Whole Teachers: A Holistic Education Perspective on Krishnamurti’s Educational Philosophy

by

Anbananthan Rathnam

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative research study, which utilizes a phenomenological inquiry method, is to inquire into the awareness of what it means to be a whole teacher from the perspective of the philosophy of Jiddu Krishnamurti, a philosopher/spiritual teacher.

Four participants (teachers) were interviewed from the Oak Grove School, an alternative, holistic school founded by Krishnamurti in 1974. This inquiry probed into teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ contemplative practices, teachers’ calling/vocation and teachers’ pedagogy. The findings of this inquiry reveal the awareness that exists among the participants with regards to their understanding of Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy and the way in which this philosophy has shaped their lives and the lives of their students (both implicitly and explicitly) The findings from this research further show that Krishnamurti’s philosophy has certainly had an impact on the participants’ wholeness. Krishnamurti was never interested in imposing his philosophy on the teachers to think in a narrow groove. Rather, he challenged them to arrive at wholeness or a holistic approach towards living by their own volition, by putting aside all philosophy, including his own.

This research points towards the possible ways in which wholeness can be developed using: Innate wisdom (teachers’ inner life, teachers’ calling); wisdom gained through experiencing life (teachers’ life, teachers’ thinking); wisdom gained through their teaching experience (teachers’ pedagogy) and wisdom gained through practices that bring harmony to the mind, body and spirit (teachers’ contemplative approaches).
An experiential model titled, *The Flower Model: An Experiential Metaphor* – which integrates the three stages of awareness – was developed using Krishnamurti’s approach towards wholeness. This model can be used to guide teachers with their respective psychological conditionings that reside or exist in their thinking, lives, inner lives, contemplative practices, vocation and pedagogy/curriculum design.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Jack Miller for his support in patiently and diligently helping me all these years. His presence and knowledge were crucial for a topic such as this and the outcome of this research is a direct consequence of the freedom Dr. Miller granted me in exploring the topic independently and with full freedom. I would also like to thank Dr. Reva Joshee and Dr. Rina Cohen for giving deep and constructive feedback that truly added value to this research. Dr. Cohen helped to renew my enthusiasm with her feedback. Dr. Joshee's keen eye for detail encouraged me to think critically and make the necessary changes that will help this research reach a wider audience. My deep appreciation goes to Dr. Karen Meyer, who is knowledgeable in Krishnamurti’s philosophy, for giving constructive and important feedback. I would also like to thank Dr. David Booth and Dr. Mark Evans for their effort in reading this thesis and giving valuable feedback. I would like to thank Meredy Benson Rice, the Head of the Oak Grove School for granting permission to conduct this research and the four teachers who volunteered from the Oak Grove School for this research. They were relentless in their pursuit and their commitment, dedication and love towards the teaching profession deserves high recognition. I would like to thank my wife, Kamini Anthonysamy who believed in my work and supported me unwaveringly while enduring many challenges and risks. My daughter, Aashwarrya who was born during this period of study, certainly helped me to stay grounded, young and constantly reminding me of the innocence that’s often forgotten. My gratitude also goes towards my parents (and Kamini’s mother) for enduring our absence over the years and all other family members who were constantly guiding and helping us. I deeply feel that the topic of wholeness chose me and not the other way around. Uncle Kuppu, who has always been a spiritual mentor in my life, was also the one who introduced and gave me the first Krishnamurti’s book, Mind Without Measure. A book can change the course of one’s life and Uncle Kuppu certainly changed the course of my life and his good deed will echo in eternity.

This research journey, first and foremost was crucial for my own journey towards wholeness. I surrender to the Supreme for initiating this doctoral journey, guiding through my research and for continuing to guide me further with this research in the future.
Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................................. 1
  Why am I conducting this research? .................................................................................................................. 1
  Research Questions ........................................................................................................................................ 5
  Holistic Education and Wholeness ...................................................................................................................... 6
  Holistic / Alternative Schools ............................................................................................................................ 7
    Summerhill School and Free Schools .............................................................................................................. 11
    Friends (Quaker) Schools ............................................................................................................................... 13
    The Robert Muller School ............................................................................................................................ 13
    The Montessori Schools ............................................................................................................................... 14
    Waldorf Schools ........................................................................................................................................... 15
    Neohumanist Schools .................................................................................................................................. 16
    Krishnamurti Schools .................................................................................................................................. 17
    The Oak Grove School .................................................................................................................................. 18
  Who was Krishnamurti? ..................................................................................................................................... 23
  Academic Research on Krishnamurti’s Philosophy ............................................................................................ 27

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .......................................................................................................................... 31
  Spirituality and Wholeness in Education ............................................................................................................ 31
    Spirituality ...................................................................................................................................................... 32
    Wholeness ...................................................................................................................................................... 36
    Parker Palmer’s Hidden Wholeness ................................................................................................................ 37
    Deepak Chopra’s Shadow Effect .................................................................................................................... 40
    Krishnamurti’s Awareness .............................................................................................................................. 49
    Foundation of Awareness .............................................................................................................................. 51
      What is awareness? ...................................................................................................................................... 51
      The Conditioned Mind ................................................................................................................................. 52
      The Negative Approach in Solving a Psychological Conditioning .............................................................. 54
      Nature of Thinking ..................................................................................................................................... 57
      Nature of Attention and Concentration ........................................................................................................ 57
    Choiceless Awareness ..................................................................................................................................... 59
    The Observer is the Observed ......................................................................................................................... 60
  Krishnamurti’s Educational Aim ......................................................................................................................... 63
    The Right Kind of Education .......................................................................................................................... 64
      Techniques and Its Limitation ....................................................................................................................... 64
      Discovery of One’s Vocation ......................................................................................................................... 66
      Limitation of Ideology and System ................................................................................................................ 67
    Helping Students to be Free from their Conditioning and to Flower in Freedom .............................................. 68
    Limitation of Compulsion, Reward and Punishment ...................................................................................... 69
    Limitation of Discipline, Conformity and Obedience ...................................................................................... 70
    Cultivation of Right Relationship and the Eradication of Fear ...................................................................... 70
    The Need for Religious Education .................................................................................................................. 71
    Understanding the Notion of Discontent .......................................................................................................... 72
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Lives: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Inner Lives: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Vocation / Calling: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches/Practices: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Pedagogy / Curriculum Design: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Research Question: Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implication</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications on Teachers’ Thinking</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Critique on Krishnamurti’s Perception on Belonging to a Religion</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Research and Insight</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Remarks</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Selected Examples of Significant Statements and Related Formulated Meanings</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Example of Two Themes with Their Associated Subthemes/Findings</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Thinking</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Lives</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 5</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Inner Lives</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 6</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Vocation/Calling</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 7</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 8</td>
<td>Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Pedagogy/Curriculum Design</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures

Figure 1  The Flower Model: An Experiential Metaphor……………………………………… 84

Figure 2  Connections between Aspects of Teachers’ Wholeness and Research
          Questions ................................................................. 105

Figure 3  Using Microsoft Word to Breakdown Transcribed Data for Q 1(a) ………… 116
**List of Appendices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Informational Letter and Consent Form – For Teachers</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Informational Letter and Consent Form – Principal of the Oak Grove School</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>Research and Interview Questions</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1
Introduction

Why am I Conducting this Research?

The word “educate” with its Latin root *educere* or its English equivalence of *educe* means to bring out or to evoke something potential, hidden and latent. But if we look at the current education system, it seems as though knowledge or information is “fed” into the students, rather than bringing out their full potential. Thomas Moore adds to this notion in J.P. Miller (2000) that since the “usual practice is to stuff what we consider valuable into a mind…this approach should logically be called *induction* – forcing in, not leading out” (p.vii). Since the current approach to education seems to be the opposite of what it means to educate, we find that this kind of education has damaged the relationship between the head and heart, between talent and passion. As a consequence of this damage, J.P. Miller (2007) adds that “in industrialized society we live in our heads, denying our deeper knowing and intuitions” (p.4). Nevertheless, progress has been made in integrating this relationship between the head and heart and one such initiative is the Character Development initiative by the Ontario Ministry of Education in 2008\(^1\). In its publication entitled *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K-12*, the Ministry defines character education as developing “excellence in education, communities that are vibrant and caring, and students who can think critically, feel deeply and act wisely…[and ] quality education is more than academic achievement – it is about the development of the whole person” (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/literacy/booklet2008.pdf). This research is an effort to enhance such initiative by focusing on teachers. With its focus on teachers, this current research seeks to enhance such an initiative.

More specifically, the focus of this empirical research is to explore the wholeness of teachers who are teaching in a Krishnamurti school, which can be described as a type of holistic, alternative school as opposed to a public school. I am situating myself as a researcher probing

into the curriculum of teachers’ inner lives. My intention in investigating teachers’ wholeness is to enhance the literature of teachers’ spirituality and wholeness, particularly their inner lives. The implications of this study will be to inform, augment, and add to present understanding of what it means to empirically explore teachers’ wholeness.

One of the important philosopher or spiritual teacher who has deeply affected the way I view education and spirituality is Jiddu Krishnamurti, who founded seven holistic schools around the world. Krishnamurti (1953) felt deeply that “the function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and therefore intelligent… [and that] education in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered” (pp. 14-17). I consider Krishnamurti’s perception of the creation of an integrated human being as being synonymous to what it means to observe wholeness.

Educators need to have experienced or be in the process of experiencing wholeness before attempting to develop wholeness in their students. Since the common goal of holistic schools is to develop the conditions that would allow the observation of one’s wholeness, the wholeness of teachers or the exploration of teachers inner lives needs to be the foundation before creating the fertile ground for students to observe wholeness. Palmer (1998) echoes this perception by asserting that teachers cannot take their students where they have not been themselves.

Krishnamurti’s philosophy has deepened the exploration of my own spirituality for the past 20 years and has helped me to look at my own conditioning in an inquiring manner. This direct observation of my conditioning or the ability to observe a conditioning is what I consider to be the greatest impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on me.

This research is crucial for my own experience of what it means to explore my wholeness, which may, in turn affect my pedagogy and the way I design curriculum in the future. Since I feel that it is important for a teacher to have experienced wholeness or is on the journey towards wholeness, it is also important for me to explore my wholeness; that’s why this research is crucial to my own well being. My hope is that the research will guide my journey towards wholeness as I believe that it is my own lack in this area that may have prompted me to embark on this journey.
Although my own educational experience (up to the Masters Degree level) did not help me to discover my vocation, Krishnamurti’s philosophy enabled me to stay with the discontentment, dissatisfaction and frustration of not finding my calling. I finally discovered my natural ability, by embarking upon a part-time teaching opportunity – while simultaneously working as an engineer. This experience made me realize that teaching was my vocation. Although I enjoyed my experience as an engineer, there was a remarkable difference between the ways the soul was engaged in the classroom as compared to the engineering experience. I became more ‘alive’ in the classroom and found myself engaging with the students and going out of my way in helping them to understand the subject matter.

When we reflect on our educational experiences, especially those relating to former teachers, there is a strong possibility that we can begin to identify the teachers who may have had an impact on us in one way or another. The Sanskrit word Guru – which means teacher – is commonly used in the eastern tradition to refer to a teacher who dispels one’s darkness or ignorance. Thus the word guru not only refers to the teacher as someone who transmits information or knowledge but also one who transforms his/her students. The transformation orientation discussed in J.P. Miller and Seller (1985) that refers an educational approach geared towards wholeness, is similar to the role of a guru, who, in the eastern tradition dispels one’s darkness (or ignorance). As such, I can undoubtedly refer to a teacher (or guru) who was instrumental in my life and who inspired me to become a teacher. The teacher who comes immediately to mind is Professor Emeritus Dr. Robert Lacher, who had been my advisor while completing the Master of Science program at South Dakota State University. Dr. Lacher, who taught in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the South Dakota State University, was instrumental in inspiring me to undertake a part-time teaching position at a college in Malaysia. Dr. Lacher was a friend as well as a teacher to me during that time. He would sometimes say he did not know the answers to some of the questions asked in the class, but he would often respond by saying that he would let us know in the next lecture; which he always did. It was this humbling attitude in front of his students’ (to say “I don’t know”) that made his humility in the classroom, an everlasting impression. Dr. Lacher also farmed during summer on a small plot of land beside his home. It was while I helped him on his farm, observing him working with black soil, with his soil-soaked pants and shirt and a farmer’s hat that marked his connectedness with nature. I saw the connection between his humility in the classroom as well
as his reverence for nature on the farm. Without a doubt, he was instrumental in my own
decision to begin to teach in Malaysia.

Dr. Lacher demonstrated from his service that teaching was indeed his calling and I
believe that his enthusiasm for and dedication to teaching had a tremendous impact on my
being. To a great extent, it was his wholeness that attracted me and brought me to this research
and doctoral work. When asked to describe the marks of a real teacher, the sage Ramana
Maharshi replied that the a real teacher has a “steady abidance in the Self, looking at all with
an equal eye [and] unshakeable courage at all times, in all places and circumstances” (Godman,
1992, pp. 91-92).

My own exploration of wholeness began in 1987 when I was naturally drawn towards
the lifestyle of the sages from the east like Krishnamurti, Ramana Maharshi, Paramahansa
Yogananda, Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Saint Francis of Assisi (from the West).
Although I was drawn towards these sages by reading and studying their biographies, I was
lacking the deeper exploration of my own being. As such, my acceptance into the doctoral
program at OISE, and focusing on Holistic Education, under the guidance of Dr. Miller was a
catalyst in helping me to continue exploring my wholeness. In situating myself within this
research on teachers’ wholeness, it is important to note that in order to know the real nature of a
guru or the swarupa² of a guru, it is necessary to begin by exploring my own swarupa. This
research is borne out of the thirst for wanting to further explore my own swarupa because a
research or inquiry on teachers’ wholeness is meaningless if the researcher is not passionate
about engaging in a deeper exploration of his/her own wholeness. The sage Ramana Maharshi
clarified this phenomenon in his response to an inquiry on the swarupa (nature or real form) of a
Guru as follows:

He is the proper Guru to whom your mind is attuned [and] endowed with tranquility,
patience, forgiveness and other virtues…He who has these virtues is the true Guru, but if
one wants to know the swarupa of the Guru, one must know one’s own swarupa first.

² The Sanskrit word Swarupa refers to the real form or real nature of a person. Ramana Maharshi refers to
Swarupa as the Self. Ramana Maharshi was a spiritual teacher in the tradition of Advaita Vedanta and will be
introduced further in Chapter 2.
How can one know the real nature of the Guru if one does not know one’s own real nature first? ...Therefore, first of all know your own real form and nature. (Godman, 1992, p. 93)

It is my intention to share with other teachers, this notion of developing wholeness within, in the hope that they will experience a shift in their consciousness towards goodness and wholeness. This research provides a framework within which this consciousness could be contemplated upon.

**Research Questions**

My research focuses on the wholeness of teachers in a Krishnamurti school and how their wholeness affects or informs their pedagogy and curriculum design.

My main research question is:

What is the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on teachers’ wholeness?

Sub-research questions include:

1. What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
2. What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
3. What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish their wholeness within?
4. What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?
5. What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
6. What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc.) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly, as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?
Holistic Education and Wholeness

Holistic education is an alternative form of education that attempts to nurture the development of the whole person that includes the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic and spiritual (R. Miller, 2000; J.P. Miller, 2005). Since the word ‘holistic’ comes from the Greek word *holon* which denotes that the universe is constructed of integrated wholes that cannot be broken down to the sum of its parts (J.P. Miller, 2007), the development of the whole person needs to be observed holistically through intellectual, emotional, physical, social, aesthetic and spiritual lens. J.P. Miller (2005) makes an important observation when he suggests that “the defining aspect of holistic education is the spiritual” (p. 2). J.P. Miller further adds that “addressing spirituality in the curriculum can mean reawakening students to a sense of awe and wonder” (2005, p. 2).

A holistic school can be defined as a school that attempts to nurture the whole person. Every stakeholder in a holistic school (administrators, teachers, students and parents) plays an important role in nurturing the development of the whole person. In this doctoral research work, I would like to focus my attention on the teachers, given that, as J.P Miller asserts, “holistic education must begin with the effort of the teacher” (J.P. Miller, 1993, p.17).

Forbes (2003) analyzed the life of six individuals who are generally considered to have laid the foundations of holistic education: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel, Carl Gustav Jung, Abraham Harold Maslow and Carl Ransom Rogers. Forbes states that these six founding fathers of holistic education felt that teachers’ self-development, which revolved around the development of virtues, morals and religiousness to be “an essential element in the students’ education” (p. 45). Forbes’s notion of religiousness can also be defined as spirituality.

Rabindranath Tagore, poet, short story writer, playwright and novelist, is regarded as one of the greatest of modern Indian writers, winning the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. Tagore started his first school in 1901 at Santiniketan, located in Bolpur, Bengal. Tagore’s educational vision was transformed from a school to a college and eventually to a University called Visva-Bharati, in 1951. Tagore was a deeply religious person and shared his views on spirituality as follows:
I believe in a spiritual world – not as anything separate from this world – but as its innermost truth. With the breath we draw we must always feel this truth, that we are living in God. Born in this great world, full of mystery of the infinite, we cannot accept our existence as a momentary outburst of chance, drifting on the current matter towards an eternal nowhere. (Tagore, 1917, p. 126)

In Tagore’s view, the aim of education was to facilitate spiritual growth and although his educational idea was rooted in the wisdom of Upanishad texts of ancient India, his philosophy was not only dependent on Hinduism as he “never depended on any authorized doctrine, scripture, and organization” (Kaneda, 2002, p. 123). As such, Tagore’s philosophy resembled Krishnamurti’s philosophy as they both emphasized pursuing universal truth. Further, Tagore (1915) shared his thought on beauty and expressed that “truth is everywhere, therefore everything is the object of our knowledge. Beauty is omnipresent, therefore everything is capable of giving joy” (p.138). Tagore (1917) recognized the fragmentation inherent in the school system, with the tendency to separate the intellectual, the spiritual and the physical by emphasizing solely the intellectual and the physical aspects of human beings. Tagore’s notion of human wholeness can be appreciated in the following:

Formerly when life was simple all the different elements of man were in complete harmony. But when there came the separation of the intellect from the spiritual and physical, school education put its entire emphasis on the intellect and the physical side of man (or human). We devote our sole attention to giving children information, not knowing that by this emphasis we are accentuating a break between the intellectual, physical and the spiritual life. (Tagore, 1917, p. 126)

The notion of wholeness will be discussed from the view point of Parker Palmer’s *Hidden Wholeness*, Deepak Chopra’s *Shadow Effect* and Krishnamurti’s *Awareness* in the section on Wholeness in Chapter 2.

**Holistic/Alternative Schools**

Vittachi, Ragharan and Raj (2007) researched alternative schools in India and compiled a database that offers an insight into the philosophies and the factors that make these alternative schools different from the mainstream public schools. In this research, I outline some features of
the alternative schools that also meant to define alternative education. I found that some of the features of alternative schools resemble the tenets/features of holistic education and therefore a more detailed description of these features will be helpful in providing a better understanding of holistic schools.

The first feature describes an approach that is more individualized compared to the approach by a mainstream school and added that there is “no one model, and so, the approach of alternative schools defies pigeonholing” (Vittachi et al., p.19).

The second feature focuses on the process of learning that is more experiential and interest-based as opposed to relying on textbooks. This is similar to Gandhi’s (1980) view of education that describes the connection between the functions of the bodily organs and the mind that in turn, corresponds to the awakening of the soul.

The third feature describes the importance of disciplines that are cross-linked to enable students to see connections across various fields of learning. This notion is supported by J.P. Miller (2007), who explains the trans-disciplinary model practiced at Waldorf Schools (a holistic school founded by Rudolf Steiner). In this model, every morning, the instruction begins with the main lesson that is conducted from about 9:00-11:00 a.m. J.P Miller further points out that “the main lesson brings together English, Mathematics, Geography, History and Science” (2007, p.139).

The fourth feature mentions the importance of maintaining small class sizes and suggests not more than 25-30 students. A small class size also reflects on the size of the school and the following research captures the impact of small school size on education. In their research that examined school size and its effects on education, Barker and Gump (1964) who spent three years studying thirteen high schools in Eastern Kansas found that student participation in activities like music, drama, journalism and student government was highest in the schools with enrollments between 61 and 150. Baker and Gump (1964) also found that with regard to classroom activities, “while the bigger school offered more subjects, the students in the larger schools participated in fewer and less varied classes than students in smaller schools” (as cited in J.P. Miller, 2007. p. 58). Other researchers (Cotton, 1996; Lee and Smith, 1994; Wasley, 2000) have found that students in small schools perform better academically than their counterparts in larger schools.
The fifth feature discusses a school’s administrative policy that is conducted in a democratic and flexible manner. A good example of this attribute was discussed in Swaminathan (2006), where student empowerment and teacher’s reflection on their own teaching and learning were realized with the ‘Role Reversal Day’ at a Krishnamurti school (Brockwood Park School) in the United Kingdom. In this “Role Reversal Day” a specific day was chosen where the students took on the role of teachers and vice versa. This exercise helped to break the monotonous school life and allowed for a chance to share authority. It encouraged new perspectives on teaching and learning, and provided time for teachers to learn from students. These initiatives served as a way to empower students and to foster a closer relationship and kinship between teachers and students.

Finally the last feature discusses the success rate of students that is not measured only by “the performance of the students in competition, examinations and other such external benchmarks” (Vittachi et al., 2007, 19). The learning outcomes in the alternative schools include a combination of “measurable and immeasurable parameters” (p. 19) or as measured by courses that are graded and also those that are not graded. An application of this practice can be seen in most Krishnamurti schools where subjects such as ecology, community service, public speaking and other elective subjects are offered and where grades are not allocated based upon high school graduation requirements. An example of such non-graded subjects can be found at the Krishnamurti’s Brockwood Park School in London, United Kingdom (http://www.brockwood.org.uk/contact_us/index.htm).

R. Miller (1992) describes a few themes that define an educational approach as “holistic” as follows: An emphasis on the wholeness of the human experience, a spiritual worldview, a community that nurtures the individual and gives priority to learning through experience. In addition, J.P. Miller (2007) identifies the three principles on which holistic education was founded – balance, inclusion and connection. These three premises help to develop wholeness in students.

Holistic schools are part of the larger group of alternative schools available today. Since my research is focused on one of Krishnamurti’s schools, I would like to explore the different types of holistic schools. This will help to identify or place Krishnamurti schools within the alternative approaches to the mainstream, public or traditional school system. It is also important
to note that all Krishnamurti schools were not developed in the same way as, for example, the Montessori or the Waldorf schools and as such, they cannot be classified as the same. This is due to the fact that in his approach, Krishnamurti does not rely on a system with an organized curriculum and pedagogy but rather, an approach that stems from a ‘methodless method’.

Koetzsch (1997) notes that the teachers, the curriculum and the educational philosophy of a school will affect the child’s daily life, mould his or her personality and also influence how he or she views life. These three concepts also combine to shape the student’s behavior and destiny. R. Miller (2006) explains the philosophical and pedagogical difference that exists among the more established holistic schools like the Waldorf School and Montessori Schools (founded by Rudolf Steiner and Maria Montessori respectively). R. Miller questions why the established forms (the curriculum) in these schools have remained intact since the early twentieth century and explains that these schools’ practitioners “argue that these approaches address universal, archetypal elements of human development” (p. 8).

In contrast to Waldorf and Montessori schools are the Krishnamurti’s schools, where a ‘methodless method’ system is used. The methodless method system explained in Peterson (2000) discusses both the advantages and disadvantages to teachers in using this strategy. According to Peterson (2000), the advantages are that teachers are “creatively free to come up with their own methods and ideas, corresponding with the age, needs and aptitudes of their students” (p. 55). Peterson (2000) goes on to explain that the disadvantages are that the teachers “have little guidance and no set text or plan to fall back on, and because of this, teaching at a Krishnamurti school can be demanding and quite stressful” (p. 56). In Education and the Significance of Life Krishnamurti (1953) explains why he does not favor systems:

Life cannot be made to conform to a system; it cannot be forced into a framework, however nobly conceived. When we train our children according to a system or thought or a particular discipline…we prevent them from growing into integrated men and women, and therefore they are incapable of thinking intelligently, which is to meet life as a whole. (p. 24)

J.P. Miller (2007) explains that for centuries, educators and philosophers have described and used the principles of the holistic curriculum, which seems to have been defined within two different streams. One stream has focused on personal growth that is further divided into
educators who stress on psychological growth (humanistic educators) and, on the other hand, educators who stress on spiritual growth (transpersonal educators). The other stream has focused on social change where the educators “have developed programs that encourage student involvement in the community… [that take the] form of service to the community or social action” (J.P. Miller, p. 67).

Following is a presentation of a few of the holistic schools that exist today, as well as a brief discussion of the philosophy of their founders:

1. Summerhill School and Free Schools
2. Friends (Quaker) Schools
3. Robert Muller School
4. Montessori Schools
5. Waldorf Schools
6. Neohumanist Schools
7. Krishnamurti Schools

**Summerhill School and Free Schools**

The Summerhill School was founded by A.S. Neill in 1921 in England. His book, *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing* inspired many free school educators to set up schools with similar approaches. Neill’s chief concern was the emotional life and freedom of the children (Neill, 1960). Neill, an educator who had a caring presence and natural ability in understanding children believes “in the goodness of the child…[who] has full potentialities to love life and to be interested in life” (Neill, 1960, p. xii). R. Miller’s (2002) research estimates that about 400 to 800 *free* schools were opened in the 1960’s due to the popularity gained by the Summerhill “*free* school model”.

In relation to the freedom of the child, Neill felt that a school should allow children freedom to be themselves. To achieve this goal, Neill asserted that, “we had to renounce all discipline, all direction, all suggestion, all moral training, all religious instruction” (Neill, 1960, p. 4). The fundamental belief behind this notion of freedom is that the child is naturally good, a notion that never wavered throughout Neill’s forty years at Summerhill.
Other schools that have developed similar approaches or modified Neill’s philosophy are:

a) Play Mountain School, founded by Phyliss Fleishmann in the early 1950’s was influenced by the humanistic psychology of Carl Rogers and the methods of A.S. Neill. The philosophy of Play Mountain School is centered on a humanistic educational environment that is appropriate for each age group. Their curriculum is child-centered/initiated and experiential in nature. In addition, as asserted in their mission statement, it was stated that “a child’s inherent desire to learn is acknowledged and facilitated, not forced or squelched. Curriculum addresses children’s social and emotional development as well as their intellectual growth” (http://www.playmountain.org/philo.htm).

b) The Albany Free School, founded by Mary Leue in 1969 was influenced by Mark, Mary’s youngest son, who was feeling miserable in his fifth-grade class in one of Albany’s public schools. After every effort made to reconcile the problem with both teacher and principal of the school showed no changes in Mark’s miserable feeling, he finally refused to go to school and the first Albany Free School was started in Mary’s home. Mercogliano (1997) discusses the school’s philosophy on handling the following issues: disruptive or aggressive children, the apprenticeship model of learning, children’s emotional and interpersonal issues, fears, concentration, the effect of television on children, religion and spirituality, race and class, sexuality, teaching and community.

c) Children’s Village School, in rural Thailand, was founded in 1979. Dhongchai and Dongchai (1997) illustrate the fusion of Buddhist principles alongside Summerhillian philosophies.

d) The Sudbury Valley School, founded in 1968. The founder believes that freedom is at the heart of the school. The fundamental premises of the school are: “that all people are curious by nature; that the most efficient, long-lasting and profound learning takes place when started and pursued by the learner; that all people are creative if they are allowed to develop their unique talents; that age-mixing among students promotes growth in all members of the group; and that freedom is essential to the development of personal responsibility” (http://www.sudval.org/01_abou_01.html)
Friends (Quaker) Schools

The Quakers are members of the Religious Society of Friends, founded in England in the 17th century as a Christian religious denomination by people who were dissatisfied with the existing denominations of Christianity. The Quakers emphasize qualities like honesty, truth, integrity, simplicity, community, peace and respect for the individual as their fundamental values (Rudge, 2008).

R. Miller (1992) explains that the Quakers “achieved a remarkable balance between the religious and empirical perspectives” (p.155). Drawing on their emphasis on the “Inner Light” – a doctrine of the Quakers, Brinton (1940) explains that “the Presence of God is felt at the apex of the human soul and that man can therefore know and heed God directly, without any intermediary in the form of church, priest, sacrament, or secret book” (p. 11). The first Friends (Quaker) school was founded by George Fox in 1668. One example of the many Friends schools around the world is The Meeting School, founded in 1955 by a group of Quaker educators “who found a shared concern, envisioning a school that would educate the whole person” (http://www.mv.com/ipusers/tms/).

The Robert Muller Center for Living Ethics (formerly known as the Robert Muller School of Fairview, Texas)

The Robert Muller School was founded by Robert Muller, in 1980 in Arlington, Texas as an innovative experiment in education. The core philosophy that underpins this school’s curriculum planning is the World Core Curriculum (WCC) introduced in Muller’s work entitled New Genesis: Shaping a Global Spirituality. The WCC is a framework that emphasizes both peace and global education. Muller (1984) writes that the WCC includes an integrated curriculum that is holistic, centered on the growth of the whole child that includes the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development of the child.

Robert Muller – retired in 1986 – was the past Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and recipient of the UNESCO Peace Education Prize in 1989 for his world love curriculum; he was also referred to as the Farther of Global Education (www.futurefoundation.org/board/Muller.html). Muller’s WCC uses a holistic concept that
encompasses all races, nations, religions and ideologies and Muller (1984) declares that “global education must transcend material, scientific and intellectual achievements and reach deliberately into the moral spiritual sphere” (p. 8).

There are about 29 schools around the world that use the WCC as their curriculum (http://robertmiller.org) and today, the Robert Muller Schools International Coordinating Center coordinates with interested parties around the world who would like to adopt the WCC as their guiding principal (http://www.unol.org/rms/index.html). The WCC as explained in Muller (1984) is organized around the following four categories:

a) **Our Planetary Home and Place in the Universe** entails the knowledge of planet earth, from the infinitely large to the infinitely small;

b) **The Human Family** reveals the interrelationships of various human groups, dealing with both their qualitative and quantitative characteristics (an example of qualitative and quantitative characteristics are moral levels and human longevity respectively);

c) **Our Place in Time** includes an expanded time dimension that is inclusive of past, present and future. Muller (1984) describes that it involves preserving the natural elements for survival like the air, water, souls, energy, animals, fauna, flora and genetic materials;

d) **The Miracle of Individual Human Life** emphasizes self-awareness through a holistic understanding of the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of each individual.

**Montessori Schools**

Maria Montessori was the founder of Montessori education. Her educational theories had a revolutionary influence on educational practices around the world. Hainstock (1997) claims that over 3,000 schools in the United States are in some ways associated with Montessori’s method.

Montessori’s concept of the cosmic view of life signifies the spiritual nature of her educational philosophy (Wolf, 1996). Lillard (2005) describes cosmic education as a method to show the child how things in the entire universe are inter-related and inter-dependent; the child
understands this web of relationships, realizes that he/she is part of the whole and thus has a role
to play and contributions to make. Hainstock (1997) informs that as a researcher, Montessori
viewed the classroom as a lab to observe, test and re-test children, in order to examine their
growth.

The concept of the cosmic view of life is one of the most important ideas that Montessori
left behind and as mentioned earlier, her philosophical outlook, especially after her work in
India, was to see beyond the superficial manifestation of the children’s behavior, to discern the
order and the interconnectedness of life (Montessori, 1970).

In the following quotation, Montessori (1967) set the standards and goals for this cosmic
study:

Let us give the child a vision of the whole universe. The cosmic view of life is
not a new idea, for it has been the natural plan wherever there has been
education in the real sense of the word, though lately fallen into disuse.
Children must first be taught the story of Creation and then of the world and
people’s place in it. (p. 8-10)

Montessori (1967) explained further that the cosmic plan is intended not only
to arouse children’s interest in the story of Creation, but to create a sense of awe and
wonder. As Montessori stressed:

That “Cosmic Plan”…which may also be called the Will of God, actively expressed in
the whole of His Creation, can be an idea presented to children which can do more for
them than just arouse their interest…it will create in them admiration and wonder. The
Cosmic Plan can be made so attractive [that children will wish] to match to the joyful
music of the Song of Life. (1967, p. 75)

Waldorf Schools

Rudolf Steiner founded the Waldorf School in 1919, upon request from the Managing
Director of the Waldorf Astoria Tobacco Company, who wanted Steiner to provide education for
his factory workers’ children (Mattke, 1994). Waldorf schools aim to foster a healthy
development of children’s physical, psychological and spiritual faculties. An important aspect of
the Waldorf School’s curriculum is the concept called eurythmy. J.P. Miller (2006) describes this concept of eurythmy as “not dance movement…but a physical form of speech...[where] children walk and run to form geometrical forms...Eurythmy can also be combined with storytelling” (p. 126). Nielsen’s (2004) research resulted in developing a pedagogy of imagination based on Steiner’s philosophy.

Wilkinson (1996) describes Steiner’s two major concepts embedded in the Waldorf schools: the oneness of the world and the search of the self or soul. In the concept of oneness, Wilkinson explains that everything in this world is interdependent on one another; for example, how crops are dependent on soil and weather, how worms revitalize the soil, how trees yield food and timber, how trees regenerate the air we breathe, and many other natural phenomena. In the search for the self or soul, Steiner believes in the doctrine of reincarnation where human beings come into earthly incarnation with certain tendencies, potentialities and ambitions, acquired as a result of experiences in previous existence or incarnation.

Wilkinson (1996) explains that every period of seven years witnesses the birth of new faculties. Another way of describing these phenomena is that the nature of human development has a seven-year cycle. Steiner’s spiritual science looks at child growth as a process of incarnation. Wilkinson explains the spiritual world of the child and added that “before birth the child lived in the spiritual world and felt one with it...[and that] the feeling of being at one with the world continues after birth for the first seven years, gradually diminishing (Wilkinson, 1996, p. 37).

Neohumanist Schools

The principles of Neohumanist education were introduced by Indian philosopher Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar. Sarkar (1999) outlines the philosophy of Neohumanism, which is based on spirituality, ecology and social change. The first Neohumanist School was founded in India by Sarkar, in 1963. There are about 850 kindergartens and primary schools, 22 secondary schools, and 150 children’s centers in 50 countries that follow the principles of Neohumanist education (Rudge, 2008).

The curriculum of Neohumanist schools addresses the development of the whole child and Sarkar stresses that “teachers must be selected carefully...teachers must possess such
qualities as personal integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a feeling for social service, unselfishness, an inspiring personality and leadership qualities” (http://nhe.gurukul.edu/teachers.htm).

The previous holistic/alternative schools were surveyed in order to place the Krishnamurti schools as one of the holistic schools around the world. In the following section, I will highlight the Krishnamurti schools focusing specifically on the Oak Grove School, where I conducted my research.

**Krishnamurti Schools**

The following schools operate under the guidance of Krishnamurti Foundations India (KFI), Krishnamurti Foundation Trust (KFT) and Krishnamurti Foundation America (KFA): Brockwood Park School in the, United Kingdom; The School, The Valley School, Rajghat Besant School, Bal Anand, Sahyadri School and the Rishi Valley School in India; The Oak Grove School in the United States of America.

Krishnamurti (1981) regarded the art of living as one of the most important things in life. He used the word *art* in its broadest sense and advised against picking one aspect of life and leaving out another and suggested that the only way to find out about the art of living is when the whole mind is facing or observing what is happening now or in the moment. This keen observation in the present moment is not an intellectual or emotional state but the direct perception that is free from the conflict of duality. Krishnamurti clarifies this notion by saying that the state of duality happens when we escape from *what is* and that the conditioning simply prevents the direct observation of what’s happening in the present moment. Krishnamurti (1981) added that:

What is taking place now is free of time. Time is the evolution of our conditioning. It is man’s inheritance, the burden that has no beginning. When there is this passionate observation of what is going on, that which is being observed dissolves into nothingness. (p. 69)

An example of anger as a psychological conditioning has been described by Krishnamurti as follows:
The observation of the anger that is taking place now reveals the whole nature and structure of violence. This insight is the ending of all violence. It is not replaced by anything else and therein lays our difficulty. Our whole desire and urge is to find a definite end. In that end there is a sense of illusory security. (pp. 69-70)

Thus Krishnamurti is suggesting that the flowering of anger ends the whole structure of violence associated with anger and since we always want to end it as an analytic process and since it involves time, we never actually dissolve the anger. This is precisely why Krishnamurti ended the earlier quote by saying that ‘in that end there is a sense of illusory security’.

**The Oak Grove School**

The Oak Grove School is a progressive co-educational day and boarding serving preschool through college preparatory high school students.

My trip to Ojai was a memorable one. I submitted my proposal to the Principal of the Oak Grove School following which four teachers volunteered to participate in my study. I headed for Ojai in October 2009, after having made an arrangement with a former staff of the Oak Grove School who gave me a ride from the Los Angeles airport to Ojai. The Oak Grove School was very kind in allowing me to stay at their guesthouse for one week (this was the Krishnamurti Foundation America’s office before they moved to another location in Ojai). The school campus is located on their 150 acres of land surrounded by the Sulphur and Topatopa mountains. One of the research participants invited me to climb part of the Topatopa Mountain and it was a memorable experience. The Ojai community has always rejected development that would tarnish its natural beauty and thus has always encouraged small and unique businesses to flourish. The stores and shops close early, and the town becomes silent. Since there are not many street lights, the people in Ojai take pride in being able to gaze at the stars in the silence of the night.

Ojai is also blessed with beautiful, natural landscape as well as many healing plants cultivated by the Chumash Indians, who were the early dwellers of the Ojai Valley. I can vividly recall the Eucalyptus trees near the Oak Grove School and the fragrance of the tree still lingers in my mind. The Oak Grove School is a wooded campus with wood chips surrounding the landscape of the school. I rented a bicycle from a bicycle shop owned by a former athletics
teacher of the Oak Grove School. I later rented and stayed in his house for about 4 days and had a wonderful experience cycling around Ojai.

The Oak Grove School provides a vegetarian lunch for everyone. The food was cooked on campus in a building called Main House. There was always a wide variety of salads, hot and cold dishes, and fruits served during lunch. Most of the vegetables served at lunch are grown on the school compound at the ‘Vegetable Garden’.

The Oak Grove School was opened in December 1974, with Mark Lee appointed as the first head of the school. He was previously teaching at the Rishi Valley School, the first Krishnamurti School, opened in 1930 in India. Mark Lee mentioned in Blau (1995) that “Krishnamurti wanted a timeless school, one that would last hundreds of years” (p. 194). Lee recollected his memory of the earliest efforts to build the Oak Grove School by sharing that:

I now see that we were pioneers without direction; we carried the frontier with us. The curriculum was developed in hundreds of hours of meetings, the result of which was that the educational requirements of the State of California were carefully upheld while at the same time everything was honed to the creative intent of the school. (Blau, 1995, p. 197)

The intent of the Oak Grove School, originally written by Krishnamurti in 1975 was re-written by Krishnamurti himself in 1984 to the present form. The full document of the Intent of the Oak Grove School is shared below:

It is becoming more and more important in a world that is destructive and degenerating that there should be a place, an oasis, where one can learn a way of living that is whole, sane and intelligent. Education in the modern world has been concerned with the cultivation, not of intelligence, but of intellect, of memory and its skills. In this process little occurs beyond passing information from the teacher to the taught, the leader to the follower, bringing about a superficial and mechanical way of life. In this there is little human relationship.

Surely a school is a place where one learns about the totality, the wholeness of life. Academic excellence is absolutely necessary, but a school includes much more than that.
It is a place where both the teacher and the taught explore not only the outer world, the world of knowledge, but also their own thinking, their behavior. From this they begin to discover their own conditioning and how it distorts their thinking. This conditioning is the self to which such tremendous and cruel importance is given. Freedom from conditioning and its misery begins with this awareness. It is only in such freedom that true learning can take place. In this school it is the responsibility of the teacher to sustain with the student a careful exploration into the implications of conditioning and thus end it.

A school is a place where one learns the importance of knowledge and its limitations. It is a place where one learns to observe the world not from any particular point of view or conclusion. One learns to look at the whole of man’s endeavor, his search for beauty, his search for truth and for a way of living without conflict. Conflict is the very essence of violence. So far education has not been concerned with this, but in this school our intent is to understand actuality and its action without any preconceived ideals, theories or belief which bring about a contradictory attitude toward existence.

The school is concerned with freedom and order. Freedom is not the expression of one’s own desire, choice or self-interest. That inevitably leads to disorder. Freedom of choice is not freedom, though it may appear so; nor is order, conformity or imitation. Order can only come, with the insight that to choose is itself the denial of freedom.

In school one learns the importance of relationship which is not based on attachment and possession. It is here one can learn about the movement of thought; love and death, for all this is our life. From the ancient of times, man has sought something beyond the materialistic world, something immeasurable, something sacred. It is the intent of this school to inquire into this possibility.

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3 Krishnamurti is probably referring to the human race when he uses this term. The term ‘his’ used later in the sentence was a poor choice of word by Krishnamurti and should include both male and female gender.
This whole movement of inquiry into knowledge, into oneself, into the possibility of something beyond knowledge, brings about naturally a psychological revolution, and from this comes inevitably a totally different order in human relationship, which is society. The intelligent understanding of all this can bring about a profound change in the consciousness of mankind (http://www.brockwood.org.uk/pdf/intent_of_k_schools.pdf).

David Moody, the first teacher appointed to the Oak Grove School, who later became the co-director with Mark Lee, mentions in his book *The Unconditioned Mind: J.Krishnamurti and the Oak Grove School*, the aim of the Oak Grove School as follows:

The school’s aim was nothing less than to work a revolution in the consciousness of mankind⁴ – to bring about a way of life that was whole, sane, intelligent, and informed with a sense of the sacred. The central element in this intention was to ‘uncondition’ the mind of the student, a process that entailed unconditioning the teacher as well. In this way, a new kind of mind would emerge, one that would affect the consciousness of the world. (Moody, 2011, p. 28)

One of the missions of the Oak Grove School is to integrate the *Art of Living and Learning* into the school’s culture, curriculum and classroom practice. In relations to Krishnamurti’s intentions, the Oak Grove School – under the guidance of Meredy Benson, the current Principal of the Oak Grove School – began to integrate the Art of Living and Learning into the school’s culture, curriculum, classroom practice, and expectations of student learning. They are:

**The Art of Living and Learning**

**The Art of Inquiry** that focuses on:
Observation; questioning; fact-finding; research; self-reflection

**The Art of Communication** that focuses on:
Speaking; writing; listening; collaboration

⁴ The word mankind is probably referring to the human race.
The Art of Academia that focuses on:
Knowledge and application of academic standards, conventions, and disciplines in core subject areas

The Art of Engagement that focuses on:
Attention; self-direction; self-motivation; self-regulation metacognition or learning how one learns; examining one’s own thinking

The Art of Aesthetics that focuses on:
Sensitivity and appreciation of beauty in all forms; finding the artist within; artistic expression

The Art of Caring & Relationship that focuses on:
Self: self-understanding and awareness; making healthy choices
Others: self-reflection and awareness in relationship; non-violent communication service to the common good
Local & Global Communities: service and citizenship
The Environment: mindful stewardship

An Example of Integrating the Art of Living and Learning into a Syllabus

This vision from Meredy Benson to include the Art of Living and Learning is now bearing fruit, as some teachers have included it as part of their guiding principle in the way they design their syllabus. An example of the application of these Arts can be seen in the Geometry syllabus at the Oak Grove School. Part of the syllabus that focuses on the assessment for Geometry reflects a holistic approach to assessing the students while utilizing Krishnamurti’s notion of the Art of Living is presented below:

Breakdown of Grades:

The Arts of Inquiry and Engagement: **worth 40% of grade**
This is where you ask questions, dig deeply into a subject and construct your learning. The homework, class work and group work will all provide opportunities for you to observe, question, reflect and observe your own thinking.

The Art of Academia: **worth 30% of the grade**
This is where you demonstrate what you have learned. Projects, quizzes and tests will afford you opportunities to present evidence of your learning to the high academic standard set before you.

The Arts of Communication, Relationship and Aesthetics: **worth 10% of grade**
This is where you address the ways in which you communicate with one another; how you relate to yourself, your peers and teacher and your surroundings; and how you care for your belongings and the physical spaces around you. Participation in class, your daily organization, the use and care of your notebook and your use of the space and class materials will all provide chances to develop and refine a sense of care both for yourself, your classmates and teacher and the physical space of the classroom and class materials (from the Oak Grove School website, http://www.oakgroveschool.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=142&Itemid=310)

After having elaborated on the different aspects of the Oak Grove School, I would like to introduce Krishnamurti and his journey as a philosopher and spiritual teacher.

Who was Krishnamurti?

Jiddu Krishnamurti was born in 1895 in Madanapalle, South India. Krishnamurti was adopted by the Theosophical Society, an International organization that observes the unity of world religions. A new worldwide organization, called The Order of the Star of the East, was established by Annie Besant (the president of the Theosophical Society at the time) and C.W. Leadbeater in 1911 (Jayakar, 1986). Krishnamurti was chosen to be the head of this new organization and in 1929, after many years of questioning his role as the World Teacher, Krishnamurti decided to disband this organization, stating as follows:

I maintain that Truth is a pathless land, and you cannot approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion, by any sect…Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, cannot be organized; nor should any organization be formed to lead or to coerce people along any particular path…For two years, I have been thinking about this, slowly, carefully, patiently, and I have now decided to disband the Order, as I happen to be its head. You can form other organizations and expect someone else. With that I am not concerned, nor with creating new cages, new decorations for those cages. My only concern is to set man absolutely, unconditionally free. (1986, pp. 78-82)

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5 Referring to the human race.
Krishnamurti rejected the role of a traditional *guru* (or teacher), who allows people to follow blindly and obediently. Rather, Krishnamurti resembled the role of a *guru* that suits the actual meaning of the Sanskrit word *guru*: A teacher who dispels one’s darkness (or ignorance). In essence, Krishnamurti was a *guru* who did not want followers who might create a religion or cult around him. All that Krishnamurti advocated was for people to use his teaching as a mirror that would help them to see themselves better. During the final years of his life, he insisted on including the following statement in the rules and regulation of the Foundation he created:

> Under no circumstances will the Foundation or any of the institutions under its auspices, or any of its members set themselves up as authorities on Krishnamurti’s teachings. This is in accordance with Krishnamurti’s declaration that no one anywhere should set himself [or herself] up as an authority on him or his teachings. (Lutyens, 1990 p, 199)

This is an important point to make, so as to clear any doubt that the readers might have if there was a successor after Krishnamurti. On his deathbed in 1986, Krishnamurti insisted that the houses in which he lived should not become a place of pilgrimage and that no cult should surround his name (Lutyens, 1990). Although Krishnamurti rejected all organized religions, Hillary Rodrigues, a professor of religious studies at the University of Lethbridge regarded him to be “a religious figure of the highest distinction” (Rodrigues, 2001. p.209). Rodrigues’s claim simply shows that although Krishnamurti rejected all organized religions, he adhered to, and lived by a perennial and universal philosophy.

Arvind Sharma, a professor of comparative religion at the McGill University, included Krishnamurti alongside with Rabindranath Tagore, Gandhi, Aurobindo and others, as representing modern Hindu thinkers in *Modern Hindu Thought*. Sharma suggests that Krishnamurti can be regarded as belonging to a modern line of Hindu thought that paradoxically happens to be universal and esoteric at the same time. On the notion of Krishnamurti’s philosophy being similar to Hinduism, Sharma shares that “it is universal in the sense that it demonstrates how modern Hindu universalism results in a type of religious thinker who is Hindu

6 It is common for a spiritual teacher in India to name his/her successor before their death. Krishnamurti did not want anyone to assume such a role after his death.
to the point of being virtually non-Hindu, inasmuch as being a Hindu means identifying oneself with a specific religious tradition” (Sharma, 2002, p. 347).

Rodrigues (2001) also points out that Krishnamurti’s teaching is similar to some concepts in Taoism, where the “Tao Te Ching’s treatment of the Tao resonates strikingly with Krishnamurti’s notion of the Ground” (p. 180). Rodrigues further points out that Krishnamurti’s philosophy also resembles the non-dualistic (Advaita) philosophy taught by Sankara in the 7th/8th century and the teachings of the Buddha.

Although Sharma (2002) and Rodrigues (2001) identified the similarities between Krishnamurti’s philosophy and Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism, it is important to point out that Krishnamurti rejected all organized religions. Krishnamurti felt that the mind must be kept clear of the past in order to see the real and only such a state of mind knows what true religion is. He further articulates as follows:

When the mind is swept clean of image, or ritual, of belief, of symbol, of all words, mantrams and repetitions, and of all fear, then what you see will be the real, the timeless, the everlasting, which may be called God; but this requires enormous insight, understanding, patience, and it is only those who really inquire into what is religion and pursue it day after day to the end. Only such people will know what is true religion.
(Blau, 1995, p. 92)

Krishnamurti (1977) also asserted that religion can be understood to be the gathering of total energy to find out if there is anything sacred. Krishnamurti kept a journal, in which he recorded his perceptions and states of consciousness for seven months – from 1961 to 1962. The compilation of that journal was published as Krishnamurti’s Notebook that made a strong impression of the sacred. Krishnamurti’s shared his understanding of the notion of the sacred, in the following quotation:

There’s a sacredness which is not of thought, nor of a feeling resuscitated by thought. It is not recognizable by thought nor can it be utilized by thought. Thought cannot formulate

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7 The word mantrams is derived from the word mantra which is a word or phrase used to evoke the being.
it. But there’s a sacredness, untouched by any symbol or word. It is not communicable. It is a fact…This sacredness has no worshipper, the observer who meditates upon it. It’s not in the market to be bought or sold. Like beauty, it cannot be seen through its opposites for it has no opposite. (Krishnamurti, 1976, p.16)

Finally, it is important to discuss Krishnamurti’s notion of the relationship between a teacher and the student as this research revolves around the wholeness of teachers. Krishnamurti’s notion of the relationship between a teacher and the student certainly deviated from the traditional eastern approach to such a relationship. The traditional approach is a top-down (or hierarchical) rigid concept where the teacher (who knows) teaches the student (who does not know). Krishnamurti, on the other hand felt that “the teacher and the student function at the same level – communicating through questioning and counter-questioning till the depth of the problem are exposed and understanding is revealed, illuminating the mind of both” (Krishnamurti, 1974, p.10). It must be understood here, that Krishnamurti is pointing towards the conditioning of both the teacher and the student that needs ‘questioning and counter-questioning’ and not the content or curriculum of any subject. Krishnamurti never spoke of the required curriculum in the schools he created, but rather emphasized the pedagogy of the teachers. The word ‘conditioning’ requires elaboration as it is an important term in order to understand Krishnamurti’s philosophy and this will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Krishnamurti emphatically explains that teachers play a central role in bringing about fundamental changes in students in order to make them whole. The transformation orientation discussed in J.P. Miller and Seller (1985) reflects an educational approach geared towards wholeness. Krishnamurti (1953) states that if the educator has not been rightly educated, he or she will educate from their fragmented state of mind and adds that “the problem…is not the child, but the teacher [and therefore] the problem is to educate the educator” (p. 100). Krishnamurti (1953) feels that because educators are not whole and conditioned, they must begin to observe their own limitation; he further claims that “out of this watchfulness comes intelligence, and with it a radical transformation in his relationship to people and things” (p.105).

Krishnamurti appears to be humble when dealing with people and did not portray himself to be a great seer but rather as a humble human being. Lutyens (1983) explains that:
One of the many remarkable things about Krishnamurti is the equal ease with which he talks to a Swami or a Western scientist, an industrial millionaire or a Prime Minister. He has discoursed on meditation with the Dalai Lama and would have no apprehension in conversing with any of the world’s great philosophers, yet he is an undoubtedly a shy, diffident man who shuns ordinary conversations, has read very little and who has no intellectual pretensions. (p. 192)

Academic Research on Krishnamurti’s Philosophy

Education constitutes the central theme in Krishnamurti’s philosophy. Krishnamurti’s educational philosophies are found in the following books (Krishnamurti, 1953, 1963, 1970a, 1974, 1975, 1981, 1985, 2002a, and 2006). Being critical of the education system, Krishnamurti (1953) asserts that, “instead of awakening the integrated intelligence of the individual, education is encouraging him to conform to a pattern and so is hindering his comprehension of himself as a total process” (p. 11). Krishnamurti feels that to bring about the right education, life must be understood as a whole and this tenet is surely consistent with the philosophy and aim of holistic education.

A search in the University of Toronto’s Proquest Dissertation & Theses database shows 1501, 722 and 65 dissertations/theses completed at the doctorate level studied Rudolf Steiner, Maria Montessori and Jiddu Krishnamurti respectively. These dissertations are either based on their educational philosophy (Montessori, Steiner & Krishnamurti) individually or grouped with other scholars. An example of one of the dissertations on Krishnamurti’s philosophy with another scholar was a comparison between the philosophy of Krishnamurti and that of R.S. Peters (Kobbekaduwa, 1990). Although Krishnamurti, Montessori and the Waldorf schools are some of the alternative educational schools, which started about the same era, the academic research conducted on Krishnamurti’s philosophy and the schools he founded are far too few as compared to the research conducted on the philosophy and schools of Montessori and Steiner.

Further analysis on the lack of research on Krishnamurti’s philosophy will be seen from the perspective of Raymond Martin, a professor at the Union College in the Department of Philosophy, who was the first analytic philosopher to write on Krishnamurti’s philosophy in the
Martin gave some interesting insights into why Krishnamurti’s philosophy was not taken seriously or widely researched and asks: “Will Krishnamurti ever become accepted at Western Universities?” (Martin, 1998, p. 31). Martin felt that since academics are generally theorists, they are interested in proposing and evaluating theories, but Krishnamurti was adamant in declaring that what he had to say was not a contribution towards a theory but rather an invitation to meditation.

Martin (1998) suggests that theory and meditation do not mix, hence the reluctance to accept Krishnamurti’s philosophy in academia. Martin also clarifies that Krishnamurti’s invitation to meditation leads towards the search for truth and shares that:

From an academic point of view, when someone claims verbally to be revealing the truth, he or she is proposing a theory. So, whatever Krishnamurti’s intentions, it would seem that he and the academics are both partly in the same ‘business’ of proposing theories. (p. 31)

Martin also points out that the academics use theories to evaluate truth and since Krishnamurti did not provide any link from his insights to be studied academically, this could be the main reason why his insights have not been largely accepted in academia. Martin (1998) adds that:

Academics are interested in considering theories only for the purpose of evaluating them, and at the university the only sort of evaluation of theories that counts is based not on meditation but on argument and public evidence. Krishnamurti did not provide these to back up what he had to say. (p. 32)

Martin (1998) suggests a way that would enable Krishnamurti’s work to be accepted at higher learning institutions:

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8 The Wadsworth Philosophers Series details the background and thinking of over 100 of the greatest intellects throughout the history of civilization. Martin credited Daniel Kolak (general editor of this series) for deciding to include a book on Krishnamurti’s philosophy in the Wadsworth Philosophers Series and added that “He (Kolak) knows, better than most, that although Krishnamurti is renowned outside the academy, he is not well known among academic philosophers” (Martin, 2003)
First, someone has to argue for views that Krishnamurti held. Second, these arguments have to be taken seriously by other academics. Finally, their interest in these views has to lead academics back to a study of Krishnamurti’s writings. In other words, for Krishnamurti to be accepted at the university, his writings have to be seen as a rich source of insights that can be expressed as theories and then argued for in the standard way (p. 32)

I will present two examples of why Krishnamurti’s body of knowledge was not used for further research. The first example pertains to a doctoral student’s decision to not include Krishnamurti’s school as a choice of holistic schools to be studied and the second example refers to the decision made by two researchers not to include Krishnamurti’s schools in a study that compiled various types of alternative education systems around the world.

Rudge (2008) claims that her reason for not choosing Krishnamurti’s school as a representation of a holistic school in her dissertation was due to:

The fact that Krishnamurti Schools have a ‘methodless’ approach to education, makes it very difficult to determine, without empirical investigation, whether the other principles of holistic education are present or not in their pedagogy. This fact alone added to the impossibility of analyzing a pedagogy that varies from school to school, eliminated Krishnamurti Schools from the selection of [holistic] school movement. (p. 45)

I would disagree with Rudge’s notion that it’s impossible to analyze the pedagogy of Krishnamurti that varies from school to school and this impossibility was due to the nature of her research – a theoretically based research study in which survey questions were sent to the different schools to learn and map their respective pedagogy. If Rudge had conducted a field empirical research and collected data from different Krishnamurti schools, then perhaps the pedagogical approach to any Krishnamurti school would not be a mystery. Nevertheless, Martin’s explanation seems reasonable in understanding Rudge’s decision of not including Krishnamurti’s schools in her research.

Woods and Woods (2009) compiled the philosophies, approaches and visions of many alternative types of education systems around the world. They included examples from the non-faith alternatives concerned with democratic education: K20 model (developed in Oklahoma, Democratic schools in Latin America, and Summerhil School); faith-based schooling (Quaker
Schools, Buddhist & Islamic schools); intercultural education (Palestine-Jewish Schools); education for indigenous cultures (Maori in New Zealand and First Nations in Canada); Montessori and Waldorf education. I was curious as to why Krishnamurti’s philosophy, approach and visions were not included in their book. In response to a personal e-mail inquiry, Dr. Woods shared that:

When we were choosing the educational alternatives for our book we were not aware of any research into Krishnamurti schools. We were aiming for contributions to the book, which were research-based. Research of the sort that you are doing will contribute to raising the profile of research into Krishnamurti schools. (Dr. Glenys J Woods, personal communication, September 13, 2010)

The above-mentioned comments from Woods and Rudge, coupled with the comments and recommendations from Martin suggest that perhaps Krishnamurti’s philosophy needs to be further studied and researched empirically, in order for it to be accepted into the discourse on curriculum and pedagogy in higher education. One of the goals of this current empirical research on Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy is to intensify the intention of including Krishnamurti’s philosophy to be accepted into the higher educational and pedagogical discourse.

This chapter focused on introducing this research and placing Krishnamurti’s school among the alternative educational schools systems around the world. This chapter also analyzed why Krishnamurti’s philosophy has not been generally accepted in academia and provided some examples as to why his philosophy has not been widely researched like those of Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner, the founders of the Montessori and Waldorf schools respectively. The next chapter reviews the literature which explores the essence of spirituality and wholeness relevant to teachers.
Chapter 2
Literature Review

Spirituality and Wholeness in Education

This chapter will serve as the foundation of the literature review for this thesis. It begins with the basic understanding of what is meant by spirituality and wholeness. While the concept of spirituality is often analyzed from the point of view of religious faith, that includes an inclusive and exclusive orientation, the concept of wholeness is explained through the lens of Parker Palmer’s (2004) concept of *Hidden Wholeness*, Deepak Chopra’s (2010) concept of the *Shadow’s Effect* and Krishnamurti’s concept of *Awareness*. Krishnamurti’s approach towards wholeness will be analyzed from his notion of the conditioned mind or rather, the awareness surrounding the conditioned mind through such concepts as: The Conditioned Mind; The Negative Approach in Solving a Psychological Conditioning; the Nature of Thinking; the Nature of Attention and Concentration; Choiceless Awareness; and the Observer is the Observed.

Since this thesis is about Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy and its relation to teachers’ wholeness, it was important to discuss his educational aim or goals. Krishnamurti’s educational aim revolved around the concept of his views on the ‘Right Kind of Education’ needed to explore the possibility of creating whole human beings. Krishnamurti’s educational aims are also explained through his perception on Thought, Knowledge and Intelligence, Religious Mind and the Scientific Mind as well as Meditation and Education. An application of Krishnamurti’s awareness using the Three Stages of Awareness is analyzed using The Flower Model. 9

Finally, six different concepts have been used to discuss more deeply, the connection between teachers and wholeness. These six concepts are: Teachers’ Thinking, Teachers’ Lives, Teachers’ Inner Lives, Teachers’ Vocation/Calling, Teachers’ Contemplative Practices/Approaches and Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design. The research questions

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9 The design of the Flower Model is based on the three stages of awareness proposed by Krishnamurti that could help teachers to observe and examine their psychological conditioning and eventually transcending it. This model is presented in this chapter under the section *An Application of Krishnamurti’s Awareness Using the Concept of the Three Stages of Awareness.*
were intrinsically tied to these six concepts that resulted in a close connection to the interview questions as well as the data analysis and conclusion.

**Spirituality**

The contributions to the literature of holistic education include contemporary holistic educators (J.P. Miller, 1993, 1994, 2000, 2006, 2007; Flake, 1993; R. Miller, 1992, 2000; Wright, 2000; Moffet, 1994; Palmer, 2000, 1998; Kessler, 2000a; Glazer, 1999; Mayes, 2005a, 2005b; Forbes, 2003; Lin, 2006; Crowell et al., 1998; Lantieri, 2001; Fox, 2002; Marshak, 1997), pioneers of holistic education (Rousseau, 1762; Froebel, 1887; Emerson, 1996; Thoreau, 1950; Alcott, 1938; Parker, 1969; Neil, 1960; Jung, 1969). Also included are other pioneers of holistic education who developed holistic schools based on their respective philosophy that resemble and point in the direction of spirituality like Maria Montessori, Rudolf Steiner and Jiddu Krishnamurti.

The word spirituality originated from merging the Latin word for breath, ‘spiritus’ with ‘enthousiasmos’, the Greek word for enthusiasm that means ‘the God within’. Thus, the resulting word, spirituality, as explained in Lindholm and Astin (2006), essentially means “capturing the dynamic process of divine inspiration or the breath of God within” (p. 64).

Although spirituality has often been viewed within the context of religious faith or religion, at present there are an increasing number of people whose understanding of spirituality is either unclear or not at all associated with an established religious faith (Fuller, 2001). It means that people are becoming increasingly comfortable with spirituality without associating it with a religious faith. In my opinion, this has brought about an interfaith dialogue, which is an excellent tool for a group of people who feel the need to embrace religious pluralism. Rambachan (2000) explains that in embracing religious pluralism “it requires one to seek out, know, and build relationships with the neighbor of another faith” (p.173). Eck (1993) claims that, “religious pluralism requires active positive engagement with the claims of religion and the facts of religious diversity and an active effort to understand difference and commonality through dialogue” (p.192). With regards to the differences and similarities that exist among major faiths/religions, J.P. Miller (2007) asserts that there seem to be more similarities than differences among the faiths and that “these commonalities have formed the core of the perennial philosophy” (p. 34).
Aldous Huxley’s *The Perennial Philosophy* (1970) provides the philosophic context of the holistic curriculum (J.P. Miller, 2007). The perennial philosophy is an understanding that all life is connected in a universe that is dependent upon one another. J.P. Miller (2007) elaborates further by sharing the following elements of the perennial philosophy:

1. There is an interconnectedness of reality and a mysterious unity (e.g. Huxley’s divine reality) in the universe.
2. There is an intimate connection between the individual’s inner self, or soul, and this mysterious unity.
3. Knowledge of this mysterious unity can be developed through various contemplative practices.
4. Values are derived from seeing and realizing the interconnectedness of reality.
5. This realization can lead to social activity designed to counter injustice and human suffering (pp. 17-18).

Huxley (1970) found that a core wisdom appears to be the underlying principles of various spiritual traditions and teachings, and referred to this core wisdom as the perennial philosophy. The perennial philosophy presents a suitable philosophical context for the holistic curriculum, since, as J.P. Miller (2007) suggests, “it is possible to identify the perennial philosophy or at least aspects of the philosophy, within the mystical thread of most religions and spiritual psychologies” (p. 16). Given that the perennial philosophy has its root in the Upanishads (Hindu Scripture), Tao te Ching, Buddhism, Hebrew, Gospel, Sufism, Christian mystics of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (Huxley, 1970), its core values can be embedded in the holistic curriculum without fear of offending students from different religious backgrounds.

The perennial philosophy, which forms the philosophic context of the holistic curriculum (J.P. Miller, 2007) provides an environment where students from different religious backgrounds can embrace its idea without the fear of being offended. This is consistent with the embrace of religious pluralism.

In my opinion, spirituality always points to our innermost entity called the Self\(^{10}\). The struggle in matters pertaining to spirituality is related to the fragmented *self*\(^{11}\), the part of us that

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\(^{10}\) This *Self* (capital “S”) is also referred to as the *Atman* (*or Atma*) in Hinduism and the *Self* is whole and complete all the time (Godman, 1992).

\(^{11}\)
is conditioned by past experiences. This conditioning includes our past fear, anger, loneliness, jealousy, sorrow, pleasure, etc. An attempt to live spiritually or to invite spirituality into our life means that we are leaning towards a happy and harmonious way of living. But every thought is divided into two; as such we are often in conflict, and when in such a fragmented state, we struggle with our spirituality. Our spirituality is mirrored in the values and ideals that are close to our heart, our sense of purpose in life, and a deep abiding feeling with the connectedness between all living beings. Spirituality also includes the elements of our experience which are not necessarily easy to define or discuss, such as our calling or vocation, our inspiration, creativity and the mysterious and mystical aspects of sacred encounters every day. Since spirituality can be approached from different traditional religious beliefs, an unbiased approach in the engagement of religious pluralism or interfaith dialogue will ensure a healthy embrace of spirituality. The deeper one understands one’s spirituality, the more fragmentation drops away and wholeness generally develops.

Wright (2000) explains that there are inclusive and exclusive orientations or approaches towards spirituality. An inclusive approach seeks to be open and accommodating towards all spiritual traditions. The exclusive approaches only include religious models as a basis for spiritual education such as Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu and other religious-based spirituality. Wright (2000) writes that both inclusive and exclusive models have their limitations and claims that inclusive models of spirituality can be problematic because they incorporate models of education that include certain spiritual traditions and exclude others. Hull (1992) asserts that such truth claims— that their own religion’s truth is greater than that of others and that certain religious traditions undermine the universal nature of religion and the possibility of interfaith dialogue.

When one considers these limitations in both inclusive and exclusive models, there seems to be a gap in the understanding of spirituality and this certainly leaves a gap in schools’ attention to the development of the whole person. J.P. Miller (2000) captures this notion well and

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11 This self (small “s”)is also referred to as the Jiva in Hinduism and the Jiva is the conditioned self or that aspect of a human being that carries the knowledge of our past (or conditioning) (Godman, 1992)
mentions that “spiritual experience is not limited to religious experience but can occur outside a religious context, and, it can also occur within religion” (p. 142). J.P. Miller (2007) advocates the study of world religions and his discussion of five individuals from a variety of traditions (Buddha, Teresa of Avila, Emerson, Gandhi and Merton) and their contemplative practices. (J.P. Miller, 1994) refers to a deeper understanding of spirituality that embraces religious pluralism. Nord (1995) strongly asserts the need to make the study of religion compulsory at the secondary schools and undergraduate levels and states that religious integration is needed where both religious and secular views of the world must be taught together.

The holistic education field recognizes that the definitions of spiritual and spirituality can be secular, non-secular (Moffet, 1994) or open to both. Moffet (1994) cautions that religion may have negative consequences on children’s spiritual development, may limit their openness to the world and dampen the integrative perspectives that highlight the essence and intentions of holistic education. Moffet’s claim that religion may have negative consequences on children’s development can be addressed by organizing inter-faith dialogues among teachers in schools that have exclusive orientation. In an inclusive orientated school, the inter-faith dialogue can be practiced where communities with different religious backgrounds can share each other’s religious perspectives while maintaining mutual respect. Glazer (1999) discusses ways to integrate spiritual development and learning that are not grounded in church, state, religion or politics. Glazer feels that spirituality is about deep connections with our own experiences, perceptions, bodies, thoughts, minds, emotions and hearts.

Dwayne E. Huebner, one of the most important curriculum theorists (Pinar et al., 1995) feels that spirit is about lived reality, experience and the possibility of experiencing spirituality in this life. Huebner (1999) feels that to have spirit is to be in touch with the forces and energies in life. Huebner (1993), who points to the center of understanding curriculum as theological text, reminds us that “the need is not to see moral and spiritual values as something outside the normal curriculum and social activity, but to probe deeper into the educational landscape to reveal how the spiritual and moral is being denied in everything” (as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 862). Patrick Slattery, another curriculum theorist, uses the word ‘theology’ to distinguish postmodern curriculum development related to morality and spirituality from the political and denominational debates about religion in American school and society (Slattery, 1995). Slattery (1989) states that, “an awareness of and sensitivity toward many environment – physical,
psychological, social and spiritual – are integral parts of postmodern proposals which inform…curriculum” (as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 847).

One cannot deny that the understanding of spirituality and its application within an academic framework can take multiple forms, since the matters of the spirit are rather subjective in nature (Speck, 2005; Vogel, 2000). With the many differences of opinions within holistic education, we can reasonably question the approach taken by teachers in a classroom. A primary difficulty lies in how teachers are prepared to meet the challenges in bringing such spiritual consciousness into the classroom. Little empirical research has been conducted on how educators’ awareness of their inner lives and their spirituality affects their pedagogy. John P. Miller, Parker J. Palmer, Rachael Kessler, Linda Lantieri and Matthew Fox present conceptual frameworks and research that address the notion of soul and teachers’ inner lives. These will be discussed later in this Chapter.

**Wholeness**

The word wholeness implies a state where one has a balanced approach towards life. One of the synonyms of the word “healthy” in the Webster’s Dictionary is “wholesome”. The word healthy is also a synonym of the word “hale”, which means being whole or free from disease. The word “holy” also has the same root as whole. Thus, etymologically speaking, wholeness seems to be the primary goal of life since it means keeping our health in good condition, free from disease; and also, being in this state constitutes full development of the mind, body and spirit. Bohm (1976) adds that the early notion of wholeness “indicates that man has sensed always that wholeness or integrity is an absolute necessity to make life worth living” (p. 3).

*Nurturing Our Wholeness* published in 2002 is an excellent text that discusses the traditions, teachers and practices of attending to our wholeness. J.P. Miller and Nakagawa (2002) discuss the process of nurturing wholeness as one of the aims of education and affirm that, “the aim of education should include the development of the whole person: intellect, emotions, body and spirit” (p. vi). The authors also looked at the lack in schools today and warn that “schools now are focusing on a few skills that can be tested…[and] we treat our students like products

\[12\] Referring to the human race.
whose value seems to be their grades and test scores” (p. vi). J.P. Miller and Nakagawa (2002) also present great hope of evolving from this narrow vision of testing, by synthesizing the Eastern and Western visions or teachings of wholeness and spirituality.

The concept of wholeness will be traced from the view of Parker Palmer’s Hidden Wholeness, Deepak Chopra’s Shadow Effect and Krishnamurti’s Awareness. Each of these perspectives on wholeness will be examined in the following sections.

**Parker Palmer’s Hidden Wholeness**

Parker Palmer’s contribution towards holistic education and teachers’ inner lives is enormous. Palmer’s notion of *Hidden Wholeness* is a realization born from observing the deepest shadows or darkness of one’s life. Palmer (2004) shares that “wholeness does not mean perfection: it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life [and it] gives me hope that human wholeness – mine, yours, ours – need not be a utopian dream, if we can use devastation as a seedbed for a new life” (p. 5). This resembles Krishnamurti’s notion that to allow thoughts (or the human conditioning that contains our past sorrow, hurt, anger, etc.) to flower (see Chapter 3), and die will result in a state of awareness where there will be clarity in every perception. Krishnamurti’s process of allowing thoughts to flower (see the Flower Model) without any condemnation or acceptance – resembles Palmer’s process of embracing brokenness. In both instances, our conditioning or brokenness is observed without acceptance or condemnation.

The *brokenness* that Palmer refers to has connection with one’s divided life that is linked to the failure of recognizing human wholeness or completeness. Palmer (2004) shares some examples of a divided life:

1. We refuse to invest ourselves in our work, diminishing its quality and distancing ourselves from those it is meant to serve
2. We make our living at jobs that violate our basic values, even when survival does not absolutely demand it
3. We remain in settings or relationships that steadily kill off our spirits
4. We harbor secrets to achieve personal gain at the expense of other people
5. We hide our beliefs from those who disagree with us to avoid conflict, challenge, and change
6. We conceal our true identities for fear of being criticized, shunned, or attacked (p. 6).
As we looked at the examples of a divided life, we cannot avoid looking at the consequences and damage it does to us. The soul, according to Palmer (2004) always calls us to heal our wounds and when we do not pay attention to this call:

We find ourselves trying to numb our pain with an anesthetic of choice, be it substance abuse, overwork, consumerism, or mindless media noise. Such anesthetics are easy to come by in a society that wants to keep us divided and unaware of our pain – for the divided life that is pathological for individuals can serve social systems well, especially when it comes to those functions that are morally dubious. (p. 20)

Although it may seem impossible for us to come out of this brokenness, especially when society at large wants to continuously keep us in ignorance, Palmer assures us that although the society does not allow us to observe wholeness, we are whole at birth. Palmer (2004) explains that we are born whole but due to the brokenness of society, the soul is beaten up through racism, sexism, economic injustice, jealousy, resentment, self-doubt and fear. Palmer declares that the strongest evidence for the soul or the true self comes from living life as if we did not have a soul, and shares that it was through a clinical depression that he learnt of the presence of the true self. Palmer asserts that depression may originate from genetic or brain chemistry imbalance or from denying the presence of the true self, and declares that his own depression originates from the latter (Palmer, 2004, p. 36).

The call towards wholeness exists all the time through our soul’s call to stop and turn back to look, in order to put a stop to the divided life. A powerful example can be seen through the action of Rosa Parks, an African American woman who did not want to live divided anymore and refused to give up her seat for a white man. She was later arrested for her refusal to give up her seat and her decision to ‘live divided no more’ resulted in many protests that eventually lead to the formation of the Civil Rights Act in the United States of America in 1964. Palmer often attributes this refusal to ‘live divided no more’ with Rosa Parks’s decision to refuse to give up her seat on December 1st 1955.13

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13 See Williams & Greenhaw (2006) to get full story on this incident.
In Parks and Haskins (1992), Parks recaptures the reason for her refusal to give up her seat:

People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in. (p.116)

Palmer formed the notion of ‘circle of trust’, a community that knows how to invite a soul, in order for the inner voice to be heard. This ‘circle of trust’ also known as the ‘clearness committee’, was invented by the early Quakers and Palmer (2004) explains the reason behind the formation of a clearness committee:

As a church that chose to do without benefit of ordained clergy, Quakers needed a structure to help members deal with problems that people in other denominations would simply take to their pastors or priests [and] the structure [assumes that] our guidance comes not from external authority but from the inner teacher, and we need community to help us clarify and amplify the inner teacher’s voice. (p. 134)

The only intention of the circle of trust is to help the person facing an issue to find his/her inner teacher. In essence, the clearness committee simply acts as a mirror in which the focus person\textsuperscript{14} can see himself/herself clearly. The word ‘clearly’ is used to describe that the questions asked by the committee to the focus person acts as a catalyst by which the focus person could see the truth of his/her problem as the truth; to see his/her false perception of the problem as false; and to see the truth in his/her problem that they deemed to be false before. In short, the committee helps the focus person to see the problem as it is.

\textsuperscript{14} The focus person in this context refers to the person who is going through some difficulties in his/her life and seeks help from the circle of trust to get clarity. The focus person will share his/her problem with the clearness committee and the clearness committee will only ask questions in order to better understand the problem and not in any way to judge or pass any remarks. See Palmer (2004, pp.129-149) for full details of the mechanics or working details of the clearness committee.
Deepak Chopra’s Shadow Effect

Deepak Chopra’s *Shadow Effect* (2010) is an important text in understanding the concept of wholeness, through the understanding of one’s shadow effect or conditioning. The term shadow is used in Psychology and as Zweig and Wolf (1997) explain, “Carl Jung, who coined the term shadow, posed it as a moral problem…[and] suggested that we need a reorientation or fundamental change of attitude, a metanoia\(^{15}\) to look it squarely in the eyes” (pp. 7-8). In connecting the shadow to Jung’s notion of the collective unconscious, Chopra (2010) clarifies that:

The unconscious isn’t about me. It’s about us. When a person has unconscious impulses and drives, they come from the entire history of humankind. Each of us, according to Jung, is linked to a ‘collective unconscious,’ as he called it…[and] this shared unconscious is also where the shadow lives. (p. 19)

Chopra, a medical doctor by profession is the author of 63 books (11 of them were co-authored with another writer). What makes Chopra a prolific writer is his understanding of western medicinal practice coupled with eastern non-dual philosophy. Chopra’s notion of wholeness will be discussed from two of his recent books: *The Shadow Effect: Illuminating Hidden Power of Your True Self* (co-authored with Debbie Ford and Marianne Williamson) and *Reinventing the Body, Resurrecting the Soul: How to Create a New You*.

In *Reinventing the Body, Resurrecting the Soul*, Chopra (2009) reveals the ten steps towards wholeness as: Nourishing one’s light body; turning entropy into evolution; committing ourselves to deeper awareness; being generous in spirit; focusing on relationship instead of consumption; relating to our body consciously; embracing every day as a new world; feeling the world rather than trying to understand it and seeking after our own mystery. Chopra (2009) reveals that wholeness is the result of connecting body, mind and soul and that the secret in experiencing wholeness is that “it must be seized at this moment, because eternity dawns only in a moment like this one” (p. 237).

\(^{15}\) Refers to a healing process.
The word shadow as mentioned in *The Shadow Effect* is what Krishnamurti called the conditioned mind\(^\text{16}\). The shadow can also be explained by the conflict in every thought. It’s the conflict of who we are versus who we want to become. It’s the dualistic nature of the human experience, the good and the bad. This dualistic nature is naturally a psychological conditioning. Let us take the following scenario as an example of our dualistic nature: When we see a rock or small stone on the road, and let’s assume that the action of removing the rock from the road might help eliminate a potential accident later, where the rock may hit a pedestrian when a car runs over it. Why is it that some of us have to offer detailed justification or think hard to remove the rock from the road while others may not even have the awareness at all to remove the rock? This very act of pausing to decide whether or not to remove the rock is proof of the existence of shadow in us. This phenomenon cannot be explained easily, neither can it be solved analytically, as it is a total mystery. Chopra (2010) explains that the shadow cannot be gotten rid of and that “there are many aspects of life in which a can-do, let’s-fix-it attitude works. Unfortunately, the shadow isn’t one of them. The reason that the shadow hasn’t been fixed for thousands of years – the whole time that human beings have been conscious of their dark side – is totally mysterious” (p. 9).

Our shadow or the negative traits have a deep control over our day-to-day activities and Chopra suggests that we need to dwell deeper to observe it. This notion of attending to our shadow or our psychological conditioning like our fear, anger, anxiety, loneliness, violence, etc., is the approach that Krishnamurti and Ramana Maharshi\(^\text{17}\) suggest, in order to face it without escaping. Krishnamurti’s notion of *inquiring into the known* (Krishnamurti, 1969, 1996) and Ramana Maharshi’s notion of inquiring into *Who Am I?* (Godman, 1992) utilize a negative approach in solving issues with our shadow. This negative approach to observing psychological

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\(^{16}\) Debbie Ford, one of the co-author of *The Shadow Effect* mentioned that “our shadow is made up of the thoughts, emotions, and impulses that we find too painful, embarrassing, or distasteful to accept” (Chopra et al., 2010). Krishnamurti’s notion of the conditioned mind also refers to thoughts, emotions and impulses.

\(^{17}\) Ramana Maharshi was a spiritual teacher from the Hindu tradition whose view on the non-dual philosophy or Advaita Vedanta is revered by many spiritual seekers today. Ramana Maharshi’s notion of inquiring into *Who Am I* is important in the context of approaching one’s shadow because the I in the phrase *Who Am I* refer to the aspect of the mind that’s conditioned or the shadow. Therefore, Ramana Maharshi’s contribution towards the understanding of the shadow deserves to be mentioned.
conditioning is explained later in this chapter. Chopra (2010) gives some specific instructions on how to dwell deeper in the shadow in order to confront it and suggests that:

A much deeper analysis of the shadow is required. If you approach the darkness superficially, it will always persist, because the shadow isn’t as simple an enemy as sickness, a demon, or a cosmic devil. It’s an aspect of reality so basic to creation that only complete understanding can successfully confront it. (p.13)

The fragmentation of human beings happen when the self is split up and labeled as wrong, shameful or guilty and it at this moment that Chopra claims that the shadow gains power or momentum. Chopra (2010) further clarifies this notion by adding that, “the shadow loses its power when consciousness stops being divided” (p.17).

Krishnamurti’s notion of the first and last freedom from his book of the same title indicates that the freedom from one’s shadow or conditioning is not at the end of the path but rather at the beginning. Chopra (2010) echoes this notion when he states that:

Krishnamurti’s doctrine of the first and last freedom, as he dubbed it, was his way of saying that wholeness – the state of complete freedom – isn’t about choosing this or that. It isn’t about being good instead of bad, pure instead of impure. Wholeness has no division. It is everything. Therefore, it must be the beginning and the end at the same time. (p. 56)

Chopra (2010) suggests that the glory of human existence lies in our possibility of uniting with cosmic intelligence, where each of us becomes a conscious part of the whole. But how do we become a conscious part of the whole? Chopra suggests five ways of observing wholeness:

1. Wholeness Wants to Heal You
2. Wholeness is Always a Gain, Never a Loss
3. Wholeness is Close, Not Far Away
4. Wholeness is Beyond the Shadow
5. Wholeness Resolves All Conflicts:
   a) The conflict between being safe and being unsafe
   b) The conflict between love and fear
   c) The conflict between desire and necessity
d) The conflict between acceptance and rejection

e) The conflict between the One and the many

1. **Wholeness Wants to Heal You**

After exposing what the shadow is, Chopra as a physician explains that wholeness and healing are intimately connected and shared that the body does the following to restore wholeness:

   It seeks balance; Every cell communicates with each other; No part is more important than the whole; Rest and activity are harmonized; In the midst of constant activity, there is a stable foundation (known as homeostasis); Every cell adapts to change in the environment; Stress is countered and brought under control (disease and discomfort are basically the result of stress). (Chopra, 2010, p. 57)

   The body is keeping itself whole with the heart, brain, and liver cells performing different functions but always gearing towards the common goal that “wholeness is more important than any single activity” (p. 57).

2. **Wholeness is Always a Gain, Never a Loss**

In this aspect, Chopra suggests that without the contrast between creative forces opposing the decaying process, the universe would not exist. He explains further that if only the creative forces existed in the universe, the “cosmos would rapidly run out of matter and energy to use for new forms, since the old ones would never wear out or become obsolete” (2010, p. 58). Chopra adds that in personal terms, if we only evolved without dissolving the old person in the past:

   We would be perpetual infant, child, adolescent, and adult at the same time. Your body would have countless layers of skin because old, dead cells weren’t sloughed off; your stomach lining would swell grotesquely without the work of digestive enzymes that constantly devour it so that it can be replaced every month. (Chopra, 2010, pp. 58-59)

Chopra (2010) further suggests that this opposition between the creative and decay or entropy can be turned into a creative tension. In simple terms, he explains that “the good guys have to keep winning, but the bad guys better not lose altogether, because that would be the end
of the story...[and that] the universe would become like a museum, fossilized and mummified forever” (p. 60). Finally, Chopra explains that ideally “the forces of truth, goodness, beauty and harmony stay a step ahead of the dark forces” (2010, p. 60) and concludes as follows:

We can’t deny the fact that life-forms are constantly evolving, moving, moving to higher levels of abstraction, creativity, imagination, insight, and inspiration. Something is maintaining the balance, but tipping it slightly in favor of evolution. In many ways, spirituality does no more than imitate nature. If you can help tip the balance toward evolution rather than entropy and decay, you are a true spiritual warrior. (p. 60)

3. **Wholeness is Close, Not Far Away**

In this context of wholeness being close and not far away, Chopra almost equates God with wholeness and suggests that ordinary people believe that God may be far away and may have forgotten us but religious people believe that God is always close at every moment. Both of these views represent duality, since far is the opposite of near.

Without using the term near or far, Chopra (2010) eloquently describes that the psychological conditioning is not bound by a finite distance and suggests that:

There is no distance between you and a memory, you and your next thought. From the perspective of wholeness, since everything is being coordinated at once, distance isn’t relevant... [and] your potential for change isn’t far away... [and] thus the shadow, which makes you see a limited, fearful world full of threat and dark possibilities, is masking many unseen possibilities that could spring into your awareness if you expanded beyond the shadow. (p. 62)

Chopra (2010) finally reveals the different state of mind that may assure us that wholeness is indeed very close and not far away:

You are at peace; You cannot be shaken from your center; You have self-knowledge; You empathize without judgment; You see yourself as part of the whole; You are not in the world. The World is in you; Your actions spontaneously benefit you; Your desires
manifest easily, without friction or struggle; You can perform intense action with
detachment; You are not personally invested in any outcome; You know how to
surrender; The reality of God is visible everywhere; The best possible time is the present.
(p. 63)

4. **Wholeness Is Beyond the Shadow**

We know that human beings have encountered enormous challenges, suffering and
tragedy while encountering or facing the shadow. Chopra suggests that the shadow cannot be
fought and the more we fight it, the more the shadow gains power. Chopra (2010) shares the
following struggle by giving examples of day-to-day situations where the notion of transcending
the problem that allows the shadow to gain power has been rejected:

You have a chronic pain. Instead of going to the doctor, you take more painkillers; you
hear that someone dislikes you; you find reasons to dislike that person; your child is
fighting with another child at school. You are certain that your child is in the right; you
hear that a couple is getting a divorce. You choose sides; an evangelist comes to your
door preaching a new religion. You slam the door in her face, because your God is the
right one. (p. 64)

Chopra (2010) shares a powerful message by stating that a problem cannot be solved at
its own plane, but can only be solved when we transcend the problem; he also declares that “the
level of the problem is never the level of the solution... [and] the process of escaping the fog of
illusion begins when you realize that no one is benefiting except the shadow” (p. 64). When we
can see this clearly, then perhaps transcending the problem may be much simpler.

5. **Wholeness Resolves All Conflicts**

The fragmented mind is often in conflict and we can deduce that conflict is the nature of
duality and Chopra (2010) affirms that, “resolving conflicts is the nature of wholeness” (p. 65),
shares the following polarities of conflict within one’s soul: a) The conflict between being safe
and being unsafe; b) The conflict between love and fear; c) The conflict between desire and
necessity; d) The conflict between acceptance and rejection; and d) The conflict between the One
and the many.
The conflict between being safe and being unsafe can be explained from the axiom of the great sages\(^\text{18}\) who posit that the dualistic state of mind desires conflict and is unsafe whereas wholeness is safe. Chopra (2010) shares his views on the Freudian and Jungian psychology on the notion of children feeling safe; he states that the “Freudian psychology holds that parenting in the first three years determines how safe a child feels growing up... [whereas] the Jungian psychology holds that feeling unsafe must be rooted in the collective psyche and specifically in the shadow, with its shared fund of fear and anxiety” (p. 67).

Chopra suggests that we feel safe in the very discovery that we have a core self that exists at the source, where there is no division or conflict or fragmentation. That’s why external issues like anxiety, nervousness, and memory-related past trauma cannot threaten the inner world or the core self. Chopra’s solution to the conflict between safe and unsafe is to stay established in our true self.

The conflict between love and fear resides in the knowledge that our existence is created at random in a chaotic world and this notion is certainly responded to with fear (Chopra, 2010). The ancient sages of India declared that the blissful state is not a state to be attained or let go but something that is built in our consciousness in the form of joy and ecstasy. Chopra (2010) shares that this blissful state has many qualities such as being dynamic (it moves on changes); evolutionary (it grows); pervasive (it wants to enter everything); desirous (it seeks fulfillment); inspiring (it increases by creating new forms to inhabit); unifying (it shatters boundaries of separation). Chopra’s solution to the conflict between love and fear is to align with love as a force within.

The conflict between desire and necessity is rooted in the state of mind where there is a constant battle between the demands of one’s ego and the true self. Chopra (2010) suggest a state called choiceless awareness where the notion of choice collapses and we give up taking sides.

\(^{18}\) Jiddu Krishnamurti, Ramana Maharshi and Nisargadatta Maharaj are example of three sages who emphasize on the conflicted mind or the mind that experiences duality or under the influence of the shadow. See their work in Krishnamurti (1973), Godman (1992) and Nisargadatta (1984). David Godman was inspired by Ramana Maharshi and from an e-mail communication with him, I understand that he is currently living in Tiruvannamalai, a small town in South India where Ramana Maharshi resided and established his ashram called Ramana Ashram.
Krishnamurti was the first person to have used the term *choiceless awareness* which he explained as follows:

Choiceless awareness is to be aware both externally and inwardly, without any choice...Just be aware of the trees, the mountains, nature – just be aware. Not choose, saying, “I like this”, “I don’t like that”, or “I want this”, “I don’t want that”...to be choicelessly aware implies [a state where] there is no decision, no will, no choice. (Krishnamurti 1979, pp. 175-176)

A deeper understanding of this notion of *choiceless awareness* reveals that it is not about giving up anything or taking sides, but rather a state of mind where the ego, the conditioned mind or the shadow is transcended, not by the act of will but by inquiring and allowing them to flower. (See Chapter 5 for an explanation of this process of allowing thoughts to flower). Chopra’s solution to the conflict between desire and necessity is to be in the state of *choiceless awareness*.

*The conflict between acceptance and rejection* is rooted in the idealized self-image. An idealized self-image is a portrayal image where individuals “develop an ideal image and then try to live up to this image and convince the world that it’s who they are...[and] an idealized self-image can be so convincing that you even convince yourself” (Chopra, 2010, p. 73). This false image helps individuals to temporarily suspend the fear of being rejected. But Chopra shares that an idealized self-image is not a feasible solution and suggests that “only true self-acceptance is, and when that happens, there is nothing for others to reject” (p.74).

True self-acceptance is a state of awareness when one realizes the state of self-denial can be a form of blindness or ignorance and the idealized self-image is a pure seduction with all one’s past images. Chopra (2010) adds that the solution “is to go past all images... [and that] there is no need to defend who you really are... [because] your true self is acceptable not because you are so good, but because you are complete” (p.75). Chopra’s solution to the conflict between acceptance and rejection is to be in a state of *unbounded awareness*. There are some subtle difference between choiceless awareness and unbounded awareness. If *choiceless awareness* deals with one’s ego where the battle between giving up and taking sides is constantly going on, *unbounded awareness* deals with relationship with others where the battle between being accepted and rejected is going on all the time; hence the need for unbounded awareness. The
state of unbounded awareness sees no boundaries between being accepted or rejected by others because as we are on the journey towards wholeness, we see ourselves having compassion for our short-comings or faults that leads towards complete self-acceptance (Chopra, 2010).

The conflict between the One Versus the Many truly deals with the dominance of the ego and the total destruction of the ego through surrender. Chopra suggests that the ego has been responsible for creating a world of infinite diversity and when the notion of wholeness is experienced by the mind (where one experiences unity), the ego feels threatened and mistakes surrender for death.

Chopra (2010) suggest that the notion of surrendering is not something that happens in the mind but a process where one “must journey into pure consciousness, before words and thoughts arise” (p. 77) and gives a good notion of the purpose of meditation, which is to bring a person to transcend their thinking mind. This thinking mind implies a mind that’s acting in the dual state of conflict. Chopra differentiates between the different types of meditation and stresses that not all meditation has transformational effects. He further shares that:

Not all meditations are created alike. Perhaps you were taught meditation as a form of relaxation or stress release or as a route to silence. These are all real results, but they aim too far short. The most profound effect of meditation is to transform your awareness. (2010, p.77)

It’s important to note here that Chopra does not criticize any kind of meditation but rather hopes that people who practice meditation will find a suitable approach that will help them to maintain awareness of their vision of wholeness. Chopra (2010) also warns that the practice of

19 The ego in this context refers to the conditioned mind.

20 Surrender refers to a state of mind that gives up the old way of looking at things and allowing transformation to take place.

21 In this context, the reason why the ego feels threatened and mistakes surrender for death is because when the ego feels threatened and realizes that it’s not useful anymore, it thinks the end has come.

22 A suitable approach may be a simple heart meditation, mantra meditation, Vipassana (Chopra, 2010)
meditation should not condition us further “where your mind convinces itself that it is peaceful or has found silence when both are just pleasant moods or habits” (p. 77).

Chopra (2010) summarizes his notion of the shadow effect by sharing some advice as follows:

1. Acknowledge your shadow when it brings negativity into your life
2. Embrace and forgive your shadow. Turn an unwanted obstacle into your ally.
3. Ask yourself what conditions are giving rise to the shadow: stress, anonymity, permission to do harm, peer pressure, passivity, dehumanizing conditions, an “us versus them” mentality.
4. Share your feelings with someone you trust: a therapist, trusted friend, good listener, counselor, or confidante.
5. Include a physical component: body work, energy release, yogic breathing, and hands-on healing.
6. To change the collective, change yourself – projecting and judging “them” as evildoers’ only increases the shadow’s power.
7. Practice meditation in order to experience pure consciousness, which is beyond the shadow.

**Krishnamurti’s Awareness**

Throughout his life, Krishnamurti had a single purpose in mind; that single purpose was to set humanity free from their cage of psychological conditioning. This notion of psychological conditioning includes our fear, loneliness, anger, jealousy and all other fragmentation in the process of thinking that’s conflicted by the dual nature of thought. Krishnamurti created schools around the world in order to address this problem of psychological conditioning and hoped that young students may be guided out of this cage of conditioning. As Rodrigues (2001) affirms, “the [Krishnamurti] schools are places where observation of the processes of the conditioned mind is crucial, for this conditioning is perceived as the major cause of internal conflict and a hindrance to the freedom necessary for genuine learning” (p.19).

Since Krishnamurti’s aim was to set humanity unconditionally free, he paid total attention to helping people to totally observe their psychological conditioning. As such, Krishnamurti attempted to help others find their wholeness by first discovering and
acknowledging their conditioning. It is for this reason that Krishnamurti’s perception on wholeness will be analyzed by laying out what he meant by awareness, or, in other words being aware of one’s own conditioning. Krishnamurti maintains that in the relationship or connection between the observer and the observed, the observer is the culprit since it is influenced by the past hurt, past unwanted memories, reactions and so on. Krishnamurti seems to imply that wholeness, or the state without conflict can be observed when the observer can put aside, voluntarily, the past psychological conditioning. Krishnamurti (1979) probes further by asking:

Can one observe without the observer, who is the essence of all the memories, experiences, reactions and so on, which are from the past? If one looks at something without the word and the past memories, then one looks without the observer. When one does that, there is only the observed and there is no division and no conflict, psychologically. Can one look at one’s wife or one’s nearest intimate friend without the name, the word and all the experiences that one has gathered in that relationship? When one so looks one is looking at her or him for the first time. (p. 204)

This awareness includes Krishnamurti’s perception on the following concepts: The Conditioned Mind, The Negative Approach in Solving a Psychological Conditioning; Nature of Thinking; Nature of Attention and Concentration; Choiceless Awareness and The Observer is the Observed.

Krishnamurti (1981) felt that the teachers in his schools should help the students not to be psychologically wounded and shared that “the student comes to school already having been hurt23…[and] probably he [or she] is unaware of this hurt. The teacher, by observing his [or her] reactions, his [or her] fears and aggressiveness, will discover the damage that has been done” (p. 37). Krishnamurti further suggests that teachers have two problems, which is “to free the students from past damage and prevent future wounds24,” (1981 p. 37)

23 The word hurt mentioned by Krishnamurti does not mean physical but a psychological hurt.
24 The term past damage refers to the existing psychological conditioning and future wound refers to conditioning that’s going to be imprinted in the students mind.
The inner revolution or transformation that Krishnamurti views as an important process towards social transformation implies that the process of self-knowing or self awareness must first be ignited. Such a state of passive awareness does not imply that one is asleep, but is in a state of awareness where there’s a constant watching of movement of thought. Thus, in exploring Krishnamurti notion of awareness, there is a need to look closer into the nature of thinking, the nature of a conditioned mind and arriving at a state of awareness to discover that the division between the observer and the observed is the source of all conflict. Krishnamurti’s way of negating or approaching psychological conditioning, by using a negative approach will also be discussed. This negative approach also helps us to navigate through the shadows of the mind (or the conditioning) in order to set us free from the crutch of our past. The state of awareness called the choiceless awareness will also be discussed, followed by a discussion of Krishnamurti’s notion of the observer is the observed.

As Krishnamurti’s notion of awareness points towards the silent and choiceless awareness of what is, the applications of awareness in solving a psychological problem will be discussed after laying the foundation for awareness. This application of awareness in solving a psychological problem will be presented as the three stages of awareness that will be greatly beneficial for teachers in understanding their own fragmentation. A model called The Flower Model will be used to illustrate the three stages of awareness towards the end of this chapter.

Foundations of Awareness

What is awareness?

Awareness implies a state of being sensitive: to be sensitive to our body, to our appearance, to the way we walk, talk, eat; to be sensitive to nature, our environment, to the animals; to be sensitive to the difficulties facing one’s family, friends and people around us; to be sensitive to someone begging for food or money. Can we just be aware to the above situations in a passive manner, without acceptance or condemnation, without judgmental evaluation? In order to understand the word awareness, it may be useful to see how the word mindfulness and awareness are used synonymously by Jon Kabat-Zinn – the founding director of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Healthcare and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical school – who eloquently described that “the application of
mindfulness gives rise to awareness [and that] mindfulness and awareness are often used synonymously” (Kabat-Zinn, 2005, p.110).

As we are working, can we be totally aware of the workings of the mind? Can we stay with what is, which is a state where one is aware and confronting who we are as it is? Krishnamurti’s notion of what is refers to the phenomenon happening in the present, which is also what he calls ‘the fact’. According to Krishnamurti, what is signifies a fact that is perceived to be existing at the moment. Rodrigues (2001) adds that, “whatever exists at the moment, a thought, a sensation, a perception, yields to a new reality the next moment. The present moment’s what is becomes the next moment’s what was… [and] it thus ceases to be true, since it is no longer a fact, but memory” (p. 69). It is a state where we are observing our own conditioning (the memories from the past that distorts direct perception) without any escape. Staying with and looking at what is, which is looking at our psychological conditioning like greed, anger, jealousy, loneliness, etc. is also known as the negative approach to one’s conditioning. Krishnamurti felt that the negative approach allows direct perception by allowing one to see his/her conditioning as it is, whereas the positive approach implies that one breaks down one’s conditioning by a system or method. In using a system or a method to free oneself of conditioning, one has introduced a new habit of a further conditioning. This is what Krishnamurti calls a positive approach. One of the important themes in understanding Krishnamurti’s philosophy is the notion of the conditioned mind.

The Conditioned Mind

It is important to present the concept of the conditioned mind by situating it in to the relationship between the teacher and student. The conditioned mind is that part of the brain which stores all the past happenings or experiences (hurt, joy, sorrow, pain, anger, etc.). In essence, we are conditioned psychologically (from the past hurt, sorrow, anger, etc.), socially (from society’s social stratification), religiously (from the different faith and creeds) and much more. Krishnamurti’s (1970b) take on this issue can best be articulated in the following quote:

25 It’s important to mention that Krishnamurti hardly used the word mindfulness in his discourse. He often used the word awareness and Kabat-Zinn clarified this by mentioning that the word mindfulness and awareness are often used synonymously.
We are conditioned – physically, nervously, mentally – by the climate we live in and the food we eat, by the culture in which we live, by the whole of our social, religious and economic environment, by our experience, by education and by family pressures and influences… Our conscious and unconscious responses to all the challenges of our environment – intellectual, emotional, outward and inward – all these are the action of conditioning. Language is conditioning; all thought is the action, the response of conditioning. (p.277)

According to Krishnamurti, the brain is where the conditioned mind resides and it is also the vessel of “all the experiences, stored as memory and thought, of the individual during the course of life” (Rodrigues, 2001, p. 92). Memory – being the storage of all the experiences – forms knowledge and it is the retrieval from this knowledge that the process of thinking is born. The connection between thought, memory, knowledge, experience and thinking has been clarified by Krishnamurti (1996) as follows:

Isn’t thought a reaction of memory? Memory is knowledge stored up as experience. There is an experience, knowledge of that experience as memory, and the response of that memory is thinking. So the source of thinking is in the past. So thought springs from the past. If you examine it, all our lives are based in the past, our roots are in the past. Knowledge is the past, there is no knowledge of the future, or of the present. There is knowledge of the present only when there is a complete understanding of what the structure and the nature of the past is – and ending it. (p. 296)

What is the relevance of the conditioned mind with regards to the process of teaching and learning in the classroom? The teacher certainly has more knowledge of the subject matter being taught and nonetheless both the teacher and the student are conditioned. Krishnamurti felt that besides merely transmitting knowledge to students, teachers must be concerned with their behavior and the also look into the possibility of unconditioning the conditioned mind. Krishnamurti (2006) clarified this further:

What is a teacher? Teaching is the greatest profession in the world, though the least respected, for if the teacher is deeply and seriously concerned, he [or she] is bringing about the unconditioning of the human brain, not only his [or her] own brain but the brains of the students. He [or she] is conditioned and the student is conditioned.
Whether he [or she] admits it or not, this is a fact, and in relationship with the student he [or she] is helping both the student and himself [or herself] to free consciousness from limitation. (p.161)

Further, Krishnamurti (2006) stresses that “when the relationship between the teacher and the student has this element of companionship, of mutual unconditioning and humility, sensitivity and affection are natural” (p. 161).

Krishnamurti often focused on the various aspects of psychological conditioning like fear, anger, loneliness, sorrow, etc. As such, it is fair to mention that Krishnamurti’s notion of the conditioned mind predominantly refers to psychological conditioning.

The Negative Approach in Solving a Psychological Conditioning

This negative approach in understanding the conditioned mind is also a process where psychological conditioning is negated from the lens of timeless qualities like love, compassion, beauty, etc. Let’s take love as an example. To find out if we have that quality of love in our heart, we need to first see the psychological conditioning associated with that timeless quality of love. Say, for an example that the psychological conditioning like pleasure or desire is associated with that timeless quality of love: First, we examine pleasure, which is the process of remembering and pursing an experience through the movement of thought; Krishnamurti (1979) asks “if love is pleasure then it gives emphasis to the remembrance of past things and therefore brings about the importance of the me – my pleasure, my excitement, my remembrances. Is that love?” (p.170). Thus, we negate pleasure as not having that timeless quality of love. Next, we examine desire, which is process of seeing, contacting and feeling that sensation which eventually cultivates the desire to possess or not to possess and Krishnamurti (1979) clarifies the conditioning called desire by asking “How does desire arise? One sees a beautiful woman, or a beautiful man – one sees. There is the perception, the seeing, then the contact, then the sensation, then that sensation is taken over by thought, which becomes the image with its desire” (p.170). Thus, we negate desire as not having that timeless quality of love. By negating what is not love (which is pleasure and desire) we suddenly have this possibility of arriving at that timeless state called love. Krishnamurti (1979) explains that:
You have negated desire though desire has a certain place. Therefore through negation and positive is. But we, on the contrary, posit the positive and then get caught in the negative. One must begin with the doubt – completely doubting – then you end up with certainty. But if you start with certainty, then you end up in uncertainty and chaos. So in negation the positive is born. (pp. 171-172)

An issue that can be broken down and analyzed is regarded as utilizing a positive thinking approach and the ability to look at one’s conditioning and to see the truth that no system can bring freedom from conditioning is to utilize the negative thinking from the point of view of Krishnamurti. Thus the perception of what is and the mere idea of becoming is an important concept in understanding this negative approach. Krishnamurti was insistent that the process of becoming is merely an intellectual trick of the mind, if it is used for the purpose of eliminating one’s conditioning. Of course the normal functions of life that requires us to survive on this earth requires the process of becoming like becoming more efficient at work, becoming more effective at doing a task, becoming a vice president of a company and so on, and this is the positive thinking approach. But the process of becoming cannot be applied in order to be free from conditioning. For example, if one is greedy, he or she cannot become non-greedy.

The concept of becoming needs further scrutiny in terms of time, to connect it to the context of the physical, as well as the psychological time. Krishnamurti’s notion of becoming with the physical time can best be described in terms of the time or duration taken by a clock or the time taken to cover a distance on earth. The psychological time is different from the physical time because the former applies to the psyche, and it is a mistake to use the concept of physical time to try to overcome psychological conditioning. As an example, if a person is jealous (a psychological conditioning pertaining to the psyche) that person wants to become non-jealous by using physical time. In other words, this person is trying to overcome his/her psychological conditioning by using physical time. This is impossible because only a physical or material problem can be solved by the process of becoming and a psychological problem cannot be solved by the process of becoming, using physical time. Krishnamurti (1988) explains this difference between psychological time and physical time:

Psychological time is different from ordinary time. I don’t know if you see that. Do you? Time by that clock, time by the sun, time to cover a physical distance. We don’t know
each other, but if we meet often, we will. Or we may know each other instantly. So, there is physical time and psychological time. We are talking of psychological time. It takes time for a seed to grow, for a child to become a man. We apply that kind of time to the psyche. I am this, but I will be that; I am not brave, but give me time and I will be. We are talking of time in the field of the psyche. (p. 84)

This begs the question: If the process of becoming cannot be used to address the handling of a psychological conditioning, how can we handle a psychological conditioning or how can we overcome it? Krishnamurti uses the term transformation in explaining this phenomenon. According to Krishnamurti, transformation (a way of handling a psychological conditioning) doesn’t depend on time because to observe what is, time is not necessary. Krishnamurti further explained that:

One is violent, greedy, envious, angry, vicious or passionate. To transform what is, is time necessary? First of all, why do we want to change what is, or bring about a transformation? Why? Because what we are dissatisfies us; it creates conflict, disturbance, and, disliking that state, we want something better, something nobler, more idealistic. Therefore we desire transformation because there is pain, discomfort, conflict. Is conflict overcome by time? If you say it will be overcome by time, you are still in conflict…therefore time does not bring about transformation. When we use time as a means of acquiring a quality, a virtue or a state of being, we are merely postponing or avoiding what is; and I think it is important to understand this point. (Krishnamurti, 1954, pp. 132-133)

Krishnamurti (1954) finally offered a solution or a way out, in handling this transformation by sharing that “when the mind is no longer resisting, no longer avoiding, no longer discarding or blaming what is but is simply passively aware, then in that passivity of the mind you will find… there comes a transformation” (p.134). Krishnamurti therefore drew the following conclusion:

When the mind is still, tranquil, not seeking any answer or any solution, neither resisting nor avoiding – it is only then that there can be a regeneration, because then the mind is capable of perceiving what is true; and it is truth that liberates, not your effort to be free. (1954, p. 135)
**Nature of Thinking**

Let’s examine what is thinking and the role it plays in the mind being conditioned. Thinking is the result of experience and knowledge. An experience that results in the formation of knowledge ends up being stored in the cells of the brain as memory and from this memory springs thought and action. Let’s consider the following scenario, as an example of an application of this process. Someone insults me, and that insult hurts my feelings. The insult then becomes part of my knowledge and is stored in the brain as memory. I carry this insult for the rest of my life and live in pain and fear. Krishnamurti explains that:

Most of us from childhood are hurt, wounded, not only at home but a school, college and university – and later in life, we are hurt. And when you are hurt you build a wall around yourself and the consequences of that is to become more and more isolated and more and more disturbed, frightened, seeking ways not to be hurt further; your actions from that hurt are obviously neurotic.” (Krishnamurti, 1984, p.16)

Thinking is surely a reaction of memory, of one’s conditioning. Our memory is the storehouse of all our experiences (hurt, sorrow, fear, pleasure, etc.). If a fairly simple question is posed, one would answer or respond immediately. If a more difficult question is asked, one would think for a while (the process of going through the storehouse of memory) before responding. Therefore, thinking is simply the response of memory. Krishnamurti shared that thinking begins from the self. The self is what we actually are that “functions daily, which thinks, feels, invents, hopes wants, and is caught in conflict, the self which is biased, which speculates, judges, seeks” (Krishnamurti, 1959, para.13). We can see that thinking is the movement of the known and any investigation into the unknown (the timeless qualities like love, compassion, etc.) has to begin with the understanding of the known. That is why Krishnamurti often asserts that the mind, which is in a state of disorder (the known state) cannot inquire directly into a state of total order (the unknown state).

**Nature of Attention and Concentration**

After understanding the nature of thinking, the negative approach and the conditioned mind, we need to find out if there is a way of observation that doesn’t allow the brain and/or the mind to condition itself. We need to look at the nature of attention and concentration to see the
possibility of setting ourselves free from our psychological conditioning. There are certainly qualitative differences between attention and concentration. Concentration implies an effort of focusing one’s energy to accomplish a task. In the effort of concentrating, the mind often wanders away and energy is constantly needed to bring the mind back to complete the task. Krishnamurti often shares that the process of concentration always resolves around the center called the self and shares that “to concentrate implies bringing all your energy to focus on a certain point; but thought wanders away and so you have a perpetual battle between the desire to concentrate, to give all your energy to look at a page, and the mind which is wandering, and which you try to control” (Krishnamurti, 1984, p. 28). On the contrary, Krishnamurti claims that “attention has no control, no concentration…which means giving all your energy, your nerves, the capacity, the energy of the brain, your heart, everything, to attending” (p. 28). There is a phenomenon where the brain stops recording and therefore bypasses the process of storage in the brain cells that results in action that stems from direct perception, rather than from memory. Krishnamurti (1984) clearly explains that “when you are attending [completely] the brain does not record… [but then] when you are concentrating, making an effort, you are always acting from memory-like a gramophone record repeating” (p. 28). We can clearly see that we need to record or to commit to memory, where we live, the skills needed to work and other practical activities of life. But we don’t need to store any psychological conditioning at all; Krishnamurti (1984) eloquently explains that “it is not necessary to record psychologically, inwardly, either the insult, or the flattery and so on…when you do, the brain, the mind, is entirely free from all conditioning” (p. 29).

The act of concentration revolves around the centre, the self or the observer. On the other hand, “in attention there is no centre, there is no me [observer] attending. When there is no me which limits attention then attention is limitless; attention has limitless space” (Krishnamurti, 1979, p.176). It is in this limitless space that emptiness and total silence are observed and “in that total silence there is a movement which is timeless, which is not measured by thought – thought has no place in it whatsoever – then there is something totally sacred, timeless.” (Krishnamurti, 1979, p.176). Can we experience such silence which is not influenced or practiced by the movement of thought?
Choiceless Awareness

The state of choiceless awareness is akin to a state of awareness that collapses into a choiceless state where there are no likes or dislikes from the observer’s point of view. It is also a state where total attention is given without the observer (the observer is the self, the past, who is conditioned). Therefore, to observe choicelessly is not to divide the observer and the observed and since the observer is the past, it’s the past that observes. The division between the observer and the observed is the source of conflict, the source of psychological conditioning. This notion of the observer and the observed will be discussed in the next section.

Kabat-Zinn compares Krishnamurti’s choiceless awareness to the “practice of shikantaza, or ‘just sitting—nothing more’ in Zen, and to Dzogchen in the Tibetan tradition [and] the Buddha called it the themeless concentration of awareness” (Kabat-Zinn, 2005, p. 262). Kabat-Zinn observes that:

[When] the mind itself, once cultivated in this way, has the ability instantly to know and recognize what is arising, what-ever it is, as it is arising, and instantly discern its true nature…And in that knowing, with no attachment, no aversion, in that knowing in this every moment of now, the event, the sensation, the memory, the thought bubble in the stream, the feeling of hurt or sadness, or anger, or joy… dissipates naturally in the knowing. (Kabat-Zinn, 2005, p.262)


This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
Some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcomes and entertain them all!
Even if they’re a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture
still, treat each guest honorably
He may be clearing you out for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice, meet them at the door laughing, and invite them in

Be grateful for whoever comes, because each has been sent as a guide from beyond

Can we have that quality of choiceless awareness that could entertain all psychological conditioning? In the next section, the notion that the observer is the observed will be discussed in detail.

**The Observer is the Observed**

In our day-to-day experiences, we have built many images. Let’s say I’m a Christian and I see someone who is a Hindu and my immediate reaction is whether I like him or not. This reaction is the result of my religion, race, culture, my tenderness, my acquired and inherited characteristics. If I am judging from that center, the center of the observer who is always in the past, a division is created between the observer and the thing he observes. Since the observer is the result of the past, the observer also represents the conditioning as images. If the observer is jealous, envious and lonely, the image of jealousy, envy and loneliness is embedded in the observer. Similarly, the observer has created thousands of images throughout his/her life and Krishnamurti observes that the observer is not any different from the images. Krishnamurti (1969) mentions that “one image, as the observer, observes dozens of other images around himself and inside himself, and he says, “I like this image, I’m going to keep it” or “I don’t like that image so I’ll get rid of it”, but the observer himself has been put together by the various images which have come into being through reaction to various images” (p. 96). The division between the observer and the observed is the source of conflict that causes fragmentation in the mind.

Understanding the notion that the observer is the observed is important in understanding Krishnamurti’s notion of the timeless moment. There is a gap between one thought and another; there is a gap between one sound and another and similarly, if we watch our thoughts, we can see that there is a gap or division between the observer and the observed. To elaborate on this
further, let’s observe a person we know. When we observe that person, we generally observe through the lens of our past experiences with that person, therefore, we hardly look at the person as they are; we look at them as we are. In other words, we look at them from the image we have about them. The gap between the observer and the observed is created because of this observation that is done from the past memory and it is important to observe without the lens of the past. Krishnamurti (1979) advised that:

The most important thing is to observe; to observe and not to have a division between the observer and the observed. Mostly there is a division between the observer who is the total summation of past experience as memory and the observed, that which is – so the past observes. This division between the observer and the observed is the source of conflict. (p. 203)

The conflict posed with the division between the observer and the observed is caused by two issues. One issue stems from the fact that we look at someone or something from the image we have of them or from the lens of the past. The other issue involved in this conflict or fragmentation is the process of naming. When one looks at a beautiful sunset, the word beautiful implies a relative term that compares itself with other beautiful things. Can one look at the sunset and enjoy its beauty without the interference of the word beautiful that may allow the mind to compare and contrast with other beautiful things? Krishnamurti (1979) mentions this naming when one is observing a mountain and shares the following:

Can one look at the thing called ‘mountain’ without the word, because the word is a factor of division? When one says ‘My wife’, the word ‘my’ creates division. The word, the name, is part of thought. When one looks at a man or a woman, a mountain or a tree, whatever it is, division takes place when thought, the name, the memory, comes into being. (p.204)

This notion of observing without the memories of the past and the word brings us into an important remark that Krishnamurti makes: That since the observer seems to be the culprit, can we observe without the observer? Krishnamurti asks if one can “observe without the observer, who is the essence of all the memories, experiences, reactions and so on, which are from the past? If one looks at something without the word and the past memories, then one can look without the observer?” (Krishnamurti, 1979, p. 204). This observation without the observer
causes the division between the observer and the observed to collapse that result in no psychological conflict. In other words, fragmentation drops away and wholeness or the timeless moments are experienced.

This observer – who is also the result of various images put together by thought – thinks that he/she is different from the images he/she has created. This creates a division between the observer and the observed in the form of time interval. The observer who is violent believes foolishly that over time, he can become non-violent but the very desire to get rid of the conflict (or violence) creates another image. Therefore, without the awareness that the observer is observed, the observer is caught in the eternal conflict of becoming, which is an illusion. The awareness needed to see that the observer is the observed is revealed by Krishnamurti (1969) who affirms that:

Awareness has revealed the different states of one’s mind, has revealed the various images and the contradiction between images, has revealed the resulting conflict and the despair at not being able to do anything about it...[and] all this has been revealed through cautious hesitant awareness, and then comes the awareness that the observer is the observed. It is not a higher self (the superior entity, the higher self, are merely inventions, further images); it is the awareness itself which had revealed that the observer is the observed. (p. 97)

In essence, the notion that the observer is the observed reveals that it’s an image looking at another image. For example, if we assume that we are looking at our anger, we normally treat the anger as an entity separate from us. In other words we assume that as the observer, we are different from the anger (observed). In essence, the anger is not different from us, since the anger is the past image experienced by the observer. Therefore, it’s one image looking at another image or simply, the observer is the observed. This awareness that the observer is the observed allows the collapse of the conflict between the observer and the observed. This conflict creates fragmentation in one’s mind and the way to close this gap constitutes one of the original contributions of Krishnamurti in explaining the wholeness of life. Krishnamurti (1979) explains that when there is an ending of psychological conflict, it surely affects daily living and “when there is no conflict inside, there is no conflict outside, because there is no division between the inner and the outer. It is like the ebb and flow of the sea. It is absolute, irrevocable fact, which
nobody can touch, it is inviolate” (p. 204). Finally, Krishnamurti links the importance of observing something as it is and not as it should be and shares that:

Because there is no conflict, there is no desire to be something. Because inwardly there is something absolute which is inviolate, which cannot be touched, which cannot be damaged, then one does not depend psychologically on another; therefore there is no conformity, no imitation. So, not having all that, one is no longer heavily conditioned to success and failure in the world of money, position, prestige, which implies the denial of what is and the acceptance of what should be. (Krishnamurti, 1979, pp. 204-205)

Up to this point in understanding awareness, we have discussed the foundation of awareness, from the perspective of Krishnamurti’s philosophy that relates to the concept of wholeness. An application of Krishnamurti’s awareness or notion of wholeness that impacts upon one’s well being and wholeness will be discussed in the end of this chapter. This application is based on the clinical practice of Robert Cloninger, a psychologist who uses Krishnamurti’s awareness in terms of the first, second and third stages of awareness to help his patients manage their psychological conditioning.

**Krishnamurti’s Educational Aims**

Krishnamurti’s educational aims will be observed and analyzed from his notion of: The Right Kind of Education; Techniques and Its Limitation; Discovery of One’s Vocation; Limitation of Ideology and System; Helping Students to be Free from their Conditioning and Flower in Freedom; Limitation of Compulsion, Reward and Punishment; Limitation of Discipline, Conformity and Obedience; Cultivation of Right Relationship and the Eradication of Fear; The Need for Religious Education; Understanding the Notion on Discontent; Transformation; Thought, Knowledge and Intelligence; Religious Mind and the Scientific Mind; and Meditation and Education.

26 See the section in this chapter titled *An Application of Krishnamurti’s Awareness using the Concept of the Three Stages of Awareness* for more detailed discussion on Cloninger’s work.
The Right Kind of Education

Krishnamurti’s educational philosophies are found in Krishnamurti (1953, 1963, 1970a, 1974, 1975, 1981, 1985, 2002a, and 2006). The notion of the right kind of education is expanded fully in Krishnamurti (1953, 1974). Krishnamurti felt that an ignorant person is not someone who is illiterate, but someone who lacks self-knowledge. Self-knowledge includes the way we behave, think, feel, react and act in relationship. It’s in a relationship that we discover our true identity, it’s in a relationship too, that we discover how cunning we are, or how cleverly we want to behave in different situations, how we want to influence another, how we want to dominate; in short, we discover our limitations and strengths in our relationship with another. It’s in a relationship that we see our real nature, our true self and it’s in a relationship too, that that all our motives are exposed to ourselves. The right kind of education will be embedded with the right kind of educator in some aspects.

Techniques and Its Limitations

The first aspect in the right kind of education is the technique and its limitations. We live in a world where following techniques or methods are greatly encouraged. The higher learning institutions, predominantly prepares an individual in a particular discipline27 to get a job and to earn a livelihood. The cultivation or specialization to be an engineer, lawyer, doctor, carpenter or gardener secures one’s financial and economic needs, but Krishnamurti asks whether or not the cultivation of a technique or method aids us in understanding ourselves. Krishnamurti feels that in order to have self-knowledge, technique has to play a secondary, and not a primary role. He explains that, “life is pain, joy, beauty, ugliness, love and when we understand it as a whole, at every level, that understanding creates its own technique” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p.18).

Although Krishnamurti had criticized the current educational system, he gives a good rationale for a balanced life. Krishnamurti (1974) shares that “technology cannot produce a perfect or a good society… [where] a good society implies order” (p. 93). Order, according to Krishnamurti does not imply buses arriving on time or producing goods efficiently, but an order within or the internal order. Krishnamurti (1973) clarifies this internal order and adds that “

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27 This discipline can also be called a technique or a method.
is not habit; habit becomes automatic and loses all its vitality when human beings merely become orderly in the mechanical sense…[and order] covers not only our particular life but also all the life about us, outwardly, in the world, and deeply inwardly” (p. 306). Krishnamurti stresses that when either the technology or the inner\textsuperscript{28} is neglected, there will be imbalance in life and found that the society at large has separated the professional life and the inner life and has paid attention to either one or the other. Krishnamurti (1974) refers to this cultivation of the outer and the inner as being good grounds for the birth of a total human being and makes us understand that:

when we talk about a total human being, we mean not only a human being with inward understanding, with a capacity to explore, to examine his inward being, his inward state and the capacity of going beyond it, but also someone who is good in what he does outwardly. The two must go together. That is the real issue in education – to see that when the child leaves school, he [or she] is well established in goodness, both outwardly and inwardly. (p. 92)

Techniques and methods eventually lead to technological advancements, which are important to better our lives at one level, but it also creates destruction and misery at another level. A classic example is the technological advancement that was required in splitting an atom; that resulted in the release of enormous energy that is useful in the generation, and use of electricity. Due to the lack of self-knowledge, this technological advancement of splitting an atom resulted in the use of atomic bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the World War II. In this context, Krishnamurti (1953) adds that “the man [or woman] who knows how to split an atom but has no love in his [or her] heart becomes a monster” (p.19). To him, the right kind of education, while promoting the accumulation or learning of a technique, should help humans to experience an integrated approach towards life that will create a balance in their lives. According to Krishnamurti, it is also in this context that we understand that the most important function of education is to give birth to an integrated individual who is whole and not fragmented. Krishnamurti emphasized that when an individual is like the specialist (someone

\textsuperscript{28} The inner in this context refers to the internal order of the mind.
who has mastered a technique), he or she is not interested in the whole but only part of it. Krishnamurti (1953) claims that the specialist, like the idealist\textsuperscript{29}:

Is not concerned with the whole… [and that] most teachers who are idealists have put away love, they have dry minds and hard hearts. To study a child, one has to be alert, watchful, self-aware, and this demands far greater intelligence and affection than to encourage him to follow an ideal. (p. 25)

Krishnamurti felt that over-emphasized techniques that result in the over-emphasized activity of cultivating capacity and efficiency are the outcome of educational systems that is a complete failure. Krishnamurti (1953) adds that our educational system is a complete failure due to this over-emphasis on techniques that only makes us “increasingly ruthless, which is to engender wars and jeopardizes our physical security [and that] the exclusive cultivation of technique has produced scientists, mathematicians, bridge builders, space conquerors; but do they understand the total process of life?” (p.18). Krishnamurti is suggesting that although technical knowledge and progress do solve certain issues at the physical level, it does not solve our psychological turmoil. This results in an imbalance and the lack of ability to have an integrated comprehension of life that includes the capacity to solve both the technological and psychological issues.

\textit{Discovery of One’s Vocation}

The second aspect of the right kind of education is the \textit{discovery of one’s vocation}. The word vocation does not imply a job, but refers to one’s calling. Our current educational system produces graduates that fit the demand of the economy. As such, the educational system creates the supply of a workforce that meets the demand created by organizations around the world. This cycle of supply-demand is so deeply embedded in the minds of parents and children that the discovery of one’s vocation or one’s natural talent seems to be impossible. This discovery of one’s vocation was one of Krishnamurti’s intent in creating schools around the world. Krishnamurti (1953) felt that while one is young, the school should investigate and experiment to

\textsuperscript{29} An idealist, in the context of Krishnamurti’s philosophy refers to someone who follows some ideals and blue-prints which are concerned with what \textit{should be} rather than \textit{what is}. He specifically refers to the specialist as the idealist.
“discover their vocations and responsibilities, and not merely cram their mind with facts and technological knowledge; it should be the soil in which they can grow without fear, happily and integrally” (p. 45).

We can clearly see a relationship between the emphasis on creating an ample supply-demand workforce with an over-emphasis on techniques or the focus on cultivating capacity and efficiency without developing the inward nature of human beings. The development of this inward nature is the discovery of one’s vocation. Krishnamurti (1953) laments that “modern education is making us into thoughtless entities; it does very little towards helping us to find our individual vocation” (pp. 55-56) and suggests that “the right kind of education should also help the student to discover what he [or she] is most interested in” (p. 96). Furthermore, Krishnamurti (1953) warns that “if he [or she] does not find his [or her] true vocation, all his [or her] life will seem wasted; he [or she] will feel frustrated doing something which he [or she] does not want to do” (p. 96).

**Limitation of Ideology and System**

The third aspect of the right kind of education is seeing the *limitation of ideology and system*. Krishnamurti was not keen about any ideology or system. In his view, when ideology or a system interferes with education, it hinders the student from freedom and to flower in love and goodness. Krishnamurti (1953) explains further the destructive nature of classification when he stressed that “any method which classifies children according to temperament and aptitude merely emphasizes their differences… [and] it breeds antagonism, encourages divisions in society and does not help to develop integrated human beings” (pp. 23-24).

Krishnamurti also felt that when life is made to conform to a system, within a boundary and when children are trained according to a discipline or a system of thought, they are prevented from growing into integrated human beings who could live life in wholeness. Krishnamurti focuses on the awareness of the educator to create new values in the mind of the child and not only to implant the existing values and ideals, as that only serves to condition them further. Over and over again, Krishnamurti admonishes us not to think in terms of ideals and principles, but rather to be concerned with things as they are, because it is only in staying with *what is* that awakens one’s intelligence. Krishnamurti (1953) explains the danger of following a method:
When one follows a method, even if it has been worked out by a thoughtful and intelligent person, the method becomes very important, and the children are important only as they fit into it. One measures and classifies the child, and then proceeds to educate him according to some chart. This process of education may be convenient for the teacher, but neither the practice of a system nor the tyranny of opinion and learning can bring about an integrated human being. (p. 26)

Thus, in this category of the right kind of education, it is hoped that a child will be understood as he/she is without imposing upon him/her an ideal of what we think he/she should become. As Krishnamurti asserts, “ideals are an actual hindrance to our understanding of the child and to the child’s understanding of him/herself” (1953, p. 26). Krishnamurti brings in the notion of the importance of the mindset of the educator and mentions that the right kind of educator will observe and study each student keenly. This keen observation is important in creating a good relationship as opposed to depending on a method, because the students (and all human beings) are “impressionable, volatile, sensitive, afraid, affectionate; and to deal with them, we have to have great understanding, the strength of patience and love” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 27). Krishnamurti warns that if educators lack being compassionate and are mechanical in their attitudes and actions, the teaching profession (with the following of by adhering to an ideal) becomes an escape, where the educator will be incapable of dealing with the students as they are and Krishnamurti concludes that “the pursuit of an ideal excludes love, and without love no human problem can be solved” (Krishnamurti, 1953, p. 27).

Helping Students to be Free from their Conditioning and Flower in Freedom

The forth aspect of the right kind of education deals with helping students to be free from their conditioning and flower in freedom. What is freedom in this context of freeing students from their conditioning? First, freedom implies a state that cannot exist without order and this implies that freedom is embedded strongly within the responsibility of being considerate of others. Krishnamurti (1974) affirms that “out of that consideration, out of that thoughtfulness, out of that watchfulness, both outward and inward, comes order and with that order there comes freedom” (pp. 38-39). It is important to note here that if the educator is not free from his conditioning (or is not observing his own conditioning), then it is not possible to free the students
from their conditioning. Krishnamurti mentions that experience\(^30\) does not bring freedom but rather strengthens the will of the self. The self is the storage of past experiences and demands defensive and expansive reactions; freedom comes only when one understands his or her own conditioning, or the ways of the self, or the experience. The culprit is the accumulated experiences of the experiencer and the notion of the experiencer being the experienced (or the observer is the observed) as explained in this chapter. It is only in the third stage of awareness that the experiencer is free from the grip of his/her conditioning and this will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

Krishnamurti felt that the right kind of educator needs to observe his or her own inward nature of freedom and understand his or her own conditioning, in order to be able to help the students understand, or be aware of their own conditioning; he concludes that “it is only in individual freedom that love and goodness can flower; and the right kind of education alone can offer this freedom” (1974, p. 29).

**Limitation of Compulsion, Reward and Punishment**

The fifth aspect of the right kind of education is to see the limitation of compulsion, reward and punishment. Compulsion or coercion of any kind, only diminishes one’s sensitivity. Krishnamurti (1953) shares that “sensitivity can never be awakened through compulsion… [and] compulsion breeds antagonism and fear” (p. 32). Reward and punishment of any form, only makes the mind more submissive and boring, and strengthens self-centered activities. If we want a child to be considerate towards others, the elders need to have the patience to explain that the mindset of being considerate towards others is not done with any expectation. Krishnamurti (1953) explains that “action for the sake of another, in the name of the country or for God, leads to fear, and fear cannot be the basis for right action” (p. 35). Krishnamurti further stresses that the notion of respect collapses when reward and punishment are practiced, because offering a child a reward or intimidating him/her with punishment, only encourages greed and fear; he explains that “because we ourselves have been brought up to act for the sake of a result, we do not see that there can be action free of the desire to gain” (1953, p. 35). Alfie Kohn’s research

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\(^{30}\) It is important to note that the word experience is used to refer to that aspect of our experiences that forms the ego or the conditioned mind that includes fear, loneliness, sorrow, jealousy, etc.
findings support Krishnamurti’s insight on this fifth aspect of the right kind of education in his book titled *Punished by Rewards*. Kohn’s findings conclude that students performed better in some tasks when not rewarded and that students’ creativity tends to decline when rewarded extensively (Kohn, 1993).

**Limitation of Discipline, Conformity and Obedience**

The sixth aspect of the right kind of education is to see the *limitation of discipline, conformity and obedience*. Disciplining is the easiest way to control children, but this does not help them to understand the actual problem. Krishnamurti (1953) feels that with the right kind of educator and a small number of students in a classroom, the educator will be able to give his or her full attention to each child in order to find the root cause of the student’s misbehavior, which may be caused by “wrong diet, lack of rest, family wrangles, or some hidden fear” (p.33).

Conforming to the rules of the educator and being obedient did not fit into Krishnamurti’s view of the right kind of education. Krishnamurti felt that without mutual affection between teacher and student, cooperation is impossible and warns that “without respect and consideration, no vital relationship is possible” (1953, p. 34). Krishnamurti clarifies the notion of respect by illustrating that when the “teacher demands respect from his pupils and has very little for them, it will obviously cause indifference and disrespect on their part” (1953, p. 34).

**Cultivation of Right Relationship and the Eradication of Fear**

The seventh aspect of the right kind of education is the *cultivation of right relationship and the eradication of fear*. This relationship is not only between individuals but between individual and society. Krishnamurti used the word intelligence here to show that it is needed to understand, and go beyond oneself. In his view, fear can prevent this intelligence from flowering. Krishnamurti (1953) claims that fear perverts intelligence and thus causes self-centered or egoistical actions and asserts that, “fear is instilled into most of us both at home and at school…[and that] neither parents nor teachers have the patience, the time or the wisdom to dispel the instinctive fears of childhood, which, as we grow up, dominate our attitudes and judgments” (1953, p. 35). It is for this reason that Krishnamurti felt that that the right kind of education must handle this issue of fear, as it dominates all other actions. Further, Krishnamurti maintains that, “to be without fear is the beginning of wisdom, and only the right kind of
education can bring about the freedom from fear in which alone there is deep and creative intelligence” (1953, p.35).

Fear plays a crucial role in preventing real learning from taking place. There is a difference between acquiring knowledge and learning, whereby the former makes one mechanical and the latter makes the mind fresh, young and subtle. Krishnamurti (1974) illustrates this difference and declares that “most educators, right through the world, are merely acquiring and imparting knowledge and so are making the mind mechanical and incapable of learning [and] learning only comes into being when there is no fear and when there is no authority” (p. 53). Krishnamurti (1974) further adds that the element of fear promotes competition and claims that “fear is essentially involved in competition [and] to be afraid of being nobody, of not arriving, of not succeeding, is at the root of competition” (p. 53). The way fear affects learning is that when there is fear, the process of learning comes to an end and Krishnamurti shares that one of the important function of education is to eradicate fear that does not give rise to the cultivation of becoming mechanical and also ensures the transfer of knowledge. This gaining of knowledge without becoming mechanical implies real learning, and this in turn implies the elimination of all competition. Krishnamurti (1974) adds that in the “process of competition, you conform, and gradually you destroy the subtlety, the freshness, the youth of the brain. But you cannot deny knowledge. So, is it possible to have knowledge and yet learn to be free from fear? Do you see this?” (pp. 53-54)

An analogy to explain the possibility of gaining knowledge, learning and also being free from fear can be seen when someone learns a hobby or learns at leisure. When someone learns a hobby (like making and flying a kite, playing a game, etc.), we find that since there is no authority (to give a grade) and since there are no competitors (in learning a hobby, we are not competing with anyone else), learning takes place without any fear. This is what Krishnamurti was implying when he asked “Is it possible to have knowledge and yet learn to be free from fear?”

The Need for Religious Education

The eighth aspect of the right kind of education revolves around the need for religious education. Krishnamurti’s notion of the word religious has a different meaning than the normal use of the word that describes the involvement with a religion. Krishnamurti felt that religion at
large is merely an organized belief with its rituals and superstitions. One can clearly see the
danger of belonging to a particular religion from Krishnamurti’s (1953) statement that: “Though
all religions assert that they worship God and say that we must love another, they instill fear
through their doctrines of reward and punishment, and through their competitive dogmas they
perpetuate suspicion and antagonism” (p. 38).

According to Krishnamurti, religious education is needed to “encourage the child to
understand his [or her] own relationship to people, to things and to nature” (1953, p. 38). Further,
Krishnamurti mentions the need to inquire into the nature of a true religious life and calls on
educators to examine their own thoughts and feelings as only such an inquiry on their part can
ensure that they can help their students to be self-aware. The word religious as used by
Krishnamurti can be used synonymously with spiritual, hence spiritual education. The word religious used by Krishnamurti in this context certainly gives rise to misunderstanding since that word is often connected with a religion; however, Krishnamurti’s use of the word has no
relevance to any particular faith, belief or religion.

Understanding the Notion on Discontent

The ninth aspect of the right kind of education is the understanding of the notion of
discontent. Discontent, Krishnamurti claims, may bring disorder in the beginning but it eventually leads to self-knowledge. Thus, being discontented means the ability to enquire without bias and this state of being is often feared by parents and society at large since it questions all forms of established security, such as acquiring safe jobs, getting inheritance, etc. Krishnamurti (1953) explains further that:

Discontent is the means to freedom; but in order to inquire without bias, there must be
none of the emotional dissipation which often takes the form of political gatherings, the
shouting of slogans, the search for a guru or spiritual teacher, and religious orgies of
different kinds. This dissipation dulls the mind and heart, making them incapable of
insight and therefore easily molded by circumstances and fear. It is the burning desire to
inquire, and not the easy imitation of the multitude, that will bring about a new
understanding of the ways of life. (p. 43)
Transformation

The tenth and final aspect of the right kind of education deals with *transformation* of the self. This transformation has to do with helping individuals towards freedom and integration. The educators themselves need to be towards the journey of this freedom and integration, otherwise, it would be impossible to convey this to students. In this regard, Krishnamurti (1953) rightly suggests that, “the real problem in education is the educator” (p. 37). Krishnamurti felt that with the right home environment and the right educators in school, integrated human beings can be developed. However, he warns against the failure to promote this integration in the children’s homes and by the educators, stating that “if, like so many others, we fill our hearts with the cunning things of the mind, then we shall continue to see our children destroyed in wars, in famines, and by their own psychological conflicts” (1953, p. 51).

Thought, Knowledge and Intelligence

J.P Miller (1994) describes the *Source* as the underlying unity of all, adding that this Source is also known as God in Christianity, Allah in Islam, Tao in Taoism, Brahman in Hinduism, the realm of the invisible by Plato, the collective unconscious by Carl Jung, and implicate order by David Bohm. Similarly, Krishnamurti referred to the Source as the *intelligence*. Thus, the word *intelligence* as used by Krishnamurti is not identical to the way it is used by Howard Gardner. The common use of the word intelligence refers to the cognitive aspect of the brain (Gardner, 1983, 1993); however, Krishnamurti’s notion of intelligence does not involve the cognitive and influence of the brain.

Knowledge is the result of accumulated thought in a scientific, collective and personal form. Since thought results in knowledge, Krishnamurti (1996) made it clear that “to come upon that which is not put together by thought, we have to understand the place of thought as knowledge and where thought has no place whatsoever…[and that] thought as knowledge has its right place, but it has no place in the psyche” (p. 300). Krishnamurti often refers to the stillness in the mind or that silence experienced by the mind as a suitable platform for the intelligence to operate. This stillness is not induced by thought, and Krishnamurti (1973) clarifies this relationship between the silent state and intelligence by adding that, “intelligence is not thought. Intelligence is this silence and is therefore totally impersonal… [and thus] it does not belong to any group, to any person, to any race, to any culture” (p. 373).
Since thought originates from the brain and since Krishnamurti states that “intelligence is not of thought”, the following conversation between Krishnamurti and Bohm in Krishnamurti (1973) clarifies the relationship between the brain and intelligence:

Bohm: The brain doesn’t create intelligence but it is an instrument which helps intelligence to function. That is it.

Krishnamurti: That’s it. Now if the brain is functioning within the field of time, up and down, negatively, positively, can intelligence operate in that movement of time? Or must that instrument be quiet for the intelligence to operate?

Bohm: Yes, I would put it possibly slightly differently. The quietness of the instrument is the operation of intelligence.

Krishnamurti: Yes, that is right. The two are not separate.

Bohm: They are one and the same. The non-quietness of the instrument is the failure of intelligence.

Krishnamurti: That is right. (p. 516)

In the above dialogue, Krishnamurti and Bohm are suggesting that when the brain is quiet, or in a timeless state, intelligence operates. Since the process of thinking originates from the brain, there may be some misunderstanding as to whether there is a relationship between thought and intelligence. This notion is clarified in the following conversation in Krishnamurti (1973):

Krishnamurti: We are trying to find out what is the relationship, in action, of thought and intelligence. Everything is action or inaction. And what is the relationship of that to intelligence? Thought does produce chaotic action, fragmentary action.

Bohm: When it is not ordered by intelligence.

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31 This timeless state does not mean that thought is not in operation but rather the conflict born from the duality of each thought is understood and transcended.

32 The phrase process of thinking is used in the simplest context where every experience is stored in the brain cells (memory) and retrieved through the process of thinking. An intuition cannot be attributed to this process of thinking since we do not know the origin of an intuition.
Krishnamurti: And it is not ordered by intelligence in the way we all live.

Bohm: That is because of what we have just said.

Krishnamurti: It is fragmented activity; it is not an activity of wholeness. The activity of wholeness is intelligence.

Bohm: Intelligence also has to understand the activity of thought.

Krishnamurti: Yes, we said that.

Bohm: Now would you say that when intelligence understands the activity of thought, then thought is different in its operation?

Krishnamurti: Yes, obviously. That is, if thought has created nationalism as a means of security and then one sees the fallacy of it, the seeing of the fallacy of it is intelligence. Thought then creates a different kind of world in which nationalism does not exist (p. 523).

It is important to see Krishnamurti’s strong perception towards the concept that the process of thinking originates from the brain. The brain has become mechanical over time and this means that its activities are repetitive and therefore its movements are within the field of the known which is of the past. Krishnamurti (1984) adds that “one’s brain, which has evolved through ages of time, through tradition, through education, through conformity, through adjustment, has become mechanical” (p. 98) and in connecting brain and thought, Krishnamurti clarifies that “thought has its home in the physical cells of the brain” (p. 98).

Intelligence, according to Krishnamurti is of the same order as that of the universe. In discussing intelligence, Krishnamurti and Bohm agree that intelligence is not the product of thought or the outcome of thinking. Bohm (1994) explains that the thought process is a physical or a material process and adds that the thought “goes on in the brain, the nervous system, and really the whole body and everything; it’s all one system… [and that] thought can be conveyed by material processes such as radio waves, television, writing – all kinds of ways” (p. 147). Since thought is a physical or material process, we can deduce that time is involved in, or influences thought processes. Krishnamurti explained this important concept by saying that:

Thought is of time, intelligence is not of time. Intelligence is immeasurable – not the scientific intelligence, not the intelligence of a technician, or of a housewife, or of a man
who knows a great deal. Those are all within the field of thought and knowledge. It is only when the mind is completely still – and it can be still, you don’t have to practice or control, it can be completely still – then there is harmony, there is vast space and silence. And only then the Immeasurable is. (Krishnamurti, 1973, p. 375)

**Religious Mind and the Scientific Mind**

Krishnamurti’s notion of the religious mind has little or nothing to do with the attributes of a religion. It’s important to see Krishnamurti’s view of a religious mind that is not the Hindu mind, the Christian mind, the Buddhist mind, or the Muslim mind. Krishnamurti (1974) affirms further that:

The religious mind does not belong to any group which calls itself religious. The religious mind is not the mind that goes to churches, temples, mosques. Nor is it a religious mind that holds to certain forms or beliefs, dogmas. The religious mind is completely alone. It is a mind that has seen through the falsity of churches, dogmas, beliefs, traditions. Not being nationalistic, not being conditioned by its environment, such a mind has no horizons, no limits. (p.25)

Krishnamurti was very clear that only the religious mind, which is not anchored in any belief system can experience God, the source that is not measurable.

The scientific mind is very factual and the best scientists inquire with this scientific mind with the least biases. The scientific mind operates on facts and every scientific discovery is free from the biases of nationalism, race and prejudice (Krishnamurti, 1974). David Bohm, who had months of discussion with Albert Einstein after his book titled *Quantum Theory* was published in 1951, recalls the mind of Krishnamurti and stated that “as a person who works in science I felt completely at home with this sort of response, because it was in essence of the same quality as that which I had met in contacts with other scientists with whom there had been a very close meeting of minds” (Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1999). Bohm also points out a similar trait in Krishnamurti and Einstein and shares that Einstein, like Krishnamurti “showed similar intensity and absence of barrier in a number of discussions that took place between him and me” (Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1999).

Krishnamurti felt that both the scientific and religious minds share the same fundamental platform in that both minds move from fact to fact and that they are not biased nationally and racially. It is with this conviction that Krishnamurti stated that “a human being is a true
human being when the scientific spirit and the religious spirit go together. Then human beings will create a good world…and I think the purpose of education is to create this new mind, which is explosive, and does not conform to a pattern which society had set” (Krishnamurti, 1974, p. 26)

Krishnamurti (1974) probes further and shares his vision of creating a school that will help the students to inquire into the possibility of merging the scientific and the religious minds:

It is imperative to help the students to be scientific, to think very clearly, precisely, to be sharp, as well as to help him [or her] uncover the depths of his [or her] mind, to go beyond words, his [her] various labels as the Hindu, Muslim, Christian…[and] is it possible to educate the students to go beyond all labels and find out, experience that something which is not measured by the mind, which no books contain, to which no guru can lead you? If such an education is possible in a school like this, it will be remarkable.

You must see that it is worthwhile to create such a school. (p. 27)

Meditation and Education

Our occupation tends to dominate most of our life and this may result in very little time allocated for meditation and contemplation. In the schools created by Krishnamurti, the connection between meditation and education is often pondered upon. Krishnamurti, rejects all methods of meditation of Zen, or Yoga and the different contemplative types of mediation concerned with the idea of controlling the mind and following a system. Krishnamurti suggests that we reject all systems of meditation by investigating their truthfulness or falseness.

Krishnamurti’s rejection of the different methods of meditation was due to the fact that he perceived meditation to be an awareness cultivated without practice (See Chapter 4, in the section entitled: Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches). Krishnamurti (1973) shares that people should not bow down to any authority including himself in matters pertaining to spirituality:

I don’t know why you pay a single penny to repeat certain words from somebody who says, ‘If you do this, you will achieve enlightenment, you will have a quiet mind.’ When you repeat a series of words constantly, whether it is Ave Maria or various Sanskrit words, obviously your mind becomes rather dull and you have a peculiar sense of unity, of quietness, and you think that will help to bring clarity. You can see the absurdity of it, because why should you accept what anybody says about these matters – including myself? (p. 473)
Krishnamurti offers no system, and proposes an awareness that is not centered in anything; this is called *choiceless awareness*, which was explained earlier in this chapter. Goleman (1988) refers to this as the ‘experiencing of what is without naming’ and elaborates on choiceless awareness by stating that “this state is beyond thought; all thought, he says, belongs to the past, and meditation is always in the present. To be in the present, the mind must relinquish the habits acquired out of the urge to be secure” (p. 98).

Krishnamurti often mentioned that the observer or the experiencer with all his/her conditioning is the culprit that prevents true meditation from taking place and this suggests that true meditation takes place in the absence of the meditator. Krishnamurti (1973) elaborates on this notion by sharing that:

Meditation is the unfolding of the new. The new is beyond and above the repetitious past– and meditation is the ending of this repetition. The death that meditation brings about is the immortality of the new. The new is not within the area of thought, and meditation is the silence of thought…It is the silence in which the observer has ceased from the very beginning. (p. 23)

Krishnamurti often stated that meditation implies everything in life, the good, bad, inner and outer and it must be approached without regard to space and time; he questioned how teachers are going to help students to see the totality of life. The following conversation between a teacher and Krishnamurti reveals his seriousness in approaching this matter of meditation and education:

Teacher: I was thinking about the practical difficulties and how it is not always possible. 33

Krishnamurti: Why do you give time to dance, to music? Why not give time to this as you give to mathematics? You are not interested in it. If you saw that it was also necessary you would devote time to it. If you saw that it was as essential as mathematics, you would do something. Meditation implies the whole of life; not just the technical, monastic, or scholastic life, but the total life and to apprehend and communicate this

33 This teacher was responding when he was asked by Krishnamurti “how will you create the climate in which they see all these influences, in which they look at the beauty of this earth, look at the beauty of this valley? Just as you devote time to mathematics, science, music, dance, why do you not give some time to all this?” (Krishnamurti, 1974, p.176)
totality, there must be certain seeing of it without space and time. A mind must have in itself a sense of the spaceless and the timeless state. It must see the whole of this picture. How will you approach it and help the students to see the whole of life, not in little segments, but life in its totality? I want him [her] to comprehend the enormity of this. (Krishnamurti, 1974, pp. 176-177)

Krishnamurti stressed that meditation takes place when there is total attention to what we are doing. He also warned of the registering process that takes place in the form of remembering an insult or praise or a psychological wound that distorts meditation from taking place. Krishnamurti (1979) explains this detail and shares that:

Meditation is the attention in which there is no registration. Normally the brain is registering everything, the noise, the words which are being used – it is registering like a tape. Now is it possible for the brain not to register except that which is absolutely necessary? Why should I register an insult? Why? Why should I register flattery? It is unnecessary. Why should I register any hurts? Unnecessary. Therefore, register only that which is necessary in order to operate in daily life – as a technician, a writer and so on – but psychologically, do not register anything. In meditation there is no registration psychologically, no registration except the practical facts of living, going to the office, working in a factory and so on – nothing else. Out of that comes complete silence, because thought has come to an end – except to function only where it is absolutely necessary. Time has come to an end and there is a totally different kind of movement, in silence. (p. 144)

An Application of Krishnamurti’s Awareness using the Concept of the Three Stages of Awareness

The foundation or the building block for the three stages of awareness was discussed earlier in this chapter, where some important concepts of Krishnamurti’s philosophy, notably: Awareness, Nature of Thinking, The Negative Approach in Solving a Psychological Conditioning, Nature of Attention and Concentration, Choiceless Awareness, and the Observer is the Observed were discussed in detail. This application of Krishnamurti’s Awareness reflected in The Flower Model that I designed as shown in Figure 1, contains the essence in which teachers can be guided to gain awareness of their fragmentation or to solve any psychological problems.
There are three stages of awareness in the Flower Model: Stage One is the stage where the individual will be aware of the cause and effect of a psychological conditioning; Stage Two is the stage where the individual will be aware of the conflict posed by the duality of thought; Stage Three is the stage where the individual will be aware of the conflict of duality that transcends into a state of choiceless awareness.

Throughout his life, Krishnamurti pointed toward human conditioning to convey the truth behind human beings’ psychological conditioning. Indirectly, almost implicitly, Krishnamurti was pointing towards the wholeness of life, towards an un-fragmented way of living. The origin of these three stages in solving a problem related to psychological conditioning stemmed from a question posed to Krishnamurti on June 24th, 1945: What is the lasting way to solve a psychological problem? The response to the question was discussed in Krishnamurti (1991b, pp. 26-27). The significance of the response to this question has the capability of unraveling the shadow or the psychological conditioning as mentioned by Palmer (2004) and Chopra (2009, 2010).

Robert Cloninger, Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology and Genetics is widely cited and honored for his innovative research in genetics, neurobiology, psychology, brain imaging, and psychometric assessment, psychopathology and psychobiology. In Feeling Good: The Science of Well-Being, Cloninger articulately integrates Hegel’s three stages of self-aware consciousness (Hegel, 1807, 1981) and Krishnamurti’s three stages of awareness (Krishnamurti, 1945). Cloninger (2004) discusses the integration of Hegel and Krishnamurti’s philosophies, as follows: “Hegel provides the philosophical foundation, whereas Krishnamurti describes a practical psychology of the same stages of consciousness” (p. 80). It is important to note here that Cloninger is using Krishnamurti’s three stages of awareness in doing clinical work, by helping his patients’ understand their fears and other problems and explains that “I recognized that Hegel’s three phases of self-aware consciousness corresponded directly with Krishnamurti’s three stages of awareness in the solution of any human problem” (Cloninger, 2004, p. 80). Nevertheless, in the Flower Model that I am proposing to explain and clarify the three stages of awareness, Hegel’s three stages of self-aware consciousness will not be included as done by Cloninger because Krishnamurti’s three stages of awareness can be observed independently in order to look at one’s psychological problems.
If Cloninger (2004) can use the essence of the three stages of awareness to help his patients understand their fears and other psychological problems, can the academia (or the Teacher Development Centers) also use it to help teachers better understand their psychological conditioning? A deeper implication of developing the Flower Model is to systematically bring Krishnamurti’s philosophy into academia. As discussed earlier in this chapter (Academic Research on Krishnamurti’s Philosophy), Professor Martin was the first analytic philosopher to write a book on Krishnamurti (in The Wadsworth Philosophers Series), that detailed the background and works of over 100 of the greatest intellects throughout the history of civilization. It was Martin who inspired the development of the Flower Model as an aid to bringing Krishnamurti’s work into academic discourse. As Martin (1998) articulates, “academics are interested in considering theories only for the purpose of evaluating them, and at the university the only sort of evaluation of theories that counts is based not on meditation but on argument and public evidence...[and] Krishnamurti did not provide these to back up what he had to say”\(^\text{34}\) (p. 32). These words by Martin are indeed an inspiration and are congruent with the goals of this present research.

Since Krishnamurti’s philosophy is universal\(^\text{35}\) and regarded to be one of the most influential philosopher/spiritual teachers (Blau, 1995) and is also considered to be timeless (J.P. Miller, 2006 and Buultjens, 1996), there is certainly a need to systematically analyze his philosophy even though Krishnamurti himself refused to be seen as a scholar and rejected systematic, intellectual and analytical discussions of his teachings (Rodrigues, 2001). A non-systematic presentation of his teachings had also created many misunderstandings among those who read his work leading them to assume that one cannot model or thematically study his teachings. On the contrary, I would argue that if one carefully studies his work, there are some very consistent themes that Krishnamurti uses in disseminating his teachings, like the notion of conditioned mind, choiceless awareness, nature of thought, nature of awareness, nature of attention and concentration, and the observer is the observed, to name a few of the consistent themes.

\(^{34}\) This quote was also used in page 29 but it’s used again for ease of reference for the reader.

\(^{35}\) The word universal implies that Krishnamurti’s philosophy can be used by anyone interested in unconditioning their mind. It is this appeal that makes his teaching universal.
I personally feel that to study Krishnamurti’s philosophy, one may need to put aside his stand on the refusal to systematically study and model his teachings, but rather to take a step back to analyze his work systematically. This Flower Model will be used to illustrate Krishnamurti’s suggestions to transcend towards wholeness which is an important step to understanding his philosophy in its totality. I would like to offer a rationale for this intention.

For a long time, throughout the many years as a keen student of Krishnamurti’s work, I realized that Krishnamurti often spoke in absolute terms or stance. Although he uses the negative approach, the message behind his philosophy is universal and absolute and Krishnamurti does not entertain any belief system or religion in conveying his philosophy. As Daniel Goleman, author of *The Meditative Mind* asserts, Krishnamurti’s uniqueness is his reluctance in entertaining any belief system. Goleman (1988) clarifies that “Krishnamurti stands alone among spiritual spokesperson in not advocating that the aspirant seek out the company of others on the same path” (p. 103) and, with regard to Krishnamurti’s objection to method of meditation, Goleman mentions that “Krishnamurti objects to method of meditation… [and] he opposes techniques of every kind and urges the putting aside of all authority and tradition” (1988, p. 98). In rejecting all kinds of belief systems and all meditation techniques, one can fall into the trap of misunderstanding Krishnamurti’s philosophy. Although Krishnamurti addresses the issues from the point of view of the conditioned self, his absolute approach often directs people into the third stage of awareness (which will be later in this chapter) and this automatically bypasses the first and second stages of awareness. It is this bypassing that prevents the total understanding of oneself, where there is no conflict between the observer and the observed; this is in fact, the highest state of awareness, which is akin to the “flow” state mentioned by Csikszentmihalyi (1991). Csikszentmihalyi had been researching on creativity in the 1960s when the concept of flow came to him. He was awestruck by the artists he had been interviewing; by how often they ignored hunger, discomfort and fatigue while working on their paintings and yet showed symptoms of loss of interest in the work once the paintings were completed. Thus Csikszentmihalyi called the process flow, as though the artists were carried by a current during the painting process.

Krishnamurti’s insistence on rejecting all systematic approaches may have been misinterpreted by some practitioners who follow him blindly thereby ignoring or bypassing the simple meditation technique like breathing, walking and other types of meditation. However,
these elements are proven to be important or essential in the first stage of awareness (See the next section entitled Three Stages of Awareness). This would not be Krishnamurti’s mistake but rather, the ignorance of the seekers who are not aware that Krishnamurti’s absolute stance requires a state of mind that is tremendously alert and aware, and one that resembles the state of the observer is the observed or the flow state as mentioned by Csikszentmihalyi (1991). It is for this reason – based on my own obstacles in truly understanding Krishnamurti’s philosophy – that I came to the realization that during the first and second stages of awareness (and hence the Flower Model), it is important in understanding the totality of Krishnamurti’s philosophy before attempting to understand the third stage of awareness, where the observer is the observed. The non-fragmented state of being or experiencing wholeness lies in this timeless state when the observer is the observed. Thus, my own ignorance in not understanding Krishnamurti absolute stance, that always points towards the third stage of awareness (that bypasses the first and second stages of awareness) resulted in developing this Flower Model.

**Three Stages of Awareness**

The three stages of awareness will be presented in the following order: Three Stages of Awareness in a nutshell; Getting Calm; First Stage of Awareness; Second Stage of Awareness; Third Stage of Awareness.

*Three Stages of Awareness in a Nutshell*

The first stage of awareness involves being aware of the cause of and effect of the problem or a psychological conditioning. The second stage of awareness deals with being aware of the conflict posed by the contradictory process of the opposites or the conflict of duality between the observer and the observed, or the thinker and the thought, or the experiencer and the experienced. The third stage of awareness is the phenomenal stage where the non-dual conflict collapses into a state where the observer is the observed.
The Flower Model represents the Three Stages of Awareness needed to solve any psychological conditioning or a psychological problem as mentioned by Krishnamurti (1991b). This model also represents the notion of allowing thoughts to flower or bloom and then die. This subtle process of allowing a thought to flower and then to die is an important process that takes place during the three stages of awareness. The Flower Model represents a flower with three petals that represents the first, second and third stages of awareness respectively. Although each stage represents the stages in awareness, a common denominator in this model represents the flowering or blossoming of a psychological problem or a conditioned thought that’s happening at all three stages.

**Getting Calm**

This stage before the first stage of awareness is where we can use the various meditation techniques suggested by J.P. Miller (2007), Kabat-Zinn (2005) and others as mentioned later in this chapter (*Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches*) in order to begin to relax and not to allow our thoughts to be in control.
As a psychiatrist, Cloninger uses simple breathing meditation to get his patients to relax deeply and to stop struggling with their thoughts. J.P. Miller (2007) suggests a simple breath meditation that can be used for this purpose of getting into a calm mode of being:

Sit comfortably in an upright position. You can sit in a chair or on a cushion; however you should keep your back fairly erect. Close your eyes. Now begin to notice the flow of the breath coming in and out of the nose. This meditation involves counting the breaths to yourself as you exhale. You inhale, and then count as one as you exhale. Inhale, and count two. You do this up to ten and begin over. Don’t worry if you lose track of the counting. Simply return to one and start over. (p.180)

Thoughts will come and interrupt this process but we need to gently refuse its influence and continue focusing on the breath. Cloninger (2004) suggests that it takes about five minutes to get into a calm state and that a longer period of relaxation can be a hindrance as it may become a form of escape.

**First Stage of Awareness**

The first stage of awareness is being aware of the cause and effect of the psychological conditioning or the problem. It is a state where we stay with *what is*, where we can observe our problems without escaping. Cloninger (2004) suggests that we allow all the “rough spots” or “sensitive issues” to appear so that the psychological conditioning or problems like jealously, loneliness, anger, etc., can be smoothed out. Staying with *what is* also provides a way of facing or owning the problem in a passive manner and this passive awareness should not be mistaken as a way of looking at a problem without interest, but as a way of looking at a problem without condemnation, without justification and without identification. Krishnamurti suggest that this way of looking happens automatically when we are interested in something and adds that “when you are interested in watching your child, your wife, your plants, the trees, the birds…you observe without condemnation, without identification; therefore in that observation there is complete communion; the observer and the observed are completely in communion… [and this happens] when you are deeply, profoundly interested in something” (1954, p.174).

Although Cloninger (2004) suggests that the acceptance – or the willingness to see who we are without the need to be something else – of a particular thought in reflection to be the end
of the first stage of awareness; I would like to add the notion of allowing a thought to flower in order to see the cause and effect, and to let a thought blossom, so that it leads us to its colors, ugliness, pettiness and the root of the thought. The *Flower Model* represents the notion of allowing thoughts to flower or blossom and then die. It’s an important process that takes place in the three stages of awareness that will be discussed next. This *Flower Model* shown in Figure 1, represents a flower with three petals. Each petal represents the first second, third stage of awareness respectively. Although each stage represents one stage of awareness, the flowering process is happening at all three stages. Krishnamurti (1974) uses jealousy as an example to illustrate the need to allow a thought or a psychological conditioning to flower:

> If you allow jealousy to flower then it shows you everything it actually is – which is envy, attachment. So in allowing jealousy to blossom, it has shown you all its colors and it has revealed to you what is behind jealousy, which you will never discover if you do not allow it to blossom. (p.186)

This metaphor of flowering, as explained by Krishnamurti, uses the process of flowering in a garden; like the flower, thought must flower and blossom and must come to fruition and die. Krishnamurti (1974) adds that: “Like the flower in a garden, thought must blossom… [and] be given freedom to die. In the same way there must be freedom for frustration to flower and die” (p.182). Krishnamurti warns that when a problem is not followed from the root to flower, it is like nipping the bud and not allowing it to flower. This is the common escape that we encounter when we are paying keen attention to one thought, other thoughts rush in and before even realizing it, other thoughts are already dominating us. This overlapping of one thought on another will be discussed in the second stage of awareness.

**Second Stage of Awareness**

The second stage of awareness deals with the notion of being aware of the conflict posed by the duality of thought. How do we become aware of the dual nature of thought? When a thought is allowed to flower, we can see for ourselves how other thoughts rush in and overlap with the earlier thought that was flowering. At this stage, the desire to allow another thought to overlap with the flowering thought must be watched and understood, and it is truly difficult to be passively alert of the dual state of conflict. If the overlapping thought is more comforting than the thought that was flowering, it simply means that the duality remained and that the flowering
process was not complete. Krishnamurti (1991b) explains this phenomenon by stating that when “we condemn or justify; compare or identify; so we are choosing sides and thus maintaining the cause of conflict [of duality]...[and] to be choicelessly aware of the conflict of duality is arduous, but it is essential if you would transcend the problem” (p. 27). It is not an easy task to remain passive and be choicelessly aware of the conflict of duality but it is important to observe a thought until it fully flowers. Krishnamurti (2002b) states that an important part of meditation is to slow down this overlapping process that prevents the flowering of thoughts.

Thus, if we continue the flowering of thought from the first stage of awareness, the challenge in this second stage is to continue to allow every thought to flower and die without allowing the “overlapping” process to take place. Krishnamurti (1974) points towards this overlapping process, when he mentions that, “as each fact unveils itself, it flowers and you deal with it. You let the fact flower and it opens other doors, till there is no flowering at all of any kind” (p.186). The crucial thing to understand at this point is in the phrase ‘it opens other doors’, which implies that when one problem – say jealousy – is allowed to flower and blossom, we will find that it will enable another thought to flower or 'open the door' for another thought to begin to flower and blossom. When this happens, where every thought is allowed to flower and blossom, no thought is denied, no thought is suppressed and no thought is controlled. If this can be experienced by teachers and students, Krishnamurti (1974) declares: “It is a tremendous education, is it not?” (p. 187). When a thought is not allowed to flower and die, it simply means that the conflict of the opposites has not been solved. Krishnamurti (1991b) offers the following explanation on as to why a particular desire needs to be observed and understood rather than desiring to get rid of the conflict that only gives strength to its continuity:

Many of us are aware of the conflict of the opposites; but because of pain or disturbance due to conflict, we instinctively seek to be rid if it violently or in varieties of subtle ways; we are concerned with escaping from the struggle rather than with understanding it. It is this desire to be rid of the conflict that gives strength to its continuity, and so maintains contradiction; it is this desire that must be watched and understood. Yet it is difficult to be alertly passive in the conflict of duality; we condemn or justify, compare or identify; so we are ever choosing sides and thus maintaining the cause of conflict. To be choicelessly aware of the conflict of duality is arduous, but it is essential if you would transcend the problem. (p. 27)
It’s also important to emphasize that the desire to be rid of the conflict is what actually gives strength to its continuity. It is like trying to stop a spreading fire by pouring gasoline or fuel on it. This is the exact reason why some psychological conditionings remain active in our mind for many years and we remain in the first and second stage of awareness without ever transcending into the third stage of awareness.

Since the second stage is being aware of thought’s contradictory process, it is also known as a stage where we broaden our consciousness or grow in awareness. Cloninger (2004) adds that “we are growing in awareness of information that was previously subconscious…[and] we want to know all sides and influences on our thoughts and actions for the sake of impartial understanding, rather than justification or rationalization” (p. 88).

In addressing the momentum or energy needed in continuing the flowering process in the second stage, Krishnamurti adds that:

That momentum, that flame which burns, can only be when there is freedom for everything to flower – the ugly, the beautiful, the evil, the good and the stupid – so that there is not a thing which has not been brought up and examined and burnt out. (pp. 182-183)

**Third Stage of Awareness**

If the second stage of awareness is concerned with the broadening of consciousness or growth in awareness, the third stage of awareness deals with the enlargement of consciousness which is to “recognize that the coherence of the universal unity of being is the only consistent source of well-being…[and] become more aware by facing reality, without any judging, condemning, or struggling” (Cloninger, 2004, p. 91).

The intuitive senses possess qualities like freedom, beauty, truth and goodness and Winnicot (1958) claims that these qualities are asleep to a substantial degree that leads to the conflict of duality or the false self. As individuals awaken their intuitive senses in the second and

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36 The term *universal unity of being* as explained by Cloninger (2004) means that the term cosmos is derived from the Greek *kosmos*, pointing towards the *universal unity of being* or “the universe conceived as a whole that is undivided, orderly, harmonious, intelligent, and creative” (p. 203).
third stages of awareness, they awaken to their true being or a state of clarity in the absence of the conflict of duality (Winnicot, 1958; Kohut, 1984; Thermes, 2002).

The enlargement or the increase of consciousness that happens during this third stage of awareness is equivalent to being in the state of *choiceless awareness*, where the thinker and the thought are seen as one. As explained earlier in this chapter, the notion of *choiceless awareness* refers to a state where total attention is given without the observer (the observer is the past, who is conditioned). This begs the question: What is the connection between the process of allowing a thought to flower and being in the state of choiceless awareness? As every conditioned thought is flowering or blossoming and dying, the duality experienced by each thought begins to collapse into a choiceless state where there are no likes or dislikes from the observer’s point of view. The conflict of the opposites happens when the thinker and his/her thought or the observer and the things he/she observes are experienced as separate and it is in this third stage of awareness that the complete integration of the thinker and his/her thought happens. It is a state known as: the observer is the observed (Krishnamurti, 1969, Krishnamurti & Bohm, 1985, 1999); the object is within itself, as a living being (Hegel, 1807); state of psychological flow or optimum state of consciousness (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991).

At this point, we can imply that the flowering process will continue as long as any psychological conditioning remains. But this doesn’t mean that we cannot experience the third stage of awareness, as the flowering process is still continuing. Csikszentmihalyi (1991, 1993) shows us that in a state of flow, we are happy, alert and the sense of time and worry seems to be absent in a state of total happiness. As such, flow is “a state of intense absorption and involvement in the present moment…[where] you’re totally immersed in what you’re doing, fully concentrating, and unaware of yourself” (Lyubomirsky, 2008, p. 181). It is that timeless state when we are watching a sunset or a wonderful scenery; where the observer is absent for a short moment. In that short timeless moment, all choices collapse and the observer is the observed in that moment. Krishnamurti also arrives at a similar observation when he states that:

At that moment when you look at something grand, immense, majestic, for a second you don’t exist – you’ve forgotten your worries…[and] all the messiness of your life. At that moment you are stunned by it. For that second, the grandeur has wiped out all your memory, just for a second, and then you come back. What happens during that second
when you are not there? That is beauty… when you are not there…that is, when the self is not, there is beauty. (1988, p. 38)

Cloninger (2004) declares that the third stage of awareness or the self-aware consciousness was “regarded by Hegel, Krishnamurti, and Csikszentmihalyi as the only truly scientific level of consciousness and the only level of self-awareness in which well-being can be attained by a full understanding of emotional conflicts and intellectual contradictions” (p. 83) and concludes that, “only in the third stage of awareness do human beings directly experience pure intuitions without effortful reasoning” (p. 83).

Thus, the Flower Model provides the philosophical and psychological context needed for teachers to experience wholeness. The purpose of this research also points towards the needed mindset for teachers to drop their fragmentations in order to experience wholeness. As holistic educators, if we are interested in developing the whole child, this empirical research and the literature shows that teachers’ wholeness cannot be ignored. This empirical research provides an aid towards that direction where teachers can be coached to deeply observe their psychological conditioning in order to observe the wholeness within.

Holistic Education shares many philosophical underpinnings with Krishnamurti’s philosophy because both body of knowledge focuses on the integrated approach. While holistic education focuses on integrated approach of educating the whole person (mind, body and spirit), Krishnamurti felt that the function of education is to create human beings who are integrated. The Flower Model uses the combination of the philosophical underpinnings of Holistic Education and Krishnamurti’s philosophy. As we can see, the stage of getting calm (the stage before the first stage of awareness) and the first stage of awareness (being aware of the cause and effect of a psychological conditioning) use the philosophy of holistic education where various meditation techniques like breathing meditation, mantra meditation, etc., can be practiced to calm the mind and be aware of the cause and effect of a problem. The second and third stages of awareness in the Flower Model use Krishnamurti’s philosophy where it requires awareness without practice. Thus, the state where one is aware of the conflict of duality (second stage of awareness) and the state where the non-dual conflict collapses (third stage of awareness) clearly utilize Krishnamurti’s philosophy.
Krishnamurti’s philosophy compliments the philosophical underpinnings of Holistic Education. On the notion of wholeness, both Krishnamurti and Holistic education philosophies agree with one another. Krishnamurti (1974) stresses on the need to develop wholeness in students in the schools he created and added that:

The purpose, the aim and drive of these schools is to equip the child with the most excellent technological proficiency…and far more important to create the right climate so that the child may develop fully as a complete human being. (p. 89)

I believe that Krishnamurti’s notion of ‘complete human being’ refers to whole human being. A similar comparison to the statement above was stated by Jack Miller, a pioneer in this field of holistic education that the “whole child education attempts to educate the whole child (body-mind-spirit) and also connect the child to the surrounding community and the world at large” (J.P. Miller, 2010, p. 8).

Aspects of Teachers that Contributes Towards Wholeness

In this section, six factors which contribute to a deeper inquiry into teachers’ wholeness will be discussed in order to get a better understanding of their wholeness. These are: Teachers’ Thinking, Teachers’ Lives, Teachers’ Inner Lives, Teachers’ Vocation/Calling, Teachers’ Contemplative Practices/Approaches and Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design. A research study on teachers’ wholeness may not point directly towards wholeness but can point towards their thinking, lives, inner lives, calling, contemplative approaches and pedagogy in order to gain a deeper understanding of wholeness. As such, this research uses relevant literature in order to map out teachers’ wholeness from the point of view of their thinking, lives, inner lives, calling, contemplative approaches and pedagogy.

**Teachers’ Thinking**

Researchers of teacher thinking strive to map the mental lives of teachers. Clark and Peterson’s (1986) research on teacher thinking shows that teachers’ personal values and beliefs affect their teaching and play an integral role in the development of pedagogy and practice. Clark and Peterson also commented on the difficulty of conducting research on teacher thinking due to
the fact that teachers’ thinking and their actions are confounded by the multiplicity of influences in their lives.

Jackson’s (1968) pioneering research was done in an attempt to describe and understand the workings of teacher behavior. In his book, *Life in Classrooms*, Jackson (1968) found that teachers have an uncomplicated, intuitive, and opinionated approach to the classroom, instead of an open-minded approach that would be suitable to being reflective. Jackson further adds that:

Teachers do not usually have occasion to probe the unconscious motives of their students or sketch the contours of their social life space or examine the depths of their intellectual powers. Perhaps it is not surprising, therefore, to find that profound words, in the teacher’s lexicon, have a distinctly parochial cast. (1968, p. 147)

The various literatures on teacher thinking tends to emphasizes the following: one’s motivation to become a teacher (Sumison, 2000); student teachers’ reasons for entering the teaching profession (Hayes, 1990; Stiegelbauer, 1992) and the influence of student teachers’ characteristics and reasons for entering teacher-education programs (Morso & Pigge, 1986).

*Teachers’ Lives*

The research on teachers’ lives is situated within the framework of understanding curriculum as autobiographical/biographical text. Pinar et al. (1995) note that the sector of autobiographical and biographical research is comprised of four streams: teachers’ collaborative autobiography (Butt & Raymond, 1992), personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987), teacher lore (Schubert & Ayers, 1992), and studying teachers’ lives (Goodson, 1991).

Elbaz (1991) researched and situated teacher knowledge of curriculum as an autobiographical text with the focus on “looking at teaching from the inside” (as cited in Pinar et al., 1995, p. 554). Pinar et al. (1995) explain that while researching teachers’ lore and personal practical knowledge, it is common to request that teachers report their experiences as an autobiography, as exhibited in Goodson’s (1992) study of teachers’ lives and Butt and Raymond’s (1992) collaborative autobiography of teachers.

Attema-Noordewier et al. (2012) describes an approach that involves teachers looking inward to build awareness of personal qualities, potential and inspiration. In their research, the
authors found that teachers’ involvement in developing awareness of their personal, collegial and student strengths results in affecting relationships and curriculum. The *Onion Model* developed by Fred Korthagen illustrates many layers of an onion \(^\text{37}\). Each of these layers plays a role in teaching and these layers are: environment, identity, mission, belief, competencies and the core qualities (patience and trust). Attema-Noordewier et al. (2012) illustrate how this Onion Model can play a role in a teacher’s life and gives the following example:

Teacher Jennifer teaches fourth grade (environment). She sees herself (identity) as a ‘guiding’ teacher who supports children to develop themselves and teaches them how to learn. She feels she contributes to the world by developing children for becoming self-reliant adults (mission). She believes it important to help children find and access their own answers to questions (belief). Therefore, she develops her skills to guide her students through the learning process (competencies), applying her qualities of patience and trust (core qualities). (p. 119)

Another research directly related to the core competencies of the Onion Model by Korthagen was conducted by Younghee Kim and William Greene. In their three-year collaborative self-study, they examined the impact of core reflection on their identities and practices as teacher educators. Kim and Greene (2011) concluded that “core reflection served as a useful approach for aligning professional and personal identities with our sense of purpose, passion and teaching ideals” (p. 109).

Christopher Day and Qing Gu researched and presented their findings in *The New Lives of Teachers* relating to the positive and negative influence on the career and professional development of teachers as well as the influence of school leadership, culture, colleagues and conditions that have a connection to teacher retention, work-life balance and wellbeing. Day and Gu’s (2010) book is about the work and lives of teachers in primary and secondary schools and is also “the first of its kind to present a holistic perspective of what it is like to be a teacher in changing and challenging times” (p. 1).

\(^{37}\) To visualize this Onion Model better, imagine an onion cut into half and many layers that can be observed. Each layer represents a role in teaching.
Teachers’ Inner Lives


Palmer (1998) explains the four stages in his Courage to Teach model, after carefully observing and studying: the civil rights movement; the women’s movement; the movements for freedom in Eastern Europe, South Africa, and Latin America; and the movement for gay and lesbian rights. The four stages that show the rise of the individual that may lead to transformation in society are:

Stage 1: Isolated individuals make an inward decision to live “divided no more”, finding a center for their lives outside of institutions.

Stage 2: These individuals begin to discover one another and form communities of congruence that offer mutual support and opportunities to develop a shared vision.

Stage 3: These communities start going public, learning to convert their private concerns into the public issues that they are and receiving vital critiques in the process.

Stage 4: A system of alternative rewards emerges to sustain the movement’s vision and to put pressure for change on the standard institutional reward system.

This vision outlined by Palmer shows that the ‘fruit’ from the journey of the inner life that transforms the individuals and the society at large indeed takes a long time. Deep changes in people truly take time and the words of Parker Palmer echo with Gandhi’s (1938) notion that “good travels at snail’s pace” (p. 45) which means that to influence others towards goodness takes a long time. Palmer’s vision of transforming society by transforming individuals is similar to Krishnamurti’s views on societal transformation. Krishnamurti states that an individual’s inner motif is revealed to oneself through relationship with another and strongly asserts that without personal transformation, there can be no transformation of society at large. Palmer et al. (2001) describe the six fundamentals involved in structuring and leading the Courage to Teach retreats:
1. *Framing Evocative Questions*, where reflective questions are raised to evoke meaningful reflection and ponder the relationship between vocation and selfhood.

2. *Welcoming Silence*, where silence is believed to be a ‘sort of speech’ from our deepest self. This practice is a fundamental practice of the Quakers, a religious organization of which Palmer is a member.

3. *Working with Paradox* suggests that the qualities concerning the inner life like “you cannot know light without darkness, silence without speech, solitude without community” (p. 138) refers to the opposite characteristics. It suggests that although these characteristics are opposite in nature, they complement each other.

4. *Identifying Birthright Gifts* means that we honor a person’s soul, and the natural talent or genius that lies within. Recognizing one’s natural talent also means that “we are much more likely to notice and draw out the gifts of others—our peers and colleagues as well as the children we teach” (p.139).

5. *Using Poetry and Teaching Stories as ‘third things’*, refers to the use of stories and poems to mediate between facilitator and participant means that “Good third things are brief, accessible, and to the point, containing aspects of both the personal and the universal” (p. 140).

6. *Practicing the Clearness Committee* is a method used in the Quaker community to get a clearer picture of a personal decision, issues or dilemma. In essence, this method refers to a group of people helping a person who is struggling with an issue or dilemma in the form of asking questions that can help the person to discover inner wisdom.

John P. Miller’s research on holistic education and the inner life of teachers that span over 30 years provide a foundation for a spiritual curriculum that nurtures the soul. J.P. Miller (1993, 1994, 2000, and 2006) outlines a model for teachers to explore their inner lives. J.P. Miller (2006) highlights qualities such as wisdom, compassion, joy, awe and wonder, feeling whole and having a sense of purpose as the outcome of timeless learning that impacts the inner life. In *Education and the Soul*, Miller explores the nature of the soul and how it could be incorporated into schools. Miller also discusses the curriculum needed for the inner life through techniques such as meditation, visualization, dream-work, and autobiography. Most importantly, Miller also focuses on the need for the teachers to explore their inner lives for soulful learning to take place. Miller affirms that “the teacher’s soul must be nourished if the student’s soul is to
develop… [and] there is nothing that our students desire from us than out attention, our authentic presence” (J.P. Miller, 2000, p. 10).

J.P. Miller (2000) and Kessler (2000a) comprehensively address how the soul can be nourished in education. Miller does not only address the development of the student’s soul but also the teacher’s soul. J.P. Miller feels that bringing the soul into education can be done in a way that respects everyone’s religious beliefs or traditions. J.P. Miller (2000) defines soul as “a deep and vital energy that gives meaning and direction to our lives” (p. 9), and Moore (1992) asserts that “soul is not a thing, but a quality or a dimension of experiencing life and ourselves…[that] has to do with depth, value, relatedness, heart and personal substance” (as cited in J.P. Miller, 2000, p. 21).

One of the important concepts that I want to address in this thesis is that in holistic education, the development of wholeness in students is of utmost importance. But there is a pre-requisite goal before we can develop wholeness in students. It is my opinion that educators themselves need to nourish their souls and explore their inner lives, to integrate wholeness in their lives first, before attempting to develop students’ wholeness. J.P. Miller (2000) feels strongly about this and asserts that “if the student’s soul is to be nurtured and developed, it follows then that the process must begin with the teacher’s soul” (p. 121) and adds that if the teacher’s soul is constricted and impoverished or not whole, then there is little hope that the student’s soul would be nourished.

There is a middle approach that might encourage both the teacher and the student to embrace wholeness as the teaching and learning is progressing. Developing wholeness requires one to observe; observe deeply the workings of our mind in relationship, because it’s only in relationship with another do we see clearly our reactions, thought, desires, attachments, identification, and so on. To enable learning to take place in the teacher and the student, surely co-operation is needed. Krishnamurti (1981) explains that “to learn about oneself the educator is not concerned with himself but with the student. In this interaction with its reactions one begins to see the nature of oneself—the thoughts, the desires, the attachments, the identifications…each is acting as a mirror to the other; each is observing in the mirror exactly what he is” (p. 99).

The late Rachael Kessler, who headed the Institute for Social and Emotional learning in Boulder, Colorado and her Passages Program offers a “curriculum for adolescents that
integrates heart, spirit and community with a strong academic program,” (Kessler, 2005, p.101). The *Passages Program* is also committed to nurturing the inner life of students and teachers and “inner life” is described as “the essential aspect of human nature that yearns for deep connection, grapples with difficult questions about meaning, and seeks a sense of purpose and genuine self-expression” (cited from [http://passageworks.org](http://passageworks.org)).

Kessler (2000b) describes “teaching presence” as a quality in a teacher in a class that captures the attention of the class and allows connection to occur between teacher and students. J.P. Miller (2007) refers to this teaching presence by explaining that teaching involves three factors: theory, teaching strategies and presence of the teacher and adds that “the holistic curriculum is rooted in the presence of the teacher” (p.190).

Kessler (2000b) looks at three qualities that define “teaching presence” in the classroom: respectful discipline, presence and an open heart. Respectful discipline refers to creating a condition in the class where students feel free and safe to share matters that are deeply meaningful to them. Such a condition creates a respectful climate that “encourages children to speak from the heart. Speaking from the heart is what makes a class come alive; it is what engages other children to want to listen” (Kessler, 2000b, p. 8). An open heart is a prerequisite to being fully present and an open-hearted teacher has the capacity to be vulnerable (an ability to be willing to feel deeply and moved by the students vulnerability without losing one’s center) and willingness to care (teachers who are able to show love, a quality that accepts and forgives the child).

Kessler (2000b) defines being present as an ability to be in the moment, at this very moment in life. She describes the ability of a teacher who is fully present in the moment as being:

Open to perceiving what is happening right now, responsive to the needs of this moment, flexible enough to shift gears, prepared with the repertoire, creativity and imagination to invent a new approach in the moment and humble and honest enough to simply pause and acknowledgement of a new approach has not yet arrived. (p.9)

Bache (2008) is an important work that describes a professor’s 30 years of personal observation in his classrooms, explores the dynamics of collective consciousness and reflects on
the synchronistic connections that occurred in the classrooms that result in insights and transformations. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers (2004) describe an amazing example by transpersonal psychologist Christopher Bache’s observations on the ability to pause and engage in the “teaching presence”. Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski and Flowers (2004) cite Bache (2000) who describes the process:

In lecturing there is a moment that comes when a student has asked a question or when you’re searching for just the right example to communicate a different concept…[when] there is a pause in the flow of your mind, a break in the continuity of your thinking… I discovered a small door in the back of my mind…open and through it slips of paper would be passed to me with suggestions written on them—an idea, an image…if I took the risk and used this gift, something magical would happen…when the magic happened, the walls of our separateness came down temporarily… [and] my students and I tapped into levels of creativity beyond our separate capacities. (as cited in Senge et al., 2004, pp. 145-146)

Bache’s exploration of collective consciousness (plus his contemplative practices) and J.P. Miller’s contemplative practices are two good examples of teachers who succeeded at being in the process of developing wholeness.

Krishnamurti (1996) eloquently describes presence by referring to the total attention to the now, the moment. He says that “attention is a flame and that attention is not something that you come to; it is attention now to everything…to pay complete attention, not partial” (p. 360).

Eckhart Tolle’s The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment captures the concept that the present moment is where we find our joy and ability to embrace our true selves. He concludes that “when you surrender to what is and so become fully present, the past ceases to have any power. You do not need it anymore. Presence is the key. The NOW is the key” (Tolle, 1997, p. 193). Eckhart Tolle was featured in Robert Ullman’s Mystics, Masters, Saints, and Sages: Stories of Enlightenment as one of the contemporary spiritual teachers who has gone through enlightenment. Ullman (2001) asserts that to “enlighten” means “to provide knowledge or spiritual insight [and those] who describe enlightenment experiences recount a shift out of their ordinary frames of references” (p. xv).
J.P. Miller (2000) strongly advocates the importance of teachers’ presence when he mentions that “teachers who cannot bring their authentic presence to the classroom each day, who cannot attune themselves empathetically to their students are ill-equipped to give of themselves or respond appropriately to students’ needs” (p. 121). In exploring teacher’s inner lives, the notion of viewing teaching as a calling or vocation cannot be avoided.

**Teachers’ Vocation/Calling**

The word *vocation* is rooted in the Latin for “voice” and Palmer (2000) stated that vocation is not an act of will but rather the calling that one hears. The listening of the authentic call comes from the voice within, the inner voice that connects to our true self (Palmer, 1998; Spangler, 1996). In researching the events in a teacher’s life that have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher, I am relating it to their calling into the profession of teaching. Most work on vocation revolves around the point of view of theology (Placher, 2005; Marshall, 1996; Schuurman, 2004; Smith-Moran, 1997).

In *The Soul’s Code*, James Hillman, a Jungian analyst, examines the lives of many individuals to show that they were born with a character, as a gift and that each of us has a soul-companion (called daimon) that guides and knows our destiny (Hillman, 1996). Clifford Mayes, an associate professor of education and also a Jungian analyst, uses transpersonal psychology to explain teachers’ calling on the basis of archetypal energy, the universal contents of the collective unconscious (Mayes, 2005a, 2005b, 2003).

Robinson’s (2009) work entitled *The Element* draws on stories of individuals arriving at the *Element*, the point at which their natural talent meets personal passion. Robinson explains that the component of the *Element* has implications for teaching that helps to understand “the diversity of intelligence, the power of imagination and creativity, and the importance of commitment to our own capabilities” (2009, p. 235). Krishnamurti (1953) stresses that the teaching profession is not merely a job but a calling or vocation and strongly states that “if the teachers are not sure of their vocation and interest, there is bound to be envy and antagonism among them, and they will expend whatever energies they have over trifling details and wasteful bickering” (p. 92).
Day & Gu (2010) uses the word vocation rather than career in exploring the inner landscapes of teachers, explaining that “career is too individualistic a concept …[and] it represents lifelong economic support in the job or a sequence of different jobs” (p. 43). Hansen (1995) supports this notion, and Day and Gu (2010) summarizes it by sharing that the concept of career “takes us away from the everyday personal and professional moral purposes of teaching, which feature core characteristics of many teachers’ lives” (p. 44).

In a conversation with a teacher, Krishnamurti was discussing the true function of a teacher. The teacher suggested that beside transmitting knowledge, a teacher can be an exemplary figure who can show the way of life, conduct, attitude and outlook that can influence and inspire the student. Krishnamurti questioned that since the teacher himself has learned through the lens of his conditioning, how he can be an exemplary figure and suggested that:

When the teacher regards each student as a unique individual, and therefore not to be compared with any other, he is then not concerned with systems or method…[and] his sole concern is with ‘helping’ the student to understand the conditioning influences about him and within himself, so that he can face intelligently without fear, the complex process of living, and not add more problems to the already existing mess. (Krishnamurti, 1992, pp. 27-28)

In realizing the difficult task presented by Krishnamurti, the teacher asked: “Are you not asking of the teacher a task that is far beyond him?” (p. 28) and Krishnamurti – as though echoing the reality that when one hears their calling, there is no choice but to enter the stream that’s inviting us and have the conviction that the intelligence will guide us through the process – gently but firmly suggested to the teacher that, “if you are incapable of this, then why be a teacher? Your question has meaning only if teaching is a mere career to you, a job like any other, for I feel that nothing is impossible for the true educator” (p.28).

Failure to find one’s vocation may lead individuals towards depression but people often do not connect their depression to the fact that they have not found the right work, or their calling. Moore (2008) mentioned this feeling of discomfort and shared that:

The failure to find the right job or to enjoy the one you have creates a special kind of depression. A person may feel that her spirit has been crushed or perhaps never brought
to the light of day. Some wonder why they feel so low and never connect their depression to work. In therapy, they may be talking about marital difficulties or an addiction, and they are surprised when their counselor asks about their work. It seems they haven’t thought much about work in relations to their emotions and the things that give meaning to their lives. (pp. 1-2)

**Teachers’ Contemplative Practices/Approaches**

Contemplative practice involves “the development of compassionate attention” (J.P. Miller, 1994, p. 2). As such, contemplation involves the act of total attention, which is connected closely to the notion of “teaching presence”. In contemplation, a phenomenon takes places where the boundary between the object and subject disappears and as J.P. Miller (1994) explains, “in contemplation we tend to merge with the object… [or in other words] we become the object or the process that we are contemplating” (p. 3). This merging with the object is also known as the non-dualistic experience or the feeling of oneness. Being is also called the Self (Carl Jung), the Atman (Hinduism), Buddha-Nature (Buddhism), Inner-self (Thomas Merton) (J.P. Miller, 1994).

In understanding curriculum as phenomenological text, Pinar et al. (1995) suggest that “phenomenologists insist that teaching is an orientation toward being” (p. 427). Tetsuo Aoki, a phenomenologist, who felt strongly that one’s way of knowing, thinking and doing flows from who one is from the inside, and added that “what matters deeply in the situated world of the classroom is how the teachers’ ‘doings’ flow from who they are…Teaching is fundamentally a mode of being” (Aoki, 1986, p. 8). When teachers experience their being, duality drops as they can see themselves in their students.

Krishnamurti (1963) writes about the importance of attention that connects to the contemplative life. He points out that attention should not be mistaken with concentration, and explains that concentration is a process of forcing the mind to narrow down to a point and is limited by a boundary but claims that attention is limitless without the frontiers of knowledge. He further adds that: “It is attention that allows silence to come upon the mind, which is the opening of the door to creation. That is why attention is of the highest importance” (p.102).

There are two major approaches to meditation: One uses the practice of meditation that includes walking meditation, breathing meditation, mantra meditation, etc; the other approach
uses no method or practice at all. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Krishnamurti endorsed the second approach called Choiceless Awareness that uses no method. Both these approaches will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

Krishnamurti (1996) was very adamant about using the second approach towards contemplation that does not utilize any practice or method and stated the following:

If meditation is determined, if it is following a system, a method, practiced day after day, what happens to the human brain? It becomes more and more dull. Is meditation something entirely different? It has nothing whatever to do with method, system, practices; therefore, it can never be mechanical. It can never be conscious meditation. (pp. 359-360)

In suggesting an alternative approach, Krishnamurti (1996) points towards a state of total attention, where there is total attention to the present moment, the now:

Is there a meditation which is not determined, practiced? There is, but that requires enormous attention. That attention is a flame and that attention is not something that you come to; it is attention now to everything, every word, every gesture, every thought; it is to pay complete attention, not partial. If you are listening partially now, you are not giving complete attention. When you are completely attentive there is no self, there is no limitation. (p. 360)

Meditation can be defined as a process of getting connected to one’s being, thus experiencing non-duality. J.P. Miller (1994) outlined several meditation practices that help to focus on one’s attention, which forms an important aspect of contemplative practice. Mediation can be defined as a process of getting connected to one’s being, thus experiencing non-duality. J.P. Miller (1994) proposes the following meditation practices:

1. Insight or vipassana is a meditation that focuses on being aware of everything that’s happening at the moment. The secret behind the insight meditation is just allowing things to happen naturally while observing everything non-judgmentally as mentioned in Goldstein (1976).
2. Mindfulness is a type of insight meditation that can be applied to daily activities. J.P. Miller (1994) offers a word to describe mindfulness, wholeheartedness, which means
that whatever we do, we do it wholeheartedly or completely. Hanh (1976, 1991) offers an excellent account of mindfulness practice from a Buddhist point of view.

3. Mantra is a word or phrase used to evoke the being. A mantra is generally repeated continuously in silence or otherwise. Some of the mantra’s used across the various religions are: *Hail Mary* (Catholicism), *Om Nama Shivaya* (Hinduism), *Om Mani padme hum* (Buddhism), *Barukh attah Adonai* (Judaism) and *Bismillah ir-Rahman ir-Rahim* (Islam).

4. Visualization meditation is a meditation that uses imagination in a form of imagery that can produce positive effects. Murphy (1992) claims that visualization meditation “can facilitate relief from various afflictions, among them depression, anxiety, insomnia, obesity, sexual problems, chronic pain, phobias, psychosomatic illness, cancer and other diseases” (p. 372).

5. Movement meditation is a form of bodily movement exercise and a form of yoga called *hatha yoga* was proposed by J.P. Miller (1994).

Research has shown the benefits of meditation for reversing heart illness (Ornish, 1990; Williams, 1989), improving productivity, quality, stamina in relation to the creative process (Carrington, 1977), enhancing physical and mental well being (Benson, 1976; Walsh, 1999; Murphy & Donovan, 1997). In short, meditation can be practiced by teachers to improve their health and well being that will, in turn, enhance their inner life and spirituality.

Brown’s (1999) article, *The Teacher as Contemplative Observer* explains the teacher training program at Naropa Institute, Boulder that incorporates the Buddhist practices of observation, meditation, and contemplative observation, and advises teachers that, “a key to contemplative observation and teaching is letting go our reactiveness on the spot” (p.72).

J.P. Miller and Nozawa (2002) in their article, *Contemplative Practices in Teacher Education* describe the contemplative practices offered in the teacher education program at the Ontario Institute of Studies in education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT). In a qualitative study on meditating teachers, J.P. Miller and Nozawa (2002) focus on 21 educators who have been meditating for an average of four years. The major finding of this study is that “when meditation is introduced in an academic setting, it can have positive long-term effects on both the personal and professional lives of educators” (p.191).
Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design

In understanding curriculum as an institutional text, Pinar et al. (1995) explains that the art of teaching and learning forms a bridge between curriculum and teachers. The exploration of teachers’ pedagogy in relation to their spirituality is an important aspect of my research. Jackson’s (1986) study of the practice of teaching takes a neutral stand by not siding with either progressive or traditional positions and states that teachers need to have both conservative and liberal outlooks. Other studies on pedagogy that are important for this research include: research on beginning teachers’ metaphor of teaching (Bullough et al., 1991); examination of great exemplars of teaching from various spiritual traditions (Mayes, 2005a); teachers as different archetype of spirit (Reinsmith, 1992; Mayes, 2005b); a fifteen year longitudinal case study examining how thinking about pedagogy develops over time (Levin, 2003); promoting identity development (Danielewicz, 2001) and the exploration of pedagogy and its impact on learning (Mortimore, 1999).

In order to observe the connection between the aspects of teachers’ wholeness (teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ vocation, teachers’ contemplative practices and teachers’ pedagogy) and the research questions, Figure 2 was created to see this in a clearer manner. This connection will be made throughout this current research and these aspects of teachers’ wholeness will be referred to as categories, in the analysis section of the paper. The research sub-questions with their associated categories will be listed here for ease of reference when referring to Figure 2:

Research Sub-Question # 1: What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
Category: Teachers’ Thinking

Research Sub-Question # 2: What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
Category: Teachers’ Lives
Research Sub-Question # 3: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish wholeness within?
Category: Teachers’ Inner Lives

Research Sub-Question # 4: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?
Category: Teachers’ Vocation/Calling

Research Sub-Question # 5: What are some of the contemplative approaches that teachers engage in and how do these approaches influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
Category: Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches

Research Sub-Question # 6: What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc.) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?
Category: Teachers’ Pedagogy / Curriculum Design

Figure 2: Connection between Aspects/Categories of Teachers’ Wholeness and Research Sub-Questions
As a conclusion to this literature review chapter, it is my opinion that a relevant and adequate foundation has been laid for this research that discusses teachers’ wholeness in relation to Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy. The literature on spirituality and wholeness provided the philosophical groundwork on the different philosophies in the field/literature to explore one’s wholeness or to understand one’s fragmentation (that results in wholeness).

A unique aspect of this research is the identification of six categories of teachers’ wholeness (Teachers’ Thinking, Teachers’ Lives, Teachers’ Inner Lives, Teachers’ Vocation/Calling, Teachers’ Contemplative Practices/Approaches and Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design) that has generated in-depth discussions on the various ways in which teachers’ can develop their wholeness. The interview questions were designed based on the six sub-research questions, the six categories and the literature reviewed which guided this process, will be presented in the next chapter.
Chapter 3
Methodology of the Inquiry

Qualitative Research

The process of qualitative research involves the inquiry and understanding of human problems or human phenomena and as Creswell (2007) explains, “qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding...that explores a social or human problem[that] builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports...and conducts the study in a natural setting” (p. 249).

Qualitative research is conducted to explore a problem or an issue. This exploration is generally done with a group (or groups) within a population. The relationship between the researcher and the participant(s) is crucial in qualitative research. Creswell (2007) adds to this concern and shares that “we conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories...and minimize the power relationship that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study” (p. 40). Standards to evaluate the quality of qualitative research can be found in Howe and Eisenhardt, 1990; Lincoln, 1995 and Marshall and Rossman, 2006.

Miles and Huberman (1984) explain that the qualitative research is an investigative process where the researcher eventually makes sense of a social phenomenon by the process of contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the object of study. Marshall and Rossman (1989) discuss the involvement of the researcher in the everyday life of the chosen environment and that the researcher tries as much as possible to place him/herself in the participants’ world through ongoing dialogue, in order to grasp their understanding.

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the wholeness of teachers’ teaching at a Krishnamurti school and to investigate the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on their lives and pedagogy. This qualitative inquiry is based on the participants’ description of their wholeness using in-depth interviews.
Phenomenology

The word phenomenon is derived from the Greek *phainomenon* that means to “flare up, to show itself, to appear” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 26). Creswell (2007) explains that the phenomenological study is useful to “describe the meaning for several individuals of their lived experience of a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 57). Phenomenology essentially reduces individual experiences with a phenomenon, to a universal essence or the understanding of the nature of things (van Manen, 1997). Van Manen (1997) clarifies that it is important for the researcher “to focus carefully on the question of what possible human experience is to be made topical for phenomenological investigation” (p. 40).

In my research, the phenomenon under study or consideration is teacher’s wholeness. The influence of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on the wholeness of teachers in his school – notably the Old Groove School – will be the first issue to be investigated, under the category of teachers’ thinking. The other issues that will also be investigated are teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ vocation, teachers’ contemplative approaches and teachers’ pedagogy/curriculum design. As such, the phenomenon of teachers’ wholeness will be investigated via the lens of teachers’ thinking, lives, inner lives, vocation, contemplative approaches and pedagogy/curriculum design.

Van Manen (1997) describes a phenomenon as an “object” of human experience. Moustakas (1994) describes other aspects of the human experience to be a phenomenon such as insomnia, being left out, anger, grief or someone undergoing a coronary artery bypass surgery. A solid philosophical foundation was laid for phenomenology by Husserl (1931), Merleau-Ponty (1962), Natanson (1973), and Stewart & Mickunas (1990). Phenomenology as a methodology is widely used in sociology (Borgatta & Borgatta, 1992; Swingewood, 1991), psychology (Giorgi, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1989; Moustekas, 1994), nursing and health sciences (Nieswiadomy, 1993; Oiler, 1986), and education (Tesch, 1988; van Manen, 1990). Creswell (2007) describes two approaches to phenomenology: hermeneutic phenomenology (Van Manen, 1997) and empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Another approach using psychological phenomenology was developed by Colaizzi (1978) and Colaizzi’s approach in analyzing the data using the seven procedural steps will be used in this current research (Colaizzi, 1978, pp. 59-61)
Some major processes that have been followed adopted in conducting research phenomenologically include *epoche* (or bracketing), *phenomenological reduction*, and *imaginative variation* (Moustakas, 1994).

**Epoche**

*Epoche* is a Greek word that means to “refrain from judgement, to abstain from or stay away from the everyday, ordinary way of perceiving things…[where] in the natural attitude we hold knowledge judgmentally” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 33). In contrast, *epoche* requires us to see the object in front of us as it is, without the lens of our past knowledge and conditioning. The *epoche* is meant to be a “methodological device that suspends one’s participation in the belief…neutralization of one’s belief” (Drummond, 2008, p. 67).

Husserl’s concept of *epoche* proposes that as researchers, we set “aside our prejudgment, biases, and ideas about things” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85) and Schmitt (1968) requests that we “invalidate, inhibit and disqualify all commitments with reference to previous knowledge and experience” (as cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). This bracketing of the biases of the researcher is useful when dealing with the research participants either during the interview process or during phenomenological reduction. Creswell (2007) regards the *epoche* or bracketing process to be the first step in phenomenological reduction where “the researcher sets aside, as far as it is humanly possible, all preconceived experiences to best understand the experiences of participants in the study” (p. 235).

Colaizzi (1978) feels that it’s impossible to totally put aside one’s bias and mentions that the researcher “will discover that a minimum of personal interest, and its coloring of his research activity, is unavoidable” (p. 55). This notion is also supported by Merleau-Ponty (1962), who responded to Husserl’s intention of using phenomenological reduction to eliminate all presuppositions from a researcher’s approach by stating that “the most important lesson that the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a complete reduction” (p. xiv). Husserl’s insistence on researchers putting aside their biases is echoed by Krishnamurti who asserts that “to investigate… we must come to it afresh and this is one of the necessities in exploration…without any reaction to what is being observed…otherwise your own investigation is colored by your own fears, hopes and pleasures” (1981, pp. 68-69).
The process of setting aside one’s biases or the bracketing of one’s biases begins during the design of the interview questions and followed until completion of the thesis. I would like to share an example of a bracketing process that took place in this research. As I’ve mentioned earlier, Krishnamurti’s philosophy made an everlasting impact on me and even though his philosophy is connected to a body of knowledge that points towards goodness or an unconditioned life, there is always a chance that such a philosophy can also condition someone who is following it. For a long time, I did not regard contemplative approaches (or practices) such as breath meditation, yoga, and other type of meditation that involves regular practice as something not useful to the understanding of one’s Self. This was a direct consequence or influence from Krishnamurti’s philosophy that stressed only the type of meditation that requires awareness without regular practice. Although I was conditioned to think that contemplative approaches that require practice were not useful, I was able to put aside or ‘bracket’ that particular influence by including research sub-question #5: What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives? This bracketing of my biases not only helped me to break away from my own conditioning but also to dig deeper into the contemplative approaches of the research participants with keen interest. Setting aside one’s biases is not erasing them all together, but placing the belief away from the centre of one’s core belief system.

**Phenomenological Reduction**

If the *epoche* requires the researcher to know things as they appear, free of judgments and past experiences, then the task of phenomenological reduction is to “return to original awareness regarding the phenomenon under investigation” (Streubert & Carpenter, 2003, p. 55). Schmitt (1967) explains that the word reduction, from the Latin root *reductionem* – which means to bringing back, or leading back – is used because “it leads us back to the source of the meaning and existence of the experienced world” (p. 61). Importance is given to the quality, nature and meaning of the experience in the way one sees and listens to a phenomena as a phenomena.

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38 Please refer to Chapter 4 (Themes, Findings and Discussions) from the category of Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches under the theme one of *Awareness of Contemplative Approaches* that discusses the two approaches to meditation: The first approach requires practice like breathing meditation, walking meditation, etc. and the second approach requires awareness without practice.
**Imaginative Variation**

Another process adopted during the phenomenological reduction step is called *imaginative variation*. In this process, intuiting or one’s intuition is used for “accurate interpretation of what is meant in the description of the phenomenon under investigation… [that] results in a common understanding about the phenomenon under investigation” (Streubert & Carpenter, 2003, p. 54). Steps 1 to 7 used for analyzing the data will be elaborated upon, in the section headed *Data Analysis Strategy using Colaizzi’s Reduction Method*. This intuiting process was used in steps 3 and 4 when the data was analyzed. Colaizzi (1978) states that in steps 3 and 4 (where formulated meanings are created from the significant statements) the researcher is involved in a process called “creative insight”, which he describes as follows:

…The researcher] must leap from what his subjects say to what they mean…[and ] the meanings he arrives at and formulates should never sever all connection with the original protocols…[and] his formulations must discover and illuminate those meanings hidden in the various contexts and horizons of the investigated phenomenon which are announced in the original protocols (p. 59)

**Research and Interview Questions**

The main research question is as follows:

What is the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on teachers’ wholeness?

Research Sub-questions include:

1. What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
2. What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
3. What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish wholeness within?
4. What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?
5. What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
6. What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

The interview questions were designed based on the sub-research questions that can be found in Appendix C.

**Data Collection Methods**

Data collection is an important process in qualitative research, in seeking to answer the research questions. In-depth interviewing was used as the method of collecting my data. Interviews were conducted for all six sub-research questions with the four research participants. Please see the research and interview questions in Appendix C.

In-depth interview is a suitable data collection method for a phenomenological study (Creswell, 2007; Siedman, 2006). Siedman’s approach to in-depth interviewing is based on life history interviewing (Bertaux, 1981), assumption from phenomenology (Schutz, 1967) and the connection between techniques of interviewing and one’s theoretical understanding of interviewing (Kvale, 1996). In-depth interviews are useful when the researcher wants detailed information about the participants’ thoughts. In-depth interviews were also useful when the interviewing process goes beyond the response from the questions.

I would like to outline a three-tier strategy for the interview process based on the ideas from Siedman (2006):

1. Total number of interviews
2. Length of interviews
3. Spacing of interviews

1. Total number of interviews

Siedman (2006) outlined a strategy for a three-interview series. The first interview focuses on participants’ life history; the second interview focuses on the details of participants’ lived experiences in relation to the topic of the study; the third interview focuses on reflecting on the meaning of their experience. I used Siedman’s (2006) approach and employed the following sequence: The first interview involved probing into the motivations and events in their lives that prompted participants to become teachers and to teach in a Krishnamurti school; The second
interview focused on the aspects of their inner life that nourish their wholeness and also the aspects of their inner lives that connect to their calling or vocation; The third interview focused on their contemplative practices and the aspects of Krishnamurti’s philosophy that they used in shaping their curriculum design and pedagogy.

2. Length of Interviews

Siedman (2006) encourages researchers to use a 90-minute length of interview, an idea initially used in Schuman (1982). The rationale in using the 90-minute format is that the one-hour design seems to be quite short that makes the participants “watching the clock” (Siedman, 2006, p.20) and two hours seems too long for participants to sit in one place. I used the 90-minute length approach for my interview sessions.

3. Spacing of Interviews

The time spacing from one interview to the next allows “time for the participant to mull over the preceding interview but not enough time to lose the connection between the two” (Siedman, 2006, p. 21). Siedman (2006) suggests an interval or space from 3 days to a week and I used the 1-week spacing strategy.

Creswell (2007) recommends using an interview protocol, that helps a researcher to take notes during an interview and adds that “it also helps a researcher organize thoughts on items such as headings, information about starting the interview, concluding ideas, information on ending the interview, and thanking the respondent” (p.135). I utilized a similar interview protocol during my interviews with the teachers at the Oak Grove School.

Data Analysis

Analyzing data from the process of interviewing, observation and documents collected is a challenging task that requires some thoughtful preparation and planning. My experience as a quantitative researcher (industrial statistical analyst) prior to joining OISE guides me in this process. The one aspect common to both quantitative and qualitative research, is that some thinking and planning strategies must be used for analysis of the data. These strategies will also influence the way the researcher collects the data. Creswell (2007) suggests a way of analyzing that “consists of preparing and organizing the data [transcribing from audio/video to text]...then
reducing the data into themes… and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion” (p.148).

**Data Analysis Strategy using Colaizzi’s Reduction Method**

The specific and structured method of analysis by Colaizzi (1978) was helpful in understanding how data analysis is conducted for a phenomenological approach. Colaizzi’s seven step method was used to analyze the data gathered from the interviews. The major processes involved in doing research using a phenomenological approach include *epoché, phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation.*

The phenomenological reduction that begins with the suspension of one’s belief (bracketing) is followed by analyzing the transcribed interview data. Colaizzi’s (1978) seven-step approach was used to analyze the transcribed data. The seven steps mentioned in Colaizzi (1978) were presented in Rieman (1986) as follows:

1. All of the subjects’ descriptions were read in order to acquire a feel for who they are.
2. Significant statements were extracted from each description, phrases and sentences that directly pertain to the investigated phenomenon. Statements were eliminated that contained the same or nearly the same information/ideas.
3. Meanings were formulated by spelling out the meaning of each significant statement. In this difficult step, the meanings arrived at must not sever the connection with the original description. The formulations discover and bring out those meanings hidden in the various contexts of the phenomenon that are present in the original description.
4. Clusters of themes were organized from the aggregate formulated meanings. This allowed for the emergence of themes common to all of the subjects’ descriptions.
   a. These clusters of themes were referred back to the original descriptions in order to validate them. This was done to see if there was anything in the original that was not accounted for in the cluster of themes, and whether the cluster proposed anything which was not in the original. If either of the above was true, a re-examination was necessary.
   b. At this point discrepancies may be noted among and/or between the various clusters; some themes may flatly contradict each other or may appear to be totally
unrelated to others. The researcher then proceeded with the solid conviction that what was logically inexplicable might be existentially real and valid.

5. An exhaustive description of the phenomenon resulted from the integration of the above result.

6. The exhaustive description of the phenomenon is as unequivocal a statement of the essence and structure of the phenomenon as possible.

7. A final validation step was achieved by returning to the subjects and asking if the description formulated validated the original experience (pp. 94-95).

The interview data was transcribed using Sony Digital Voice Editor Software. After transcribing the audio data into text using Microsoft Word, I designed a three-tier process to help me to reduce the data from the transcribed text data to formulated statements followed by thematic formation. This three-tier process is described below:

1. Microsoft Word was used to break down the transcribed text data by research question. This is shown in Figure 3. The goal for this process is to identify the significant statements.

   a) This was done by using ‘Comment’ tool to highlight the main and sub-research questions of the research from the transcribed data. This can be seen in Figure 3 that shows the comment on the right side of the document (for example: Comment[01]:Ecila – Q1).

   b) The ‘Super script’ tool was used to distinguish the relevant significant statements important to the particular research and sub-research question. This is also presented in Figure 1 that shows the super script as: Q 1(a), Q 1(b) and Q 1(c).

2. Microsoft Excel was used next to import the significant statements highlighted from step 1(b) above. Selected examples of Significant Statements and related Formulated Meanings are shown in Table 2.

3. All the formulated statements were grouped together by their research questions and the themes were formulated using this strategy. Examples of two themes with their associated Subthemes or Findings are shown in Table 3.
Table 1

Selected Examples of Significant Statements and Related Formulated Meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Statement</th>
<th>Formulated Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We talked about this in terms of like a sanctuary or a sacred place, but to me nature has that sacred quality because it draws out something. So that’s part of the whole, right, for me. There’s has to be that sense of connected to something larger. Because if it’s all about this, it’s so petty, so stupid, you know, honestly, this world works in such small little circles, you know, and it’s all broken up, and ugh, whereas you know nature actually asks something much bigger of you.(^{39})</td>
<td>Paul regards nature to be a sacred place due to its ability of drawing out our conditioning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{39}\) Research Question # 3(c) - Paul

Figure 3: Using Microsoft Word to Breakdown Transcribed Data for Q 1(a).
For Krishnamurti there’s a way in which having a relationship with nature means, because nature doesn’t talk, human language right? In order to have any relationship with it you have to end. So if you read the passage where he says that, he comes clearly back and says “and that’s the same quality you must have with another human being in order to have a relationship [or another way of saying this is that] the quality of attention you must have to be in relationship to nature is the same quality of attention you must have in a relationship with anybody. So, you know, for me to really hear what you have to say, this has to go, right? What did he say, “Where the self is, the other isn’t”, right? 40

Well, I mean to be a little provocative, I think in Krishnamurti’s word he would say no, he would say “be the fragmented person you are, and be it even more so, be it stronger, let the whole thing come out”. 41

Observe further and not rely on strengths and develop things that may be, help them develop areas of weakness or at least develop a tolerance for their areas of weakness and in that, they sometimes find things that they really enjoy that they had no idea they would enjoy. 42

The quality of attention one must have to be in relationship to nature is the same quality of attention you must have in a relationship with anybody.

Instead of developing wholeness, Paul suggest that Krishnamurti would urge one to be aware of their fragmentation

Observing them keenly also gives room to work on their weaknesses (developing a tolerance in their area of weakness and perhaps find enjoyment while exploring their weakness further]

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40 From Research Question # 3(c) - Paul
41 From Research Question # 3(d) - Paul
42 From Research Question # 4(d) - Ecila
Table 2

*Example of Two Themes with Their Associated Theme/Findings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Teach in Krishnamurti School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Where Their Children Schooled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Factors &amp; Its Relationship with Krishnamurti’s Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom to Inquire and Explore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding with the Community of the Oak Grove School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Transformational Phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Understanding of Calling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognizing and/or Discovering One’s Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors Preventing the Hearing of One’s Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching as a Calling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions Promoting the Hearing of One’s Calling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates how the themes were formed using the categories described in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Each category also represents each research question.

The summary below reflects the breakdown from the raw data to themes and findings:

a. 18 hours of audio interview with 4 participants resulted in 233 pages of transcribed data.

b. A total of 20 themes emerged from the 233 pages of transcribed data.

c. A total of 58 findings were obtained from the 20 themes.

This analysis reveals the process of reducing the interview data from the 233 pages of transcribed data to the 20 themes and 58 findings.

**Ethical Consideration**

Ethical review was conducted to ensure that the method of recruitment, choice of participants and the data collection method had been done appropriately. Furthermore, the ethics
review was also important to ensure that the research participants were not exposed to any risk (or if there are any risks, the researcher must be able to assess the risk).

The consent letters were sent to the Principal and the research participants. The consent letter to the Principal outlined the purpose of the interview with the teachers (or participants) and all other relevant information about myself and my thesis supervisor. The consent letters sent to the participants outlined what was expected from the teachers, and included the following information:

1. The rights of participants
2. The purpose/focus of study
3. Procedures to be used in data collection
4. Protecting the confidentiality of participants
5. Risks and potential benefits to participants and the Oak Grove School
6. Contact information
7. Signature of participants.

Pseudonyms were used for the participants, except for Paul, who didn’t mind the use of his name. Nevertheless, the name of the school, The Oak Grove School was retained as this study presents no risk to the school but has great benefits for the school and in keeping with the purpose of this study, the literature contributes towards the educational philosophy of Krishnamurti.
Chapter 4

Themes, Findings and Discussions

Overview of Chapter 4

This chapter contains the essence of the data collected from the participants during the interviews. The significant statements were summarized into formulated meanings and it is from these formulated meanings that the themes and sub-themes were obtained.

The findings are arranged under the categories (teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ vocation, teachers’ contemplative practices and teachers’ pedagogy) and themes. The research sub-questions served as a direct guide that attempts to answer the main research question and also served as a guide during the interview sessions with the participants. 43

Participants

The participants were chosen from The Oak Grove School, one of the schools which Krishnamurti founded. I contacted the Oak Grove School in late May, 2009 and the principal of the school, Meredith Benson Rice, gave her permission for me to conduct my research there. 44 A purposeful sampling strategy (Creswell, 2007; Siedman, 2006) was utilized to select four teachers from the school. This strategy was suitable because it allowed me to “purposefully” select participants who could provide useful and “rich” data in order to better understand the phenomenon under study.

The selection of suitable participants (teachers) is crucial in a phenomenological study. Before imposing any selection criteria, it is important to understand that the participants need to

43 Please refer to Appendix C, which depicts this interaction between the sub-research questions and the interview questions.

44 Please see the Informational Letter and Consent Form for the Principal and the Participants in Appendix A and B respectively.
volunteer for this study, and that they fully understand the purpose of this research (this task was completed in the first letter sent to the principal dated 26th May, 2009).

The four participants who volunteered to take part in my research were Mary, Ecila, Neville and Paul.45

Mary first heard Krishnamurti speaking via a tape recorder while volunteering at the Oak Grove School in 1992. Mary attended a Quaker school when she was growing up and has a personality that deeply cares for little children. Mary volunteered a lot as a parent at the Oak Grove School when her kids joined the school. Three of Mary’s children graduated from the Oak Grove School and she is currently teaching in the Early Childhood Program.

Ecila first heard Krishnamurti speaking in 1971 at Ojai, and was a teacher in a Montessori school before she started teaching in the Oak Grove School in 1981. Ecila is deeply moved by nature’s presence and often takes her students for walks in the 150-acre campus of the Oak Grove School. Ecila teaches third grade students.

Neville first got to know about Krishnamurti through one of his books in 2003 and began teaching music for Elementary and Junior High students. Neville is deeply passionate about music and has experience working with the Peace Corps in Bolivia.

Paul first read one of Krishnamurti’s books in 1984; this impacted him deeply in terms of his thoughts about his life and led him to question what he was doing at that time. This transformation led Paul to embark on a Masters program and he wrote his thesis on David Bohm’s work. Paul is deeply passionate about teacher development work and has deep insights on Krishnamurti’s philosophy; he is constantly finding ways to integrate Krishnamurti’s philosophy into his pedagogy and curriculum design. He started working at Brockwood Park School in 1990 before starting to teach at the Oak Grove School where he currently teaches English for high school students.

45 All the teacher participants were assigned pseudonyms except Paul.
Overview of Research Sub-Questions and the Respective Categories

The six categories – Teachers' Thinking, Teachers’ Lives, Teachers’ Inner Lives, Teachers’ Vocation, Teachers’ Contemplative Practices, and Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design – were designed in order to capture the wholeness of the participants’. The themes and findings that emerged from these six categories will serve as a guide that points towards teachers’ wholeness.

Research Sub-Question # 1: What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?

Category: Teachers’ Thinking

The first research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Thinking) discuss the participant’s thinking process in relation to their intentions to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school. This category also probes participants’ major motivations to teach in a Krishnamurti school and their reactions after listening to Krishnamurti for the first time. These findings will reveal the thought process of teachers in choosing the school where they wanted to teach; they also trace the earliest intentions of teachers and why teachers choose one school system over the other. Examples relating to the impact of this decision by teachers can be seen in the intention of those teachers who choose to teach in a particular school system – namely: public, private, alternative or religious-based schools.

Research Sub-Question # 2: What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?

Category: Teachers’ Lives

The second research sub-question and its category discuss the events in a teacher’s life that have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher. This section also traces the teachers’ inclination towards the teaching profession based on the choice of their tertiary education (or major of study). Besides exploring their choice of study, this section also probes into the different occupations in which they were involved or engaged before eventually deciding on the teaching profession.
This section also attempts to trace and capture the first time each of the participants decided to become a teacher. Milies (1992) describes the reflections of one of her teachers who find that her interest in the events that happened over time, especially the important moments, impacts her teaching. An important moment for teachers in this section captures the first time they decided to become teachers. Similarly, the data from this section on teachers’ lives contributes to the understanding of curriculum as an institutionalized text, and teacher lore, in a way that traces a teacher’s earliest intentions to become a teacher.

**Research Sub-Question # 3:** What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish wholeness within?

**Category: Teachers’ Inner Lives**

The third research sub-question question and its category (Teachers’ Inner Lives) discuss the aspect of teacher’s inner lives that may have led them towards wholeness. This category probes the participants to find out: the state of mind needed to evoke one’s natural talent; conditions for timeless learning to happen; the role that a school plays in helping students learn about the wholeness of life; whether there is a need for teachers to be on the journey towards wholeness in order to help their students to discover their wholeness; and teachers’ understanding of what is meant by good teaching.

**Research Sub-Question # 4:** What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?

**Category: Teachers’ Vocation**

The fourth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Vocation) explore the aspects of teachers’ inner lives that may point towards their calling. This category explores in greater depth the following themes relating to participants’: discovery of their calling, the factors that prevented their discovery and the factors that promote the discovery of their calling.

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46 The word calling is used here synonymously with the word vocation
Research Sub-Question # 5: What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these approaches influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?

Category: Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches

The fifth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches) explore the participants’ familiarity and experiences with the different contemplative practices. The participants’ were also requested to reflect on the connection between their contemplative practices and their inner life and pedagogy. The participants also shared some of the positive attributes that contributed towards their pedagogy as a result of their contemplative practices/approaches.

Research Sub-Question # 6: What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc.) do the teachers use (explicitly or implicitly) as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

Category: Teachers’ Pedagogy / Curriculum Design

The sixth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Pedagogy) explore Krishnamurti’s common philosophical theme (e.g. fear, conditioned mind, etc.) that contributes or guides the way the participants teach (pedagogy) and the way they design their curriculum. This question provides some insight into the heart of their teaching practice that is deeply embedded in the philosophy of holistic education, namely the notion of child-centered education.
Data Analysis: Findings and Discussion

Research Sub-Question # 1: What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?

Category: Teachers’ Thinking

In this category of Teachers’ Thinking, the participants’ thinking process in relations to their intentions to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school will be discussed. The first theme – reactions and reflections after listening to Krishnamurti – reveals the finding relating to the positive and negative impact felt by the participants after coming across Krishnamurti’s work and the sense of hope that they felt after joining the Oak Grove School. The second theme – motivations to teach in a Krishnamurti School – reveals the findings: Teaching where their children were schooled; Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School and Beauty of the Environment; Additional influences and their relationship with Krishnamurti’s work; Freedom to inquire and explore and interest to teach at the Oak Grove School outweighing economic benefits.

Theme One: Reactions & Reflections After Listening to Krishnamurti

Krishnamurti was regarded as one of the most influential spiritual teachers in the 20th century. His charismatic personality and his gift of being able to penetrate through one’s mind are well known. The first of Krishnamurti’s books that I read titled: Mind without Measure kept me thinking and reflecting upon his philosophy since the age of 20. As I reflect on my understanding of that book now, I realize that although I did not grasp the content at a deeper level, understanding it at the surface level was enough to trigger my journey of self-knowledge that has remained very alive until this day.

This theme reflects on the finding of the negative and positive impact felt by the participants after coming across Krishnamurti’s philosophy and the sense of hope that they felt after joining the Oak Grove School.
Positive Impact

The participants in this study, reported to have had many mixed reactions after listening or reading Krishnamurti’s work for the first time. These reactions ranged from being spell-bound to having a violent reaction. I will now present the responses of the participants in their own words:

Ecila: I’m not sure what he said, I just know that something resonated within me and I was spell-bound and I really wanted to understand what he was saying. He had a presence and it was a presence that was, it was like seeing something living, I can’t describe the presence, but there was a presence that was magnificent, just a magnificent presence, charismatic, but not in a way that, I don’t know, it’s hard to describe because when I use magnificent or charismatic, I mean so many people who become gurus are also charismatic and magnificent, but it wasn’t like that, it was very grounded. He seemed to be very practical, grounded, in touch-wise, in touch with the reality.

In addition to talking about Krishnamurti’s magnificence, charisma and overall presence, Ecila also shared how she was influenced by Krishnamurti’s ability to relate day-to-day human difficulties with ease:

Ecila: Krishnamurti was a very practical person. He spoke about the conundrum of living life and the conflicts that we have in daily living; the paradoxes of daily living and the struggle of daily living and suffering. He spoke about the real stuff about living.

Paul also spoke enthusiastically about the impact of Krishnamurti’s works on his life. He reports as follows:

Paul: I could not put down the title Commentaries of Living, Part One, and felt like the earth move under my feet and, yeah, it had a tremendous effect on how I thought about my life and what I was doing.

As noted in the following quote, Paul reported that his encounter with Krishnamurti’s work helped him solve some of his relationship issues that gave him clarity in moving forward in life. He relates this experience as follows:
Paul: I was completely immersed, as I say, it was one of the catalysts that helped end a long term relationship I was in. I really was consumed by it, and I mean I was really searching through it and I was, in a sense, filtering and asking, and just trying to come to grips with what he was saying and it took a few years that way, and then as I said I entered a Master’s Program, which eventually led me to Europe and to Brockwood so, yeah, all these things were connected.

Mary was rather surprised that she did not encounter Krishnamurti’s work during her time in higher learning institutions, considering the large volume of his work that had already been published. She expressed her surprise and revealed the following:

It was a surprise that I didn’t know about him before because I consider myself fairly educated and I guess a philosophy class or something might have included it but just a whole body of work that was so big had not been a part of my knowledge-base.

**Negative Impact**

In addition to the positive impact felt by some of the participants, others reported the negative impact or reactions after getting to know Krishnamurti’s work. Neville, for example, spoke about his difficulty in relating to Krishnamurti’s ideas about the role of methods, as follows:

Neville: One of my main reactions with Krishnamurti is his concept of there is no method, or truth is pathless land, or whatever. I mean, I automatically just closed the book after a couple of paragraphs because it’s like…..I don’t get why people would study him because he’s clearly telling you not [to] study, I mean he’s spend his life saying “don’t follow me”, and yet we’re all reading him constantly.

Similarly, Paul also reports having experienced a “violent reaction” to Krishnamurti’s work, when it was first introduced to him. He describes this reaction as follow:

Paul: I was travelling in Asia and someone gave me a copy of the book and said they thought that I would be interested in this book. They didn’t know me very well, but it was just a sense they had about me, and it was on violence by Krishnamurti and I indeed began to read it and in a sense had a violent reaction against it. I really thought that he
was really unfair and way too harsh, and so I really felt that it was just a waste of time, I didn’t even finish it.

Hope

This section on hope relates to the sense of hope that the participants felt either before joining the teaching staff at a Krishnamurti school or while already teaching there.

Ecila expressed her hopes with regards to what she could learn after listening to Krishnamurti. She shared that since the United States of America just had that terrible war experience with Vietnam in the early 1970’s, Krishnamurti’s theme of peace attracted her interest. Ecila describes this experience in the following excerpt from her narrative:

Ecila: I was a housewife who had children who was living my life but when I heard him I just wanted to know what he meant by that and we had just come out of a terrible war in Vietnam and he was talking about war and peace and peace begins with us and you know the dividing and the observer and the observed and I just thought all right, he knows maybe a way to live that I don’t know and maybe I can learn about that. Not that he was a guru. I mean I’m sure at times I thought, gee, I would really like to get to talk to him in person and maybe he could... but it wasn’t like that.

It is clear that Krishnamurti’s work, particularly his ideas about war and peace and his notions about the “observer and the observed” was truly timely, and inspired a feeling of hope in Ecila.

Similarly, Paul indicated that his experience was one that was filled with wonder because Krishnamurti’s work resembled the things that Paul had always questioned and pondered upon. Paul describes this awe-inspiring experience as follows:

Paul: It was like meeting someone who you’ve always wanted to meet, someone who was exploring the same questions and who knew the problems and also kind of asked questions that you sort of sensed were out there but no one had ever articulated.

In discussing this theme further, we can see that there is a mix of positive and negative impact and a sense of hope in participants’ minds after listening to Krishnamurti [or reading his work] for the first time.
Irrespective of their reactions – positive or negative – it is clear that Krishnamurti’s work did have an impact on the participants. It’s difficult to articulate Neville’s feelings about the need for others to study Krishnamurti’s work, especially when he referred to others as reading Krishnamurti constantly. I personally feel that there is a difference between blindly following Krishnamurti’s philosophy and constantly referring to his work. If someone is blindly following his work, then it was against Krishnamurti’s wish but he encouraged others to read and reflect on his work if they found it useful for them to do so. As Rodrigues (2001) affirms “Krishnamurti encouraged a serious examination of his teachings and the Foundations clearly support the principle of access to all archival material for the purpose of research” (p. 27). Krishnamurti was not against others reading and analyzing his work but rather, he was against the interpretation of his work and clarified that:

You can interpret according to your logic, according to your emotions or according to your conditioning. Or you can write about it saying this is what I think. I see he is right in this way; he’s wrong in this. Discuss, criticize. Go into it. That’s not interpretation. I read K’s book and I intellectually tear it into pieces. Or intellectually go with it. Does he mean this, does he mean that – you follow? Discuss. That’s not interpretation.

(Rodrigues, 2001, p. 27)

Having explored the first theme, in which the findings relating to Krishnamurti’s impact on the participants and how their encounter with him inspired hope, in the next section, I will present the findings with regards to participants’ motivations to teach at a Krishnamurti school.

**Theme Two: Motivations to Teach in a Krishnamurti School**

Blau (1995) captured several stories from people all over the world who shared how Krishnamurti’s works impacted their lives in her book *Krishnamurti: 100 years* that featured such luminaries as: Aldous Huxley (humanist, pacifist, and satirist, and he was also interested in spiritual subjects such as parapsychology and philosophical mysticism), Joseph Campbell (American mythologist, writer and lecturer), Henry Miller (American novelist and painter) and Van Morrison (Northern Irish singer-songwriter and musician), to name a few.
After reading and reflecting on Krishnamurti’s philosophy for over fifteen years, I was also motivated to work in a Krishnamurti’s school. I first applied for an administrative position at the Brockwood Park School in the United Kingdom in the year 2000 but was not selected for the position.

The second theme, motivations to teach in a Krishnamurti School, reveals the findings: Teaching where their children were schooled (this finding shares the notion of two participants who had children and happy to realize that they could teach in a school which their children attended); Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School and beauty of the environment (a finding that reflects the aesthetic beauty of the Oak Grove School campus particularly its beautiful surroundings which attracted them to the school); Additional influences and their relationship with Krishnamurti’s work (this finding reveals the connection that the participants made in relations to Krishnamurti’s work that made their presence in the Oak Grove School to be more meaningful); Freedom to inquire and explore (this finding explored the variety of ways in which the participants experienced the freedom to inquire and explore that served to deepen their motivation to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school); and Interest to teach at the Oak Grove School outweighing economic benefits (this finding reveals a deep satisfaction from the teachers teaching in a Krishnamurti school who share that even the prospects of getting a higher salary was not enough to lure them to work elsewhere).

**Teaching Where Their Children Were Schooled**

The participants with children of their own expressed their earliest satisfaction and happiness by the possibilities of them teaching where their own children were schooled. Since the Oak Grove School was offering a variety of educational programs from infant care to high school, this made it easier for them to have their children attend the school where they were teaching. The following excerpts from the interviews of two participants in the study (Mary and Ecila) reveal their high degree of satisfaction with this convenient arrangement:

Mary: This feeling of ‘Oh...my children could go to school here. I had this same experience and having 3 children and the fact that they could all go to one same school was a miracle, because you know in a big city where they have a preschool for one, elementary for the other and junior high for another. So, that’s how I fell in love with the school, the people, and the friendliness of the people.
Ecila: I had a daughter who was young and I wanted her to go to Oak Grove which she did and I was teaching [here].

It’s important to note that Mary and Ecila felt at ease teaching at a school where their own children were schooled as opposed to Paul and Neville due to the fact that the latter two did not have any children at that time.

**Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School and Beauty of the Environment**

Krishnamurti felt strongly about the beauty of the environment and that the aesthetics of the school plays a significant role in the quality of learning that happens. In terms of architecture, the Oak Grove School building is a wooded structure, which this reflects the aesthetics of the school and blends well with the oak grove surrounding the school. Krishnamurti’s perception of the role that nature plays on the healing of the mind reflects his strong inclination to the need to have the school located within a natural setting. Krishnamurti explained that “that healing gradually takes place if you are with nature, with that orange on the tree, and the blade of grass that pushes through the cement, and the hills covered, hidden, by the clouds (1987, p. 10)

Mary expressed her awe with the beauty of the Oak Grove School. The 150 acres of Oak Grove provides a wonderful opportunity for the students to explore nature, as captured in Mary’s description below:

Mary: You know when you come into a classroom and a playground like this it’s a teacher’s dream. We can take walks. There are acorns because they dropped its not because you picked them up or bought them at an art supply store so it’s absolutely wonderful especially in this cultural environment where kids are in front of screens so much and maybe in their cars a lot that when they come to school they are just outside and really exploring nature.

Ecila seems to put Krishnamurti’s notion of the importance of nature into practice, by taking her students out of the classroom for walks twice a week to write poetry. As she explains, this is embedded into her curriculum:
Ecila: I also explicitly design our getting out of the classroom at least twice a week to go in to, there’s a place over here called Lost Meadow, we write poetry there, they pick, I love my Friday nature classes and I guard that time.

**Additional Influences and their Relationship with Krishnamurti’s work**

Another important finding which emerged from this research, speaks to other influences that impacted the participants and how they relate to Krishnamurti’s work. Some of these additional influences – like Mary’s involvement with the Anti Bias Curriculum (ABC) before coming to the Oak Grove School and realizing that the ABC was also used there – made her feel welcome to the school. The anti bias curriculum requires that everyone (including teachers and administrators), identify, examine and deal with their own biases, and this blended well with what Krishnamurti mentioned about looking at our own conditioning or biases. Mary articulates this experience as follows:

Mary: I think the anti-bias curriculum was embraced here and what we do here. It wasn’t an add-on that we had to convince the administration into being able to do certain things or think a certain way, it was really what we were doing in our staff meetings. That felt very welcoming and I also like the fact that it wasn’t jammed in anyone’s throat, it was a person’s choice cause you can’t force change or transformation so where people are ready that’s where their growth is.

Neville felt that he was influenced by other writers when he’s writing his own songs like the sayings of Marquez and Whitman:

Neville: I just find that some of the things I’ve written in the past few years kind of seem to reflect his themes a little bit, kind of like I was saying Marquez does, or, you can see it’s all over Whitman, the same themes of freedom, authority, individuality, like it’s all over Whitman, and the other one that I still can’t think of, but that’s why, I don’t know, I think I’m more conscious of those themes, and when I write I try not to do anything consciously, but when I look back at it, I’m like “oh, that sound like….”.

Like Neville, other participants also spoke about the impact of other influences and its connection with Krishnamurti’s work. For example, Paul revealed the impact felt with his
association with David Bohm that eventually strengthened his understanding of Krishnamurti’s philosophy:

Paul: And then of course David Bohm was there at that time and his work was just honestly just startlingly insightful, even though it took me probably two or three meetings with him before I even had any idea what he was saying. I had absolutely no idea.

Paul further revealed the importance of an ‘elder’ or someone knowledgeable about Krishnamurti’s philosophy to help individuals like himself better understand Krishnamurti’s work. As articulated in the following excerpt, Paul’s reverence for Krishnamurti’s work was ignited by David Bohm’s insights:

Paul: David Bohm would meet with the whole staff and then sometimes he’d just meet with people informally over lunch and dinner, or whatever, and I would always show up because I never met anybody like this before. David Bohm always looked for people who could…like Krishnamurti did….who could ask the right question or who listened well enough to be able to ask a good enough question that would force him to say something in a different way, a way that was perhaps clearer, or more revealing.

The foregoing excerpts from Mary, Neville and Paul clearly identify the other aspects that influenced their lives and how these influences helped them gain a deeper appreciation of Krishnamurti’s work. Ecila’s experience with nature during her childhood schooling period was probably the reason why she could relate to Krishnamurti’s love for nature. Ecila’s reminiscence of her experiences at the Orchard School reveals the impact that nature has on young children. She also revealed that the seduction by nature that she felt at the Orchard school brought her to the beautiful Oak Grove campus.

Ecila: I just remember being so happy to go to school every day. We were in nature. I remember a great big tree, it was a huge tree with lots of roots and it was our wishing tree and we would go out and if we fell off our wish wouldn’t come true and if we could stay on the root our wish could come true. So it was a project-based learning school. We tapped from maple tree every winter and we boiled the maple syrup down and made the pancakes and we made igloos when we were studying about the Eskimos and we’d go have our classes in the igloos.
Freedom to Inquire and Explore

Krishnamurti always felt that one should not be dictated to by any authority and felt that every individual should to be a light unto him/herself in order to feel the freedom to inquire and explore the possibility of transforming themselves. Krishnamurti often pointed out that the freedom to inquire and explore does not depend on revolt or reaction but rather on a mind that has understood the nature and meaning of fear. Krishnamurti shared that:

It is only the free mind that can really inquire, obviously, not a mind that says, “I believe and I will inquire,” not a mind that is frightened of what will happen to it through inquiry, and therefore stops inquiring. (Krishnamurti, 1991c, p. 91)

Krishnamurti felt that one should inquire into their conditioning with humility or the state of mind that wants to inquire out of sheer curiosity. As an example, Krishnamurti explored the manner in which envy (an example of a psychological conditioning) can be inquired and shared the importance of inquiring with humility:

A mind that is really humble has an immense capacity for inquiry, whereas the mind that is under the burden of knowledge, that is crippled with experience, with its own conditioning, can never really inquire. A humble mind says, ‘I do not know, I shall find out’ – which means that finding out is never a process of accumulation… [and] humility cannot be practiced, but because there is humility, your mind has the capacity to inquire into envy, and such a mind is no longer envious. (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 196)

The participants expressed their satisfaction with the environment at the Oak Grove School in terms of how Krishnamurti’s philosophy is understood and how the philosophy plays a role in creating an environment free of fear and competition. The following quotes from Ecila and Neville aptly capture this essence:

Ecila: You know in a certain way there is a great responsibility in teaching here. I’m very responsible I feel, for creating an environment that doesn’t have fear [and] that kids don’t feel competitive, creating an environment where children can really be themselves and discover who they are. I wouldn’t have been able to teach that was I in any other school. So there’s a great deal of freedom in that and then there’s a great deal of responsibility also because each child becomes your child.
It is clear that Ecila whole-heartedly embraced her responsibility as a teacher at the Oak Grove School, and was particularly grateful for the opportunity to create an environment where students did not feel any fear or competition, and where they felt free to explore and discover who they are. Neville also expressed similar sentiments with regards to his experience as a teacher at Oak Grove School, as follows:

Neville: OGS is a great place to work, which is why I’m still here, you know, I mean the people are great, and one nice thing is the class sizes are smaller, and [the freedom is] part of the climate, or the culture, I shouldn’t say climate, what I mean by that is the culture, and I think that’s related to the teachings [of Krishnamurti]

As Neville asserts, the culture and overall climate established at Oaks Grove School, provided an excellent opportunity to forge relationships and the freedom to fully experience and explore the teachings of Krishnamurti.

Dialogue sessions with mixed-aged groups enhanced Paul’s freedom to inquire and explore at Brockwood. Similarly, at the Oak Grove School, Paul indicated that he has regular dialogues with few other teachers on the issues related to pedagogy and Krishnamurti’s philosophy.

Paul: The people were of fairly mixed ages, but many of the staff was fairly young and very interested in the work, so I had, you know, the kinds of discussions with staff there at dinner and in the hallways and whatnot that I had never had for years. So this was an important sort of experience for me.

Mary indicated that the freedom to inquire and explore with the parents of children enrolled in the Early Childhood Education at the Oak Grove School was very satisfying as it was important to discuss with parents the overall growth of their children. This reminds me of my own experience in the daycare (which my daughter attends) where I constantly have discussions with staff to inquire and explore ideas relating to the overall growth of my daughter; I certainly find resonance with Mary’s experience. Mary also shared her experience of working with parents and indicated that such practice was not common in other schools:
Mary: Krishnamurti really wanted this to be the school for the whole family and I’ve always felt working with the youngest ones that you can have them for three hours a day but then they go home...and let’s be partners with parents and families and let’s really work together and learn from each other and that was such a you know, it seems like a no-brainer but it isn’t happening in every school.

**Interest to Teach at the Oak Grove School Outweighing Economic Benefits**

Although the participants felt that they could have earned better salaries teaching at the public schools, they commented on the fact that their level of satisfaction and contentment at the Oak Grove School outweighs the economic exchange. One gets the sense that the teachers teaching at the Oak Grove School are happy to be there and this is due to the attraction to Krishnamurti’s philosophy, the aesthetically beautiful 150-acre campus and the strong bonding between the teachers and parents. These sentiments are captured in the following words articulated by Mary and Ecila respectively:

Mary: Every teacher definitely needs to earn more and if I taught in one of the public schools I would make a lot more and have better benefits and all that but the rewards of teaching here, for me are far greater. I wouldn’t trade making double the salary and working in an environment that is nowhere, nothing like this… I guess if I didn’t have to work to pay my rent and my expenses I would still do it. So that’s part of it, it’s a real joy to work here.

Ecila: If I were teaching in a public school I’d be making twice the salary I make now. I have been so much been rewarded, it has been such a gift to be able to teach in this school with these teachers and these parents and these faculty members and this gorgeous environment. I think the environment is very important for a child’s learning, but to have the gift to teach here, you couldn’t put a value on that, there’s no way you could put a value on that.
Findings and Discussions
Sub-Research Question # 2: What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
Category: Teachers’ Lives

In this category of Teachers’ Lives, the primary interest was to map out the events in a teachers’ life that have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher. The first theme – Educational Experience – reveals the findings: Childhood educational experience and education as an adult. The second theme – Events Leading towards the Teaching Profession – reveals the findings: adult education; professional experience; earliest recollection of wanting to be a teacher. The third theme – Motivation to Become a Teacher – reveals the findings: Krishnamurti’s influence; other individual’s influence and other Influence.

The findings reveal the terrain of their lives that have influenced them in becoming teachers. The findings also reveal that participants’ educational influence, professional influence and Krishnamurti’s influence impacted their decision to become teachers.

Theme One: Educational Experiences

Krishnamurti considers teaching to be one of the most difficult endeavors one could undertake. He finds that the external capabilities of a teacher, such as learning to teach effectively, planning the delivery of the teaching process, giving grades and other classroom management, to be important factors for effective teaching. But Krishnamurti wonders if this is the only function of the teacher and inquires deeply into the nature of the teacher, by asking the following questions: “Who is a teacher? What are the implications of teaching apart from following the curricula? Very few people are dedicated teachers. They are dedicated to helping the students in their studies, but surely a teacher has far greater significance than that” (Krishnamurti, 2006, p. 160). Thus, Krishnamurti’s inquiry into ‘who is a teacher’ brings us into this journey of exploring the events in a teacher’s life that may have guided him or her into this profession.

In exploring this notion further, this theme reveals that teachers’ childhood experiences and their educational experiences as adults have ties to why they became teachers. This
important theme will be the focus of the next section, which explores the data relating to the childhood educational experiences of the participants in this study.

**Childhood Educational Experience**

Childhood educational experiences seem to be have made powerful and lasting impressions in the minds of the participants. For example, Mary recalls her strong Quaker education background as follows:

Mary: I grew up with Quaker parents and grew up in Quaker communities and went to schools that my parents founded with a group of parents and teachers, you know turning a chicken coop into a classroom, that kind of thing. I was very fortunate, I went to Quaker schools. Not every year because we moved once and they had a public school segment from sort of 4th grade to 7th grade but I went to a Quaker boarding school for high school on the farm where we did all the work because you know it was very inexpensive and that was philosophically what this school was founded upon. So I feel that my own education gave me this foundation for progressive, for valuing progressive environments educationally.

Ecila’s involvement with nature at the Orchard School, with a 50-acre campus that resulted in the love for nature stemmed from this childhood experience and also possibly influenced her to eventually come to the Oak Grove School, a school that also has a large nature campus.

Ecila: I went to grade school, it was like a pre-school, like four-years-old through eighth grade at a school in Indianapolis, Indiana and it was called the Orchard School. It was a private school. It was on about 50 acres, it had and apple orchard, it had maple trees.

In addition, Ecila adds how her joy of experiential learning has contributed to her personal growth and eventually her journey towards teaching at Oaks Grove School.

Ecila: It was all experiential learning and at the time, you know it was just a wonderful place to go to school, it was delightful. But I think going to that school something within me was developed that helped bring me here.
Ecila also felt that her rich experience in nature during her schooling at the Orchard School impacted the way she feels towards nature. She further feels that children can easily pick up the energy from nature.

Ecila: A deep respect for, we went camping, a deep respect for the natural world, a love for the natural world and an appreciation that all living things are our part of the same ekes, I don’t know, I think children just pick that up.

**Education as an Adult**

The participant’s experience with these different educational exposures as adults gives us insight into an aspect of a teacher’s life that cannot be taken lightly. Mary completed her tertiary and graduate studies in Film due to her interest and fascination with watching lots of films in eagerness to learn about the history, aesthetics and film criticism:

Mary: I think that I was a natural student. You know I’m one of these students who can read and write and write a paper that a teacher loves but it was more of… when I say path of least resistance it was an easy path to take because as a young person you major in film you get to watch a lot of films and they’re fascinating and you go through all the history of film and see the greats and learn about it because this was history and esthetics and criticism rather than film making, although I took classes in that as well.

Ecila studied drama in college and became an actress working with commercials, television shows and movies. Ecila describes this experience as follows:

Ecila: I studied drama in college and became an actress several years. I was acting in New York and in Hollywood and I did commercials and I did television shows and I did movies. I didn’t think anything of it until I had my first child. Then when I had my first child I just knew, oh, this life is not for me, I have to get back to that other way of living.

Ecila felt that her decision to study drama stemmed from her interest in being and working in a collaborative way with people as well as her ability to sing, dance and act.

Ecila: I just loved being with other people in that way. It was such a collaborative effort you know, putting on a show was such a collaborative thing you know, there was so
many people involved and it was so much fun working with other people. That’s why I think I went into drama. I was also talented at it.

Although Neville majored in English, he studied music in a variety of ways, including taking academic music at the university level.

Neville: I studied English. Why did I study English? Oh God, that’s a good question, I don’t know. I wish I hadn’t. I mean English? It’s like, what are you going to do with that? I studied Music in quite a variety of different ways, and I did take quite a bit of music classes in college and I still do, but it’s a real competitive kind of, like, academic music at the University level, it’s not much fun, you know, and it’s all classical music.

Paul was attracted to Philosophy due to the influence of his brother who was a philosophy major and eventually got his BA in Philosophy.

Paul: I think the philosophy attracted me because as I think I mentioned my older brother was a philosophy major and he would come home from college and he’d have these interesting books etc., which he would try to force on me, and occasionally I would read.

In this finding related to Adult Education, we can see that all the participants did not pursue tertiary level studies in Education. Mary’s education in film did not provide enough enthusiasm for her to get involved in teaching; neither did Ecila’s studies in drama encourage her to begin to teach. Similarly, although Neville studied English as a major in college, it was his natural interest in music which was instrumental in eventually directing him into the teaching profession. Paul’s tertiary education in Philosophy, although it did not direct him into the teaching profession, this certainly helped him to make a deeper connection given his interest in such authors as David Bohm and Krishnamurti’s philosophical discourse.

The result of these findings also help to probe further questions on why the participants did not chose to pursue a degree in Education. My own educational journey in Mechanical Engineering and Industrial Management did not directly land me into the teaching profession. It was while teaching part-time at a college, and working as a full-time engineer that gave me the insight that teaching was more stimulating for my soul than engineering. Thus, the gap between the end of one’s early education (up to high school) and the time when they choose their tertiary
education seems to be a crucial period that could play an important role in helping an individual to pursue a suitable choice of study. In this context, a student with great potential to be a teacher may choose a suitable major of study that will help him or her to pursue the teaching profession later on.

**Theme Two: Events Leading Towards the Teaching Profession**

This theme highlights the events in the life of the participants that may have brought them towards the teaching profession. Their education as an adult will be re-visited, only to see its relevance to their calling or vocation. Other personal and professional experiences also give a glimpse of their lives experiences that brought them to the teaching profession. Why is it important for teachers to reflect on the journey that lead them towards the teaching profession? Reflecting on this journey that brought them to the teaching profession gives a good grounding or confidence for the teachers to be certain that teaching is indeed the profession which they really want to pursue.

These reflections on the events leading towards the teaching profession also reveal that one may not get into the teaching profession directly by completing tertiary studies in Education or Pre-Service Teacher Education programs. The participants in this research arrived at this profession by first getting involved with the tertiary level education that they later found unsuitable. Therefore, from the point of view of this research, mapping out the events leading towards the teaching profession, can be useful in verifying the soul-searching journey that teachers undertook and in identifying their adult educational journey, personal and professional experiences, and their earliest recollection of wanting to be a teacher. The different journey undertaken by each of the participants often brought dissatisfaction in their lives but they persevered despite this discontent. Krishnamurti calls such process *creative discontent* and this *creative discontent* should not be mistaken with the general meaning of the word discontent that “becomes the pursuit of the more, the desire for a bigger house, a better car, as so on, all of which are within the field of envy; and it is envy that sustains such discontent” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 103). Krishnamurti (1996) clarified that this discontent is a state of mind that understands *what is* and further explained the discontent he is referring to, is indeed something different:
But I am talking of a discontent in which there is no envy, no greed for ‘the more’, a discontent that is not sustained by any desire for satisfaction. This discontent is an unpolluted state which exists in each one of us, if it is not deadened through wrong education, through gratifying solutions, through ambition, or through the pursuit of an ideal. When we understand the nature of real discontent, we shall see that attention is part of this burning flame, which consumes the pettiness and leaves the mind free of the limitations of self-enclosing pursuits and gratifications. (p. 103)

As such, we can see that some of the reflections from the participant’s points towards this discontent and their ability to persevere, to stay with their discontent may have brought them to the teaching profession.

*Adult Education*

In this finding, Mary’s education experience in film did not result in her vocation and Neville’s college level music that only focused on memorizing and playing truly bored him. Nevertheless, it is important to see that it was their dissatisfaction with their respective educational experiences that brought them further into investigating their true calling.

Mary's tertiary and graduate studies in film has no relevance to her natural ability or her vocation or calling but her involvement in her Masters of Arts (MA) in Early Childhood indicated her calling as a teacher; she feels she has a gift and loves being a teacher. Even though Mary’s educational experience in film did not result in a vocation, it was an important experience in helping Mary to pursue her vocation.

Mary: So it wasn’t a vocation, it wasn’t really a chosen, like I’m passionate about it, I want to do this and when I found Human Development and Early Childhood Education that was my experience that this is what I was born to do. It turns out that I have a gift and I love it. I would do it if I got paid or not which wasn’t true for my work in film and TV.

Neville took some college level music classes during high school but college level music was mostly about memorizing and that bored him.
Since music was the closest to my heart that comes naturally, I think that’s why I didn’t study it. Because I studied a lot when I was in High School, music, and so, like I kind of took some college-level classes when I was younger, so, yeah, when it came to college and the music program was about memorizing and playing, basically, music that I wasn’t really that interested in, I was just like, wow, what for?

Neville loved to play jazz, but was disappointed with college level jazz music as it was mainly only for credits. It was this dissatisfaction or discontent that perhaps kept Neville wanting to pursue music education through a different and unconventional approach. Perhaps, it was also this different and unconventional approaches that brought Neville to the Oak Grove School where he could experiment with these approaches.

Neville: Well I wanted to study jazz. Essentially I chose this particular school because they had a jazz program, but the way the jazz program worked was that you, er… I don’t know if this really pertains to this question. It’s just that, basically, you took their music program for credits, which was all about the Western Art Music, and then if you were enrolled in those classes you could do extra-curricular jazz stuff, and I just wanted to play jazz, you know.

Ten years later (after obtaining his B.A in Philosophy, Paul got his MA in International Education (experienced-based but now called learner-centered, or inquiry-based learning) and he wrote a master’s thesis based on David Bohm's work.

Paul: The school itself introduced me to a different kind of educational approach because it was an experientially based graduate program (which was very rare at that time), I think there were only two in the country at that time. So we did a lot of the kinds of, what’s now called “Learner centered, inquiry based learning”. So we did a lot of that, not a lot, but a fair share of it, and also group dynamic. We had to work in groups, so communication and the kinds of conflicts and challenges of working in a group were part of what we actually studied. So there was self-study built into the program.

**Professional Experiences**

The participants’ professional experiences shed some light on their earliest involvement with various organizations that carved their way towards the Oak Grove School. Mary, Neville
and Paul were involved with teaching (whether in a school or community centers) before settling at the Oak Grove School. Ecila felt discontented with her work in drama; however, such a discontent was important for her to realize or find her interest in teaching, as explained earlier in this theme.

_All Children Great and Small_ School is a progressive alternative pre-school conducted in a home that was converted into a school. Mary recollects her professional experience there.

Mary: [My first job after the M.A in Teaching] was working in a small pre-school in LA in Silver Lake called All Children Great and Small and it was working with three head teachers and a rotating group of kids. It’s still a very popular progressive alternative pre-school where the teaching is wonderful. It’s in someone’s home which has been converted so it’s a house with a yard that’s been turned into a school and a lot of parent involvement and very good teaching as well. So it was my youngest daughter who went there at the time. That’s the first job where I was actually paid. I did a lot of volunteering in my children’s schools so you know sometimes there’s a blur but that was definitely a job that, I did that just before we moved to Ojai for a year or two.

Mary also recollects her experience at _Resources for Infant Educators and Pacific Oaks College_. It was also the place where she realized that she would leave her involvement with film and television and begin to lean towards early childhood education. Krishnamurti’s notion of being creatively discontent may have played a role here in Mary’s life.

Mary: Marg Degerber had her own institute in LA as well called Resources for Infant Educators. So becoming a parent put me into contact with Marg Degerber and with Pacific Oaks. The beginning of my journey was there. There was no question that I turned my back on film and TV and never looked back and it was just education, child development from then on. We’ve talked a little bit about that but that’s a little more detail on my journey.

Ecila was involved in drama after her formal education and she enjoyed the work but felt that that something was lacking. She did not like the competitive nature of that profession where you compete against people you know well.
Ecila: Well drama was a lot of fun, it was so much fun, but when I had my first child I realized for me, there wasn’t a lot of depth in that. I can go do my work but it’s not going to teach me about life. I was having a lot of fun with the people there but I had a life now here you know that I was going to raise [and] spend time with this child. What I did not like about it was there was an aura of competitiveness and well you had to compete very hard to get a job. And you know you were reaming each other out and competing against people you knew and knew [everyone] was really talented too.

Ecila was not only critical about her community at that time but was also critical of herself and begin to realize that there was no sense of community in the drama profession and that one’s ego seemed to be the guiding factor rather than intuition or humility.

Ecila: There was sort of an aura of superficiality and phoniness that could also accompany the whole realm of acting. There were no true sense of community and a lot of ego. Of course mine was, I’m sure as big as anyone else’s but just so much ego. You know I got to see ego in spades, my own included.

Ecila’s discontent was towards the community in the drama profession that was not focused on what is, or the phenomenon happening in the present. Krishnamurti perceives the notion of what is to be the act of experiencing the moment as it is and not as it was or as it should be. Ecila’s observation of the superficiality within the community in the drama profession also indicated that she did not escape from seeing the situation as it is.

Neville reported that he has always worked in an area that was related to education: Enrolment Officer for a Distance Learning Program; Peace Corps related to education; music teacher in a Montessori school.

Neville: I came to Ojai and I got a job at this other office in town. It happened to be a school, right? It was an office job. Basically I was an enrolment councilor for a Distance Learning Program. So it was related to education. I’d been doing things in the Peace Corps related to education. I’ve been doing that work which had parts of it that related to education, and anyhow, so I had all that that I’d kind of been a part of, and I had that job and I think I probably, actually, called the Montessori school.
Neville started teaching at the Montessori school before taking up the job as a music teacher at the Oak Grove School.

Neville: I think I called some of the local schools, because I was fluent in Spanish, so I figured I could teach Spanish or English, you know. I don’t even know if I had thought about music, but anyway I sent my resume out to everybody...and the Montessori school needed a music teacher, and they didn’t pay much...and so I started teaching a few classes there, and then somebody actually came to me and said that there was a job here at the OGS.

Paul's work with developmentally disabled children was challenging but intrinsically rewarding and he learnt that just listening to them was the biggest intervention in their lives. Paul’s earliest experiences in listening to others give a hint that he possesses an important attribute in teaching, the ability to keenly listen to another.

Paul: I think working with kids who are basically what we would call… they call them “school leavers” in England, but they’re “dropouts” in this country, and they were failing everything including their job training. They were the most challenging group I’ve ever worked with. Certainly as I said I wanted to hear, first of all, what on earth was going on with them, and as I said once they realized that I was actually going to listen to them, this in itself, here’s another example, right? Once I sat down and actually asked them questions and listened to them, that in itself was probably the biggest intervention in their lives, because no one, parents, teachers, cops who would stop them all the time, nobody listened to them. So, that was [a] huge [leap].

_Earliest Recollection of Wanting to be a Teacher_

Mary was touched by the way the teachers spoke to her three-year old son at the Pacific Oaks School, a teaching college with a children's school and this was the first incident that prompted her to become a teacher.

Mary: It was definitely when I took my 3-year-old boy to Pacific Oaks and heard the teachers talk to kids and it was not the way I was spoken to as a child and a lot of what we do is about the way we listen and talk to each other so the kids will listen in other
ways you can get kids to just shhhh, cut you off the way you talk and the same with the ways you listen to them, they will either talk or they won’t talk because they can tell you’re not really listening because they are so authentic.

Ecila’s involvement as a Montessori teacher prompted her to become a teacher and she was impressed by the Montessori approach that resulted in children being: Independent, happy, able to choose what they want to do, and they were also able to teach her what they needed.

Ecila: Well, I think it was when my children were little and my daughter was going to the Montessori school and I walked into the classroom and there were little children who were independent and happy and they were choosing their own work and they were only four years old and they were putting their own work back and they were choosing their own work and then I began reading Maria Montessori and I just thought that’s what I’m doing for the rest of my life, I love this. I love the fact that you can observe a child and learn about the child, the child will teach you what the child needs.

Neville’s father was a teacher, and his mother was a nurse; he therefore assumes that their influences may have brought him to the teaching profession, perhaps unconsciously.

Neville: Well my dad’s a teacher. I kind of just grew up with that mentality, I think. And my mum’s a nurse, you know. My whole family’s like, we all work in sort of human services. I assume it was never conscious.

Paul’s working experience with the Laotian refugees gave birth to the notion of the importance of helping another person and this was the first time Paul became aware of his inclination to become a teacher.

Paul: I was doing that work with Laotian refugees and that’s really where it first came to me. It was never an abstract idea for me, I didn’t particularly like school, but this was before I had my Master’s degree because there was ten years between B.A. and Master’s for me, but I was standing up holding a phone book in front of that group of former monks and peasants from the hills in Laotian and I thought “good Lord, this is fun”. Because it’s useful too, you know, you really felt like you were doing something for
these people, and I think that’s where I first got the first inkling that there was something to giving back, you know.

This theme that discussed the events leading towards the teaching profession focused on the journey of the participants that brought them closer to the teaching profession. The following theme, Motivation to Become a Teacher, focuses on Krishnamurti as well as other individuals that motivated the participants to become teachers.

**Theme Three: Motivation to Become a Teacher**

The motivation to become a teacher was influenced by many factors and some of these factors can be attributed to Krishnamurti’s influence and that of other individuals. For Paul, David Bohm was influential in helping him understand Krishnamurti better and to bring him into the teaching profession. Mary reports that since Krishnamurti’s work was not a compulsory philosophy to learn, it gave her a sense of freedom to better explore his philosophy.

We can also see that the wide variety of other interests in which participants were engaged, also helped them in getting motivated to enter the teaching profession. For example, Paul’s interest in working with the Lepers or Hospice and Neville’s interest in an alternative approach to education were the earliest motivation that brought them into the teaching profession.

**Krishnamurti’s Influence**

Paul indicated that the only difference between David Bohm and Krishnamurti was that Krishnamurti's vision was slightly larger and more integrated. Paul’s interaction with David Bohm deepened his enthusiasm to understand Krishnamurti better.

Paul: Krishnamurti talked about the religious and scientific mind, but what does that mean until you meet someone who has a scientific mind, and really here’s someone who has a really deeply, deeply, gifted scientific mind and you realize when science is pushed it goes right into what we could call spiritual. There is a way in which the kind of perception that a scientist must work with is as deep and profound as any perceptual insight. The whole point is that there is a rigor around asking questions, and there’s a looking at very subtle things. There’s also a looking at deception in the way we’re
guarding against the kinds of deception that would lead to easier, cheap answers, or just
taking secondhand information... no, nothing secondhand can survive a good scientific
scrutiny. So this is exactly what Krishnamurti spoke of. There’s really no difference,
except that Krishnamurti’s vision was slightly more larger and integrated.

Mary was comfortable that the Oak Grove School did not have rigid rules requiring
potential teachers to be interested in Krishnamurti’s teachings, in order to be selected as a
teacher. This reveals the freedom given to teachers to explore their inner lives without any
interference, including Krishnamurti.

Mary: I first heard about Krishnamurti after coming to OGS. Absolutely. I didn’t know,
and many parents come to this school not looking for an alternative to the public school
system, because there are many alternatives, but some are very you know, the other end
of the spectrum, very rigid and one-track and I was looking for what might be called a
progressive school. That’s the way I had been taught to teach and view children and
childhood and education. So that felt very compatible and it was later that I started
learning about Krishnamurti and of course I enquired about it because a school that has a
founder, you want to know what the thinking was and everything that I heard it’s fairly
simple in that first process because parents come, when people come to Oak Grove there
isn’t a requirement to be interested in Krishnamurti which I like because otherwise it
might be a very small school.\(^{48}\)

Mary reported that she also found comfort in the fact that there were always dialogues at the Oak
Grove School that makes inquiry-based education possible there – like Krishnamurti, who
always inquired and engaged in dialogue with others.

Mary: Oak Grove School was a place where many people had different ways of thinking
and could come together and have dialogue about that. So the very early exposure to
Krishnamurti was quite simple. Really this is inquiry-based education and Krishnamurti

\(^{48}\) Please see Thapan (2006, pp.78-82) on the recruitment process for teachers at the Rishi Valley School,
Krishnamurti’s earliest school founded in India (see the Rishi Valley school’s website,
http://www.rishivalley.org/school/overview.htm ). Thapan reveals that there are generally two types of recruitment,
one by means of advertisement and another type is by the recommendation of individuals keen or having deep
interest in Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy.
talked about questioning everything and conditioning and what we come to life and every moment in our life is conditioned so much by our family, our culture, our history, our religion and to really look at that and question that and that felt very comfortable to me.

Originally, it was Ecila’s involvement with the Montessori teaching that was instrumental in her decision to become a teacher; [and] subsequently, reading and getting to know Krishnamurti's teachings sealed her interest as a teacher forever.

Ecila: As soon as I had heard Krishnamurti and read *Education and Significance of Life*, then I knew I wanted to learn all I could so I would become the kind of teacher I’d hoped I could be.

*Other Influences*

Mary pointed out the similarities between the philosophy of the Quakers, Parker Palmer and Krishnamurti, which all emphasize respect for the individual’s inner life.

Mary: Yes, it’s very compatible, and really the respect for the individual and the light, the inner light which is in each human being and that we are all you know the equality and pacifisms, simplicity and community, all of those things are very compatible.

Neville attributed his continued interest in teaching after coming to the Oak Grove School. His interest in an alternative form of education helped his vision to continue to be a teacher.

Neville: I mean I do think that, for example, I didn’t come and enroll at the university to become a teacher, because I’ve taken some of those class and such but I never really… The whole notion of alternative education or whatever, I guess it seems more acceptable to me than… or at least it did before. I don’t think I would have really continued teaching if I hadn’t come to this school, you know what I mean?

Paul felt that Krishnamurti created the platform for the importance of education and David Bohm contributed towards the intellectual dynamism surrounding it; he felt that the meeting with David Bohm left an everlasting impression of someone who is passionate and Paul sensed how much passion was lacking in himself after meeting David Bohm.
Paul: When I got to Brockwood49, I got to my thesis time, and David Bohm showed up, so I actually wrote my thesis on his work. So it became a bit of an important link between my academic work and my interest in all kinds of questions. So there was a real link and from there, after spending time with David Bohm I really never looked back. It was a sense that Krishnamurti sort of created the platform of the really vital importance of education and then David came along and created the intellectual dynamism. I realized “goodness, gracious, there’s really something here that…” and I say, we didn’t talk about it today, but when I was a younger person and finally met someone who was passionate, I’d only met one, and so I was almost an adult, and I realized how formative that was for me. So I did sense that what was lacking in a way in my surroundings was a sense of passion, even in me. I had sort of adolescent arrogance, but that’s not passion.

Paul has a deep affection to helping others and if he had not become a teacher, he would have worked in a Leper colony or with the individuals who are terminally ill, in a place like the hospices. This description shows Paul’s deeper caring instinct and such recollection strengthens one’s interest in becoming a teacher.

Paul: That I’ve always been attracted to the bottom of society. I wanted to work in a Leper Colony, for example. I would have been drawn to work, had I been allowed to, to work with the dying, like hospices. So the bottom [of society] have always been interesting to me and I never really knew why and so it’s not surprising that teaching is attractive to me, it’s the so-called “caring profession”, and that’s actually true, you really can’t be a very good teacher in this sense, in Krishnamurti’s sense of a teacher, if you don’t have affection and real sensitivity for these children. It’s just not possible.

49 “Brockwood Park School is an international co-educational boarding school in the southern English countryside, United Kingdom. The school is deeply inspired by J. Krishnamurti’s teachings, which encourages academic excellence, self-understanding, creativity and integrity in a safe, non-competitive environment” (from the Brockwood Park School website, http://www.brockwood.org.uk )
Findings and Discussions

Sub-Research Question # 3: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish wholeness within?

Category: Teachers’ Inner Lives

In this category of Teachers’ Inner Lives, the discussion revolves around the aspects of teachers’ inner lives that may have led them into the teaching profession. The first theme–Learning and educating oneself, reveals the findings: when relationship acts as a mirror and when the self acts as a mirror. The second theme – Inner dimension of the Oak Grove School, reveals the findings: Inner dimension of teachers at the Oak Grove School and inner dimension of students at the Oak Grove School. The third theme – Inner life and timeless learning, reveals the findings: teachers characteristics contributing to timeless learning; conditions to timeless learning; importance of staying with what is. The forth theme – Wholeness of life, reveals the findings: awareness of wholeness; conditions promoting wholeness; conditions preventing experiencing wholeness. The fifth theme – Wholeness in teachers, reveals the findings: conditions for creating wholeness among teachers and consequences when teachers lack wholeness. The sixth theme – Good teaching, reveals the findings: teachers’ characteristics that contributes to Good Teaching; conditions for good teaching to occur; conditions preventing good teaching from occurring.

Theme One: Learning and Educating Oneself

When the process of learning is reflected in one’s inner life, many factors surface or gets exposed. In this context of learning, the educator and the educated are assumed to be learning together. Of course the educator knows more than the students where the subject matter is concerned but as regards matters involving psychological issues like fear, loneliness, anger, etc., the educator and the educated are on the same plane, and therefore they need to learn from each other. Krishnamurti claims that a relationship is a mirror in which we see ourselves; in other words the “relationship is the awareness of interconnection between two people” (1954, p.177). This theme reveals that to learn and educate oneself, includes, among many other things: the need to be aware of our conditioning in the midst of a relationship and the need to be aware of
the conditioning itself. It is this awareness that leads individuals towards wholeness or deeper into themselves.

When Relationship Acts as a Mirror

Mary felt that she considers her students as being a mirror in which she sees her actions and behavior. It simply means that her interaction with her students revealed her deeper intentions.

Mary: But much more profound really is the inner growth that takes place when you’re faced with a mirror for yourself and children provide that I know parents know that. The child holds up a mirror to the parent and oh, did I really say that? Oh dear what does that mean and what does that mean for me and this child?

Mary felt that there is sharing at the psychological level among teachers at the Oak Grove School and her experience at the Pacific Oaks made her more aware of the way she interacts with others like her students, husband, parents, siblings and children.

Mary: One of the things I value in our teaching environment here is the opportunity to talk with other teachers about everything that goes on, not just oh we taught these concepts or we covered these basis with kids but really what’s happening and where I’m struggling as a teacher there’s a twosome or a threesome or a dynamic in the classroom and I keep getting stuck or certain time of days always problematic and if you have other colleagues to talk about not just the physical situation but what it’s bringing out for you, there’s so much growth that happens as a human being and I think in terms of when I mentioned hearing at Pacific Oaks teachers speak in a way I had never heard adults speak to children, that then became a way that I incorporated you know it’s integrated into who I am.

Mary shared that the relationship with parents becomes an important link in her relationship with the students, in that it made her understand them better.

Mary: And I would add the parents too because we’re in a partnership and there are many schools I think where you drop off and pick up and there’s communication but we work toward profoundly have as deeper communication and a partnership as we can. We ask
parents to share with us what’s going on in their lives not because we’re nosy but because it helps us support children you know.

Paul echoed Krishnamurti’s theme of ‘You are the World’ which essentially means that in a relationship where everything about one another is exposed, there comes an untold revelation that psychologically there is no difference between him and the students. Krishnamurti’s theme concept of ‘You are the World’ also reflects the notion that although there may be differences in language, religion, cultural and traditional beliefs, psychologically human beings share the same conditioning like fear, sorrow, loneliness, etc. Therefore, Krishnamurti argues that since we fundamentally share the same psychological conditioning, it should be easier for human beings to understand one another and create a meaningful relationship with one another. In You Are the World, Krishnamurti shares that:

What is important is to learn about yourself, not according to any specialist, but to learn by actually observing yourself. And there you will find that you are the world: the hatreds, the nationalist, the religious separatist, the man who believes in certain things and disbelieves in others, the man who is afraid and so on. By observing the problem we are going to learn about ourselves. (Krishnamurti, 1972, p. 38)

Paul: So what comes out is a kind of, sometimes shock and awe at life, it’s scary, it’s awesomely beautiful, it’s deeply and profoundly confusing, it’s alive, it’s no longer words, it’s no longer right, and I teach English so I see these in these characters, you know, or in plots. The things that is very real and very human for someone who is sensitive enough to be able to see it. And then you get to this thing, which I do talk to the kids about, you know, you are the world. There’s this sense that you realize that this intensity is all about things that are human.

**When the self acts as a mirror**

The word self implies the mind that is influenced by one’s conditioning as explained in Chapter 2. Ecila reports that the ‘teacher’ within was totally hidden from her as a child but was re-kindled upon having her own child. Ecila’s keen interest in the development of her children helped her to discover her deep interest in becoming a teacher.
Ecila: Becoming a teacher was totally hidden from me as a child. I had no idea I would become a teacher and I had no idea that I would be a good teacher. I just thought I would experiment with it and see. I was interested in my children and their development and because of them I became very interested in bringing out the hidden potential and I didn’t know what it was except by observing them and in the process of interacting with other people, things reveal themselves.

Paul felt that when the conditioning is understood, the inner-life becomes clearer and as a consequence one’s passion can be discovered. This notion echoes Krishnamurti’s philosophy of discovering one’s wholeness by means of discarding or eliminating the conditioning. This also resembles the philosophy of *Advaita Vedanta*\(^{50}\) that stresses the point that the Self is ever realized (or whole), only that it is camouflaged by one’s *samskara*\(^{51}\) or one’s past conditioning. Ramana Maharshi’s teachings resembled the doctrine of *Advaita Vedanta*, a school of thought in Hinduism where the non-dual philosophy was realized by *Sankara*\(^{52}\) during the 7\(^{th}\) and 8\(^{th}\) century. Paul shares his view on inner life, conditioning and passion:

Paul: So they’re still struggling with it, I do it with the seniors, but to me it’s when some of that garbage gets cleared out, we realize it’s not that important, then the so-called inner life has a different meaning, it’s not just about recycling secondhand fears and values and all the stuff that we’re indoctrinated into, but when some of that conditioning starts to break down, it seems to me that that’s where the passion lies, right?

Paul feels that the more he understands his conditioning, the more amazed he feels. He feels that the letting go of his conditioning makes him a better teacher.

Paul: Being a human being in this world and it almost sounds like a cliché but it’s a very, I don’t know, I think the more my conditioning begins to falter and all the rest of it, I just

\(^{50}\) *Advaita* refers to the philosophy of non-duality and *Vedanta* refers to the metaphysical philosophy derived from the *Upanishadic* texts (texts from which all Vedanta philosophy is derived)

\(^{51}\) The word *samskara* is explained further in the final chapter, under the concluding remarks for Research Question #3.

\(^{52}\) Davis (2010) explains that “the non-dual experiential path of Advaita Vedanta has occupied the dominant position in Indian philosophy from the time of Sankara (c. 7\(^{th}\)-8\(^{th}\) century) to the present day.
become more amazed, more amazed at the stupidity, more amazed at the beauty, more amazed at... all the aspects of life just become more amazing, and I think that makes me a better teacher...

Paul dialogues with his students even though they will argue strongly, but continues to point out to them that their conditioning has been controlling or running their lives without them being aware about it. So, pointing out to the students that their conditioning is controlling them is a part of Paul’s pedagogy.

Paul: I point out that this is their thinking, which this is something that’s in a sense running them, right? Running their system, as David Bohm used to say. So their system is being run by this information and you need to have an idea what that information is.

**Theme Two: Inner Dimension of the Oak Grove School**

This theme discusses the unique condition or atmosphere that permeates at the Oak Grove School. This atmosphere refers to the ‘methodless’ approach towards creating an ambience where teachers discuss issues at a psychological and not just at the surface level. It is methodless because no training is provided to create this atmosphere, but with a certain level of awareness among teachers, the ambience is created automatically. Sheldrake’s (1981, 1988, 1991) notion of the morphic fields – that includes different types of fields, including morphogenetic, behavioral, social and cultural fields, and mental fields – is referred by Chris Bache as the group mind (Bache, 2008, p. 47). Bache (2008) mentions that Sheldrake’s notion of experiencing and learning is registered at two levels: the individual and centralized, or collective level – and explains that:

When members of a given species are learning a new behavior, the learning curve is low because the new learning of the few is outweighed by the prior cumulative learning of the many. As more individuals learn the new behavior, however, a critical mass is eventually reached. The system comes to a tipping point where the learning curve of the group shifts. It’s as if the collective mind suddenly ‘gets it’. (p. 48)

In essence, Bache shares Sheldrake’s (1981, 1988, 1991) notion that groups have minds and that these minds can be described as fields. I believe that the group of teachers at the
Krishnamurti’s schools, all share from the same field that forms the **group mind**. This *group mind* is what I believe to be the ambience that exists at the Oak Grove School.

**Inner Dimension of Teachers at the Oak Grove School**

Mary affirmed that her teaching is a reflection of her inner self and shares that at the Oak Grove School it's important that teachers reflect on their psychological reactions (like anger) whenever and wherever it arises:

Mary: Teachers teach who they are. It allows us to know ourselves, all sides, all layers of ourselves because you don’t put it in a box on the shelf when you go home and it keeps stirring, the soup keeps bubbling and simmering and there are things that come up and it’s a choice to look at it too. We can say no, it’s getting too uncomfortable, I’m getting angry whenever this child whines or something. We really, in this environment, have that as a goal to look at ourselves and that’s where we find out, I mean there are things we can do.

Ecila observed that [new] teachers who are not willing to observe themselves (or become aware of their conditioning) do not last long at the Oak Grove School:

Ecila: I don’t think teachers last very long here if they aren’t interested in developing practice for themselves and they can be very challenging and it can be very painful at times and its sitting with the bad as well as the good and its sitting with the negativity from within and observing it and yes, I think that it is very important for all of us as human beings but especially if we’re going to be with children.

**Teachers’ Transformational Phase**

Krishnamurti defined the transformation of human beings as the ability to bring some kind of order to daily life and added that “when one is not thinking clearly, objectively, rationally, be aware of that and change it, break it…[and] that is transformation” (Krishnamurti, 1991, p. 97). The participants expressed the transformational phase that they observed and experienced. For example, Mary felt very much at ease at the Oak Grove School because the understanding of Krishnamurti’s philosophy was never forced upon anyone. She articulates as follows:
Mary: That felt very welcoming and I also like the fact that it wasn’t jammed in anyone’s throat, it was a person’s choice cause you can’t force change or transformation so where people are ready that’s where their growth is. And the spiritual aspects of it that really acknowledging that teacher’s are learning every bit as much as children.

Ecila was also eager to teach at a Krishnamurti school, to know more about Krishnamurti’s philosophy and to create that transformational environment where children can learn to discover who they are. This environment relates to conditions where children do not have the fear of competition, which in turn provides fertile ground for real learning to take place.

Ecila: I wanted to teach here because I wanted to learn more about what Krishnamurti had to say in a practical way by being with other teachers who were also interested in Krishnamurti’s work. You know in a certain way there is a great responsibility in teaching here. I’m very responsible I feel, for creating an environment that doesn’t have fear that kids don’t feel competitive, creating an environment where children can really be themselves and discover who they are.

As revealed by the data provided from both Ecila and Mary, it is clear that these participants were transformed by their experiences at Oaks Grove School, and there is a strong interconnection to the themes which relate to the freedom to explore and grow both as individuals and in community with teachers and students alike.

**Inner Dimension of Students at the Oak Grove School**

Paul shared that helping the students at Oak Grove School to look at their inner dimension, contributes to the uniqueness of the Oak Grove School.

Paul: I try to get the kids to look at the world out there and look at other people through characters or just each other, but inevitably you’ve got to go back to the inward. The inward, again, that’s one of the things that makes this school distinct, is that there is an inward dimension of education here, or there’s meant to be.

Paul further added that he urges his students to look inward, which means to be able to look at their own thinking. Paul intentionally incorporates this into his pedagogy by means of challenging their writing or during group discussions:
Paul: So that means that they’ve got to be able to look at their own thinking, and ultimately question whether it makes sense. Now how does that happen? Well it doesn’t always happen, but it can when they’re challenged by something I present or something they read, or a writer presents, or in a discussion group when someone comes up with something that completely strikes them as ridiculous or wrong, or they hear from their peers something that they’ve never thought of. So all those things, inward and outer, it’s dynamic, right? They hear from someone else but it draws out, right, something from their conditioning, right? Except they’ve never thought about it.

**Theme Three: Inner Life and Timeless Learning**

Timeless learning does not happen when the brain is being filled with knowledge and information (pure transmission) but rather, it takes place when the mind begins to *uncondition* itself (transformation). In this context of learning, the notion of evoking something potential, hidden and latent was also considered as the outcome of timeless learning.

J.P Miller (1996) shares that Krishnamurti’s notion of being present to *what is* relates to timeless learning. Krishnamurti (1996) shares this notion of timeless learning as a transformational process:

> When you are listening to music, your mind does not wander all over the place; you are listening. Similarly, when you want to understand conflict, you are no longer depending on time at all; you’re simply confronted with what is, which is conflict. Then immediately there comes a quietness, a stillness of mind...[and] it is that quiet mind, that still mind, which brings about transformation. (p. 82)

Krishnamurti (1996) further adds that when the mind does not resist, avoid, discard or blame *what is*, it is passively aware of the problem and during this passivity of the mind, transformation takes place. According to Krishnamurti (1996), this transformation means that the problem will cease to exist and produces an “immediate regeneration, a newness, a quality of freshness; because the mind is always still when it is interested, when it desires or has the intention to understand” (p. 83).
Teachers Characteristics Contributing to Timeless Learning

Mary felt that the timeless qualities (wisdom, compassion, joy, awe and wonder) are essential needs for life, but she does not consider it a goal:

Mary: Well those qualities sound like the intention of living. Leading a life without joy, without compassion, without all of those things would be very different. Not a goal I guess we should say that. I think since I was a young person it’s been a goal of mine to live with joy and happiness is a goal and maybe it wasn’t a goal so much for my parents.

Mary added that leading a balanced life makes one whole or full and it is from this fullness that one can give the timeless quality to students. In other words, she felt that teachers need to nurture themselves first before nurturing their students. This resembles Parker Palmer’s perception that teachers cannot guide their students towards wholeness if they themselves are not embarking upon a similar journey.

Mary: It became clear to me that if you’re nurturing others, you have to be nurtured yourself, you have to be full before you can give of that fullness so that’s been a very big part of my thinking is that I need to lead a life that is in balance that isn’t just a sacrifice I think that’s the word.

Ecila felt that the timeless learning qualities cannot be communicated to another, as it happens automatically when there is a sense of love, affection and caring for one another:

Ecila: You can’t talk about it, you can’t explain it that well, you just find that a sense of affection and joy and fun and I don’t know about wisdom, compassion, caring about each other, caring about the school, caring about these kids, their families, it just happens because you are really relating to each other.

Conditions for Timeless Learning

Ecila shared that when there is a deep affection towards the teaching profession and when there is genuine care among teachers, students and colleagues, timeless learning continually happens all the time:
Ecila: If you are in a classroom with children and there is so much happening every day and you love what you’re doing and you care about them and they care about each other and your colleagues care about you and you care about them, timeless learning happens all the time.

Mary felt that when a teacher's energy is depleted, he or she cannot give, serve and help. She indicated that she re-fuels her energy by sleeping well, eating well and exercising well. This is an indication that the body is an important vehicle in realizing the Self or experiencing wholeness:

Mary: And keep that in mind that if you get depleted you can’t give and serve and help. So that there’s a piece where I’m very committed to being to re-fuelling so I get a good night sleep and I eat really well and I make sure I get a walk every day and spend time with my family, my kids, my partner.

Mary also reported that she re-fuels her energy by meditating twice a day, eating well and sleeping well and felt that wholeness or balance is essential one's life:

Mary: I do a meditation practice twice a day, that re-fuels, refreshes, replenishes, you know eating well and eating fresh and local and all those things and sleeping, you know getting the time rather than saying you know I have these four deadlines I have to write the text for the web site and I have to do a head of school performance review and all the things that I do as an administrator and staying up late to do it, I take the time to rest and then I have more energy to be effective and do them well. Wholeness is so essential, having a balance in your life, it’s not all in your head or all in your body or all in your hand, it’s being whole.

Paul shared that the process of discovering one's conditioning requires great sensitivity and that this sensitivity brings joy to a teacher. Krishnamurti felt that it is important to nurture sensitivity as it means being sensitive to everything surrounding us like the plants, animals, trees environment and people. Krishnamurti shared that such nurturing “brings about the quality of uncalculated, unselfish response, which is true morality and conduct” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p.99). Paul shared a point that Krishnamurti made on feeling sad:
Paul: You know kids used to say, you know, “if you’re sensitive Krishna Ji, you’ll be sad.” He said “What’s wrong with feeling sad?” For God’s sake, you know, why is this sense that … When I say whole, I mean whole, you know, I really mean whole, and it’s taken me a long time to sense it, because like a lot of people I think I’ve been similar if not exactly the same in thinking that there’s in these sorts of spiritual things, that there’s this place that’s away from all that and there’s this thing that’s joyful and beautiful and you realize we’re just one more silly fantasy, you know.

Without sensitivity, there's no joy and Paul stressed that without that joy, one cannot walk into a classroom and teach. We can see that Paul has really nurtured his sensitivity and considers joy as an important aspect of sensitivity; he questions the integrity of teachers who walk in a classroom without that sense of joy:

Paul: But having said that, without that sensitivity there’s no joy, and if you just imagine, if you don’t have joy why would you go into a classroom? Honestly, seriously, ask yourself that question. Would you really walk into a classroom if you didn’t know joy, for God’s sake, how could you do that? And yet I used to do teacher observations and I used to walk in and you’d get these angry teachers, and these frustrated teachers, and you think “God, get out of here”.

*Importance of Staying with ‘What Is’*

Paul points out that rather than focusing on those good qualities (wisdom, compassion, joy, awe and wonder), he rather focuses on his conditioning, his insensitivities and so on. This ties in with Krishnamurti’s negative approach where he suggests that rather than inquiring into the unknown or the timeless qualities like love, wisdom, compassion, awe, wonder, etc., one should inquire into the known (like fear, loneliness, anger, jealousy, etc.) or staying with what is. In other words, Krishnamurti is suggesting that the unknown cannot be communicated or inquired upon directly but if the known is observed, understood and negated, then what remains would be the unknown. As an example, if love needs to be understood, then the person needs to understand the factors preventing him/her from being a loving person. As such, such conditioning as hate, fear, jealousy, etc., could be inquired upon and negated.
Krishnamurti ties the notion of being with *what is* and the concept of the *known* and the *unknown*:

Our problem is not how to seek the unknowable, but to understand the accumulative processes of the mind, which is ever the known. That is an arduous task: that demands constant attention, a constant awareness in which there is no sense of distraction, of identification, of condemnation; it is being with what is. Then only can the mind be still…Our job is not to pursue the unknowable but to understand the confusion, the turmoil, the misery, in ourselves; and then that thing darkly comes into being, in which there is joy. (Krishnamurti, 1954, 257)

Paul echoes Krishnamurti’s notion of pursuing the known (arrogance, insensitivity, etc.) by suggesting that being aware of *what is*, is actually understanding the known:

Paul: I think those are good qualities, but I think a lot of the awe and *thunderstruckness* can come from one’s stupidity, from one seeing how blind one is or how insensitive one is. I think Krishnamurti’s main point is that we stay alive to *what is*, and often *what is* is a little uncomfortable because we’re stupid, we’re insensitive, we’re pompous, arrogant, and often in funny ways, we think we don’t see ourselves necessarily that way, but suddenly someone says something to us and in our own minds we say “what an idiot”, or whatever, you know.

Paul reports that having spent the whole semester trying to teach his 10th Grade students about wisdom, he realized that wisdom cannot be transmitted, thus agreeing with the idea that wisdom cannot be communicated directly:

Paul: I’m spending a whole semester with my group in tenth grade on wisdom, but, you know, ultimately I think you come to the point where you can’t really transmit wisdom. There’s a way in which we stumble into these things. I think we have to have the right intention as a teacher.

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53 The word wisdom implies a timeless quality or being in the state of unknown
Paul also added that teachers need to have the right intention to be awake and to see the importance of staying with *what is* and not what we hope and dream:

Paul: The right intention is… I really see that it’s important to be awake, really see that it’s important to stay with *what is*, because *what is*, is the only thing that really matters, not what we hope, not what we dream but stay with it.

Paul also cautions that staying with *what is* can be a discomfort as it shows our fragmented state and the vices that are built into the thinking system; however, he agrees that staying with *what is* brings out the joy and also agony in him:

Paul: And what is can be a bit disconcerting, so we’re as fragmented as anybody, I’m as fragmented as anybody, I’ve got all kinds of vices that I didn’t even realize, right? It’s built into the system, this system, this thinking system, so it’s really much more important that we delve for the real important stuff of awareness and sensitivity, and that brings out the awe to me and the joy and also the agony, you know.

**Theme Four: Wholeness of Life**

In the context of Krishnamurti’s philosophy, wholeness is not a goal or an aim of life but rather a state that one arrives at, when fragmentation drops away. This notion implies that wholeness is one’s natural state and this school of thought agrees with the philosophy of *Advaita Vedanta* or the *Non-dual* philosophy. Wholeness also implies being in the third stage of awareness (Krishnamurti, 1945; Cloninger, 2004) where all the contradictions between the observer and the observed are dissolved and are akin to being in the state of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1991).

Krishnamurti (1996) explains the wholeness of life as an act of looking at life as a whole or in other words, looking at “our education, our occupations, our hobbies, work, and all the travail that exist inwardly, the psychological conflicts, the anxieties, the fears, the pleasures, the sorrows” (p. 322). In essence, Krishnamurti stresses that we do not compartmentalize looking at life with a particular experience or a particular point of view, but rather look at life as a whole.
Awareness of Wholeness

Since wholeness is not a goal to be attained, being aware of the notion of wholeness seems to be a logical thing to do. Mary considers a child to be whole and not an empty vessel to be filled up; she feels humbled by their wholeness and respects their childhood greatly:

Mary: I can agree with that statement and I think the wholeness of life is here when they walk through the door I see wholeness, I see a child who is whole and it’s not an empty vessel to fill up or any of those things. I feel very humble, the children are teachers and I have a great deal of respect for children and for childhood. Then the school, there are many school systems in which there can be a lot of it feels like destructive things that happen in schools. I have my own opinions about competition, rewards, and punishment and I’m sure you’re familiar with all of those.

Ecila mentioned that education does not only relate to reading, writing, and calculating but relates to awareness of something larger, that includes being aware of the animals and the surrounding environment:

Ecila: If you’re talking about education as bringing out the hidden potential of each individual, you’re not just talking about reading, writing, math, social studies, although that’s part of our educational stuff. We are talking about at this school, the awareness of something much larger, being aware of the birds in the trees, being aware of hearing birds singing as you are walking to the library, being aware of the rains that just happened, listening to the rain, watching how the hillsides seem to turn green over night, being aware of the animals and all the critters that cohabit in this environment with us, being aware of how we feel in these moments when we are on walks together, being aware how we feel at these moments when we’re really frustrated with math.

Ecila added that besides being aware of the animal kingdom and the surrounding environment, it’s important to be aware of what is going on in a relationship:

54 This statement refers to the following: Krishnamurti felt that the school is to be a place where students learn about the wholeness of life
Ecila: [Learning about the wholeness of life is also ] being aware of how our friends are feeling or acting and reaching out to them or not, just being aware of yourself, ourselves, individual selves, the people we interact with in a larger world… Just what is going on in relationship?

Ecila observed that her students grew up as balanced individuals and seem to be interested in so much more than just themselves. Some of the qualities that emerged from this balance are: Being good listeners, knowing what they like to do and being unselfish individuals:

Ecila: These children grow up and they’re balanced, they seem to be very good listeners, they seem to know what they like to do, they seem to have a place in the world, they seem to have care for the world and they seem to be people who aren’t one dimensional or narrow. I just don’t know how to explain it any other way except they seem to be interested in so much more than just themselves.

As if nature was listening to our interview and when Question 3(c) was asked to Neville, a woodpecker was pecking the woods outside the classroom when Krishnamurti’s notion of wholeness was being discussed. We listened to that pecking sound and continued the interview with the pecking sound in the background. Just at that moment, it felt like we were both learning about the wholeness of life and the conversation was integrated into the pecking sound:

Neville: Well… do you hear that woodpecker?

Paul broke down wholeness into the inner and outer and, as for education, he believes that it is broken down into the physical, emotional, intellectual, social and individual. He elaborates as follows:

Paul: Well, I mean the wholeness of life is just about everything you can consider, I mean some of the major categories would be inner and outer. For education, it would be the physical, as well as the emotional and the intellectual. Those would be essential, but then there’s the social as well the individual and that’s huge, huge, huge, and then there’s nature.
Conditions Promoting Wholeness

The school can promote the flowering of wholeness by finding out the different ways students learn and by tailoring a variety of learning strategies associated with their ability to learn through sight, hearing and the different modes of learning:

Mary: The school has the opportunity to teach wholeness by responding to the child as a whole person and being a whole person then of course just in curriculum planning as teachers you know, just being sure that we are looking at each child as an individual and differentiating learning for them so that some children learn more through physical activity and others can sit and do it through reading and writing and arithmetic and sort of establishing a respect for the way children learn through hearing, through music, through sight, through kinesthetic, through all the different modalities that are pretty well articulated now.

Mary added that finding out how the environment and surroundings play a role in the way teachers and students absorb information and learn promotes the flowering of wholeness. She specifically shared that it is important for teachers to observe the different temperaments or levels of sensitivity of a student that allow for the conditions which promote wholeness:

Mary: And help create wholeness and really acknowledging that even if a child is very different from me in the way they absorb information that that is who they are and that is the way it works for them. It may be a child that is very sensitive to noise and activity you know, needs a quiet space, sort of seeing, observing, this child is a cautious child and needs a lot of time to warm up so I’m going to create space for that to happen where another child will enter and be everywhere at once and figure out how to make it work for everybody is the teachers’ dilemma because we are a group.

Mary was impressed by David Elkind’s (2007) notion of promoting ideas like slowing down and being in nature in *The Hurried Child*:

Mary: *The Hurried Child* by David Elkind had a great phrase for that, he’s written a lot of amazing books which have helped people take a breath and stop and say okay, it’s going
to be okay and let’s just be together, let’s just be in nature, let’s just be in family, let’s just be in school.

Neville said that learning about the wholeness of life does not only imply the teaching and learning of the subject matter but also implies the relationship with the students; to him, this includes compassion and awareness beyond the self, the ego or group awareness. Neville’s perception resembles Null’s (2011) explanation of Alfie Kohn’s Existentialist Curriculum. Null shared that, “connecting students with a common curriculum is much less important that cooperating with them as they pursue the subjects they want to study. Subject matter is secondary; students’ personal interests are primary” (2011, p. 70).

Neville: The wholeness of life. I mean I realize that the thing is it’s not just about the subject matter, it’s not about teaching them…the theory, the technique, or the songs. That’s clear, right? And I think the most important thing is that I teach kids how to practice, you know. I don’t want to say I teach them, but I give them opportunities to learn to concentrate, to use their brain in a particular way. And actually in a lot of different ways, and some of them are very technical musically, but most of them are not. Most of them have to do really with relationship, you know what I mean? And I think that’s how it applies to the whole Krishnamurti sense of whole life, is that relationship, compassion, and like awareness beyond the self or the ego, you know, group awareness.

Paul refers to Krishnamurti’s perception on the relationship between human beings and nature shares that we can have no relationship with a human being if we are unable to develop a relationship with nature:

Paul: Krishnamurti said, ‘if you have no relationship with nature, you can have no relationship with man’, and you know, I’ve been sitting on that one for years, and honestly, I really think he’s right and I don’t mean that simply because I’m a tree hugger, but it’s because nature brings you out of yourself, you know, you go out into nature if you’re alone and quiet and sensitive, or if you’re worried and anxious and miserable.
Paul regards nature as being a sacred place due to its ability to draw out our conditioning. In *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, Richard Louv shares cutting-edge studies that point to exposure to nature as being important for a child’s physical health and emotional development. This includes reaping “nature’s psychological benefits – including the ability to work better and think more clearly” (Louv, 2008, p.104).

Paul: We talked about this in terms of like a sanctuary or a sacred place, but to me nature has that sacred quality because it draws out something. So that’s part of the whole, right, for me. There’s that sense of being connected to something larger. Because if it’s all about this, it’s so petty, so stupid, you know, honestly, this world works in such small little circles, you know, and it’s all broken up, and ugh, whereas you know nature actually asks something much bigger of you.

Paul further added that the quality of attention one must have to be in relationship to nature is the same quality of attention we must have in a relationship with anybody. Paul’s phrase of *this has to go* (in the following quote) refers to the ego or the attributes of the self that is preventing us from having an authentic relationship with another. This ego simply promotes self-importance in any relationship that prevents love and mutual understanding to flower. Therefore the ego is one of the many vices of the self that promotes fragmentation that results in people having bad relationships:

Paul: For Krishnamurti there’s a way in which having a relationship with nature means, because nature doesn’t talk, human language right? In order to have any relationship with it you have to end. So if you read the passage where he says that, he comes clearly back and says the same quality you must have with another human being in order to have a relationship or the quality of attention you must have to be in relationship to nature is the same quality of attention you must have in a relationship with anybody. So, you know, for me to really hear what you have to say, this has to go, right? What did he say, “Where the self is, the other isn’t”, right?

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55 See Aversano (2009) that discusses the discovering of the healing energies of the natural world in *Plant Spirit Journey* for further understanding.
Paul felt that fragmentation need to be understood before understanding wholeness. This perception ties in with Krishnamurti’s notion that our conditioned mind which is the known can only inquire into the known (the conditionings) and cannot inquire into the unknown (the timeless qualities):

Paul: It’s kind of like looking at it with the Krishnamurti perspective, where to understand the whole you have to understand fragmentation. Don’t say whole until you understand fragmentation. When you understand fragmentation, you’ll understand what wholeness is. Don’t look for wholeness, look for fragmentation, and when you understand that, then you’ll get a sense of what the whole is, and I think that’s right. Now I know he didn’t say that but that’s how I would refer to it. I would say understand why you can’t relate with nature, understand why you have conflict with the people you’re around, understand why you’re unhappy, or lonely, or bored, or all the ways that are indicators of fragmentation. Know and understand why with some people you’re happy and other people you’re miserable, just understand these borders, understand these fragments, understand this disconnection. When you understand disconnection, you know, and you really get a sense of what that’s about, the other just comes, right?

**Conditions Preventing Experiencing of Wholeness**

Mary felt that there are less opportunities to promote the flowering towards wholeness nowadays with the increasing emphasis on academic progress as opposed to being in nature, and that competition towards academic excellence robs teachers and students of the opportunity for wholeness to flower:

Mary: We don’t always have opportunities to touch that wholeness especially now, children are highly programmed and there’s a lot of lessons and tutoring and extra things where they don’t just have time to stop and be in nature, be with themselves, be in a simple place and it’s a missing ingredient and there’s a lot of worry, anxiety, it’s a highly accelerated environment and parents are feeling like if I don’t do this now, there won’t be enough spots at Harvard for my child when they get there, there’s this competition and acceleration, hurry-up, hurry-up, hit the milestones and somehow they’re not so pushy about children learning to walk or to talk but definitely when you come to sort of so
called academic learning there’s a lot of sense of not only hurrying, I would call it pushing which has its own value but it’s based on hurrying really.

Mary lamented that children already appear to be conditioned even at the tender age of 0-5, and feels that this may pose challenges in nurturing children towards wholeness. Mary shared the term pre-prejudice, where children are found to be showing signs of conditioning as early as 2 years old:

Mary: So there’s that and something else came up for me while you were saying helping students look at their own conditioning and even at this very, very young age that I teach from 0-5, there’s so many ways to help kids do that it’s really quite amazing when you have that as an intention how much is right there even when they’re 2-years-old. The assumptions, at that point it’s called pre-prejudice in the literature, in the research where kids are noticing differences, categorizing and thinking some are good and some are bad.

Neville does not know how the notion of students’ learning the wholeness of life can be systematically applied to the classroom, when every classroom is different and feels that it will be interesting to be able to quantify the notion of wholeness as it applies to the learning outcomes from students.

Neville: Well this is what I think is interesting about your work. I don’t even know if that’s possible, or useful, I mean, because I think it’s sort of an individual or group

56 The conditioning observed at this young age is called pre-prejudice in the literature. See an actual story that that took place at the children’s School of Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, where Mary studied Early Childhood Education. For the full article that was published in the Los Angeles Times, Nov. 6th 1985, see http://articles.latimes.com/1985-11-06/news/vw-48661_child-development

57 When I was conducting my interviews at the Oak Grove School (OGS), a holistic effort was undertaken by the Director of OGS, Meredy Benson, who was trying to formulate themes called the Art of Living and Learning. The themes focused on: Art of Inquiry, Art of Communication, Art of Academia, Art of Engagement, Art of Aesthetics, Art of Caring and Relationship. Today, these themes are used by teachers in their syllabus to give grades to students. One example is for the syllabus on the subject of Geometry where 40% of the grade was allocated for the Art of Inquiry and Engagement. See the OGS website at http://www.oakgroveschool.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=142&Itemid=310 to view this syllabus. As the notion of wholeness is related to the themes found in the Art of Living and Learning, this effort in trying to quantify them qualitatively is indeed a breakthrough.
journey and it would be different with every class, with every teacher. How do you quantify?

**Theme Five: Wholeness in Teachers**

This theme addresses one of the important questions asked with regards to the need for teachers to be on the journey of developing wholeness while attempting to create a similar awareness among students. It’s important to see the difference among the participants with respect to their perspectives on the various conditions for creating wholeness. Here are some of the differences: Mary believed that everyone is born whole; Ecila felt that it’s important to observe her thoughts or her conditioning in order to develop wholeness; Neville felt when teachers embody wholeness, they would not recognize it and Paul felt that being aware of one’s fragmentation implies a movement towards wholeness.

**Conditions for Creating Wholeness among Teachers**

Mary thinks it's absolutely necessary for teachers to be developing wholeness themselves in order to develop wholeness in students. Mary believes that everyone is born whole and that one is always progressing towards the journey of connecting to that wholeness:

Mary: Absolutely, wholeness is I think, I believe that we’re born with wholeness and then things and everybody is in a different place based on who they are and maybe I have said it already but just that it’s a goal for all of us to work to move to a greater wholeness and I think that we naturally do that. We have goals and as soon as we meet them we even forget they were a goal and we have a new goal. Maybe the nature of life is to move toward greater wholeness, greater fullness, and greater joy, and greater all of those things.

Ecila felt that in order to develop wholeness in students, teachers should also be developing wholeness within and shared that she regularly observes her thoughts and feelings:

Ecila: I am very dedicated to sitting with my thoughts, with my feelings, observing them, try not to judge them although I do. Acknowledging something much greater than I although I can’t possibly define it and nature is an enormous balm for me and a teacher as well.
Neville felt that even if the teachers embody that wholeness, they would not recognize it themselves. This perception is also shared by Krishnamurti, who felt that wholeness should not be recognizable because if one does recognize it, it is still within the realm of thinking. Anything that is within the sphere of thinking does not indicate an awakening process of duality collapsing into non-duality:

Neville: I don’t think they would be teaching anymore, I honestly don’t think so. I think if they were that thing, they would not be teachers and I don’t think it’s ever been done and I don’t think it’s ever been recognized. Maybe we’re doing it every day.

Instead of developing wholeness, Paul suggested that Krishnamurti would urge one to be aware of his or her fragmentation and added that to develop wholeness, we need to be aware of our conditioning or our fragmentation and that is a movement toward wholeness:

Paul: Well, I mean to be a little provocative, I think in Krishnamurti’s word he would say no, he would say “be the fragmented person you are, and be it even more so, be it stronger, let the whole thing come out”. Otherwise, how do you see it, how do you know really what it’s about?

Paul felt that staying with what is itself directs us towards wholeness and he also felt that this is a pre-requisite for a teacher in developing wholeness:

Paul: Don’t worry about the wholeness. Be that fragmentation, and then something else has a chance, otherwise you’re just pushing that away, putting this there until that comes back and pushes it out of the way and nothing’s changed. All you’ve done is add another layer of complexity to your life.

**Consequences When Teachers Lack Wholeness**

Ecila asserts that when teachers do not dedicate their lives to bringing order in their day-to-day activities, it simply means that they are not aware of their wholeness within and felt that

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58 The phrase Be that fragmentation implies staying with what is and staying with what is implies observing one’s fragmentation or conditioning as it is.
without the reservoir of wholeness, teachers cannot be authentic with their students. By reservoir of wholeness, Ecila implies the abundance of the field of wholeness within oneself:

Ecila: If we don’t have any reservoir of wholeness that we can be with children in a very authentic way and I think children pick up on it right away and I’m not saying that I’m a whole person but I’m certainly willing to say I make mistakes.

Ecila further added that a teacher who is not in the process of self discovery cannot be effective with children and notes that a teacher who lacks wholeness also possibly lacks openness towards a healthy relationship with students:

Ecila: I don’t think a teacher who is not in the process [of cultivating wholeness] can be very effective with children. I think such a relationship has a barrier [that] implies a lack of openness to a relationship whatever that might bring.

Paul feared that when teachers do not acknowledge their own conditioning, there is a strong tendency that the mind only wants to entertain what it wants to become in the future and thought creates the ideal. Krishnamurti added that “the ideal is the opposite of what is. The ideal is in the future, and what is is actual [and in the present now]. One does not know how to deal with the actual, how to understand it, how to go beyond it and, therefore, not being able to understand it, one projects an ideal, which is fictitious, which is not actual. Thus, there is a division between what is and the ideal and, hence, conflict” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 299). This is a classic example of Krishnamurti’s negative approach where one’s inquires into one’s fragmentation instead of inquiring into wholeness. Paul suggested that when every fragmented state of mind has been inquired and understood, perhaps the awareness of wholeness might permeate one’s being:

Paul: Suddenly it becomes idealism, right? I need to be whole, I need to be a whole person when I walk in there. Well, you’re not, so why pretend, you know? Go in there and see that this child who you can’t tolerate and this one you favor. Look at it, you’re fragmenting it, you’re cutting it up, you’re not whole, right? Or, you know this day you

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59 For the full talk given by Krishnamurti in Ojai, April 4th, 1976 see Krishnamurti (1996, pp. 295-302)
come in and you’re in a good mood, next day you come in and you’re just, you know, you feel terrible. So understand the fragmentation.

**Theme Six: Good Teaching**

This theme probes into the notion of good teaching and discusses whether good teaching refers to classroom techniques or the identity and integrity of the teacher or both. Palmer (1993) outlines four approaches in discussing good teaching: Identifying critical moments in teaching and learning (where critical moments are defined as a moment when a learning opportunity either opens up or shuts down for a student); the human condition of teachers and learners (a reflection on teaching by observing that a response to any given moment in a classroom depends on what is happening from within the teacher and students); Metaphor and Images (where metaphor and images are used to explore who we are, why we do what we do when teaching); Autobiographical Reflection (an exploration of great teachers who impacted and brought us into the teaching profession).

**Teachers Characteristics Contributing to Good Teaching**

Mary felt that the attributes of good teaching include respect for self and respect for others or in short, it’s about the relationship between the teacher and the student:

Mary: Good teaching, maybe the words that come to mind are respectful, being respectful serves respectful teaching which means respecting one’s self and the others so it’s about the relationship.

Krishnamurti often questioned if we truly engage ourselves to observe and listen intently. The quality of listening described by Krishnamurti pointed toward a state of listening where we “abandon or put aside all prejudices, pre-formulations, and daily activities” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p.60). Unfortunately, we listen from the lens of our conditioning and Krishnamurti (1996) adds that we listen through a screen of resistance through “prejudices, whether religious or spiritual, psychological, or scientific; or with our daily worries, desires, and fears” (p. 60). Mary also shared that being responsive or having the ability to observe and listen in a profound way is an important criterion for good teaching:
Mary: Responsive would be criteria for me of good teaching. Be able to observe and listen in a very profound way, not sort of a superficial way but really spending time watching and listening and taking it in and mulling it over and thinking it through.

Paul felt that a good teacher always has good techniques and surely knows his subject matter:

Paul: I think a good teacher always has good techniques, right? A good teacher, it’s like a good jazz musician, he knows his instrument. He doesn’t fool around. He’s studied this instrument, he knows this damn thing, right? So, that’s good, you should have them.

Paul added that a good teacher is a good learner above and beyond anything else and faces and stays with *what is* that creates the basic feeling of humanness:

Paul: I think a good teacher really is a good learner above and beyond everything else. If I don’t think I can learn when I walk in that classroom, honestly, I don’t know what I’m doing. So, you know, again, you have to have heart, but to have heart you’ve got to be, on the whole you’ve got to be able to face difficult stuff, to stay with *what is* and be willing to face up to your shortcomings and to your neuroses, and all the rest of it. So that there’s a way in which you have that basic feeling of humanness.

*Conditions for Good Teaching to Occur*

In order to develop a good relationship with a student, Mary found that she needed to speak from her integrity and think from her identity and felt that the integrity and the identity behind a technique is born from the inner psyche of a teacher:

Mary: So it’s my integrity speaking and identity thinking that in order to be in a relationship with this child, I am going to be respectful in the way we deal with even the hard stuff, like setting limits and creating natural consequences, I even use the word consequences being spanked as a consequence which I would not go to because I don’t think it has any effect except teaching the child that it’s okay to hit and be hit and then eventually they will do that with their own children. So I have strong opinions about the techniques that are respectful but it comes first from within.
Mary shared a powerful example of a reflection process on the inner life that uses both integrity and identity. This is such a subtle reflection on the minute details that are happening in the moment:

Mary: Yes. It is easy to talk about it as being, you know doing it with calm, but sometimes we’re in the heat of the moment and that technique of even stopping a child from hitting someone else I could be upset by that because of violence upsets me. So I could be holding this child you know, with a little bit of force and that’s where I have to stop and say, okay this is upsetting me, I’m going to take a breath myself and then address it and even address it with the child. My hands were holding you so tight it must have been a little scary and I was worried about you hitting and it’s not okay to hit and it’s not okay for me to hold too tight so let’s work you know, I mean, it’s a process. I guess that’s what came out for me with your last question. It’s not like we’re all paragons of perfection here. We’re all working with what we have.

Neville stressed that importance should be given to both technique and being centered (or weighing the inner side):

Neville: Some people will weigh higher on the technique side and some people weigh higher on the inner side, but in any community you have people who are going to value either of those things more or less.

Paul shared the notion that good teachers understand that their shortcomings, deceptions, laziness, inattention are also shared by the students. This realization, according to Paul, will allow the teachers to understand their students better:

Paul: You know the human frailty, all the stuff that those kids are going to show you, you know, their shortcomings, their little deceptions, their laziness, you know, their inattention, all those things you have. If you’re just going to fight with them, if you’re just going to be hard on them, you’re just going to treat them as machines to fill with information, you know, that’s not good teaching. So my sense is that you have to have that sense of the human situation and be living that.
Paul declared that being fully alive in the moment with total attention enables the mind to be in the 'presence' mode. It is in this presence that learning takes place:

Paul: Absolutely, I mean again, there’s this presence really showing up, and when you do, yeah, you hear something you don’t think “oh that’s the hundredth time I’ve heard them say that”. There’s a sense of you’re really trying to understand what is going on, you know, what’s actually going on, and that takes real attention.

**Conditions Preventing Good Teaching from Occurring**

An example of a teacher sitting on a chair away from children playing on a playground is an indicator of a teacher who lacks the integrity and the example, according to Mary, this is a lost opportunity for the teacher to know themselves and the student:

Mary: I visit other schools sometimes just to sort of reflect on what we’re doing and sometimes there are 25 kids on the playground and the teacher sitting on a chair a way back here and you know that’s for me, to be with kids means with integrity, means to know them and to know myself and that’s integrity/ identity, it’s an opportunity missed because to be closer and to be there if they need to call on you or to be able to reflect.

Mary declared that she could not use a technique that had no integrity and felt that techniques that had no integrity like asking a child to sit in a corner, to be disrespectful and abusive to the children:

Mary: Just thinking it through it for the first time, I couldn’t use a technique I didn’t feel had integrity, I couldn’t use a time out or put a child in a corner or stick their nose to the wall with chewing gum you know you hear about those, or hitting, all those things that are not uncommon in families because you know there’s unfortunately a lot out there, there’s shaming and techniques in order to sort of live together are everywhere and there are many, many, many which to me, feel really disrespectful of children if not abusive.

Paul felt that it is important not to get used to teaching material, kids and the routine as it dulls the mind; he further shared that it's important to have a curious mind in the teaching profession:
Paul: I think you need to be alive in your profession. I think if you think you know everything about Moby Dick there is to know about Moby Dick, you’re a troll, but I see it has to be creative, you know, it has to be creative and is it creative, some of it’s more creative than others. The longer you do it, I think, the harder it is to see the creativity in it, but having said that, that’s the challenge and that’s the same challenge as Krishnamurti said, “Don’t get used to anything”, including your material, including your kids, including the fact you’ve got to be there at eight o’clock whether you feel like it or not. You should never get used to anything. I mean that’s impossible. The brain is programmed to get used to things. But having said that, that’s one of the impossible things he asks.

**Findings and Discussions**

**Research Sub-Question # 4: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?**

**Category: Teachers’ Vocation/Calling**

In this category of Teachers’ Vocation or Calling, the discussion explores the aspects of teachers’ inner lives that may have pointed towards their calling. The first theme – The Understanding of Calling/Vocation– reveals the findings: recognizing/discovering one’s calling; factors preventing the hearing of one’s calling; teaching as a calling/vocation; conditions’ promoting the hearing of one’s calling. The second theme focuses on the different ways the participants convey this notion of calling to their students with the theme – Students awareness in Self-knowledge and vocation – reveals the findings: evoking Self-knowledge from students; conditions promoting Self-knowledge; teachers’ vulnerability; teachers’ pointing toward potential students vocation.

**Theme One: The Understanding of Calling/Vocation**

The understanding of one’s calling can take a long time to discover. Palmer (2000) refers to vocation as the voice that one hears. Moore (2008) refers to the process of finding one’s calling as a creative process that’s purely based on instinct and states that “if you don’t find a way to be creative in life, that instinct goes repressed and frustrated. You feel its loss as a
deflation, the spirit leaking out of your sense of self...[and] you feel empty, disengaged and unfulfilled” (p. 2). This voice of vocation or the instinct is dampened in many ways that prevent one from discovering one’s vocation. Similarly, the participants’ voices were also dampened by their choice of work and choice of study.

Recognizing/Discovering One’s Calling/Vocation

In using Palmer’s (2000) notion that vocation is not an act of will but rather the calling that one hears, participants were able to reflect on their own discovery. Mary agrees with Parker Palmer's meaning of vocation:

Mary: I love what Parker Palmer said, I think that’s wonderful and it really speaks to my experience with people that I know.

Mary’s soul was in joy after embarking into early childhood education and realized that teaching young children was her calling. As a metaphor, she referred to the field of early childhood as her playground, where she found total joy:

Mary: Then as soon as I had children, discovered Early Childhood Education it was a voice saying whoa, I don’t ever want to leave this playground, this is where I belong, I am in joy. I mean really another one of our kindergarten teachers who came through with her child through our programs and was obviously was a gifted teacher but she didn’t know it at the time but she said I just feel closest to God when I’m right here and she’s not particularly religious but she used that word because she needed to express how profound it felt that she had suddenly discovered that she was a teacher and she should work with young children and she’s right, she’s amazing.

Mary pointed towards the difference between work and calling, and echoes Parker Palmer’s notion of the voice of vocation.

Mary: And there’s such a difference between the work and the way we feel when we’re doing the work that is so fulfilling and a voice, I love that, a voice.

Ecila never knew teaching was her calling until she stepped into the classroom and clarifies the difference between doing something out of will versus doing something you are called to do.
Ecila: I mean I don’t think I chose to be a teacher. I never really thought about it this way but I didn’t think I’d be a teacher and why would I be a teacher? But I went into that classroom and I was called I guess. I think people do choose professions out of will and I don’t know that they’re very happy. I don’t know, I haven’t interviewed that many people but I have done things because I have willed them and it’s just a very different feeling about doing something that you willed versus something that you’re called [where] you just have to do it.

Mary's discovery of how to speak to children reminded her of when she was speaking to herself at the age of three or four; she found this was very healing for her.

Mary: I think partly because it was so healing to discover as I spoke of a way to be in a relationship and it started out as parent to child or teacher to child for me in my first experience but then it really became about how I was parented. So it’s almost as though when I open my mouth and speak with children now, I’m speaking to myself as I was when I was three or four or two.

To Mary, the learning that occurred with respect to early childhood education appeared to have just been flowing through her.

Mary: I have every kind of parent comes through our programming so there’s a lot of learning that goes on and I feel like it’s the learning that happened for me just flowing right through me, it came to me from preschool teachers like me and it’s not something I created or made up it’s just flowing through me. So that’s sort of a profound calling.

Factors’ Preventing the Hearing of One’s Calling

Mary reflected on her decision to pursue her Masters in Film and realized that it was not a calling, but it was taking an easier route towards work.

Mary: I did the masters degree in film and TV and it wasn’t a calling, there wasn’t a voice, it was kind of work, it was a path of least resistance.
Ecila reflected that her acting career was not a calling or will, but she did it because she was good at acting and singing. Ecila recalled that the switch to teaching made her realize that there was a world of difference between the two professions.

Ecila: Well being an actress I don’t know if it was a calling, it wasn’t just a will either. I was good at acting; again I was good at singing. I had the skills and it was a lot of fun. I’m very social, I just love being with people and doing those kinds of things together. Being with children is a whole different thing. That was something that was just a whole different level of involvement, engagement, interest, joy. You know I could leave acting at the end of the day and not think about it but I think about teaching a lot, I think about children a lot and I think about child development and it just is a big part of my life and acting wasn’t, it was a job I could go to and come home and forget it.

The monetarily or the economically-driven mindset prevents one from embarking upon one’s calling because in the economically-driven society, individuals are rewarded based on their talents in producing better products and services that bring more monetary growth rather than discovering their calling. Thomas Moore in A Life at Work: The Joy of Discovering What You Were Born to Do shares similar concerns about how the workplace is driving individuals away from their calling and states that:

Most people don’t think beyond the immediate need for money and a bearable job, and most companies don’t worry much about the personal calling of their workers. Today we may not fully appreciate the workplace as a laboratory where matters of soul are worked out. We tend to focus on literal concerns such as pay, product and advancement, whereas the development of your work life deeply affects your sense of meaning. (Moore, 2008, pp 2-3)

Similarly, Paul felt that the goals of the monetary driven society makes the hearing of one's calling more difficult.

Paul: I think, again, we’re told a lot of what’s important in society, what we need to do, like be successful and secure, obviously, right? I’m talking about all these messages that get transmitted to us from parents and society and peers. You know, the system’s flooded with that information, so, it’s not difficult for us to be persuaded by those things
to do things we may not actually have a calling for, and that includes… there’s a lot of the glamour professions that attract a lot of people, get a lot of air-time and kids get a lot of exposure to. And that also made obscure what their calling is.

Paul suggested that a sure road to misery is to take a job that is meaningless to oneself.

Paul: Maybe if your Father’s a lawyer that might be different… anyway, so yeah, I think all those things are valid and important, because a sure road to misery is to take a job that’s meaningless to you. Having said that, Krishnamurti talked about being a gardener and being part of the educated poor, and he clearly said to stay away from professions that lead to destruction.

**Teaching as a Calling/Vocation**

Mary shared that teaching is certainly her vocation, having taught for about 30 years.

Mary: Everyone of them had to do with teaching young children and I’ve worked in several you know, it’s 30 years of experience, it’s just the last I’ve done about 8 years at Oak Grove so everyone of them where I was teaching young children and their families, their parents as well [and yes] absolutely, no doubt about it [that teaching is my vocation]

Mary’s father was working with the American Friends Service Committee, when it was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947. The following reflection from an e-mail communication with Mary shows the impact of her family involvement in the service-related work that certainly had an impact on her becoming a teacher. She said that:

There's no doubt in my mind that the impact of my parents' work (also in China during their civil war and in South Africa against apartheid) is profound on me. My childhood, schooling and young adulthood were spent living in intentional Quaker communities (Pendle Hill in Pennsylvania, Scattergood Friends School in Iowa, Earlham College in Indiana) for which I am grateful. (Mary, personal communication, January 26, 2011)

Mary felt that teaching is her gift and wants to pass it on to the children with joy:
Mary: It’s not that we’re saying, ooh look at me, look how great I am. It’s not that at all, it’s really...I was given this gift and it’s mine to pass on, it’s my responsibility and my joy.

Teaching is Ecila's calling and she cannot imagine doing anything else:

Ecila: Oh yes, it’s my calling, it’s my vocation, it’s my, I can’t imagine doing any other thing. I’m getting up there in age. People say are you thinking about retiring? Well I’m sure I’ll retire at some point but why? What would I do? This is it.

Teaching is Neville's calling coupled with his musical projects in which he is involved on the evenings or weekends:

Neville: Oh absolutely and it almost feel like it’s a dharma.

By means of negating other professions, Paul figures that teaching is probably his calling. Paul is certainly using Krishnamurti’s negative approach to arrive at his calling:

Paul: So, again, I think the nice thing about that, the figurative language with ‘a calling’, is that it is an act of perception, right? You have to be able to hear what it is. And then also observe. Clearly, if I just take myself for example, just look at my disposition, I do not have a disposition of a lawyer, I’m not a detail person, and that would take out an accountant as well. You put me with a long column of figures and I start to really feel odd inside. Wonder just floods my system with all kinds of questions of “what’s the meaning of life?”, because I just can’t bear sitting inside of a room working through a column of numbers. So, you know, you have to pay attention to these things.

Paul feels that some sense of meaningful life needs to come from a meaningful vocation and since he is really passionate about his teaching, he feels that teaching is very likely to be his calling or vocation:

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60 In Hinduism and Buddhism, dharma is the principle or law that orders the universe; the individual conduct in conformity with this principle; and the essential function or nature of a thing.
Paul: I think one of the important parts of this inquiry is for a person… because obviously, some sense of a meaningful life needs to come from a meaningful vocation, and some of us don’t really know what that vocation really is. I mean, I teach and I’m involved in that. I don’t know, ultimately, whether I am a teacher by calling. I probably am.

There are certainly some similarities and differences in the way the participants viewed teaching as their calling. Mary, Ecila and Neville seem to view teaching as something inevitable and that teaching is something that is a part of them, which cannot be separated. The word *dharma* used by Neville also implies the ideas such as duty and calling as a way of conforming to the principles or laws that govern the universe (Henderson, 2002). Mary felt that her dad’s involvement with the American Friends Service Committee that’s engaged in service-related work was another strong reason why she was attracted to teaching, which is also considered service-related work. Another deviation from the notion of teaching as a calling was revealed by Paul, who explained that in order to hear one’s calling, one needs to have a clear perception and the ability to observe why a certain profession may simply not be suitable for an individual.

*Conditions Promoting the Hearing of One’s Calling*

Ecila felt that there is no choosing when one is called to do something. This echoes Krishnamurti’s notion of choiceless awareness, a state where the mind is not conflicted between choices but rather only focused on the one thing that we were called to do:

Ecila: Well I personally, I mean have you ever done anything that you weren’t called to do and you had to do it? It’s really difficult, tedious, boring to do it, but if there’s something that a voice is saying ahhh…you know it’s like an engine that’s running on all the cylinders and you’re just happy to be there and you’re happy to be doing it, you love what you’re doing, it’s what you’re supposed to do. There might be other things that you’re supposed to be doing too, and you can’t choose it [instead it chooses you]

Paul’s calling is both as a teacher educator and a teacher due to its interactive-relationship nature:
Paul: I probably have a little more, I don’t know, probably more as a trainer. I may be more of a trainer⁶¹ than a teacher. But the jury’s out on that because I’m back in teaching now, and it is a transition and that transition doesn’t happen overnight. But there is a way in which, you know, you see the basic tendencies are there, it’s a very interactive relationship-based vocation that demands a certain kind of creativity, and that’s what draws me.

Paul is intolerant of the things that do not challenge him creatively:

Paul: The fact that I just can’t teach the same thing over and over the same way that would just kill me. I need something that really challenges me and involves people. So something in this general area has always… You know, I’ve tried to go off into other areas, but my tolerance is… it’s really interesting, I’ve become really intolerant to things that do not challenge me creatively.

Paul has a keen interest in developing awareness around ‘inquiry’ among adults. He feels that his deeper interest in developing teachers is complimented in his work as a teacher in a classroom teaching younger students:

Paul: Of course, you have to have the teacher [within]… I’m not saying I’m not… I just don’t know whether my final vocation, calling, would be to be in the classroom with children all the time. I have really been interested in adult learning, and I’m interested in working at that level of inquiry with interested adults.

**Theme Two: Students Awareness in Self-Knowledge and Vocation**

Krishnamurti felt that one of the important functions of a teacher is to help students find their vocation and helping the young towards self-knowledge. He also felt that the beginning of freedom is self-knowledge, stating that, “self-knowledge is not in the withdrawal from life but is to be discovered in the relationships of our everyday existence” (Krishnamurti, 1996, p. 181)

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⁶¹ Paul is referring to his interest in training teachers or teacher development trainer.
**Evoking self-knowledge from Students**

In the class, Ecila gives the students freedom to express themselves (as long as it is not rude and harsh) and allowing children to express their conflicts (without accusing others) brings a lot of awareness to that child and others:

Ecila: Yes, unless it’s rude and then I will say, mmm your tone of voice sounded a little harsh, did you mean it to be harsh? But that freedom to say sort of what they want to say with respect and often discussions come up and people explore sort of what they think about things, conflicts arise often, maybe one a day, there will be small conflicts but I encourage children to talk about their conflicts in a way that doesn’t accuse other people.

Ecila felt that it’s important to allow children to learn differently (some draw to explain, some like to act it out, etc.). Ecila shared the different ways in which her students engage in their learning:

Ecila: It’s a big indicator of what they’re thinking and then we can explore that a little bit without being judgmental. I think it’s important to of course we do math and all the things that we need to do, but I really try to have the space around that so that children can explore a little bit in their own way. I might have a bit different ways of learning. Maybe a child would like to draw a picture about the book they read or several pictures about the book they read? Maybe a child would rather tell it in front of a class about the book they read, an oral presentation? Maybe a child would rather make up a little play about it and get people to act in it? Maybe a child has so much to say about the book he can’t possibly say it and so he’ll say part of it and dictate part of it to me because it’s so complex in his mind? So they’re starting to adjust to different children’s ways of learning.

Neville felt that the teachers at the Oak Grove School are responsible for allowing the students to look at their subject matter more deeply than they have looked at it before:

Neville: There are aspects of music that are written down and can be tested, but be it awareness or performance, it’s a matter of doing it, you can’t write it down so much. I don’t think it’s just me that does this, but I just think the most important thing that
teachers do, and especially the teachers here, is just that you give kids the opportunity to look at something more deeply than they’ve looked at before.

Paul was of the opinion that the notion of self-knowledge needs to be integrated into one's pedagogy and that the constructivist pedagogy supports this notion by allowing students to observe their own thinking:

Paul: I feel it has to be kind of integrated into the whole way you teach and that’s why I’m so interested in constructivist pedagogy because it’s really about bringing the students thinking front and forward on a kind of consistent basis. So the students are really, in a sense, faced either by my response, or by the response of peers, to look at their thinking.

**Conditions Promoting Self-Knowledge**

Allowing children to come up with their own solution rather than the teachers providing one seems to empower the students towards self-knowledge:

Mary: We’ll say so we have one doll and two kids needing it and they may say exactly why they needed it because the milk is over there and we have to get it to the tree and the truck and then, what do you think we should do? And that helps them grow in their resources for finding solutions. They have to feel fair to everybody. I say I’m going to time this, you get the dolly for five minutes, and then you get the dolly for five minutes. Usually, that doesn’t feel satisfying so they carry the conflict on into the next interaction and it’s profound when they’re allowed together to work through it themselves. Well we do need somebody to drive the truck with the milk over to the tree. I can drive a truck. Okay, well I’ll take the baby in my, I’ll wrap the baby here so she’s safe and then we’ll go get the milk together. That’s their solution; it’s nothing a teacher would have ever thought up.

Ecila takes her students out for walks in nature and gets them to write their experiences later. Ecila felt that nature presents the necessary condition that promotes self-knowledge:

Ecila: We go outside a lot; we go outside at least twice a week. This is a gorgeous campus and giving children time to be in the Oak Grove to be up on the saddle to be in
the lost meadow, to look for bugs, to look for animal tracks, to see hawks. I think they naturally become aware of something larger than themselves.

Ecila realizes that observing her students keenly also gives them room to work on their weaknesses. It’s a way of developing tolerance in their area of weakness and perhaps finding enjoyment while exploring their weakness:

Ecila: Observe further and not rely on strengths and develop things that may be, help them develop areas of weakness or at least develop a tolerance for their areas of weakness and in that, they sometimes find things that they really enjoy that they had no idea they would enjoy.

Paul explores the notion of thinking and the nature of thought and that sets the stage to discussing many other phenomena such as cultural conditioning and other aspects of conditioning:

Paul: I also worked with seniors, though a little bit with the other groups. I do thinking about thinking, and we look at the nature of thought and how it works, just basic stuff. Pretty straight forward, you know, we really look at it in terms of characters in books, or our own lives, but we look at, for example, perception. How a character in a novel about Indian, who’s a Brahman and can’t see an untouchable? He sees the label of an untouchable, and so the kinds of inhumane treatment that an untouchable can suffer or endure, we look at how someone could treat someone else like that. And we look at it, we look at the way cultural conditioning affects perception, and I’ll diagram aspects of brain anatomy. I go straight to it, and we discuss it, and I get them to write about it. So, you know, I try to look, as I was saying earlier, at the human level. And then once I think that’s established, then it’s easier to talk about, “are you really seeing each other?”, or “in what way in your life”…

Paul is better able to make connections to students’ self-knowledge by attempting to understand the nature of thinking and thought:

Paul: I don’t know, I’m just intuitively doing it this way rather than just saying “are you seeing what’s around you?” I’m looking at it more abstractedly, more intellectually, and
then bringing it closer to home, rather than the other way around. I’ve tried other ways, but kids are, I think rightly, reactive to a teacher coming into their lives and trying to tell them what is and what isn’t going on in their heads. They’re not happy about that.

Paul also acknowledges that one needs to be deeply alert and aware, in order to be able to identify opportunities in the classroom that allow for dialogue on the nature of thinking and thought:

Paul: That’s right, holding up a mirror when possible. So you really have to be on it, you really have to be deeply alert to pick up on all these opportunities. There are tons of opportunities to this, tons of them. But sometimes it’s a “choice”, sometimes it’s like “well, I do need to go through this”, sometimes you don’t have the energy to do it, because it takes a certain amount of energy to do it.

**Teachers’ Vulnerability**

Paul describes the vulnerability of a teacher in attempting to address self-knowledge to students. Krishnamurti explains that the vulnerable state implies being both introvert and extrovert and explains further that it’s important “not to be self-centered but turn my eyes and my hearing to the subtleties of life. That is, I must be able to protect and at the same time cultivate generosity, be both the receiver and the giver” (Krishnamurti, 2006, p. 164). That state of vulnerability, according to Krishnamurti is experiencing the state of being sensitive which includes being sensitive to one’s reaction or hurt and not being self-centered at the same time. He adds that “the strength of vulnerability is not self-centered…this vulnerability is incapable of being hurt whatever the circumstances. Vulnerability\(^{62}\) is without a centre as the self. It has an extraordinary strength, vitality and beauty” (2006, p.164)

Paul: Inevitably the kids will also figure “well, what does this have to do with what we’re talking about”. So that kind of question comes up, and you have to answer that question, it’s a very important question. So it is timing, its feeling, its intuition. You just know

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\(^{62}\) For further analysis on this state of vulnerability, please see Krishnamurti (2006, pp. 163-166)
when it’s right, and sometimes you get it wrong. I definitely get it wrong. I can think back on a class this week and I definitely missed an opportunity, a good one, or I went down a path and shut something down when I should have opened it up. It happens all the time. I mean, I’m not perfect, and I know that. And sometimes I honestly don’t have the energy, so I make a note, and I say, “Okay, I’ll come back to this”, and when I do, it may not work, but that’s okay. I mean the point is, I feel at least in my own world, that I’m on a cutting edge of some kind, and I think that some of us who are trying to bring this into a classroom is so unusual anyway, on top of all the other responsibilities of a teacher, that you just have to be a little tolerant of your own limitations and you never know the reaction, really, that’s going to happen.

**Teachers Pointing Towards Potential Students Vocation**

Ecila was aware of the need to avoid molding a child into something else in the pursuit of helping, in order for the students to find their calling:

Ecila: Of course. But I think we have to be very careful not to try to mould a kid. I think that we, as teachers give children space, time, and I really think they tumble into their own calling. I really believe that in a traditional setting in which there is no time for reflection, no time for personal space, no time for leisure, no time where everything is just so regimented from 8:00 o’clock in the morning until the time that they go to bed. There’s no space to even experiment with what you might enjoy or love or need to express. So I think that a school that sees the value in that space and that time and that nurturing of all the seeds within the child, allows for the calling to come forth naturally.

Ecila shared two examples which explain how her students may have found their calling:

Ecila: [Example #1 on her student who pursued his interest on forest and studied forestry] Oh yeah, oh gosh I’ve been here long enough. I had a boy in my class and he was the sweetest boy, and he struggled a bit with reading and he struggled a bit with writing, he was good at it but it wasn’t his, but as soon as you went outside, as soon as you went camping, he knew where north, south, east, west was, he could get you out, you’d go on a hike he could find his way back, you knew exactly. He was alive outside and of course he went to study forestry.
Ecila: [Example # 2 on her student who was interested in classical art and became an art restorer] Another little girl who came and she was a very bright girl. She could do everything very, very well but she had a particular love of art and she loved classical art. She went to Italy and she became an art restorer.

Paul also gives an example of how teachers could help students to begin to look at their own calling:

Paul: [An example of a student who has a natural talent in writing] I think it has to, again, be more often than not, indirectly done, and I look at these kids everyday and observe them and, you know, I think sometime it’s more individualized where I would say to someone who I’ve been interacting with for a while, and then be able to say, “I’ve noticed this about you, you have a…” like, for example, there’s a senior this year, and she’s just an extraordinary writer, she’s so far ahead of anybody else, so, you know, the sense is, “well, this seems something that comes to you really quite naturally, you’re very good at it.” And there are two teachers who deal with her writing, myself and another at this school, who, you know, say to her: “You should seriously think about this in college as a… some English, or literature, or journalism, or something, because it really seems to come to you naturally”. Having said that, I feel that she really also needs to expand her thinking, right? So in that sense I don’t think there would be a big long discussion there. I think she sees it, she sees that’s she’s quite talented at it. I think the discussion really might be more around what’s worth writing about. But she’s also very young, so you can’t expect her to have great insights into the nature of writing as a career, but I think someone one like that… But that, again, I also think that they often have to do thought experiments, they have to put themselves into different things and try it out and see how it works.

Findings and Discussions

Sub-Research Question # 5: What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these approaches influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?

Category: Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches

In this category of Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches, the discussion explores the participants’ familiarity and experience with the different contemplative practices. Since the
word contemplate means to look or to ponder, this word will be used in a wider sense to include all types of contemplative approaches, the ones that require regular practice and the ones that require awareness. The word contemplation can also be used synonymously with meditation and J.P Miller gives a good overview in *The Contemplative Practitioner*, where he categorizes the four types of meditation: Intellectual, emotional, physical and action-service. J.P Miller (1994) refers to meditation as a contemplative practice. The intellectual type of meditation includes vipassana (or insight or mindfulness) meditation. The emotional type includes the mantra meditation while the physical type includes all kinds of movement meditation (such as yoga, or walking meditation). The action-service type includes the service-oriented approach like karma yoga in Hinduism.

Vipassana meditation is also known as mindfulness meditation in the Theravada Buddhist tradition (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). The words vipassana, insight and mindfulness can be used interchangeably. Different participants understand contemplation differently and these differences will also be elaborated upon.

The first theme – Awareness of contemplative approaches – reveals the findings: similarities and differences in understanding contemplative approaches; practices and awareness of contemplative approaches; benefits and intrinsic values of contemplative approaches. The second theme – inner life and contemplative practices – reveals the findings: Connection between inner life and contemplative approaches; Conditions preventing the integration between inner life and contemplative approaches. The third theme – Pedagogy and contemplative approaches – reveals the findings: impact of contemplative practice outside the classroom; awareness of contemplative approach on pedagogy; impact of the absence of contemplation; positive attributes of contemplative approaches on pedagogy.

**Theme One: Awareness of Contemplative Approaches**

In this theme, participants’ awareness of their contemplative approaches will be the point of discussion. Different individuals have different perceptions or understanding of the word contemplation and/or contemplative practice. As mentioned earlier, the contemplative or meditative approaches include the ones that require regular practice and those that require awareness. There are different schools of thought by various spiritual teachers from different
traditions that approach contemplation or meditation in the approach mentioned above. Kabat-Zinn (2005) refers to this dual approach as “contradictory ways to think about meditation” (p. 64) whereby the approach that requires practice is to “think of meditation as instrumental, as a method, a discipline that allows us to cultivate, refine, and deepen our capacity to pay attention and to dwell in present-moment awareness” (p.64).

Kabat-Zinn (2005) further elaborates on the other approach that requires awareness without any practice as:

[a] way of describing meditation [as] not instrumental at all. If it is a method, it is the method of no method. It is not a doing. There is no going anywhere, nothing to practice, no beginning, middle, or end, no attainment, and nothing to attain. Rather, it is the direct realization and embodiment in this very moment of who you already are, outside of time and space and concepts of any kind, a resting in the very nature of your being, in what is sometimes called the natural state, original mind, pure awareness, no mind, or simply emptiness. (p. 65)

In summary, the two approaches to meditation are:

1. First approach – Requires practice like breathing meditation, walking meditation, etc.

2. Second approach – Requires awareness without practice

Krishnamurti’s approach to meditation refers to the second approach mentioned by Kabat-Zinn, the one that requires awareness without any practice. Kabat-Zinn (2005) refers to Krishnamurti’s meditative approach as *choiceless awareness*, as explained in Chapter 2. We can see in the findings below that Mary and Neville use the first approach of practice as their contemplative approach whereas Ecila and Paul use the second approach to contemplation that does not require any practice.

**Similarities and Differences in Understanding Contemplative Approaches**

In this finding, the general similarities and differences will be observed whereas the next finding will go deeper into the types of contemplative approach used by the participants. Mary's experience of Quaker meetings, which were conducted in silence until someone speaks, ever
since she was a child was a powerful experience of a contemplative practice. This is an example of the second approach to contemplative practice, and we can see in the next finding that Mary also engages in the first approach to contemplation, using Transcendental Meditation – a meditation based on the repetition of a mantra:

Mary: So the contemplative practice is part of Quakerism, it’s the value of silence is deeply felt and so in terms of my growing up as early as I can remember every Sunday morning we went to Quaker meeting which is a silent meeting and everyone sits in silence and there is no minister or Rabi or person to intercede for one. Anyone who feels the lead speaks out of the silence. So silence has been part of my life and every meal was begun with a silent grace and not singing, not chanting or praying, but silent and it’s been very influential.

Ecila is familiar with and aware of the different contemplative practices but was not involved in any practices herself:

Ecila: You hear about meditation, we’ve had several students come to the school who are Buddhists and they would become aware of their leaving school for certain things like children’s holidays and you know, things like that. I’m certainly aware that there are students and people all over who are engaged in lots of different spiritual practices. I myself am not.

Neville is familiar with some contemplative practices and shares that he practices yoga and breathing meditation:

Neville: I do practice yoga. I’m not very trained in it.

Paul does not use the term contemplation as it's a term that means so many things and cautions that misunderstanding can easily take place:

Paul: I don’t really like that word because I would never use that with kids for example. For them that’s navel gazing, it’s artificial. I kind of use the word meditation with them occasionally, but even that is such a loaded term. You know contemplation means to contemplate on something, so again, to me it’s really… it’s going back to being… to this
whole notion of perception. Perception is where it’s at and that perception is sensitivity, and openness, and vulnerability.

Paul does not use the word contemplation as it is one word that, to him, does not resonate with people; nevertheless, he agrees to compromise, for the sake of the interview, offers that to contemplate could also mean to observe what is:

Paul: I mean it’s just semantics. I personally don’t like the word contemplation; it’s just a personal thing. Mostly because I work in the public domain and I talk about these things with all different kinds of people, and I find words that work and resonate and words that don’t. And contemplation is one of those words that, in America at least, do not resonate. People think contemplation is a waste of time. So it’s a judged term here. So I just don’t use it. I don’t want to fight another battle, it’s hard enough to do this work. If I have to fight a linguistic battle, I won’t do it. So, I’m sure what you mean by that is similar to what I’m saying, but that term… I’m not trying to be difficult, I’m just saying that I try to build up language that works for me and for groups of people and the kids that I work with. And I’m learning all the time that certain terms are big problems, and so I just don’t go there.

Practice and Awareness of Contemplative Approaches

This finding reveals the type of contemplative approaches used by the participants as mentioned by Kabat-Zinn (2005) where the first type actually involves practicing and the second type uses no specific practice. Mary has been practicing transcendental meditation (TM), a technique that allows the mind to wonder and experience the source of thought. She has been practicing TM since 1968 and shares that this consists of meditating for 20 minutes twice a day:

Mary: When I was in college it was 1968 and now in this country there are whole college classes about the year 1968 and I was on a Quaker college campus and I was introduced to meditation as a technique, it had just come to this country through from India and I started that practice which is 20 minutes twice a day, morning and evening and never stopped because it has been so very helpful and I don’t know if it comes under the category of contemplative but it’s actually a technique which doesn’t involve
contemplation or concentration, it’s a technique which sort of allows the mind to wonder but is then the point is to sort of experience the source of thought, the wholeness of life.

Mary also combines some asanas\textsuperscript{63} (yoga), breathing meditation and TM as her contemplative practice and elaborates further on how her whole family is engaged with this practice:

Mary: Many people do yoga as their contemplative practice and I could define it that way as well but morning and evening I’ll do about 15 minutes of yoga, 5 minutes of breathing, they call it pranayama. And then the meditation practice so that it’s a whole program that I do that actually takes longer than 20 minutes and now that I don’t have young children, it’s my routine, my husband’s routine, my family, extended family also does that. So maybe it’s a family culture for me as well, I’m not raising my family on new family in the Quaker tradition but there is definitely other thing that we do.

Neville has been practicing Yoga and breathing practices for about 10 years:

Neville: Yoga is something you do all the time [where] you take a certain amount of time to set aside and practice and go through these postures but it’s really about an awareness of your body. Yoga is an exercise, but it’s a great body thing, and it’s a mental thing too.

Ecila continues to be mindful about her thinking, reaction, conditioning, competitiveness, and judgmental thoughts:

Ecila: I do try to be aware of my own thinking and my own reactions to things and I’m appalled at how you know, my condition, you know my thought of myself as one way and then you know I see myself thinking things and doing things that are in a whole different category than that and how we’re all so conditioned and so competitive and fearful and I’m very aware of that in myself and I do want to continue to be mindful of that.

\textsuperscript{63}\textit{Asanas} are the physical exercise aspect of Yoga whereas the breathing exercise aspect of Yoga is called \textit{Pranayama}. 
Ecila was impacted by Krishnamurti’s perception of the ‘Observer is the Observed’ that has become part of her contemplative approach and realized that she often sees her reactions from her own conditioned perspective:

Ecila: Well it was influenced by Krishnamurti’s, the ‘Observer is the Observed’. That is so true. If I have a reaction to somebody, it’s my reaction, it’s not them. And I’m seeing through a lens that’s clouded.

Ecila felt that at the Oak Grove School being aware of one's conditioning while in a relationship is important. She connects being aware of her conditioning as part of her contemplative practice or simply observing what is:

Ecila: Well I think if you’re going to teach in a school like this, the more aware a person is of how they think, how they feel, how they teach, the reactions they have if a certain child does something and if they’re really observing that. That’s our work because we’re a school based on relationship and if I’m thinking about a child in a certain way through a lens of conditioning, I’m not having a relationship with that child, so the more I can get that stuff out of the way, the better I can really see a child, the more honest our relationship, the more affection our relationship is and the more available I am as a teacher to that child, all these children.

**Benefits and Intrinsic Values of Contemplative Approaches**

Mary always feels refreshed or refueled after doing transcendental meditation (TM) created by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi:

Mary: During college I went to the beginning of the teacher training process with Maharishi when he was still teaching those courses himself so it’s been an influence that’s been important, partly because it’s a very practical technique so it’s just when I talk about refreshing/refueling, it’s a very concentrated way of 20 minutes after a long day at school I can go home, meditate, get up and feel fresher than I would if I took a 20 minute nap or hour long nap even, it’s a very refueling, very easy technique. And occasionally I go to Quaker meeting when my parents are with me or I’m with them.
TM has helped Mary in developing wholeness and feeling healthy. It has also helped her to integrate her inner and outer life:

Mary: TM is a technique you know now that it’s been 30 some years it’s like brushing my teeth I would just not do it twice a day and it has the influence of making me feel well, feel whole and healthy. TM is an integration of inner and outer because it’s a physical process which doesn’t separate the inner or outer, the physical, the mental and the emotional.

Mary explains the TM technique and its benefits in great detail. She clarifies that the crux or the heart of TM is mantra meditation:

Mary: I could describe what I understand to be different about it because there’s so many meditative practices with many names and many variations that the teacher assigns a sound to a person based on an individual interview so they know you a little bit, it’s not a big, it’s not a deep process that you go through with the teacher but they assign a mantra sound, it has no meaning in terms of the people who are or at least for myself and the people in the west, and a technique is taught for using it in a very simple way so that it’s an introduction of the mantra with the eyes closed sitting comfortably, there isn’t any sort of requirement to sit in a bed of nails or something or even with no back support which for me it’s difficult. Just introducing it and being very light with it so as the thoughts come and go you’re not trying to shut out thoughts but just focusing on that sound using it in a light way, it’s not in a concentration way or in a repetition necessarily, it’s just introducing it and then the mind has a natural tendency to go you know to float and go everywhere and maybe you’re holding anxiety so there are a lot of thoughts and everything that comes in the mind is okay, it’s just when you realize that oh, I’ve been just trying to solve that work problem for five minutes then you just lightly and easily return to the mantra. So it’s a very easy technique which anyone can do who can think and there’s no tension in it, sort of oh dear, I’m doing something wrong, I need to focus, I need to get a bit of lost in my…

Ecila felt that over the years, she has become calmer (less reactive, less frustrated, less concerned about what others think of her):
Ecila: Once you’ve begun connecting your feelings with your thoughts, feelings come up and they’re gone very quickly now, I realize oh, but my thinking isn’t gone quickly but I’m much less, I am much less reactive, I’m much less flustered, concerned about what people think of me. I’m just much more grounded I guess.

**Theme Two: Inner Life and Contemplative Approaches**

In this theme, the participants’ contemplative approaches were connected to their inner life to observe its impact. A deeper look at Miller’s notion of connecting one’s inner life with contemplative practice can be noted in the following explanation:

During our meditation practice, we compassionately witness all our thoughts and ego trips, and very gradually we begin to see that our fundamental identity is not the thoughts that form our ego structure but that clear awareness that is witnessing the rising and falling of all these thoughts. (J.P Miller, 1994, p.7)

**Connection between Inner Life and Contemplative Approaches**

Mary finds TM to be an effective technique that always refreshes her and she has been practicing it for about 30 years now. Mary explains that her TM practice is coupled with yoga and breathing exercises:

Mary: For the TM I didn’t grow up with it although at this point 30 years is you know more years having practiced than having not practiced it. I’m not particularly active in any kind of movement it’s really just very effective technique that holds me in the practice and the effect of it is what makes me never miss it because it’s just I get up in the morning, if I didn’t sleep well and I’m tired I med-sit-up, do a routine sit-up and meditate. I feel fresh and ready to go and I should mention that it does involve a bit of a cycle so I do a yoga practice which is actually not so much for doing yoga and also a breathing practice but for kind of preparing the body to become more settled so that the mediation practice is then more settled.

As walking in nature produces the suitable condition for Ecila to experience the timeless state, she observes that thinking is temporarily suspended during these times:
Ecila: I can’t really speak about it, I really think that if I really, being mindful is one thing and being without mind is a whole other thing and sometimes in nature walking, you just wake up to the fact that you’re not really thinking, you’re just observing and looking and the thinking is suspended temporarily.

Karen Meyer, an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum Studies at the University of British Columbia shared similar experience where thinking is temporarily suspended when one is totally absorbed in the moment or while experiencing the timeless moment. Meyer shared her experience being in the beach as part of her inquiry in a course she designed called *Living Inquiry*. The design of this course originated from Meyer’s deep interest in Krishnamurti’s philosophy and shared the notion of being in the timeless state and how thought disrupts the awareness of feeling empty:

Since I too am a visitor here, I pay close attention to the way the day unfolds on the Beach. Inwardly, I’m aware of feeling empty without my usual routines. What do I do with my self? Now and then my restless mind rushes in, filling the bareness with whatever it has stockpiled – thoughts, opinions, and fears. When that happens, the Beach disappears. I no longer see. (Meyer, 2006, pp. 158-159)

Meyer’s notion of ‘when that happens, the Beach disappears. I no longer see’ beautifully captured the state of mind during a timeless moment when she was absorbed in the moment while paying close attention to what’s happening in the beach and also captured the moment when the timeless state was disrupted when thinking creeps in.

Ecila experiences this timeless state while going for walks with the children and while being in the classroom and not thinking about herself. It also reflects a state when the observer is absent (the observer with the baggage of conditioning):

Ecila: I experience it when I go for walks, I experience it when I go for walks with the children, I experience it sometimes when we’re just busy in the classroom and I’m not

64 In Krishnamurti’s words, ‘In the absence of the self, the other comes and works through you’.
thinking about myself at all, I’m just involved in what we’re all doing together and there’s no past and there’s no future, there’s just what’s happening right now.

Neville finds that one's contemplative practice contributes towards one's “beingness” rather than “doingness”:

Neville: [Neville is expressing the connection of his doingness (which is yoga) to his beingness (mind)] Even like right now we’re kind of going through the process of having this conversation and we’re thinking about all these words and things, but it’s just like these spiritual practices are a little bit less about doing, necessarily, and just being.

Paul describes the hope that this connection would make his life simple through observation, more direct, less agitated. Paul is actually describing the process of keenly observing one’s conditioning:

Paul: Well I hope the work turns me into a very simple person. I hope that’s sort of the direction I’m going. I’m not really interested in being a complicated person, I’m much more interested in being a simple person, or simplifying my life, and I think that simplification is born through observation, so I think the more you observe the more your inner life becomes a little simpler, a little more direct, a little less seething (or agitated) and full of intrigue. It’s like, whatever, there’s this sense that a lot of that really doesn’t matter, a lot it’s just nervous energy, jangling the neurons, it’s not really even that important.

Paul shares the notion of observing oneself that brings clarity from one’s shadows (or conditioning) and connects one to his/her inner self:

Paul: So, my sense is, the more you observe… because what Krishnamurti did point out, you know, observation changes what’s observed, and you know I think if you are observing inwardly and if you simplify your thinking, you don’t have to make great claims of victimhood or anything, you just realize you screwed up and you face it. And life gets a little simpler, and that’s good, you know, you’ve got more capacity to feel, more capacity to be present with another human being, that’s all good stuff.
Conditions Preventing the Integration between Inner Life and Contemplative Approaches

Paul feels that in the absence of self importance, self-interest and cognitive tricks, there is a chance to actually feel for another human being. In other words, when a person is selfish and absorbed in his/her own thinking, then the contemplative approach will not help him or her to dig deeper into his/her inner life. He adds that connecting the contemplative practices and the inner is very subtle work and feels that the brain and society goes in an opposite direction (not aligning the contemplative practice and one's inner life):

Paul: I feel really strongly about this, because there’s the capacity, and I see it in myself, the capacity to convince ourselves we’re something that we’re not is so strong, and honestly I do feel that there’s this thing called love that only happens… You can’t make it happen, it only happens when all these kinds of self-important, self-interested, fancy, cognitive tricks that we use, start losing their significance, and then you have a chance to actually feel something for another human being. And we have a chance, we have a real chance. But the problem is that it’s very subtle, it’s subtle work, as you know, and everything, society and the brain itself, is oriented in the total opposite direction.

Paul points towards the brain that’s deeply conditioned and flawed (or not rational and only sporadically rational); that makes it difficult to have an inward capacity to inquire and question. Paul has certainly understood Krishnamurti’s perception that the human brain is not rational, and therefore suggests that this is caused by conditioning:

Paul: So I think about conditioning. Why is conditioning happening? It’s happening because it’s really important for a person to learn the ins and outs of their society to survive. Now you’re wired to be conditioned…[and] the brain has a strong hold and a strong disposition to not have an inward dimension, questioning, inquiring, you know? Krishnamurti was up against it his whole life. So the brain isn’t actually rational. So when you kind of begin to sense and that was Krishnamurti’s thesis as well, right? The

65 See the conversation between David Bohm and Krishnamurti in The Ending of Time that discusses why the brain is not rational. See Krishnamurti (1985, pp.49-76) in the chapter titled Why Has Man Given Supreme Importance to Thought?
brain actually is deeply flawed, right? So it’s not rational, or it’s only sporadically rational.

**Theme Three: Pedagogy and Contemplative Approach**

Pedagogy of is defined as the way a teacher teaches or the art and science of teaching (Pinar et al., 1995). One of the participants mentioned that one’s pedagogy cannot be distinguished from who they are. This means that the art of teaching cannot be separated from who the person is on the inside. In this theme, pedagogy is not only observed from the activities that are taking place in the classroom but also those that occur outside the classroom. It makes sense that a teacher who is pedagogically strong is not only competent in how to teach a particular subject, but is also able to look at his/her psychological or inner make-up because it is the inner stability that results in outer clarity.

**Impact of Contemplative Practice outside the Classroom**

The term “outside the classroom” means the situations where the participants were not in the classroom. Mary says that several practices such as TM and her study of *Ayurveda* inform the way she and her family live. Deepak Chopra explains in *Perfect Health* that “the purpose of *Ayurveda* is to tell us how our lives can be influenced, shaped, extended, and ultimately controlled without interference from sickness or old age” (Chopra, 2000, p.11).

Mary: Part of my practice as a TM mediator is that there’s a whole body of knowledge called Ayurveda or Ayurved from India, thousands of years old, which is also part of how I live and how I’ve raised my children and created a family life and I use a lot of that which is more knowledge-based although it certainly becomes experiential as well in working with children and sort of just this one other strategy or tool in my tool belt to think about kids and dynamics and it’s a very holistic way.

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66 *Ayurveda* - a medical system about 5,000 years old which originated from ancient India - means the complete knowledge for long life.
Mary shared some examples of the influence of Ayurveda in her life and felt that these Ayurvedic approaches towards eating, exercising and other activities only point towards a healthy and holistic way of living:

Mary: Ayurveda is the science of life and it’s about what time, the influences that are going on in individual people based on sort of how they are, their physiology and also what time of day, what season it is, the food that we eat, the routine that we strike, the amount of exercise, it’s very whole, there’s sort of no part of life which isn’t articulated and it’s been a fascinating study for me to learn to do pulse diagnosis and I did that with my children so they could kind of find out whether they were in balance or not, it’s about balance.

**Awareness of Contemplative Approaches on Pedagogy**

Embodying awareness is a lifetime work and being on that journey towards such embodiment affects the way Ecila teaches in the classroom. For some participants, this awareness that is connected to the contemplative approach is based on observing *what is* or observing their conditioning or their students’ conditioned mind:

Ecila: I think [being mindful is] the foundation of everything. Yes, or if they don’t embody it yet, they’re on their way to embody. And I know embodying it’s a lifetime work, it’s my lifetime work, but my lifetime work very much effects how I am in the classroom.

Neville feels that the practice of Yoga helps him to feel more relaxed physically and mentally:

Neville: Yoga kind of just chills me out [or makes him more relax] a little bit and that relaxedness contributes both mentally and physically when I'm teaching.

For Paul, the ability to stay with *what is* awakens something within, for both the teacher and the student:

Paul: And the same for the teacher, the teacher also has to stay with *what is*. All the confusion, all the pettiness, all the insensitivity, those are the things, and the process of
looking at that brings about something different. It awakens – that would be
Krishnamurti’s language – it awakens something different, right?

Ecila lectures less nowadays and gets children to learn in their reading circles, do their
own reading and writing and gets out of the way or tries not to dominate with her physical
presence when the students are learning:

Ecila: Well it effects my relationships with the children, it effects my relationships with
the parent, it effects the ...I think I give much more to the children to do...in a lot of
schools, and there’s nothing wrong with this, you’ll see people up there lecturing, I never
lecture anymore, I think I used to you know, have to give a big lesson. Well I don’t do
that, children get down to work and you know they’ll have little reading circles and
they’ll do their own reading and they’ll do they’ll do their own writing and they’ll do
down...but I won’t be up in the front of the classroom talking.

Although there are periods of transmission, Ecila shares that the process of learning circles
creates a sense of competence and independence that allows children to think for themselves at
the Oak Grove School:

Ecila: [On whether there is transmission taking place before her students could do their
own reading and writing] Right, there is some, some. [On what takes place after
transmission] I try to get out of the way. [Ecila mentions that over the years she has done
that more and more] I’ve done that more. [On what is actually taking place when the
children are allowed to learn in reading circles, doing their own reading and writing] I
think they are gaining a sense of competence and independence [and generally that's what
happening in most classrooms at the Oak Grove School where] there’s a big emphasis on
children thinking for themselves.

Impact of the Absence of Contemplation

Ecila shares that an imbalance in the psyche (or impact or influence from one's
conditioning) that happens outside the classroom does have an impact on her relationship with
her students in the classroom:
Ecila: If something happens, if my husband and I have a disagreement or something and my conditioning comes whizzing up, well when I walk in the door, I know that it’s going to affect my day and my relationship with the kids. So being mindful of that really helps.

Without this connection, a teacher will not be able to pay attention to why students don’t actually listen in a class. Paul shares a hypothetical example of this disconnection:

Paul: So the teacher who is not actively looking at, for example, paying attention to how they don’t listen. So what is it, not castigating yourself, “oh I don’t listen, I’m a bad listener”, or flattering oneself, “I am a good listener, I am a beautiful listener”. The point is, are you listening now? And the point is if you’re not listening now, what’s going on? Well, I’m worrying about something. So, what’s that? So it’s a notion of going back and just inquiring into what’s actually going on and that process is way more important than anything you dig up, right? That process is what counts.

Mary shares that if teachers are troubled or stressed, they bring that stress into the classroom and it shows in their pedagogy:

Mary: The thing we bring the most into the classroom is who we are so as teachers, teach who we are so if I come in having just had a fight with my partner and I’m cranky or I haven’t slept well and mother is very sick, I bring all of that, we all bring ourselves into the classroom. So if I can take care of the stress that I’m carrying before I walk through the door that’s going to impact the classroom a great deal.

*Positive Attributes of Contemplative Approaches on Pedagogy*

Mary feels that contemplative practice helps teachers to refuel their own energy level that is lost in daily-life activities:

Mary: I’ve taught with some teachers at some very high-levels of stress and sometimes it’s out of their control, you know they have aging parents living with them and not enough help or care or whatever they needed and all of my current teachers have children except for my daughter and they balance, juggle their roles as parents and as teachers and sometimes the child is home sick and has kept them up a night and they come in and they’re amazing, they put it aside and they are very present with kids but to be able to do
that takes some kind of refueling really to nurture children as we do, we have to nurture or be nurtured outside of the classroom.

And as a consequence of refueling their energy, they experience calmness and have that presence in them. Mary feels that this helps them to not take any issues personally:

Mary: Find ways not to take things personally, kids will say things to us that are hurtful, because they may trigger us, having enough psychological understanding ourselves so that we know it’s not personal. Children say, I hate you or I don’t like you. They’re angry because maybe their dad just left and they didn’t want daddy to leave and they just say what pops out. I hate school you know, and we’ll just say you’re really wishing daddy could stay today. Because we have the calm and the presence to see that it’s not personal and we can help reframe it.

Ecila sees goodness in every child and observes that children learn based on their conditioning. As a result, she has learnt to incorporate their conditioning in the process of learning, by observing and adjusting to their abilities at a personal and emotional level:

Ecila: I see goodness in each child, each child is just precious. We are at this school so we need to learn reading, writing, math, social sciences, and science. All those things need to be taught but I think what happens is that rather than approaching, every child is maybe learning the same subject but each child is obviously learning it through their own conditioning and I think I’ve learned to balance each child’s need or capacity by observing and adjust to their abilities, both on a personal and emotional level and according their work.

This practice (of observing children’s conditioning) happens organically as Ecila continue to be mindful and observing how children learn:

Ecila: Although you know I knew that, but I didn’t set out, I didn’t know how that happened except by doing it, by practicing and being mindful myself and by observing how children learn and this is unteachable [where perhaps] you’ve got to maybe see yourself transmitting all the time at an earlier stage [to be able to allow them to explore and learn for themselves]
Paul felt that to be a teacher is to connect and to establish a relationship with the students, to be open, sensitive and to care for them. His dedication towards creating a powerful bond with his students only reveals his earnestness and honesty in understanding his own conditioning or the contemplative approach of staying with what is:

Paul: And one of the things you have to have to be a teacher of any merit is, you have to connect and have a relationship with those children and there’s only way to do it, and that’s to be open to them and sensitive to them, and care about them. And that’s not a mystery that happens through observation that happens through sensitivity. Sense being the root of the word sensitivity, right? So you listen to them; wow, that’s radical. No, it’s really important, you’ve got to listen to them. If they feel listened to you’ve got the makings of a relationship. If you’re self-absorbed, overly self-important, they know that, they sense that, and maybe they’ll obey you, but you’re not developing a meaningful relationship. And everything comes from that relationship. Then when it’s a matter of classroom order, you know, you can relate directly more from your heart with them.

Paul shares that the art of listening to one another creates the necessary order in a classroom. This order mentioned by Paul has a lot to do with the essence involved in the art of listening. When we listen to another person, there are times during the process of listening that we create a resistance, a defense to what is being said. The mechanism responsible for this resistance is rooted in our conditioning due to our religion, language, social and psychological. Thus, our listening is processed from the filter of our conditioning and that is the reason we sometimes react quickly when we are listening to someone. Krishnamurti mentioned that to listen effectively, one has to pay attention with a sense of affection, a sense of trying to understand what the other is trying to communicate. Therefore, the order in the classroom that is associated with the art of listening has three components: to listen without resistance; to listen with attention; and to listen with affection:

Paul: They will listen, because you have listened to them, and it’s normal they’ll want to listen to you. Not all of them, but enough of them, right? So, you know, yes things move in and out of order, but you’ve got a relationship, and that relationship becomes the basis for bringing order into that classroom.
Findings and Discussions

Sub-Research Question # 6: What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

Category: Teachers’ Pedagogy / Curriculum Design

In this final category of Teachers’ Pedagogy/Curriculum Design, the discussion will explore Krishnamurti’s philosophical theme (e.g. fear, conditioned mind, etc.) that contributes or guides the participants’ pedagogy and curriculum design. The first theme—Connection between Krishnamurti’s philosophy and pedagogy—, reveals the findings relating to how the participants use the following Krishnamurti’s philosophy: The conditioned mind; relationship with others and nature; and mirror of relationship. The second theme — Application of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on pedagogy and curriculum design— reveals the findings relating to participants’ approach in applying or integrating Krishnamurti’s philosophy with their pedagogy and curriculum design. The findings include: Mary’s awareness of multiculturalism; Ecila’s commitment to building relationship with others and nature and Paul’s idea of cultivating group awareness to promote learning. The third theme — Conveying the timeless is implicit— reveals the findings: Nature as an implicit nurturer; awareness as an implicit process. The forth theme — Using other approaches that guide a pedagogy or curriculum design— reveal the findings: Orff Approach and Kodaly Method; and nonviolent communication.

Theme One: Connection between Krishnamurti’s Philosophy and Pedagogy

This research question goes deep into the thinking process or the pedagogy of the participants with regards to integrating Krishnamurti’s philosophy and their way of being in the classroom. Another way to describe this way of being can be called the art and science of teaching or simply their pedagogy. These themes reveal the participants’ connection to certain premises or philosophical themes of Krishnamurti.

The Different themes of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy

The following participants wanted to discuss the following themes:
Mary: **The Conditioned Mind or Conditioning**

Ecila: **Relationship with others and nature**

Paul: **Mirror of relationship and Conditioning**

In his pedagogy and curriculum design, Neville did not use any of Krishnamurti’s philosophy but uses other approaches like the Orff Approach and the Kodaly Method that will be discussed in theme four.

**The Conditioned Mind**

The concept of the conditioned mind is one of the most important teachings of Krishnamurti. The conditioned mind is that part of the brain with the storage of all the past happenings (past hurt, past joy, past sorrow, past pain, past anger, etc.) and Krishnamurti mentions that human beings always look at the present life from the lens of the past happenings. This way of observing from the lens of the past distorts one from engaging and living fully in the present moment.

Stereotyping plays a big role in children’s world and it's natural that this may contribute to their conditioning. Mary’s ability to keenly listen to their world-view gives rise to her emergent curriculum design. Mary is trying to show that the act of stereotyping conditions the mind and breaking the pattern of stereo-typing helps to un-condition their minds:

Mary: So that a lot of it here will be about what boys can do, what girls can do or if that person has long hair they must be a girl, you know and sort of looking at oh, well here’s Marcus and he has long hair. It’s looking at that stereo-typing, starting to coagulate at this age and saying, mmm, girls are people who wear jewellery, oh, but here’s Sam and he’s wearing jewellery and boys are people who can play basketball but here’s Rosa and she is really good at basketball and here’s somebody who can carry heavy stuff which is a boy thing. Wow but Cloey can carry those, she’s carrying four gigantic blocks and she is so strong and sort of always, so it’s emergent curriculum…But it’s always with that in mind that the conditioning is happening all the time.
Mary reveals how important it is for teachers to think about their own biases and conditioning by reflecting on the occupation of the parents of some of their students. So, it’s this constant unraveling of one’s conditioning that Mary is trying to emphasize as being an important work for a teacher. In fact, such an undertaking of constantly looking at one’s conditioning is exactly what Krishnamurti is suggesting to others:

Mary: And thinking as a teacher about my own biases. So here’s maybe a parent who is a real estate sales person and I’m thinking I hate sales people, real estate sales people. I’m thinking, oh boy, that’s my conditioning, that those people are not nice people, they’re allowed to get what they can get. So it’s a self examination and it’s other really involving the communities and the community of parents where you do parent meetings where you talk about: What is it like to be a mother or a father of a boy or what is it like to be a mother or father of a girl? What were my role models growing up? Who are the role models for my children right now?

Paul, who teaches the seniors of High School students, uses the notion of conditioning explicitly in his classroom. Paul indicates that he uses discussion and writing to get his students to begin to think about their own conditioning:

Paul: One of the themes that I think most teachers historically here in this school have been able to do with the kids is the notion of conditioning. With the seniors I don’t really use that term directly because there is sensitivity to it, but some of them use it, so it is used. But it doesn’t matter really if you use the word conditioning or not, it’s the basic notion that’s important. And I’m very explicit with them; it’s built into the curriculum that way. But discussion, and in writing, both, you have an opportunity to see what your thinking is, because generally speaking, your thought is hidden, so the idea is for you create context where the thought can come out.

*Relationship with Others and Nature*

Mary’s curriculum is driven by the children's worldview by the means of listening to the kids constantly:
Mary: I feel like I’m always listening to kids and when you’re with kids on the ground and they talk and they play and there’s a lot to listen to, I’m always hearing kind of their worldview because they’re speaking it or playing it, so it could be physical, it could be verbal, nonverbal and verbal and it drives my curriculum design a great deal.

Agreeing collectively on the guiding principles of the classroom is one practice that Ecila encourages in collaboration with her students and the scenario depicts a relationship-building process with one another:

Ecila: I think that I explicitly try to create an environment in which that at the very beginning the children talk about what a community is and what the guiding principles of our classroom should be. You build it together so I’m not the one saying this is the way it is, this is the way it is, this is the way it is. That they agree collectively with the things that we decide make our environment safe and make our environment a healthy place to learn in.

Ecila points out the need to create good relationship with one another that in turn creates a healthy learning environment. Ecila builds the ground work in establishing good relationships among students by allowing them to talk freely, while working individually and then getting them involved in the process of deciding when they want to share their work to the class. Ecila finds that this approach lessens the competitive feeling and it also helps in creating group dynamics where everyone’s work is important:

Ecila: So discussion and be able to talk freely, being able to do your own work, sharing your work in front of the class if you choose, having the permission to share or not share until you sort of grow into that I think helps create a lack of fear, helps create a lack of competitiveness, helps create a feeling of support and collaboration among the class rather than, and it takes a long time. I personally don’t do like co-operative tasks until the first couple of months because then they’re more willing to work together. Oh you really are good at drawing, will you do this? And then we’ll do this. They’re much better at knowing what their gifts are and their friend’s gifts are and they are just...

Ecila hopes that bringing students closer to nature is important to counter the impact from the gadgets of technological advancement. Ecila hopes that instilling in them an interest in
outdoor activities (such as walks), and engaging in the act of observing along with poetry writing while being in nature will get them connected to nature for years to come:

Ecila: Because children are in front of the TV, they’re in front of their computers; they have DVD’s in the back of cars now, movies that they can watch, headphones that they can listen to. So at this age I really focus on being out of the classroom, taking walks, being in nature, writing poetry, observing, observing, observing because I hope that it is something that is instilled within them their whole lives.

**Mirror of Relationship**

Krishnamurti mentioned that relationship is a mirror in which we observe ourselves. In other words, by observing our reactions, likes, dislikes, etc. in any relationship helps us to discover our own conditioning.

Paul spends time in discussion with his students and the idea behind it is to allow the students and him to look at each other’s pattern of thinking. This method of dialoguing was used by Krishnamurti throughout his life in order to engage others in looking at their conditioning:

Paul: Because I do a fair amount of discussion with my classes, in that there are two really Krishnamurti elements to that, probably more, but two come to mind quickly. One is the mirror of relationship, so that when we discuss, really anything, there is an opportunity for students to, either with their relationship to me in that discussion or anyone else, their peers, they get to see what their own thinking is, right? So this relates to conditioning, whether something that they’re seeing is the assumptions they have, or opinions, or beliefs that they have.

Paul uses the notion of mirrored relationship as a tool to observe one's thinking and feels that the process of using the essence of relationship to unravel one’s conditioning creates an inner dimension in education:

Paul: And when it comes out then you can see whether it makes sense. And that whole process creates an inner dimension in education. So that’s an important part. And it’s there, it’s already there, it’s built into a course that has a lot of writing involved, or has discussion. So when I’m looking at how I run a course, that discussion element where
there’s a mirrored relationship, where there’s the notion of seeing what one’s thinking is and being able to look at it, and obviously students disagree, and again that’s the mirrored relationship as well, so there’s a way in which it makes them face who they are.

Paul also uses a technique called 'Group Processes' whereby dialogues and discussions are geared towards the intention of creating a learning environment. The essence of group processes lies in the ability to hold a discussion together, in order to have a deeper understanding together:

Paul: And then of course there’s another layer and that is what I call group process, the way in which they relate with each other. That’s a very important part of being able to communicate well, or at all, and the kids, you know, it’s very difficult for them, but they come from a society where it’s almost non-existent… So the group process piece is really, really critical to what happens, and it’s perhaps one of the more challenging things to do. Just because there is almost no awareness in them, and generally in society, about not only that we talk together, but how we talk together… So you’re not lecturing to them, they’re not just talking about random things, they’re actually trying to hold the discussion together. So it’s something that I spend time with them on. Again you have to build that into your curriculum.

Paul shares that the guideline for the group processes comes from the students themselves:

Paul: The guidelines that I put together for group process come from the students; they don’t just come from me. I don’t just say, “these are what we need to do”.

Theme Two: Application of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy on Pedagogy and Curriculum Design

This theme discusses the application of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (like the conditioned mind, the role that relationship plays in the process of learning, relationship with nature, the ability to be aware of the ‘mirror of relationship’) on the participants’ pedagogy and curriculum design. The layout to present this theme will be organized by participants rather than using the sub-themes approach used thus far.
Mary – Awareness of Multiculturalism to Expose Conditioning

Awareness of multiculturalism is inculcated in the curriculum to raise awareness of how conditioned a society and families are. Mary gives an example of celebrating the *Dia De Los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) as opposed to focusing on the mainstream holidays like the Halloween, Valentine’s Day, etc.:

Mary: I have things that I plan and they may be about things like a holiday, this weekend it’s Halloween and instead of doing a big focus on mainstream holidays which everybody is going to get through the stores, the television, you know it just bombards you, you know the Christmas, the Easter, the Halloween, the Valentine’s Day [and they are] very commercial. Just sort of ignoring that, you know we did pumpkins because it’s harvest and it’s eating and it’s together but then going to something which is an alternative right at this moment would be the *Dia De Los Muertos* which is the Day of the Dead, which is actually the same holiday but celebrated in South and Central American cultures it’s about remembering people who have died and things that have died.

Part of Mary’s curriculum is geared towards exposing how society is conditioning children; she tries to instill in her students, awareness of the fact that their families form part of the society:

Mary: My curriculum is very driven by that motivation of looking at how society is conditioning children and their family is a part of the society so it could stem from there and it doesn’t even matter I don’t have to pinpoint where does this come from you know when a child is kind of expressing something that I really want them to question because it feels like a pre-prejudicial point of view.

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67 *Dia De Los Muertos* is the Day of the Dead, which is actually the same holiday (like Thanks Giving) but celebrated in South and Central American cultures it’s about remembering people who have died. Mary brings this celebration into her curriculum since she has four families in her group of twelve, where one of the families is from Nicaragua, one parent from Argentina, two from Mexico.
Ecila – Building Relationship with Others and Nature

Ecila shared a process that allows the students to get involved in collectively discussing the rules and guidelines that they think would make their classroom a good learning environment. This collective agreement is called a ‘contract’. Ecila felt that such a process truly helps children to understand one another in a profound way:

Ecila: We have a contract over here that the children made up, all the things, all the kind of rules, the guidelines that they collectively wanted to see in the classroom that would make it a good place to learn. I think this leads to a lack of fear of being themselves and I think that sort of leads to a general acceptance of all the class members. I think that when a child is able to express themselves freely, then the rest of the children I think their conceived assumptions about that child disappear. And they can see their other peers for who they are and the gifts that they have to give rather than what they may have projected onto them.

Ecila also encourages collaborative projects where students work together to foster friendship and an atmosphere of non-competition:

Ecila: Then we begin our big maybe collaborative learning projects or things like that and they’re always allowed to work together as long as they, you know one of them, our contract says, we are allowed to work together as long as we don’t just give the other person the answer. But we can work together and it fosters a sense of friendship and affection and non-competition. You know I have to check all their work. And I’m always looking around to see that they’re working together appropriately. And that one person isn’t taking over and just doing the work [for others]

Ecila develops a curriculum that creates awareness in developing a relationship with nature. She explicitly plans these outings or trips out of the classroom at least twice a week to go to a place called Lost Meadow. Some of the activities done during these outings include: noticing the animals and insects surrounding them; writing poetry and outdoor games:

Ecila: [Going out to nature helps them to] discover, I think they begin to develop a relationship with nature in the natural world. One of the first things they do is find their
own spot. They have their favorite spot and you know it might take two or three times of
going out there before they find their spot and then whenever we go out there they go to
their spot and then they notice what’s changed in their spot, they notice the animals and
you know and the birds and the insects and the things, and somebody visited their spot
and they adopt a tree, they write poetry, they go to their spot and write poetry. We go to
the Oak Grove and they adopt a tree in the Oak Grove and they find places in the Oak
Grove to write poetry. We go on walks in which we don’t talk. We go on walks where
they just play, we learn about you know the animal classification and then we have games
that we do outside with the animal classification games and it’s just anything to have
them draw their attention to what are the animals around here. What animals do we live
with?

Ecila instills an awareness of relationship-building with their surroundings by studying
the Chumash Indians who lived at the Oak Grove a long time ago and this is embedded into the
curriculum. About fifteen hundred species of plants are native to the Chumash region that
includes Ojai, and one of them is the toyon berries. Jan Timbrook notes that “most commonly,
they [the Chumash Indians] toasted the fresh toyon berries...” (Timbrook, 2007, p. 91). This text
gave rich explanations of the Chumashan peoples’ lives and cultures and their relationship to
their environment; it also revealed how Ecila uses Ojai’s history to build her own curriculum:

Ecila: So a part of my curriculum is studying the early people who were here, the
Chumash Indians. And I’ll take a long time doing that. I mean, I’ll bring in the wood
from the elderberry tree that’s out there, we’ll pick toyon berries, we collect acorns, and
we pound them. I want them to know there are things are out here they can eat, that
provide medicine, that provide shelter, and it’s right out there and the Chumash used
those things and it gives us reason to go out all the time, our studies force us out to pick
the berries and roast them and see what they taste like and pound the acorns and make
acorn cakes and see what they taste like. Well you have to pound the acorns, it takes
forever to pound these acorns then you have to dry them, then you have to pour boiling

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68 The Chumash Indians were the early dwellers of the Ojai Valley, where the Oak Grove School is located in California. The word Ojai means moon from the Chumash word awhay. See Harrington (1981) for more details.
water through them to leach the tannins out and then you mix them with cornmeal and then you fry them. And put a little honey on them because the Chumash did have honey bees. So I really do try to plan the curriculum as much as possible to get them outdoors.

**Paul: Cultivating Group Awareness to Promote Learning**

Paul shares the subtler effects of the group processes that addresses classroom atmosphere like the kind energy or presence that everyone brings to the classroom. Some of the subtler elements of group processes that Paul finds to be important are: The kind of energy students bring in to the classroom; the kind of presence the teacher brings in to the class; Is the teacher bringing in the aura of authority (or use of power to handle a class); the quality of listening and the possibility of negotiation. Paul finds that these subtler aspects are important in order to create a good learning environment:

Paul: Well the group process, and part of that if you want to really understand it is… the other part of that is classroom atmosphere, and that’s the first thing any teacher establishes first in the class. You know, it’s like, what kind of energy are you bringing? What kind of presence are you bringing? Are you bringing authority in? If you are, in what way? How are you going to relate with these children? What’s the quality of your listening? What’s the course load that you’re going to impose on them? Is there any negotiation on anything? Can students feel they can speak up, or are they helpless in the class? All these things create classroom atmosphere, and plus your mood and your sense of who you are as a human being, takes them a little while and you a little while to kind of sense how that’s all going to work together.

Paul Herder’s e-book titled *Revolutionary Minds: The Educational Vision of J. Krishnamurti and Its Practice* explained the importance of group processes that includes:
Behaviors and attitudes in any interactions (body language, listening or the lack of, level of interest, the presence defensiveness or submissiveness, tone of voice or emotional state);
Dynamics that impact the inquiry process in a classroom and the elements a teacher should keep in mind (intention to learn, support, openness, outward inquiry, inward inquiry, equality) (Herder, 2011).
**Theme Three: Conveying the Timeless is Implicit**

In this theme, the notion of a teacher being implicit in getting the students to experience the timeless state (like being in nature) is presented. In giving direction towards the right kind of education, Krishnamurti (1953) states that “implicit in right education is the cultivation of freedom and intelligence…after all, the concern of the educator is to help the student to understand the complexities of his whole being” (p. 33). I believe that Krishnamurti is implying that the unknown cannot be approached directly, but through the negative approach. Similarly, in assisting the students to understand the timeless qualities (like freedom and intelligence), teachers need to approach it implicitly and not explicitly.

**Nature as an Implicit Nurturer**

Ecila intentionally takes her students to nature, and nature implicitly nurtures them. This implies that Ecila only brings the children to nature and nature nurtures the children just by being there:

Ecila: I don’t know that but I think that by intentionally, well of course you want intentionally, I intentionally want the children to be in nature as much as possible so that they have that feeling but I’m not doing anything, nature is.

Ecila only provides the environment for the students to feel the order and attention; it’s implicit and it comes about naturally:

Ecila: I want children to feel absolutely free to say whatever they want to say and have the kids feel an order comes within the group, that was disrespectful or that was rude or that hurt my feelings or these things. A certain order comes in the group when you have paid enough attention at the beginning of the year to these things and it’s implicit but respect and giving another space and awareness to be who he is without judging first, that just naturally comes about. And I’m not doing anything except providing an environment, they’re doing it.
**Awareness as an Implicit Process**

Paul feels that creating awareness is generally an implicit process; this simply means that the relationship between the teacher and the students, which encourages the observation of one’s thinking, creates the right foundation for freedom and intelligence to occur:

Paul: Well, a lot of it is implicit, you know, awareness is generally implicit, there’s the sense that it’s obviously central to Krishnamurti’s work that students be aware of it. If you just hammer on them to be aware, aware, aware, they’ll just turn you off. So it’s really more of a kind of ongoing guiding principle as just someone who’s interested in the work. And I think in the relationship that you’re in with them, there’s always the sense of asking the questions and trying to get them to look at things, their own thinking, the way they sit, whether they’ve come sleepy, are they eating properly, you know.

Paul shares his difficulty in getting the students to observe their own thinking and it requires building a relationship with them in order to begin exploring these issues:

Paul: So that there can be more awareness of the kinds of things they do and why they do them. You know it’s an incredibly important part of it. I mean, there is the whole more subtle work around the observer and the observed, and that kind of thing. That’s much more difficult to get to ask them in a meaningful way how they observe their own thinking. You really have to build quite a relationship with them for that to happen, and you have to have a kind of ongoing dialogue around the importance of all this before you could get to a question like that. So it remains rather implicit.

**Theme Four: Using Other Approach/Method that Guides a Pedagogy or Curriculum Design**

In this theme, other methods or curricular orientations by other educationists (other than Krishnamurti’s philosophy) that are used in the Oak Grove School are discussed. The use of Orff Approach and Kodaly Method used by Neville and the Nonviolent Communication curriculum used by Ecila will be discussed.
**Orff Approach and Kodaly Method**

Neville uses the *Orff Approach*\(^6^9\) which is a child centered approach of music education.

Neville: Well, I mean curriculum design… I guess one thing I haven’t mentioned yet is that most of my pedagogy comes from a body of work called the Orff-Schulwerk method. Have you ever heard of that? Carl Orff was a German composer and educator in the first half of the twentieth century. And he developed this kind of school of music instruction that was based more on experience. A lot of music instruction is really based explicitly on reading, you know? And the teaching methods that they practiced and developed were ones that allowed, especially the younger students, to participate in music immediately without having direct literacy. You know, just like with language, how you hear people speak and you learn to speak long before you learn to read and write? It’s the same principle.

Neville also employs another method, the *Kodaly Method*\(^7^0\) which is a child developmental approach that uses music according to the capability of the children”

Neville: That’s really where my pedagogy comes from and I also use some techniques from another method called K-0-D-A-L-Y. And that’s where the actual direct music processes come from. I guess processes and techniques, that’s where all those things come from.

**Nonviolent Communication**

Ecila uses a *Nonviolent Communication*\(^7^1\) curriculum created by Marshall Rosenberg:

Ecila: I think there are some things that help and one is called non-violent communication. You may have heard of that here and it’s a tool to use language in a way

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\(^6^9\) The Orff Approach was created by Carl Orff, a German composer in the 1920’s. The Orff Approach is a child-centered way of learning music education that uses a holistic approach to teaching music in a gentle and friendly manner (Campbell, 2007)

\(^7^0\) The Kodaly Method was created by Zoltan Kodaly and this method uses a child-developmental approach according to the capabilities of the child (Choksy, 1998)

\(^7^1\) See *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* by Marshall B. Rosenberg
which expresses yourself, where you’re coming from. We try to teach it to the kids here. I feel when you do this because what I really want is this and then it helps them begin to be clearer about their own thinking process.

Ecila describes a process where each child builds a peace bridge and she uses the following example to illustrate it:

Ecila: So there might be a conflict and so we start together, you’ve had a conflict with me. And we might just start together for being quiet for a minute. Then I feel maybe, maybe I’m annoyed that you were late, I’m not, but maybe. I feel annoyed when you were late because we don’t have very much time together. So what I would like for you to do is give me five extra minutes and then you can say, I feel because, and what I need is and then we say all right: Are we all right with our choice? Will you give me this or will you give me that or is this okay? We might say no, we’re still not quite resolved or I still feel angry when you call me names because it hurts my feelings and I want us to be friends. And then the other person does that and then we meet in the middle.

Ecila shares that when both of them have exhausted the use of words, there is a good chance that they meet in the middle.

Ecila: There are no words there (in the middle), we might decide we haven’t finished talking, we might decide we have to postpone our conversation for another few minutes or another day. We might decide oh, it’s over, it’s finished.

The choice of words used in the Nonviolent Communication’s curriculum was created by Marshall Rosenberg. Two teachers who knew this curriculum, taught at the Oak Grove School over 20 years ago. They are Sura Hart and Victoria Hodson and they have written three books so far on the topic of Nonviolent Communication. 72

Ecila: Well it starts from a man named Marshall Rosenberg and he teaches a method called Nonviolent Communication and two of the teachers who used to be teachers at the

Krishnamurti School are trainers of his and they wrote a book about using it in the classroom.

Ecila shares an example of using the Nonviolent Communication.

Ecila: All right well what do I need? And sometimes well, I don’t know what I need, well would you feel good if he said it was an accident or he’s sorry? Or that he wants to be your friend or you know we can kind of help them and they’re pretty honest about saying no, it’s not that. Well yeah, I’m just afraid he doesn’t like me anymore. Oh, well why don’t you check that out? You know maybe that’s a wrong assumption? Oh, yeah okay...Do you like me? Yeah, I do I didn’t mean to say it that way, or maybe I did mean to say it that way but I was just mad. And then often when you get to the middle, it’s over. How are you feeling now? Fine. How are you feeling? Fine. Then they’ll walk off and they’re just dissolved.

**Summary on Themes and Findings**

The themes and findings will be presented in the following six different tables for the six categories. These summary tables will be useful in making quick references to the themes and findings.

Table 3

*Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Thinking*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Thinking</td>
<td>1. Reactions &amp; Reflections after Listening to Krishnamurti</td>
<td>a. Positive Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Motivation to teach in a Krishnamurti School</td>
<td>b. Negative Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Hope</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a. Teaching where their children were schooled</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School and Beauty of the Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Additional Influences and their relationship with Krishnamurti’s work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Lives</td>
<td>Educational Experience</td>
<td>a. Childhood educational experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Education as an adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Events Leading Towards the Teaching Profession.</td>
<td>a. Adult education</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>b. Professional experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Earliest recollection of wanting to be a teacher</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Motivation to Become a Teacher</td>
<td>a. Krishnamurti’s Influence</td>
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<td>b. Other influence</td>
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Table 5

Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Inner Lives

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Inner Lives</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Educating Oneself</td>
<td>a. When relationship acts as a mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. When the self acts as a mirror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner Dimensions of the Oak Grove School</td>
<td>a. Inner dimension of Teachers at Oak Grove School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Teachers’ Transformational Phase</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Inner dimensions of students at the Oak Grove School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inner Life &amp; Timeless Learning</td>
<td>a. Teachers characteristics contributing to timeless learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Wholeness of Life

- Awareness of wholeness
- Conditions promoting wholeness
- Conditions preventing experiencing of wholeness

5. Wholeness in Teachers

- Condition for creating wholeness among teachers
- Consequences when teachers lack wholeness

6. Good Teaching

- Teachers’ characteristics contributing to good teaching
- Conditions for good teaching to occur
- Conditions preventing good teaching from occurring

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### Table 6

**Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Vocation/Calling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Vocation / Calling</td>
<td>1. The Understanding of Calling / Vocation.</td>
<td>a. Recognizing / Discovering One’s Calling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Factors Preventing the Hearing of One’s Calling</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Teaching as a Calling/Vocation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Conditions Promoting the Hearing of One’s Calling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Students awareness in Self-Knowledge and Vocation</td>
<td>a. Evoking Self-Knowledge from Students</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Conditions Promoting Self-Knowledge</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Teachers Vulnerability</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Teachers Pointing Towards Potential Students Vocation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7
Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches</td>
<td>1. Awareness on Contemplative Approaches</td>
<td>a. Similarities and Differences in Understanding Contemplative Approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Practice and Awareness of Contemplative Approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Benefits and Intrinsic Values of Contemplative Approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Inner Life and Contemplative Practices</td>
<td>a. Connection between Inner Life &amp; Contemplative Approaches</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Conditions Preventing the Integration between Inner Life &amp; Contemplative Approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Pedagogy and Contemplative Approaches</td>
<td>a. Impact of Contemplative Practice Outside the Classroom</td>
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<td>b. Awareness of Contemplative Approaches on Pedagogy</td>
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<td>c. Impact on the Absence of Contemplation</td>
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<td>d. Positive Attributes of Contemplative Approaches on Pedagogy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 8
Themes and Findings for Teachers’ Pedagogy/Curriculum Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Pedagogy/Curriculum Design</td>
<td>1. Connection between Krishnamurti’s Philosophy &amp; Pedagogy</td>
<td>a. The Conditioned Mind</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Relationship with Others and Nature</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Mirror of Relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Application of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy on Pedagogy and Curriculum Design</td>
<td>a. Mary – Awareness of Multiculturism to Expose Conditioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Ecila – Building Relationship with Others &amp; Nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Paul – Cultivating Group Awareness to Promote Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Conveying the Timeless is</td>
<td>a. Nature as an Implicit Nurturer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The six research sub-questions and their respective categories of teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ vocation/calling, teachers’ contemplative approaches and teachers’ pedagogy/curriculum design contributed to the formation of the following themes and findings.

The first research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Thinking) discussed the participant’s thinking process in relation to their intentions to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school. This category also probed participants’ major motivations to teach in a Krishnamurti school and their reactions after listening to Krishnamurti for the first time. The first theme – Reactions and Reflections after Listening to Krishnamurti – revealed the finding of: The positive and negative impact felt by the participants after coming across Krishnamurti’s work and the sense of hope felt by the participants after joining the Oak Grove School. The second theme – Motivations to Teach in a Krishnamurti School – revealed the findings of: Teaching where their children were schooled; Aesthetics of the Oak Grove School and beauty of the environment; Additional influences and their relationship with Krishnamurti’s Work; Freedom to inquire and explore; Interest to teach at the Oak Grove School outweighing economic benefits.

The second research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Life) discussed the events in teacher’s life that have influenced their decision to become a teacher. This section also traced their inclination towards the teaching profession based on the choice of their tertiary education (or their major of study). Besides exploring their choice of study, this section also probed into the different occupations they were involved or engaged in, before eventually settling with the teaching profession and the first time the participants decided to become teachers. The first theme – Educational Experience – revealed the findings: Early childhood educational experience; Education as an adult. The second theme – Events leading towards the teaching profession – revealed the findings: Adult education; Professional experience; Earliest recollection of wanting to be a teacher. The third theme – Motivation to become a Teacher – revealed the findings: Krishnamurti’s Influence and other Influence.
The third research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Inner Lives) discussed the aspect of teacher’s inner lives that may have led them towards wholeness. This category probed the participants to find out: the state of mind needed to evoke one’s natural talent; conditions for timeless learning to happen; the role that a school plays in helping their students to learn about the wholeness of life; whether there is a need for teachers to be in the journey towards wholeness in order to help their students to discover their wholeness; and teachers’ understanding of what is meant by good teaching. The first theme – Learning and educating oneself – revealed the findings: When relationship acts as a mirror and when the self acts as a mirror. The second theme – Inner dimension of the Oak Grove School – revealed the findings: Inner dimension of teachers at the Oak Grove School; Teachers’ transformational phase; Inner dimension of students at the Oak Grove School. The third theme – Inner life and timeless learning – revealed the findings: Teachers characteristics contributing to timeless learning; Conditions to timeless learning; Importance of staying with What Is. The forth theme – Wholeness of life – revealed the findings: Awareness of wholeness; Conditions promoting wholeness; Conditions preventing experiencing wholeness. The fifth theme – Wholeness in teachers – revealed the findings: Conditions for creating wholeness among teachers; Consequences when teachers lack wholeness. The sixth theme – Good teaching – revealed the findings: Teachers’ characteristics contributing to good teaching; Conditions for good teaching to occur; Conditions preventing good teaching from occurring.

The fourth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Vocation) explored the aspects of teachers’ inner lives that pointed towards their calling. This category goes deep into the participants’ discovery of their calling, the factors that prevented their discovery and the factors that promote the discovery of their calling. The first theme – The understanding of calling/vocation – revealed the findings: Recognizing/Discovering one’s calling; Factors preventing the hearing of one’s calling; Teaching as a calling/vocation; Conditions promoting the hearing of one’s calling. The second theme focused on the different ways the participants convey this notion of calling to their students with the theme titled – Students awareness in Self-knowledge and vocation – revealed the findings: Evoking Self-knowledge from students; Conditions promoting Self-Knowledge; Teachers’ vulnerability; Teachers’ pointing toward potential students vocation.
The fifth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches) explored the participants’ familiarity and experiences with the different contemplative practices. The participants’ were also requested to reflect on the connection between their contemplative practices and their inner life and pedagogy. The participants also shared some of the positive attributes that contributed towards their pedagogy as a result of their contemplative practices/approaches. The first theme – Awareness of contemplative approaches – revealed the findings: Similarities and differences in understanding contemplative approaches; Practices and awareness of contemplative approaches; Benefits and intrinsic values of contemplative approaches. The second theme – Inner life and contemplative practices – revealed the findings: Connection between inner life and contemplative approaches; Conditions preventing the integration between inner life and contemplative approaches. The third theme – Pedagogy and contemplative approach – revealed the findings: Impact of contemplative practice outside the classroom; Awareness of contemplative approach on pedagogy; Impact of the absence of contemplation; Positive attributes of contemplative approaches on pedagogy.

The sixth research sub-question and its category (Teachers’ Pedagogy) explored Krishnamurti’s common philosophical theme (e.g. fear, conditioned mind, etc.) that contributed or guided the way the participants teach (pedagogy) and the way they design their curriculum. This question provided some insight into the heart of their teaching practice that is deeply embedded in the philosophy of holistic education, namely the notion of child-centered education. The first theme – Connection between Krishnamurti’s philosophy and pedagogy – revealed the findings on how the participants use the following Krishnamurti’s philosophy: The conditioned mind; Relationship with others and nature; and Mirror of relationship. The second theme – Application of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on pedagogy and curriculum design – revealed the participants’ approach to applying or integrating Krishnamurti’s philosophy with their pedagogy and curriculum design. The findings include: Mary’s awareness of multiculturalism to expose conditioning; Ecila’s effort in building relationship with others and nature; Paul’s notion of cultivating group awareness to promote learning. The third theme – Conveying the timeless is implicit – revealed the findings: Nature as an implicit nurturer; Awareness as an implicit process. The forth theme – Using other approaches that guides a pedagogy or curriculum design – revealed the findings: Orff Approach and Kodaly Method; and Nonviolent communication.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to explore the inner lives or the spirituality of teachers in order to gain a deeper understanding of their wholeness. As we have seen throughout this research, the notion of wholeness cannot be explained objectively, but rather subjectively. The notion of the *Whole Teachers* revolves around the process of exploring the inner lives of teachers. The literature seems to agree that wholeness cannot be pinned on a particular model and that wholeness encompasses the total awareness of one’s life (Bohm, 1976; J.P. Miller and Nakagawa, 2002; Lao-tzu, 1988; Mitchell, 1998; Korom, 2002; Thakadipuram, 2009; Wilber, 1996; J.P Miller, 1993, 1994, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2010; Krishnamurti, 1953, 1954, 1969, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1981, 1985, 1991, 2002a, 2006; Covey, 2004; Palmer, 1983, 1998, 2000, 2004; Chopra, 2010; Godman, 1992).

J.P. Miller’s *Whole Child Education* was an inspiration to focus on the topic of Whole Teachers. J.P. Miller (2010) stressed the importance of educating the whole child that develops the faculty of thinking, feeling and acting based on mind, body and the spirit. J.P. Miller (2010) focused on whole teaching, whole curriculum, whole school, and the whole teacher in order to facilitate educating the whole child. The chapter on *Whole Teacher* focused on the qualities of the whole teacher such as patience, presence, caring, love and humility and suggested ways of nurturing these qualities using the different practices of meditation and mindfulness. This current research has zoomed in and focused on the different aspects of teachers like their thinking, lives, inner lives, contemplative approaches, calling and pedagogy/curriculum design that enable their fragmentation to drop away in order to experience wholeness. This research is also the first of its kind to focus on teachers’ wholeness based on teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ contemplative practices, teachers’ calling and teachers’ pedagogy/curriculum design.

Krishnamurti was very insistent that the current turmoil or difficulty in educating a student stems from the fragmentation of the educator. He felt that without self-knowledge, there is no basis for educating another and added that:

*It is only by understanding the ways of our own thought and feeling that we can truly help the child to be a free human being; and if the educator is vitally concerned with this,*
he will be keenly aware, not only of the child, but also of himself. (Krishnamurti, 1953, p.106)

It is natural that without self-knowledge, there will be fragmentation in the way we think and feel. Without self-knowledge, our conditioning will dictate our thinking and feeling. The consequences of the fragmented teacher results in stuffing the pupil with information just to pass examinations and Krishnamurti (1953) rightly observes that if the educator is “confused and narrow, nationalistic and theory-ridden, then naturally his pupil will be what he is, and education becomes a source of further confusion and strife” (p. 100).

Volumes have been researched and written on policies in education, school administration, teaching strategies, classroom administration. Vinovskis (1999), Lang et al. (1994), Orlich (1980) and Reed (2000) reflect on some literature on these aspects of the educational enterprise. There are also volumes written and researched on teachers’ lives or teachers’ lived experience using autobiographical approaches (Butt & Raymond, 1992), narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987) and phenomenological approach (Aoki, 1986; van Manen, 1990, 1997). These research studies on teachers’ lived experiences are important and serve as a foundation to this present research on teachers’ wholeness. While these studies on teachers’ lived experience focus on teachers’ thinking and teachers’ lives, this research on teachers’ wholeness that focuses on additional aspects of teachers such as teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ contemplative practices and teachers’ calling contributes further to this growing body of knowledge in terms of spirituality and wholeness of teachers. The limited research on teachers’ spirituality and wholeness that is explicitly spiritual in nature may be due to the inherent difficulty in researching the inner life or the wholeness of teachers. Krishnamurti (1953) suggested that this difficulty may stem from the fact that:

To educate the educator – that is, to have him understand himself – is one of the most difficult undertakings, because most of us are already crystallized within a system of thought or a pattern of action; we have already given ourselves over to some ideology, to a religion, or to a particular standard of conduct. That is why we teach the child what to think and not how to think. (p.101)

The volumes of research done on the aspects external to teachers (school administration, teaching strategies, classroom administration, etc.) are definitely important to the effectiveness of
the overall educational enterprise. One of the aims of this research is to stimulate discussion on the inner workings of teachers and to promote the research on the aspects internal to the teachers (well being, love, wisdom, awareness, mindfulness, etc.). In bridging the gap between the need for advancing the external aspects of schooling and the internal aspects of an individual, the findings from this research will be a guide. Krishnamurti (1974) clarifies the need to develop wholeness in students in the schools he created by commenting that:

The purpose, the aim and drive of these schools is to equip the child with the most excellent technological proficiency, so that he may function with clarity and efficiency in the modern world, and far more important to create the right climate so that the child may develop fully as a complete human being. (p.89)

This research attempts to understand this awareness in the form of teachers’ thinking (the thought processes of teachers regarding why they choose a particular school or schooling system), teachers’ lives (events in a teacher’s life that influenced their decision to become a teacher), teachers’ inner lives (different aspects of teachers’ inner lives that have lead them towards wholeness), teachers’ contemplative approaches (exploration of how different contemplative practices/approaches bring the teachers closer towards the inner terrain of their mind), teachers’ vocation/calling (exploring the notion of calling in the teaching profession, the necessary conditions that might promote the hearing of and heeding toward one’s calling) and teachers’ pedagogy/curriculum design (exploring teachers’ guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design).

The Flower Model can be used to guide teachers with their respective psychological conditionings that reside or exist in their thinking, lives, inner lives, contemplative practices, vocation and pedagogy/curriculum design. As the flowering process happens in all three stages from the Flower Model, we can deduce that Krishnamurti’s perception on awareness (that forms the basis of the Flower Model) will play an important role in assisting/helping teachers in understanding their own conditioning and possibly attain the flow state as suggested by Csikszentmihalyi (1991), which is also the state where the Observer is the Observed as illustrated by Krishnamurti (1991b).

In this concluding chapter, each research question will be discussed based on the findings, and reflected with appropriate literature or research. The implication of these findings
or the consequence of this doctoral thesis will be discussed, followed by limitations and suggestions for future research.

Concluding Remarks

Research Sub-Question # 1: What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?

Category: Teachers’ Thinking

This research sub-question relates to the thinking processes involved in the mind of research participants in relation to their intention to teach in a Krishnamurti school. Krishnamurti attracted many people with his philosophy and his views on education. The impact that Krishnamurti had on others was captured well in Blau (1995) who presented various accounts of his impact on such luminaries like Aldous Huxley, Joseph Campbell, Henry Miller, Van Morrison, Deepak Chopra, David Bohm and many more.

This sub-research question explored the research participants’ first experience/encounter with Krishnamurti, their occupation when they encountered Krishnamurti and the factors which motivated them to teach in a Krishnamurti school. This sub-research question was designed to capture or map out the mindset of teachers teaching in a Krishnamurti school. There is no literature found on why teachers are eager to teach in a Krishnamurti school. Nevertheless, a broader body of literature that discusses the topic of teachers’ thinking includes the study of the deeper-level thinking in teachers (Jersild, 1955); a study describing and understanding the mental constructs and processes that give clarification to teachers’ behavior (Jackson, 1968); a study that discusses the complexity of teachers’ thinking due to the influences in their thought processes (Clark & Peterson, 1986); a study in exploring teachers’ voices, the tension between ordinary teachers and extraordinary teachers, the place of story in educational research and finding the concept of voice central in the development of teacher thinking (Elbaz, 1990).

The limited research in this area also suggests that perhaps empirical research on teachers’ thinking may be a difficult task since the thinking process occurs in their mind and is not easily observed. Yero (2002) commented in her book titled Teaching in Mind: How Teacher Thinking Shapes Education that “researchers have generally bypassed teachers’ thought processes in favor of the teacher action domain. Teacher behavior, student behavior, and student
achievement scores are much easier to observe and measure… [and] they are subject to empirical research” (p. 4). Yero (2002) also compliments the implications of this research question by introducing different aspects of teacher’s thought, teacher’s belief and how these beliefs shape decision-making and behavior.

A major finding of this study is the importance that teachers placed on teaching in a Krishnamurti’s school, and that the environment at the Oak Grove School allowed for the freedom to inquire and explore the possibility of transforming themselves. Krishnamurti felt that the freedom to inquire is often dampened by one’s conditioning and this conditioning is part of the culture in which the mind is educated. Thus Krishnamurti feels that “freedom lies beyond this conditioning, not within the field of consciousness with the content that makes up consciousness… [and stressed that] the responsibility that lies beyond conditioning is different from the responsibility of so-called freedom” (2006, p. 234). In the finding, Freedom to Inquire and Explore\textsuperscript{73}, one of the participants felt a great sense of responsibility teaching at the Oak Grove School and for being able to create an environment that’s free from fear and competition and one where the children can really discover who they are.

The formation of the processes involved in teachers’ thinking lies in the attraction that brought the teachers to the Krishnamurti schools in the first place. Krishnamurti naturally attracted many serious-minded people who wanted to confront their own conditioning. The first of Krishnamurti’s books that I read in 1988 (over 23 years ago) titled Mind without Measure had a significant impact for me. Krishnamurti’s work brought about some lasting changes in terms of helping me drop some conditioning. One example is the dropping of nationalistic feelings towards my country of origin. It must be made clear that the phenomenon of dropping of nationalistic feelings towards one’s country of origin does not constitute that there is no love towards the country. It did not happen overnight but over the years of observing Krishnamurti’s perception of how nationalism or nationalistic feelings blind people by participating in a war, allowed that particular conditioning to fade away. My own experience is that once a conditioning fades away through the process of inquiry, and if the condition is allowed to flower through the three stages of awareness, it does not come back as it is dissolved for good. It was such an

\textsuperscript{73} The findings are italicized to show emphasis
impact that directed my decision to come to OISE to pursue this doctoral degree. Therefore, I can relate to the experiences of the participants who were impacted by Krishnamurti’s work at a personal level.

Concluding Remarks

Research Sub-Question # 2: What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?

Category: Teachers’ Lives

This research sub-question focused on the events in a teacher’s life that influenced his/her decision to become a teacher. This sub-research question took the participants on a journey that explored their own educational experience and recalled why they chose their area of study, and to find out if this has any relevance to their natural ability. Natural ability refers to one’s innate natural talent like the natural talent of Mozart in music and Picasso’s natural talent in arts/painting. The research participants also reflected on their first job after their formal or tertiary education and when they first realized that they wanted to become teachers or the events in their lives that prompted them to pursue the teaching profession. The final discussion with the participants focused on whether or not Krishnamurti or his teaching was a catalyst in their decision to become teachers. In Rathnam (2008), I explored the events in my own life that triggered or influenced my decision to become a teacher. In this unpublished manuscript, I explored teachers’ early influences and the impact of the saints/sages in my decision to become a teacher. I also explored the impact of the different books and movies that may have influenced my decision to become a teacher.

In the theme, Educational Experience, the findings revolved around the research participants’ childhood educational experiences and their adult education. One of the research participants, Mary, grew up in Quaker communities and attended Quaker schools. The Quakers valued qualities like honesty, truth, integrity, simplicity, community, peace and respect for the individual as part of their fundamental values (Rudge, 2008). My own experience in my interactions with Mary during the interviews reflected her core values of integrity and simplicity.

74 The themes are italicized to show emphasis
Mary also reflected that her own childhood education, which gave her the foundation for embracing the progressive type of education, like the holistic schools.

Another research participant, Ecila, attended a school called the Orchard school in Indianapolis – a 50 acre property filled with many trees – and Ecila vividly recalled the sheer joy of going to school every day. It was that experiential learning in nature at the Orchard school that left a lasting impression on Ecila’s being, particularly with regards to her love for nature. Ecila reflected during the interview that her involvement with nature during her experience at the Orchard school must have brought her to the Oak Grove School.

Both Mary and Ecila reported that their childhood experience had a direct impact in their lives that brought them to the Oak Grove School; this experience also guided them towards the teaching profession. In her research on teachers, Carol Melnick interviewed teachers that revealed the influences of one’s own childhood experiences. One of the teachers, Anne Welles, revealed that she was guided by the belief that parents, students, and teachers need to work together and that she is “…extensively involved with the parents of her fifth and sixth grade students, because of her own in- and out-of-school experiences as a child” (Melnick, 1992, p. 86). Melnick’s research further revealed that “Anne’s elementary school teachers encouraged interests outside of school…[and recalled that] her eight-grade teacher knew that her mother was expecting a baby…[and] talking about her future brother or sister helped Anne feel closer to her teacher” (1992, p. 86). As a result of her childhood educational experience, Anne values and appreciates the relationship between students’ out-of-school and in-school lives and as a teacher, she forwards her personal touch to all her students and their respective families by visiting their homes and participating in community activities. The findings of my research further strengthen the notion that teachers’ early childhood educational experience does have an impact on their lives as teachers.

Two other prominent findings, Personal Experiences and Professional Experiences, revealed that the research participants’ experiences impacted the lives as teachers. Paul’s work with the developmentally disabled kids and the Laotian refugees gave him meaningful indicators of the qualities of a teacher within him. Similarly, teacher educators (Fieman-Nemser, 1979; Clandinin, 1966; and Garman, 1986) have acknowledged that the discussion of teachers’ past experiences can lead towards an increased understanding of their lives and professional growth.
Krishnamurti’s Influence is certainly an important finding from the theme, Motivation to Become a Teacher. Although it was evident that most of the participants were impacted by Krishnamurti’s charisma, it must be noted that Krishnamurti never encouraged anyone to follow him blindly and there was never a rule in any of Krishnamurti’s school that knowledge about his philosophy be a requirement before becoming a teacher there. This point was brought out by Mary, who reported that when she first came to the Oak Grove School, she realized that it was not a requirement to be interested in Krishnamurti in order to be a teacher there.

Concluding Remarks

Research Sub-Question #3: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that nourish wholeness within?

Category: Teachers’ Inner Lives

This research sub-question goes to the heart of one’s wholeness as it relates to teachers’ inner lives. This sub-research question also discusses the different aspects of teachers’ inner lives that may have led them towards wholeness. The phrase inner life can be used interchangeably with the word soul. A closer look at Parker Palmer’s notion of soul reveals that he uses the word soul to indicate that aspect of an individual that is whole or not fragmented (Palmer, 2004). The word soul can relate to different ways of being in different traditions (J.P. Miller, 2000). In Hinduism, the word soul is categorically divided into two aspects to differentiate between the different ways of being: one is called the Jiva and the other Atma or Self. The aspect of the soul called Jiva is used to describe the aspect of one’s being under the influence of karma. The word karma, as explained by Ramana Maharshi, was presented in Goodman (1992) where karma was classified as:

*Sanchita Karma* (the store of karmic debts accumulated from previous births); *Prarabdha Karma* (that part of one’s sanchita karma which must be worked out in the present life. Because the law of karma implies determinism in human activities, pararabdha is often translated as destiny); *Agami Karma* (New karma accumulated in the present lifetime which is carried forward into future lives). (p. 210)

In short, karma is the total sum of one’s past, present and future experiences. The word Jiva is also often interchangeably used with the word self (lower case s) as opposed to the word Self (upper case S). The word Self refers to the word Atma in Hinduism that points towards a
non-personal (not an experience of an individual) total awareness. In Godman (1992), Ramana Maharshi explains, the nature of Self in relations to awareness, stating that:

You are awareness. Awareness is another name for you. Since you are awareness there is no need to attain or cultivate it. All that you have to do is to give up being aware of other things that are of the not-Self. If one gives up being aware of them then pure awareness alone remains and that is the Self. (pp. 10-11)

Ramana Maharshi also explains the non-dual nature of the Self that reflects the nature of wholeness:

There is no duality. Your present knowledge is due to the ego and is only relative. Relative knowledge requires a subject and an object, whereas the awareness of the Self is absolute and requires no object...[and we simply need] to throw out all the age old samskaras (our past conditionings) which are inside us...[and] when all of them have been given up, the Self will shine alone. (Godman, 1992, pp. 11-13)

The samskaras or the innate conditioned tendencies here refer to the conditioned mind as explained by Krishnamurti. Like Ramana Maharshi, Krishnamurti uses the word intelligence to refer to the Self and explains that, “when thought is absolutely quiet, then there is a state, or a dimension, in which the immeasurable has its own movement... [and that] intelligence comes into being when the mind, the heart, and the body are really harmonious” (Krishnamurti, 1973, pp. 448-449). It is important to note that what Ramana Maharshi refers to as ‘when all of them have been given up’, is synonymous to Krishnamurti’s notion of the thought being completely quiet. Thus, Ramana Maharshi’s process of giving up the samskaras is the same as Krishnamurti’s process of the thought being completely quiet.

In the finding, Teachers Characteristics Contributing to Timeless Learning, the participants felt that living with joy and happiness, living a balanced life that leads to wholeness and communicating with love are some of the their characteristics that contribute towards timeless learning. These findings are well documented in J.P. Miller (2006) in the section on characteristics of timeless learning where concepts like holistic/integrative, embodied, connected, soulful, transformative, etc. were discussed.
In the finding, *Conditions for Timeless Learning*, the research participants shared the following: 1. Love for the teaching profession where there is genuine care among teachers, students and colleagues; 2. Leading a balanced life and re-fueling one’s energy with meditation; 3. Discovering one’s conditioning, which requires great sensitivity and that this sensitivity brings joy to a teacher.

1. The finding on having love in the hearts of teachers and for the teaching profession is supported by many educators such as Parker Palmer (1983, 1998, 2000, 2004); John Miller (1993, 1994, 2000, 2006, 2007); Chris Bache (2008) to name a few. Walsh (1999) writes about the love that is needed by asserting that:

> What we feel within ourselves we find reflected in our world. If we feel angry, we look out on a hostile world; if fearful, we find threats everywhere. But when love fills our minds, we see a world that yearns to love and be loved. (p. 71)

Further support for the need to have a loving characteristic is shared by Uhl (2011) when he stated that:

> To teach as if life matters is to realize that each person—each student—in a teacher’s care is following his own evolution as a loving being (no matter how convoluted his path may appear). Our task as teachers is to facilitate that path...[and] as teachers, our capacity to love our students unconditionally begins with cultivating the capacity to unconditionally accept and love ourselves. (pp. 38-39)

2. One research participant has been practicing Transcendental Meditation (TM) for many years and finds this re-fuels her energy level and truly balances her life. The findings for general benefits of meditation is well-documented by Murphy (1992) and Murphy & Donovan (1997) who summarize the benefits of meditation that include: lowered heart rate, reduced blood pressure, heightened perception, increased empathy, anxiety reduction, relief from addiction, alleviation of pain and improvements in memory and learning ability. Further findings of the physiological benefits of TM are well documented by Cloninger (2004) and it was observed that “enduring physiological changes have been observed in people identified as regular practitioners of TM. Dillbeck & Orme-Johnson (1987) and Alexander, Davies et al. (1990) reported that “regular practice with TM results is associated with lower
respiratory and heart rates, lower plasma lactate levels, and decreased fluctuation in spontaneous galvanic skin responses outside of meditation as compared to non-meditating controls at rest” (as cited in Cloninger, 2004, pp. 257-258).

3. In the groundbreaking book that connects non-dual philosophy and psychotherapy, Peter Fenner, an experienced spiritual teacher discusses a non-dual approach to therapy that focuses on awakening the unconditioned mind. Unconditioned mind is defined as “the ultimate goal of all human endeavors for one simple reason – when we rest in the unconditioned mind, there is nothing we need. We are complete” (Fenner, 2003, p. 29). In the first part of his book chapter, Fenner (2003) shares the general characteristics of a therapy inspired by non-duality as the healing power of the unconditioned mind, the capacity to go beyond suffering, a homing instinct toward openness and acceptance, the reconditioning of thought patterns and emotions, living in the here and now, embodying transcendence, and the union of love and wisdom.

In addressing the research participants’ notion of discovering one’s conditioning, Fenner’s (2003) identifies obstacles to experiencing the unconditioned mind as, “the attachment to suffering, the habitual need to do something, the need to know and to create meaning, and fearful projections about the unconditioned mind” (pp. 11-12). Krishnamurti’s notion of the conditioned mind was explained in Chapter 2 and we know that Krishnamurti felt that our past belief and all the psychological hurt have conditioned the mind and distort direct perception. Krishnamurti (1985) explains the fragmented nature of the brain and adds that:

The brain, as it is now, is that slave of knowledge and so is limited, finite, and fragmentary. When the brain frees itself from its conditioning, then the brain is infinite, then only there is no division between the mind and the brain. Education then is freedom from conditioning, from its vast accumulated knowledge as tradition. This does not deny the academic disciplines which have their own proper place in life. (pp. 22-23)
Concluding Remarks

Research Sub-Question # 4: What are aspects of teachers’ inner lives that connect to their vocation or calling?
Category: Teachers’ Vocation/Calling

The notion of teachers’ calling refers to the calling that teachers hear and also the processes that brought them to the teaching profession. This research sub-question explored the necessary conditions or the fertile ground that promotes the hearing of one’s calling. This hearing of one’s calling certainly does not require one’s auditory ability, but rather the intuition (or gut feeling) and this requires the mind to voluntarily set aside the ego and other conditioning (at least temporarily) to allow the ‘hearing’ of one’s calling or vocation.

One of the books that moved me with regards to this notion of vocation or calling is Parker Palmer’s Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation. Palmer eloquently clarifies that vocation is not an end goal that could be achieved but rather, a gift that needs to be received. And this gift, according to Palmer is the treasure of the true self that everyone already possesses. Palmer further adds that “vocation does not come from a voice ‘out there’ calling me to become something I am not. It comes from a voice ‘in here’ calling me to be the person I was born to be, to fulfill the original selfhood given me at birth by God” (Palmer, 2000, p.10). Palmer (2000) also shared a powerful analogy in which a calling is identified as the voice that one hears rather than an act of will. This simply means that a calling cannot be organized, analyzed and broken into smaller parts for clarification but rather, the voice that one hears effortlessly. It resembles Picasso’s notion that I don’t develop, I am. This was the same conviction I had when I decided to pursue this doctoral work by voluntarily giving up many economic securities because the calling was so intense and I had no choice but to honor that calling, it was experiencing the classic case of choiceless awareness – explained in Chapter 2 – a term defined by Krishnamurti as the state of mind where one does not strive to make a decision; instead, one strives to be in a state of awareness that directs one towards the truth or birthright of that individual.

In the finding, Recognizing/Discovering One’s Calling/Vocation, the research participants’ views resembled Palmer’s view of the voice that one hears in the search for one’s calling. Mary mentioned that after discovering Early Childhood Education, her inner voice echoed that she would never leave this playground. The word playground indicates that kind of
joy children experience when they are there and similarly Mary indicated the joy that filled her soul when she discovered the inner joy while working with very young children. Ecila never knew teaching was her calling until she stepped into the classroom and clearly distinguished the difference between doing a work out of will versus engaging in a work that one is called to do.

In the finding, *Factors Preventing the Hearing of One’s Calling*, the research participants shared that choosing an unsuitable tertiary educational area surely prevents one from hearing one’s calling. Mary and Ecila also shared their work experiences before embarking upon the teaching profession that actually prevented them from hearing the voice of calling. Another research participant lamented that the goal or success or monetary-driven society and the acceptance of a meaningless job also prevents one from hearing this calling. In his book titled *On Right Livelihood*, Krishnamurti asks the following question in relation to choosing the right means of livelihood:

Is it not necessary for each one to know for himself what is the right means of livelihood?... [and then asserts that] if we are avaricious, envious, seeking power, then our means of livelihood will correspond to our inward demands and so produce a world of competition, ruthlessness, oppression, ultimately ending in war. (Krishnamurti, 1992, p.1)

Krishnamurti gives examples of the wrong means of livelihood of someone who works in manufacturing weapons and politicians who “either for the benefit of his nation or of himself or of an ideology, is occupied in ruling and exploiting others, is surely employing wrong means of livelihood, which leads to war, to the misery and sorrow of man” (p. 2). The research participants’ comment on the monetary driven society that may play a role in driving people away from their calling was also echoed by Krishnamurti when he mentioned that:

the pressure of the world is strong—the world being your parents, your grandparents, the society around you…they want you to fit into the established pattern, so they educate you to conform…[and that] the whole structure of society is based on acquisitiveness, on envy, on ruthless self-assertion, on the aggressive activity. (1992, p. 23)

The core of this research question reveals that the process of finding one’s vocation is crucial in connecting to his or her inner voice, which is connected to one’s inner life. When one
embarks into a wrong profession or on an unsuitable livelihood occupation, it seems to be preventing them from finding their vocation; in other words, the wrong occupation does not provide the fertile ground for the mind to hear the calling. The following work provides some direction for a teacher to explore if their calling is indeed teaching. In The Element, Ken Robinson (2009) points towards a situation called the Element, where natural talent meets personal passion. Robinson’s notion of Element can be regarded as an application of the process of calling, where natural talent and personal passion coincide and make a person feel authentic and inspired and able to perform at peak levels.

Gandhi’s My Experiments with Truth demonstrates his struggles in understanding the inner turmoil that leads to listen to the still voice within; this resembles Palmer’s notion of the voice that one hears. In illustrating the importance of listening to that voice within, Gandhi states that “there are moments in your life when you must act, even though you cannot carry your best friends with you. The ‘still small voice’ within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty” (Gandhi, 1997, p.62).

In The Soul’s Code, James Hillman discusses calling, fate, character and that innate image that “make up the ‘acorn theory’ which holds that each person bears a uniqueness that asks to be lived and that is already present before it can be lived” (Hillman, 1996, p. 6). Hillman also suggests the existence of a guidance or Daimon, whose single purpose was to guide the soul for the purpose it was made for. There is also evidence that suggests that the validity and authenticity of the ‘voice’ that was never compromised even if it brings death. Socrates, for example, had the opportunity to escape from the prison, and that may have saved his life; but that ‘voice’ or that guardian called Daimon advised otherwise, and that eventually killed him. Hillman (1996) captures the integrity behind this ‘voice’ by explaining that “this helps to explain why Socrates’ Daimon told him not to escape imprisonment and execution… [and that] his death belonged to the integrity of his image, to his innate form” (p. 203).

In Krishnamurti’s On Right Livelihood, he brings awareness to whether the jobs that we undertake lead towards the right livelihood. The implication of this research question might suggest the importance of teachers finding out if teaching is indeed their calling. The findings of this research question have the potential to help both the teachers who are planning to pursue the teaching profession and existing teachers to inquire whether or not teaching is their calling. It’s
not important whether or not they find their vocation, but it’s important that the inquiry has begun because the beginning of the inquiry itself is an indication that the teacher is in the process of finding the path towards wholeness. As Krishnamurti often says, ‘The first step is the last step’.

**Concluding Remarks**

**Research Sub-Question # 5: What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these approaches influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?**

**Category: Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches**

The word contemplate comes from the Latin word *templum* or simply temple which literally means to create an open space that allows us to look or ponder. J.P. Miller (1994) in his text *The Contemplative Practitioner* views contemplation as a non-dualistic experience and adds that contemplation “is the state of consciousness where we are deeply attentive and often experience a sense of awe and wonder” (p. 4). Krishnamurti views meditation and contemplation in a similar manner, and feels that meditation and contemplation are the mechanics of understanding the wholeness of life, where the conflict of duality has ceased. Krishnamurti’s view on meditation does not imply following a particular method but rather a state of mind that can observe with total attention. Krishnamurti clearly differentiated between attention and concentration when he explains that:

> To concentrate implies bringing all your energy to focus on a certain point; but thought wanders away and so you have a perpetual battle between the desire to concentrate, to give all your energy to look at a page, and the mind which is wandering, and which you try to control. Whereas attention has no control, no concentration and [complete attention] means giving all your energy, your nerves, the capacity, the energy of the brain, your heart, everything to attending. (Krishnamurti, 1984, p.28)

Krishnamurti (1967) also refers to the wholeness of attention when he mentioned that “attention is not fragmentation, it is a total thing… [whereas] concentration is exclusion…it is an effort: excluding, building a wall around yourself. But attention has no wall, and such is meditation” (1967, 5th Public Talk, paragraph, 17).
In the finding, *Connection between Inner Life and Contemplative Approaches*, the participants’ approaches to contemplation – like engaging in transcendent meditation, walking in nature, practicing yoga and observing one’s conditioning – have connected them to their inner lives. Ecila experienced the timeless state while walking in nature and observed that thinking is temporarily suspended during these times. Some examples of individuals who, through their writing have shared how the practice contemplation or meditation have impacted their inner lives are: Bache (2008), Kabat-Zinn(2005), J.P. Miller (1994 ), Palmer (1983), Siegal (2011), Crowell (2002) in *The Living Classroom*, *Coming to Our Senses*, *The Contemplative Practitioner*, *Mindsight* and *The Spiritual Journey of a Taoist Educator* respectively. These authors have demonstrated that through their respective contemplative approaches, they were able to connect with their inner lives and have contributed enormously to their respective field of research and to the education of others.

In the finding, *Positive Attributes of Contemplative Approaches on Pedagogy*, the participants felt that their respective contemplative approaches helped them to be in the moment with their students. Mary’s TM practice refuels her energy level, and this results in calmness that helps her not to take any issues personally. Ecila’s notion of observing her conditioning as a contemplative approach helps her to connect better with her students. Paul’s intent of creating a powerful bond with his students shows his deep interest in understanding his own conditioning by staying with *what is*.

**Concluding Remarks**

Research Sub-Question # 6: What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

**Category: Teachers’ Pedagogy / Curriculum Design**

This research sub-question explores the thinking or the pedagogical process of the research participants in relation to integrating Krishnamurti’s philosophy in the classroom. There is a difference between explicitly mentioning Krishnamurti’s philosophy in the classroom versus the implicit way that teachers’ impart Krishnamurti’s philosophy. An example of explicitly teaching Krishnamurti’s philosophy as a course can be found at the Brockwood Park School,
England where a course titled *The Krishnamurti Class* was started in September 2002. Initially, this course was offered only on a voluntary basis, but eventually became a compulsory class. Taylor (2005) clearly explains this process and shares that the intention or aim of designing *The Krishnamurti Class*, “was to offer students in the School some direct and sustained exposure to Krishnamurti’s teachings and the provocative questions and challenging insights contained in them” (p. 61). In terms of format, the class was offered for 45 minutes a week and consisted of sharing some texts or video clips that would be occasionally paused to allow for discussion with students. The topic was always selected with the teenage students in mind, and occasionally, the students would choose the topic of discussion themselves.

This sub-research question explored some pedagogical approaches and curriculum designs based on Krishnamurti’s philosophy and some participants shared the various ways in which these were actually applied in their classroom. In the finding, *The Different themes of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy*, the participants shared that Krishnamurti’s themes of *conditioned mind, relationship with other and nature* and the *mirror of relationship* served as guidance in their pedagogy and curriculum design.

In the finding, *Mary – Awareness of Multi-culturism to Expose Conditioning*, we can see how deeply *Mary* was engaged in creating awareness using multicultural celebrations. Thus, some of Mary’s curricula were designed to celebrate the festivals with deeper meanings. For example, the *Dia De Los Muertos* (the Day of the Dead), a celebrated event in South and Central American cultures, was presented as a celebration which is similar to Halloween. Therefore, the reason for this shift (i.e. observing the *Dia De Los Muertos* rather than Halloween) was to allow the very young students to see how society is conditioning children and their families with the commercially-driven festivals such as Halloween. Thus, Mary uses Krishnamurti’s notion of conditioning to design some of her pedagogical and curricular adaptations.

In the finding, *Ecila – Building Relationship with Others and Nature*, Ecila takes her students to nature for walks at least twice a week so that they could mingle directly with nature. She had designed some of her curriculum by integrating the study of the Chumash Indians, who were the early dwellers of the Ojai Valley, where the Oak Grove School is located. The history of the Chumash Indians can be found in Harrington (1981) and Timbrook (2007). Krishnamurti felt deeply about the importance and aesthetics of nature and its capacity to have an impact on
the learning process. Most of Krishnamurti’s schools or Foundations are located either in a valley or near the woods, and Krishnamurti’s choice of location for the Rishi Valley School revolved around a group of banyan trees (the banyan trees still exist near the Rishi Valley School today).

Paul goes to the heart of Krishnamurti’s theme of awareness to cultivate group awareness among students. Part of the group awareness includes creating a suitable atmosphere in the classroom with respect for the energy or presence everyone brings. This presence also includes: The kind of authority a teacher brings to the classroom; the quality of listening on the part of a teacher; freedom for the students to negotiate and make choices; freedom for the students to speak instead of feeling helpless in the class; and the overall mood of the teacher in the classroom.

In the theme, *Conveying the Timeless is Implicit*, it was clear that the research participants felt that the sharing of timeless state like love, goodness, etc., can only be done implicitly and Krishnamurti (1953) mentioned that the cultivation and the sharing of freedom and intelligence are possible, if done in an implicit way. Similarly, Macdonald (1995/1977) mentions that:

*Curriculum, it seems to me, is the study of what should constitute a world for learning and how to go about making this world. As such it implies, in microcosm, the very questions that seem to be of foremost concern to all of humanity. Such questions as what is the good society, what is a good life, and what is a good person, are implicit in the curriculum.* (p. 137)

In the finding, *Nature as an Implicit Nurturer*, the participants shared that matters relating to creating awareness are generally implicit in nature, and Ecila shared that she only intentionally brings the students to nature and in return, they are implicitly nurtured by nature.

In the theme, *Reflection and Application of Krishnamurti’s Educational Intent/Goals as Pedagogy and Curriculum Design*, the research participants shared their thought processes on how they organize their pedagogy and curriculum design based on the document titled *The Intent of the Oak Grove School* that was originally written by Krishnamurti. In focusing on the teachers’ awareness with respect to Krishnamurti’s Intent, the findings shared reflected teachers’ awareness.
The following findings reveal some of the qualities that participants consider to be necessary in order to design their pedagogy and curriculum:

a) Teachers need to have respect for each child, cultivated through observation, profound listening and thoughtful responses.

b) Teachers are encouraged to leave psychological authority out from their relationship with students.

c) Teachers must value the process of learning more than knowledge acquisition.

d) Teachers need to get students to ponder, inquire, reflect and ask questions.

f) Teachers need to embody the flame of inquiry and question, in the spirit of learning.

Main Research Question: What is the impact of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy on Teachers’ Wholeness?

The main research question relating to the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on teachers’ wholeness can be seen in the findings. In Teachers’ Thinking, Krishnamurti certainly had an early impact on the lives of the participants in choosing to teach in a Krishnamurti school. In Teachers’ Lives, the participants seem to have gone through a simple, but remarkable early childhood education and although teaching may not have been their vocation early in their lives, their unique exploration towards wholeness connected with Krishnamurti’s philosophy. In Teachers’ Inner Lives, the findings: When Relationship Acts as Mirror, Teachers Characteristics Contributing to Timeless Learning, Conditions for Timeless Learning and Importance of Staying with What Is have direct relevance to Krishnamurti’s philosophy.

In Teachers’ Vocation/Calling, every participant acknowledges that teaching is their calling and this certainly has direct implications on their wholeness as a teacher and a human being.

In Teachers’ Contemplative Practices/Approaches, every participant’s unique way of approaching contemplation marks a deviation from Krishnamurti’s philosophy. Although Krishnamurti was always against organized approaches towards contemplation, this did not prevent the participants from being free to practice their choice of contemplative practice(s). Nevertheless, Ecila and Paul did not follow a systematic approach towards contemplation and Mary and Neville’s contemplative approaches to yoga and meditation are certainly powerful and
have proven to promote wholeness. These contemplative approaches also seem to play an important role in calming the mind along with the three stages of awareness, explained later in this Chapter.

In *Teachers’ Pedagogy/Curriculum Design*, the participants seem to be using some of Krishnamurti’s philosophical themes such as the conditioned mind, relationship with others and nature as well as the mirror of relationship in shaping their pedagogy and curriculum design. Nevertheless, the participants’ reflection on how they use Krishnamurti’s Educational Intent was not very clear. The findings revealed from this research question, clearly reflects the need to systematically use Krishnamurti’s philosophy in their pedagogy and curriculum design. All participants agreed that there was a need to develop a teacher development program based on Krishnamurti’s philosophy. Although this is done on a small scale at the Oak Grove School and the Rishi Valley School (as explained in the latter part of this Chapter), there needs to be greater collaboration and group work in order to make such a Teacher Development Program a reality.

The findings from this research show that Krishnamurti’s philosophy certainly had an impact on the participants’ wholeness. Krishnamurti was never interested in imposing on the teachers in the schools he created to think in a narrow groove. Rather, he challenged them to arrive at wholeness or truth by themselves and to put aside all philosophy, including his own.

**Implications**

The implications of this research are multi-faceted. The implications for research question # 1 will be discussed to show that it is important for teachers to ponder on why they are interested in or keen on teaching in the schools where they are currently teaching.

**Implications for Teachers’ Thinking**

The findings revealed in the themes that emerged from the first category of Teachers’ Thinking have implications for why teachers are interested in teaching at a particular school. This could open up further research on why teachers may be interested in a public school or an alternative school (like Montessori, Waldorf and many other holistic or alternative schools). An understanding of why teachers choose to teach in a particular school may reveal the deeper thinking of the teacher; this process will benefit the teachers themselves, and allow them to begin to explore their wholeness. Research on teachers’ thinking that focuses on the motivation to
become a teacher (Sumison, 2000), student teachers’ reasons for entering the teaching profession (Hayes, 1990; Stiegelbauer, 1992) and the influence of student teachers’ characteristics and their reasons for entering a teacher education program (Marso & Pigge, 1986) are all very useful in mapping out teachers’ thinking. The findings from this research contribute further to the literature, by adding a more subtle element that brought teachers to the schools where they are teaching, like the deeper reason behind their choice of a school and the deeper reflection after choosing a particular educational system.

A Critique of Krishnamurti’s Perception on Belonging to a Religion

Through my experience of trying to understand the various aspects of Krishnamurti’s philosophy for the past twenty over years, his perception on the need to reject all organized religions, was what troubled me the most. I would like to clarify my use of the word critique. I am using the word critique not to imply criticism but a critical assessment and this implies an effort to see a thing clearly and truly, in order to judge it fairly. Krishnamurti was quite insistent on the idea that the acceptance of a religious belief (or belonging to a religion) prevents people from understanding the self and thus prevents self-awareness from flowering. Krishnamurti felt that God, or the Supreme, or the Intelligence cannot be inquired into, because it’s the unknown; and the human mind, which is so conditioned or the known, cannot possibly inquiry into something as immense as the Intelligence or God. In other words, Krishnamurti is suggesting that the mind, which only knows the known, cannot possibly inquire into something unknown, such as God, or Supreme or the Intelligence. He shares further that our desire to live a materialistic life overshadows the desire to inquire into the unknown, because “it is our own desire to be more secure, more permanent, more established, more happy, to escape from turmoil, from pain, confusion” (Krishnamurti, 1954, p. 255).

Krishnamurti was adamant that the unknown or God or Intelligence comes to us uninvited. In other words, he is suggesting that we cannot go after, or seek God. It is only after understanding and voluntarily letting go of our conditioning that God comes to us. Krishnamurti shares that “when the mind is silent, when it is no longer projecting itself into the future, wishing for something; when the mind is really quiet, profoundly peaceful, the unknown comes into being” (1954, p. 257) and insisted that:
You cannot invite an unknown guest. You can only invite one you know. But you do not know the unknown, God, reality, or what you will. It must come. It can come only when the field is right, when the soil is tilled, but if you till in order for it to come, then you will not have it. (p. 257)

We can see that Krishnamurti seriously felt that one cannot, using the faculty of thinking, inquire into God and insisted that he is speaking from his direct experience. But most people rely on religion or their respective saviors in order to seek God. This was my dilemma during the years of reading Krishnamurti’s work because on the one hand, I was following Hinduism and on the other hand, I felt Krishnamurti’s influence was acting as an authority. Upon further contemplation on this matter, it was through Ramana Maharshi that I began to understand Krishnamurti’s absolute stance on Jnana or the knowledge of the Self. Ramana Maharshi utilized both the approaches of Bhakti (path of devotion) and Jnana (knowledge of the Self) to help people understand the journey towards Self-realization or wholeness. It was through Ramana Maharshi that I learnt that Krishnamurti’s approach in finding the Self was the most difficult path because it requires one to have relinquished their ego completely (this is by means of unconditioning the mind totally, from the view of Krishnamurti) in order to find God. It is also the most difficult path, because it is a kind of worship without form (like the form of Ganapati, Shiva, etc.). Ramana Maharshi shared in Godman (1992) that:

Worshipping the formless reality by unthought thought is the best kind of worship. But when one is not fit for such formless worship of God, worship of form alone is suitable. Formless worship is possible only for people who are devoid of the ego-form. Know that all the worship done by people who possess the ego-form is only worship of form. (pp. 85-86)

I was born into a Hindu family and at a very young age, the notion of worshipping many gods and goddesses in Hinduism was a way of life. The Hindus believe that the Atma or the Self is the manifestation of Brahman, the impersonal absolute of Hinduism. In contrast, Iswara is the supreme personal God of Hinduism. The Self, according to Ramana Maharshi, who is considered to be a Jnani (one who has realized the Self) “is not an experience of individuality but a non-personal, all inclusive awareness” (Godman, 1992, p. 8). Godman further added that, “the Self is ever-present...[and that] there is no duality. Your present knowledge is due to the ego and is
only relative. Relative knowledge requires a subject and an object, whereas the awareness of the Self is absolute and requires no object” (1992, p.11).

It is from my own experience as a Hindu that the common Hindu practice of worshiping a personal God like Iswara, Ganapati\(^\text{75}\), Murugan\(^\text{76}\) and other deities such as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva has been a way towards understanding God. When Ramana Maharshi was asked about the status of the deities (Iswara, Ganapati, etc.) relative to the Self, his reply baffled me the first time I read it. His reply in Godman (1992) was the following:

Siva, Ganapati and other deities like Brahma, exist from a human standpoint; that is to say, if you consider your personal self\(^\text{77}\) as real, then they also exist. Just as a government has its high executive officers to carry on the government, so has the creator. But from the standpoint of the Self all these gods are illusory and must themselves merge into the one reality. (p. 199)

Ramana Maharshi’s explanation that the deities with a form only exist as long as our ego exists, gave me an insight into what Krishnamurti was always trying to say about the notion that our idea of God, which is derived through our thinking cannot possibly be that Supreme or God. Although Krishnamurti insisted that one’s religion will not lead him/her towards self realization or towards the Self, he did not provide the required explanation like the one given by Ramana Maharshi above. It is for this reason too, that I felt that Krishnamurti’s absolute stance in rejecting all organized religions by only relying on Jnana and formless worship may have caused despair in many people who may have approached him, looking for a way to understand their Self. The Flower Model is relevant here, in order to realize that the understanding of the first and second stages of awareness is important before embarking on the third stage of awareness. The first and second stages of awareness are relevant to those still attached to their religious practice (or belonging to a religion) and it is in the third stage of awareness that one needs to even

\(^{75}\) Ganapati is son of Shiva and revered as the remover of obstacles. Also known as Ganesha.

\(^{76}\) Murugan is the younger brother of Ganapati and revered as the purifier of the soul.

\(^{77}\) This self is the ego or the human conditioning governed by one’s karma.
transcend their form of worship (in the case of Hinduism) in order to experience the non-dual state of the observer is the observed.

Ramana Maharshi on the other hand utilized both Bhakti and Jnana in order to help people discover their Self. Ramana Maharshi understood very well that their attachment towards their religion (form of worship in the case of Hinduism) needs to be relinquished or transcended eventually, in order to understand the Self and consequently advised people who came from all over the world towards the path of Bhakti and Jnana. My critique of Krishnamurti’s perception on religion is only applicable towards the Hindu religion, the religion that I am familiar with regards to its application. Extrapolating this critique using another religion may be valid, however I have no practical knowledge, in order to do so.

Limitations

Four participants volunteered to take part and contribute to this research. There are about eight official Krishnamurti schools around the world under the guidance of three of his foundations (Krishnamurti Foundation America, Krishnamurti Foundation India and Krishnamurti Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom). The findings of qualitative research are not generally used to make inferences about any population and cannot be used to make generalizations. As such, this qualitative research with four research participants also falls short in a similar way.

Every Krishnamurti school is unique as no two Krishnamurti schools operate within a fixed system, curriculum or pedagogy. This uniqueness follows Krishnamurti’s reluctance to follow a systematic way of governance. If teachers from every Krishnamurti school were chosen for this research, then one could have mapped out the uniqueness of each school. As such, this research that focused on four teachers of the Oak Grove School is limited in its scope to map out the uniqueness of every Krishnamurti’s school.

Another limitation of this study is that the research participants are all from North America. It would have been interesting to have chosen teachers from Asia and North America to find out if there is any impact based on the geographical location. Future research on Krishnamurti’s philosophy could address these two limitations in order to be able to make broader implications on the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy.
Future Research and Insight

As mentioned in the limitations above, future and further research should involve more Krishnamurti’s schools. More teachers from different geographical locations should also be chosen to study the impact left behind by Krishnamurti and his teachings.

The one thing truly lacking for the Krishnamurti schools is a Teacher Development Program. Considering that the Rishi Valley School in India is among the oldest holistic schools in the world, it is surprising that there are no systematic approaches in designing a curriculum and pedagogy for teachers in the Krishnamurti schools. A contrasting example is the existing curriculum and pedagogical training for teachers in the Montessori and Waldorf schools founded by Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner respectively.

There are some efforts in the Rishi Valley School through a program called The Rishi Valley Institute for Teacher Education, where the goals are to provide: In-house teacher development programs; Workshops for Outstation Teachers; School Support Programs; Development of mini-courses for teachers; and Curriculum development for teachers. There is also a yearly workshop/seminar conducted in the Oak Grove School for those interested in applying Krishnamurti’s philosophy in their classrooms. It is a joint program with the Oak Grove School and the University of California, Santa Barbara’s Gevirtz Graduate School of Education. Although these two programs are unique and useful, I am of the opinion that all the Krishnamurti schools could get together to design and develop a one-year Teacher Development Program that focuses on using Krishnamurti’s philosophy and his educational intent.

All the research participants in this study felt that such a Teacher Development Program would accelerate their understanding of Krishnamurti’s philosophy, help them to develop their curriculum and engage them deeper into the importance of teaching from their wholeness. My own research categories of Teachers’ Thinking, Teachers’ Lives, Teachers’ Inner Lives, Teachers’ Contemplative Approaches, Teachers’ Calling and Teachers’ Pedagogy and Curriculum Design can be used as a building block in developing a Teacher Development Program based on Krishnamurti’s philosophy.

Another potential future research is developing the Flower Model as an experiential metaphor to assist teachers become aware of the three stages of awareness, as mentioned by
Krishnamurti. The Flower Model will guide teachers’ to be aware of their conditioning from the context of their thinking, lives, inner lives, contemplative approaches, calling and pedagogy/curriculum design. Can teachers possibly get into the flow state as suggested by Csikszentmihalyi (1991) or the state where the Observer is the Observed as illustrated by Krishnamurti (1991b), in order to experience wholeness?

An original insight from this research is the formation of six categories (teachers’ thinking, teachers’ lives, teachers’ inner lives, teachers’ vocation, teachers’ contemplative approaches and teachers’ pedagogy/curriculum design). The findings reveal the terrain of consciousness of the participants in relation to their wholeness. The other original insight from this research is the design of the experiential metaphor – The Flower Model – that can be used to guide teachers to become aware of their conditioning. Both insights can be used as a foundation to develop a Teacher Development Program capable of helping teachers to explore and observe their conditioning. Krishnamurti’s notion of ‘Freedom from the Known’ can also be called ‘Freedom from Conditioning’ as this would more aptly reflect his aim of freeing individuals from their bondage of conditioning. Krishnamurti never encouraged a systematic development of his philosophy and this resulted in the separate (not unified) formation of his educational philosophy in The Rishi Valley School and The Oak Grove School.

This systematic study of Krishnamurti’s educational philosophy that resulted in approaches that could encourage teachers to observe their conditioning in order to allow the flowering process to make them whole are the insights that this research brings to the field of Holistic Education.

**Concluding Remarks**

Wholeness refers to the harmony between the body, mind and spirit. When the body, mind and spirit are in harmony, we can live to our fullest potential. If the body is not healthy, the mind and spirit cannot reach full potential; and this is true if any one of the three aspects of the body is not well. Therefore, the importance of living a balanced life or living holistically has direct implications for our wholeness. Thus, Parker Palmer’s *Hidden Wholeness*, Deepak Chopra’s *Shadow Effect* and Krishnamurti’s *Awareness*, all point towards the harmony between the body, mind and spirit which is an important goal of holistic education.
Krishnamurti had been pointing towards this wholeness throughout his life. He obviously was not pointing directly towards the timeless qualities such as love, patience, compassion, etc., but towards the shadow or the conditioned mind. Krishnamurti felt that the timeless qualities (or what he calls the unknown) cannot be inquired directly, but the very inquiry into the fragmentation of our mind or the conditionings such as our sorrow, jealousy, anger, loneliness, etc., will automatically reveal the timeless or the unknown to us.

This empirical research study that investigated the wholeness of teachers in a Krishnamurti school has direct implications for teachers on their journey towards wholeness. Teachers’ wholeness matters if we are interested in creating the conditions that would allow the flowering of students’ wholeness. In other words, Whole Teacher Education is a needed, and is undoubtedly an important element in realizing Whole Child Education. If the teachers are fragmented and are troubled in the body, mind and spirit, how can they transform their students? By transform, I mean helping students to see their own conditioning. If one is fragmented, then one can perhaps follow the curriculum orientation of transmission and transaction but surely cannot engage in the transformational orientation as articulated in the work of Miller & Seller (1985). A teacher who is observing wholeness within needs to have a healthy body, mind and spirit, and must be able to engage in all three orientations: transmission, transaction and most importantly, transformation. In other words, a teacher who is flowering in wholeness, no matter what subject he or she is teaching, should strive to impact his/her students’ lives through the use of curriculum and pedagogy that results in further inquiry on the subject. Teachers need to give deeper meaning to the subjects they are teaching and this can only happen if they themselves are passionate about the subject matter. Therefore, to transform the world at large, we need to transform ourselves first. Without the inner transformation, the outer action becomes perverted, becomes an escape, and becomes selfish. With the inner transformation involving the integration of the body, mind and spirit that flowers in wholeness, one’s action becomes integrated, holistic and sacred. As such, the journey of this research has been very meaningful for the well being and health of my body, mind and spirit. Perhaps it was my own fragmentation that led me towards this research on wholeness, and in essence, this research chose me and not the other way around. My hope is that Krishnamurti’s philosophy will find its way into the discourse of Teacher Development and Whole Teacher Education.
As a concluding remark, I would like to end this thesis with a quote from Krishnamurti (1991a) that points towards a way of living in the present moment and the possibilities for us to tap into that timeless state or the flow state or the third stage of awareness, where the observer is the observed. He stated that:

We are told by the biologists that it has taken millions of years for the brain to develop to its present stage and that it will take millions of years to develop further. Now, the religious mind does not depend on time for its development. What I want to convey is that when the brain, which must function in its responses to the outward existence, becomes quiet inwardly, then there is no longer the machinery of accumulating experience and knowledge. Therefore, inwardly it is completely quiet, but fully alive, and then it can jump the million years. So, for the religious mind, there is no time. Time exists only in that state of a continuity moving to a further continuity and achievement. When the religious mind has destroyed the authority of the past, the traditions, the values imposed upon it, then it is capable of being without time. Then it is completely developed. Because, after all, when you have denied time, you have denied all development through time and space. Please, this is not an idea, it is not a thing to be played with. If you have gone through it, you know that it is, you are in that state, but if you have not gone through it, then you cannot just pick up these as ideas and play with them…[and] what makes a person religious is the total destruction of the known. (pp.115-116)
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Appendix A

Informational Letter and Consent Form – For Teachers

Dear Participant,

The following information is provided for you to request your formal permission to participate in my doctoral thesis research titled, *A study on Teachers’ Spirituality: The impact of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy on Teachers’ Inner Life*. Please take note that the word ‘teachers’ and ‘participants’ mean the same thing and the words will be used interchangeably. This informational letter and Consent form is organized in the following manner:

1. The rights of participants

2. The purpose/focus of study

3. Procedures to be used in data collection

4. Protecting the confidentiality of participants

5. Risks and potentials benefits to participants and the Oak Grove School

6. Contact information

7. Signature of participants.

1. The rights of participants

   Participation in this research is voluntary and at any time during the process, if you intend to withdraw, you may do so without any fear.

2. The purpose/focus of study

   The focus of this research is to explore the impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on teachers’ spirituality and to further investigate how their spirituality affects or informs their pedagogy and curriculum design. Pedagogy can be defined as any ways used to teach or generally refers to strategies and/or styles of instruction.

3. Procedures to be used in data collection

   I will be using the methods of interviewing, classroom observation and document collection as the means to collect my data. You will be interviewed three times, 1.5 hours each
interview, totaling of 4.5 hours. The interview sessions will be audio and video recorded. The video recording technique will be utilized as a back-up recording mechanism, in the event that the audio recording produces poor quality of sound.

At least one classroom observation is needed, where I will be a silent observer. The purpose of this observation is to identify what aspects of Krishnamurti’s philosophy is used as a way of teaching or in the way the curriculum is designed. Therefore, the observation will focus only on teachers and not on the students. In addition to classroom observation, I would like to request if you could share relevant curriculum design, teaching plans, archive materials (audio, video, cd-rom, paper) and any other documents that will help to identify the aspects of Krishnamurti’s philosophy applied to aid in your pedagogy and curriculum design. If you like, you could keep a journal to write how you use Krishnamurti’s work to guide in your pedagogy and curriculum design. This journal writing is strictly voluntary and you can choose not to write a journal entry for this research.

4. Protecting the confidentiality of participants

Your name or identity will not be revealed and a pseudonym will be used. Your pseudonym will only be known be known to me as the principal researcher. After my doctoral studies, I intend to use the findings of this research to write scholarly papers on teachers’ spirituality or inner life. Whether the findings of this research are used for this doctoral research or for related journal papers or presentations, your confidentiality will be protected through the use of pseudonyms at all times. Please take not that I will not be able to provide confidentiality beyond my means. But I can assure you that anyone reading my research, who does not know you, will not be able to identify you in any way.

5. Risks and Benefits of study

Your involvement in this study will not pose any risk or discomfort to you but has the potential of benefiting you in terms of your own exploration of your spirituality and probing deeper into the use of Krishnamurti’s work in your classrooms. Your participation in this research will also help the academic community to better appreciate Krishnamurti’s contribution towards educating the whole person. Your play an important and integral role in this study.

6. Handling of research data

The data collected from the interviews, observation and document collection will be stored into a disk. The original copy will be kept safely in my apartment or the duration of the study. Three years after the completion of my study, all raw data will be destroyed. During the stage of data analysis, I may request you to verify some information to ensure no error or misrepresentation has taken place.

7. Contact information
I am furnishing the contact information of myself, my research supervisor and the University of Toronto Ethics Review Office. Please feel assured that this research will be conducted in a way that will make you feel very comfortable.

a) Principal Researcher

Name: Anbananthan Rathnam (Anba)
Address: 30 Charles St. West, #1521, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1R5, Canada
E-mail: anbananthan.rathnam@gmail.com
Phone: 416-358-0218

b) Research Supervisor

Name: Dr. John P. Miller
Address: Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
152 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6, Canada
E-Mail: jmiller@oise.utoronto.ca
Phone: 416-978-0221

c) University of Toronto Ethics Review Office

Address: 12 Queen’s park Crescent West, McMurrich Building, 2nd Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1S8, Canada
E-Mail: ethics.reviews@utoronto.ca
Phone: 416-946-3273

8. Signature of participants

Please sign your consent with full understanding of the nature and purpose of this research. A copy of this consent will be mailed or given to you in person to keep.

_________________________________                                                 __________________
Name of Participant                                                              Date

_________________________________                                                __________________
Participant’s E-Mail address                                                    Participant’s Signature
Appendix B

Informational Letter and Consent Form – Principal of the Oak Grove School

Dear Meredy Benson Rice,

I am Anbananthan Rathnam, a fourth year doctoral student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning.

First of all, I would like to thank you for assisting me since May, 2009 that resulted in the selection of 4 teachers from the Oak Grove School (OGS) in October, 2009. Although you have given me your permission to conduct this research at the OGS via e-mail and a letter to assist me during the visa interview on the 27th August, 2009, I would still like to get your formal consent as per the requirement from the University of Toronto Research Ethics Board. My research is titled, A study on Teachers’ Spirituality: The impact of Krishnamurti’s Philosophy on Teachers’ Inner Life. Please take note that the word ‘teachers’ and ‘participants’ mean the same thing and the words will be used interchangeably. This informational letter and Consent form is organized in the following manner:

1. Research Proposal

2. Personal Information

3. Thesis Advisor

4. Participant selection process

5. Participants’ Consent

6. Contact Information

7. Signature of Principal
1. Research Proposal

The focus of this empirical research revolves around exploring the spirituality of teachers who are teaching in a Krishnamurti’s school, which is considered a type of holistic school (an alternative type of school as opposed to the public school system). My intention in investigating the inner lives of teacher is to fill the gap in the literature of teachers’ spirituality that revolves around their inner lives, which is situated within the literature on holistic curriculum and the literature on teachers’ lives. The implication of this study will be to inform, augment, and add to present understanding of what it means to empirically explore teachers’ spirituality.

The focus of my research will be on the spirituality of teachers in a Krishnamurti school and how their spirituality affects or informs their pedagogy.

*My main research question is:*

What is the influence of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on teachers’ spirituality?

*Sub-questions include:*

7. What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
8. What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
9. What are some of the contemplative practices that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
10. How do teachers reflect and apply Krishnamurti’s educational goals in their own teaching (or pedagogy)?
11. What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

This qualitative inquiry will be based on the teacher participants’ description of their spirituality using observations, interviews and documents. 4 teachers have been identified with your help and assistance from Oak Grove School. Choosing the right teachers who are willing to
share their inner lives will be crucial for this research and I look forward to further discussing with you, the various strategies which will facilitate this endeavor.

2. Personal Information

Krishnamurti’s philosophy has deeply inspired the exploration of my own spirituality for the past 20 years and has helped me to look at my own conditioning in an inquiring mode. This direct observation of my conditioning without bias is what I regard to be the greatest impact of Krishnamurti’s philosophy on me. Prior to accepting the offer from OISE/UT, I was a practicing engineer in Malaysia and was also teaching part-time at two colleges. I applied to OISE/UT because I realized that my true calling was teaching and with the loving support from my wife, we quit our jobs, sold our car, made plans to rent our house that we just purchased one year before accepting the offer from OISE. As I’m touched by Krishnamurti’s teachings, I want to dedicate my life in researching and exploring deeper into his educational and overall philosophy. I have chosen Oak Grove School due to its proximity to Toronto, Canada.

The aim of this research is to explore and investigate the application of Krishnamurti’s educational philosophies, specifically his notion that teachers play a central role in bringing about fundamental changes in students in order to make them whole.

3. Thesis Advisor

My advisor/Supervisor is Professor Jack Miller, who has dedicated over 35 years into researching and teaching in the area of Holistic education. He is author of more than a dozen books and his writing has been translated into seven languages. In his latest book, *Educating for Wisdom and Compassion*, Dr. Miller has written about the Krishnamurti schools, calling Krishnamurti’s work timeless. He has worked extensively with holistic educators in Japan and Korea and has been a visiting professor at two universities in Japan. Dr. Miller teaches graduate level courses such as “The Contemplative Practitioner”, “Holistic Curriculum” and “Spirituality in Education”. Dr. Miller has keen interest in Krishnamurti’s work and his pioneering works in the field of holistic education are among my main reasons for choosing him as my advisor.
4. Participant selection process

I would like to list the guidelines that were used to select the teachers’ for this study.

- **Familiarity with Krishnamurti’s Educational Goals & Philosophy.**
  
  A possible indicator for this important criterion could be the number of years the teachers have taught at the Oak Grove School.

- **Teachers Teaching Four Different Subjects.**
  
  A possible combination could be subjects like Math, Science, Religious Studies and an environmentally related subject like ecology. The reason for selecting teachers teaching different subjects is to investigate and probe how Krishnamurti’s educational goals and philosophy could be integrated through different subjects. Even if this aspect of integrating Krishnamurti’s educational goals and philosophy with the various subjects could be a challenging task, it is one of my goals in this research to find ways to make this integration process a simpler one.

- **Teachers Belonging to Different Faith.**
  
  A possible combination of teachers belonging to four different faiths will allow an angle of observation to realize how teacher’s faiths inform their spirituality/inner life. This selection criterion would be useful given my deep abiding interest in religious pluralism or interfaith dialogue coupled with inclination towards research in this area.

- **Teachers Teaching all Three Levels of Grades.**
  
  A possible combination of teachers teaching at the elementary, junior and high school will allow an observation on how Krishnamurti’s educational goals and philosophy are disseminated across the levels of grades.

Please take note that if these requirements could not be met, the first selection criterion, which is the familiarity with Krishnamurti’s philosophy, should be met.

5. Participants’ Consent

A separate Informational Letter and Consent Form were prepared for the teachers. The information covered in the consent letter includes: The rights of participants; The purpose/focus of study; Procedures to be used in data collection; Protecting the confidentiality of participants; Risks and potential benefits to participants and the Oak Grove School; Contact information; and Signature of participants.

A copy of the letter of consent for the teachers will be given to you by mail or in person.
6. Contact information

I am furnishing the contact information of myself, my research supervisor and the University of Toronto Ethics Review Office.

a) Principal Researcher

Name: Anbananthan Rathnam (Anba)
Address: 30 Charles St. West, #1521, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1R5, Canada
E-mail: anbananthan.rathnam@gmail.com
Phone: 416-358-0218

b) Research Supervisor

Name: Dr. John P. Miller
Address: Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
152 Bloor St. West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6, Canada
E-Mail: jmiller@oise.utoronto.ca
Phone: 416-978-0221

c) University of Toronto Ethics Review Office

Address: 12 Queen’s park Crescent West, McMurrich Building, 2nd Floor, Toronto,
Ontario M5S 1S8, Canada
E-Mail: ethics.reviews@utoronto.ca
Phone: 416-946-3273

7. Signature of Principal

I would like to thank you once again for allowing me to conduct this research at the Oak Grove School.

_________________________________  __________________
Name of Principal  Date

_________________________________
Principal’s E-Mail address

_________________________________
Principal’s Signature
Appendix C

Research and Interview Questions

The interview questions were designed based on the sub-research questions:

1. What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
2. What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
3. What are aspects of teachers’ inner life that nourishes wholeness within?
4. What are aspects of teachers’ inner life that connects to their vocation or calling?
5. What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
6. What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?

1. What are the major motivations for teachers who choose to teach in a Krishnamurti school?
   a. Please recall the first time you listened or heard Krishnamurti speaking. Did you see him in person? Did you hear him speaking via audio or video recording?
   b. Where were you at that time?
   c. What was your reaction(s) after listening to Krishnamurti for the first time?
   d. What was your occupation when you first encountered Krishnamurti or his work? Were you already teaching at that time?
   e. How long since you first heard Krishnamurti’s talk that you wanted to teach in one of his schools?
   f. What were your motivation factors to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school?
   g. What are the sacrifices (if any) that you had endured in the process of wanting to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school?
   h. As you reflect on your sacrifices now, do you regret or appreciate your decision to teach in a Krishnamurti’s school?
2. What events in a teacher’s life have influenced his/her decision to become a teacher?
   a. Could you describe your educational experience (include your area of study) and try to recall why you chose this area of study?
   b. As you reflect on your current realization and understanding, do you think your area of study has any relevance to your natural ability?
   c. What was your first occupation after your formal education? Reflect on your first job and describe what you liked and disliked about it.
   d. Recall the first time in your life when you actually wanted to be a teacher?
   e. What are the events in your life that prompted you to the teaching profession?
   f. Was Krishnamurti or his teachings instrumental in your decision to become a teacher or was there other motivation for you to become a teacher?

3. What are aspects of teachers’ inner life that nourishes wholeness within?
   a. The word ‘educate’ with its Latin root educere or its English equivalence of educe means to bring out or to evoke something potential, hidden and latent. What is your response to this meaning in relations to your own learning and educating yourself?
   b. John Miller, an educationist in the area of holistic education, highlighted qualities like wisdom, compassion, joy, awe and wonder, feeling whole and having a sense of purpose as the outcome of timeless learning that impacts the inner life. Could you relate to any of the qualities mentioned and describe how they impact your inner life?
   c. Krishnamurti felt that the school is to be a place where students learn about the wholeness of life. What is your understanding and comments on this statement?
   d. In order to develop wholeness in students, do you think teachers should also be developing wholeness in themselves? If your answer is ‘Yes’, please describe why you think so. If your answer is ‘No’, please describe it too.
   e. What is your understanding of ‘good teaching”? As an example, do you think good teaching refers to techniques used in the classroom or it refers to the identity and integrity of the teacher?

4. What are aspects of teachers’ inner life that connects to their vocation or calling?
a. The word vocation is rooted in the Latin for ‘voice’ Parker Palmer mentions that vocation is not an act of will but rather the calling that one hears. What is your understanding of the word vocation or calling?
b. If you were to reflect on all the jobs you have undertaken before and the current one, could you pin-point any one of these jobs to be your vocation or calling?
c. In the context of vocation or calling that we have been discussing, do you think teaching is your vocation? If ‘Yes’, please elaborate. If ‘No’, please elaborate too.
d. Krishnamurti said that “one teaches to encourage the student to find his true vocation...to help the young towards self knowledge”. In your own classroom, how do you encourage the students to find their vocation? How do you help the students towards self-knowledge? Please give at least one example of each.

5. What are some of the contemplative approaches that the teachers engage in and how do these practices influence or affect their spirituality or inner lives?
   a. Are you familiar with any contemplative practices?
   b. Are there any (or a few) contemplative practices that you’re currently engaged in?
   c. What is your personal feeling about contemplative practices? Is this feeling influenced by your faith or any spiritual teachers?
   d. Do you feel that there is a connection between your contemplative practice(s) and your spirituality or inner life?
   e. If there is a connection, could you describe it?
   f. Is there any connection or relationship between your contemplative practice(s) and the way you teach in a classroom?
   g. Could you describe (if any) some of the positive attributes that contribute towards your pedagogy as a consequence of your contemplative practices?

6. What aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy (e.g. fear, choiceless awareness, conditioned mind, intelligence, etc) do the teachers use explicitly or implicitly as their guiding principles in relation to their pedagogy and curriculum design?
A guiding principle in designing interview questions for this research question will depend on the familiarity of participants’ knowledge on Krishnamurti’s philosophy and his themes. Some guiding questions include:

a. Which aspect of Krishnamurti’s philosophy you are most comfortable in discussing with relations to your pedagogy and curriculum design?

b. How do you use any one of Krishnamurti’s philosophical themes (like fear, awareness, etc) as your guiding principle in connection to your pedagogy and curriculum design?

c. Can you share some real examples on how you use them in your pedagogy and curriculum design?

d. If you are using any of Krishnamurti’s philosophical themes implicitly as your guiding principle in your pedagogy and curriculum design, could you share this process in as detail as possible?

e. If currently you are not using aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy as your guiding principle in relations to your pedagogy and curriculum design, could you share the reason(s) for this?

f. Do you think you may need some assistance in this process of trying to integrate aspects or themes of Krishnamurti’s philosophy into your pedagogy and curriculum design? Could you suggest any ways that this goal could be achieved?