

DISSERTATION

REFLECTIVE LEADERSHIP BY SELECTED
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Doctor of Education

Colorado State University

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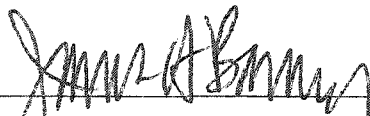
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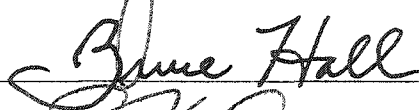
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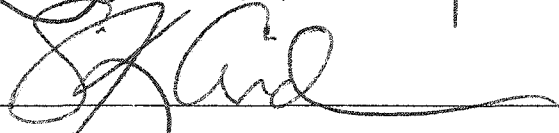
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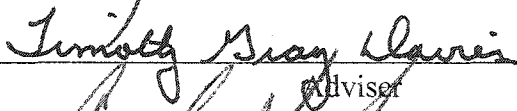
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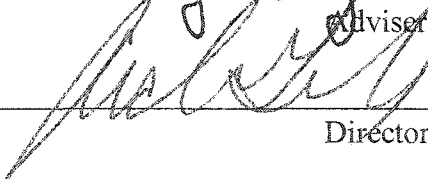
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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION
REFLECTIVE LEADERSHIP BY SELECTED
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENTS

This study examined community college presidents' self-reflective leadership. Community college presidents were chosen due to their critical role in leading institutions providing access to a majority of freshman and minority students entering higher education. A phenomenological approach answered the question: How is self-reflection experienced by community college presidents in the leadership role?

Data was collected through in-depth interviews. Four female and four male presidents of diverse racial backgrounds were interviewed to uncover the lived experience of reflective leadership.

Three themes emerged: mindfulness; discovery and authenticity. These themes revealed the essence of reflective leadership, self-care. Presidents spent deliberate time in introspection and inquiry, expanding self-awareness in order to lead others. This research expands knowledge of the community college presidents' role.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmothers

Cora Westre and Ruth Garhart.

To my parents Jack and Myrtle Garhart.

You are my inspiration.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Tim Davies for guiding my dissertation experience; I learned much about myself during the journey. I am also grateful to the members of my committee: Dr. Jim Banning, Dr. Bruce Hall, and Dr. Sharon Anderson for their recommendations and advice. I want to thank my wonderful friend Marsha for her friendship and support over the past five years. To my friend Char I extend thanks for opening up her home to me as a retreat when I needed quiet time. To my husband Dave and my sons Matt and Josh, I want to tell you I love you and thank you for being there for me.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

“The community college today is the single largest and most important portal into higher education” (Dougherty, 1998, p. 1) Over 1,100 community colleges, comprising over one fourth of all higher education institutions in the United States, enroll 5.9 million full-time equivalent students (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 199a, 199c). This accounts for 45% of all first-time college entrants and 37% of all undergraduates in United States colleges and universities. Nontraditional and minority students are particularly represented in community college education. In fact, persons of color make up about 30% of all participants in community colleges compared to approximately 24% in 4-year institutions (NCES, 1999a). Many students select community colleges because they offer access and opportunity to those who would otherwise not have the opportunity to enter postsecondary education. Shifting U. S. demographics toward a more diverse population supports the importance and crucial position of the community college to the future of higher education.

Students begin the process of a better future through job preparation at the community college. The open-door policy provides opportunity to pursue postsecondary education, to initiate transfer coursework leading to a baccalaureate degree and to enroll in occupational/technical programs that teach high-level skills needed in a technological age (Rendon, 2001). United States economic stability and productivity will depend on a

trained and educated populace. Community colleges play a crucial role in shaping the workforce of the future and will influence the future economic foundation of the country (Roueche, Baker, & Rose, 1995).

Future community colleges will continue to be multifaceted, complex, and challenging.

Higher education and its over 4,000 years of tradition are rushing toward a future where the access to information and the power to manipulate it will give learners options they have never known, instructors capabilities the likes of which they have never dreamed, and leaders tools for decision making that exceed any expectations" (Milliron & Leach, 1997, p. 1).

The mission of community colleges will involve issues concerning diversity, technology, and building a nurturing learning environment (Nora, 2001). Community college leaders have the daunting task of preserving the unique aspects of the college and also moving the college forward.

The community college presidency is a powerful position. Presidents have the critical role of leading dynamic institutions into a complex future. Murry and Hammons (1995) maintain that both the current and future success of community colleges depend on the skill of the institutions' leaders. Vaughn (1986) wrote that community college presidents help to chart the educational, social, and economic life of thousands of students, faculty members, and administrators across the country. This will continue to be true. The significance of the leadership role supports the importance of research related to presidential leadership.

Research into the role of president is essential to the success of community colleges. Studies have examined traits and characteristics of presidents (Campbell & Leverty, 1997; Pielstick, 1998; McFarlin, Crittendon, & Ebbers, 1999). Some of these

studies profile leaders and describe their development. Few of these studies examine the process of presidential learning and personal growth.

Reflection as a way of promoting personal growth and learning has ancient roots in literature. "Reflective learning is the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changed conceptual perspective" (Fales & Boyd, 1983). Early philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle practiced reflection. Reflection has been practiced in psychology and education since the early 1800s (Boyd & Fales, 1983). Habermas (1973) described levels of reflection. Hatton and Smith (1995) and Schon (1987) described the levels in more detail. Schon (1987) utilized reflection-in-action and reflection-about-action as a means to explain how expertise was developed in professional practice. Osterman (1991) suggested that reflective practice could facilitate organizational change by bringing about changes in the behaviors of individuals in organizations. Daudelin (1986) examined whether reflection in a business setting was more effective alone or with others. Levels of reflection by students studying school administration were examined by Short and Rinehart (1993). These studies focused on the steps of reflective problem solving.

While the studies above describe reflection as steps of a learned experience Boyd and Fales (1983) contend that self-reflective experiential learning must be conceptualized as a process. They go on to say that,

The process of reflection is the core difference between whether a person repeats the same experience several times, becoming highly proficient at one behavior, or learns from experience in such a way that he or she is cognitively or affectively changed" (1983, p. 100).

Researchers in the field of organizational management define the reflective process in different ways (Boyd & Fales, 1983; Daudelin, 1986; Francis, 1995; Twale & Short, 1989). The literature reveals that self-reflection by leaders is not merely a sequence of steps but is a synthesis of factors that help to frame it. Factors drawn from the literature that make up a reflective leadership process are self-awareness, job competency and behavioral competency. The components are seen in the writings of Koestenbaum, (2000), Goleman, (2001) and Cox (2001).

Self-awareness is key part of the reflective leadership process. A number of leadership authors have the opinion that exemplary leadership requires leaders to be self-aware (Bennis, 1989; Bollman & Deal, 1995; Jaworski, 1996). Bennis (1989) stated, “to look forward with acuity you must first look back with honesty” (p. 62). Leaders are encouraged to “know themselves” and use that knowledge to make decisions in a complex world. Wheatley (1992) described a quantum world in which relationships are everything and leaders must focus on complicated interactions between participants and the environment. According to Goleman (1998), effective leaders are those with the highest degree of emotional intelligence. Goleman (1985) refers to emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize feelings of self and others and manage emotions in relationships (p. 312). A cornerstone of emotional intelligence is the ability to be self-aware (Golman, 1998).

Job competency is a part of reflective leadership. Kostenbaum (2000) describes job competency as specialty skills, and know-how about work. Goleman (1998) stated that “whatever our intellectual potential, it is expertise-our total body of specialized information and practical skills-that makes us good enough to do a particular job” (p. 21).

Job knowledge increases the leaders credibility and aids in prudent decision-making. Robert Birnbaum (1992) concluded that college presidents could be “a vital source of leadership and a force for institutional renewal when they are perceived by constituents as competent, legitimate, value-driven, of complex mind, and open to influence” (p. 151). The skill of job competency is derived by various means including formal learning and learning on the job. Proponents of formal learning and reflective experiential learning include Schon (1987) and Osterman (1991).

Presidential behavior impacts reflective leadership. According to Goleman (1989) behavioral competencies are those behaviors that enable the leader to participate in relationships through empathy and social skills. Reciprocal leadership theories emerged in the 1970s reflecting the postindustrial era and emphasizing the behavioral competencies of leaders (Komivas, 1998). The importance of the relationship between leaders and followers caused Goleman (1998) to identify behaviors of the leader as crucial to leadership success. Studies of business executives at Fortune Five hundred companies confirmed that behavioral competencies were more crucial to leadership success than job competencies (Goleman 2000, 2001).

The conceptual framework for this study of reflective leadership brings together Boyd and Fales (1983) stages of reflective learning with Kitchner and King’s (1981) stages of reflective judgment. These stages serve as a framework for examining how community college presidents self-reflect in the leadership role.

Job competency includes job skills, technical abilities and know-how of performing tasks. Behavioral competency is the relational skills that involve working with people. Self-awareness is the concept of knowing oneself; being aware of personal values,

strengths and weakness. Reflection is viewed as the means of bringing these concepts together.

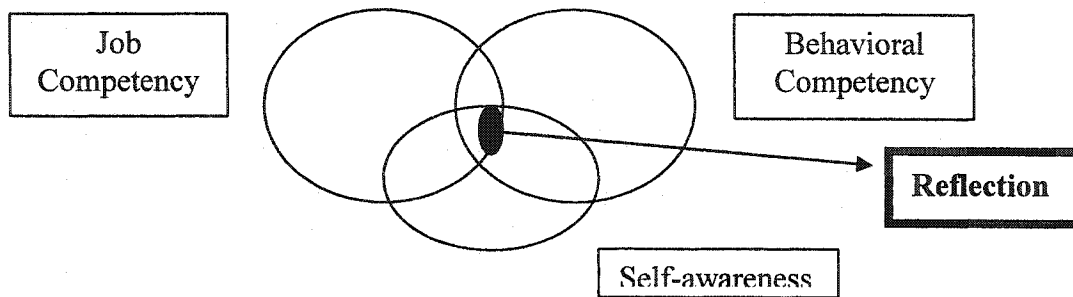


Figure 1. Visual of reflective leadership

Permeating the three concepts of reflective leadership is the idea of ethical leadership. Shaw and Berry (1989) define ethics as “the social rules that govern and limit our conduct, especially the ultimate rules concerning right and wrong” (p. 2-3). Komives, Lucan and McMahon (1998) describe leadership as values driven. “Leadership is a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good” (p.89). Garner (1990) describes ethical leadership as aligned with positive, constructive ends. Reflection examined by itself without an ethical framework could have negative implications or outcomes that are destructive, harmful or immoral. Burns (1978) elevated the importance of values and ethics in the leadership process through the theory of transforming leadership. He noted that

The ultimate test of moral leadership is its capacity to transcend the claims of multiplicity of everyday wants and needs and expectations, to respond to the higher levels of moral development, and to relate leadership behavior-its roles, choices, style, and commitments to a set of reasoned relatively explicit, conscious values (Burns, 1978, p. 47).

Community college presidents face challenges that require ethical decisions.

Wharton (1997) wrote in the *Community College Review* that presidents are often uninformed of what motivates them and influences their behavior. They act out their

personal needs in their leadership position. "This behavior tends to result in major losses in morale, productivity, job satisfaction, and service to stakeholders: it says loud and clear the leader's needs come first" (Wharton, 1997). Terry (1993) stated that action without authenticity erodes what can be ethical or moral leadership. At the core of authenticity is a "genuineness and a refusal to engage in self deception" (p. 128). Being honest with oneself as a leader is a prerequisite for ethical and moral leadership. Community college presidents may use self-reflection in the process of being authentic.

The reflective community college president was not identified in the literature. Biographical approaches have been used to examine, in retrospect, the process leading to presidential behaviors during their tenure (Conway, 2002). In some cases college presidents have been asked to complete a self-analysis as part of the evaluation process imposed by boards of trustees. This technique identified ways that the presidential job description was met, but did not address the process used to self-reflect. Presidents' autobiographies give some knowledge of presidential thinking in an unstructured format. Shapiro and Stefkovich (1994) and Cooper and Dunlap (1989) used journaling and personal philosophy statements as an approach to promote reflection by administrative students. Boleman and Deal (1991) discussed reflection as a means for leaders to be explicit and thoughtful about their core beliefs by writing personal philosophy statements. Although the reflective community college president was not named in the literature, support for ethical community college leadership was expressed in this quote by Duncan and Harlacher (1999):

The position of the CEO of the American community college carries with it a public trust, a belief that he or she guides the institution according to the standards and values that promote the common good. Not only will the effective leader need to establish and adhere to a well known personal moral code, he or she will have

an obligation to demonstrate by overt action the desired values and principles of the institution (p. 43).

What is missing in the literature is a holistic examination of the process of self-reflection utilized by community college presidents. It is possible that the reflective leadership model may act as a guide for examination of self-reflection. The overriding question is, what is the process of self-reflection used by community college presidents? This research is an attempt to expand knowledge of the community college presidential role.

Purpose Statement

This study will examine the self-reflective process used by community college presidents in the leadership role. Community college presidents' personal experiences of self-reflection will be investigated.

Research Questions

The grand tour question was: How would you describe the experience of using self-reflection in your role as a college president? Sub-questions will include: What are the ingredients of your self-reflective process as a community college president? .

Significance of the Study

This study delves into the process of self-reflection used by community college presidents in the leadership role. It meets a need for further research of presidential learning and role performance. Leadership literature supports the importance of the reflective leader but there is little information about how self-reflection is accomplished (Bennis, 1989). Self-reflection is identified in the literature as a problem solving technique but not as a tool for personal growth and self-awareness. This research provides broader, holistic knowledge of the process and application of self-reflection used by community college presidents.

Researchers Perspective

I am interested in the process of reflection and decision-making. For years I kept a journal of my thoughts and ideas as a means of reflection. As a nurse I used critical thinking and critical reflection daily as a basis for decision-making. Thinking back I see the use of reflection as a tool that expanded my understanding of life experiences. Watching my twin sons mature and embark on their own processes of self-discovery has caused an intensified interest in the process of reflection. It is clear that I have bias regarding the importance of reflection. I agree with the idea that the researcher should know her own mindset, values, and biases before she can begin to understand the world of others (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). I approached my research on reflection with an open mind and a willingness to discover the unknown.

The Colorado State University doctoral program in Community College Leadership has been a personal awakening for me. I have become conscious of new knowledge and perspectives about leadership. My experiences have particularly made me aware of how specific people have impacted my life. Leaders who have influenced me include my parents, my husband, my professors and administrators. I am taking a closer look at these encounters. Within my experience in higher education, which has spanned a period of twenty years, I have seen a variety of leaders come and go. They have yielded a tremendous amount of power and influence over people, and it is with perplexity that I observe the varying degrees of success they achieved. Many of these leaders have affected my life significantly. Frequently I have pondered what process was used to make decisions and to evaluate themselves. "What were they thinking?" "What caused then to

act the way they did?” “What was their internal process of self-awareness?” My research into reflection afforded me the chance to investigate these questions.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter investigates the concepts of the community college presidency, reflection, and leadership. A historical perspective of the founding of the community college is given to enhance understanding of the community college president's role. Issues facing the presidency will be examined. Research about the community college presidency will be synthesized. Leadership and reflection will be integrated within the scope of the community college presidency and in the literature. Reflection as a means of learning and personal growth throughout the ages will be examined. The integration of these concepts to establish the relevance of reflective leadership in the role of the community college president and provides background for the need for this study.

The Community College Presidency

Introduction

Vaughn (1998) wrote, "By understanding the role of the founding presidents, we can appreciate more fully the role of today's community college presidents, who build upon the foundations laid in those earlier decades" (p. 2). This section reviews the community college evolution and community college president's role by examining four distinct periods: (1) The junior college and the presidency, (2) the community college and the presidency, (3) the comprehensive community college and the presidency, and (4) the community college of the future and the presidency. A final section reviews the research relevant to the community college presidency.

Evolution of the Community College and the Presidency

The four sections about the community college presidency identify the major developmental periods of the community college and equate them with the roles of the presidency. The concepts are blended in order to parallel their development.

The Junior College and the Presidency

The original junior college movement was part of the restructuring of secondary education. After the Civil War three environmental conditions affected ideas about higher education: (1) the nation's rapid industrialization, which mechanized agriculture; (2) increasing high school completion rates; and (3) emergence of American research universities (Deegan & Tillery, 1985). The Morrill Act of 1862 created the American land grant universities, emphasizing practical education in agriculture and technical fields; however, geography and cost were major barriers to student attendance (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998; Lorenzo in Baker, 1994). Normal schools were a form of alternative secondary education in the 1880s mainly for women wanting to teach as a profession. Teacher shortages led to the establishment of a normal school training course at the high school, which led the way for the addition of the junior college in St. Joseph, Missouri in 1913 (Ratcliff in Baker, 1994).

1. Consideration of alternatives to the university system began during the economic downturn of 1894 when Reverend J. M. Carroll, president of Baylor University, realized that there were insufficient finances and students to support the numerous, small Baptist colleges in Texas and Louisiana. His suggestion was that smaller colleges provide the first two years of college curriculum, and Baylor University would provide the junior and senior years of

the baccalaureate degree (Ratcliff in Baker, 1994). This concept was actually put in place by William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago, who is given credit for creating the phrase “junior college” (Eels, 1931).

Harper envisioned the “junior college” as a means of diverting students away from the university into an upward extension of high school (Erdman & Ogden, 2001). Harper anticipated five outcomes of his plan to create the “junior college.” His intention was to retain the exclusivity of the four-year institution while providing education for the masses.

2. Many students would find it convenient to give up college work at the end of the sophomore year
3. Many students who would not otherwise do so, will undertake at least two years of college work
4. The professional schools would be able to raise their standards for admission
5. Many academies and high schools would be encouraged to develop advanced work
6. Colleges that did not have the means to do the work of the junior and senior years would be satisfied under this arrangement to do the lower work (Harper quoted in Eels, 1931, p. 48).

Harper also encouraged the vocational education movement in the late 1800s by establishing several private technical institutes in Illinois (Ratcliff, 1994). Soloman (1985) suggests that Harper envisioned separate institutions for women as a result of the success of the normal schools. These outcomes reveal that Harper followed an elitist perspective based on the German concept of the university as a research institution by segregating

inadequately prepared students in the “junior college” from others ready to perform at the university level (Erdman & Ogden, 2000).

The first public junior college was founded in 1902 in Joliet, Illinois (Andrews & Fonseca, 1998). Joliet Junior College retains its original name today, recognizing its early role in bridging the local high school with the university and offering Joliet students advanced standing on entrance to the University of Chicago (Bragg, 2001). The first state law allowing public junior college was passed in 1907 in California and was written by Senator Anthony Caminetti (Erdman & Ogden, 2000). Caminetti’s bill creating the junior college system in California provided educational access to students of lesser means and abilities. Koos (1925) states “Harper seems to have inspired the establishment of the first junior college” (p.238). However, other authors have a different perspective. “Anthony Caminetti was the true educational progressive whose bold vision has defined democratic education in America” (Erdman & Ogden, 2000, p. 4). Starting as extensions of local school districts, the first junior colleges emerged as advanced grades of high school. Koos (1925) identified the junior high school and the junior college as twin education developments of the early 1900s.

The community college had a various missions in the early years. Tappan, Jordan and Harper stressed the transfer role (Diener, 1986). In addition to collegiate level instruction, two-year colleges also had the role of providing developmental, remedial and college preparatory courses (Ratcliff, 1986; Zook, 1922). Gradually as economic and political circumstances exerted greater influence, another focus, vocational education emerged. Early junior college leaders such as Crosby, Eells, and Koos were steadfast supporters of this broader mission for junior colleges, going beyond transfer education to

prepare students for employment (Frye, 1992). The “terminal function” of preparing youth and adults for immediate employment in semiprofessional occupations became important (Bragg, 2000). Eells (1931) wrote that the junior college should “offer something more than a simple university preparatory course, if is to live up to its destiny. The development of the terminal function is an essential corollary of the success of the popularization function” (p. 289).

Sullivan (1997) describes “the first generation of “Founding Fathers” of the community college as pioneers of a new and democratic form of higher education. University leaders such as Tappan, Jordan and Harper played a significant role in fostering the junior college movement (Ratcliff, 1986. p. 7). They were interested in restructuring university education to make research the primary purpose of universities. It was suggested that the first two years be a part of pre-collegiate or secondary education, making them an upward extension of high school grades (Ratcliff 1987). Junior colleges were generally supported by public school systems with presidents drawn from their ranks (Wattenbarger in Baker, 1994, p. 333). “Perhaps the greatest contribution of the founding presidents was the unbridled missionary zeal they brought to promoting the community college mission” (Vaughn & Wisman 1998, p. 7). Early presidents had to convince members of the community at large that the community college was both legitimate and permanent (Vaughn & Wisman, 1998). Critics pointed out that early community college leaders catered to the business community protecting the interests of a privileged sector of the population (Pincus in Baker, 1994).

The junior college was designed to provide the first two years of the baccalaureate degree and relieve the universities from the dealing with unprepared or unwanted students entering higher education.

The Community College and the Presidency

The Truman Commission of 1947, led by George F. Zook, issued a major report shifting the emphasis of community college education away from the transfer function (Bragg, 2000; Levine 1978). The commission was given the authority to address the issues of returning soldiers flooding the workforce, and the need to stabilize the economy of the U. S. following World War II (President's Commission 1947). The "community college" was seen as a way of providing educational services and job training to local constituents for a reasonable cost aided by the GI Bill (Eaton in Baker, 1994). The term "community college" was used to give predominance to the notion of service to local communities. The President's Commission on Higher Education (1947) identified five defining characteristics of the community college:

1. The need to survey community needs in order to adapt programs to the educational needs of students
2. Provide apprentice training as well as accommodations for older students including alternative periods of attendance and remunerative work
3. Support student efforts to develop skills to make a living, by providing integrated general and vocational programs
4. Meet the needs of students transferring on to professional studies
5. Provide adult education programs

The recommendations of the commission were part of a call for public education to be made available, tuition free, to all Americans able and willing to receive it, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or economic and social status (President's Commission 1947, vol. 5).

Wattenbarger in Baker (1982) reflected upon the community college at this period as becoming "more vitally involved in the community than was true of the older junior colleges" (p. 982). In the beginning the community service function of the community college was not well defined. Emphasizing the importance of this evolving role, Ervin Harlacher's (1969) identified four-service obligation of the community college:

1. Become a center of community life by encouraging the use of college facilities and services by community groups
2. Provide for all age groups educational services that utilize the special skills and knowledge of the college staff and other experts.
3. Provide the community, including business and industry, with the leadership and coordination capabilities of the college, assist the community in long-range planning, and join with individuals and groups in attacking unsolved problems.
4. Contribute to and promote the cultural, intellectual and social life of the college district community and the development of skills for the profitable use of leisure time.

The growth of the community college accelerated in the 1950s. The number of community colleges grew from 600 in 1950 to 1,100 at the end of the decade. The states became the major source of community college funding and helped promote increase numbers of colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 128). The foundation of the economy in

many states was moving from an agrarian base to an industrial base. There was an urgent need to provide industry with workers trained in the trades and crafts associated with the industry. Former agricultural workers required more specific skills to augment the general skills they had gained on the farm (Hockaday & Puyear, 2002). The business community was eager to build a steady workforce, and immediate employment became a more important concern than long-range educational goals (Eaton, 1994). Other reasons for growth focused around the desire for parents to educate their children for future jobs, but the cost of education was a factor in making this happen.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 greatly increased the federal funds available for career education, thereby encouraging the community colleges to alter their mission to include a greater emphasis on vocational training (Cohen & Brawer, 1984). The dominance of the vocational function changed the curricular emphasis of the community college. This shift, according to some critics, limited the social and economic mobility of students, although others saw the vocational function as a form of opportunity for students who otherwise would have no college experience at all (Eaton in Baker, 1994, p. 32). Statistics showed that attendance at two-year colleges lowered the chances of student's attaining a bachelor's degree, which created concern that students were being discouraged from achieving their full potential (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). The emphasis on vocational education also fed the perception that two-and four-year colleges were significantly different from one another with the community college as the lesser partner (Eaton in Baker, 1994, p. 31).

Sullivan (1997) described the second generation of community college leaders as "good managers, who led the college through a period of rapid growth and abundant

resources” (p.12). The presidency focused on “bricks and mortar,” the building phase of community colleges. Issues facing the president varied from where and how to build campuses to development of vocational programs. Successful early presidents learned about the community college mission while they shaped it, and how to be a president while functioning as one (Vaughn & Weisman, 1998, p. 6). Presidents came up through the academic ranks and exhibited traditional leadership styles within hierarchical organizational structures (Vaughn & Weisman, 1998). Sullivan (1997) describes the early the early presidents as having similar characteristics:

The first two generations of presidents had some characteristics in common: they were generally white males, married, in their 50s, who had come up through the academic ranks. They exhibited a traditional leadership style within a hierarchical organizational structure... Under these leaders, colleges which started on a shoestring and were creative, daring and unrestricted grew into large bureaucracies with enviable physical plants, vast resources, and considerable community support (p. 120).

The period of the community college dealt with issues of growth and change. The vocational function was of particular importance. Presidents were described as “traditional” moving up within the white, male ranks. Criticism of the community college centered on the fact that students did not go on the baccalaureate.

The Comprehensive Community College and the Presidency

During the 1960s a major shift towards a service function occurred in the mission of the community college (Myran, 1989). The concept of the “comprehensive community college” began to take shape at a time of explosive growth in student enrollment. The baby boom generation was approaching college age and most states had fewer colleges and universities than were needed. It was less expensive to build capacity at local institutions designed for commuting students rather than building up colleges and

universities (Hockaday & Puyear, 2002). This was because the local community had to tax themselves to help pay for operations and, also they bore part of the fiscal responsibility for building new buildings.

The Governor's Commission of 1962 used the term "comprehensive community college." The Governor's Commission recommended that two-year colleges offer, "college parallel, technical-vocational-terminal, and adult education instruction tailored to area needs; and that comprehensive community colleges be subjected to state level supervision by on agency. This signaled the beginning of the state system. Pearson (1966) called for accommodation of the curriculum to the increasing diversity and individual needs of the community college student population. The comprehensive mission included five traditional components: (1) transfer-oriented education, (2) career education, (3) general education, (4) remedial education, and (5) community education (Cohen & Brawer, 1989).

In the 1960s the profile of the community college president did not change. Approximately one-fourth of community college presidents came from public school administration and over 15% came from four-year institutions (Vaughan, 1989, p. 2). Early presidents had difficulty selling the college to the community, and at the same time building an organization that would support the college's mission, operate efficiently, and establish the college as an integral and legitimate part of higher education (Vaughn & Weisman, 1998). Presidents played a major role in creating college culture. Much of the community college's culture formed in the 1960s remains integral to the institutions today (Vaughn & Weisman 1998). Founding presidents often had to make many decisions quickly and without consulting others causing them to be accused of governing with a

heavy hand. Presidents who were successful gradually moved toward a more participatory governing style. Decision-making was stressful in the early years. "In addition to worrying about credibility, organizational matters, finances, and decisions, any number of things often went wrong as colleges prepared to open" (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p. 10).

The 1970s brought a backlash against the excesses of the 1960s, which included extensive growth of institutions and programs. The pace of enrollments at the community college slowed due to decreased numbers of high school graduates. Moses (1971) correctly projected that even though enrollments of conventional students in colleges and universities would decline, the need and demand for educational services would continue to escalate. Edmund Gleazer, as president of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, believed that the community college should be a "nexus of community learning activities" (Cohen, Palmer, & Zwemer, 1986). He also said "The institution was a resource to be used by individuals throughout their lifetime and by the general public as an agency assisting with community issues" (Cohen & Brawer, 1982, p. 252).

The characteristics of the community college changed in the 1970s. Part-time students comprised two thirds of student enrollment. "Continuing education for part time, adult students has become the dominant function of Community Colleges, with resultant neglect of the occupational, transfer and general education function of more traditional students" (California Postsecondary, 1976). The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1970) and the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (1974) stressed the importance of open access at community colleges. The Commission viewed the comprehensive community college as the primary vehicle for allowing high school graduates entry into higher education, particularly for students historically

disenfranchised. Minority and low socioeconomic students were lured by the college's close proximity to home, inexpensive tuition, and the opportunity to "try out" college-level work (Cohen, 1985; Rendon, 1984).

Vaughn and Weisman (1998) describe the 1970s as a time of rapid advancement for aspiring community college presidents. A major role of the president continued to be convincing the community of the viability of the community college. Presidents at this stage faced issues of establishing educational programs, combating segregation and blending into the local communities. Some of the stresses facing presidents were maintaining enrollments, open access admissions and providing funds for lower socioeconomic groups (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998). "A popular cliché of the day was that the community college could and should be all things to all people. The motto itself was enough to produce stress in those presidents who took it seriously" (Vaughan & Weisman, 1998, p. 11).

The 1980s ushered in a more conservative period. "The community college was positioned to lead a new era of educational and community service, and to be in the vanguard of change required in policies, institutional forms and citizen attitudes" (Gleazer in Baker, 1994, p. 23). The community college enrollment continued to grow, expanding from a headcount of 850,000 in 1963 to 4,526,287 in 1980 (NCES, 1991). Problems surfaced including the fact that mission statements were out of step with the times, and community colleges were under funded for future plans (Gilder, 1981). The Brookings Institute studies done by Breneman and Nelson (1981) summarized three possible directions that the comprehensive community college could pursue: (1) a comprehensive mission giving equal priority to academic, vocation-technical, and community service

programs; (2) dropping the strong community service orientation and focus on the traditional collegiate function, and/or (3) community-based learning centers and an expanded role for part-time, non-degree-seeking, adult learners.

Three factors, to be discussed further, contributed to the reemergence of transfer as an important higher education issue in the 1980s: (1) equity, (2) availability, and (3) accountability (Eaton in Baker, 1994). The Civil Rights movement caused an increase concern for upward mobility of minority students (Wilson, 1986). Community colleges in the 1980s enrolled approximately one-half of all minorities and were encouraged to place additional emphasis on transfer of minority students to baccalaureate institutions (Eaton in Baker, 1994). Nontraditional students defined as older, part time, working married, female, non-white and noncredit were not accommodated in the transfer function (Eaton in Baker, 1994. p. 33). School reform efforts in the 1980s generated a series of accountability efforts at the state level. Elected officials viewed degree acquisition, transfer, and going to work as the three major indicators of community college effectiveness (Eaton in Baker, p. 35).

Vaughan (1991) identified seven factors that affected the service function of the community college as it entered the 1990s:

1. Community service advocates went too far in offering courses that were viewed as frivolous by too many powerful people;
2. Funding had been cut for many community services functions;
3. Community colleges were less willing to try new courses and programs which might be seen as risky innovations;

4. A lack of funding for noncredit courses caused many colleges to offer courses for credit that should have been noncredit, creating a “credibility gap” for community services.
5. Recession coupled with the demand for “high technology” skills caused the community college to put more emphasis on job training and retraining and less on recreational and avocational programs and courses;
6. Community service offerings had been so successful that faculty and administrators of other institutions looked to use them to fill empty seats.
7. The national attitude toward community services changed making it more accepted, (p. 25-26).

During the 1980s the profile community college presidency began to change significantly. More persons of color and women were included in the ranks, however the presidents seldom reflected the demographics of the communities served (Vaughan & Weisman 1998, p. 250). According to Eaton (1984) “Enlarging the leadership role of women and minorities increased the similarity between the key decision makers and those affected by management decisions” (p. 93).

Presidents of the 1980s struggled with declining revenues. Community colleges began competing for resources with universities, public schools and community social services. Tuition and fees increased, as did the need for funding from gifts and grants (Wattenbarger in Baker, 1994, p. 337). Involvement of local and state officials in the funding of community colleges increased the concern of leadership about the autonomy of two-year institutions (Garland in Baker, 1994). The leaders of comprehensive public community colleges had to deal directly with a governing board, local sponsors, and often

state officials as part of the state system of community colleges. Presidents were challenged to advocate for adequate funding for colleges that included branch campuses (Garland in Baker, 1994, p. 304).

Management styles were changing from a hierarchal design to more inclusive forms of governance. Management by objectives in the form of strategic planning was a popular model (Deegan in Baker, 1994, p. 320). Community college president set objectives to address issues of inflated grades, back-to- basics education, and bloated curriculum.

During the 1990s, minority groups fueled the population growth of the United States (Rendon & Valadez in Baker, 1994, p. 565). As community colleges matured, their learners became more diverse than four-year colleges (Nora, 2000).

“The diversity of curricular offerings has proliferated to meet students’ needs, outcomes associated with participating in and finishing a community college education have become more varied, challenging these institutions to address the increasingly rich array of outcomes necessitated by diverse student participation” (Bragg 2000, p. 2).

In the 1990s more than half of African American and persons of Hispanic origin who enrolled in college after high school graduation attended a community college (NCES, 1999). Adelman (1992) stated that Hispanic students had been over represented in community colleges historically relative to other racial and ethnic groups. “As a consequence, community colleges have a particularly important responsibility for ensuring Hispanic students have ample opportunity to succeed and reach their ultimate educational goals” (Bragg, 2001, p. 2). Access continued to be attainable partly due to the reasonable cost. According to Phillippe and Patton (2000) tuition and fees at public community

colleges averaged less than half those at public four year colleges and about one tenth those at independent four-year colleges (p. 104).

The issue of developmental education was prominent in the 1990s. McCabe (2001) observed that poverty is the highest correlate with under preparedness, and that minority students are disproportionately represented in the highest poverty status. For under prepared students, remedial coursework is necessary to bridge the gap between high school and college, along with related developmental services such as peer tutoring, counseling and learning labs (Shaw, 1997). The most significant events of the 1990s may have been the School to Work Transition Movement that was passed into federal law in 1994 and the welfare reform.

Transfer was still an important issue in the 1900s. Two to four year transfer was estimated to be twenty two percent to twenty five percent nationally. The concept of reverse transfer, or students transferring from other institutions to the community college took form. It was estimated that that about fourteen percent of community college students nationally in the 1900s were reverse transfer students (Townsend, 1999).

In the 1990s community college administrators focused on financial issues (El-Khawas, 1991, p. 19). To handle these challenges presidents implemented actions to handle the budget crisis which included hiring freezes, across-the-board cuts, increasing tuition, increasing class size, curtailing services, discontinuing programs, delaying capital expenditures and instituting long-term productivity studies (Angel & Devault, 1991). Presidents were forced to address the call for a diverse, global workforce that could compete in world markets, and continued criticism of the lack of accountability by higher education.

The period of the comprehensive community college saw an expansion of the mission to include a more diverse student body and developmental education. Financial issues dominated the thinking of the president. The presidency matured into a complex job requiring a wide range of skills. A wider variety of individuals had access to the office of president.

The Community College of the Future and the Presidency

The pressures on the community college of the 21st century will be intense. Over the past decade, community colleges have experienced a large-scale transformation in terms of the racial and ethnic composition of its student population (Rendon & Valadez in Baker, 1994, p. 565). It is projected that, by 2015, Hispanics will be the largest minority group in America, and around 2030, people of color will make up more than half of the American population (Cetron & Davies, 1989). Parnell (1985) anticipated that providing a caring environment would be one of the major elements of the opportunity-with-excellence philosophy of community colleges of the future (1985, p. 92).

“We grow when we develop new frames of reference and when we can celebrate difference-not just intellectual differences, but differences in culture, gender, ethnicity, physical abilities and challenges, nationalities, religions, age political beliefs, orientations and values” (Mittelstet in Baker, 1994, p. 562).

The 1990 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching entitled *Campus Life: In Search of Community* also anticipated that if the community college was going to be caring then appreciation and understanding of difference must be seen as integral to education and multicultural perspectives must be genuinely valued. The Carnegie (1947) report describes a caring community as one “where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged (p. 47). The first challenge

to the community college of the future will be to discover the essence of a caring and just milieu.

Another challenge of the future community college will be to achieve the same diversity in leadership that has been achieved in student enrollment (Vaughan, 1996). The following are recommendations by Vaughan to achieve this end: (1) Minorities must view the presidency as a career option and make plans for achieving that option. This includes attainment of the doctorate, gaining administrative experience and having mentors and sponsors. (2) Trustees, faculty, and others should work to assure that the presidency is as appealing to minority candidates as it is to whites. (3) Minority trustees should work to explain to white board members the value of employing minorities as president. (4) If a diversity is to be achieved at the presidential level in the future trustees must look at sources other than the academic pipeline for presidents. (5) Current community college presidents should seek, mentor, and sponsor minority candidates for the presidency. (6) Trustees should not eliminate minorities (and women) from consideration for the presidency because they are not the “best qualified,” a stance that makes no sense in today’s society where there is often little past experience that prepares candidates for many of the duties presidents must perform in the future (Vaughn, 1996).

The 1990 Carnegie report proposed attributes of college campuses that should be adopted as a foundation for decision making and governance: a purposeful community, an open community, a just community, a disciplined community, a caring community and celebrative community (p. 8). Community colleges of the future must discover the essence of a caring and just community. This will be accomplished in numerous ways including: (1) building connections beyond college with schools, industry, business, social agencies

and policy groups;)2) building a learning community that supports integrated learning, and)3) building a curriculum with coherence that strengthens general education for students (Carnegie Commission, 1988).

Milliron and Leach (1997) identified changes and choices that will shape the community college as it enters its second century. The seven issues they identified were: (1) enrollment pressures, (2) retirement waves, (3) technology transitions, (4) partnership programs, (5) at risk access, (6) accountability mandates, and (7) the learning revolution. These issues are elaborated upon below:

Enrollment. “Community colleges will be hard pressed to accommodate this second tidal wave of enrollment and increasingly will hear calls to close the ‘open door’ that has been the cornerstone of their egalitarian philosophy” (1997, p.2). Colleges will be eager to find ways to manage both the influx of diverse students and the variety of learning options that will have to be engaged to meet this growing demand (p. 3).

Retirement waves. More faculty will retire in the next ten years than have retired in the last twenty years. The study discussed the concern that new full-time and part-time faculty will need training to understand the history and identity of the community college mission.

Technology transitions. The study supported the opinion that information technology instruction would increase dramatically in the future and that the training infrastructure necessary to support the use of hardware and software needed to be in place. (p. 6).

Partnership programs. Workforce development, facilities collaboration, welfare reform, tech-prep programs, school-to-work initiatives as well as developing partnerships

with corporations are important to college operation (p. 8). Community colleges will increasingly fill the gap in providing in-house training programs for the workforce of the future (p. 8).

At-risk access. At risk students – most commonly defined as those student most “at risk” of attrition because of lack of academic or social preparation for college – continue to flood into the community college and challenge educators to develop programs to identify and serve their unique needs (p. 9). In the 21st century, community colleges will continue to be the primary point of access for students at risk into higher education and into the world of work. This places the community college in a pivotal role in workforce development (p. 10).

Accountability mandates. The public has given mandates to institutions to provide information on how, and how well publicly funded institutions are achieving their institutional missions; meeting the needs of their communities and helping students succeed (p. 12). It will be important that institutional data systems reflect and explore the diversity of mission and the transitory nature of community college populations and programs (p. 12).

The learning revolution. O’Banion stated “the purpose of the Learning Revolution was to place learning first in every policy, program, and practice in higher education by overhauling the traditional architecture of education” (p. 12). Improving learning in the future will become the focus of the community college. In enacting these principles the college will become a model of how a diverse community engages one another in a learning environment.

The Commission on the Future of Community Colleges concluded that the key to the success of the American community college lies with the community college president (AACJC). In the article *the Twenty-first Century Executive Leader* by Duncan (1999), the author describes future leadership competencies: (1) institutional vision and revitalization, (2) ethical leadership, (3) institutional empowerment and transformation, (4) political leadership, and (5) institutional conceptualization and survival (p. 41). Duncan conducted interviews of leaders at ten successful community colleges to identify and report desired leadership competencies of future chief executive officers of American community colleges. Her findings as listed above will be examined more closely.

Institutional vision and revitalization were considered important for institutional renewal and inspiration of staff. A means of achieving this was to develop close relationships with the boards of trustees. “Beyond visualizing institutional purpose and mission for the community college, the future effective CEO will be a strategist who can revitalize the college by translating vision and purpose into pragmatic objectives, policies and procedures “ (Duncan, 1999, p. 42).

Ethical leadership was necessary to establish models of moral leadership for society.

The position of the CEO of the American community college carries with it a public trust, a belief that he or she guides the institution according to the standards and values that promote the common good. Not only will the effective leader need to establish and adhere to a well-known personal moral code, he or she will have an obligation to demonstrate by overt action the desired values and principles of the institution (Duncan & Harlacher, 1999,p. 43)

Institutional empowerment and transformation was achieved by governing by collaboration and coalition. “Crucial to collaborative governance is the ability to empower faculty and management with authority, responsibility, and greater productivity” (p. 43).

The more global business and industry become, the more CEOs will need to become skilled politicians. “Future effective leaders will resolve conflicts, handle confrontations skillfully, and manage the varied spheres of interest with political acuity, astute negotiation skills and a sensitivity to the needs of the “movers and shakers” (Duncan & Harlacher, 1999, p. 46). Entrepreneurship will emerge as a means of approaching fiscal problems (Deegan in Baker, p. 328).

In the article *Developing and Selecting Leaders for the 21st Century*, Campbell and Levery (1997) provided a work profile for community college presidents of the 21st century. Essential attributes included: (1) planning, (2) motivating, (3) assessing/evaluation, (4) implementing/ coordinating, (5) learning/research, (6) public relations, (7) problem solving/designing, and (8) decision making (p. 35).

In *Managing Community College*, (1994) Cohen, Brawer and Associates, identified 12 areas of focus for effective community college presidents. These included understanding the institution, appreciating the culture, mediating disputes, understanding the necessity of good management, selecting personnel, utilizing information, acting as educational leader, functioning in the professional field, establishing political leadership providing avenues for renewal, serving as an institutional symbol and using power (p. 60).

Although leadership traits and skills will remain about the same over the next decade, differences will come in the changing of some goals. The globalization of higher education will force community colleges to think in a broader manner. Mission focus, such as workforce preparation, will be dramatically different. Most of the traits and skills of leadership may be the same, but they will be applied to evolving goals (Hockaday & Puyear, 2002, p. 6).

The community college president of the future will face different but equally complex issues compared to presidents of the past. Major innovations will impact

leadership decisions including the speed of communication and the use of technology within a global environment.

Selected Research on the Community College Presidency

Hammons and Keller (1990) that there was surprisingly little research on the topic of competencies needed by community college presidents (p. 34). George Vaughn (1986) was one of the first to look at personal attributes, skills and abilities required by successful community college presidents. Seventy presidents completed a Career and Lifestyles Survey and a Leadership Survey. In addition, Vaughn (1986) conducted thirteen personal interviews. Vaughn found that presidents rated integrity and judgment as the personal attributes of most importance, with courage, concern, and flexibility as highly important. In *The Community College Presidency at the Millennium* (1998) Vaughn and Weisman followed up the 1986 study with a continuation of the study. The survey was repeated in 1991 and in 1996 the study included survey questions and personal interviews. The profile of the presidency was expanded upon. Data on diversity revealed that the number of women presidents had increased from 11% to 18%, and the number of minority presidents had increased from 11% to 14%. The authors did not attempt to offer opinions about the causes or implications of the data.

In his 1997 study, McFarlin identified preparation factors, which may contribute to the development of outstanding community college leadership skills. McFarlin surveyed presidents of public, two-year institutions located in the upper Midwestern United States. A peer selection process was used to identify outstanding-leading community college presidents. Surveys were sent to 147 community college presidents with a return rate of 85%. Utilizing a statistical test for comparing two binomial proportions, McFarlin

identified statistical significant differences between the outstanding/leading presidents and the normative presidents on four of nine identified factors. Outstanding leading presidents displayed a higher rate of having earned a terminal degree, a higher rate of having majored in higher education with an emphasis on community college leadership, a higher rate of both publishing and presenting scholarly work and more involvement with both peer networks and mentors (McFarlin, 1997).

Pielstick (1998) utilized meta-ethnography to identify themes, patterns, and connections that define transformational leadership of selected community college presidents. The findings of the study revealed that transforming leadership involved seven themes: (1) creating a shared vision, (2) communicating the vision, (3) building relationships, (4) developing a supporting organizational culture, (5) guiding implementation, (6) exhibiting character, and (7) achieving results (p. 5).

Dissertations added to the body of literature about community college presidents. Studies of the characteristics and preparatory factors of presidents are numerous (Adams, 1992; Crittenden, 1997; Moore, 1999). Gender differences have been investigated with emphasis on female community college presidents (Gatteau, 2000; Krumm, 1997; Moore, 1999). The impact of race has also been studied (Freeman, 1999; Mata, 1997; Reed-Taylor, 1998).

Several dissertations identified the effect of presidential behavior and decision making on the success of the institution. Harrison (2000) examined *Transformational Leadership and Community College Effectiveness* and found that transformational leadership was a better predictor of organizational effectiveness than transactional leadership for this sample. Based on the interviews transformational presidents relied on

personal convictions, open communication, and trust to establish and articulate their vision than do their transactional counterparts. Many factors contributed to college performance including culture of the college and the conditions under which a leader assumed the presidency (Harrison, 2000). In the dissertation *Leadership Styles and Ethical Views of Presidents of Small Community Colleges*, Preston (1993) found that ethical leaders strive for mutual goals and the leaders' values are used in the process of this persuasion. The presidents of small community colleges demonstrated that law and order was dominant in their decisions as opposed to religion or other moral foundations. Principled morality was constant among the 50 leaders (Preston, 1993).

In summary, research on the community college presidency covers a variety of subjects including leadership traits, perceptions, gender race and style. What is lacking in the literature is a closer investigation of the reflective process that impacts leadership behavior and decision-making. Research on the community college presidency will be enhanced by qualitative methods that can pull out the thoughts and reflections contributing to presidential behavior and decision-making.

Reflection and Leadership

The purpose of this section is to bring together the concepts of self-reflection and leadership. Reflection will be addressed from a variety of perspectives. The origins of the reflective process will be examined historically by identifying a representative sample of reflective thinkers. Reflective learning will be described. Theories of leadership and leadership traits will be reviewed for their connection to a reflective process. Finally, research and writings related to reflection and leadership will be examined.

Historical Perspective of Reflection and Reflective Thinkers

The power of the intellect to comprehend, reflect, abstract, analyze and draw conclusions has been considered throughout history as a defining characteristic of human beings, therefore leaders have the potential for reflective thought. Reflective thinkers were selected from several anthologies that named thinkers and leaders. Early origins of self-reflection can be traced to the Greek philosopher Socrates who lived between 470-399 B.C. (Rohmann, 1999). He named the highest state of being as “arête” or excellence, a moral knowledge that sees clearly the best course of action in any situation. In the *Apology*, Socrates said that the best way to arête was through self-knowledge. He suggested a reflective process in the statement “the unexamined life is not worth living.” His pupil, Plato (428-348 B.C.), told the allegory of the cave found in the *Republic* (Rohmann, 1999). He described the world like a cave with humans shackled by ignorance of the true nature of reality. If humans were to have a true picture of the world, they had to struggle out of the cave into the sunlight. Only persons who were “thoughtful and persistent” would have true knowledge. The others were contented to stay in the cave and “watch shadows dance” (Rohmann, 1999, p. 306). Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), Plato’s pupil, suggested a reflective process by founding classical logic based on syllogism in which two premises are given and a certain conclusion or inference follows. Logic was viewed as a framework for reason to operate within. This led him to the principle of the Golden Mean, which stated that “Virtue informed by reason, lies in the middle path between two extremes” (Rohmann, 1999, p. 27).

Prominent religious thinkers practiced personal self-reflection. Jesus (4 B.C.-30 A.D.) said He was the Son of God, sacrificed to atone for human sin. He called people to

examine their lives, repent of wrongdoing and rededicate their lives to God. He admonished his followers to maintain a personal relationship with Him through prayer and inner reflection upon the Bible (Rohmann, 1999). St Augustine (354-430 A.D.) wrote in *Confessions* a frank reflection of his life as he struggled to find spiritual and intellectual satisfaction. Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama, 563-483 B.C.) rejected a privileged life to embark on a quest to understand and overcome the afflictions of existence. It was through individual contemplation and meditation that he achieved enlightenment, and went on to encourage this behavior in the Buddhist religious communities he founded (p. 47). Confucianism, based on the teachings of K'ung Fu-tsu (551-479 B.C.), was based on a system of ethics and behavior. Self-reflection in the form of meditation was encouraged. "Man has three ways of acting wisely. First, on meditation: that is the noblest. Secondly, on imitation: that is the easiest. Thirdly, on experience; that is the bitterest" (Confucius, *Analects* in Rohmann, p. 74). Muhammad (570-632), Arab prophet and founder of Islam, set the example of meditating in caves outside Mecca as a youth. It was there at the age of 40 he received the first of the revelations from God that he transcribed into the Koran, the Islamic scripture (p. 269). Islamic scholar Ibn Rushid (Averroes) (1126-1198) applied Aristotelian logic to theological matters, concluding that truth could be discovered by reason as well as by faith, a principle known as the "double truth" doctrine (Rohmann, 1999, p. 23). Thomas Aquinas's (1225-1274) goal was the reconciliation of faith with reason (p. 23). Religious leaders through their philosophies and behavior have influenced the practice of self-reflection from early times. Martin Luther (1483-1546), a German theologian, instigated the Protestant Reformation by his belief in justification by grace of God through faith, not works. He encouraged reflection and study of the Bible as the

authoritative source of Christian doctrine (Rohmann, 1999, p. 240). Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948) drew from the Bible, Thoreau, and Tolstoy to develop the philosophy and practice of satyagraha or constructive nonviolent resistance to oppression. Another concept of his philosophy was swaraj (self-rule), implying both national and personal self-control (Rohmann, 1999, p. 157). Religious leaders encouraged reflection by example and through their writings. They have profoundly influenced history.

Many philosophers reflected about how to think and obtain knowledge (learn). Rene Descartes (1596-1650), a French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician, developed a model of thinking based on “doubting everything.” The Cartesian method, outlined in his *Discourse on Method* (1637), had four primary rules: (1) accept as truth only what is clear and without doubt, (2) divide every problem into as many parts as necessary, (3) consider each part clearly and completely, building by accrual to knowledge of the whole, and (4) omit nothing from consideration that might be a source of error (Rohmann, 1999, p. 98). John Locke (1632-1704), English philosopher and political theorist, identified experience as the source of knowledge. He described the mind as a blank slate on which experience imprints itself. To Locke, the triumph of the human mind was that in addition to sensation, shared with animals, humans were capable of reflection. Ideas obtained through sensation were combined through reflection into limitless “complex” ideas (Rohmann, 1999, p. 191). George Hegel (1770-1831) viewed history as the progressive development of human understanding toward perfect knowledge. He saw self-knowledge as a product of desire to be recognized by other human beings (Rohmann, 1999, p. 172). In the book *Principles of Psychology* (1890), William James (1842-1910) described a stream of consciousness. In this mental experience a succession of events and

perceptions flowed like a stream through consciousness. From these a few perceptions became apart of awareness (p. 322). John Dewey (1859-1952) argued that the concepts of knowledge and truth were determined by practical use and that knowledge was based on experience (Rohmann, 1999, p. 102). Jose Ortega y Gasset (1883-1955), Spanish philosopher, coined the phrase “I am I and my circumstances.” Persons were defined by their beliefs, desires, actions, and interactions. The goal of life was to “become what you are,” merging the internal and external (Rohmann, 1999, p. 290). Paulo Freire (1921-1997), the Brazilian educator who pioneered “pedagogy of the oppressed”, believed that political empowerment was obtained through literacy and social consciousness. He challenged the image of students as empty vessels into whom information was poured. He promoted a vision of education as an interactive, reflective, and dynamic process that incorporated and built on the learners’ own knowledge and experience. Working together, students shared their common experiences and built a group identity as well as self-awareness. Social consciousness (Conscientiacao) developed through praxis, the integration of action and reflection (Rohmann, 1999, p. 148)

The existentialists of the 20th century struggled for a broader view of reflection. They based their position on a universe without intrinsic meaning in which individuals must struggle to create meaning for themselves with unlimited freedom of choice (Rohmann, 1999, p. 7). From this perspective individuals must find meaning in their own existence and not in an externally imposed doctrine. Jean Paul Satre’s (1905-1980) position was that “existence precedes essence” meaning that the essential nature of a person was developed through choices (Rohmann, 1999, p. 127). Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) introduced the concept of authenticity, the idea that humans may choose to act

authentically, committing to the development of their true being, or they can sink into mundane conformity (p. 128). The existentialist view is illustrated in Albert Camus's essay on a Greek legend "The Myth of Sisyphus" (1942). A man is condemned to push a heavy stone uphill only to see it roll back down again and again.

Man stands face-to-face with the irrational. He feels within him his longing for happiness and for reason. The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world. Albert Camus, *the Myth of Sisyphus*, 1942 (in Rohmann, 1999).

Erich Fromm (1900-1980) also took an existentialist view in saying that humans occupy "a unique and problematic position in the world, part of nature and subject to its laws, but also transcending it by virtue of our self-awareness and reason" (p. 83). Hannah Arendt (1906-1975), a German-born political philosopher, believed that meaningful action depends on careful thought. She wrote a report of the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the German officer responsible for the Nazi extermination camps. She examined the "banality of evil," claiming that Eichmann's atrocities stemmed not from calculated cruelty, but from the bureaucratic mind-set in which rules and routines overcame the capacity to reflect on one's actions" (Rohmann, 1999, p. 26).

Two prominent writers of the New England Transcendentalists Period associated reflection with nature. Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), American philosopher and naturalist, practiced the ideals of individualism, self-reliance, and communion with nature (Rohmann, 1999, p. 403). His reflections are contained in the accounts he wrote, *Walden* and *Life in the Wood* (1854), during a two-year sojourn in a rustic cabin at Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts. He retreated to a solitary life in the woods to learn how to "live deliberately." He tried to seek the essential qualities of nature around him. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American essayist, lecturer, and poet, rejected

institutionalized religion, stressed communion with nature, and advocated social reform. Self-cultivation was Emerson's prime goal through development of character and abilities (Rohmann, p. 114).

Feminist authors have dedicated their efforts to collective reflection leading to women's social and political equality and personal liberation. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, (1860-1935), a leading feminist intellectual of her time, reflected upon her struggle with postpartum depression in the short story *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892) in which a housebound woman goes mad. She believed, based on her own experience, that women could never be equal or worthy partners to their husbands so long as they were confined to the home and domestic functions for which they were not suited. In her book *Women and Economics* (1896), she examined how the institutionalization of women's economic dependence on men prevented women and men from fulfilling their natural potential (Rohmann, 1999, p. 160). Carol Gilligan (1936-) differentiated between the male "justice voice" and the female "caring voice" noting that neither was superior to the other. Germain Greer (1939-) in *The Female Eunuch* (1970) charged that women are psychologically and spiritually "castrated" by patriarchy, through capitalism, nuclear families, and their own submissive self-image (Rohmann, 1999, p. 138). Other feminist authors such as Brownmiller, Butler, Davis, and MacKinnon have dealt with issues related to violence, race, and sexual orientation.

Black activists and writers also stirred the national consciousness with their reflections about the life of blacks in the United States. Frederick Douglass (1817-1895) was a former slave, American abolitionist, orator, social activist, and writer. He stressed the importance of racial pride, integrity, and self-help, while also advocating political

activism and nonviolent resistance against discrimination. He wrote an influential autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845). Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), former slave and American educator, wrote *Up from Slavery* (1901). He believed that for African-Americans the ideal of racial equality and political rights was secondary to achieving economic self-reliance and moral dignity (Rohmann, 1999, p. 423). Two other prominent African-Americans spoke out for black self-determination: William Du Bois (1868-1963) and Marcus Garvey (1887-1940).

Novelists, playwrights, and filmmakers have used reflection as a means of telling stories or presenting their perspective of issues. William Shakespeare wrote plays about the human condition of his time that continues to promote modern day reflection. Through his words he held up a mirror for the readers to view themselves and stimulated thought about actions and their consequences (Whitney, 2000).

Political leaders have acted as models of reflection throughout history. Abraham Lincoln rose from humble beginnings, educated himself, and struggled with bouts of depression possibly brought on by reflection, only to attain the 12th presidency of the United States during a brutal civil war (Abshire, 2001). The genius of his words in the Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address, derived from the Bible, Shakespeare, Burns, and Bunyon, lent an historic quality to his rhetoric and persona. Such literary mastery also gave birth to the qualities of his leadership. Lincoln was known for his “indomitable firmness, extraordinary timing, and certainty” (Abshire, 2001). He displayed introspection and reflection by his ability to make decisions without letting his ego distort his objectivity (Sherman, 1994). He was able to endure civil war, yet he is known as being a profound and genuine conciliator.

This section has presented a summary of some past reflective thinkers and writers. A broad interpretation of the concept of reflection was utilized. The impact of reflection on individuals and groups was inferred by the impact that these individuals had on society and on current thinking. The review confirms that reflection is not a new concept. The idea of “venturing outside the cave into the light” is a concept that has been repeated over and over in history. There is the suggestion that there may be methodologies that activate and cultivate the potential for leaders to use reflection. Thinking and reflecting can be activated in a learning environment.

Reflective Learning

The educational setting has been a focal point for the growth of reflective thinking due to its central role in the dissemination and development of knowledge. Educators share the goal of wanting their students to achieve a deep comprehension that synthesizes the knowledge of literal facts with critical/creative thinking (Langrehr & Palmer, 2001). Brown (1999), summarizing Dewey, united the concepts of reflection and critical thinking by stating that “Reflection guides critical thinking, so critical thinking is a reflective thinking process” (p. 171). In order to critically think, learners must be capable of organizing and regulating their thinking processes. “Thinking about thinking” or metacognition is the process of knowing when and how to use one’s thinking skills to solve problems in understanding (Wellman, 1985). “Metacognitive reflections invite thinking about thinking and help student make meaning out of events” (Costa & Kallick, 2000). Theories of student development incorporated self-reflection and the attainment of critical thinking skills.

Student development theorists describe reflective processes in the attainment of thinking skills. Chickering's seven vectors of student development identified intellectual and social maturity as a central construct and implied a reflective process Erickson, Kitchner, and King identify seven stages of reflective judgment describing how people "know" or believe and how they justify their knowledge claims and beliefs (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). "The process of forming judgments becomes increasingly complex, sophisticated, and comprehensive from lower to higher stages" (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 33). Perry's Scheme of Intellectual and Ethical development and Kohlberg's theory of moral development seek to explain cognitive and ethical growth that requires a reflective process (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Educators from the past to the present emphasize the importance of reflection in education. Dewey (1933) described a reflective person as one who constantly questioned his or her goals and behaviors, and evaluated outcomes and practice. Mezirow (1990) considered self-reflection to be a transforming process. Costa and Kallick (2000) believe that "every school's goal should be to habituate reflection throughout the organization—individually and collectively, with teachers, students and the school community." They go on to say:

In reflective schools, there is no such thing as failure---only the production of personal insights from one's experiences. To be reflective means to mentally wander through where you have been and to try to make some sense of it. (p. 2).

Educators have utilized innovative strategies to incorporate reflection. Reflective writing through journaling, portfolios, diaries and concept mapping has been widely used (Baker, 1996; Miccinati, 1988; Orem, 1997). Collaborative dialogues held between teachers, between a teacher and student, or among students cause participants to share

their reflections and outline their progress toward the mastery of learning tasks (Lee & Barnett, 1994). Types of dialogue include debriefing sessions, action learning groups, case studies, description of critical incidents and post-conferences (Hunt, 1996; Saylor, 1990; Williamson, 1997). In an atmosphere of trust well-crafted questions allow participants to reveal their insights, understandings, and thought processes (Costa & Kallick, 2000). Hole (1999) developed a guided reflection protocol to be used by teachers. The steps included: 1) what happened, 2) why did it happen, 3) what might it mean, and 4) what are the implications of practice (p. 4). A weakness in the use of reflection is the lack of a consistent way to measure outcomes of critical reflection. Kember et al. (1999) developed a scale to distinguish levels of reflection. The scale classified statements as habitual, thoughtful, or introspective (non-reflective) or as content, process or premise reflection (reflective) but the level of reflective thinking was not reported (Kember, 1999). Other examples of instruments that measure incremental levels of conceptual and reflective thought include the Hunt Paragraph Completion method, the levels of Reflectivity and the Framework for Reflective Pedagogical Thinking (Barnett, 1995).

A group of educators viewed reflective learning as a means to improve professional practice. Proponents of reflective experiential learning include Schon (1987) who distinguishes between two types of reflection: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action was a metacognitive process in which rapid interpretation of information and decision-making occurred in the midst of action. By contrast, reflection-on-action took place after the event and allows for more digestion of thought and action (Schon, 1987). Osterman (1991) suggested that reflective practice could facilitate organizational change by bringing about changes in the behaviors of individuals in those

organizations. Argyris and Schon (1974) contrasted theory and practice by contending that individuals work with two types of theories: espoused (or published) theories, which can be used to justify behavior, and implicit “theories in use, which govern actual behavior. Williams (1998) contended, “the use of reflection encouraged practitioners to make explicit the knowledge which helps them interpret practical situation (theories-in-use) and compare them with publicly acknowledged or espoused theories” (p. 5).

Research related to reflective practice is sparse. Boyd and Fales (1983) identified six stages of reflection based on numerous self-reported questionnaires and open-ended interviews of adult educators, graduate students and counselors. These stages were: (1) a sense of inner discomfort; (2) identification or clarification of the concern; (3) openness to new information from internal and external sources, with ability to observe and take in from a variety of perspectives; (4) resolution, expressed as “integration,” “coming together,” “acceptance of self-reality,” and “creative synthesis;” (5) establishing continuity of self with past, present, and future, and (6) deciding whether to act on the outcome of the reflective process (p.5). The implication drawn from the study was that “the mere naming of the process-the bringing to consciousness of what is done naturally-is a significant aid to the use of reflective learning” (Boyd & Fales, 1983, p. 7). Habermas (1973) studied the reflective process and identified three levels of reflection: 1) technical reflection, 2) practical reflection, and 3) critical reflection. Research on problem solving, a process requiring reflection, suggests that expertise requires a knowledge base that is extensive and accessible (Chi et al, 1981). Berlinger (1986) found that the mental networks of meaning (schemata) of experts included more categories, greater detail and greater interconnectedness than did the mental networks of novices. Williams (1998) developed

and piloted a postgraduate course in radiography that utilized reflective practice as a fundamental feature. Evidence of reflective practice included: (1) developing goals, rationales and learning outcomes around critical reflection, (2) completing the core module of reflective practice that were designed to enhance and regenerate the knowledge-development potential of individuals, (3) using reflective strategies embedded in all components of the curriculum (i.e., learning contracts and evaluations), and (4) engaging in dialogue with colleagues in class and in the clinical setting to share experiences and justify their actions (Williams, 1998, p. 8).

Boyd and Fales (1988) contend that experiential learning is a process and that reflective learning is the key element in learning from experience.

The process of reflection is the core difference between whether a person repeats the same experience several times, becoming highly proficient at one behavior, or learns from experience in such a way that he or she is cognitively or affectively changed” (Boyd & Fales, 1988, p. 2).

This section has examined the realm of reflective learning. Leaders gain valuable knowledge through experience and draw on experiences through reflection.

Historical Perspective of Leadership Theories and Reflection

Theories of leadership have evolved within the last century. Among the earliest was the “Great Man” theory, which dominated thinking in the middle 1800s through the early 1900s (Komivas, 1998). The theory asserted that leaders were born into families of nobility and possessed unique inherited characteristics. Darwinist thinking dominated theories of leadership in the eighteenth century (Bass, 1981). In the 1920s, trait theories grew out of the search for the cluster of traits that would determine whether a person would be a leader.

Beginning in 1907-1947 trait researchers examined personality, physical abilities, and social and work-related characteristics (Bass, 1981; Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1994). Hundreds of trait studies were conducted during the 1930s and 1940s to discover a list of qualities that guaranteed leadership success. A number of characteristics appeared to correlate with leadership: above average height and weight, an abundant reserve of energy, an ability to maintain a high level of activity, better education, superior judgment, decisiveness, a breadth of knowledge, a high degree of verbal facility, good interpersonal skills, and creativity (Bass, 1990). The notion that leaders were “born not made” did not prove to be consistently true. Research failed to reveal a list of traits that ensured leadership ability. Ralph Stogill disputed the trait theory with the premise that “persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations” (Greenwood, 2003, p. 7).

During the 1950s-1960s behavioral theories of leadership focused on what a leader did instead of what a leader was (Komivas, 1998). Ohio State and the University of Michigan conducted the premier studies on behavioral leadership (Yukl, 1994). From these studies and others came a managerial model that showed effective managers had concern for people and production, and that managerial behavior varied with the situation (Komives, 1998). This led to the development of situational contingency approaches.

Situational contingency theories proposed that leaders should vary their approach or their behaviors based on the context or situation. These theories became popular as American influence globalized, and leaders had to contend with different cultures and value systems (Lussier & Achua, 2001). Several contingency theories became popular during the 1950s through the early 1980s (Komives, 1998, p. 37). The Least Preferred Co-

worker Model explained the importance of the situation in explaining leader effectiveness (Yukl, 1994). This model distinguished task-oriented from relationship-oriented leaders (Lussier & Achua, 2001). The Path Goal Theory originated in 1957 by Georgopoulos and was advanced by Robert House in the early 1970s. This theory explained how a leader's behavior was contingent on task and subordinate's characteristics, which influenced the impact of the leader on subordinate satisfaction (Yukl, 1994).

Influence theories developed during the mid 1920 through the 1970s. These theories focused on charismatic leadership by individuals who emerged out of crisis or exhibited extraordinary vision to solve a problem (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1994). Robert House's theory of charismatic leadership failed to explain charismatics that had a negative influence on society (Yukl, 1994).

Leadership theories that emerged from the 1900s to the early 1970s were grounded in the industrial paradigm. Rost (1991) describes them as being "structural-functionalist, management-oriented, ...goal-achievement dominated, individualistic, ...male-oriented, ...materialistic and scientific in language and methodology" Rost, 1991, p. 267). Because they emphasized individualism and personal power most of these leadership theories did not emphasize reflection. Beginning in the 1970s reciprocal leadership theories emerged reflecting the postindustrial era (Komives et. al, 1998). These theories emphasized mutual goals and motivations of both followers and leaders, and elevated the importance and role of followers in the leadership process. A more reflective process was evident in these theories. Reciprocal theories were in part based on motivation theory.

Motivation theories focused on explaining and predicting behavior based on people's needs and could be applied to both leaders and followers. Three major

classifications of motivation theories were developed. Content motivation theory focused on explaining and predicting behavior based on employee needs motivation. The best known of these theories was Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory developed in the 1940s (Lussier & Achua, 2001). Four assumptions were evident in this theory: (1) Only unmet needs motivate, (2) People's needs are arranged in order of importance going from basic to complex, (3) People will not be motivated to satisfy a higher-level need unless the lower-level need(s) have been at least minimally satisfied, (4) Five classifications of needs in order were; physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs (Lussier & Achua, 2001, p. 62). Other categories of motivational theories include process motivation theories focusing on understanding how employees choose behaviors to fulfill their need, and reinforcement theory that proposed behavior could be explained and controlled through consequences. B. F. Skinner, reinforcement theorist, believed that through consequences for behavior, people were motivated to behave in a predetermined way (Lussier & Acha, 2001). Utilization of these theories required leaders to contemplate employee needs and rewards.

Reciprocal leadership theories were brought about by a shift from the industrial paradigm to the postindustrial paradigm of leadership. Changing perspectives of the world brought about changes in the postindustrial environment. The world was viewed as chaotic and not controllable (Wheatley, 1992; Stacy, 1992). Chaotic behavior was defined as inherently unpredictable, while at another level it displays a "hidden pattern" (Stacy, 1992). The chaotic world was a quantum world where the whole was considered rather than the parts. Wheatley describes a world filled with "strange attractors of meaning" (1992, p. 122). In a quantum world relationships and connections were essential.

According to Wheatley (1992), “None of us exists independent of our relationships with others (p. 34). Leaders must cultivate relationships in and out of organizations, and be aware that groups will self-organize from within (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1996). From these perceptions came new perspectives about leadership. Reciprocal theories emphasized mutual goals and motivations of followers and leaders, and elevated the importance of followers in the leadership process.

Three major reciprocal leadership theories developed in the 1970s: (1) transforming leadership, (2) servant leadership, and (3) follower-ship (Komives, 1998). James MacGregor Burns defined transforming leadership as “a process where leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). Transactional leadership satisfied the self-interests of followers, whereas transforming leadership appealed to higher ideals and moral values of both leaders and followers (Burns, 1978; Yukl, 1994). Barker (1990) believes that the most significant tool used by transformational leaders is oneself, particularly one’s self-awareness and self-development (p. 159). In the servant leadership process, both leaders and followers are stewards of the organization who dedicate themselves to taking care of the needs of the members and the needs of the organization (Block, 1993; Greenleaf, 1997). Proponent of this theory Robert Kelley (1992), described leaders and followers as having equally important but different activities. He stated that organizational success was due to effective follower-ship and effective leadership (1992).

Changes in perspective from the industrial to the postindustrial era have altered perceptions of leadership. The evolution of leadership theory reveals advancement

towards a more inclusive and relational process. Reflection is viewed as significantly contributing to the success of leaders in this new environment.

Reflective Leadership

Reflective leadership combines the concepts of self-awareness, behavioral competency, and job competency. Each concept will be examined with relevant research reviewed, and then brought together in the reflective leadership model.

Leadership authors stressed the importance of self-awareness and self-knowledge. Kouzes and Posner (1995) stated that “The mastery of the art of leadership comes with the mastery of the self. Ultimately, leadership development is a process of self-development” (p. 336). They go on to say, “Personal soul searching is essential in the development of leaders. You can’t elevate others to higher purposes until you’ve first elevated yourself” (p. 339). Daniel Goleman (2000) included self-awareness as a component of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence referred to “a different way of being smart. It is not your IQ – it’s how well you manage yourself and your relationships, how well you can work on a team, your ability to lead, your capacity to anticipate the future” (p. 19). The components of emotional intelligence included: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Goleman (2000, 2001) based his belief that behavioral competency (emotional intelligence) was more essential to the leadership role than job competency on studies done on business executives at Fortune 500 companies. Self-awareness was defined as “knowing what we are feeling in the moment, and using those preferences to guide our decision-making: having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a well grounded sense of self-confidence” (Goleman, 1998, p. 318). Komives et al. (1998) stated “leadership self-awareness grows when you can identify your personal

strengths and weaknesses in working with others toward change” (p.110). Leadership was viewed as a relational process of people together attempting to accomplish change or make a difference to benefit the common good (Komives et al., 1998).

Because leadership was viewed within a relational context the behavioral competencies of leaders were essential. Burns (1978) elevated the importance of values and ethics in the leadership process through his theory of transforming leadership. He noted that “ The ultimate test of moral leadership is its capacity to transcend the claims of multiplicity of everyday wants and needs and expectations, to respond to the higher levels of moral development, and to relate leadership behavior – its roles, choices, style, commitments – to a set of reasoned relatively explicit, conscious values” (p. 46).

Ethical leadership requires human judgment and analysis and is achieved through decision-making models that can be used by leaders and participants to collaboratively resolve ethical dilemmas. Rest’s (1986) decision-making model had four components: (1) interpreting the situation as moral, (2) defining the morally ideal course of action, (3) deciding what to do, and (4) executing and implementing a moral plan of action. Beauchamp and Childress (1979) proposed five principles of biomedical ethics commonly used in the helping professions. These principles were: (1) respecting autonomy, (2) doing no harm, (3) benefiting others, (4) being just, and (5) being faithful. Nash (1987) proposed a model of questions to use when faced with a problem or dilemma.

Several processes in addition to moral decision-making were essential to relational, transforming leadership. These included collaboration, cooperation, reflection, feedback, civil confrontation, community building, and trust. Goleman (2002) stressed the importance of behavioral competency in compiling two years of research which revealed

that before leaders could turn to setting strategy, fixing budgets or hiring staff, they had to first attend to the impact of their moods and behavior on the people they worked with. High levels of emotional intelligence created climates in the work place that stimulated information sharing, trust, healthy risk-taking, and learning. Low levels of emotional intelligence created climates of fear and anxiety (Goleman, 2002).

Job competency was another component of the reflective leadership model.

Koestenbaum (2000) described job competence as specialty skills, and know-how about work. Marquardt (2000) notes that:

What has become increasingly clear to almost every organization is that our new century demands new kinds of leaders with new skills. Leadership styles and skills that may have worked in a more stable predictable environment of the twentieth century will be inadequate in this new era of uncertainty and rapid change where we can hardly define the problem much less engineer possible solutions” (p. 1).

Daudelin (1986) pointed out that studies have shown that the day-to-day experiences of managers as they confront challenges and problems on the job are rich sources of learning – perhaps more appropriate “classroom” than academic venues. Jacques (1989) asserted that leaders must have the “learning how to learn” skill, the opportunity to learn, and the capacity to learn. Dechant (1990) found in her research that the ability to learn was an important competency of leadership. Action learning, according to Marquardt (2000), derives its power from the fact that it does not isolate any dimension from the context in which managers work, “It develops the whole leader for the whole organization” (p. 1). Learning while on the job allows leaders to develop problem-solving skills as they experience situations requiring those skills. Studies of problem solving expertise by principals (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1992) resulted in a model outlining the problem-solving process. This model included the steps of: (1) problem interpretation, (2) goals for

problem-solving, (3) underlying principles and values, (4) constraints, (5) solution processes, and (6) effect (p. 3). The concepts of job competency, behavioral competency, and self-awareness are brought together through reflection.

Reflection has been identified as an invaluable tool for leaders. Bennis (1989) stated that “to look forward with acuity you must first look back with honesty” (p.62) Gunn (1999) defines reflection as:

The art of listening to our inner voice for insights about a question, and accessing intelligence that may be beyond our personal knowledge or experience. It is the process of quieting our mind sufficiently to frame a question, seeing what insights occur by listening to ourselves, and then taking those insights to a deeper level of understanding.

Boyd and Fales (1983) view reflection as the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changed conceptual perspective (p. 100). Williams merges these two perspectives in stating “reflection is a theory of metacognition which directs skilled behavior during professional activity or assists in the deliberative processes which occur during problem solving” (p. 5). In a study of successful leaders Bennis (1989) observed that effective leaders encouraged “reflective backtalk.” They knew the importance of truth telling and encouraged their colleagues to reflect honestly what they think they saw or heard. Conceptual models and theoretical frameworks have been developed to describe the reflective process.

Theories of reflection used in leadership have commonalities. Daudelin (1986) describes reflection as progressing through four stages: (1) articulation of a problem, (2) analysis of that problem, (3) formulation and testing of a tentative theory to explain the problem, and (4) action or deciding whether to act (p. 40). Ross (1989) outlines a similar

process in five steps: (1) identify the problem/issue, (2) respond to the problem by determining similarities to other situations and unique features of the situation, (3) frame and reframe the problem/issue, (4) anticipate possible consequences and implication for various solution to the problem/issue, and (5) determine whether the anticipated consequences are desired. Goleman (2002) identified a five-part process of self-questioning that leaders could use to reflect gain self-awareness. This process included asking questions: (1) Who do I want to be? (2) Who am I now? (3) How do I get from here to there? (4) How do I make change stick? and (5) Who can help me? (p.7). Smyth (1989) suggested that reflection requires four processing actions: (1) clearly describe what one does, (2) consider what it means to practice professionally, (3) confront how their practice evolve, and (4) reconstruct their practice for improvement. All these methods utilize Socratic questioning as frame for reflection. Questions were one of the most basic and powerful elements of the reflection experience (Daudelin, 1987). Other strategies have been used to encourage reflection.

Reflection can be solitary or within groups. Daudelin (1987) gives examples of solitary reflection: spontaneous thinking during rhythmic, repetitive, mindless physical exercise (jogging, swimming laps, mowing the lawn) or routine habits (driving an established route, showering, shaving), meditation, prayer, journal writing, business writing (project reports, professional papers, evaluation) assessment instruments (p. 42). Examples of reflection with a helper or small groups include: performance appraisal discussions, counseling sessions, individual or group therapy, problem solving meetings, project review session, informal discussions with friends/colleagues, interviews, mentoring and feedback discussions (p. 42). Daudelin conducted a study to determine

which of three ways of reflecting, alone, with a helper, or in a small group was most effective in helping managers enhance learning from challenging work experiences. Both individual and helper groups had statistically greater significance than the control group (p. 44). Short and Rinehart (1993) found that the capacity of educational administrators to reflect was enhanced when they used reflective group process and journaling. Shapiro and Stefkovich (1994) combined reflective journals and educational platforms in an important approach to reflection on personal and professional codes of ethics for administrators.

Past research on reflection and leadership focused on reflective problem solving and not on the personal process of self-reflection. Current leadership literature strongly supports the use of reflection, but few research studies investigate the process of reflection. There is a need to examine the experience of self-reflective leaders. The focus of the study was a holistic examination of reflective leadership. Asking community college presidents to describe their experience of reflection will expand understanding of the leadership role.

CHAPTER III

Introduction

This chapter describes the research method I selected for the study of reflective presidential leadership. Included is an explanation of (a) the research design and rationale, (b) the participants, (c) the data collection, and (d) the data analysis.

Research Design and Rational

The purpose of this study was to uncover the process used by community college presidents to reflect in their roles as educational leaders. To achieve understanding and analysis of the process of reflection in the leadership role, I chose a qualitative research paradigm so that I could examine the meaning of the presidents' experiences. Patton (1990) describes qualitative research as emphasizing the inductive strategies of theory development, rather than theory generated by logical deduction from a prior assumption. Using a qualitative paradigm allowed me to be open to emerging complexities and multiple perspectives of the concept of self-reflection.

I was drawn to the qualitative tradition of phenomenology because it emphasized subjectivity and discovery of the essences of experiences (Husserl, 1965.) Creswell (1998) states that the phenomenological approach translates into "an approach of studying a problem that includes entering the field of perception of participants; seeing how they experience, live and display the phenomenon: and looking for the meaning of the participants' experiences" (p.31). Moustakas (1994) stated, "The method of reflection that

occurs throughout the phenomenological approach provides a logical, systematic, and coherent resource for carrying out the analysis and synthesis needed to arrive at essential descriptions of experience” (p. 47). In this phenomenological study, truth was not the goal; but rather truth was found for each individual through personally held knowledge and/or experiences of self-reflection. I considered each participant leader individually to determine how they viewed their world and their perception of their reality. I think that the emphasis placed on reflection as a process through which the “stream of experience” can be grasped and analyzed in the light of its own evidence fit with a study of the process of self-reflection (Husserl, 1931, p. 219).

The structural meanings of the experience of self-reflection were described as a process. According to Patton (1990), qualitative methods are capable of examining a process. The reasons, according to Patton (1990), included: (a) interviews produce in-depth descriptions that can reveal the intricacies of a process, (b) a process varies from one individual to another, and face-to-face interviews captured unique differences, (c) a process is flowing and dynamic requiring a research method that described gradations and differences, and (d) perceptions are a critical issue when assessing a process. I was able to do face-to-face interviews with the presidents that produced in-depth interviews and descriptions reflecting the nuances of their perceptions of self-reflection. Based on these assumptions qualitative inquiry was chosen to explore the process of self-reflection in order to uncover the richness and depth of data that would be difficult to assess with quantitative studies.

Participants

This section explains the sampling process for selection of participants, and the procedures for contacting the participants.

Sampling

I chose participants for my study that were community college presidents at public community colleges in the United States. My advisor, a former community college president, and a peer, a respected community college vice-president, identified an initial sampling pool of three reflective presidents. The presidents were chosen because they had a reputation among their colleagues for being self-reflective. This process fit Patton's description of purposive sampling in qualitative research. The term "reflective president" was not defined and was left open to emerge in the study.

After the first three presidents were identified the sampling continued through what Patton calls a "snowball effect" to a total of eight community college presidents in different regions of the United States (1990, p. 176). The nominated sample recommended other presidents based on their reputation for being self-reflective. The final sample of eight presidents included equal numbers of males and females of different racial backgrounds in different part of the United States. Three presidents declined to participate due to scheduling conflicts. Saturation of data was achieved at eight presidents.

Procedures

The first step in contacting the presidents was to look up their phone numbers on their college websites. In addition to finding the phone number of the president's offices, I was able to learn information about the colleges they served. I then contacted the president's office, communicating with the president's assistant. I explained the study, and

asked for a fax number in order to send a letter introducing myself with the consent form. Developing a genuine relationship with the president's assistant was instrumental in getting the interview. I kept careful notes of names, phone numbers, and fax numbers obtained from my phone calls. After faxing information about the study and a biographical survey, I waited several days before calling the assistant back to ensure that everything had arrived. Following that contact, I called within one week to confirm the president's participation. In some cases I waited several weeks to receive participant confirmation due to the fact they were out of town or extremely busy. Arrangements for dates and times of the interviews were made with the presidents' assistants. The assistants also gave recommendations for hotels in the area and provided parking passes to make traveling to the campuses easier. After setting up the interview, I asked for the president's email address so that I could confirm the date, time, and place of the interview. Some of the interviews were made months ahead so I made sure that an email was sent to confirm the meeting a week ahead. Some of the consent forms and biographical surveys were faxed back immediately, while others were collected at the time of the interview. Following the interview I sent an email thanking the president, and reiterating that I would be sending a copy of the transcript for their approval.

Data Collection

I was able to interview the presidents face-to-face on their campuses due to a generous grant from the Stryker Leadership Institute. The grant allowed me to travel to different parts of the country and conduct presidential interviews in offices of the community colleges. Meeting the presidents in person afforded me the opportunity to make a personal connection with them, and experience the environment of the campuses.

These experiences helped in developing field notes that added depth to the interviews. The length of the interviews was one to one and a half hours. I used an open interview format in order to encourage participants to describe their experiences in their own words, and to allow them to share their professional and personal stories. I avoided prompting the participants, and did not rush their responses. Participants were given time to think and ponder. Permission was obtained to audiotape the interviews. Two tape recorders were used in the event of a malfunction.

Grand tour questions included:

1. How do you experience self-reflection in your role as a community college president?
2. What are the key ingredients of your self-reflective process?

Data Analysis

I transcribed the interviews and reviewed them for nuances important to the study. Transcribing the interviews was helpful in becoming familiar with the data. Field notes were added to augment the transcripts and make them as complete as possible. Field notes were descriptive and reflective in nature as recommended by Creswell (1994). I included descriptions of the settings, portraits of the informants, and accounts of happenings during the interviews. My reflections included “speculation, feelings, problems, ideas, hunches, impressions, and prejudices” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). I then combined participant statements with field notes to add texture and richness to the data.

After transcribing the interviews, I read through each interview several times to get a holistic perspective of each participant’s experience. I was concerned that analyzing the data would break up the interviews and lose the meanings and intent of the presidents’

words. To honor them, I decided to craft profiles of each participant's experience of self-reflection. Profiles are composites of the most compelling quotes of the interviews combined in a way that captures the depth and intensity of the participant's experiences. The profiles were created using Seidman's (1991) recommendations.

To analyze the data I used Moustakas's method of phenomenological reduction. Key concepts were horizontalized and then clustered together in meaning units using a five-column method in word-processing. I studied the codes looking for overlapping concepts and patterns, which might support emerging themes. NVivo software supported my identification of codes that emerged from the interviews. As a part of my personal process I drew diagrams connecting different aspects of the data. I also created clipart pictures to fashion a holistic image of each participant. The participant's perceptions were examined for commonalities as well as discrepancies. This process enabled me to arrive inductively at three core themes: mindfulness, discovery, and authenticity. The more I studied the data the more I was able to see supporting themes, which gave structure and credence to the core themes.

After identifying the themes I created an imaginary conversation between the presidents in which they talk to each other sharing their impressions and experiences of self-reflection. This technique, shared in Chapter V, uses me as the moderator. The presidents never actually met, but they come together in a type of virtual environment. The section "moderator aside to the reader" allows the reader to experience how I developed the themes. A summary statement at the conclusion of each theme brought the key concepts together. The essence of reflective leadership was brought together in Chapter VI as a metaphorical story.

Trustworthiness of Study

Six procedures were incorporated in this study to address the issues of trustworthiness. These procedures included (1) clarification of researcher bias, (2) compilation of a reflexive journal, (3) diagrams and pictures, (4) member checking, (5) audit trail, and (6) peer examination. Each of these procedures is explained in more depth.

Clarification of Researcher Bias

Rubin and Rubin (1995) state that the researcher must discern her own mindset, values and biases before she can begin to understand the world of others. In order to understand my personal biases impacting the study of self-reflection, I attempted to identify past experiences, biases, and prejudices that impacted the interpretation and methodology of the study (Creswell, 1998). To address this issue, I used the process of “Epoche” to create a favorable tone and bond with the participants. “Epoche” is a method that sets aside personal values, biases, and pre-judgments in an attempt to open up the research interview (Moustakas, 1994). It was an intricate part of this study because it embraced the very idea of self-reflection. Moustakas shares this by saying

This way (Epoche) of perceiving life calls for looking, noticing, becoming aware, without imposing our prejudgment on what we see, think, imagine, or feel. It is a way of genuine looking that precedes reflective ness, the making of judgments, or reaching conclusions. We suspend everything that interferes with fresh vision. We simply let what is there stand as it appears, from many angles, perspectives, and signs.

The process of “Epoche,” allowed me to assume an attitude that helped me be open to what unfolded from the data.

Reflexive Journal

A reflexive journal traced the process of data collection and was composed of field-notes obtained from traveling to interview the presidents. These field notes contained

rich descriptions of the settings, portraits of the informants and accounts of happenings during the interviews. I kept separate notes in a notebook about the data categorization process, connection between categories, and questions about the data as the study progressed.

Diagrams and Pictures

Diagrams were extremely helpful in the analysis stage of the research process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I drew numerous diagrams of the categories that developed from the coding process, which enabled me to determine their relationship to the emerging themes and concepts. To explain my vision of the themes, I created clipart images to present a holistic view of the presidents' experience of self-reflection, and aided in sharing my perceptions with others.

Member Checking

Member checking was a way to determine accuracy of transcribed data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Audiotapes of the interviews were transcribed and a copy sent to the participants to verify the accuracy of information. I also sent profiles of the presidents drawn from the interviews. The profiles were compilations of the most significant quotes taken from the interviews. The clipart pictures were also sent to the presidents for their review and critique. Modifications were made based on participant feedback.

Audit Trail

Reliability was addressed by the use of an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Audiotapes, verbatim transcripts, and field notes were used to record the researcher's ideas; observations, interpretations and impressions at the outset of each interview are available for other researchers to evaluate. This "trail" allows another individual to

uncover and locate the steps of the researcher to verify and/or comprehend the sources of the results.

Peer Examination

Peer examination was used as a means of achieving trustworthiness. I chose peers within my doctoral cohort and professional colleagues to review my data and analysis. Their critique was a means of reviewing the findings as they emerged.

In summary, six procedures, including (1) clarification of researcher bias, (2) compilation of a reflexive journal, (3) diagrams and pictures, (4) member checking, (5) audit trail, and (6) peer examination served to provide trustworthiness for this study.

CHAPTER IV

Introduction

After transcribing and coding interviews of eight community college presidents I was concerned that analyzing the data would break up the interviews and lose the intent and meaning of the president's words. To honor them, I crafted profiles of each participant's experience of self-reflection. Profiles are a composite of the most compelling quotes of the interview combined in a way that captures the depth and intensity of the participant's experiences. The profiles were created using Seidman's (1991) recommendations in the following manner: (a) I read each interview several times highlighting the significant quotes, (b) I cut and pasted the highlighted sections into one transcript, (c) I crafted a first-person narrative from the highlighted sections, and (d) I changed some grammatical structures (e.g., verb tense) and added words in order to keep the flow of the narrative. I retained the participant's words verbatim when possible. Using this technique allowed me to retain authenticity of the president's words.

After completing the profiles I conducted a "member check." Participants were emailed a copy of their profile and asked to read it and give written feedback specifically noting anything they wanted changed or added. By collaborating with the participants, I accomplished two things: (1) a reduction in the distance between myself and the participants, and (2) an increase in the credibility and trustworthiness of this study (Ely, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1987; Seidman, 1991.)

The profiles appear in the order that the interviews were conducted. The introduction to each profile includes the presidents pseudonyms, a title that summarizes their interview, and a description of the size and diversity of the campuses they served.

President Sarah
“Big Picture Thinking”

A Caucasian female president from an institution of 7,000 students in the west with a student body of 60% Caucasian, 30% Native American, and 10% Hispanic

I think probably I experience self-reflection in bits and starts – when I’m driving to work or when I’m exercising or at three o’clock in the morning when I can’t sleep, like this morning. The ingredients of self-reflection... frequently they are cued by a challenge, a problem, an issue at work. I find myself in those private times being more able to back off and get a holistic picture of the institution, and to try and compare various options against my personal value set, if you will, and trying to think through the consequences of actions or behaviors. I strive to behave as an authentic leader, an authentic person. I frequently measure actions and choices against my value set, and not just my spoken value set, but also my values set as I try to live my life. And so I am always, whenever I have a tough decision, trying to balance those things.... does this fit, does this continue to fulfill my value set. And I can't do that when I am in the midst of things. So I have to pull away and do it when I am alone.

I think I spent more formal time reflecting when I was doing graduate studies. One, there were cues to think about my values, my concerns, my aims, my goals, and how I fit into a context but.... it is harder with the push of the daily job. The cues are frequently there but you have to be real intentional about taking the time, and that is really hard as president.... to take that time. So it tends to just happen when I am alone, which isn't very

often.... when I'm driving in the car, when I'm rocking my little boy to sleep, when I'm exercising and those sorts of things.

Once in a while, in the early days, when I was first a president, I would bounce those things off of my spouse. He is a long time educator. And that was useful; I don't do that so much anymore. I think because our interests and our understandings of organizations have evolved, as I have been a president for a longer time. So I tend to do it alone more.

The guiding principle that I have spoken of frequently to all of my direct reports in that every decision ought to be seen through the lens of what is best for our students. Other values... I am deeply committed to personal growth of employees at the college. Another value that is very important to me is teamwork. Teamwork is an overused word but truly a collegial approach...we are a strong institution, we bring everybody to the table. It is messy, it takes longer, but decision-making needs to have as much involvement at the broadest base possible.

Joy, it ought to be fun to come to work, not just for me, but for the people that I get to work with. The last value, although this is not in any priority or order, would be focusing on my role as a steward. I'm not always as consistent as I'd like to be but that is where I strive.

The biggest issues that I have reflected upon as a new president are change management and change leadership; how to help this institution integrate change behaviors into its ongoing behavior. There are many changes that I see and that our board sees that need to happen. It is about changing the culture of the institution so that it welcomes change rather than feeling forced.

Particularly over the last six months my reflection has been on changing the culture, and I expect it will be there for some time to come. I ask myself “How do I do that, how do I model it, what kind of questions do I ask, which challenges do I tackle, which ones do I leave alone for awhile?” It is kind of my internal checklist of things I need to do. I see the college as becoming one that is much more self-managing, and self-renewing, much more collegial. I truly want to help the college push decision-making to the lowest possible level for any particular decision. One of my goals for the college is to help the college meet and exceed the expectations all its constituents.

For the most part, over the first few months here, I have reflected alone. I had a similar role in my previous college. I’ve worked and made lots of mistakes in helping a college evolve and change its culture. I see a lot of parallels between the two. In many ways it is applying lessons learned this time around, rather than stumbling I hope quite as much.

I think also a couple of my touchstones are a couple of wonderful mentors that I have had over the years. I am a watcher of people. Not only the mentors, but also you learn as much from the weak folks that you worked for as you do from the strong. I continually attempt to compare my behavior, my words, and my ability or inability to provide vision against those folks that I look up to.

Those folks who did not do it well and frankly were burned were people who thought that or behaved as though, I don’t know what they thought, but behaved as though since they were president they obviously knew all the answers and other that's folks needed to follow their direction even if it was against their own judgment.

What I learned from the strong ones is just the mirror image of that. They were inclusive people, they were very caring, they were very authentic, what you saw was what you got twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. They were real committed to the missions of their institutions and their students. And it was *about* the institutions and *about* the students and not about them as president or chancellor.

Reflection for me is on a couple of different levels. There are the big issue levels of what fits my values set and those really personal things and no.... and that I do alone and I would not be comfortable in making myself that vulnerable.

We spend a lot of time reflecting on how things will be perceived, how we help people understand the intent, how we keep folks from developing anxiety. Those tend to be more operational kinds of reflection rather than personal. And I guess I probably also use that kind of interaction with my senior staff to communicate who I am and what I believe... but also to help to coach them to help build their leadership skills to make sure they are reflecting or at least thinking about the impact of their actions and decisions. Because I think we probably don't always think things through as well as we might, so I think I can help them by asking those questions.

What I hope to get to, maybe not in that specific session, but long-term, is that I see indications for example that my vice presidents are asking some of those longer-term, impact questions, particularly from a human perspective, of a values laden perspective, before they get to me. That we get to a point where I'm not always the only one that says "Well now how is that going to make instruction feel?" or "How is that going to be perceived in the community?"

Part of my role is to help them continue to grow their skill set on reflection...big picture thinking. Maybe that's what those books mean by reflection...big picture thinking. I had never in my life had any interactions with any minority population. It was a major growth experience for me; I learned to be a much better teacher.

My husband and I have always felt the raising of our children in communities with a variety of cultures and colors would help prepare them for a world that we won't see. So I embrace diversity; I love the art, I love the music.

I want to grow the support systems of the Native American students. They still are predominantly first generation-college, and unfortunately many of them come under-prepared. Also I also want to enrich the experiences for faculty and staff.... to help understand the cultural differences so that we can better provide learning experiences. It is not a one size fits all whether it's Native Americans or African American or Hispanic students. There are cultural barriers and cultural access points and we've got to figure what those are ... because it is our job to provide that access and if we are arrogant enough to assume that everybody learns like we do then ... we aren't doing an adequate job.

It is hard to find focused time to reflect. But it tends to be, if I've got an issue...I find the time. Like this morning, I was awake at three o'clock. My body seems to make me do it. . It is particularly difficult if I am not feeling well physically. Reflection seems to come natural when I'm doing physical activity.

My life as a president is pretty crazy. Fortunately I have the energy for it and I work on it and I have good control of my own calendar. The place doesn't impact me in terms of self-reflection. The being alone and not interfacing with other people is more important than the place. It is much more internal. One of the things that is hard to explain

to someone who has not done this job, but for me anyway, this job is constant interaction with people.

Because it is such a drain that it's kind of how I renew my energy...is being alone. I've learned to do it in the grocery store. My rule is that mama goes to the grocery store alone because there are so few places that I don't *have* to be part of an interaction that takes energy for me. And that is renewing for me. I also like to cook I do lots of thinking what I cook. For me I take the time whenever I'm alone... I don't need a place.

Maybe that's one of the few blessings of passing your fiftieth birthday. You know you're never going back and you've got what you've got! I think also with the number of kids that we have been able to have ...we've learned to be focused on other rather than self.

Troubling reflections cause a lot of anxiety my stomach hurts. It is a physical feeling when I'm troubled, there's a lot of anxiety there is a lot of stress I think that's probably why I've taken to reflecting when I exercise because the exercising is really a stress reliever. If I've got a hard problem I will just take off and walk three miles. I can usually work through the alternatives and come up with concrete behaviors that I want to handle, that I want to display. And I feel less stressed and calm. I tend to couple physical activity with the really hard (decisions) ones.

If I were to give advise about reflection I would advise presidents to..not skip it. They've got to find their own way to do it to whether it is with physical exercise, going to that special place in the mountains. If they truly are going to be an authentic leader than they have to measure their behaviors and their choices and their words against a core set of values, and they need to do it regularly. That is part of being a leader. You can't lead

anybody unless you know where you want to go and where you want the organization to go, and you can only do that by thinking about your experiences and your values.

One of the things I suggested to my vice president who aspires to the presidency in order to express her values, it would be really helpful for her to be able to give examples of her decision making. When somebody asks “What kind of a decision maker are you?” you don’t go to the textbook description of the types autocratic and yada yada yada... what you need to do is to say, “Well we had this kind of decision last week and these are the things I did.” She really puzzled over that advice for about ten days and then she came back about ten days right before she went to the interview and said “You know I thought about it and I was able to come up with a lot of examples.” But she wasn't in the habit of the thinking that way. She was very academic in her approach. So making it personal, understanding who you are and what's important and being able to stand up and say this is who I am.

President Helen
“Transparency”

A Hispanic female president of a community college of 9,192 students in the south with a student body of 47.3 % white, 18.7% Hispanic and 14.5% African American and .6% Native American

I think about (self-reflection) in terms of a combination of things in terms of the roles of the president. Some of it is very private and as we go through our days we are so busy and it can be so hectic that it's like you almost have to protect some time or try to identify those best times when you have an opportunity to..... settle down, if you would, and center yourself and think about.... what in the world am I doing... and why am I doing this and what do I value and how is that being imparted? So part of that self-reflection and that process has to do with first of all, acknowledging the need for it and

recognizing that you do have time or you have to make time to stop and think...because we're so hectic in our society. And I think some of it is best described, for me anyway... as thinking out loud with other people, which I think is another aspect of self reflection...which means okay...this is what it looks like to me. I need for you guys to react. It's kind of putting thinking out there that gives you a chance to think. Sometimes when you say things out loud you may be thinking them but until you say things out loud you don't necessarily realize either where you are personally or conceptually. Sometimes it can be a surprise. I'm thinking this but when I said it, it really made it clearer...

I use techniques from the "Master Student" which is a book by David Ellis. It was a student orientation process and there were several things that he talked about there that I have found to be useful tools for self- reflection or thinking. Those had to do with mind maps because sometimes thinking, for me anyway, is very relational, "How are things related?" So sometimes I have to draw pictures for myself about how things are related. I write, I do these little maps and I also draw. So that's just another way to try describe or communicate whatever the phenomenon is that you're dealing with at the time. there is time to be quiet,...which in our society is probably rare or at least it's not necessarily recognized as important.... There is discomfort that comes around quiet. Those are the things that are for me tools that I use it and not necessarily only limited to tools...they are ways of approaching work, problem solving, and people.

When you do this kind the work of a (community college president) there has to be some kind of an anchor if you will, some kind of a basis upon which you react or interact with the world. You have to be who you are. Values are really important not only in self- reflections but also in terms of trying to create the culture of the organization and to

reinforce the culture.... What we care about? What we value? What is the organization basing its decision-making upon...the implementation of the work? What values underlie the organization? And then is the leader consistent with or do the leader's values match the organization's values? That is important because if they don't, it doesn't work very well. And then as a leader am I being consistent with what I say I value? People will acknowledge and recognize when there is an inconsistency as well as when there is consistency.

I began my first couple of months as the president of the college going to 44 different workgroups and groups of students to say, "What do you care about and what do you value?" Let's see if we can write it down and all of this was somewhat like a data analysis to identify the themes that emerged from the things that the people here told me. That is another aspect of reflection.... Values are really, really important, and it's really important to articulate them not only personally but for the organization..

(The most important value) that I've just described is authenticity...being who you are. I must say there were times early when I was first a dean when...it wasn't me.... But I was following the models that I had up to that time in terms of how people lead. It was kind of a unique situation because I was the only female, the only Hispanic who had attained that particular level of responsibility in the organization. The models that I had, and I don't mean to demean them.... the models that I had were all white males whose styles were very, very different from who I was.... But I thought that that was the only way to do things. Be confrontational!.... Draw the line.... Don't let people mess with you! And so it wasO. K.... I can't let them know I'm worried because then it will be a sign of weakness. Can't let them know that I disagree or that I'm not sure.... Because

then... oh my gosh... that's no good...you don't do that ... stand your ground and all that kind of stuff. Trying to implement that particular style, when inside me I was thinking... this doesn't feel good.... I don't necessarily feel that I need to hide or that I need to tell somebody that I am worried ...that I don't know or that I'm not sure about next steps. It was a very uncomfortable way to exist and probably a very stressful way to exist. So how do I deal with this? Well... maybe I ought to just be honest and tell them where I am. there is a concept there that he talked about in terms of transparency.... Be transparent. Let them know you are a human being and who you are. So let's try that on for size.... and so I tried it on for size.... I took a chance.... I'm not sure... what do you think.... I'm worried.... I don't know...lets see if that'll fly and be honest with my feelings and what I am struggling with? ... and ... by golly it worked !... for me that worked. Let people know who you are and then they will work with you. That was just a much more comfortable model for me and I think that it was a very helpful realization for me... to know who you are, to know what you care about, to know what you value... tell people... share it. They realize that they can relax as well. It makes for a much better situation.

Coming to the realization that a) I do not have all the answers, and b) sometimes what I think is the answer has holes in it! And so I need people to help me shoot holes in it. I really need that interaction with people and that interface and that reflection in terms of speaking out loud with other people. (I choose people to reflect with based on) expertise, sometimes by probably.... interpersonal relationships that say to me your somebody that I really have a lot of confidence and trust in. Sometimes randomly by whose convenient, who can I... come over here I got to think about this Come tell me what you think. It may not be anything that they have been concerned about. All those

different ways to select people like grab them in say let's think about this. For my staff I think it has been different...

I know that I have a seven percent cut to deal with. It is really important for me to begin the brainstorming process. I could have looked at the budget and said... cut here, here and here and on the next thing. But now my staff has to invest some time with me in thinking about how are we going to do this, where does it make the most sense and at this point it is a small circle because the other part of it is you don't want panic going on all over the place, you want to be reasonable and think through the problem that you are trying to solve. So we start with a small group and I met with several and then when I went to lunch it was more of a discussion group about how do we deal with this, what you think, what are your ideas... it will be a larger circle next week with my president's cabinet. So the circle just keeps getting bigger. And so by the time I get finished thinking about it, I have looked at it from a lot of different angles and people have looked at it with me and we may have some viable solutions and some stuff that I might never even would have thought about. So it's that kind of thinking with people, it takes more times, it is more time intensive. There is a greater investment of energy and effort and so I also have to watch myself because there are some things to do merit a quick decision. So I got to balance it and say I don't need to be wasting people's time on that even though it's nice and comfortable for me to stop and think about it for two weeks with a bunch of people! That is part of the challenge in terms of ... you don't want to wear people out that you want to save them for the big issues.

(When I am dealing with troubling reflection it means) coming back to.... What do we care about? How do we take care of our students? First touch base with the values...

then wrestling with who can bring light to the problem solving. And then part of it is ultimately there is some things that I have to decide and so there are times when I'll listen, we've talked, I'd heard, I've looked at the angles and I have some choices. So when I'm struggling with that particular kind of thing is probably when I sit down and I'll write and I'll draw, I need quiet... oftentimes I'll do that in the middle of the night. I'll wake up in the middle of the night.... I've got to do something here.... I've got to make a decision... and I have paper and pen. Sometimes it's early in the morning, on the weekend... it's when you are totally disengaged from being at the job, and being at work when that kind of thinking surfaces.

One place (I reflect) is my kitchen table. It is one of those kinds of butcher height... it is a higher table.... It is a big space where I can sit and write.... And there's a little garden right outside the window of the kitchen that has lots of wildflowers and bird feeders. Which is neat because then I feel that I can look out and see the birds coming to get something to eat or some water from the water fountain there. It is a peaceful place. My car is another place where I think. I like to go fishing and so out on the lake on the boat is another neat place. I reflect most often on the weekends whenever the weather is good. I have a very dear friend who has a boat and we'll go out on the lake and then again it's a very natural setting. If I have been to a conference, if I have been in this huge discussion about something, if I have seen something on television that really catches my eyes and I'm thinking.... wow this has implications for my college or if I have taken a bunch of notes at some point. I am thinking I need to have a recorder in the car that I can click on as I used to do when I when I was doing my dissertation research, to just spit it out! And then have a chance later to go back and refine and think and build it ...or clarify

it... there is some frustration on my part related to that place and time to reflect because.... for me if I were to structure my day in the ideal way or my life experiences not even just my day or how life rolls along... after these high stimulation times I would love for people just to leave me alone and for me to be able to stop and look at what I've written and what I have thought about that and have a chance to crystallize it but.... too many things back to back. I do think probably some of what I call byproducts or some of the concepts and ideas that came to the surface at some point right after these kinds of experiences are lost. I think I lose a bunch of ideas because I haven't had time to stop and captured them.

(Music is another way of reflecting it) It is almost like needing another form of expression that brings forth additional thinking and awareness I find that I have to be in the mood to reflect so even if I structure time.... nothing comes because I am not in the mood. I may be tired or distracted or something.

An example of reflection is my effort to look at re-organization of continuing education at the college.) . One day I sat down and thought how am I going to explain how I am thinking about this and what do I really think about it? And so I did and it's a tree... and so I put it together and I said what you think this is describe what we're trying to figure out here? So (the tree is) a model and it shows relationships and (how to describe them) to other people so that they can be on the same page. (I will use this reflection) to describe to the group that there will be a major change in their lives. I am going to propose a consolidation of what has been distributed throughout the college in terms of our continuing education. So now I need for them to try to understand how I think about the different functions. I've already sat with them and said this is how it looks to me, tell me

does if it make any sense to you... I don't know how we are going to organize but I know that these are the ways in which we do things. Now let's talk about how do we put it together for the college?

(When I think about the internal place of self-reflection I think of Parker Palmer.)

Parker Palmer is talking about the internal landscape or environment (that is) what made me come to that realization that there is something happening inside. (It is about a) an awareness of how I am interpreting the stimulation (that I am) experiencing everyday. Dave Ellis (in the Master Student describes), the power processes and he defines eight of them in his book and one of them is called "be here now." It has to do with mindfulness and being in the moment and being present. It was like my first awareness that there is something more happening internally... stop and look at it and so that one is one aspect. Parker Palmer has also done a whole lot of work in terms of helping people, if you would, get in touch with the inner thoughts of who you are there is something more happening internally. Parker Palmer has also done a whole lot of work in terms of helping people, if you would, get in touch with the inner thoughts of who you are. We hit points in our life where you stop and say I am either very pleased with what I'm doing- I am fulfilled or my gosh why am I doing this or what can I do that might be a better, healthier here thing for me psychologically? (Parker Palmer made the effort to) help (people) begin to communicate that interior landscape. (The Fetzer Institute encouraged us to) go back and reflect everyday in the morning. Reflect...make time...to stop and think and reflect. Everybody wrote their reflections or their stories for this particular monograph. When I was there, again the discovery of what are the different modes that might later stimulate or cause you to be more reflective... a lot of it is poetry. Some of it is being in the presence

of nature. We did music, singing and dancing. It was kind of a neat thing to go back and think about what do we teach our children in terms of body movements, kinesthetic experiences that so many times as adults ...it like... put a lid on it! You're not to jump around or have fun... you're an adult...and so we are very verbal, somewhat visual but not very kinesthetic and so we loose part of ourselves when we loose the activity that comes with physical movement. So all of those concepts were kind of like... Wow this is news to me. The funding for the institute was from the corporate side from somebody who was very successful economically in the business world. But he recognized the starvation that we do to ourselves or the other side of who we are. The Formation in the Community College does similar kinds of retreats, and time away from the campus where people gather in nice, beautiful, natural settings to reflect and think.

Sometimes you go through life and you are just kind of going through it but you don't really stop and recognized the significance of what that is. This particular kind of experience made me stop and say... well, stop and think about it. Even before I had done it, there are times when I'd say Leave me...I have got to center.... Give me room to breathe.. but this was a much more conscious understanding of why these kinds of things are important and how to do it and how to approach it.

President Martin
"Body, Mind and Health"

A Caucasian male president from an institution of 24,000 in the south with a student body of 44.2% Caucasian, 16.5% African American, 14.9% Hispanic, 13.5% Asian, .5% Native American, 7.7 nonresident foreign national, and 2.7 unknown

Self-reflection is such an interactive thing both for me personally and with the institution... they really reinforced one another. Because it is very difficult to be a reflective person in an institution that doesn't value that, so having a culture that values it

helps you....because it's an expectation of the job.... and then to the extent that we are successful in creating a culture that values reflection and deep listening and encourages one another to do that...not only encourages but teaches each other how to do that, then... it is more likely that will be so.

So I think we do have a culture here at the college that has emerged over a number of years, and as I mentioned before, I've been at the college since it opened in 1972, so 30 years. This is my 24th year as president here. So I think we do have a culture here at the college that has emerged over a number of years, and as I mentioned before, I've been at the college since it opened in 1972, so 30 years. This is my 24th year as president here.

From the early days we were interested in mind body health connection and talked about, not by that name, but emotional intelligence and its role in human potential was a big part of how we started that out. We invited providers of non-traditional healing to be here in a festival and to do mini-courses and... many of those were teasers for courses that we had in continuing education. So I guess from the very beginning there has been an element of our acknowledging that it wasn't just about cognitive learning. There is a culture here that started probably in the late 70s is when I first started quoting Parker Palmer, like *To Know as We Are Known* and some of his earlier works. I learned from many people at the college who helped me see we could tend to each other's needs.

We had faculty here who were teaching about writing for health. The people targeted were people with quote terminal illnesses or chronic illnesses or so on, and that the act of writing and telling their stories in a reflective manner might actually help them in their healing. We found out was that health-care providers were starting to refer some of their patients to this course because it was so powerful.

Faculty came to me and said we need to get some funding from the Fetzer Institute and send a team there and just immerse ourselves in formation listening or finding out what that is this about... what implication might it have on our teaching and our administrative office. And I said that sounds like a great idea, lets go for it. We did and got funding and sent a team up.

Part of the commitment of the grant was that everybody who went there had this experience in formational listening and being with one another, would write a short essay to be published by the League for Innovation in the Community College reflecting on the impact of that kind of self work on our public service here at the college...regardless of our role. We committed to continue to meet throughout the year and do the work ourselves, in community...and then in between we would do our own personal work

Most of the people in the group work were very, very apprehensive about this commitment because they are not published writers. They thought they might have to write something and their colleagues would see it and he would be on the topic not cognitive. It made them very apprehensive. Our coach did a wonderful job of modeling and we all got into her students skin.... So that was a very formational thing to have done. We helped each other with the writing, which our coach has her students do anyway so we were in a cooperative learning type of setting. That was a very good experience.

The institution supported other retreats off campus. (The goal was) to take time out to be together with one another to learn some skills about reflective listening and getting in touch with who we are internally and feeling confident about that so that we wouldn't mask that with other individuals. We believed that projecting authentically is a better medium for learning for students.

We created an outdoor labyrinth.... Because people said we need a place on campus for this kind of reflection... for the community, for students and for ourselves. We raised the money on campus, \$50,000. (We have) an outdoor labyrinth of about 60 feet in diameter...it is by the lake over here under some pecan trees in a very peaceful setting. It is designed after the classic labyrinth and...some form of a reflective labyrinth is in most indigenous cultures. This one is designed not as a maze that you can waltz down but a path that takes about twenty minutes if you walk slowly through it reflectively to get to the center. Once you get to the center...you reflect and take a deep breath and your ideas are energized so that when you walk out you go renewed into the world. It is there for whoever wants to do that as often as they want to.

So we hopefully have gone about creating spaces on campus where people can be away and.... teaching people skills which are based on the Quaker tradition, clearness committees, where in a three hour session an individual can invite five or six other people to come and listen to them. In our retreats we teach people how to listen that way to and not to ask leading questions but to really help listen and assist another person in solving their own issues. I myself have been in a meeting when I realized sitting around the room were all but two people who had been trained in the clearness committee listening, and I realized the issue we were talking about went much deeper with me than the level we were talking. And I simply said if it is ok with you I'd like to turn this into a clearness committee. Because I don't really know what's going on with me here... but emotionally there something really deep about this issue. it helped take me to a place which was really at the core of this particular issue and my discomfort with that and my own role and feeling guilty. There was an ethical issue going on which was partly why I didn't feel good

about it. Having that kind of climate allowed me to do that in a way that I would never just spontaneously say...help me...listen while I figure this thing out in a very supportive way.

For me personally the more I have helped the organization that way, and by that... it's important to me personally that we really talk about and.... being counter cultural in that committee because the academy is based among other things on teaching people debate. Debate is not a genuine type of listening...it is listening to prepare your counter argument and you don't really care where that person is coming from (only that) it helps you prepare your counter argument so you can win. The counter cultural part of that is ...be still and listen to what a person is saying and if you are feeling some dysfunction seek clarity so when you have classroom discussions, part of your responsibility as a faculty member is not cut people off, and to help students pick up skills to work collaboratively and cooperatively and that the process is really about building community. The more that we build community the more teaching and learning is going to increase. We are a community college. That's why we are here, to help build community. It goes very deep philosophically in terms of the mission.

That's part of the challenge for the CEO I think. It depends on who you are and the way that you approach (reflection) and the way that is authentic for you. I am a gardener and I try to garden in a way that can help me reflect. An interesting thing over the years is I found out that in that time for reflection I have also seen that there are a number of lessons I've learned about how to garden that apply metaphorically to how to be a leader here in a community college.

Here is that beautiful tree and I get to see that and I get to experience that. but what I don't get to experience is more than half of that tree is under the ground and things are

going on there that I have no idea about the details about but I appreciate that it is happening and I do things to nurture whatever it is that is going on down there without the direct feedback about that. And similarly at the college there is no way that I can do all the good work that's going on here I do get to see the fruits of it but I know that I need to the trust that important stuff is happening that I can't see... I can encourage that. That is an example of a metaphorical lesson.

(Inner peace feels like) well it's kind of being so much in the moment that that morning...by being in that space... being with this little seedling that I had been with for like three years... helping it do its tree thing and helping the ivy do its ivy thing but not getting in touch with one another.. Interrupting that ...being an intervener without being violent about it. That was all about being in the moment. It was not about gardening or it wasn't about busyness it was just that I was there and I was observing and I was somehow participating in that and I lost track of time...

(It was a) Monday morning, a pre-school type of thing. The heron startled and I observed what had taken place, and was startled when what came back was not the heron but the gull. And then oh...you know I have a life, an external life I got to get into that. It was a very calming thing and it was an inspirational thing and it stuck with me all day long. It isn't a predictable thing. Generally I don't even think about the outcomes of something like that but in reflecting back on it and because of this assignment I reflected more than I typically would. I realized that a chain of events was set up that moved from this inner peace to activity that launched something that's still going on today in terms of that ritual of starting our meetings. The way we start them is much more than just that ritual because it one of the things that helps us keep this culture of reflection going.

I am not a person that can keep any one discipline going for a long period of time due to boredom and also I have many, many interests and I get in the moment with way too many things. Part an acknowledgement of that is just to go with that and realize that there are many ways that I can be reflective on my own so that when I am with other people I can be the same and it can be a productive thing.

I don't have a television and haven't had for probably seven years, I also have in the middle of my house a room, which is an aviary, and it has about twenty little songbirds in there-they are not the large hookbill noisy birds....they are really little songbirds, so they wake me in the morning.

I've found that I don't have to use an alarm clock and haven't for years and I also have six fountains in the house strategically placed and so ...it's a peaceful place to be and it is on about an acre and a half, there are trees as you look out. It is only about five houses away here which is actually very nice because I can easily drop out to that place or I can drop out to our garden-this campus is a garden. Part of it is arranging your life in such a way that both through discipline you spontaneously can tend to yourself even if you are not going to get sleep. (I) play my singing bowls and native American flute, crawl into bed and going to bed feels like you're in the middle of a brook because by that time all you hear is the water and something just carries you away someplace. There is kind of a rhythm to all that...So those are ways that I personally tend to my own inner nurturing. My house is probably my most reflective place.

I read books that people give me. One of the books I read was called *The Redbird* ...it is about this woman who found this place while on retreat in the hill country of Texas, it is a very life changing moment.... I thought that was so cool, I wish I could do that and

then I thought....I can do that! And so down by the creek years ago we leveled off a little place like a little beach that floods in the flash floods but I brought my tent down there some weekends...it doesn't require huge efforts and because then you lose the effect of the whole retreat... getting back through the traffic and the airports. It is important that it (reflection) happens in the routine of my life... so getting up in the morning and doing morning yoga routine and walking out and watering the garden or just looking at the flowers kind of like the birds...a little bit at a time.... waking up. I really try not to be in breakfast meetings because they tend to be very early and disrupts all that waking up. I try to pay attention to my body and spirit in all of that.

(I am compelled to reflect because) I am an INFP... introverted intuitive feeling perceptive individual and it's the smallest quadrant and... my understanding of Myers Briggs is that this is where you are most comfortable...it isn't necessarily who you are, but it is the place that gives you energy and if you don't have it then you are sapped of energy. The job I have is not an INFP job it is an ESTJ job...it is out there doing its action and so on and I have had to learn that. I can come out energized (by being alone.)

The whole idea is ahh..... to be reflective but to be reflective in a supportive community and the results of that can be different than just on your own...so both.

(In occasions where faculty do not get along) what we need is a conversation...a reflective conversation. (In one situation) we had a couple of hours, which was not nearly enough time. We went into that setting and I handed out copies of the touchstones for a formation conversation. So following these touch stones for conversation I wanted (everyone) to take time to listen to what (was) going on and see if we (could) figure it out and not to interrupt if you (heard) something that you didn't agree with or get all agitated

about it. Don't jump at the person that just said something...describe what is going on with you look at the center of the table don't even look at the person because this isn't about them it is now about you. Talk about that. And likewise talk about what is going on with you not judging what somebody did to you. Take no more than three minutes each to get off your chest what makes you think that you have been wronged. Let that be out there and then lets hear what is going on inside (your mind). That gave me a chance to listen- there was more to it than what had been presented to me.

The truth of the matter was I was seeing that from an organizational point of view we had some processes and some things in place that were a little dysfunctional. I said what I would like for us to do is take some time out now and just have a college wide forum on learning communities among faculty and all come and say here are our dreams about learning communities here at the institution. I would use it as an opportunity to get attention for this. Afterwards I said don't invite me in to something and expect me to be arbitrary...I have to be fair...this was set up to listen and I was listening and this is what I heard and I didn't judge I said I wasn't going to.

I think it is important that we are able to reflect in the moment and if we will slow the conversation down and if we will follow certain guidelines. Part of it is modeling and trying to find our way together. Had I been in another institution or even in this institution if we had not been to that point and I had done something like that they might have thought this guy has lost his mind!!!...they (the faculty) were open to a new experience. And we needed one, the old things weren't working.

(One of my troubling reflections dealt with) having to eliminate 20 positions due to budget cuts – something we had not had to do in over a decade. And we were very

thoughtful about how we did that, so it is one of those things that you really have to orchestrate and then you have to have in place people to tend to their immediate emotional reactions from a counseling point of view. Their job from this point until then was to find another job and that we would work with them. We had classes lined up for them. It sent chills through the organization because people felt secure here and suddenly they didn't. So we had a college wide forum that I needed to address.

There was a lot of emotions there, and so I started with a one-page handout, its prose, written by David White who is a poet. He's an Irish poet, to help (faculty) look at their culture through the eyes of a poet.... Which is pretty fascinating. He is a marvelous poet and he has written a book on the nature of work. A one-page quotation about the nature of work and what it means that a person's life. I felt that some people would take it and reflect on it but I also asked them to indulge me reading aloud. So I read aloud to set kind of a tone for all of that. Who knows why but it was a very civilized, thoughtful conversation and that's what I invited them to do, as opposed to people yelling and throwing grenades and those kinds of things that you do when you're upset. And again that didn't come out of the blue but it was consistent with how we have tried to handle things all along. And regardless of what we did there would a lot of anger and hurt and so on and so part of it is how do you behave in that context in a caring kind of way.

So it says something about how you behave in tough times, I think in a way that people can understand, honor, and feel a part of ...and I think we have afforded people who are interested in it to pay attention to their own mind, body health connection, to embed that in classes so it really it will be interesting to see if over a sustained period of

time we can keep that going, but I think we are much better situated for tough times than organizations that don't have culture that we have.

What brought me to the mind body health connection has been kind of an evolutionary thing (of realizing) that it is the whole person that best teachers, learns, leads and serves; and I can see elements of that back in when we first opened. For me personally, I think I was as a kid and as a college student and as a young professional who had never experienced any personal failure and so long as I was in that mode I was not as sensitive to the whole person ...because I thought... you do your work and you get your reward and people who don't do it have only themselves to blame kind of thing. (I believed that) you pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. In putting my life back together, I got in touch with people who had been caring for me throughout the period when I wasn't a good a person to be around... I was at a point where I couldn't listen and learn. (Through events in my life) I came to grips with (being) in a very public position (and) being who I am in an authentic way. That probably brought me down to a level of humanity that most people have to deal with that I had never had to deal with before.

(I) still (have) lots of energy left! It has allowed me personally to remain excited about the work that we have here and not get burned out on a place. I (have) been here for so long, and (am still) excited about all our evolutionary stages and being apart of that. I really do feel like community college work is mission work. It is about helping people realize their full potential.

(In my office) all the frenzy and out of control stuff is behind the doors over there... yes it is a little cubicle this actually was an executive washroom not used for much more than storing things. My desk was in here and I had bookshelves and so on and now

all the clutter is behind here. What I realized is most of what I do or need to do is to be in meetings with people or sit and talk and so on, and all that clutter was too distracting to me and to what we wanted to accomplish so this is just a little cubicle here which is all I need.

President Matthew
"To be Honest with Yourself"

An African American male president of an institution of 19,000 students in the west with a student body of 29% Hispanic, 51% Caucasian, 8.8% Asian, and 2.8 African American

There are two avenues, as I see it, where (self reflection) happens. The first is what I would call a traditional avenue, a traditional approach...where at a certain time every year one is required to do self-evaluation. That self-evaluation is to be self-reflective on goals and objectives you may or may not have accomplished within the past year. So that automatically triggers thinking about what have I accomplished over the last year, year and a half, two years or for however long a person has been in a position... that automatically triggers a self-reflective experience.

The nontraditional approach, is in my opinion, on any given moment, one may pause, in what is otherwise a very hectic fast-paced schedule and think about what one has achieved, or as a president where you think the institution is headed. How one feels personally about the job you as president are doing, and whether or not the personal agenda, as far as growth and development is being achieved or realized. That happens, as I said, in any given moment, it may be 10 o'clock at night or seven o'clock in the morning, or sitting at a luncheon meeting... and then your mind suddenly drifts and you start thinking about your dreams and aspirations for your organization. So I think, for me personally those tend to be the two avenues of self- reflection.

The key ingredient in all of that is a willingness to be honest with oneself. And to be self-critical or self judgmental, if you will, and I think the only way that a person can be truly successful and do really good self-reflective analysis, is to put your ego aside and as I said really be genuinely honest with yourself as you are reflecting upon the grand vision, whatever that vision happens to be, or whatever the vision was when you first started as a president.

I go back to the point about a willingness to be honest and candid with oneself. Everybody likes positive praise and positive feedback. I know personally every time it gets close to my time to be evaluated, on the one hand, I look forward to it; on the other hand I don't look forward to it... because it's not an easy thing to subject oneself to criticism. It takes a lot of self-courage, it's important to convince oneself that gee you can't take it personally. After all, on the one hand, you need to know how well you're doing as a president; you need to know if goals and objectives are being met. You need to know how others perceive your leadership, and the only way you're really going to know that is to get the feedback. On the other hand, you're sitting there dreading oh... do I really want to hear this, do I really want to subject myself to this.

Part of the problem is sometimes we don't take enough time to really understand that you have to develop the art of deciphering what is legitimate and what is not legitimate. In other words, in a bureaucracy there are always going to be individuals who will have particular axes to grind... old baggage, old history that they can't let go of. Others will simply need a target to vent their frustrations. Presidents are in a fish bowl environment, so it is inevitable that there are going to be those individuals who really don't have anything of substance to contribute. So realizing that makes, it easier then, again

when you're getting the input from others... to focus the reflection on... is this legitimate input or is this not legitimate, is this coming from a person who has a particular axe to grind, is this coming from a person who is genuinely trying to be objective? When you're able to sort all this out it makes the self-criticism piece easier and more meaningful.

One of the common things that often gets asked when you do a self-evaluation, is about strengths, you also get asked about weaknesses, and it is always much more difficult to figure out... OK how am I going to articulate weaknesses? We've grown up in a culture that does not appreciate that part of being human, that is, that we all have shortcomings. At the same time if we are honest with ourselves, we know that we will always try to do better and try to improve. There are no perfect people in this world. There's a lot that goes into the process of being self-critical. It's working with the mind's eye in a manner that says... OK I need to be able to separate personal agendas from objectivity. I need to make sure that I personally have a good handle on what my vision is for the organization and the strengths and weaknesses of my leadership. Once you have accomplished (sharing a vision of the future)... then I think you are able to more objectively criticize yourself in terms of progress and to receive criticism.

Some of it, a lot of it, is positive criticism. The word criticism connotes, in the minds of a lot of people, totally negative things. I look at criticism as being positive, it could be negative and in some cases it could be neutral. Neutral...that sends a message as well... for example if on an instrument, an evaluation instrument, if you find that a lot of key stakeholders are indicating "not observed" or "can't measure" or "not enough information," that's not positive thought it is not totally negative, because they're not able to evaluate a particular strength or a particular value on that form. What that says is... OK,

that means I've got to find a way to become more visible or to get the vision to become more visible so that the next time around people will be able to say either rate me as doing a good job, a so-so job, or poor job as opposed to "I don't know."

I think probably the leadership philosophy that I espouse and promote compels me to reflect. When I self reflected on that document I realized that. . .management is really not what it's about. . . it is about leadership. And so I changed to "leadership manifesto". The values in that manifesto were values that I strongly encourage members of my leadership team's to think about on a daily basis. I make efforts to think about those values on a daily basis. . . such things as interconnectedness, trust, compassion, integrity and a lot of little subtitles under all of those. I don't go around every minute of the day trying to recite those literally but whenever I find myself in the midst of an interaction, whether it's with an individual or a group of individuals, in the back of my mind is the leadership manifesto. As I'm communicating, as I problem solve, as I am dealing with difficult situations or as I'm sitting casually around the lunch table. . . which of these values am I promoting? To come full circle in terms of your question, my reflective process is constantly thinking about my administrative philosophy. This is the bottom line in responding to that question.

I was inspired to (write the leadership manifesto) based on the environment I inherited when I arrived at (a community college where I was president). That community college districts have been in a lot of turmoil for a lot of years. The college itself had something like five president in six or seven years. Some of the presidents had quickly gotten votes of no confidence by faculty. It was a very, very contentious environment.

I came up with the theme, and again this was the mid '90s, of moving in harmony towards the 21st century. Well, OK... how are we going to do this? How are we going to establish a harmonious working relationship? How are we going to start moving towards the 21st century, working harmoniously together? I began to spend a lot of time thinking about key values. Some of the values in that manifesto evolved as a result of the strategic planning process that I initiated at the college. Focus groups started to look at "what do we value as an institution... *what do we value?*" Some of the values in the manifesto came from that exercise and others just came from me in terms of who I as a person and my own personal philosophy. Like the ingredients of a cake... a little bit of this a little bit of that... like making a cake from scratch building this process from scratch and then putting it all together and started promoting it.

I would say probably 95% of the time to I would be in my office at my home when I reflect. It's a very quiet place. A lot of times I would draw inspiration from music. Sometimes I would put a CD on of classical music. My favorite one is one that has the musical scores from some of the big films in which the orchestration was so inspirational, grandiose, (and) powerful: or musical groups with upbeat spiritual type music... beautiful music vocals.. so depending on the mood I would play that and just sit back and think and get a lot of inspiration that way. Occasionally I would put on a tape of speeches and just sit back and listen to keywords, key phrases really inspirational thoughts...and sometimes draw inspiration from that.... A friend was admiring my remarks (from a speech) that I'd made. She said you always have the most positive, most upbeat presentation she said. You must have an enormous file of material. Yes, as a matter of fact, (I do).

I think just being able to just get away from the job site for a length of time allows me to be reflective. I really don't have any distractions or even answer the phone (when I am in my office at home). If I am focused and I'm concentrating on something, occasionally my wife will chide me, why don't you answer the phone? I wasn't interested in answering a phone, I was too focused on what I was doing... if I had stopped to answer the phone then I would get involved in a conversation and lose my train of thought. It takes me out of that mode of reflection and it takes me a while to get back into that creative thinking mode.

I'm very much a people oriented person. I'm always thinking about situations, whether it is where I work or family... in terms of problem solving and thinking of strategies... constantly thinking of strategies of how to approach things. I just had my first year evaluation last week and part of the process is once you do the paper thing then I sit down with the chancellors and the faculty and classified staff leadership and then it is your time to share with the president how you think things are going. At the conclusion of that session I started thinking that there are a couple people here. I was thinking to myself now, who I think I'm going to approach and ask if they would be willing to be my kind of confidants or persons that I could bounce things off of. They're not administrators, they are faculty... they are leaders individuals, both of them who faculty highly regard and are highly respected. Because I thought they gave what I consider the most balanced, the most objective, and at the same time, the most inspiring assessment of my first year. It was unbelievable that it was so balanced. Usually it is one extreme or the other. . But their presentations were so very thoughtful, very deep and it really struck me. I kept thinking I

really think I'm going to go to these people... these two individuals and see how they feel about allowing me from time to time to bounce things off of them.

(In the past I was able to reflect with my management team) Yes, every one of them. They each had unique strengths. You just felt so at ease, so comfortable. None of them had big egos. They were all willing to roll up their sleeves and I could pick up the phone to anyone of them at any point in time or walk into anyone of their offices, it just all jelled.... melted together perfectly. (Reflecting with others) is something that I have not done before in terms of really identifying individuals that that I feel I can sit down to bounce things off of in terms of reflection.

If I am (faced with troubling reflections) rather than embarrass people in a group setting or engaging a debate in a group setting, I will go to the person privately. I will say "you know on further reflection I am troubled by something you said or something I heard, or your interaction with ...whatever the case may be." Generally I will get at it that way. I don't like to put people on the spot in group settings because it creates more defensiveness and right away the others who are observing draw a conclusion that may not be accurate. Anything you do with personnel matters should be done one-to-one with the appropriate vice president rather than expose the entire cabinet to that because it is just human nature for people to talk. You can say "let's keep this in this room" but it's not going to stay in this room... it never does. Somehow, some way somebody says something.. either inadvertently or deliberately. So anything of a very sensitive nature is limited really to the individual. one of the things that people tend to see as a strength in me is my tolerance level. I do allow people to say what they have to say... I am a terrific listener... but there will come a time when I will say we have to move on.

President Joshua
“A View From the Mountain Top”

A Caucasian president from an institution of 60,000 students in the south with a student body of 58.8% Caucasian, 13.5% African American, 18% Hispanic, and 6.4% Asian

(I experience reflection) as a discipline. For many years I have had the practice of keeping a journal. And surprisingly a good bit of the journal is about work because that is where a lot of my life happens. A lot of the reflection time I have is captured by a journal. I have a place and time, a way of approaching that is mine...to me it is like going into the workshop...my tools to work on me and my challenges, things around me. So journaling has been an important discipline for me. It is almost always closely linked with prayer. So sometimes it is just a matter of making lists of things that are of concern to me and lifting those things up. Other times it is much more intense than that.

I get lots of input for reflection at work. I don't get a lot of reflection at work. It is hard for me to carve out that kind of time. (It is difficult to reflect) when things are coming at you as quickly as they do. Even on a slow day there are many surprises for me. It is hard to close the door when there are people out there clamoring for attention and actually do a lot of reflection at work. So it is mostly at home or on the road for me.

Journaling and reflection occurs at my desk or at a retreat at my house. I do get lots of quality time when I am traveling because I am not a television watcher. Hotels are generally quiet and there is not a whole else to distract you. Airplanes, I write a lot on planes. When I am in the car.... those are all good times to capture some silent moments. I don't get a lot done at the office. (I reflect at home) more than any place else.

(Home is reflective environment because) there are not a lot of incoming calls! Not for me anyway. It is comfortable ...I am familiar...with every nook and cranny every

book. It's habituated. I think whatever you do, whatever I do anyway, habit helps me so I need the discipline of doing it at a certain time everyday, if I do it at other times too fine but I have to sit down in my spot, in my chair, with my notebook and do my thing.

Sometimes it's pretty thin sometimes it is pretty fat but it is my thing.

People play all sorts of roles in my reflection. Very often they tell you things you need to know about yourself. They hold up a mirror and you look in the mirror and say gosh I am not who I thought I was or maybe I am not becoming who I want to be. More often than not it is in relationships that I discover the ugly parts of myself that I need to work on. But they also give encouragement. Stories leave impressions that I need to sort out later...good questions...so that I'm rarely driven to reflection by data or by spreadsheets, graphs or things like that. I am much more likely to becoming reflective in the sense of not just personal reflection but also modeling the world, imagining the great hypothesis about work...what is happening here, why is it happening, what is likely to happened next? I am much more likely to get that from conversation and personal interactions that I am from data and diagrams.

I encounter (people to reflect with) everywhere. Part of being a leader in an organization like ours is that you have your antenna up all the time, to learn what you can from every encounter. There are things that people know deep in the organization that you can't possibly know. So I like to have good questions to ask wherever I go. I ask them habitually. I learn sometimes as much from a clerk or a custodian as much as I do from a dean, it just depends. If you are asking who I go to bounce the tough ideas off of as opposed to just gathering information, those are relationships that you develop over time, some of them are formal. I've gotten business associates in the community that I bounce

ideas off of. There are some other presidents (I reflect with.) I will call them, visit them, and ask hard questions. I don't have a method, it's more of a posture than it is a method to be open, to be ready, to be asking, to be questioning, to put myself *in* the problem statement and *out* of it, and to do that constantly than to have some method.

The people I gravitate toward are value centered, people whose principles are evident to me. Their vision-oriented people as opposed to competitive or achievement oriented per say. I like a great diversity of people, they are not all alike. I am kind of attracted to people on the fringes because they have fun and interesting perspectives.

It sounds narcissistic but a lot of my reflection time is about what is happening in me and to me with me...I believe the first work of a leader is for interior work. Leadership is an expression of character not technique. Technique is fine but it is empty. People who are technically leading are just dangerous. So to me the first work of the leader, wherever you are leading, is your interior work. Who am I? Why am I this way? Who am I becoming? Who do I admire? How do I keep telling myself the truth instead of protecting myself? Your second work is to connect your interior work to your exterior work so that what I do everyday is an expression of who I am and not just how I am employed. And I think that the kind of leader that you want to follow...someone's whose leadership is rooted in who they are not just what they know. So a lot of my reflective effort is to do my interior work and to connect my interior work with my exterior work. A good bit of the journal writing is about that.

I guess what I mean by values in people is I am attracted to conversation with people who clearly are consciously doing *their* interior work too. It is not a code they have to agree to it is that they are engaged consciously in doing their work. (I am compelled to

reflect due to) a world-view... sounds sanitary doesn't it... I am a very ordinary guy, not anything special, an orthodox Christian. To me (life) has always felt more like a trip, a journey. I am not quite sure what the destination is but I've got some ideas about it and the important thing is to be in the road, the conversation in the road is very different from the conversation on the side of the road.

There is no question that my interior life is much more active probably much more nourishing and less pleasant during times of great stress, fear or struggle. Those things always end up being gifts in the end. Whether that is something on a personal level such as someone dying or in pain or failing in some way around me or it is my own failure ...failing somebody in relationship or failing in my leadership, or failing my children as a father whatever it might be ...you confront those hard truths. There is no question that it is better for my reflective life and is *essential* to my reflective life for several reasons. One is those are the times when you know the kind of poverty of spirit that is necessary I think to engage your interior work. If you believe the world is your oyster why bother with your interior work. There is a kind of helplessness that drives people that drives me, to prayer and to reflection and to writing and to the reflective time. And again at work very often it is that way to...it's not in the moment of the crisis but in the aftermath of a crisis that you really have a fertile time of reflection. What does this mean, not just what happened and how did it happen, what does it mean that it happened?

I am a singer-songwriter. Sometimes my right brain work finds its way into songs. I publish poems. They tend to be productive work for sorting ideas out. I felt for many years like I had multiple lives. I had a home life and I had a work life or school life, an artistic life, and spiritual life. They were related to each other but just related and it seems

to me over the past 25-30 years what has been going on for me is that those separate things are being woven together into one garment. It is important for me that those lives not just to intersect but to overlap considerably so that I am the same wherever I am, I can just be me.

We have these moments of epiphany in our lives. I can point to a handful. There were some during that time that were really important. One in particular where I had gotten a very very good job, much better than I deserved and knew I was in way over my head...and that makes you reflect. I had some success and after a couple years of working at this job and being successful I think I got proud. I reexamined my life as to how work was forming me rather than me forming it, and I was turning into somebody I did not want to be. That drove me to look for new ways of being responsible rather than just accepting the game as it is handed to you in higher education. About that same time some reading I was doing kind of intersected with that...Robert Greenleaf, Thomas Merton, Abre Knowan, and others.

It is a relatively new thing that human services would be mediated through institutions rather than being delivered directly, say through family only. It is a wonderful thing. It may be that the institution is the most important technology invented in the 20th century, more so even than the transistor or microchip because millions, millions receive services now when only the very, very privileged might have. They are marvelous things that we ought to celebrate, but we also know them to be diabolical and they do horrible things to people. So organizations are a lot like organisms in that regard. They are not just the sum total of the behaviors of the individuals, they are systems that operate independent of the individuals, relatively independently anyway.

So the mission of a servant leader is to infiltrate the great serving institutions and reclaim their servant ethic. Greenleaf used religious language for it...redemptive work he called it. So I feel nurses, teachers and law enforcement professionals, you start naming all the people who enter these Byzantine bureaucracies that have or had at least human service as their initial purpose. I have a belief that authentic human service cannot be rendered to a group or to a population or to a demographic. In the end authentic human service can only be rendered to a person. The very idea of serving means to render a unique response to the unique human being in front of you. is an evil thing to say...it says your humanity is not as valuable as my organization's order and so I am going to violate your humanity in order to maintain our order. That is an immoral thing. So it doesn't mean that we don't need rules or habits or procedures but it means those things are not held in higher regard than the human being in front of me. And so you break rules and you ignore procedure when it is better to do so. (A servant leader) re-engineers the systems.... they challenge the authority of the institution; they try to hold the community accountable to a different standard of service. I believe nurses in particular because they are at a nexus of patient care they stand between the institution systems and the individual person whose needs they are trying to meet. They have a special responsibility to challenge the institution.

I feel vocation in the original sense of the Latin "vocare" to be called. I feel called to work in large complicated organizations for the purpose of an experiment to see if life and labor in that kind of environment can be nourishing, can be authentically serving human beings rather than necessarily diabolical. I love community colleges and stumbled into them, greatly because they are not very old. They have not ossified the way a lot of

other institutions have. They are still relatively in touch with their servant ethic.

Particularly most large universities have long since lost the possibility of reclaiming their original sense of mission and servant-hood.

I think many organizations believe diversity is a problem to be solved. And that is an upside down way of thinking about it. It is a problem to solve in the sense that we have to achieve some quota here some ratio there, some goal. ...or at least show that we made good effort and insulate ourselves against complaints....that is a very defensive impoverishing way to approach diversity. When we behave that way, for example, with regard to ethnic diversity we also short circuit the whole possibility of all the other kinds of diversities that people bring with them. In the end I think what you want is for people to bring their whole selves to work and hardly anybody does.

A necessary condition for individual reflection, and a necessary precursor to a reflective environment, in an organization, is listening. If you don't have an ear for other people you are not going to have an ear for yourself. You want to hear your own inner voices. And visa versa if you are not listening closely to your inner voice you will never hear with any depth what other people are telling you. Without that hearing there really isn't any potential for useful reflection. In most leadership cultures probably because they are pressed for time lock and load, get on with it, don't hear very well. I make that mistake all the time...I think I know what somebody is telling me, I have already concluded what the end of their sentence is ...I moving on and I miss what they really had to say

I have seen and been a part of some habits, some processes that people describe... like appreciative inquiry, those kinds of things that are disciplines ...they are guides to help us avoid some of the common mistakes in communication. It is sort of like taking a

listening course. You can learn some cues that help you stay on task and keep you from making common mistakes. They are not panaceas in the end...there is still the character thing looming out there. Trees seem to be the most reflective of all organisms don't they? Many of them outlive many of the organisms on the planet. Is there anything as old as a redwood, a sequoia, and pine? And I have often thought metaphorically about trees that are slumbering, trees that are in some kind of dream now ...I tried a story one time about how trees lost the gift of speech and ...and when man causes time to accelerate...things were happening too fast to be absorbed and understood at any deep level the trees went to sleep rather than endure the pain of constant chaos around them. All just fantasies but I think trees are a great metaphor for endurance and reflection and depth and...being attuned to the natural cycles of the world rather than creating our own. One way of thinking about living is that it is about surrendering or turning loose of things and thatthat as you grow older and wiser and hopefully learn, your life becomes simpler and not more complex and the sap sort of returns to the roots again. You're born and you turn loose of the womb, you grow as a child and you turn loose of mother, you get a little older you turn loose of home, you get older and you begin to acquire wife or, husband, children or things like that... but you turn loose of the freedom of play and your life gets more complicated for a period of time. And then it's like it crests and it begins to get simpler again and you have to turn loose of your own children and you turn loose of your own parents and may have the experience of having to let go of a spouse and in the end let go of life all together; surrendering all those complications, marvelous complications that you have developed in the middle of your life.

I love my music.... it is a great release for me. It is about putting the pieces of life into one fabric again. A few poems are on my website so that faculty and staff and students have a connection to that part of who I am...that is not something I guard or hide or do some place else.... it is just a small part of my life and I want to know all those parts of their lives too.

Why not ask the question “So what?” “What is the point of being reflective?” “Why should our organizations be reflective?” And I would argue this.... being very practical about it ...I believe there is tremendous drift in the community college movement towards post modern consumer capitalism towards a retail model of education where students are customers, courses are product, we are like a shopping mall. People of all kinds of backgrounds drop in drop out, sample this product, sample that product and in the end that is a very impoverished view of higher education and what we can mean to our students and to our communities. It may produce the most FTE using that you may produce the most interesting and dynamic organizations in terms of modern competitive organizational theory. It may advance careers but I think it is absolutely bankrupt with regard to really serving our students. And it is almost inexorably happening...our students are doing it to us...they want to treat us as a retail establishment...they want to be customers. And it is a big, big mistake. So I think we are in a time period here particularly as we serve the first truly post modern students ever where we have to consciously assume a different model of organization, a different sense of mission, a different way of engaging one another and the students we serve and I don't think that can be done without reflection. If people are not in tune with the larger currents of our culture and what they mean to human dignity and human potential and human community then we will flat miss

the boat. We will be part of the problem and not part of the solution. So I think there is a vital reason why reflective leadership and reflective communities have to be engaged right now. If they are not, I think 20 years from now we will look back on the turn of the century here as a watershed period for the failure of the community college movement to achieve what it might have achieved. So there are hard mission reasons for doing this not just personal growth, development and spirituality it is about what we might accomplish not just about what we are becoming although both are important.

President Liza
“Finding Pieces of the Puzzle”

An African American female president at a community college of 13,000 in the northwest with a student body of 90% Caucasian, 10% Hispanic, African American, and Native American

I think (reflection) is an ongoing process. Community colleges may be unique in that with shared governance no decision is done and you move on to the next one. So part of everything that you are doing is still open and available to be brought to the table again because somebody didn't hear it or somebody didn't know what was going on or because it is a problem once again starting up—or they like it and they want to get more out of it in a positive way. So being a part of that culture means always thinking about and reflecting on how things went. Was the process appropriate? Did the outcome match my thought about what I thought the outcome would be? Was my role as strong or as facilitative as I thought it could have been? Given this outcome how would I do it again?

I journal; so that probably means that I reflect almost every day at the end of the day, because I journal if not every day then 4 to 5 times a week. So a lot of that is the thoughts that flow around in my head. (Journaling) is something that I've done off and on

probably since I was about 30. I started college when I was 29 so about that time I started to write things down. I didn't call it journaling but I would just write ideas and thoughts down and they were all over the place. I would write in this book and that and years later I would be going through a notebook that I had for classes and I'd find it and say oh that is pretty good stuff. in the last year my husband died suddenly a year ago and not having somebody to talk to I think it has become much more of a significant part of my life then before when I could go home and talk to him. So journaling has become and intimate part of my life and in that reflection and that is what I do and I'll just sit down and start to do something else because I do it on the computer and I keep my laptop on my bed at night because sometimes I wake up and I have these thoughts and I get them down real quick.

I reflect on everything. I always want to know why and what- so I think about things a lot to try to figure things out because so many things don't make sense to me in a vacuum and I always have to put the pieces together to make them fit. I have this friend that talks about a puzzle and we talk about it all the time whenever we get a new idea whenever we do -I've got a new piece! This piece fits that piece and that corner of the puzzle is getting bigger as relates to that issue. So I don't think this is a job that can be done without reflection.

(I) usually (reflect) in the wee hours of the morning – first of all I am a night owl. I could stay up all night and sleep most of the day-naturally. I am nocturnal. And so sometimes I force myself to go to bed at 9:30 and I will wake up just as wide awake at sometime between 3 and 4 o'clock. And the ideas are just flowing and it is like the dam has been opened – write this down and you can't write it quickly enough – get all this stuff

out. And so a lot of that has to do with clarifying some thoughts I went to sleep with and coming up with the right pieces that fit together that make sense.

I am a person who needs people. I need people who are close and that I can trust, and I have always managed to do that when I think back over my life – I’ve always had one or two persons in my life that I felt very comfortable with and comfortable in sharing confidential matters about me that relate to me. A job like this is a job where a confidential friend or good relationships where you can talk things through are vital. I think I would absolutely lose it if all I had were just my thoughts going around in my head without somebody to talk to. I value that and absolutely helps me to stay sane...it helps me stay grounded. They have to say – Heh, you’re OK. It is just simple things that I wouldn’t even say to other people that I work with because they don’t know me personally and I just wouldn’t share them with them. I just need (friends to talk to). I have friends that I talk to every day.

(The friends that I reflect with) are long relationships – my friend who came in last night, my college roommate – they know me well I don’t have to wear any masks. I can take them all off. I can say “I really didn’t handle that right” or something and I know that they will say, “yeah you’re right you didn’t. Now what do you think need to do in order to correct it. What is the best course...and I bounce ideas off them, and on the other hand I say sometimes “I really messed that up” and we’ll talk about it and “You didn’t mess that up,” “You didn’t mess that up. Just wait and see things are going to work out.” It is just that affirmation and I know them to be ethical people. I know them to be honest and I know that they love me and that we have had a bond over the years and I don’t have to worry about something breaking that relationship because it has weathered a lot of storms.

There are some (people at the college that I reflect with). Actually I have good relationships with a large number of people here at the college, but because I am the boss there are limits to how much I will share with them about my personal life. So I am comfortable with them and them with me. There is still a point in which there is a respectful dividing line and I am comfortable with that I think there has to be a barrier I don't want them to be closer than that. So that at a time when I have to say no to them or when I have to take care of an issue I can feel comfortable doing that and not feel that I've got to do something to appease them. It allows me an opportunity to be in the role that I need to be in; a strong role and also be an approachable person with a caring side.

I look for people (to reflect with) who have reputations for not being caught up into politics all the issues that are going on at the school. I look for people who don't talk a lot and listen well. Nearly all the people have the reputation for doing their jobs well, (and) they have reputations for doing their job well and for being balanced, people who can see both sides of all the issue and who care about people.

(My internal place) is troubling (when I have things on my mind) until I put it into—until I fit it somewhere. For example, if an issue is rolling around in my mind and I am getting more information and I am hearing about it and I am not having time to deal with it—it is like a cloud and I've got to take care of that cloud but I am putting out so many fires and I am doing so many things that I have to do and being so many places that I have to be that I just don't have time to deal with that cloud because it hasn't started to rain yet. And yet I know it is there and I am working with it but not at a point where it is in my face. It is so forward that I can hold it up there and if I can make it till Thursday

when I get past all these things that I must do where I have to be on target and speak and do all of that then I can begin to deal with it.

A process for looking at things I learned in graduate school when I was working on my doctorate I had this professor that said that before you go to make a decision on issues you need to line them up in some sort of order so that you have a process of review for all the things you do- he called it the “sleepe principle” “s-l-e-e-p-e” look at the social, the legal, the economic, the educational, the political and the ethical issues related to whatever is going on in your mind or what is going on at the institution. And when you get those written down and you look at them then you say OK with this kind of information and with this knowledge the best decision I can make is ...so it may seem kind of out there but if I can just remember the “sleepe principle” than I can get to things much faster. The longer it takes me longer to engage in the “sleepe” process, the longer the problem goes on.

(I can't always discipline myself to do this process) all the time...it is like ... that is why I say when I can get to it and sometimes it takes longer to get to it then others and for those times when I've not considered all of that sometimes they are good decisions and sometimes they are not but I can't measure them I don't have any process for going back and reviewing them to relate the outcome to chance or to a process. I applied this I made a good decision yes this verifies that I made a good decision-I feel differently about it when I go through a process and I make a decision and I am confident of that decision and then when the affirmations come that yes this was a good decision I feel much better about it, and I am encouraged in the fact that “yes you make good decisions.” I have a history of it

and I can be confident of that so it is an affirming process I think that gives me inner strength and faith in my decision-making.

The physical place (that I reflect) is in my bedroom. I bought that bed and so with that bed it makes it so easy because I can be in a soothing position, have my laptop in my lap, and just go for it. It is very comfortable to keep the laptop plugged in and right beside my bed and I can work on it—that is the place my bedroom it is always quiet. It is usually in the middle of the night (that I reflect.) A good place for me (to reflect) is my office. I like roosters. In fact you are sitting in my rooster chair. It is just warm and I have the paintings around me; my husband painted that picture and that one and all the rest of the pictures are very special and I can look at them and think about the people that gave them to me and what they mean. This is a good place for me. Sometimes I get so frustrated (and I look at the picture on my office wall of) the girl and the blackboard she's written "I quit." Sometimes I sit and look at that and I wish I had the nerve to say that and just get out of here – so sometimes when I am totally frustrated I stand there and I look at that and I just say OK can't quit – get back up there. Each picture has a story so I can just sit right here and reflect and I like to have the lights off. I keep the lights off most of the time...and just kind of sit and when people come in - this room for some reason calms people down, even people who are angry. They come in here and they sit and the lights are not on and there is no noise in here. It is real quiet and it seems to be a real positive room for a lot of people.

(Diversity) is almost non-existent. We do not have any African American faculty full time faculty. We have some representation of Hispanic, Native American, and Indian

The population is not strong for people of color in this area. I guess there must be variety of races. I don't know where they are but I know there is not a lot of support and when I say support, for example, to buy makeup. It is little things like that that may not mean like much to someone who has lived here all their lives and is white. Ethnic foods (are lacking.)

It is (lonely being a minority president.) When I was in graduate school one of the things the professor said was if you want to be a president you have to go where the presidency is for the first time, after that you can pick the place, but for the first time you have to go where somebody will hire you as president. It is easy to be hired when you are a sitting president but it is difficult to get that first job and so I knew that diversity was not strong in this area but I wanted to be a president and this was an opportunity so I took the opportunity. I see me moving to a place to my next position being one where there is a high degree of diversity. (I see myself moving to) a metropolitan area in a city where I can get all of the things that I need and so that I can have a social life.

More diversity means more opportunities to learn from a different group. To share different experiences, richer classroom experiences for students. There are students at this school that have never even had a conversation with an African American and they could possibly go through this institution, unless they stop to talk with me, without ever talking with an African American. In a city there are many more challenges but it is real rewarding to go home and live in a neighborhood where your neighbor looks like you. To have options to attend cultural events – African American museums, art shows, a college where there are multicultural studies, African American studies, Chicano studies that kind

of bridge experiences to expose the entire college to so that it is more reflective of the global experience.

I have learned so much being here about myself and about leadership and about institutions. Institutions have cultures and one of the first things I have learned from this experience is to learn the culture, and to very early on establish relationships with the people who carry the culture. There are some people on this campus who can never make a comment in a meeting without saying “Let me tell you what happened 20 years ago.” They are the bearers of the history and so those are the kinds of people that as a president coming on to a campus to become a leader – that is one of the first things you must do is make that contact with the bearers of the culture. Make that contact with the people who are the leaders not the people who have the leadership positions but identify the people and establish relationships. I’ve also learned that leadership is.... I’ve really learned that you lead people and manage things. I’ve said that and I mean you see the signs but it is really true, you can’t just tell people what to do and expect that they will do it and that you will get good results. You can tell them what to do and because of my position they will do it but it won’t be done in such a way that it moves us in the direction that we need to go. People have to spend time talking and participating in the process so that ultimately they will make it their own responsibility to work toward making that process productive. . It is little things like that that come out in the meetings and so it is talking to me, it is talking to groups but having an opportunity to actually speak out on problems. (It is important to) take the time to say OK what does that mean? Help me to understand what you are talking about. I am working with them to help them understand that we are in a

whole new-whole new era of the community college we have to raise money like four-year institutions have always done, our culture is changing.

I would (advise presidents) to take notes on every conversation in every meeting right down to describing things that are going on while you are sitting there. Something is said, jot it down, do some follow up appropriately. It facilitates settling into an institution for the first time. Pay attention to everything. Everything that happens is significant, if not to you, to somebody else because people are watching to see how you care about their issues or their programs. They are only interested in what you are going to do for them and what you have done for them lately. If you haven't done anything for them lately you are not a good person. If you have done something for them lately that was very successful you're a good person. In order to be successful it means you have to establish good strong trusting relationships with faculty because if you don't that will really come back to haunt you.

The culture of the college is that it doesn't matter once you become an administrator faculty have this imaginary line drawn. They have this imaginary line drawn between faculty and administrators- that stands. Faculty members are at the top and then everybody else falls in line under faculty. The most important thing is that faculty have all their needs met and if you have to lay off somebody you lay off staff and administrators. I think we need everybody-I mean there is not one area that we have that could just be gotten rid of- I can't say we don't need those people anymore which makes downsizing such a big issue. The majority of the people who work here are fulltime faculty. But I think the building of teams is the most important thing-that is what I have worked to do - We didn't have any planning committees before I came and now we have strategic

planning, campus planning, program review, personal advisory committee –we’ve got these committees in place now and I strategically choose the people to be on those committees so that there are representatives of all the areas of the college. So in having a discussion faculty members talk to administrators who talk to classified people. They each try to get each other to see their way. There is much more communication because there has to be in order for us to come to consensus. That is building working relationships across working groups. (Communicating in teams makes them) more aware of what is going on and they understand why everybody is thinking differently.

I would (advise president to) say keep balance in your life. Don’t let the job consume you so that 24/7 that is all you are doing. (Another piece of advise would be to) guard your personal time- and the other thing is hiring an administrative assistant, many of which are women whose major job is to take care of you. That is absolutely essential- somebody that you can trust with anything-you just have to have that. Somebody who will keep their mouth closed, somebody who understands what it means to give up only as much information as is appropriate-somebody who is professional-somebody who has excellent skills-all that is vital to the success of the president.

President Jack
“Collective Reflection”

A white, male president of a community college of 2,900 in the west with a student body of 90% Caucasian and 10% other

There are several components to reflection...first of all I think at our institution reflection is really collective reflection because although when I came here, I guess like most other people, I had a tendency to want to make decisions myself. I was fortunate, and have been fortunate to have three deans and an associate dean right now, and together we

make up the executive counsel or cabinet, as you would call it. All of those people were here when I came only one of them was a dean and that person had been appointed after I was appointed So the people I liked, the people I inherited, the people who had a love for the college or they wouldn't have stayed as long as they did and we made decisions as a group.

Next Monday we have a special executive counsel on student drivers because we use students to take ...to drive on some of our trips. We have our regular executive counsel meeting which is weekly at 2 o'clock ...we have a special executive counsel meeting on computer purchases on Wednesday at 9 o'clock, we have an executive counsel meeting to discuss the self study resource room that is coming up around accreditation on 11 o'clock on Wednesday. And so we meet probably a minimum, a minimum of three times a week sometimes up to 6 times per week As I said I don't like unilateral decisions, sometimes I have to make the decision but is only after significant discussion.

Our discussions involve making up an agenda anyone can go in and ask Karen to put an item on the agenda a topic and then that topic is then discussed. A person may send out information or a person may bring in information to the executive counsel when we meet. We basically like each other, work together well and respect each other and the thing that I really like about the process that we have is our executive counsel members, even when they have submitted requests in their sector which exceed the amount of money available, in the final analysis we make decisions that are in the best interests of the institution, even if it means the person requesting gets what might appear to be less than their fair share. The relationship that we have, the trust that we have, the input that we make... usually if it comes to a difference of opinion it is a vote just purely on the

basis of numbers and not on the basis of our positions. So it is the system that we like, a system that I think has allowed me to keep these people because each of these people is capable of being a president, and it gives them autonomy, we don't make unilateral decisions-we make decisions in the best interests of the institution.

I think the reflective part comes as you think about the topics that are coming up on your agenda at the executive counsel meeting or as you think about preparing the budget for next year, or as you plan for our accreditation visit, and so reflection is more collective than it might be in some instances. Individually reflection for me occurs most often when I am by myself and usually when I am walking. I walk a lot and backpack in the mountains, hike in the mountains, and walk around the track. I sometimes do that with my wife, I sometimes do that by myself, but when I am alone I do a lot of thinking about the institution, thinking about how the institution could change for the better....all kinds of topics... all kinds of general items that I could bring to the executive counsel so we can generate discussion on some of those topics that might make us a better institution.

There are all kinds of problems to consider as I walk around the track and hike in the mountains. Of course I have other time on my own. So the reflective process does not always work out in the details of it as neatly as you would like, but as I said I think as a President of this institution some of the reflection that I do is a consequence of the relationship with members of the executive counsel and the process that we use to make decisions. Some of the reflection that I do is the result of ...a characteristic of personality.... I like to think when I am alone; I like to think when I am exercising so... walking primarily, sometimes it can be when working on the machines. That provides me with an alternative to use my mind without wasting the time while you are doing a

physical exercise. Because unless you are doing some kind of team sport, some sort of competition the mind is not very challenged. I think in exercise quite frequently you have endorphins kick in and at that point in time I think you probably think as clearly as you do at any time in the day.

I love the outdoors that is a particular interest. I can camp in the mountains summer and winter and I prefer to do that by myself. I am looking for people who are committed to the institution and loyal to the institution who are committed to making the time and energy sacrifices necessary to make the institution prosper...which means more than a 40 hour week, which means a lot more than a 5 year career, which means in effect keeping a commitment to the community college long-term, so when you have those kind of people and those kinds of commitments of time and energy then you have the opportunity to interact with them on the basis of common interest and that common interest means success for the institution. If you noticed the logo over the front main door ...commitment to quality and success. When you have people who are interested in that, and committed to that then you can sit down and talk with them. (I consider their) personality and characteristics, work ethic, moral values, ethical behavior...there are a lot of things that go into that decision...having a compatible feeling, if you can't trust the person that you are negotiating with then you can't negotiate.

Every time you terminate someone you struggle. And so recommendations are made to me, recommendations are initiated by me.... they go to the dean and they make a recommendation to me and then I have to decide whether to support that and take it to the board. During that whole process obviously you are thinking about ...is this the right decision, is it the right decision legally, which is the first question that an administrator

has to ask. But then is it the right decision morally. Are we doing the right thing for the institution. So that certainly is a troubling part of reflection.

They don't always come to me because again the deans play almost an equal role on the executive counsel. They may feel more comfortable and have a more frequent interaction with the deans. So they may end up with the dean. But people may come to me...we each have an open door policy...the open door is literal...when you came my door was open. At that point in time anybody can walk in and knock on the door and Karen will say you are here and if I have someone in here the door is usually closed. If no one were in here I would accept your visit on whatever you want to talk about.

(I frequently reflect at) 6:30 in the morning in this office. It is relatively large and ostentatious; I probably would not have designed it for myself. But what I do like about it is that that it allows me to bring people into the president's office in large groups. Some president's offices you can't do that. So I like that. One of the things that is sometimes frustrating, is you come in early and you are reflecting, or using your term... thinking, you think of something that you want to talk with someone about and nobody else is here. I think if people are not a part of the reflection that a president does than he or she is probably in the wrong profession. Perhaps you should be. ...Remember the old smoke towers, fire towers that people used to get up on to watch a fire...they should probably be in a job like that, if you don't think about people in the reflective process.

I live about 50 yards from the residence hall and about 100 yards...75 yards from the entrance. So I walk along a one-mile track, it still has the desert terrain but it has a rubberized surface that goes through it. And when I walk down there I can reflect but I can also walk across campus. The other day I came in a bit earlier than usual, the custodial

staff has a staff meeting at 6 o'clock, I went by and the custodial staff and said thank you for...the college looked great for graduation, they did special things like washing the windows and things like that...I went in to say thank you for that.

The reason that I spend most of my time and do most of my work with the executive counsel is that it is my opinion that you give people autonomy and do not interfere with their work. If I give you responsibility and I give you authority and I give you a reasonable amount of autonomy within the confines of the institution, if you like your job, you are going to be able to do a lot of things that you want to do. Yes you'll have to come in and talk to the executive counsel about those things and yes if it takes away resources from the rest of the institution it will have to be something that everyone else agrees to, but you will have the responsibility, the authority and the autonomy to do the job. I think that is why I have been able to keep people in dean's positions that are capable of being presidents. So... for me it works, for the people I work with it works. I am not sure with all people in all circumstances that it would.

I will on occasionally read summaries and articles on characteristics of leaders. I really think that leadership comes in effect from adapting to human environment and environments change because I think how you behave in one environment, as a leader might be different than how you would have to behave in another environment. I think there are certain characteristics that leaders have-honesty, integrity, a cult work ethic, willingness to work hard but you must also have... competence goes with that, competence comes in a great part in a position like this, more from experience. I think it starts with your education and your learning but that really doesn't give you the tools you need to be successful such as experience. But if you have the other things-if you have the

honesty, if you have the integrity and you are willing to *share* success, because I honestly don't care if I get in the paper. I really don't care about the credit because in most instances it is not really my credit anyway, it is one of the deans, directors or one of the division chairs or one of the faculty members or one of the custodians. I think some of (my feelings about myself) come from being born in the depression and growing up when people were still poor. Some of it comes from my dad's work ethic. He worked more hours than I'll ever work in a week. And I think some of it comes because my parents were honest. (It) fits together and then the experiences that you have over the course of a lifetime.

I went into the Peace Corps. President Kennedy created the Peace Corps and I happened to be a senior in college and I wanted to help people so I went into the Peace Corps. Then I wanted to continually help people so I went to Vietnam and worked there as a civilian and as I said I had responsibilities for both military and civilian aspects. My job was to go in and continue the economic development aspect and the education training of teachers, building schools, the bringing of agriculture all of those kinds of things and at the same time help them defend the village. So every night I was going out on ambush and everyday I would come in and work with them on education, on agriculture, whatever it might be. Through reflection sometimes you think back on the experiences you that you had and there is still a question to reflect why you did that. I went into the Peace Corps to help, I went into the agency because I wanted to help and I guess I was with the agency for five years and the Peace Corps for two. So, wanting to help, having parents who contributed I think to moral values and ethical values, work ethic values and having the opportunity to get a decent education.

We are very homogeneous. The most significant minority group is Hispanic, many of them recent immigrants from Mexico and I think that is about 8 %. We have about 6% on campus so we are doing relatively good reflecting our population. But it truly is mostly white. We try to bring in diversity by actively recruiting international students. I don't know if you saw the atrium or not, but if you see the atrium we have flags on the wall... for each flag there is at least one student here from that country. So we try to bring in some diversity but we are limited by what we can do. We are after all a community college and community colleges should reflect the community and we do. We are using the Daniels Fund process as a way of trying to bring in more minority students. And then I told you about the active recruiting. We send our admissions officer to China, to Japan, to Malaysia, to Thailand, to countries in South American, to Canada, I realize Canada is not real different but we actively seek out students from other countries to come to our school.

President Sharon
"Envisioning What Could Be"

A Caucasian female president from an institution of 7,200 students in the west with a student body of 48% Hispanic, 47% Caucasian, 6 % African American, and 3 % Asian

I have a tendency to do reflection in the middle of the night or early in the morning. I am a morning person. If I have something that I need to figure out or I am thinking about how to meet a challenge that I have or how to do something I have never done before, or how to deal with a situation that has arisen or how to just...lead an initiative, I have a tendency to wake up early and lie there and think about it or I will get up and do my yoga, or go out and jog and think about whatever it is that I need to be about. I also, it is interesting that you use the word reflection, because I also took a learning styles inventory, it is called the Kolb, I think. One of the learning styles is

reflective, and that happens to be my dominant learning style. I think when you put together the fact that that's my dominant learning style with the issues that one has to deal with as a leader, I think it is appropriate that I find time for reflection because to me it is how I learn to do what I need to do to lead.

Where does my mind go...that is a difficult question because it depends on what I'm thinking about. If I am thinking about something related to the job I would typically be thinking... O.K. here is the situation and then I would go through and try to think of creative options for dealing with it. So I sort of let my mind wander and I try to do that quietly and often something what I consider a really good idea comes to mind which always scares people when I come in and say "I've got an idea!" Uh Oh hear we go again! I think that is how I get creative...I just let my mind wander around on the particular topic. And then sometimes I do that in relation to my personal life also. I may be thinking I would sure like to do such and such so I will just think about what it would be like to do that. Then I will sometimes say ...yea I think I am going to do that.

It is not so much the place (I reflect in) but the quiet. In my job you spend a lot of time working with people and I love working with people but you have to balance that with quiet time. It is very difficult to reflect when I am at work because there is always something going on so to me it is really important that I find a quiet time...a time when there aren't other people around to do that reflection. It is less the place than it is the condition of either silence or often times I will play some type of very soothing music and that also helps me to get into a mode of relaxation, to clear the other things from my mind; which is really important to clear everything else from your mind. And sometimes you

have to clear everything from your mind including what you are trying to reflect on to get your mind clear enough to then be able to focus on an issue.

Early on when I hadn't done a lot of speaking ...I would get very nervous so what I would do I would find a place back stage or wherever I was or in a room off to the side where I could just get calm and just ...what I would do is I would capture this image in my mind of all the people I care about standing there like two people I care about standing there with their hands on my shoulder giving me the courage to go and do what I had to do. Cause for me that did take courage for some for some people it is no big deal. What I do is envision the idea and what could happen with this idea...if we did this but I don't necessarily envision all the details of how to get there; that is what we do together. But I guess it is envisioning. I remember a specific instance we were trying to create a vision statement that was more "actionable." I just had to put it away for a while and then I would just think about it every now and then. One day I decided it was time to get something to work with and so I think I took all this stuff we had gathered and I tried to imagine what it would take to be where all this stuff said and that was how I came up with the statement that I could bring to a group of people.

I see what I do as a calling, not just as a job and so to me it is important to lead in that way and to model that for other people. And so my own learning...if you value learning then you value it for yourself also. So placing a value on learning, placing a value on service, placing a value on high ethical standards in your work and, I think, on knowing yourself, which pretty much states my vision! But I think that one of the things that we tried to do at this institution is to hire people that have those same values who value learning, who value the students that we serve, and who value working together, value

collaboration. Those things are all important to me and so I guess they come out in this work place. I really believe that you are going to see in a place that is led by a certain person for any length of time, if they are there for a year you are not going to see it but if they are there for I think five years or more you are going to see that person's values reflected in that workplace.

I believe that you have to try to reflect (values) in your images about the place and so our image is a circle with certainly we have distinct entities but not totally independent they are very interdependent and so we even have dotted lines that divide the different entities in the college to show that they are not totally independent. (I value diversity.) While our employee demographics don't exactly reflect our student demographics we work really hard to have a diverse employee base that at least, if there are not exactly reflected of our student population, they're role models for the student population. In some ways you don't even want it to be exactly reflected of the student population because you may want diversity you don't even have in your student population. So that for example, if you have a large Anglo or Hispanic population as we do, that they are also exposed to other cultures, other ethnicities, other kinds of diversity. So we try very hard to get that. Collaboration is a value that I have and that I think we have here.

I can think about something by myself but I don't then come in and decide okay. I've got it figured out. I may bring it to the leadership team. We have a leadership team that has our vice-presidents and our deans and my assistant. I often will go and seek out folks in the college that I think know a lot about what ever the issue is that I am dealing with so that I can get their ideas. Whatever idea you have it always gets better when other people get involved in the discussion. So yes I do bring in other people. I think the

expectation (of other people) is that everybody listens to everybody else. Everybody has an opportunity to share their ideas or to contribute to whatever it is that we are thinking about but nobody is put on the spot. You don't *have* to say anything, if you don't have something to add you are not required. The goal is not to accomplish this tomorrow; the goal is to learn more about ourselves...individually and collectively.

(An example of a group activity in which we will reflect is) we are going to this park and we will have some activities and one of the activities is what I would call a reflection. We will put people in groups of may 8 to 10 and then we are going to give them a question to reflect on and that question is basically around "what is my contribution to the whole of this institution?" So in that kind of reflection it requires me to think about that for myself, it requires me to listen to what other people say and in doing that I make connections with them and they make connections with me by hearing what I have to say. Those activities that help people to connect make it much easier when it comes time to have reflections that involve accomplishing something because people feel safer to say what they think, they are just more open.

(My approach to reflection is influenced by) things that have happened to me in my life both in the work place and personally that have allowed me to get in touch with who I am and have allowed me to be open to sharing that with other people. You know it makes you feel better as a human being and so you want to try to do that for other people too. There are so many people in my life who gave me opportunities like that obviously you have to take the risks but then if other people are creating a safety net for you then it is not quite so risky. I never thought when I first went to work in a community college; I was 21 and I didn't think I was a very good writer. I was a good technical writer but I

didn't think I was a very good creative writer so I would never share anything I wrote except business kinds of writing with anyone else because I felt inadequate. And I remember we used to have these faculty retreats at the institution that I was at and they were a lot about writing, they were about making connections, but you would do a lot of reflective writing or opportunities to do creative writing were there and you were not required to share what you wrote with anybody else. So I remember through that evolution in me from not sharing because I didn't feel that what I wrote was good enough to one day I decided that this isn't bad I think I will share it with everybody and then pretty soon you get to where you decide, hey, I am a pretty good writer and I can say that about a lot of different aspects of my life. So my own growth has given me the courage to take risks I would not have taken when I was 29 or 30 years old. You learn about yourself but you also learn about things that you are capable of, that you didn't know you were capable of but through learning...it is like through writing you learn to write through speaking you learn to speak. So I want other people to have that opportunity.

(Experiencing troubling reflections) is agonizing particularly agonizing when there is no right answer, it is that I have to make judgment about this and I have to try to be as fair as I can to the party or parties involved. I can't necessarily be what somebody else would call nice or actually I can't be what I would call nice because being nice would be making people feel good so this person isn't going to feel good about what I have to say. I have to decide how to handle it so that it is best for everybody concerned. Sometimes what is best for everybody concerned isn't going to be what that individual wants. One of the reasons that I agonize so much over that is that I always want to do it as well as I can so that there is the most benefit for the most people and ultimately maybe even benefit say

even a person which you have a serious performance issue with and is having a negative impact on other people in the institution. Ultimately you have got to do something about it. You keep giving the person the opportunity to change and then at some point you have to decide enough is enough. These are really agonizing situations and you know it is like you think well I could do this and this and this.

I tend to think of the options, and then I think well if I take this approach what are the possible things that could happen? I try to think of the approach that has the most potential for being the best for the most people concerned. And then you just do what you think you have to do. And I try to think, what is the right thing to do? You never know for sure you just have to do it. And sometimes you are wrong! Sometimes you don't get it right. And when you don't get it right you can't go back and do it again you just have to see what you can learn from that. I think predominately you pick up things from everywhere and you put them together in a certain way and how I put them together isn't going to be how someone else puts them together. A piece of writing that has meaning for me isn't going to be a piece of writing that has meaning for somebody else. For the most part I think I have a very optimistic approach. Is that something I was born with or is it something I grew to have? But certainly the fact that I had a great childhood, that I had good parents, that I had ...my parents were strong role models. I think that had an impact, but in terms of my own growth there is a group of women that I have learned a lot from. They are all teachers, they were not college presidents. They were not leaders like that. Those are not the people I have learned the most from.

I scan books about leadership. If I need to learn about a specific idea, like what we have ...we are going to a conference on innovation and we also have been trying to figure

out ...how do you measure innovation in an institution? I don't really have the answer to that so I have been trying to find some readings to help me with that, but I haven't really found anything on that. So I look for things to help me with a specific issue that I am trying to develop in my mind as a leader, so that is when I read leadership books. But for my own personal interest I value fiction, poetry...I read a lot of writers. I think I started having these connections with nature so you have the connections and then poetry and some prose also it touches those connections you already have and then it creates new connections. And then you have another experience and then pretty soon you start writing about your experiences. So it is like this building process...this growth that you experience that suddenly allows you to spontaneously do that.

I certainly have a strong commitment to this institution. I helped to build it. So I want to stay here long enough to help create a culture that will not go away when I leave...so that it becomes institutionalized so that everybody else wants it to stay the way it is.... The culture stays while you have the flexibility to change and grow as you need to grow as an institution. I think I have an identity ...I think I bring my identity to my job rather than my job being my identity. (My advice on reflection would be to) Find the time. We live in a pretty fast paced world and I can tell when I am not taking the time to do that because I am in touch I think with myself and my own needs for that and so when I feel myself getting too stressed, not being patient with somebody or a collective group or I am not able to think clearly about an issue or an idea then I know that I'm getting away from that and I need to find time to get back to it. So I think finding a time and a place...what works for me is not necessarily what works for another person.

It gives me energy when I reflect on something and come up with an idea but I also require physical activity. I personally feel the need for that but I do a variety of physical activity because that also helps with balance. I do yoga, I jog, ride my bicycle, I dance, I take walks so the variety of different physical activity does different things for me. Oh I also do tai chi. Of course the ones that are the best for clearing my mind are the yoga and the tai chi. But I can also go out ...I'll start jogging and I'll start thinking about something and it is great because I am dealing with this situation and I'm also concentrating on that and I am not thinking about the fact that I'm getting tired so it makes the time pass faster.

I think about how to get other people to share the value (of honoring diversity) and to look for that kind of diversity in who we hire while still looking at finding people who have our core values. One thing that comes to mind is how (to) talk to people about that in a way that doesn't have the opposite affect that you want to have? How can I get that value (of diversity) out there and get people to buy into that value with out mandating what they do? First of all it is in our values so I insert it in the values. And we keep our values out there visible in a lot of different ways. If you try to make something up and contrive something and it isn't what you really believe... it isn't going to work, I don't think. People see right through that. And I also think it is my own learning because you learn how to do that by seeing ways that it gets done that are effective and sometimes not effective.

I think there are a lot of reasons why (community colleges) have success (with diversity). First of all in this country poverty is disproportionately minority, in other words there is a disproportionate number of Hispanic, African American and other ethnicities that don't have enough money to go to wherever they want to go to college. I think there

are also situations in the school systems and in the homes that create disadvantaged groups of people when it comes to accessing higher education. Because we are in the community, because we are affordable, relatively affordable... because we have developmental education for those who did not quite get where they needed to get to be ready for college, we provide access that the universities don't provide. Now is that bad for universities? Well, not necessarily, but I think what a lot of universities are finding is that where their students need to come from if they are going to grow diversity, they need to get their students from the community college. As we (the community college) prepare people to go to the university then the diversity in higher education in general will increase so I see us as helping people to access higher education. We are also helping those people get to the university because they aren't necessarily in places (financially and preparation wise) where they are going to get in.

Conclusion

This chapter has used the technique of profiling to retain the authenticity of the participants' words obtained from transcripts of audio taped interviews. The profiles provide the basis for the chapter VI where the presidents' words will be analyzed and the themes revealed. Through the profiles the reader can go back to the data in order to evaluate and understand the derivation of the themes.

CHAPTER V

Introduction

This chapter explores data obtained from interviewing selected community college presidents. I chose to study self-reflection due to the lack of information on self-reflection and its effect on community college leadership. For reference, the interview questions are restated here: (a) what is your experience of self-reflection in your role as a community college president and leader? (b) What are the ingredients of your self-reflective process?

After interviewing eight community college presidents at their home campuses I transcribed the interviews. To honor the presidents and capture the depth and intensity of their experiences of self-reflection composite profiles were crafted as described in Chapter IV. Moustakas's method of phenomenological reduction, as developed in Chapter III, was used to code and categorize the interviews. Analysis revealed that the presidents' self-reflection was experienced through the themes of mindfulness, discovery and authenticity. Further study revealed supporting themes, which gave structure and credence to the core themes. To illustrate this progression the core theme of mindfulness occurred through awareness and sensitivity of four main areas: (a) the internal environment, (b) the external environment, (c) people and (d) Socratic Dialogue. The core theme of discovery emerged as three distinct areas: a) origins, b) personal growth through learning, and c) vulnerability and struggle. Authenticity integrated genuine striving for (a) congruence, and (b) choosing to act.

After the themes were developed, I looked for a means to present my findings in a way that continued to honor the presidents' words. To achieve this goal the data is presented as a conversation among the eight presidents with me serving as their moderator. This data presentation technique is used to allow the reader to participate in uncovering the themes. The presidents' voices are based on their personal interview transcripts and their presidential profiles.

Using this dialogue technique I created a virtual meeting of the presidents in which they come together to share their concepts of self-reflection as a group. Although they have never met before, they gather in an intimate, comfortable setting to talk. The reader sits in on their conversation and listens to them share their self-reflective experiences. I lead the discussion as the moderator. To facilitate the flow of the dialogue phrases in parenthesis are added that help the flow of the conversations and introduce the topics. I included sections labeled "Moderator aside to the reader" in which I explore and analyze the data. These comments are not part of the discussion but will assist the reader in understanding how I arrived at the themes. My intent was that you the reader would become a collaborator in this virtual encounter. The chapter unfolds with a brief description of each main theme followed by the respective supportive themes. At the conclusion of each theme a summary statement joins the supporting themes to give a holistic picture of the findings. The three themes merge to form the essence of self-reflection, which will be described in Chapter VI.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness emerged as a theme implying a state of being attentive, heedful, and observant. I particularly liked the use of the word *mindful* to envelope a concept dealing

with cognition, thinking and awareness. Four supporting themes surfaced as I continued to analyze the data. Mindfulness involved awareness of (a) the internal environment, (b) the external environment, (c) people, and (d) Socratic Dialogue. I explored each supporting theme using the quotes of the president in the virtual discussion. After presenting the supporting themes I brought them together in a summary statement of mindfulness.

The Internal Environment

In the interviews each president described an inner place of self-reflection. I chose the term internal environment to describe the private internal place to which the presidents retreated. I explored this supporting theme by fashioning the dialogue so that the participants shared their experience of the internal place of self-reflection.

Moderator: Welcome, it is good to see all of you together. We have completed our introductions and are settled in comfortably. We are now ready to commence our conversation sharing your experience of self-reflection as community college presidents. I would like to explore what goes on in the mind, the internal place of self-reflection. Describe what happens when you go to that internal private place of self-reflection.

Helen: Self-reflection is having an opportunity to settle down and center yourself and think. My internal environment is about recognizing the need to stop and recognize what is happening in my life and examining the significance of what is happening. It is about an awareness of how (I am) interpreting stimulation that (I am) experiencing every day. It is about getting in touch with inner thoughts.

Joshua: (My internal process) involves listening. If you don't have an ear for other people you are not going to have an ear for yourself. If you are not listening closely to your inner voice you will never hear with any depth what other people are telling you.

Moderator: You describe an awareness of the need to stop, to settle down and center. You use the words "taking time to think," "recognizing what is happening," "examining the significance of what is happening." There is an awareness of how stimulation is interpreted. It is about getting in touch with inner thoughts. You elaborate on this process by saying it involves listening to the people around you and also to your inner voice but, what goes on in your mind while you are reflecting?

Helen: It has to do with...being in the moment and being present. It (is) like my first awareness that ...oh gee, there is something more happening internally...stop and look at it.

Jack: (For me it is about thinking about issues related to the college). I think the (self) reflective part comes as you think about the topics that are coming up on your agenda at the executive counsel meeting or as you think about preparing the budget for next year or as you plan for an accreditation visit.

Sharon: (It is a process of focusing on issues). If I were thinking of something related to the job I would typically be thinking...OK here is the situation and then I would go through and try to think of creative options for dealing with it.

Matthew: (I self-reflect) through two avenues. The first is what I call a traditional avenue where at a certain time every year one is required to do self-evaluation. This self-evaluation is to be self-reflective on goals and objectives you may or may not have accomplished within the past year. The non-traditional approach is on any given moment one may pause in what is otherwise a very hectic fast-paced schedule and think about what one has achieved or as a president where you think the institution is headed, how one feels personally about the job you as president are doing and whether or not the personal agenda as far as growth and development is being achieved or realized. Your mind suddenly drifts and you start thinking about your dreams and aspirations for you organization.

Moderator: You are saying that you recognize that something more is going on internally. You become aware that there are issues and topics that require your attention and you acknowledge that you need to focus on those issues. On the other hand what happens in the internal environment is not just about focusing, but it is also about letting your mind drift. This may involve pausing in a hectic schedule to let your mind wander to past experiences or to aspirations for the future. What happens when your mind drifts?

Helen: (Letting my mind drift is like brainstorming for me.) It is really important for me to begin the brainstorming process (in my self-reflective time.).

Liza: (For me) a lot of (self-reflection) is the thoughts that flow around in my head.

Sharon: I just let my mind wander around on the particular topic. I envision the idea and what could happen with the idea. I try to think of the approach that has the most potential for being the best for the most people concerned. Sometimes you have to clear everything from your mind including what you are trying to reflect on in order to get your mind clear enough to then be able to focus on an issue.

Moderator: The mind wanders in a brainstorming process where thoughts flow around in your head. You envision ideas and what could happen with them. There is searching for the best use of ideas. Clearing the mind may enable the process of focusing to happen. You mentioned envisioning an idea, how does envisioning occur?

Sharon: I guess in a way it is seeing what you want (something) to be (like) or somehow imagining (it)... it not exactly seeing it. (An example of envisioning would be how I dealt with my nervousness about public speaking). I would find a place where I could just get

calm...and capture this image in my mind of all the people I care about ...standing with their hands on my shoulders giving me the courage to go and do what I had to do.

Joshua: I find my self imagining great hypotheses about work, asking questions about what is happening, why is it happening what is likely to happen next?

Sarah: (A leader must have a vision.) You can't lead anybody unless you know where you want to go and where you want the organization to go, and you can only do that by thinking about your experiences and your values.

Moderator: I am hearing you say that envisioning is about imagining possibilities. It is not exactly seeing something literally but it is seeing the potential or the desired outcome. It is imagining the future and forming a vision of what could be. Are there particular subjects that stimulate you to envision the future?

Joshua: A lot of my (self) reflection time is about what is happening in me and to me. I believe the first work of a leader is for interior work.

Matthew: My reflective process (as a leader) is constantly thinking about my administrative philosophy.

Jack: A lot of (my) thinking (is) about the institution. I think about how the institution could change for the better and general items that I could bring to the executive council so we can generate discussion on some of the topics that might make us a better institution. The reflective process does not always work out the details of issues.

Sarah: One of the biggest issues (I reflect on) is change management and change leadership. Particularly that's been on my mind as a new president... how to help this institution integrate change behaviors into its ongoing behavior, particularly taking this role after a long-sitting president. We spend a lot of time reflecting on how things will be perceived, how we help people understand the intent, how we keep folks from developing anxiety.

Helen: (A particular concern for the future is the college budget).

All: (Yes, that is true).

Moderator: The envisioning process is partly about what is happening in your interior life and partly what is happening in your professional life as a president. There is envisioning about your leadership philosophy and where that is headed. There is envisioning about the institution and how it could be better. It is not, however, about the details of issues. There is self-reflection on leadership philosophy, institutional improvement and on change management. What cues your internal process to reflect on these issues?

Sarah: I am cued to reflect by a challenge, a problem or an issue at work.

Matthew: I ... listen for keywords, key phrases and thoughts (in speeches) that inspire me. A lot of time I draw inspiration from music.

Helen: Music is another form of expression that brings forth additional thinking and awareness. I find that I have to be in the mood to reflect.

Sharon: (I have a similar experience). I will play some type of very soothing music and that also helps me to get into the mode of relaxation.

Liza: (My cues are different) All of the pictures (in my office) are very special and I can look at them and think about the people that gave them to me, and what they mean.

Joshua: I'm rarely driven to reflection by data or spreadsheets, graphs or things like that. I am more likely to become reflective from conversations, stories and personal interactions. There is a kind of helplessness that drives me to prayer and to reflection and to writing and to reflective time.

Sharon: (I am cued to reflect) when I feel myself getting too stressed, not being patient with somebody or a collective group or I am not able to think clearly about an issue or an idea then I know that I'm getting away from (reflecting) and I need to find time to get back to it.

Moderator: You mentioned being cued to self-reflect by challenges, problems, and issues at work. Other cues are music. It alters the mood and aids in self-reflection through listening. You listen to famous speeches and attend to words, phrases and thoughts to gain inspiration. Visual cues to reflect include gazing at art and thinking about what it means. These artistic forms inspire you but spreadsheets and other forms of written data do not stimulate self-reflection. Conversations, stories and personal interactions stimulate internal work. Feelings of helplessness encourage self-reflection through prayer and writing however feeling stressed is an indication that self-reflection is needed. Once you are cued to reflect describe what other activities are associated with the mental process of reflection?

Joshua: (I experience reflection) internally as a discipline. For many years I have had the practice of keeping a journal. And surprisingly a good bit of the journal is about work because that is where a lot of my life happens. A lot of the reflection time I have is captured by a journal. I have a place and time, a way of approaching that is mine...to me it is like going into the workshop...my tools to work on me and my challenges, things around me. So journaling has been an important discipline for me. It is almost always closely linked with prayer.

Moderator: What do you journal about?

Joshua: Sometimes it is just a matter of making lists of things that are of concern to me and lifting those things up. Other times it is much more intense than that. Habit helps me

so I need the discipline of doing it at a certain time everyday, if I do it at other times too... fine but I have to sit down in my spot, in my chair, with my notebook and do my thing. Sometimes it's pretty thin sometimes it is pretty fat but it is my thing.

Liza: I journal (as well). A lot of what I write (are) the thoughts that flow around in my head. I think journaling has become more of a significant part of my life (over the last year).

Sharon: I require physical activity to accomplish reflection. I personally feel the need for that. I do a variety of physical activity because that helps with balance. . I do yoga, I jog, ride my bicycle, I dance, I take walks so the variety of different physical activity does different things for me. Oh I also do tai chi..

Jack: I like to think when I am exercising, walking primarily. That provides me with an alternative to using my mind without wasting time while you are doing a physical exercise. Endorphins kick in and at that point in time I think you think as clearly as you do at any time.

Sarah: If I've got a hard problem I will just take off and walk three miles. I feel less stressed and calm. I tend to couple physical activity with the really hard (problems).

Helen: I like to go fishing and so out on the lake on a boat is another neat place (to reflect).

Martin: I garden (while I reflect.)

Moderator: You are saying that activity facilitates the thinking process. The action of writing or journaling is a discipline in which self-reflection takes place. Prayer is an activity that occurs in self-reflection where a Higher Power is acknowledged. There appears to be many types of activity that are done while reflecting: walking, jogging, gardening, fishing, dancing. These activities encourage self-reflection. What is the end result? What happens when you bring thoughts together in the internal environment?

Sarah: I find myself in those private times being more able to back off alone and get a holistic picture of the institution, and to try and compare various options against my personal value set. I view reflection as big picture thinking.

Helen: (I also examine relationships in my thinking process.) My tools for self-reflection or thinking include mind maps because thinking is relational. I draw pictures of how things are related. (In the end I ask myself) how do we pull it together for the college?

Martin: (My internal process) is about blending body, mind, and spirit (in reflection).

Sharon: It gives me energy when I reflect on something and come up with an idea!

Liza: I think about things and try to figure things out relationally because so many things don't make sense to me in a vacuum. I always have to put the pieces together to make them fit. A process of review I learned in graduate school is called the "sleepe principle." It means looking at the social, the legal, the economic, the educational, the political and the ethical issues related to what is going on in your mind or what is going on in the institution. The longer it takes me to engage in the "sleepe principle" the longer the problem goes on so I don't think this is a job that can be done without reflection (in decision-making).

Helen: Ultimately there are some things that I have to decide and so there are times when I'll listen, we've talked, I've heard. I've looked at the angles and (now) I have some choices.

Moderator: There is a merging of thoughts that leads to conclusions through self-reflection. In self-reflection there is the opportunity to back off and view the "big picture." Mind mapping and drawing are used to show relationships of data than can be used in decision-making. All aspects issues are considered. This means looking at the effect on body mind and spirit. A process called the "sleepe principle" is used to look at the social, legal, economic, education, political and ethical issues of a problem. It is comparable to putting the pieces of a puzzle together and seeing the image produced by the pieces.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The internal environment was revealed as awareness of the meta-cognitive experience of self-reflection. The presidents described the process of how they thought and reasoned. A common finding was that they stopped during the course of life to listen, center and connect with inner thoughts. This occurred despite a hectic life. Helen spoke of "recognizing what is happening and examining the significance of what is happening." Joshua described, "Listening to an inner voice." I noticed a paradox in that reflection was about focusing the mind but also about letting the mind wander. An example of this was Matthew who described a formal, focused evaluation process but also a more informal time of letting the mind wander to dreams and aspirations of the organization. Sharon described thinking of creative options, and Helen's thinking involved a "brainstorming process."

The presidents discussed the importance of having vision as part of their internal environment. They shared that having vision was aided by self-reflection. Sharon speaks

of “imagining” possibilities. Joshua said he finds himself “imagining great hypothesis about work.” This alluded to the importance of leaders having vision in order to lead. Sarah supported this leadership perspective by saying, “You can’t lead anybody unless you know where you want to go.” Envisioning combined the two paradoxical processes of focusing and drifting. Sharon described a process of envisioning her friends with their hands on her supporting her as she spoke in public. She presented a different perspective of this paradox when she mentioned clearing the mind in order to focus on an issue. She said “you have to clear your mind in order to focus.” This resembled a meditative process.

Self-reflective time was spent thinking about a variety of topics in the internal environment. The presidents mentioned reflecting on “interior work” which I interpreted as reflecting on issues related to self. Other reflective topics included issues concerning the institutions they served such as leadership philosophy, change management and the budget. Cues for self-reflection varied. Several of the presidents viewed self-reflection as a discipline and scheduled time in their day. Others were more spontaneous responding to personal interactions. Some participants combined the two techniques by having a specific time and place yet being open to spontaneous self-reflective moments. Many of them spoke of being driven to reflection by a problem or an issue at work. Sharon was aware of the need to self-reflect when she felt stressed or impatient. Matthew spoke of “key phrases and thoughts that inspired” him to self-reflect. Joshua revealed that data from spreadsheets and graphs seldom cued self-reflection. He spoke of a sense of helplessness “driving” him to prayer and to the reflective time.

Many of the presidents required physical activity to facilitate the thinking process. Joshua and Liza journaled. Helen went fishing. Martin gardened. Jack stated that “I like to

think when I am exercising, walking primarily.” He viewed exercise without thinking as a waste of time. Sharon stated that exercising while self-reflecting kept her “in balance,” she jogged, practiced yoga, and danced. There was a sense that the presidents were kinesthetic and in tune with their physical selves. Helen says, “We lose part of ourselves when we lose the activity that comes with physical movement.” Self-reflecting involved a physical and mental process. Liza and Matthew relied on sight and hearing as opposed to the kinesthetic sense. Matthew self-reflecting on the speeches of great leaders. Mathew, Sharon, and Helen gained inspiration from listening to music and Liza reflected while looking at art.

The presidents described integration of thought in the internal environment by using phrases such as “getting a holistic picture of the organization” or “big picture thinking.” There appeared to be a bringing together of the important information about an issue in self-reflection. The process involved looking at relationships between ideas and thoughts. This was accomplished by using tools that helped the presidents to see associations. Helen described mind mapping and drawing pictures as ways of looking at relationships. These visual depictions helped her reveal essential facts in her thinking process. Liza described trying to put the pieces of a puzzle together in her mind using a method of review called the “sleepe principle.” This process examined the social, the legal, he economic, the educational, the political and the ethical issues. It also served as a decision making tool. She described self-reflection as a cloud hanging over her until she initiated the “sleepe principle.” Several of the presidents spoke of using reflection in the decision making process.

The External Environment

I used external environment to describe the place outside the mind that facilitated the presidents' self-reflection. It provided the backdrop to the internal environment and included location and time of self-reflection. I expanded the meaning of the external environment to incorporate whatever the presidents identified as impacting their self-reflection outside of themselves.

Moderator: We have talked about the internal experience of self-reflection, but what about other influences outside of you. I would like you to explain how attentiveness to the external environment impacts your self-reflective process.

Matthew: I would say 95% of the time I would reflect in my office at my home. It is a very quiet place. I think just being able to get away from the job site for a length of time allows me to be reflective. When I am in my office at home I don't have distractions. If I am focused and I'm concentrating on something, occasionally my wife will chide me. Why don't you answer the phone? I wasn't interested in answering the phone. I was too focused on what I was doing. If I had stopped to answer the phone then I would get involved in a conversation and lose my train of thought. It takes me out of that mode of reflection and it takes me a while to get back into that creative thinking mode.

Liza: (Yes, I agree that home is a reflective place). The physical place is my bedroom. I can be in a soothing position with my laptop in my lap. It is always quiet.

Joshua: Journaling and reflection occur at my desk (at home) or at a retreat at my house. What makes it a place to reflect is that I am familiar with every nook and cranny, every book. It is habituated.

Helen: My place to reflect is at my kitchen table. It is a higher table. It is a big space where I can sit and write. There is a little garden right outside the window of the kitchen that has lots of wildflowers and bird feeders. It is a peaceful place.

Martin: (My external environment is of great importance to me. It is a mirror of my internal environment). My most reflective place is my house. It is a peaceful place to be. (I create a nurturing environment by) all you hear is the water and something it just carries you away someplace. Somewhere in the back of my consciousness I am aware from the time that that first bird starts waking me up at 6 o'clock, they just kind of come in at different times. And sometimes I am more conscious but if I think about it I am aware that one of the bird's songs is always first. There is a kind of rhythm to all that...so those are the ways that I personally tend to my own inner nurturing. The garden is a reflective place also. I can easily drop out to that place or I can drop out to our garden (on the campus.)

Moderator: What does it mean to have the place reflect your internal environment?

Martin: Part of it is arranging your life in such a way that both through discipline you spontaneously can tend to yourself.

Jack: I love the outdoors. That is a particular interest. I can camp in the summer in the mountains summer and winter and I prefer to do that by myself (giving plenty of time for reflection.)

Moderator: You described the external environment as frequently occurring at home. It was helpful to get away from the work site to a home office. At home there were fewer distractions to disturb self-reflection, and there was a choice to ignore distractions. Home was a place of safety and familiarity, there was the opportunity to focus and concentrate. Different rooms were part of the external environment of self-reflection. The bedroom, the kitchen, a study were all used for self-reflection. The idea of the external environment mirroring the internal environment was addressed. Words such as peaceful were used to describe the place. Being alone outdoors was also part of the external environment. What else can you describe about the external environment?

Matthew: My office is a very quiet place (to self-reflect.)

Sharon: For me it is not so much the place but the quiet that allows me to reflect.

Sarah: The place doesn't impact me (either). It is much more internal. For me it is more about when I reflect than where. It tends to happen when I am alone which isn't very often...when I'm driving in the car, when I'm rocking my little boy to sleep, when I'm exercising.

Joshua: I do get lots of quality time (to reflect) when I am traveling because I am not a television watcher. Hotels are generally quiet and there is not a whole lot to distract you. Airplanes, I write a lot on planes. When I am in the car... those are all good times to capture some silent moments.

Moderator: Some of you placed more importance on the place of reflection than others. There was more emphasis by some of you on the "internal" place of reflection. Descriptions of the external environment were that it was quiet, peaceful, and calm. A quiet atmosphere appeared to be of particular significance. For some of you the timing of self-reflection was more important than where it occurs. You have described reflecting while driving, rocking your children, exercising, traveling in an airplane and relaxing in hotels. Describe more about what benefit there is to "being alone" when you self-reflect.

Sarah: The being alone and not interfacing with other people is more important than the place. I crave that alone time, quiet time. But it can be in my recliner; it can be sweeping the patio. Because it is a drain (always interacting with people, reflection alone is) how I renew my energy.

Jack: Individually reflection for me occurs most often when I am by myself and usually when I am walking.

Moderator: Self-reflection is often done alone. Not “interfacing” with people re-energized you. When self-reflect occurred people were often present but there was not interaction with them. Disengagement from people renewed your energy. Some form of activity such as sweeping the floor or walking often accompanies being alone. Tell me more about when you reflect.

Martin: For me anyway it is important that (reflection) happen in the routine of my life getting up in the morning and doing morning yoga routine and walking out and watering the garden or just looking at the flowers. I am a gardener and I try to garden in a way that can help me reflect. An interesting thing over the years is I found out that in that time for reflection I have also seen that there are a number of lessons I’ve have learned about how to garden that apply metaphorically to how to be a leader here in a community college.

Sharon: I have a tendency to wake up early and lie there and think about (an issue) or I will get up and do my yoga or go out and jog and think about whatever it is that I need to be about

Sarah: (I share that experience.) If I’ve got an issue I find the time (to reflect), like this morning. I was awake at 3 o’clock. My body seems to make me do it.

Helen: Oftentimes I (also self-reflect) in the middle of the night.

Joshua: I don’t get a lot of reflection done at work. It is hard for me to carve out that time when things are coming at you as quickly as they do. Even on a slow day there are many surprises for me so it is hard to close the door when there are people out there clamoring for attention and actually do a lot of reflection at work.

Helen: Part of that self-reflection and that process has to do with first of all, acknowledging the need for it and recognizing that you do have time or you have to make time to stop and think...because we are so hectic in our society.

Liza: (To give you an example of my hectic schedule) I know there were several weeks where all I did from morning to night was work. I had advisory groups and some met as early as 6:30 in the morning and some as late as 6:30 in the evening. Some days are spent trying to make those ugly hours.

Sharon: (My experience is similar). We live in a pretty fast paced world and I can tell when I am not taking the time to (reflect). So I think finding a time and a place (to reflect) and what works for me is not necessarily what works for another person.

Jack: (Another side of that is that) one of the things that are sometimes frustrating, are you come in early and you are reflecting ...or thinking, you think of something that you want to talk with someone about and nobody else is here!

Moderator: There were a variety of times when self-reflection takes place. Some of you reflect as part of the routine of your life, and in those times you use that time to learn about yourself as a community college leader. Again it seems to happen along with other activities: jogging, gardening and yoga. You mention waking up early, lying there and thinking before rising. Reflecting early in the morning was common. You speak of your “body making you do it.” You relate that the lives of community college presidents are hectic offering little time on the job to self-reflect. It is about acknowledging the need and then taking the time to self-reflect. Finding a time and place that works for individuals is important. Are there other aspects of the expanded external environment that influence self-reflection?

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The supporting theme of external environment became evident from the presidents’ voices as they spoke of where they self-reflected. There appeared to be individual receptivity to the external environment by each president. For some of them the external environment was a crucial piece of their reflective space while others described their internal environment as more important. Each president created an individual milieu where he or she could concentrate and be alone. I was struck by the number of times the presidents spoke of the hectic life of a president interfering with self-reflection. There seemed to be a need for places away from work where the presidents could reflect, concentrate and think creatively. The most common self-reflective places were the presidents’ homes. Home was described as contemplative and habituated. It was a quiet environment away from the job site. Joshua used the word “retreat” to describe his home. Martin referred to his home as “peaceful.” An impression was given that home was a place of safety and familiarity where the presidents could retreat into their own personal world.

The presidents created reflective spaces at home and at work. The external environment of the participants frequently mirrored the internal environment. Martin spoke of tending to his inner nurturing by having an aviary where songbirds awaken him

slowly in the morning. This fit with his personal commitment to body, mind and spirit. Helen described her kitchen as having expansive counter with a window where she could write and look out at her garden. This matched her need for a place to ponder and integrate her thoughts. Each president drew from his or her own needs and likes and created a place that supported each. Not all presidents reflected indoors some shared a preference for reflection outdoors in a natural setting. Jack preferred to walk on an outdoor track early in the morning and to reflect on camping trips in the summer. Martin created reflective places such as a sand beach near his home. Sarah reflected in the unpretentious setting of her home while she was doing normal things for her family. Helen went out on the lake to fish.

For many of the presidents their campus offices were places of reflection. Due to my grant, I was able to personally experience the external environment by interviewing the presidents on their campuses. The office décor revealed what was important to them and was an authentic statement of the external environment. Martin's office was contemplative and displayed the simplicity and elegance of cherry wood paneling with a single stunning orchid. Joshua's office was sunny, warm and inviting. Sharon's external environment reflected an inviting, relaxed space. Jack celebrated his love of Asian culture by displaying oriental art. Liza exhibited pictures on her office walls that caused her to pause and ponder. She created an ambiance with her "rooster chair" and subdued colors that promoted self-reflection by all who entered. One wall of Sarah's office was a window allowing her to look out on the campus. A distinctive feature of her office was the pottery and sculpture that adorned the shelves of her walls. In contrast to this was Helen whose

office had no windows, and although the ambiance felt contemplative, it did not mirror her engaging personality.

Several of the presidents stated that the place of reflection was not as important as a quiet environment, and disengagement from people. It was paradoxical that they desired a quiet environment away from people, yet they often listened to music and were involved in activities where other people were present. Sarah was a good example of this. She preformed self-reflection while exercising at the gym or shopping at the grocery store. I interpreted this to mean that disengagement was about mental separation and not necessarily separation from people in the physical environment. It was repeated many times that the life of a community college president was fast paced hectic and involved constant interaction with people. They verbalized a need to get away. Constantly interacting with people was draining and inhibited creativity. Finding time to self-reflect was a challenge for all the participants and many spoke of the difficulty reflecting at work. Joshua stated, "It is hard for me to carve out that time when things are coming at you as quickly as they do." Jack shared a different perspective when he expressed frustration with not having people around in the early morning when he wanted to reflect with others in the college.

I included time as a part of the external environment. This aspect of the environment often played a role in determining the self-reflective process. Timing of self-reflection frequently occurred for the presidents in the early morning. Many of them woke early and reflected before rising. This was true of Sharon, Liza, Jack and Sarah. Joshua and Liza described self-reflection as a habit and engaged it at a specific time each day. For Matthew it was a matter of grabbing pieces of time here and there in the midst of work

and home life. Sarah spoke of reflecting “while I’m driving in the car, when I’m rocking my little boy to sleep.” Self-reflection occurred when they were alone or involved in an activity. There was awareness by all of the participants of the importance of the self-reflective time.

People

Mindfulness of people examined the different ways that people affected the self-reflective process. Because interrelationships with people are a fundamental part of leadership, interactions with people were deemed a critical part of self-reflection. The presidents frequently consulted with people in person. At other times they reflected on the writings and speeches of prominent people. The presidents carefully considered the characteristics and character of individuals with whom they self-reflected. Self-reflecting with people evoked a variety of responses in the presidents.

Moderator: We have talked about reflection as a solitary process but at this time I would like to discuss how people impact self-reflection. Describe the role of people in self-reflection?

Liza: I am a person who needs people. I need people who are close and that I can trust. I’ve always had one or two persons in my life that I felt comfortable sharing confidential matters about myself. A job like president requires a confidential friend or a good relationship where you can talk things through. I think I would absolutely lose it if all I had were just my thoughts going around in my head with nobody to talk to. I value that and it absolutely helps me to stay sane. It helps me stay grounded. I have friends that I talk to everyday.

Joshua: People play all sorts of roles in my reflection. Very often they tell you things you need to know about yourself. They hold up a mirror and you look in the mirror and say gosh I am not who I thought I was or maybe I am not becoming who I want to be. More often than not it is in relationships that I discover the ugly parts of myself that I need to work on. But people also give encouragement.

Liza: (Yes that is true they give encouragement). With my friends I do not have to wear any masks, I can take them off. I can say, “I really didn’t handle that right.” I know that they will say, “You are right, you didn’t. Now what do you need to do in order to correct it?” I bounce ideas off them. I can also say “I really messed up.” My friends may respond,

“You didn’t mess up, just wait and see.” It is just that affirmation that is needed. I know the people I reflect with to be honest and ethical. I know they love me because of our bond over the years. I don’t have to worry about something breaking that relationship because we have weathered storms before.

Martin: (When we are) getting in touch with who we are internally and feeling confident about that (then we don’t) mask that with other individuals.

Sharon: In terms of my own growth there is a group of women that I have learned a lot from. They are all teachers they are not college presidents. They are not leaders like that. I have learned the most from friends that supported me in my own growth and that were good role model for me.

Moderator: It appears that a job like president requires a confidential friend or a trusting relationship. You stay sane and grounded when there is someone to talk to. People tell you things about yourself that you need to know. They help you determine if you are who you want to be. People give criticism and also encouragement in a safe environment. You don’t have to wear masks when you are with friends. You can admit that you messed up and receive affirmation for what you have done well. You choose people to reflect with who are honest and who care for you. Self-reflection can occur with one or two people or in with a group of close friends. You are describing a deeply personal connection with people who act as a support for you. These individuals may not be formal leaders but they function as role models. Since you are in a leadership role how would you describe reflection with groups of people?

Helen: (An) aspect of my self-reflective process is thinking out loud with other people. It means saying out loud what this looks like to me, and then asking for people to react. Sometimes when you say things out loud you gain greater understanding personally and conceptually. It can be a surprise. I’m thinking this but when I say it, it really makes the issues clearer. Reflecting with people came with the realization that a) I do not have all the answers and b) sometimes what I think is the answer has holes in it. So I need people to help me shoot holes in my ideas. I need that interaction with people.

Martin: Self-reflection is an interactive thing both for me personally and with the institution, they reinforce each other. It is very difficult to be a reflective person in an institution that doesn’t value that so having a culture that values reflection helps you because it is an expectation of the job. To the extent that we are successful in creating a culture that values reflection and deep listening and encourages and teaches one another to do that it is more likely that self-reflection will be a part of the culture.

Jack: (I share a similar experience). At our institution reflection really is collective reflection. I inherited a staff that loves the college and we make decisions as a group. We meet probably a minimum of three times a week sometimes up to six times per week. I don’t like unilateral decisions. There are times when I have to make decisions alone but only after significant discussion.

Helen: My staff has to invest some time with me in thinking. That is part of the challenge in terms of ...you don't want to wear people out you want to save them for the big issues.

Moderator: Part of reflecting with people is thinking out loud with people and seeing their reactions. You realize in reflection that you do not have all the answers and sometimes your thinking is flawed-interactions with people reveal the flaws. Self-reflection is interactive with the institution. A culture of self-reflection supports reflection by encouraging deep listening. You say that it is hard to be self-reflective in a place that does not value self-reflection. Collective reflection occurs when groups meet often and only make decisions after careful deliberation with each other. Would you give an example of how you would practice reflection in a group?

Sharon: An example of a group activity in reflection is we are going to a park and we will put people in groups of 8 or 10 and then we are going to give them a question to reflect on and that question is basically around "what is my contribution to the whole of this institution?" So in that kind of reflection it requires me to think about that for myself. It requires me to listen to what other people say and in doing that I make connections with them and they make connections with me by hearing what I have to say. Those activities that help people to connect make it much easier when it comes time to have reflections that involve accomplishing something. People feel safer to say what they think. They are more open.

Martin: (Comparable activities would include) gaining experiences in formational listening, being with one another and writing. People (can be) taught skills in formational listening based on the Quaker tradition of the clearness committee. It is about being still and listening to what a person is saying and seeking clarity if there is a feeling of dysfunction. It is not about debate or preparing your counter argument to win. People are taught not to ask leading questions and to listen in order to assist another person in solving their own issues.

Helen: We start with a small group and I met with several and then when I went to lunch it was more of a discussion group about how do we deal with this, what you think, what are your ideas... it will be a larger circle next week with my president's cabinet. So the circle just keeps getting bigger. And so by the time I get finished thinking about it, I have looked at it from a lot of different angles and people have looked at it with me and we may have some viable solutions and some stuff that I might never have thought about.

Moderator: In group reflection people are expected to think, listen and make connections with others. They are brought together and asked to share their perceptions and views. The atmosphere of sharing is safe. It is also important to seek clarity through formational listening derived from the Quaker tradition of the "clearness committee." It is not about debate but about asking the questions that help people solve their own problems. Reflecting in a group also means expanding the circle of involvement out from a core group. With many people involved there are many different viewpoints. There seems to be attentiveness to the way people respond to one another. The leader is open and inclusive. What are your expectations of people in self-reflection?

Sarah: Part of my mentoring role as president is to help my leadership team continue to grow their skill set on (self) reflection ...big picture thinking. What I hope to see is that my vice presidents are asking some of those longer-term, impact questions particularly from a human perspective of a values laden perspective before they get to me. I shouldn't be the only keeper of the values I shouldn't be the only person who cares about the big picture. I don't want them to come in with a list of numbers and who's going to sign what and here are the contract. I want them to develop a longer-term perspective, a big picture perspective of the impact on the college and whether or not we're serving our students and other constituents in the way the need to be served. So this kind of reflection gets beyond the mechanical day-to-day business kinds of things.

Jack: (I have expectations of people as well). I look for people who are committed to the institution and are loyal to the institution and are committed to making the time and energy sacrifices necessary to make the institution prosper. That means more that a forty-hour week and more than a five-year career, which mean in effect keeping a commitment to the community college long-term. I also consider their personality, work ethic, and moral values ethical behavior. I look for a compatible feeling. If you can't trust the person that you are negotiating with then you can't negotiate. When you have people who fit these criteria and you have the opportunity to interact with them on the basis of common interest, that common interest means success for the institution. These are the kind of people you can sit down with and reflect with.

Joshua: The people I gravitate toward are value centered, people whose principles are evident to me. They are vision- oriented people as opposed to competitive or achievement oriented. I like a great diversity of people. I am kind of attracted to people on the fringes because they have fun and interesting perspectives. I am attracted to conversations with people who clearly are consciously doing their interior work too. If you are asking who I go to bounce the tough ideas off of as opposed to just gathering information, those are relationships that you develop over time, some of them are formal. I've got business associates in the community that I bounce ideas off of. There are some other presidents I reflect with. I will call them, visit them, and ask them hard questions.

Matthew: (I am cautious about who I reflect with.) Much of my self-reflective behavior has been just that involving myself, not other people directly and then indirectly based on the inspiration that I get reading and listening (as I explained before)... but not directly from other people.

Moderator: Leaders act as mentors to help the leadership team grow their skills in self-reflection. Big picture thinking describes self-reflection. It is about asking longer-term impact question that are value laden. It goes beyond the day- to- day operations. There are expectations of people in self-reflection. They should be value centered visionary as opposed to competitive or achievement oriented. It is important diverse people to get fun and interesting perspectives. You go to persons with whom you have long-term relationships to bounce ideas off of. These may be other presidents. There is an expectation of commitment to the organization. People to reflect with are chosen

carefully. People are expected to be committed, loyal, trusted and ethical. There should be a compatible feeling. and Explain why you would be hesitant to include people in self-reflection?

Matthew: Something that I have not done before (is identify) individuals that I feel I can sit down to bounce things off of in terms of reflection. Over the years I think that has been one of my weaknesses. (I believe that self-reflection with other people places you in a vulnerable position) You have to develop the art of deciphering what is legitimate and what is not legitimate. In other words, in a bureaucracy there are always going to be individuals who will have particular axes to grind... old baggage, old history that they can't let go of. Others will simply need a target to vent their frustrations. Presidents are in a fish bowl environment, so it is inevitable that there are going to be those individuals who really don't have anything of substance to contribute. (You have to ask yourself) is this legitimate input or is this not legitimate, is this coming from a person who has a particular axe to grind, is this coming from a person who is genuinely trying to be objective?

Moderator: Not all of you are comfortable in opening yourselves up to others. It is important to develop the art of deciphering what is legitimate and what is not when relating with people. Presidents are in a fish-bowl environment. Being discriminating in your analysis of peoples' advice is protective. What happens when you risk sharing yourself with the people you work with?

Helen: (You become vulnerable when you share yourself with people in the institution) but you let people know who you are and then they will work with you. That was just a much more comfortable model for me and I think that is was a very helpful realization for me to know who you are, to know what you care about, to know what you value. Tell people, share it, they realize that they can relax as well. It makes for a much better situation.

Sharon: (Yes and) whatever idea you have always gets better when other people get involved in the discussion. (So it is important to bring other people into the process of self-reflection.)

Jack: I think if people are not a part of the reflection that a president does than he or she is probably in the wrong profession. Remember the old smoke towers, fire towers that people used to get up on to watch a fire? They should probably be in a job like that, if you don't think about people in the reflective process

Moderator: Opening yourself up others makes you vulnerable but if you let people know who you are then they will work with you. They need to know who you are and what you value, then they can relax and work with you. Self-reflection with people allows better ideas to surface. Including people in self-reflection can be a risk but it is also a risk not to include people because leadership involves interaction with people/ There is strong agreement among the presidents that people need to be involved in self-reflection.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The presidents were mindful of people in their self-reflective process. They sought relationships with a variety of individuals either on a one-to-one basis or in a group. They described the need for personal friends who they could trust and share confidential matters with. Liza says:

“I would absolutely lose it if all I had were just my thoughts going around in my head with nobody to talk to. I value (having friends to talk to) it absolutely helps me stay sane.”

There was a longing for relationships where she did not have to “wear masks.” Masks might be described as the opposite of self-reflection. Helen stated that there was a need to be transparent. Jack summed up his view of people in the reflective process by saying that anyone who did not think about people in the reflective process should probably not be a community college president..

The presidents chose a variety of people with whom to reflect. Sarah reflected with her spouse, an educator, early on in her presidency. Sharon also reflected with her spouse, but her strongest support system was with a group of women outside of work. She stressed that they were not college presidents, but friends who supported her over the years. Liza also had a small group of women friends outside the college to whom she turned for support. This corroborated the idea that it was not degrees and credentials that attracted the presidents to people but the quality of the relationships. Joshua said he was attracted to individuals on the fringes who could give him different perspectives. He was willing to engage unconventional voices in his self-reflective process.

The presidents sought quality of character in the people with whom they self-reflecting. They carefully chose persons who were stimulating, validating, and inspiring. Joshua spoke of gravitating towards value-centered people whose principles were evident.

He was attracted to conversations with people who were consciously doing their interior work. His interest was in people who were engaged in their own reflective process. Jack described people he would choose to reflect with by saying that

Personality characteristics, work ethic, moral values, ethical behavior...there are a lot of things that go into (the) decision (of who I will reflect with)...having a compatible feeling, if you can't trust the person that you are negotiating with then you can't negotiate.

Liza described needing people to self-reflect with who loved her and were affirming, but also willing to challenge her thinking.

The presidents were particularly discriminating in selecting people within the college to share their personal self- reflections. They gathered data from a variety of people but reflected with a select number. Jack collaborated with his executive council where he had developed trusting relationships. Helen chose people in her institution to self-reflect with based on their expertise, their interpersonal relationships, and randomly by who was available. They deliberately chose people of position in the college. Jack chose people on his executive council. Sarah turned to her vice-presidents. Joshua selected other presidents outside of his own institution to ask the hard questions.

Liza identified an imaginary line between faculty and administrators. She believed she had to maintain distance from employees in the college in order to effectively lead them. She says " Because I am the boss there are limits to how much I will share with them about my personal life." Matthew in particular found it uncomfortable sharing his self-reflections with people in the college. He stated "something I have not done before...(is) identify individuals that I feel I can sit down with and bounce things off of in terms of reflection." Although he did not interact on a personal level he turned to recordings of speeches of famous leaders to gain inspiration in self-reflection.

The presidents placed expectations on the people they self-reflected with. Jack expected loyalty and commitment. Sarah wanted her vice-presidents to develop a longer-term perspective. She said of her vice-presidents “Part of my role is to help them continue to grow their skill set on reflection.” Of all the presidents Martin was most vocal about engaging employees in his self-reflective process. He stated

Self-reflection is an interactive thing both for me personally and with the institution, they reinforce each other. It is very difficult to be a reflective person in an institution that doesn't value that so having a culture that values reflection helps you because it is an expectation of the job.

He describes a culture in which formational listening and the pursuit of personal work was appreciated and encouraged. Sharon spoke of self-reflective group activities in which staff members were asked to think about an issue, listen to others and then make connections with others in the group about their ideas in a safe environment.

The presidents were aware of the need for counsel in their leadership role. They acknowledged the necessity for considering more than their own thinking. Joshua spoke of business associates and other presidents that he went to for advice and to ask the hard questions. Interactions with people aided in decision-making. Helen spoke of speaking out loud with people to gain clarity about the issues. She expressed the need to have people “shoot holes in her ideas” in order to reveal their feasibility. This required trusting that feedback was not directed at her personally but was about supporting her decision-making process. There seemed to be a general understanding that presidents did not have all the answers and needed the input from others in a form of collaborative problem solving. Sharon concluded, “Whatever idea you have always gets better when other people get involved in the discussion.” Jack was the most decisive in expressing that he did not make decisions unilaterally. All ideas were evaluated and voted on by the executive council.

Socratic Dialogue

I discovered as I read the interviews that the presidents, without exception, turned inward and asked questions of themselves and others. The questions expressed the depth of their thinking process. Socratic principles were evident in their self-discourse, principles included: questioning persistently, involving people in dialogue about values, learning from those with authentic experience, and working together toward finding personal internal truth. I believed the best way to describe this finding was as a Socratic Dialogue.

Moderator: In the course of our discussion you have asked many questions as a part of your thought process. Explain how questioning is a part of self-reflection?

Helen: (In my private reflective time I constantly ask my self) what in the world am I doing and why am I doing this and what do I value and how is that being imparted?

Joshua: Leadership is an expression of character not technique. Technique is fine but it is empty. People who are technically leading are just dangerous. So to me the first work of the leader ... is your interior work. (This involves questioning yourself) Who am I? Why am I this way? Who am I becoming? Who do I admire? How do I keep telling myself the truth instead of protecting myself?

Martin: (I examine my self through questioning) and if there is some emotional reaction ... (I) can pay attention to that...I wonder what is going on with me that caused this reaction to affect me?

Liza: I always want to know why and what.

Moderator: You emphasize the importance of looking inward as a leader. It is referred to as doing "interior work." There is a sharp focus on self-examination through questions such as "what is going on with me that makes me act this way?" This brings about an awareness of the connection between mental functioning and the physical body. There is concern about how you communicate and what people you emulate. You ask questions about your core values, your interests and your capabilities such as: What do I value? What am I doing? Who am I becoming? You question why (Why am I doing this? Why am I this way?) There is exposure of self-delusions in the question "How do I keep telling myself the truth instead of protecting myself?" Explain how self-questioning influences you as a leader?

Sarah: (The questions I ask are) how do I do that, how do I model it, what kind of questions (should) I ask, which challenges do I tackle, which ones do I leave alone for a while? This is kind of my internal checklist of things I need to do.

Moderator: These questions concern behavior as a leader, they are action questions such as how do I do that? There are also questions about priority and sequence of actions such as “which challenges do I tackle which ones do I leave alone?” Particularly relevant is the question “what kind of questions should I ask?” The action of mentoring is addressed by “how do I model it?” You refer to questions that form an internal leadership checklist. Is questioning something that happens all the time?

Matthew: I don't go around every minute of the day trying to recite (it) literally but whenever I find myself in the midst of an interaction, whether it's with an individual or a group of individuals, in the back of my mind is the leadership manifesto. As I 'm communicating as I (am problem solving) as I am dealing with difficult situations or as I'm casually sitting around the lunch table (I am asking) which of these values am I promoting?

Helen: As a leader (I ask myself) am I being consistent with what I say I value?

Moderator: The self-questioning process happens in the course of being a leader. You are formulating questions while you communicate, while you deal with difficult situations or while you relate informally with others. You ask yourself if your actions reflect what you say you value. You look for inconsistencies in your behavior by asking what do I value you and how is that being imparted. Do people play a part in the questioning process?

Joshua: There are things that people know deep in the organization that you can't possibly know. So I like to have good questions to ask where ever I go. I ask them habitually. I learn sometimes as much from a clerk or a custodian as I do from a dean, it just depends.

Jack: (I agree.)

Moderator: You frequently ask questions of people at all levels of the organization because there is much to learn from them. You want good questions to bring out information. How do you use questions in decision-making?

Jack: (I ask questions such as) is this the right decision? Is it the right decision legally? Which is the first question that an administrator has to ask. But then is it the right decision morally, are we doing the right thing for the institution?

Sharon: I try to think what is the right thing to do? You never know for sure you just have to do it. And sometimes you are wrong. Sometimes you don't get it right and when you don't get it right you can't go back and do it again you just have to see what you can learn from that.

Moderator: There is a search for personal internal truth in questioning. What is right? There is an underlying need for honesty and willingness to look at the evidence that is shown in the question; What is legally and morally right? Self-criticism is a part of the process of questioning by admitting that sometimes you are wrong. What impact does questioning have on self-reflection in a group?

Liza: Being a part of a reflective culture means ... thinking about and reflecting on how things went. (The questions I ask are) was the process appropriate? Did the outcome match my thought about what I thought the outcome would be? Was my role as strong as facilitative as I thought it could have been? Given this outcome how would I do it again? What is the best course?

Sharon: (When dealing with people I wonder) how do you talk to people .. in a way that doesn't have the opposite affect that you want to have?

Sarah: (I) have conversations about how will the community perceive (ideas)...how do we communicate this to the senior executive staff? What are the implications?

Martin: (Questions also help in shaping the future because you think to yourself) that was the vision. What's the blueprint, how are we going to get there?

Moderator: Questions such as "was the process appropriate? did the outcome match my thought about what I thought the outcome would be? And was my role as strong as facilitative as I thought it could have been? " show a willingness to recall successes and failures and learn from experiences. You look back and envision what could be done differently, what could I as the leader have done differently. There is a desire for personal improvement by asking was my role as strong and as facilitative as I thought it could have been? Leaders search for answers by asking how would I do it again? The future is anticipated by looking back and then using that information to envision what could happen. This is illustrated by the question "how do you talk to people in a way that doesn't have the opposite affect that you want?" Questioning helps to clarify values and beliefs. It develops vision. Problems are identified and learning occurs through questioning.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: Self-questioning was an ongoing component of self-reflection by community college presidents. Self-dialogue was utilized in variety of ways (a) for self-evaluation (b) for communicating vision and (c) for maintaining integrity in decision-making. Self-examination was accomplished through questioning. Helen spoke of asking "What am I doing and why an I doing it?" She confronted herself about her goals and aspirations. Joshua connected questioning to doing his interior work by asking

“Who am I? Why am I this way? Who am I becoming? He placed tremendous importance on the importance of the leader’s character rather than his or her technique. It was also noted that “why” questions were often asked that probed the intent of actions. These were questions of depth that addressed core values, interests and capabilities.

Martin questioned himself in order to determine what caused him to react the way he did. He says: I wonder what is going on with me that caused this reaction to affect me? This addressed his awareness of the connection between mental functioning and the physical body, which was consistent with his holistic view of body, mind and spirit. The presidents used questioning to expose inconsistencies. Joshua confronted self-delusions by asking, “how do I keep from telling myself the truth instead of protecting myself?” Matthew questioned himself about how he communicated his leadership philosophy. He explained that he asked questions of himself as he communicated, as he dealt with difficult situations, and as he related informally with others. At the core of his question was the willingness to be self-critical.

Questioning was used to analyze leadership abilities. In order to improve upon leadership behavior blunt questions were asked. An example of this was Sarah who asked, “how do I do that?” and Joshua who asked “who am I becoming?” Emphasis was placed on the priority and sequence of actions as illustrated by Sarah who asked, “which challenges do I tackle? Which ones do I leave alone for a while?” The presidents also shared concerns about how to communicate. Sarah was concerned with how she was communicating to her staff and how her decisions were perceived in the community.

The importance of questioning was revealed by asking the broad question, “what kind of questions should I ask?” I considered this question by Sarah to be of particular

significance because she revealed her approach to leadership. Self-questioning helped her to organize and clarify thoughts. She described using questions as an internal leadership checklist. Joshua gathered data by dialoguing with people at all levels of the organization.

He stated:

There are things that people know deep in the organization that you can't possibly know. So I like to have good questions to ask where ever I go. I ask them habitually. I learn sometimes as much from a clerk or a custodian as I do from a dean, it just depends.

The presidents used questions to define what was important to them. I interpreted this to mean that in many cases they led by asking questions.

Socratic dialogue was a part of the presidents' self-evaluation process. It enabled the presidents to look back and learn from their experiences. Self-questioning was focused on self-improvement. Liza reflected about her leadership behavior by asking:

Was the process appropriate? Did the outcome match my thoughts about what I thought the outcome would be? Was my role as strong and as facilitative as it could have been?

Vision of the future was developed through self-questioning. Sharon anticipated the future by asking, "How do you talk to people ...in a way that doesn't have the opposite affect of what you want to have? She faced a problem by naming it and investigating solutions. Martin asked the question "What is the blueprint, how are we going to get there? Liza asked, "Given this outcome how would I do it again? What is the best course? These questions looked holistically at possibilities in the future and engaged others in the solutions.

An important part of Socratic dialogue was the search for personal internal truth. To uncover the truth the presidents asked why questions that probed the motivation of their behavior. Not only did the presidents use questions to address the integrity of their

personal beliefs and actions, but they also used questions to decipher the truth in decision-making. Jack asked, "Is this the right decision morally and legally?" Questions centered on values. The core value revealed in Jack's comment was honesty. Values were compared to behavior in order to maintain integrity in decision-making. Helen asked, "What do I value and how is that being imparted?" The question uncovers her belief that it is not enough to state her value, but she must also act upon it. Sharon asked herself what was the right thing to do, knowing that sometimes she would be wrong. She said:

I try to think what is the right thing to do. You never know for sure you just have to do it. And sometimes you are wrong. Sometimes you don't get it right and when you don't get it right you can't go back and do it again you just have to see what you can learn from that.

This revealed the importance of using questioning to analyze and learn from the past. She was not apologetic, but honestly stated she did not always know what was right. This presented the reality of her decision making process. Sometimes she would error but she would then learn from her mistakes. It is through Socratic dialogue that the internal environment, external environment and people are intermingled to form the theme of mindfulness in self-reflection.

Summary of Mindfulness

Mindfulness was revealed as internal cognitive awareness. This involved the purposeful act of stopping, settling and centering the mind in order to think and feel. Time was taken to examine and interpret thoughts. They experienced a hierarchy of mental functioning through: (a) recognition, (b) identification and rumination, (c) determination of relationships, and (d) analysis and evaluation through questioning. Some aspects of the internal environment were paradoxical in that focusing the mind occurred as well as letting the mind wander. Clearing the mind as a part of meditation sharpened the ability of

the mind to focus. Envisioning the future involved the mental processes of focusing and wandering simultaneously. The result of envisioning was imagining possibilities. The envisioning process did not literally see solutions to problems, nor how they would be accomplished. Reaching this state of openness was attained through experiencing chaos and crisis. They afforded both danger and opportunity and opened the door to self-discovery. There was integration of cognitive, affective and spiritual responses. The affective or feeling senses influenced the cognitive process. Emotions such as concern, fear, and stress cued self-reflection. It was from the feelings of helplessness that a higher power was sought in prayer revealing a spiritual element. Various meditative activities helped to focus and center the mind. Activities such as walking, jogging, gardening, fishing and dancing utilized the kinesthetic sense to initiate and/or support self-reflection. A merging of thoughts culminated in seeing the “big picture.” Holism was achieved by discovering relationships through visual means such as mind mapping and drawing.

The external environment, in mindfulness, encompassed factors impacting the internal environment. It was helpful to be physically removed from work because it was difficult to reflect on the job. Home was a place of safety, peace, calm, and familiarity, which revealed the significance of the affective role in the external environment. There was a choice to ignore distractions. Self-reflection happened in different rooms of the house depending on the needs and desires of the individuals. Surroundings of esthetic beauty indoors and outdoors stimulated thinking and mirrored the internal environment. Creating reflective spaces at home and at work brought a sense of satisfaction and calm. To illustrate this I noticed that the offices of the presidents reflected their interests and personalities. Although the atmosphere of self-reflection was described as quiet, music

and sounds in nature calmed and centered them. Being alone was described as important to self-reflection: however other people were often present. What was most important was disengagement from people. Not interfacing with others rejuvenated them. Being alone was really about internal solitude. This was achieved while working out at the gym or rocking a child to sleep. The external environment provoked emotions and feelings that nurtured self-reflection. Timing of reflection was seen as part of the external environment. Deep concerns prompted reflection early in the morning. The need to reflect caused them to awaken and lay in bed thinking. Some of the participants described reflection as a discipline practiced at a certain time and place. They portrayed journaling as a discipline where self-reflection was expressed outwardly. For others it happened spontaneously throughout the day even when relating with others. They placed importance on recognizing the need for finding reflective times and places that worked for them.

In mindfulness interpersonal relationships influenced self-reflection of the presidents. They chose confidential friends to ground them and keep them sane. They trusted people to give criticism and encouragement in a safe environment. The presidents reflected on personal matters in private with people who were honest and caring. There was no need to wear masks, which they otherwise might have to do. This afforded the opportunity to admit mistakes and receive affirmation for what was done well. Supportive individuals outside the college might not be formal leaders, but they served a supportive role. The presidents often related with close friends on a daily basis. At other times groups of friends gathered to support each other. Self-reflecting within the college involved asking hard questions in private with persons of positional power such as the executive council or other presidents. Part of reflecting with a group was thinking out loud and

seeing their reactions. The presidents acknowledged that they did not have all the answers and needed interaction with people to get information and expose thinking flaws. Self-reflecting with people, as opposed to thinking alone, produced creative ideas. The clearness committee, a Quaker tradition, used formational listening and questioning to help people solve their own problems. This technique created an atmosphere of safety to encourage attentiveness to each other's needs. It was difficult to be self-reflective in a culture that did not value it. The presidents acted as mentors to support growth of self-reflective skills of the leadership team. Part of that process was encouraging people to ask value-laden questions about the future. The leadership team was expected to be value centered, loyal, and trustworthy as opposed to competitive and achievement oriented. By exposing their thoughts and feelings to others the presidents made themselves vulnerable. Some felt that this allowed people around them to know them and feel more comfortable working with them. Others felt the need for careful deciphering of what was legitimate and what was not when relating with people. The fish-bowl environment of the presidency produced this self-protective behavior. The emotional aspects of relationships with people influenced their leadership decisions. The presidents strongly agreed that people needed to be involved their process of self-reflection.

A questioning mode permeated the presidents' process of self-reflection in mindfulness. There was a willingness to do self-examination. The body, mind connection was addressed by asking what made them do the things they did. There was exploration of core values, interests and capabilities. Asking why questions probed the motivation of their actions, which determined if their behavior was authentic. There was exposure of self-delusions through questioning. They examined their behavior as a leader including

looking at priority and sequence of actions. Questions served as an internal leadership checklist and included asking about how they modeled desired behaviors. They even asked what questions to ask as a leader. An important aspect of Socratic dialogue was the search for personal truth. There was an underlying need for honesty and willingness to look at the evidence. Questioning helped to uncover truth in decision-making. Self-criticism was a part of the questioning process and resulted in the admission that sometimes they were wrong. They looked back and analyzed what they could have done differently. Willingness to recall successes and failures allowed them to learn from experience. They envisioned the future by using information they gleaned from questioning to anticipate the future. Socratic dialogue used a complex level of thinking to evaluate the presidents' behaviors and motives.

Discovery

The theme of discovery emerged as the presidents revealed a process of personal exploration leading to better understanding of their motives and behaviors. Through self-reflection they shared experiences from their pasts that shaped their character. I chose the term discovery because it created the image of the presidents on a sojourn of self-discovery and personal understanding through self-reflection. Discovery was experienced through attention to a) origins, b) personal growth through experiential learning, and c) vulnerability and struggle.

Origins

The term origins encompassed the ideas of looking back at the influences that shaped the individual. This involved looking at roots, family, and significant experiences.

The supporting theme of origins included the accumulation of life circumstances that defined the presidents as individuals.

Moderator: Our discussion of mindfulness has brought us to the second theme of discovery. I would like to begin by having you to think about your origins and give examples of what it has influenced you in the process of self-discovery?

Sharon: For the most part I think I have a very optimistic approach. Is that something I was born with or is it something I grew to have? (I am not sure) but certainly the fact that I had a great childhood, that I had good parents, that ...my parents were strong role models (is part of what I discovered about myself.).

Jack: I think some of (my understanding about myself) comes from being born in the depression and growing up when people were still poor. Some of it comes from my dad's work ethic. He worked more hours than I'll ever work in a week. And I think some of it comes because my parents were honest.

Martin: I grew up in a poor family but everybody was poor and that was the culture. You pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.

Joshua: (My religious beliefs influence my process of discovery)... I am a very ordinary guy, not anything special, an orthodox Christian. It would be hard to put a label on me, just kind of vanilla. But my life ...there are lots of ways of experiencing your life some people... experience their lives as battles, for example, some people view the world as essentially hostile and their job is to survive and prevail so they engage life as a battle. Others engage their life as an argument...(they've) got something to prove or demonstrate or something...or (seeing life as) a contest. To me it has always felt more like a trip, a journey. I am not quite sure what the destination is but I've got some ideas about it and the important thing is to be in the road, the conversation in the road is very different from the conversation on the side of the road.

Moderator: Good parents are strong role models contributing to a great childhood. Being poor, and being told that you needed to pull yourselves up by your bootstraps in order to succeed influenced you. Discovery of origins in self-reflection shaped your views of yourself. Acknowledging spirituality is part of origins. Spirituality influences attitudes about life such as viewing it as a journey rather than a battle. There is a difference in how life is experienced when you are engaged in living rather than observing from the sidelines. What origins have impacted your self-reflection?

Jack: (You are molded) by the experiences that you have over the course of a lifetime. Through reflection you... think back on the experiences you (have) had and there is still a question to reflect.. (why did I do that?). I went into the Peace Corp to help, I went to Viet Nam because I wanted to help. So wanting to help, having parents who contributed I think to moral values and ethical values, (a strong) work ethic and having the opportunity to get a decent education (contributed to the person I have become.)

Martin: (I agree that looking back is part of origins.) For me personally, I think I was as a kid and as a college student and as a young professional (someone) who had never experienced any personal failure and so long as I was in that mode I was not as sensitive to the whole person ...because I thought... you do your work and you get your reward and people who don't do it have only themselves to blame.

Joshua: We have these moments of epiphany in our lives. One in particular (is) where I had gotten a very, very good job, much better than I deserved and knew I was in way over my head...and that makes you reflect. I had some success and after a couple years of working at this job and being successful I think I got proud. In the midst of all that I hurt somebody at work. (The person) was thoughtful enough to let me know (about) it in no uncertain terms. That put me back on my heels to reexamine my life as to how work was forming me rather than me forming it, and I was turning into somebody I did not want to be. That drove me to look for new ways of being responsible rather than just accepting the game as it is handed to you in higher education.

Helen: (I was involved in) kind of a unique situation because I was the only female, the only Hispanic who had attained that particular level of responsibility in the organization (I was part of). The models that I had, and I don't mean to demean them.... the models that I had were all white males whose styles were very, very different from who I was.... But I thought that that was the only way to do things. Be confrontational!.... Draw the line!... Don't let people mess with you!.... That kind of stuff. And so it was O. K.... I can't let them know I'm worried because then it will be a sign of weakness. Can't let them know that I disagree or that I'm not sure.... because then... oh my gosh... that's no good.. you don't do that ... stand your ground and all that kind of stuff. (I discovered that this was not my leadership style.)

Moderator: You are molded by experiences over a lifetime. In looking back the question is asked, "Why did I do that?" The answer is: wanting to help, having parents with strong morals, a strict work ethic and having a decent education. There is recognition of impressions of life as a young college student, which were based on never experiencing personal failure. Youthful ideas included, "if you do your work you have only yourself to blame if you fail." Discovery comes through moments of epiphany. These times cause reexamination of life, and realization of becoming someone other than who you want to be. This realization brings about the decision to act differently. Looking back there is awareness of how other leaders have modeled behavior, and the importance of reflecting an authentic leadership style. Discovery of origins helps to leaders to understand the leadership values they advocate, and how that affects their behavior as a leader.

Sharon: (I think it does. I discovered through reflection that) I see what I do as a calling not just as a job and so to me it is important to lead in (a way that reflects that) and to model that for other people.

Joshua: (I have discovered a strong belief in servant leadership). I feel called to work in large complicated organizations for the purpose of an experiment to see if life and labor in

that kind of environment can be nourishing. It is (this) work of institutional transformation that interests me.

Sarah: (I also focus) on my role as a steward. This is a public institution we are supported by public dollars. Although I hope to be here for long time, this institution will be here much longer and I want to leave the place better than I found it.

Moderator: Origins is about looking back at experiences. The past reveals a calling to vocation in education. Other values about work emerge. The role of steward is about leaving the institution better than it was. Acknowledging values is a part of discovering origins. In what ways have values influenced presidential leadership?

Helen: Values are really important not only in self-reflection but also in terms of trying to create the culture of the organization and to reinforce the culture.

Sarah: (Values are) the criteria that I try to measure my actions and my behaviors against. I'm not always as consistent as I'd like to be that is where I strive.

Sharon: We keep our values out there visible (to the college) in a lot of different ways. I think about how to get other people to share in the value (of valuing different kinds of diversity) and to look for that kind of diversity in who we hire while still looking at finding people who have our core values.

Moderator: As a leader values are important in creating the culture of the organization and reinforcing the culture. Actions as a leader are measured against values. In analyzing behavior there may not always be consistency with values but that is what is strived for. Values cannot just be talked about they have to be visible to people in the institution. People are a part of naming and acting on values. It is important to find people who share core values of the institution. Name the values that are a part of origins.

Matthew: The values in (my leadership) manifesto are values that I strongly encourage members of my leadership teams to think about on a daily basis. I (also) make efforts to think about those values on a daily basis...such things as interconnectedness, trust, compassion, (and) integrity. I know the commitment is here to promote diversity.

All: (We value diversity in the community college.)

Sharon: Collaboration is a value that I have and that I think we have here.

Sarah: Another value that is very important to me is teamwork. Teamwork is an overused word but truly a collegial approach I am deeply committed to personal growth of employees at the college. If we are a learning institution we are not just a learning institution for students, we are a learning institution for the folks that work there.

Sharon: If you value learning then you value it for yourself also. So placing a value on learning, placing a value on service, placing a value on high ethical standards in your work and I think on knowing yourself which pretty much states my vision!

Joshua: We (as an institution) want to value learning and we want to think deeply and communicate broadly and collaboratively about what we think.

Sarah: Joy it ought to be fun to come to work, not just for me but also for the people that I get to work with.

Martin: (I agree.) The other part of our culture, which is very strong, is laughter and play is a very big part of who we are.

Moderator: Part of origins is stating core values of interconnectedness, trust, compassion, integrity and valuing diversity. Other values are collaboration, teamwork, personal growth (knowing yourself), and being part of a learning institution for all people at the institution. Placing value on service, high ethical standards, thinking deeply and communicating broadly and collaboratively are more values that you state. There should be joy and laughter for people who work together. What stimulates the process of discovery of origins in reflection?

Helen: (Part of the process is) the discovery of what are the different modes that might later stimulate or cause you to be more reflective.... a lot of it (for me) is poetry.

Helen: I do enjoy playing music. It is almost like needing another form of expression that brings forth additional thinking and awareness

Martin: (Our faculty shared their self-reflections in writing.) It was a very formational thing to have done. We help(ed) each other with writing ...so we were in a cooperative learning type of setting (at the college)

Helen: Some of it is being in the presence of nature.

Sharon: (Even as a child) I started having these connections with nature. So you have the connections and then (you add) poetry and some prose ...it touches those connections... and then it creates new connections. And then you have another experience and then pretty soon you start writing about your experiences. (It is part of the process of discovery.) I think predominately you pick up things from everywhere and you put them together in a certain way and how I put them together isn't going to be how someone else puts them together. A piece of writing that has meaning for me isn't going to be a piece of writing that has meaning for somebody else.

Jack: (Being in nature is a part of my self-reflection.) There are all kinds of problems to consider as I walk around the track and hike in the mountains.

Moderator: Connecting with origins brings about self-reflection. Actions such as reading

poetry and prose, and listening to music are forms of expression that bring forth additional thinking and awareness. Helping each other write is formational behavior in the discovery of origins. Connections with nature enhance reflection. Through connections origins are revealed.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The presidents examined their origins and discovered significant aspects of themselves. Sharon, Jack and Martin identified family experiences as being important. Parents were considered to be strong role models. Sharon spoke of her childhood as happy, giving her an optimistic attitude. Jack and Martin recalled being poor. Being poor was not portrayed as detrimental but as a way of instilling values. Jack spoke of his parents “strong work ethic” and Martin recalled being told to “pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.” These aspects of family life were origins that influenced them in their self-reflective process.

The participants revealed origins of spirituality. Joshua clearly identified his religious faith as having a major effect on his outlook on life. He stated that he was an orthodox Christian man who believed that essence of life endures. He acknowledged a higher power and the presence of the afterlife. His spirituality altered his view of life. He revealed the influence of his beliefs by saying:

...there are lots of ways of experiencing your life some people... experience their lives as battles, for example, some people view the world as essentially hostile and their job is to survive and prevail so they engage life as a battle. Others engage their life as an argument...(they've) got something to prove or demonstrate or something...or (seeing life as) a contest. To me it has always felt more like a trip, a journey. I am not quite sure what the destination is but I've got some ideas about it and the important thing is to be in the road, the conversation in the road is very different from the conversation on the side of the road.

Martin referred to spirituality by making the body, mind, and spirit connection. He described a method of waking in the morning to the sounds of birds as a an experience that supported his “inner nurturing.” This went beyond creating a reflective atmosphere and

involved concern for his inner life. The significance of spirituality was displayed in the behaviors of the presidents. Matthew listened to spiritual music. Liza pondered art that moved her to think deeply. . They engaged another dimension of their being by addressing the needs of the soul.

Significant life experiences also led to discovery of origins. Jack looked back at his experience as a young soldier. He recalled being challenged and matured by his experiences. He struggled to make sense out of his experiences by examining motives and asking himself: Why did I do that? In a similar way, Martin recalled being a young professional who had never experienced failure. He says:

For me personally, I think I was as a kid and as a college student and as a young professional (someone) who had never experienced any personal failure and so long as I was in that mode I was not as sensitive to the whole personbecause I thought... you do your work and you get your reward and people who don't do it have only themselves to blame.

He portrayed self-centered entitlement of youth. Helen spoke from the viewpoint of a young Hispanic woman discovering her leadership style. She uncovered who she was as a leader through the experience of comparing herself to her white, male mentors. She says: "I thought that that was the only way to do things." The realization came that she had to reflect her own leadership style, which was more transparent and collegial. Looking back at origins allowed authentic self to be revealed. Joshua described a painful experience that served as an epiphany in helping him examine his life and motives. Through this experience he became aware of hurting the feelings of a co-worker. Discovery of origins made him say: "I was turning into somebody I did not want to be." These experiences had a significant impact and were part of self-examination in the discovery of origins.

Another discovery of origins was the realization of being called to a profession. Sharon and Joshua discovered a vocational calling. Having a calling was interpreted as a passionate commitment to vocation that originated in an internal place. Sharon shared the depth of her conviction when she said:

I discovered through reflection that I see what I do as a calling not just as a job and so to me it is important to lead in (a way that reflects that) and to model that for other people.

A calling to serve the community was evident. Sharon, Joshua and Sarah spoke of servant leadership. Sarah spoke of leaving the institution better than she found it. Joshua described his role as a servant leader in this way:

I feel called to work in large complicated organizations for the purpose of an experiment to see if life and labor in that kind of environment can be nourishing. It is (this) work of institutional transformation that interests me.

Discovery of a calling resulted from examination of origins and awareness of values.

In discovery of origins, values were identified and included self-awareness of values, feelings and beliefs. Matthew stated his values of interconnectedness, trust, compassion, and integrity. Past experiences molded the participants and shaped their view of leadership. Helen stated, "Values are really important not only in self-reflection but also in terms of trying to create the culture of the organization." Sharon spoke of keeping institutional values visible. Sarah described herself as a "keeper of the values." Her decision-making was based on what was best for students. The presidents elaborated on the values of collaboration, appreciation for learning, and joyful work environment. Martin addressed joy in the workplace by saying: "The other part of our culture, which is

very strong is laughter and play, it is a very big part of who we are.” These values emerged as part of the presidents’ experience of discovery.

Discovery of origins in self-reflection was stirred by reading literature particularly poetry. Helen talked of discovering different modes that stimulated self-reflection when she said: “ (Part of the process is) the discovery of what are the different modes that might later stimulate or cause you to be more reflective.” Each participant had individual ways of making connections to the past. Helen, Joshua, and Sharon read poetry. Making connections with nature and making connections with literature were part of discovery for Sharon. She said:

I started having these connections with nature. So you have the connections and then (you add) poetry and some prose ...it touches those connections and then it creates new connections. And then you have another experience and then pretty soon you start writing about your experiences.

I interpreted this to mean that reading poetry and prose helped to stimulate discovery of origins in self-reflection. In looking back at others experiences they were able to analyze their own through journaling. Many of the presidents had an appreciation for nature and through these connections they gained personal insight. Jack stated “There are all kinds of problems to consider as I walk around the track and hike in the mountains.” Martin gardened as a way to contemplate origins. Through his words he tells the story of experiencing nature as a way of reshaping his inner self.

Personal Growth Through Experiential Learning

Another aspect of discovery that emerged was personal growth through experiential learning. The presidents articulated how they learned from past experiences. Lessons learned through experience contributed to life altering and life enhancing

transformations. This supporting theme described how discovery resulted in change of the presidents' lives.

Moderator: Several of you have intimated that learning takes place through discovery. What growth experiences can you recount?

Sarah: I grew up in (the Midwest, rural Anglo Midwest. There were two kids of color in my whole high school. My first teaching job, I taught as a home economics junior high teacher...in (the South) in an all-black school. I had never in my life had any interactions with any minority population. It was a major growth experience for me, I learned to be a much better teacher, I learned much about Southern African-American culture particularly in poverty context, most all the kids came from poverty households. It was a wonderful growth experience for me. All of a sudden, as one of the few white teachers, I understood how the one black kid in my high school must have felt.

Jack: (My experiences in the past have caused me to grow in understanding about leadership). I really think that leadership comes in effect from adapting to human environment(s) and environments change. I think how you behave in one environment, as a leader might be different than how you would have to behave in another environment. (To illustrate this point in my military experience I) had command responsibilities for military advisory teams my behavior had to be significantly different than it is in (my) role as a community college president. You must also have... competence. Competence comes in a great part in a position like this, ... from experience.

Sarah: I think what I've (also) learned is that it is critically important (as a leader) not to be too full of myself, and to understand that I am a guide and a facilitator and not a director. Those (leaders that I observed) who did not do well and frankly were burned were people who thought that or behaved as though, I don't know what they thought, but behaved as though since they were president they obviously knew all the answers and that other folks needed to follow their direction even if it was against their own judgment.

Liza: I've also learned that leadership is ..I've really learned that you lead people and manage things. I've said that and I mean you see the signs but it is really true, you can't just tell people what to do and expect that they will do it and that you will get good results-you can tell them what to do and because of my positions they will do it but it won't be done in such a way that it moves us in the direction that we need to go. People have to spend time talking and participating in the process so that ultimately they will make it their own responsibility to work toward making that process productive.

Helen: (I think that the way we learn is to) hit points in our life where you stop and say I am either very pleased with what I'm doing- I am fulfilled or my gosh why am I doing this or what can I do that might be a better, healthier thing for me psychologically.

Martin: (I've learned about myself through being aware of my personality style.) If you look at my Myers Briggs, I am an INFP... intuitive....what is that "introvertive" intuitive

feeling perceptive individual and it's the smallest quadrant and... my understanding of Myers Briggs is that this is where you are most comfortable...it isn't necessarily who you are but it is the place that gives you energy and if you don't have it then you are sapped of energy...well the job I have is not an INFP job it is an ESTJ job...it is out there doing its action and so on and I have had to learn that.

Sharon: I also took a learning styles inventory; it is called the Kolb, I think. One of the learning styles is reflective, and that happens to be my dominant learning style. I think when you put together the fact that that's my dominant learning style with the issues that one has to deal with as a leader, I think it is appropriate that I find time for reflection because to me it is how I learn to do what I need to do to lead.

Matthew: If we are honest with ourselves, we know that we will always try to do better and try to improve. There are no perfect people in this world. (By being self-critical we learn about ourselves.) There's a lot that goes into the process of being self-critical. It's working with the mind's eye in a manner that says... OK I need to be able to separate personal agendas from objectivity. I need to make sure that I personally have a good handle on what my vision is for the organization

Moderator: Personal growth is gained through putting yourself through circumstances that challenge childhood ideas. New experiences result in learning tolerance and challenge long-standing beliefs. Attributes gained include empathy, and appreciation of other cultures. Past experiences in a variety of venues including the military, hone leadership skills and bring about realization that competence is gained through experience and is different depending on the situation. Learning is achieved by watching the failures of other leaders. Discovery of growth is accomplished by stopping and asking, "Are you pleased with your life?" Understanding of leadership ability happens through self-analysis and awareness of personality type and learning style. Self-discovery unfolds by being self-critical and then making the effort to improve. It is about being objective. What more can you say about the result of growth in self-reflection?

Sharon: My own growth has given me the courage to take risks (that) I would not have taken when I was 29 or 30 years old. You learn about yourself but you also learn about things that you are capable of, that you didn't know you were capable of but through learning...it is like through writing you learn to write through speaking you learn to speak. So I want other people to have (this growth) opportunity (as well).

Martin: I am a gardener and I try to garden in the same way that can help me reflect. An interesting thing over the years is I've found out that in that time for reflection I have also seen that there are a number of lessons I've learned about how to garden that apply to metaphorically to how to be a leader here in a community college. Here is that beautiful tree and I get to see that and I get to experience that, but what I don't get to experience is more than half of that tree is under the ground and things are going on there that I have no idea about the details about but I appreciate that it is happening and I do things to nurture whatever it is that is going on down there without the direct feedback about that. And similarly at the college there is no way that I can do all the good work that's going on

here...I do get to see the fruits of it but I know that I need to the trust that important stuff is happening that I can't see... I can encourage that. That is an example of a metaphorical lesson.

Helen: (Trees have meaning for me as well). One day I sat down and thought how am I going to explain how I am thinking about (continuing education) and what do I really think about it? And so I did and it's a tree.

Joshua: Trees seem to be the most reflective of all organisms don't they? Many of them out live many of the organisms on the planet. Is there anything as old as a redwood, a sequoia, a pine? And I have often thought metaphorically about trees that are slumbering, trees that are in some kind of dream now ...I tried a story one time about how trees lost the gift of speech and ...and when man cause time to accelerate...things were happening too fast to be absorbed and understood at any deep level the trees went to sleep rather than endure the pain of constant chaos around them. All just fantasies but I think trees are a great metaphor for endurance and reflection and depth and...being a tuned to the natural cycles of the world rather than creating our own.

Helen: (I view self-reflection as an anchor.) When you do this kind of work there has to be some kind of an anchor if you will, some kind of a basis upon which you react or interact with the world.

Liza: (Self-reflection is like a cloud to me.) If an issue is rolling around and I getting more information and I am hearing about it and I am not having time to deal with it –it is like a cloud.

Sharon: (The circle is a metaphor that I use to describe the college). I believe that you have to try to reflect that in your images about the place and so our image is a circle with certainly we have distinct entities but not totally independent. They are very interdependent.

Jack: (Through reflection) life is a tapestry and experiences make up the pattern that makes up the tapestry and the kind of weave that you have

Moderator: Through growth experiences comes courage to take risks that might not have been taken at a younger age. Taking risks and succeeding brings about awareness of undiscovered capabilities. After experiencing personal success there is the desire to bring about equally enriching experiences for others. Metaphors convey lessons learned in self-reflection. Through activities such as gardening lessons are applied metaphorically to being a leader in the community college. Trees, as subjects of metaphors, describe organic organizations such as the community college. The branches of the trees represent relationships within organizations. Roots are referred to as unseen places of productivity. Trees are also symbols of endurance, reflection, and depth. They embody the natural cycles of nature. Clouds represent reflection in that they built up in the mind and dissipate as they are addressed. Reflection is referred to as an anchor, or a solid basis upon which to interact with the world. The symbol of a circle stands for interdependence. The terms

garment and tapestry are used to symbolize the discovery of “wholeness” and completeness resulting from assimilation of life experiences.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The presidents experienced personal growth and experiential learning by a) going beyond their comfort zone, seeking out new experiences b) identifying their leaning styles, traits and values, and c) being aware of changed perspectives. The presidents sought out experiences that changed them. Sarah spoke of leaving the Midwest in order to teach black students in the South. She was willing to expose herself to new experiences and challenge ingrained beliefs. Through role reversal, this encounter, taught empathy for disenfranchised students. She acknowledged her past, privileged status and summed up her experience by saying:

I had never in my life had any interactions with any minority population. It was a major growth experience for me, I learned to be a much better teacher, I learned much about southern African-American culture... It was a wonderful growth experience for me... All of a sudden, as one of the few white teachers, I understood how the one black kid in my high school must have felt.

Helen, a young Hispanic woman, found herself in positions where white male leaders mentored her in the leadership role. She found that a dominating, autocratic leadership style did not suit her. Her style was more transparent and collegial. This awareness helped her grow into a style that allowed her to be authentic. Sarah described a similar learning experience by saying that she learned leadership lessons from observing weak and strong leaders. Strong leaders were described as inclusive, caring authentic and committed to the missions of their institutions and their students. She described strong leaders as being less concerned with having the title of president, and more concerned about the effect they yielded over the institution. She says weak leaders,

Behaved as though since they were presidents they obviously know all the answers and other folks needed to follow their direction even if it was against their own judgment.

Liza learned through experience what it meant to be a leader she says, "I've really learned that you lead people and manage things." Experiential learning was not limited to the academic arena. Jack volunteered to work in the military because he wanted to make a difference. He looked back at his military service and gained understanding of the leadership role. He acknowledged that leadership behavior was different depending on the environment, but that leadership competence came from experience. He says,

Leadership comes in effect from adapting to human environment(s) and environments change. I think how you behave in one environment, as a leader might be different than how you would have to behave in another environment... You must also have... competence. Competence comes in a great part in a position like this, ... from experience.

Experiences in the military developed a sense of loyalty and commitment that impacted presidential leadership. This illustrated how experiential learning was pivotal in the process of growth through discovery.

The presidents revealed growth through self-analysis. Matthew approached growth and learning through self-criticism, and pointed out the importance of being honest in self-reflection. Most of the presidents, however, emphasized searching for self-knowledge. .

Helen described the learning process when she says

(I think that the way we learn is to) hit points in our life where you stop and say I am either very pleased with what I'm doing- I am fulfilled or my gosh why am I doing this or what can I do that might be a better, healthier thing for me psychologically.

The presidents learned by taking risks. They sought experiences outside their comfort zone that challenged them. In those experiences they were able to discover their potential. Successes and failures resulted in self-growth, and the desire to help other people have that same realization. Sharon expressed this by saying,

My own growth has given me the courage to take risks (that) I would not have taken when I was 29 or 30 years old. You learn about yourself but you also learn about things that you are capable of, that you didn't know you were capable of but through learning...it is like through writing you learn to write through speaking you learn to speak. So I want other people to have (this growth) opportunity (as well).

Martin and Sharon used learning and personality inventories to gain self- knowledge. The use of the Myers-Briggs and Kolb learning styles inventories were described. Personal growth and learning happened as the presidents delved into their personalities, and contemplated their successes and failures.

Metaphors expressed the presidents changed perspectives in leadership through experiential learning and growth. They used rich imagery to illustrate what they learned. Martin said that lessons in gardening guided him in how to be a leader in the community college. Helen viewed reflection as an anchor, keeping her steady. Martin, Joshua and Helen identified trees as metaphors of reflection and endurance. Joshua referred to tree roots as being unseen core beliefs and values.

One way of thinking about living is that it is about surrendering or turning loose of things and thatthat as you grow older and wiser and hopefully learn, your life becomes simpler and not more complex and the sap sort of returns to the roots again.

There was emphasis on the organic nature of trees and how they grow and change. Helen described curriculum as the trunk of a tree with teaching and learning branching out from it. Other metaphors included Liza's description of self-reflection as a cloud hanging over her. In order for it to dissipate, she had to find time to address issues that bothered her. Sharon used the symbol of a circle to represent the interdependence of departments in the college. Metaphors defined and explained concepts in self-reflection and were leaning tools in the process of personal growth and experiential learning.

Struggle and Vulnerability

The supporting theme of vulnerability and struggle was chosen to address discovery in self-reflection. The presidents described times of struggle in acting out the leadership role. Vulnerability was experienced through leadership encounters that left them open to criticism and attack. I felt that the supporting theme of struggle and vulnerability added richness and depth to the experience of discovery, because it captured the authentic side of how self-reflection is lived out.

Moderator: In the course of our conversation you have mentioned difficult experiences that tested you in the course of being a leader. I would like to check that out by asking about experiences of struggle and vulnerability. What are those experiences like?

Liza: (I struggle to find time to deal with issues in self-reflection.) I've got to take care of that cloud (self-reflection) but I am putting out so many fires and I am doing so many things that I have to do and being so many places that I have to be that I just don't have time to deal with that cloud because it hasn't started to rain yet. And yet I know it is there and I am working with it but not at a point where it is in my face. It is so forward that I can hold it up there and if I can make it till Thursday day when I get past all these things that I must do where I have to be on target and speak and do all of that then I can begin to deal with it.

Helen: (One of my struggles is that) after high stimulation times..some of what I call byproducts or some of the concepts and ideas that came to the surface at some point right after these kinds of experiences are lost. I think I lose a bunch of ideas because I haven't had time to stop and capture them.

Matthew: I know personally every time it gets close to my time to be (formally) evaluated, on the one hand, I look forward to it, on the other hand I don't look forward to it... because it's not an easy thing to subject oneself to criticism. It takes a lot of self-courage, it's important to convince oneself that gee you can't take it personally. After all, on the one hand, you need to know how well you're doing as a president,.. you need to know if goals and objectives are being met. You need to know how others are perceiving your leadership, and the only way you're really going to know that is to get the feedback. On the other hand, you're sitting there dreading oh... do I really want to hear this, do I really want to subject myself to this.

Sarah: (Feelings of vulnerability produce) a lot of anxiety (in me), my stomach hurts. As most presidents you will probably meet, I am on blood pressure medicine and cholesterol medicine... you know... it goes with the territory. It is a physical feeling when I'm troubled, there's a lot of anxiety there is a lot of stress.

Moderator: It is a struggle to find times to reflect. There are issues that require immediate attention and others that have to wait. Complicating matters is the fact that after times of high stimulation times you often lose new ideas because you haven't had time to stop and capture them. Another time of vulnerability is at the time of formal evaluation. It takes courage to be evaluated. You need to know how you are doing, but there is dread in subjecting yourself to the process. Vulnerability and struggle are revealed in physical and emotional feelings. Physical expressions of stress included stomachaches, headaches and high blood pressure. Emotions included worry, frustration, and intensity. Explain the sense of vulnerability that you experience.

Matthew: In a bureaucracy there are always going to be individuals who will have particular axes to grind... old baggage, old history that they can't let go of. Others will simply need a target to vent their frustrations. Presidents are in a fish bowl environment, so it is inevitable that there are going to be those individuals who really don't have anything of substance to contribute. So realizing that makes, it easier then, again when you're getting the input from others... to focus the reflection on... is this legitimate input or is this not legitimate, is this coming from a person who has a particular axe to grind, is this coming from a person who is genuinely trying to be objective? When you're able to sort all this out it makes the self-criticism piece easier and more meaningful.

Liza: I have a good relationship with (people at the college) but because I am the boss there are limits to how much I will share with them about my personal life. So I am comfortable with them and them with me (but) there is still a point in which there is a respectful dividing line and I am comfortable with that I think there has to be a barrier. I don't want them to be closer than that-so that at a time when I have to say no to them or when I have to take care of an issue I can feel comfortable doing that and not feel that I 've got to do something to appease them. That doesn't happen- I've not had to do that but it allows me an opportunity to be in the role that I need to be in-a strong role and also be an approachable person with a caring side.

Sarah: There are the big issue levels of what fits my values set and those really personal things and no.... (those personal issues I reflect upon) alone and I would not be comfortable in making myself that vulnerable (with other people).

Moderator: Being in a fishbowl environment brings about a sense of intrusion by others. There are times during evaluation when people have axes to grind and presidential criticism is unfounded, but at other time rationalization may be a way of handling criticism. The presidents deal with vulnerability by setting personal boundaries. By setting boundaries conflicts of interest are prevented when facing difficult decisions. Personal issues are reflected upon alone in order to not become vulnerable. Explain more about the experience of vulnerability.

Helen: (I felt vulnerable when I was) trying to implement a style of leadership (that didn't feel good to me). It was a very uncomfortable way to exist and probably a very stressful way to exist.

Martin: (A particularly vulnerable time for me was when) my wife and I had split up and got a divorce and that was a devastating thing that gave me my first full human experience I think. In putting my life back together I got in touch with people who had been caring for me throughout the period when I wasn't maybe as good a person to be around. In my own life I am a gay man and so in coming to grips with that in a very public position being who I am an authentic way, there were consequences to that from a prejudicial, discriminatory point of view. That probably brought me down to a level of humanity that most people have to deal with that I had never had to deal with before. I would guess that probably more than anything else ...and to deal with all that in a way that was understanding of where other people were coming from and trying to deal with that without bitterness.

Joshua: There is no question that (times of vulnerability and struggle are) better for my reflective life and (are) *essential* to my reflective life for several reasons. One is those are the times when you know the kind of poverty of spirit that is necessary I think to engage your interior work. If you believe the world is your oyster why bother with your interior work. There is a kind of helplessness that drives people that drives me, to prayer and to reflection and to writing and to the reflective time. And again at work very often it is that way to...it's not in the moment of the crisis but in the aftermath of a crisis that you really have a fertile time of reflection. What does this mean, not just what happened and how did it happen, what does it mean that it happened?

Moderator: Being someone you are not makes you vulnerable and exposes you as an imposter. This brings about feelings of discomfort and stress. Particularly stressful are personal problems that that bring you down to a basic level of humanity such as divorce or coming to grips with who you are. It may mean facing prejudice, discrimination and fear. Even though these times are troubling the reflective time is better when you know the poverty of spirit pushing you to engage your interior work. Vulnerable feelings of helplessness drive people to writing, reflection, and prayer. A particularly fertile time of reflection occurs in the aftermath of a crisis. Knowing this what decisions are most troubling for you?

Matthew: One of the common things that often gets asked when you do a self-evaluation, is about strengths, you also get asked about weaknesses, and it is always much more difficult to figure out... OK how am I going to articulate weaknesses? We've grown up in a culture that does not appreciate that part of being human, that is, that we all have shortcomings.

Jack: Every time you terminate someone you struggle.

All: (I agree.)

Joshua: (There are issues that I deal with) during times of great stress, fear or struggle Whether (it) is something on a personal level such as someone dying or in pain or failing in some way around me or it is my own failure ...failing somebody in a relationship or

failing in my leadership, or failing my children as a father whatever it might be ...you confront those hard truths.

Sharon: The toughest decisions I've had to make in my life were not professional ones they were personal ones and there is no right answer.

Moderator: What makes these decisions so difficult?

Sharon: I agonize so much (because) I always want to (make decisions) as well as I can so that there is the most benefit for the most people and ultimately maybe even benefit say even for a person which you have a serious performance issue with and is having a negative impact on other people in the institution. Ultimately you have got to do something about it. You keep giving the person the opportunity to change and then at some point you have to decide enough is enough.

Sarah: (I keep values in the forefront). The guiding principle that I have spoken of frequently to all of my direct report is that every decision ought to be seen through the lens of what is best for our students.

Sharon: You ask (when facing difficult decisions), "Did I do the right thing?" So you agonize and you agonize and you think whoa...it is a no win situation. If I do this there is this good and this bad, if I do (that) there is this good and this bad and you have to decide what (to do) based on your own values, your own personal situation and what you have to do. Then you are going second-guess yourself. I second guess myself and think well what if...and yet I did it.... that was the way it is. ...and I've got to go on.

Moderator: It is troubling to articulate weaknesses, because our culture does not appreciate that part of being human. It is particularly difficult to fire someone. There are hard personal truths that must be confronted. These may deal with failed relationships, leadership failures or failing as a parent. You agonize over decisions because you want to be right and you want to produce the most benefit for the most people. People are given the chance to change, but in the end the standards of the institution must be upheld. When making tough decisions you keep in mind, what is best for students and ask, "Did I do the right thing?" Even when you have analyzed decisions from every position you may still second-guess yourself but in the end you must go on.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: The presidents described incidents of struggle and vulnerability through discovery in self-reflection. Like firing pottery in a kiln the presidents endured encounters to improve their leadership abilities. Liza struggled to find time to self-reflect. Helen grappled with finding time to capture her thoughts in self-reflection. She said, "I think I lose a bunch of ideas because I haven't had time to stop and

capture them.” This addressed the need to have time to integrate thoughts and feelings. Matthew shared his internal struggle of facing formal evaluation. His experience invoked emotions of fear and worry, which may reflect his past experiences with evaluation as an African American male. He says

You need to know how others (perceive) your leadership, and the only way you're really going to know that is to get the feedback. On the other hand, you're sitting there dreading oh... do I really want to hear this, do I really want to subject myself to this.

Sarah describes having physical symptoms of stress and anxiety as she wrestled with presidential issues. “My stomach hurts. As most presidents you meet, I am on blood pressure medicine and cholesterol medicine.” Struggle was revealed as a mental and physical process.

The presidents related instances of being vulnerable as leaders. Matthew described the “fish bowl environment” of the presidency.

Presidents are in a fish bowl environment, so it is inevitable that there are going to be those individuals who really don't have anything of substance to contribute. So realizing that makes, it easier then, again when you're getting the input from others... to focus the reflection on... is this legitimate input or is this not legitimate, is this coming from a person who has a particular axe to grind, is this coming from a person who is genuinely trying to be objective?

This perception may involve the rationalization that here will always be people with nothing of substance to contribute, or it may be a self-protective mechanism as a result of past exploitation. Vulnerability was also expressed as the presidents attempted to establish boundaries. Liza spoke of her struggle to maintain a “respectful dividing line” between employees at the college and herself. This prevented her from being forced into a position of having to appease them when dealing with issues. Sarah stated her thoughts about boundaries when she said:

There are the big issue levels of what fits my values set and those really personal things and no...(those personal issues I reflect upon) alone and I would not be comfortable in making myself that vulnerable (with other people).

In describing incidents of vulnerability the presidents expressed being uncomfortable, devastated and helpless. Their comments revealed an undercurrent of pain and struggle. Martin related how an incident involving his private life profoundly affected him.

(It) probably brought me down to a level of humanity that most people have to deal with that I had never had to deal with before. I would guess that probably more than anything else ...and to deal with all that in a way that was understanding of where other people were coming from and trying to deal with that without bitterness.

He revealed his struggle to act authentically and to be understood by others.. Joshua described how struggle and vulnerability were exposed in the aftermath of a crisis, and that that time became a fertile time for reflection. Deciding the best way to articulate weaknesses was a struggle for Matthew. He also shared his personal struggle with formal evaluation by saying

I know personally every time it gets close to my time to be (formally) evaluated, on the one hand, I look forward to it, on the other hand I don't look forward to it... because it's not an easy thing to subject oneself to criticism.

The presidents expressed struggle in decision-making. All the participants considered the decision to fire employees particularly troubling. Sharon spoke of personal decisions being the most difficult because often there was no right answer. Joshua summed up the discovery of struggle in reflection by stating

(There are issues that I deal with) during times of great stress, fear or struggle Whether (it) is something on a personal level such as someone dying or in pain or failing in some way around me or it is my own failure ...failing somebody in a relationship or failing in my leadership, or failing my children as a father whatever it might be ...you confront those hard truths.

He acknowledged confronting hard life issues. Sharon agonized over decisions. She wanted to make the best decisions she could to benefit the most people. She shared her feelings of vacillation about her decisions. In the end she says “I second guess myself and think well what if...and yet I did it.... that was the way it is. ...and I’ve got to go on.” She accepted the struggle and vowed to move on.

Summary of Discovery

Discovery of origins was experienced through exploration of the past and resulted in self-understanding. Past family experiences of being happy, being poor, and working hard influenced self-perceptions. Spirituality contributed to attitudes about life. This included looking at life as a journey rather than a battle. Awareness of a sense of helplessness drove them to prayer and meditation. Some of the presidents acknowledged the presence of a higher power while others spoke of honoring body, mind, and spirit. Significant life events led to self-discovery. Being involved in life was valued over observing from the sidelines. The presidents recalled their youthful impressions of life and compared them to what they had since learned. They reminisced of times when they were soldiers, college students and young professionals. In response to these memories they asked, “why did I do that?” Moments of epiphany occurred that caused examination of failures. These involved hard personal truths often involving failed relationships, leadership failures, or failing as a parent. Facing failure was a part of growth and learning. There was realization of individual choice and commitment to authentic and responsible behavior.

Examination of origins exposed personal beliefs and values. This resembled a process of values clarification. Values included beliefs in interconnectedness, trust,

compassion, integrity, and diversity. They acknowledged being called to their vocation. Placing value on service, high ethical standards, thinking deeply and communicating broadly formed a basis of their behavior. Behaviors were measured against values. They not only stated their values they shared them with people in their institutions. For many of the presidents this meant sharing joy and laughter. In all there was a breaking through to consciousness and an awareness of their assumptions. Discovery of origins also occurred through making connections between the past and present. This happened by communing with nature, reading prose and poetry, and writing.

The presidents put themselves into situations that exposed them to challenging experiences outside the comfort zone. From these experiences they achieved personal growth. New experiences contributed to learning empathy, tolerance and appreciation for other cultures. Growth happened by stopping to analyze past experiences. They asked the question “am I pleased with my life?” Self-understanding was increased by studying self; including examining personality profiles and styles of learning. Personal growth through learning enabled the presidents to take risks they might otherwise not have taken. They expressed what they learned in metaphors. Metaphors revealed depth of understanding about leadership

The presidents discovered times of vulnerability and struggle in the leadership role. It was difficult to find time to self-reflect due to the hectic life of the presidency. It was a struggle to retain creative ideas. After times of high stimulation, ideas were lost when there was not time to write them down. The presidents spoke of the struggle to be authentic in their leadership style. They had to find their own way of leading.

Vulnerability was sometimes experienced during formal evaluation and included feelings

of fear and loneliness. A troubling part of the evaluation process was sharing areas of weakness due to the fact that our culture does not appreciate that part of being human. Rationalization was used to deal with feelings of vulnerability and may be a form of self-protective behavior. To deal with vulnerability boundaries were set.

Exposing personal struggles made the presidents vulnerable. It meant facing prejudice, discrimination and fear. Although times of vulnerability and struggle were grueling they provided the impetus to do interior work and engage in self-reflective activities such as prayer and journaling. A fertile time for reflection occurred in the aftermath of a crisis. Firing people was described as very difficult. The presidents agonized over decisions. They based decisions on their values and what was best for students. Evaluation of decision making meant asking, "Did I do the right thing?" Even though they stayed true to their values and beliefs, the presidents scrutinized their decisions and vacillated over whether they had made the right decisions or not. In the end the decision was made and they moved on.

Authenticity

The theme of authenticity was evident in the process of self-reflection by: (a) striving for congruence and (b) choosing to act. Being authentic involved efforts by the presidents to be genuine and trustworthy. They achieved authenticity by examining their beliefs and values, and then acting in accordance with what they believed. I chose authenticity as a theme because it embodied the outcome of the self-reflective process.

Striving for Congruence

A supporting theme of authenticity was striving for congruence. This involved looking critically at the past in order to determine if actions reflected the beliefs and

values of the presidents. Striving for congruence was a personal search for veracity about oneself as a leader.

Moderator: We have arrived at the final theme of authenticity. As we begin this discussion I would like you to share what it means to strive for congruence in your beliefs as a leader?

Matthew: I make efforts to think about ... values on a daily basis ... such things as interconnectedness, trust, compassion, integrity and a lot of little subtitles under all of those. I don't go around every minute of the day trying to recite those literally but whenever I find myself in the midst of an interaction, whether it's with an individual or a group of individuals, in the back of my mind is the leadership manifesto.

Jack: If you noticed the logo over the front main door ... commitment to quality and success. When you have people who are interested in (those values), and committed to that, then you can sit down and talk with them. (I promote values I believe in.)

Sharon: We keep our values out there visible in a lot of different ways. (I do that by contributing to a college newsletter and letting people know my values.)

Matthew: I continue from time to time to put the values in the (leadership) manifesto out there and to remind the administrators, the faculty and the staff.

Moderator: Values are examined often and are evident at the institution so that people can share them. The values of interconnectedness, trust, compassion and loyalty reveal the breadth of their commitment to the institution. Promotion of values is achieved by talking and writing about them. So it begins with prizing your values-and making them evident, what else is involved with being congruent to what you esteem?

Sarah: I strive to behave as an authentic leader, an authentic person. I frequently measure actions and choices against my value set, and not just my spoken value set, but also my values set as I try to live my life.

Helen: (For me congruence means asking the question of myself) as a leader am I being consistent with what I say I value?

Joshua: (I ask myself if I am the) the kind of leader that (others) wants to follow ... someone whose leadership is rooted in who they are not just what they know?

Moderator: Being congruent means prizing ideals, and then measuring choices and behaviors against declared values. Self-questioning occurred in striving for congruence. You ask yourself "am I being consistent with what I say I value?" Other questions are "am I the kind of leaders others want to follow? Do I know who I am?" It sounds like you are doing a process of self-analysis to help you?

Matthew: (Yes.) The key ingredient in all of that is a willingness to be honest with oneself, and to be self-critical or self judgmental, if you will. I think the only way that a person can be truly successful and do really good self-reflective analysis, is to put your ego aside and as I said really be genuinely honest with yourself as you are reflecting upon the grand vision, whatever that vision happens to be or whatever the vision was when you first started as a president.

Sarah: (In self-analysis) I continually attempt to compare my behavior, my words, and my ability or inability to provide vision against those folks that I look up to. I've been fortunate to work with some really special people.

Moderator: You have to be willing to face yourself honestly and to compare what do against the behaviors of people you admire. This involves putting ego aside and being willing to judge whether you are achieving what you said you wanted to. Are there consequences to not being congruent in your actions and beliefs?

Helen: I have discovered even more so now (that I am a president) although I think it is true in many leadership situations, you have to be who you are. If you're not.... it is often I think pretty evident ...if you're not being authentic or sincere.

Sharon: If you try to make something up and contrive something and it isn't what your really believe... it isn't going to work. I don't think. People see right through that.

Sarah: (I accept that I am not always consistent in my behavior.) (I keep in mind) the criteria that I try to measure my actions and my behaviors against. I'm not always as consistent as I'd like to be but that is where I strive.

Moderator: It is important to find out who you are and what you stand for that. You can't fake authenticity. If you try it will be evident if you are not authentic or sincere. There is acceptance that you will not always be consistent but you strive to be. Are there times that require compromise?

Liza: (I cannot live authentically in the situation that I am in right now.. I am an African American woman president living where) the population is not strong for people of color. When I was in graduate school one of the things the professors said was (that) if you want to be a president you have to go where the presidency is, for the first time, after that you can pick the place, but for the first time you have to go where somebody will hire you as president. I know there is not a lot of support (in this community) for (my unique cultural needs.) I have learned so much being here about myself and about leadership and about institutions but (I also have a strong belief in diversity.) There are students at this school that have never had a conversation with an African American and they could possibly go through this institution unless they stop to talk with me without ever talking with an African American. (To me) diversity means more opportunities to learn from a different group, to share different experiences, and (to have) a richer classroom experiences for students. In a (larger) city there are many more challenges but it is real rewarding (as a president) to go home and live in a neighborhood where you neighbor looks like you. To

have options to attend cultural events-African American museums, art shows, a college where there are multicultural studies African American studies, Chicano studies that kind of bridge experience to expose the entire college to so that it is more reflective of the global experience. (So what I am sharing is that it is not always possible to be congruent with your values in every aspect of your life. Life situations can make it difficult.)

Martin, Joshua and Helen: (I share the feeling of not having been congruent at times in my life.)

Liza: (I will make changes in the future.) I see (myself) moving ... and my next position being one where there is a high degree of diversity. A metropolitan area in a city where I can get all of the things that I need and so that I can have a social life (as an African American woman.)

Moderator: Compromise happens when values conflict. Poor modeling may result in decisions that are contrary to the best interests of the presidents. If compromise does occur one choice might be to change life course in order to be congruent with beliefs. This involves careful consideration and reflection. What else is involved with being true to who you are?

Joshua: I felt for many years like I had multiple lives. I had a home life and I had a work life or school life, an artistic life, and spiritual life. They were related to each other but just related and it seems to me over the past 25-30 years what has been going on for me is that those separate things are being woven together into one garment. It is important for me that those lives not just intersect but overlap considerably so that I am the same wherever I am, I can just be me.

Jack: (I would describe congruence in a similar way.) Life is a tapestry and the experiences make up the pattern that makes up the tapestry and the kind of weave that you have.

Moderator: Meshing the different aspects of your life, home, work, school, artistic and spiritual is an important part of being congruent. It means being a whole person wherever you are. The metaphors of weaving a garment or a tapestry illustrate this idea. In what way are you congruent with your beliefs about the college?

Sharon: I believe that you have to try to reflect (congruence) in your images about the place (you are at) and so our image is a circle. We have distinct entities (at the college) but (they are) not totally independent. They are very interdependent and so we ... have dotted lines that divide the different entities in the college to show that they are not totally independent. (The image you give to the public and to students needs to be congruent with what the institution is about.)

Martin: I really do feel like community college work is mission work. (Being congruent is not just about my personal self-knowledge) it is about helping people realize their full potential. (It is about building a reflective college culture that) affords people who are

interested in it (the chance) to pay attention to their own mind, body, (and) and health connection.

Moderator: The circle is a symbol of the interdependence of entities in the college. Images of the college should be consistent with what the institution is about. Being congruent means providing the same opportunities for others in the organization. A culture of reflection supports consistent treatment of everyone. You say that you believe in a reflective culture but how do you build a culture of reflection?

Martin: (Part of the building process is) to take time out to be together with one another to learn some skills about reflective listening and getting in touch with who we are internally and feeling confident about that so that we (don't) mask that with other individuals. We (also) believe that that projecting authentically is a better medium (of) learning for students. (In the end the truth about the culture is revealed in how people at the college) behave in hard times. (Can we work with people) in a way that (they) can understand, honor and feel a part of (the culture?) (Being part of a reflective culture means acting in congruence with what we believe.)

Jack: I think at our institution reflection is really collective reflection because we (make decisions together.) (We achieve this by meeting often and) we basically like each other, work together well and respect each other. The thing that I really like about the process ... is (that) our executive counsel members, even when they have submitted requests in their sector which exceed the amount of money available, in the final analysis make decisions that are in the best interests of the institution, even if it means the person requesting gets what might appear to be less than their fair share. The relationship that we have, the trust that we have, the input that we make... usually if it comes to a difference of opinion it is a vote just purely on the basis of numbers and not on the basis of our positions. So it is the system that we like, a system that I think has allowed me to keep these people because each of these people is capable of being a president, and it gives them autonomy. We don't make unilateral decisions-we make decisions in the best interests of the institution.

Moderator: A reflective culture is about reflective listening and getting in touch with internal feelings. There is no masking of feelings. Congruence in a reflective culture is revealed in hard times. They asked; "can we work with people in a way that they can understand, honor and feel a part of the culture?" Other aspects of a reflective culture were trust, unselfishness and collaborative decision-making.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: Striving for congruence in authenticity began with prizing personal values and then examining them. The presidents not only stated their values, but also thought about them regularly and eventually put them out before the public. Matthew described his values in his leadership manifesto that he reflected upon in the course of his daily life. Jack's values were reflected in the motto inscribed above the

entry to the college. Sharon spoke of keeping values visible to the college through a newsletter. These behaviors went beyond internally contemplating or stating their values. The presidents expressed why values were esteemed.

Another aspect of congruence was the act of measuring values against behaviors and actions. Sarah clearly stated this when she said:

I strive to behave as an authentic leader, an authentic person. I frequently measure actions and choices against my value set, and not just my spoken value set, but also my values set as I try to live my life.

Helen and Joshua strived for congruence by asking questions. Helen asked, "Am I being consistent with what I say I value." Joshua asked if he was a leader rooted in who he was not just in what he knew. Questioning contributed to self-scrutiny. The process of being congruent involved self-judgment as expressed by Matthew who stated that a key ingredient was a "willingness to be honest with yourself." In Sarah's self-analysis she compared her behavior to behavior of people she admired. Sharon admitted that this was a struggle for her. Faking or contriving values was revealed as being easily exposed by others. Sharon stated,

If you try to make something up and contrive something and it isn't what your really believe... it isn't going to work. I don't think. People see right through that.

The presidents admitted that acting congruently was not always possible. Liza shared that her values were in conflict. Being an African American woman in a non-diverse environment did not allow her to act on her values. She was aware of compromising her personal value of working in a diverse environment, but knew it was necessary to achieve her career goals. Striving for congruence was not described as being a simple process. Joshua shared a desire to express all the different parts of him in the leadership role:

I felt for many years like I had multiple lives. I had a home life and I had a work life or school life, an artistic life, and spiritual life. They were related to each other but just related and it seems to me over the past 25-30 years what has been going on for me is that those separate things are being woven together into one garment. It is important for me that those lives not just intersect but overlap considerably so that I am the same wherever I am, I can just be me.

The presidents used metaphors to illustrate the search for congruence. Joshua depicted different aspects of himself being “woven into a garment.” Jack describes life experiences as “a tapestry woven together.” These word pictures implied a melting together of the essence of the person. Sharon used the image of a circle to reflect the interdependence of the entities at the college. These metaphors described the need of the participants to reflect consistent images of their beliefs.

Being congruent as a leader not only meant achievement of personal understanding but acting with consideration for others in the institution. It meant helping others achieve their full potential. Martin examined what it meant to strive for congruence as a leader when he said:

I really do feel like community college work is mission work. (Being congruent is not just about my personal self-knowledge) it is about helping people realize their full potential. (It is about building a reflective college culture that) affords people who are interested in it (the chance) to pay attention to their own mind, body, (and) and health connection.

Striving for congruence was part of a culture of reflection revealed in the presidents' past behaviors. Martin in particular embodied this culture in his description of how people related. He described people taking time out to be together and to learn reflective listening skills. Jack also described a culture in which people liked each other, trusted each other and were willing to sacrifice their needs for the good of the group. This culture pulled people together in collective concern for the institution.

Choosing to Act

Choosing to act was about expressing authenticity. The presidents revealed their “true” selves through their behavior. It was not enough to select and prize values, they acted upon what they cherished. Authenticity was revealed as not only an intellectual activity but as a meaningful pursuit in the presidents’ lives.

Moderator: What brought about the desire to act authentically?

Helen: (Choosing to act authentically happened for me when) I came to the realization that you have to just reflect who you are.. let people know who you are and then they will work with you. That was just a much more comfortable model for me and I think that it was a very helpful realization for me... to know who you are, to know what you care about, to know what you value.... tell people... share it. They realize that they can relax as well. It makes for a much better situation.

Joshua: In the end I think what you want is for people to bring their whole selves to work and hardly anybody does. If you could bring not just your competent technical self to work but all the rest of who you are ...your spiritual life, your emotional life, your creative life, your unresolved questions, your capacity to observe from a unique perspective and express that.....(To be authentic) all the things you have that make you different from any other human being... need to be brought to work, if work is to be as rich as it could be.

Moderator: The desire to act authentically comes from wanting to share all the unique aspects of self with others. You reflect who you are and others will work with you. Know who you are, know what you care about, and share it. Bring your whole self to work including all the things that make you different. What did you do to encourage your self-reflective process?

Sharon: (I took advantage of opportunities to improve myself and help myself grow as a person.) I may be thinking I would sure like to do such and such so I will just think about what it would be like to do that. Then I will sometimes say ...yea I think I am going to do that. I remember one time I had a series of experiences that made me want to go to China. I remember one day I get this fax from a woman who heads up this women’s leadership organization that I was active in, it was a fax about her organizing a trip to go to the 4th World Conference on Women which was in Beijing in 1995. I saw that fax and I thought about it, thought about the things that had happened that had made me want to go to China and then here is this opportunity and II just have to do this. So I did.

Helen: (I attended workshops on reflection.) and spent a week there learning about self-reflection and about (my) inner life and how to be more sensitive to those things that are happening inside.

Martin: (I participated with others to learn about self-reflection.) We have done retreats to teach people how to listen and not ask leading questions but to really help listen and assist other people in solving their own issues, about 120 people on campus have been trained voluntarily to be (part of) clearness committee(s) to where people actually (have called) for these committees.

Moderator: You have taken advantage of opportunities to gain experiences to improve yourself and learn about self-reflection. You think about what you want to do and then you act on what you want. Workshops help you to learn about self-reflection, about your inner life and how to be sensitive to what is going on inside you. You attended retreats that taught you how to listen and participate in a clearness committee. You learn skills but how do you put them to use? Explain what it means to choose to personally act authentically?

Sharon: (Being authentic) I think it is finding a time to get in touch with yourself.

All: (We agree.)

Joshua: A lot of my reflective effort is to do my interior work and to connect my interior work with my exterior work. A good bit of the journal writing is about that.

Liza: (I also express myself through journaling.) It has become an intimate part of my life.

Helen: (I express myself through writing and drawing. I read books about personal growth.)

Martin: (Part of my process is to acknowledge)... and realize that there are many ways that I can be reflective on my own so that when I am with other people I can be the same and it can be a productive thing. (As I said before) part of the reflective process is arranging your life so that you can tend to your own inner nurturing. (I do this by reading, writing, traveling and creating personal spaces that re-energize me internally).

All: Yes, we create personal spaces to reflect.

Joshua: I (express myself as) a singer-songwriter. I have a CD out and perform around the country and some locally too. Sometimes my right brain work finds its way into songs. I publish poems. (I also share my writings on the college website and encourage others to do the same.)

Matthew: (I express myself in my speeches) I have a file at home that is about this thick of nothing but quotes, anecdotes, short stories, and parables from national and international great thinkers. (I use these in my speeches)

Sarah: (I choose to live in a diverse environment.) My husband and I've always felt (that) raising our children in communities with a variety of cultures and colors would help prepare them for a world that we won't see. So I embrace diversity (on a personal level.)

Moderator: It is important to find time to reflect. You find ways to express outwardly what was inward through self-expression such as in journaling, writing speeches, drawing and singing. You reflect on your own so that you can be the same with other people. You arrange your life to tend to your inner nurturing. Creating self-reflective personal spaces was a way of expressing yourself authentically. Expressing self authentically happened by acting your values such as living in a diverse environment. In what ways have you chosen to demonstrate authenticity as a leader?

Joshua: (The collective goal of acting authentically should be) to value learning and (to) want to *think* deeply and communicate broadly and collaboratively about what we think will get better results. We (must then) want to *act* on that conversation and not get stuck in the academic mine fields of the conversation. (Acting authentically is more than talking about expressing authenticity.)

Helen: (I value collaborative decision making.) (I do that) by being willing to have other people be a part of my decision making process. It takes more time....

Sarah: (Yes, collaboration) is messy, it takes longer, but decision-making needs to have as much involvement at the broadest base possible.

Jack: (I seldom make decisions unilaterally)

Sharon: Collaboration is a value that I have and that I think we have here. We look for that in people that we hire, you don't get it right every time but I think it is very much reflected in this workplace because of the people that we hire.

Moderator: The values of the institution's leader are reflected in the workplace. To act authentically you look at the values of: learning, thinking deeply, communicating broadly, and collaborative decision-making. It is important to act instead of getting stuck in the academic mine field of the conversation. How else do you act authentically at work?

Sharon: (I believe that you hire people who reflect many of the values of the institution.) One of the things that we tried to do at this institution is to hire people that have those same values, (people) who value learning, who value the students that we serve and who value working together, value collaboration. Those things are all important to me and so I guess they come out in this work place. I really believe that you are going to see in a place that is led by a certain person for any length of time, if they are there for a year you are not going to see it but if they are there for I think 5 years or more you are going to see that person's values reflected in that workplace.

Helen: (People in the college should be involved in selecting the values of the institution.) I began my first couple of months as the president of the college by going to I guess it was

like 44 different workgroups and groups of students to say, "What do you care about and what do you value?" Let's see if we can write it down and all of this was somewhat like a data analysis to identify the themes that emerged from the things that the people here told me. That is another aspect of reflection... values are really, really important, and it's really important to articulate them not only personally but for the organization as well.

Jack: (I believe if you value people you pay them a fair salary.) (In our case) it just seems to me that one of things that we have ... is an institution that is based on loyalty, (an) institution based on dedication, (an) institution based on competency, an institution based on a good work ethic so we pay a salary that I think allows us to hire people who in fact do that.

Moderator: You hire people that reflect the values of the institution. You ask people in the college to participate in naming the values of the institution. Authentic behavior is paying people a fair salary. This refers to acting on the basis of valuing the people that you work with. How do you act to influence how people reflect together?

Liza: I think the building of teams is the most important thing that is what I have worked to do. We didn't have any planning committees before I came and now we have strategic planning, campus planning, program review, personal advisory committees we've got these committees in place now and I strategically chose the people to be on those committees so that there are representatives of all the areas of the college. So that having a discussion involves faculty members talking to administrators...and trying to get administrators to see their way as well as the classified person but there is much more communication because there has to be in order for us to come to consensus. That is building working relationships across working groups.

Sharon: (We have encouraged and created methods of celebration.) There are a couple (of celebration techniques) that I have created but I think the ones that are created collectively and that are more spontaneous are really the ones that have the most meaning.

Sarah and Martin: (Experiencing joy in the work place is important to us as well.)

Martin: (To encourage participation in self-reflection we created) a ritual (of lighting candles and contemplation) that promotes inner peace at the start of our meetings that is still going on today. It's one (way) to keep this culture of reflection going. We (also) created an outdoor labyrinth. Because people said we .. need(ed) a place on campus for this kind of reflection... for the community, for students and for ourselves. (The) outdoor labyrinth (is a circular structure) about 60 feet in diameter. It is designed after the classic labyrinth ...some form of a reflective labyrinth is in most indigenous cultures. This one is designed not as a maze that you can waltz down but a (circular) path that takes about 20 minutes if you walk slowly through it reflectively to get to the center. Once you get to the center...you reflect and take a deep breath and you ideas are energized so that when you walk out you go renewed into the world.

Moderator: Building teams brings people together to listen to each other. Celebration

techniques build a reflective atmosphere. Rituals set a reflective mood. Reflective spaces such as a labyrinth encourage self-reflection on campus. The results are that people are re-energized and renewed. Can you give examples of acting authentically as a leader?

Martin: (I was involved in a conversation when) I realized sitting around the room were all but two people who had been trained in the clearness committee listening, and I realized the issue we were talking about went much deeper with me than the level we were talking. And I simply said if it is ok with you I'd like to turn this into a clearness committee. Because I don't really know what's going on with me here... but emotionally there something really deep about this issue...some work related thing. It was a very natural thing for us to do because they knew what I was talking about... that it was extremely helpful... it helped take me to a place which was really at the core of this particular issue which had to do with fund-raising itself and my discomfort with that and my own role and feeling guilty about not doing that well for the college... it was kind of a breakthrough. There was an ethical issue going on which was partly why I didn't feel good about it. . Having that kind of climate allowed me to do that in a way that I would never just spontaneously say...help me...listen while I figure this thing out in a very supportive way.

Sarah: (An example of acting authentically was my role as a mentor) It's been fun because I've got one vice president who is in a couple of interviews for presidencies and we have had to interesting conversations about how to handle the interview, how to express her values. It's been fun to watch her learn to think about these things. One of the things I suggested to her was that for me it was really helpful to be able to give examples. When somebody asks "What kind of a decision maker are you?" you don't go to the textbook description of the types autocratic and yada yada yada... what you need to do is to say, "Well we had this kind of decision last week and these are the things I did." She really puzzled over that advice for about 10 days and then she came back about 10 days right before she went to the interview and said "You know I thought about it and I was able to come up with a lot of examples." But she wasn't in the habit of the thinking that way. She was very academic in her approach. So making it personal, understanding who you are and what's important and being able to stand up and say this is who I am.

Martin: (I have chosen to act impartially in a situation where there)... were like vice presidents and deans and others and I said don't invite me into something and expect me to be arbitrary...I have to be fair...this was set up to listen and I was listening and this is what I heard and I didn't judge I said I wasn't going to and I didn't because in order for me to judge I was going to have to do that thing which none of us wanted and that was to have a full hearing

Matthew: One of the things that people tend to see as a strength in me is my tolerance level. I do allow people to say what they have to say...I am a terrific listener...but there will come a time when I will say we have to move on. Most people appreciate that but, there are a few that don't because of their traditional view of what the president is supposed to do...and that is to be a demagogue and I don't believe in demagoguery.

Moderator: In a reflective culture if you identify something deeper going on inside of you, it is acceptable to use a clearness committee to address the issue. Authentic behavior is also mentoring others by advising them to know who they are, what is important, and how to stand up and say who they are. Authenticity is about acting fairly, allowing people to say what they feel and listening to them. It is not about acting like a demagogue. Using the example of the issue of diversity can give specific examples of how you would act authentically as a leader?

Liza: It is difficult to act authentically when you are one of the only persons of color on the campus.

Moderator: From the perspective of the leader, it is difficult to be authentic when you are one of the only persons of color in the institution. What other concerns do you have in relation to acting authentically about diversity?

Sharon: One of the things that has worried me often in trying to create this college is making sure that we have a lot of different kinds of diversity not only ethnic but diversity of thought, gender diversity age... a lot of different kinds of diversity. And so I think about how to get other people to share that value and to look for that kind of diversity in who we hire I think about ...how can I be sure that I am including diversity (in how I behave) so I am connecting with people. I speak Spanish at graduation not well but I speak it!

Matthew: One of the things that attracted me to (this college and played a role in my accepting the position of president was the) commitment to promote diversity. The programs we have brought (to the college) promote that commitment. An even bigger challenge than attracting more students from diverse backgrounds is to attract more faculty from various diverse backgrounds.

Sharon: While our employee demographics don't exactly reflect our student demographics we work really hard to have a diverse employee base that at least if there are not exactly reflective of our student population, they're role models for the student population. In some ways you don't even want it to be exactly reflected of the student population because you may want diversity you don't even have in your student population. So that for example if you have a large Anglo or Hispanic population as we do that they are also exposed to other cultures, other ethnicities other kinds of diversity. So we try very hard to get that.

Jack: We are using the Daniels Fund process as a way of trying to bring in more minority students. We try to bring in diversity by actively recruiting international students.

Sarah: (Diversity is celebrated on our campus through art and sculpture.) We are pursuing federal funding to provide some additional help (for our students of color.)

Joshua: Diversity can be seen as a resource and a power to be engaged in our work rather than a problem to be solved or a quota to be met...when they bring to candidates forward we want to make an argument...we have some positions in our hip pocket...lets hire both

of them...we'll just advance you a position form next year to this year...it is opportunistic...it is strategic...it is not bureaucratic and compliant.

Moderator: Acting authentically means supporting different kinds of diversity including diversity of thought, gender, and age. Speaking Spanish is a way of making connections and making diversity evident. Authentic behavior is selecting a job based on commitment to promote diversity. It is also hiring a diverse faculty to act as role models for students. It is recruiting international students. Authentic behavior is celebrating diversity through art and sculpture. Leaders act authentically by pursuing funding for diverse students. Diversity should be viewed as a resource by the community college, and when the opportunity arises to hire diverse employees it should be taken advantage of. Why has the community college been successful in recruiting diverse students?

Sharon: (The community college has had success in attracting minority students because these students often) don't have enough money to go to wherever they want to go to college. Because we are in the community, because we are affordable - relatively affordable because we have developmental education for those who did not quite get where they needed to get to be ready for college, we provide access that the universities don't provide. Now is that bad for universities? Well, not necessarily, but I think what a lot of universities are finding is that where their students need to come from if they are going to grow diversity, they need to get their students from the community college.

Moderator: The community college is affordable and accessible to diverse students. There is a need for two and four-year institutions to collaborate in order for diverse students to be successful. Diversity is just one area where self-reflection is needed. Do you see consequences to not acting authentically through self-reflection?

Joshua: (Yes, there are consequences due to a) drift in the community college movement towards postmodern consumer capitalism (and) towards a retail model of education where students are customers, courses are product, and we are like a shopping mall. People of all kinds of backgrounds drop in drop out, sample this product, sample that product and in the end that is a very impoverished view of higher education and what we can mean to our students and to our communities.... If people are not in tune with the larger currents of our culture and what they mean to human dignity and human potential and human community then we will flat miss the boat. We will be part of the problem and not part of the solution. So I think there is a vital reason why reflective leadership and reflective communities have to be engaged right now. If they are not I think 20 years from now we will look back on the turn of the century here as a watershed period for the failure of the community college movement to achieve what it might have achieved. So there are hard mission reasons for doing this not just personal growth, development and spirituality it is about what we might accomplish not just about what we are becoming although both are important.

Moderator: Consequences of not acting authentically through self-reflection include failure of the community college movement to achieve everything it could at the turn of the century. Would you say that reflection is necessary for a leader to be successful?

Martin: (I think that is a subject that requires further study.) An interesting thing to me, which is especially phenomenal, is for a number of years we've been doing the Noel-Levitz institutional survey (and even in times where we were having to eliminate positions in the college we scored high on the survey.) Paying attention to our organizational climate is one of those indicators (of) how well we are doing.

Moderator: Scores reflecting satisfaction on institutional climate surveys may indicate success of a reflective culture. In conclusion how would you advise leaders to act in regard to self-reflection?

Sarah: I would advise (leaders) ..not skip (self-reflection). They've got to find their own way to do it to whether it is with physical exercise, going to that special place in the mountains. If they truly are going to be an authentic leader than they have to measure their behaviors and their choices and their words against a core set of values, and they need to do it regularly. That is part of being a leader. You can't lead anybody unless you know where you want to go and where you want the organization to go, and you can only do that by thinking about your experiences and your values.

All: (Taking time to self-reflect is essential.)

Moderator: It is important to make time on a regular basis for self-reflection, and to find individual ways to be self-reflective. It is about measuring behaviors and choices against a core set of values. It is important to take time to think about where you are going as a leader. Thank you for participating in this discussion of self-reflection.

Moderator Aside to the Reader: Choosing to act authentically came from a desire by the presidents to express outwardly what was inward. Helen said "let people know who you are and they will work with you." Joshua spoke of expressing "all the things you have that make you different from any other human being." Choosing to act was stimulated by taking advantage of opportunities to learn about self and become more knowledgeable about self-reflection through books, workshops and retreats. Sharon spoke of acting on her impulse to go to China. Personal choices to act authentically were accomplished in various ways. Sharon stated that "finding time to get in touch with yourself" was an important step in acting authentically. Joshua and Liza journaled. Helen made drawings. Matthew expressed his values in speeches. Joshua was a singer and songwriter. Martin summed up the process by saying,

(Part of my process is to acknowledge)..... and realize that there are many ways that I can be reflective on my own so that when I am with other people I can be the same and it can be a productive thing. (As I said before) part of the reflective process is arranging your life so that you can tend to your own inner nurturing.

Demonstrating authenticity as a leader involved acting in accordance with chosen values. A stated value of the presidents was collaboration. Helen, Sarah and Jack collaborated by involving members of the college in decision-making. Sharon hired people that personified collaboration. The presidents appreciated the people they worked with. This was achieved by involving people in the process of naming institutional values. Helen said,

One of the things that we tried to do at this institution is to hire people that have those same values, (people) who value learning, who value the students that we serve and who value working together, value collaboration. Those things are all important to me and so I guess they come out in this work place.

Jack chose to act authentically by paying employees a fair wage. The expressions of authenticity were based on values.

Valuing people meant encouraging communication and participation in self-reflective activities. Liza created teams of faculty, administrators and classified staff for the purpose of building working relationships. Sharon, Sarah and Martin valued joy in the workplace and pursued activities that promoted that type of environment. Martin created a culture of self-reflection.

(To encourage participation in self-reflection we created) a ritual (of lighting candles and contemplation) that promotes inner peace at the start of our meetings that is still going on today. It's one (way) to keep this culture of reflection going. We (also) created an outdoor labyrinth. Because people said we .. need(ed) a place on campus for this kind of reflection... for the community, for students and for ourselves. (The) outdoor labyrinth (is a circular structure) about 60 feet in diameter. It is designed after the classic labyrinth ...some form of a reflective labyrinth is in most indigenous cultures. This one is designed not as a maze that you can waltz down but a (circular) path that takes about 20 minutes if you walk slowly through it reflectively to get to the center. Once you get to the center...you

reflect and take a deep breath and your ideas are energized so that when you walk out you go renewed into the world.

Acting in accordance with values was not easily achieved. The presidents relayed instances of feeling pressured to act a certain way but not yielding to the demand. Sometimes the anxiety was internal. Martin illustrated this by stating his internal discomfort about an ethical issue and how he acted by enlisting the help of a clearness committee. Sarah mentored a prospective president by instructing her to identify responses to decisions she faced. She wanted her protégé to reveal what kind of a decision maker she was. Martin and Matthew shared examples of feeling pressured by people in the college to act in opposition to their values. Martin stated “Don’t invite me into something and expect me to be arbitrary.” Matthew said,

One of the things that people tend to see as a strength in me is my tolerance level. I do allow people to say what they have to say...I am a terrific listener...but there will come a time when I will say we have to move on. Most people appreciate that but, there are a few that don’t because of their traditional view of what the president is supposed to do...and that is to be a demagogue and I don’t believe in demagoguery.

The researcher inquired about the presidents’ behaviors related to diversity. They shared unique perspectives resulting from their diverse backgrounds. Matthew, an African American president chose to work at an institution due to the commitment to promote diversity. He spoke of bringing activities to the campus that celebrated differences. Sharon conveyed that acting authentically meant talking about the value of diversity in many venues including a newsletter. She made speeches in Spanish. She spoke of ways to bring different types of diversity to the campus.

One of the things that has worried me often in trying to create this college is making sure that we have a lot of different kinds of diversity not only ethnic but diversity of thought, gender diversity, age (diversity)...a lot of different kinds of diversity. And so I think about how to get other people to share that value and to

look for that kind of diversity in who we hire I think about ...how can I be sure that I am including diversity (in how I behave) so I am connecting with people (about the value of diversity).

Sarah celebrated diversity in art and sculpture. Jack recruited international students.

Joshua addressed diversity as a “resource and a power to be engaged in our work rather than a problem to be solved or a quota to be met.” Liza, an African American president shared the difficulty in acting authentically as a person of color in a predominately white institution. Commitment to incorporating diversity was evident in the words of the presidents. They cited the importance of the role of community colleges in providing chances for minority students to be successful. Sharon explained the importance of collaboration between two year and four-year institutions to the success of students of color.

Joshua discussed the consequences of not acting authentically through self-reflection. He said,

If people are not in tune with the larger currents of our culture and what they mean to human dignity and human potential and human community then we will flat miss the boat. We will be part of the problem and not part of the solution. So I think there is a vital reason why reflective leadership and reflective communities have to be engaged right now. If they are not I think 20 years from now we will look back on the turn of the century here as a watershed period for the failure of the community college movement to achieve what it might have achieved.

The question of whether self-reflection promoted successful presidential leadership was not the focus of this study. Martin broached this issue by discussing the use of organizational climate surveys as indicators of how well a reflective culture impacted the institution. To act as an authentic leader all the presidents supported taking time to reflect.

Summary of Authenticity

Striving for congruence began with prizing personal values and then making them evident to others. To achieve congruence the presidents measured choices and behaviors against declared values. This involved a process of self-questioning. Questions included “Am I consistent with what I say I value, “Am I the kind of leader others want to follow” and “Do I know who I am?” Questioning led to prioritizing values and comparison of actions to those of admired mentors. Being self-honest was a key part of striving for congruence. Contriving or faking personal values was quickly evident to others and did not work. Acting congruently as a president was not always possible. In some cases there was compromise of values due to a sense that they had no other choice. Compromise brought internal conflict, but also helped shape future goals. In striving for congruence there was a meshing together of different aspects of the presidents’ lives. This included bringing together their home and work lives, and their artistic and spiritual sides. There was a desire to share all the unique aspects of self with others at work. The metaphor of weaving a garment and a tapestry was used to illustrate wholeness. Striving for congruence was a part of building a reflective culture, and meant acting with consideration for others in the institution. A reflective culture allowed people to reach their full potential through spending time together, listening and interacting with each other. There was a pulling together in collective concern for the organization.

Choosing to act authentically came from a desire to express outwardly what was inward. Through self-reflection the presidents chose to behave in a manner that gave credence to their beliefs. On a personal level they expressed themselves through journaling, writing speeches, drawing and singing. They shared the need to self-reflect

individually so that they could remain consistent in their behavior. Attending retreats and workshops fine-tuned their knowledge of self-reflection. They stressed the importance of arranging their lives in order to attend to inner nurturing. One of the ways self-nurturing was accomplished was through creating self-reflective personal spaces. Another aspect of acting authentically involved the setting of boundaries in their relationships in and out of the organization. Boundaries appeared on a continuum and reflected individual comfort level with self-revelation.

Demonstrating authenticity as a leader involved acting in accordance with chosen values. The presidents spoke of the importance of acting rather than mirroring in academic conversations. Leaders' values were reflected in the workplace and included authentic behaviors such as hiring people that mirrored the values of the institution, and paying them equitably. Acting authentically meant allowing people to say what they feel, listening to them, and then responding to them by acting fairly. It was not about being a demagogue. People were encouraged to listen to each other and participate in rituals and celebrations that promoted a reflective culture. Reflective spaces such as the labyrinth encouraged self-reflection on the campus and served to reenergize and renew.

Acting authentically as a president in regard to diversity meant supporting diversity of thought, gender, race, ethnicity, and age. The presidents chose to work at institutions that reflected their values. Authentic behavior included hiring a diverse faculty, recruiting diverse students, and actively pursuing funding to promote diversity. Differences were celebrated through art and sculpture on the campus. The community college was viewed as affordable and accessible to minority students. Collaboration

between two and four-year institutions was seen as a means of supporting success of diverse students.

At a time of a retail approach to higher education, failure to act through self-reflection was viewed as a possible failure of the community college movement to achieve its potential. There were vital reasons why reflective leadership and reflective communities needed to be engaged now. The presidents recommended taking time on a regular basis for self-reflection, and for discovering ways to be self-reflective. Measuring choices and behaviors against core values contributed to acting authentically as a leader.

CHAPTER VI

Introduction

Chapter VI identifies the essence of self-reflective leadership interpreted through a metaphorical story told by the moderator. This technique condenses the findings of the study and explains self-reflection in a way that encourages others to see themselves in the story. The story is a continuation of the conversation among the presidents. One of the female community college presidents is concluding a meeting after addressing problems with her executive council. At the end of a hectic day she realizes the need to stop and center herself. Through her journey traversing the passageway, she walks the reader through her experience of self-reflection. The metaphors in the story represent the components of her reflective process.

The chapter begins with the story entitled “Traversing the Passageway” and is followed by the section “Meanings” that discusses the story’s metaphors. The last segment entitled “Epilogue” brings together the study’s findings by explaining the “Essence,” “Connections to the literature” and “Applicability and recommendations for further study.”

Traversing the Passageway

She felt the eyes of the executive council focusing on her as she brought the meeting to a close. As president of Reflective Community College she presided over a discussion of personnel and budget problems, but after a three-hour meeting nothing had

been decided. As she got up to leave, several members asked to make appointments with her so she quickly pulled out her calendar and penciled them in. Gathering her folders and notes, she was accompanied to the door by several members sharing their ideas about a new program they hoped she would endorse. She could tell by their eager expressions that they were committed to the student project, and it made her think back to what stimulated her passion for community colleges years ago. She had always wanted to make a difference. It was not that her dedication was wavering, but at this moment she felt a sense of heaviness and a lack of creativity. What was making her feel this way? How would she move beyond the mental block? The council members walked on to their offices as she packed her bag in preparation to leave. She was used to the hectic pace and the human demands of the job, but it was Friday and she recognized how weary she was. Shouldering her bag, she walked outside to her car.

The warmth of the sun engulfed her as she opened her car door and settled inside. Being indoors all day, she had not realized how beautiful the day was. She gave a sigh of relief at having this time alone, and her thoughts turned to how she would utilize the last hours of daylight. It was natural that her thoughts would turn to home. Home offered quiet and solitude until her family would arrive later in the evening. If the traffic was light, she would be home in thirty minutes. As she drove, her mind acknowledged the heavy, stressful feelings that had burdened her throughout the week. Putting off the feelings had not helped, because now her body was telling her it was time to deal with them. The back of her neck was tight, and her body felt numb. The question nagged at her “Why do I feel this way?” She acknowledged a personal need that was not being met. Being home alone

would offer the opportunity to stop and collect her thoughts and relax. She drove up the wooded, secluded driveway and parked.

After walking through the heavy, oak door of her home, she slipped off her shoes, changed into comfortable clothes and made her way to the kitchen. Sitting on a stool, she turned on soothing music to help her set a mood of relaxation. Everything around her was comfortable and reassuring. She consciously blocked everything from her mind except what was physically present. As she enjoyed the music, her eyes gazed at the water of the passageway through the window. She enjoyed living along the water; it held a special meaning for her. Living along the water helped her to contemplate and get in touch with genuine feelings and impressions. A sense of relief brought on by being disengaged from her work enveloped her as she gazed out the window.

The picture window, in her large living room, revealed a panoramic view of the narrow interior island waterway. She knew that this deceptively beautiful section of water served as a passageway for ferries traveling between the islands. Her eyes settled on the shallow pool in the cove below the house. She could see the jagged rocks encircling the cove, still wet as the tide fell. The gentle waves lapped at the shore, bringing pieces of driftwood and seaweed up onto the rocky beach. It was so inviting. Her eyes moved along the water stretching out to the island in the distance. The water was undisturbed by any boats.

The red kayak caught her attention. It was lying upside down under a tree a short way up from the beach. It not only provided a means of getting out on the water, but a way of getting in touch with herself. She was glad she was alone. Should she challenge herself by taking the kayak out? She knew the kayak would assist her in reaching a more

connected state of mind, but she hesitated. It would take time and energy to drag it to the water, and she wasn't sure she had the motivation to overcome her weariness. Taking a nap or even reading had some appeal, but then looking up at the sun, she felt resolve within her to take advantage of the remaining sunlight, and the opportunity for renewal. Without realizing it her body moved, seemingly of its own accord, down the grassy path to the beach.

Turning over the kayak, she tossed the paddle inside, grabbed the bow and pulled it to the edge of the cove, scratching pebbles as she scooted it down into the water. Lifting her cold wet feet into the opening of the kayak she settled in. The red kayak floated out from the shore. Reaching down she felt for the small net pouch that held her compass. It was there. She felt a lightness and exhilaration as the kayak moved forward. Instead of paddling, she paused, laid the paddle across her lap, and looked down. What would the shallow pool disclose? The crystal clear water revealed a myriad of sea life. Drifting close to the rocks she saw mussels poking above the surface and barnacles waving feathery tentacles in the current. Crabs could be seen scurrying frantically for cover. Orange and purple starfish squeezed the rocks with their tentacles. Schools of tiny fish darted out of sight with the slightest movement. She was also aware of rocks on the sea bottom. The large rocks stood solid in the surf while the pebbles rocked back and forth with the lapping waves. Returning to the present she was reminded of the need to be aware of the location of the rocks as she maneuvered out of the cove

Turning away from the shore, she set her sights on paddling out into the passageway. This was her time of self-determination and challenge. The sun peeked out off and on from behind the clouds warming her face and arms and encouraging her to

continue. The deeper water was dark and opaque. She remembered other journeys into the passageway. Some of them had been routine, others difficult. Recalling these successes and failures caused her to ask, "what will I learn about myself this time? What will be different?" These thoughts ruminated in her mind as she paddled farther from the cove; but she was willing to take the risk in order to push herself. The challenge appealed to her, and she felt confident that the kayak would be her safety net. She was aware of the deep water. It crossed her mind that sharks might lurk below, but there might also be satisfying discovery of salmon, dolphin and octopus. The unseen dangers did not distract her because she knew it was worth the risk to challenge her abilities and seek out new experiences. Her concentration became more intense. She was aware of the paddles moving her forward and keeping her on course in the water.

In an instant the sun was suddenly covered by a larger cloud only to swiftly return glaring brightly in her eyes. Screeching seagulls dove into the water searching for herring and candlefish, distracting her from her reverie. A seal poked its head above the water, stared at her and then swam away as if playing a game of tag. These distractions only made her concentrate more fully on paddling into the passageway.

Feeling coolness on her neck she looked behind her and was startled by the closeness of the fog unexpectedly forming behind her. In her state of intense concentration she had neglected to pay much attention to the weather. The fog continued to gather quickly and was moving fast engulfing the kayak. As it surrounded her, she reached for the pouch and pulled out the compass; it gave her assurance that she could determine the direction she was moving. The sun was barely visible through the fog, but with her compass she knew she could find her way back. The fog quickly intensified,

overwhelming her as she struggled to coordinate her compass with the hazy impression of the sun. What was the best course of action? Taking time to think, she allowed the kayak to float aimlessly for a while as she listening intently for sounds of activity around her. Her senses were acute. Disorientation and a vague sense of panic set in as the kayak drifted in the fog. She no longer had a clear point of reference. Distantly, a foghorn sounded, alerting her to the ferry's crossing the passageway. She continued to drift. The low muted horn grew louder, warning of troubles ahead, and forcing her to contemplate how she would handle encountering the ferry.

The water, smooth as glass at the beginning of her trip, was now choppy and rough. The foghorn sounded again, this time close enough for her to hear engine noises in the direction of the horn. Knowing that she was close to the path of the ferry made her feel small, insignificant, and vulnerable. She thought of the immense size of the ferry in relation to the kayak. Past experience told her that the ferry's wake would reach her within minutes of passing. She would need to have a strategy to remain upright. Mentally, she pictured in her mind what could happen and using her experiential knowledge she formed a plan.

Her thoughts turned to what she had gleaned from traversing the shallow pond, and her past experiences paddling her kayak through the currents in the passageway. She thought of what techniques had worked and what had not. Each piece of information that surfaced helped her to shape her plan. She recalled stories she had heard of friend's encounters with boats in their travels. All these impressions came together as she endeavored to set her course. Options swirled through her mind.

Wanting to confront what was ahead, she made the decision to face the wake head-on. She knew this meant preparing to be plunged into the icy water of the passageway if she was forced to roll the kayak. Was she prepared for the consequences of her decision? The wake intensified and she felt the kayak heave upward and then dive sharply. She struggled to balance herself, moving the paddles back and forth, as she fought to stay in control. The ferry's steely wall passed in front of her through the fog. She held her breath and gripped the paddle harder. Her arms ached from fighting to keep steady in the water. She realized it would take more than her strength to face the multiple swells of the wake head-on. Would she be able to ride it out? Was there a way to move beyond this crisis? In her helplessness she realized there were limits to her endurance. Struggling against the wake had put her in danger. She realized if she stopped paddling and backed off, she would be carried out of harm's way. She ceased to struggle and felt the kayak being propelled back from where she had come. It rose steeply and then dove down away from the sound of the engines. Her body stayed still as she allowed herself to become one with the kayak. Trusting her sense of balance, she rode out the wake. The ferry moved away as a break in the fog appeared, and the sun peeked out.

Relaxing her tired arms, she placed the paddle across her lap, and allowed the water to carry her back. This experience of weariness was different from what she had felt earlier in the day. Her aching muscles contrasted with her sense of relief and accomplishment. Her energy level soared. She played back the episode in her mind. What could she have done differently? Back-paddling, she turned the kayak around. Using her compass and the sun as guides, she set out for home. As quickly as it had come, the fog

dissipated. The sun had been hidden during her ordeal, but now it shone clearly just before descending beyond the horizon. Blue sky appeared above her.

The shoreline gradually came into view, revealing the house clearly. Looking back, she could see the ferry moving along the passageway unchanged in its course. Back towards the shore, lights flickered inside the house, and figures moved. She smiled in anticipation of sharing her adventure with her family. The experience in the passageway had been both troubling and uplifting. She had successfully maneuvered the kayak through a difficult situation, and now knew more about her abilities than she had known before. The chance existed that she would be plunged into the icy water, but there was elation over having mastered her fear. Had she not attempted the trip, she would never know what she could accomplish. The heaviness and murkiness experienced earlier in the day had gone, and a different type of energy had replaced it. This was more than a casual trip; it had given her clarity about her ability to traverse the passageway. She would share her revelations with others, and use her knowledge to make decisions in future travels. This would not be the last time that she would make the journey into the passageway. She knew that each time she ventured out she would learn more about herself.

Meanings

My story is based on experiences at a summerhouse on Shaw Island, in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. My sister and her husband housesit June through September, and my family visits them, taking advantage of the opportunity to enjoy the serenity and beauty of the islands. The magnificent setting provides elements of the story that act as metaphors embodying reflective leadership.

The story begins as a community college president is ending a difficult week; she acknowledges that she has put off taking time out for herself. There are important work issues that need her attention, but she finds that she is uninspired and fatigued. She feels the eyes of the council upon her and is aware of their expectations. Her hectic life and the human demands of her job trigger a need for her to tend to her inner nurturing. This illustrates the human demands of leadership that bring about fatigue and stress. She has put off addressing her inner needs in the past, and now she is physically fatigued and emotionally drained. She acknowledges the enthusiasm of her faculty, but is not as engaged because of her weariness. The underlying passion for her job is still present, but she recognizes the need to stop and center herself and disengage from her hectic life. The idea of centering is about doing the internal work of the leader. This involves stopping and focusing inward to listen and attune to the most authentic self.

She becomes aware of trying to regain a sense of her own rhythm, of her striving for balance between doing and being. She is aware of being physically affected by feelings of stress, and she realizes the need to honor the important cycle of retreating, which is about finding time for self-care. Interspersed in her thinking are questions that aid her in self-examination. Questions form a critical part of her experience that help her to be aware of her assumptions and expectations and sharpens what she already knows. She looks inward and asks; what is making me feel this way? What is most vital to me right now?

Stepping outside into the sun puts her in touch with her ever-present spiritual sense. The spiritual sense brings about yearning to find meaning and healing in life. Her spiritual sense stays with her like the existence of the sun. She feels compelled to question what she needs at the moment and decides that she wants to use the rest of the day for her.

After identifying her intention to retreat from her hectic life, she thinks about a place to go.

Her thoughts turn to home as a place to be alone. Her home is the physical place where she feels sustained and comforted. It is a type of container that holds and carries the energy of her experience and helps her feel safe. She realizes that feeling safe is a precursor to the ability to do her inner work. Her home forms one of the boundaries that make her feel physically and psychologically enclosed and secure.

She lives in a secluded island home so nature becomes a part of her container. The immensity of nature puts her struggles into perspective helping her to feel both insignificant and vital. By being in nature she can look for answers revealed there and listen for personal insights. As she approaches her home, she thinks about how her family will arrive later. She knows that home is a challenging place to retreat because it is inextricably entwined with her ordinary life. It can be difficult to overcome family expectations and gain enough privacy to avoid distractions that conflict with private time. Her experience of self-reflection is not about the place, or the amount of time away, or even the physical proximity of others, it is about how she allows these distractions to affect her.

She enters her home and immediately makes herself physically comfortable. She puts on meditative music that soothes her and cues her mind to contemplate. Sitting at the table in the kitchen she further calms her anxious mind by focusing her thoughts on the scenery around her. In essence she becomes a “hollow listening woman (Louden, p. 229).” This involves her willingness to let go and suspend thinking. It is a type of discipline that allows her to use her senses acutely to see what nature offers around her.

She looks through the window and sees the water. Water is a metaphor that represents her mind and her thinking process. Through the window she sees the water stretching out into the passageway between the islands. The passageway is that part of her thinking where problems present themselves and must be addressed. Dilemmas come and go like boats traversing the passageway. The water is inviting; she feels a need to think and contemplate. Finally she gives herself permission to go to the cove. This permission is not about guilt or coercion; it is about her intention to nurture herself. The body mind connection is made, and she walks down to the cove.

The red kayak is another container, like her home, that offers secure boundaries to begin her mind journey. She takes deliberate actions to prepare the boat and pulls it to the water's edge. This represents the effort and deliberation involved in taking the time to do personal self-reflection.

Looking down into the shallow pond is like examining the shallow recesses of her mind. The clear water allows her to look inside the pond in the same way that she looks inside her past. Memories of her family, friends, places and experiences come to her mind. All of these are part of her conscious perceptions that influence her thinking. The sea-life holds meanings for her. Starfish are like celebrations she has experienced. The darting schools of fish remind her of people who briefly share time with her and then move on. The empty shells make her recall transitions that changed her life like leaving home for the first time. Rocks make her think of values that she holds, some of them stand firm while others waver when challenged by life circumstances. She is reminded of the incident earlier in the day when her commitment to supporting her faculty vacillated.

Another important aspect of the shallow pool is about thinking through what belongs to her and what belongs to others in order to produce an authentic portrait of herself. She recognizes the challenge of self-reflection is in taking time to name and depict the essential parts of who she is. Realizing her authentic self, means acknowledging that this is who she is and what she values, needs and respects. She knows this is not a static state, and that when she enters the shallow pool again her authentic self will change and grow as life unfolds.

She looks outward to the water in the passageway. There are dangers lurking in the deeper water just, as there is risk in thinking at deeper levels. By heading out into the unknown, she is inviting change and is aware that change may provoke others' anxiety. People may have a vested interest in things staying the way they are. So she knows there could be resistance to continuing, both from within her and from others. This illustrates the paradox of leadership in that leaders often inspire others by making them uncomfortable. The sharks represent unconscious feelings and impressions that could sabotage her success. She continues because she wants to challenge herself; she feels the need to push past what she thought she could do physically and emotionally. By challenging herself she brings about increased confidence in her self, and the realization of what she is capable. Shifting herself out of the comfort zone, she ventures out from the cove.

The glaring sun, screeching seagulls, and a playful seal disturb her intensity. Just as with distractions in life, she puts these diversions aside and focuses on her goal of self-reflection. Without warning, a sudden cloud of fog entraps her. The fog representing ambiguity and chaos overtakes her, leaving her floating aimlessly. Her container, the

kayak, is important because it gives her a sense of safety and control. She does not panic but, reaches for her compass, representing her personal beliefs. The compass along with the sun, her spiritual sense, will guide her through this crisis. Even though the sun's light is dulled, she keeps her spiritual center. In self-reflection there is grounding to personal values and beliefs as a leader.

The kayak wandering in the fog represents times of chaos when thinking is confused and aimless. She temporarily loses her perspective as she becomes aware that she is facing the unknown and is unsure of what she is willing to risk. She uses her senses to explore her environment, as a leader would use all the information available to her to make a decision. Her brainstorming is interrupted when she hears the sound of a foghorn and is alerted to a ferry crossing nearby. She does not have much time to think, because the horn sounds again signaling the ferry is closer. In realizing the danger, she will have to make a decision about how to handle the ferry passing. Dealing with the oncoming ferry represents the daunting problems that leaders face.

Her mind goes back to the campus issues earlier in the day. Problems of budget and personnel loom large and give warning of the need for attention. Others are more difficult to anticipate and sneak up like the ferry. The ferry demands her immediate attention in order to preserve her upright position in the kayak. She must deal with the fog, the ambiguity and uncertainty of her position. The fog leaves her floating aimlessly for a while as she struggles to set her course. She looks at all perspectives and avoids jumping to conclusions or making assumptions, this includes contemplating the gray areas rather than expecting black and white solutions. She thinks back to prior experiences. What her friends have told her, her values, her spiritual center and, her consciousness of her origins.

All will be a part of how she chooses to act. She is thoughtful, deliberate, focused and rational.

She heads into the wake. Aware that capsizing the kayak will make her wet and cold; she is not capricious in the choice to meet the wake head on. Fighting to stay up right, she dips and rises sharply in the water, just as the decision-making process involves different points of view and differences of opinion. Even though she has put careful thought into her journey into the passageway there is no guarantee that the situation will work out the way she envisions. This is the reality that she must accept. Reflection offers a way of deliberating upon her choices, but it is not a guarantee of success.

As she continues to struggle, she asks herself what she can do to get past this experience. She is aware of her aching muscles, and her feelings of anxiety, which symbolize the mental and physical unrest that self-reflection brings. She is surprised at her ability to maneuver in the water and learns about the ability of the kayak to endure the swells. These are all new aspects of her experience that she will learn and later contemplate.

As she fights the swells, she takes stock of her physical and mental status and realizes that she will not be able to continue fighting forward. Her arms are tired and the wake is steep and strong. She is aware of her fear and feelings of vulnerability. To mark this passage into self-reflection she acknowledges that change has occurred. There has been a shift in her thinking. She sees the reality of her struggle and realizes that a crucial element of her process of self-reflection is change. Change will bring insight into her present situation. By relaxing and not paddling she allows the water to take her backward

out of harm's way. Within the kayak's safety, she can listen to her instincts and see how this experience can be illuminating and meaningful.

She thinks back on her performance and critiques her choices and her actions measuring them against her values and her beliefs. Insight has led her to see that when confronted by the ferry, letting go and relaxing calms her mind and brings self-acceptance. Struggling brought the realization that she could not face the issues alone. By letting go of the idea of self-perfection there is acceptance of limitations of self and life.

As she sets her sights for home, she relaxes and thinks about what she has just experienced. She contemplates her actions and responses. The journey in the kayak has connected her reflection and action resulting in rejuvenation and increased creativity. She has reconnected with her inner self and her physical self and has reclaimed her energy. The fog lifts allowing her to see clearly the shore and lights flickering in her house. After self-reflecting, there is a sense of wanting to share insights and reconnect with others. She will celebrate traversing the passageway by sharing the experience with her family. Attending to her own inner knowing has nurtured her and brought personal insight to her thoughts and behaviors. She knows that the journey of self-reflection will be repeated often in her life.

Epilogue

In concluding this study of reflective leadership by selected community college presidents I will address the four final topics (a) the essence of reflective leadership, (b) connection of findings to the literature, (c) applicability of the findings, and (d) recommendations for further study.

The Essence

I derived the essence of self-reflective leadership by merging the themes of mindfulness, discovery and authenticity. From these themes the essence, self-care, emerged. I drew the essence from the voices of the presidents expressed in their profiles in chapter four, from the dialogue among the presidents in chapter five, and from the metaphorical story in chapter six.

The presidents expressed self-care through the theme of mindfulness by being aware of the need to stop and take time to examine and interpret their thoughts and behaviors. They were deliberate in taking time to reflect. Their cognitive process involved paradoxical practices of focusing and wandering. Clearing the mind helped to focus, and envisioning allowed the mind to wander and see what could be. Throughout there was integration of cognitive, affective and spiritual responses that made them aware of their internal process. Reflection was intentional, cued by problems, concerns or feelings. The presidents engaged in a variety of physical activities that helped to support the internal processes. Through mindfulness of the internal environment they recognized the “big picture” by using techniques that enabled them to see relationships, connections, and new perspectives. Addressing these issues was part of doing their interior work which was about spending time doing self-care.

Part of mindfulness included the presidents’ awareness of the need to disengage from people, thus creating a time of personal solitude. There was physical retreat from the hecticness of life. They often retreated to home because it was safe, peaceful, calm, and familiar. The external environment provoked emotions and feelings that nurtured self-reflection. The presidents practiced rituals that supported reflection. They created spaces

mirroring their interests and personalities. A common time for reflection was in the early morning, but time and place for presidential reflection were less important than how they allowed distractions to affect them. Even though self-reflection occurred spontaneously, it was often practiced as a discipline of private personal time alone. Through their choices and behaviors they acknowledged the need for self-nurturing, self-renewal and self-care.

People supported the presidents' personal self-reflective process. The presidents were mindful of the need to include honest, caring people in their process of self-reflection. They chose people to reflect with in and outside their families with whom they did not have to wear masks thus affording them the opportunity to admit mistakes and receive affirmation. The presidents set boundaries as to what they would share and with whom they would share as a part of self-preservation. Aspects of a reflective culture included deep listening and creation of safe environments in which there was attentiveness to the needs of others. Attention to reflective culture came from acknowledging the importance of the individual's process of self-reflection, which grew out of regard for self-care.

The presidents were aware of the necessity to understand the reasons for their behavior. Questioning permeated the process of self-reflection in mindfulness and probed the presidents' behaviors and motives. Questions served as an internal leadership checklist and helped uncover personal truth. The presidents were able to attend to their personal needs and challenges by using questions.

The theme of discovery revealed a process of personal exploration that included examination of origins and significant life experiences. Spirituality and passionate commitment to a vocation were revealed. This culminated in a process of values

clarification. Reading literature and making connections with nature stirred discovery of origins, helping them attain personal insight. Awareness of their origins and values aided the presidents in their journey of self-care.

The presidents discovered personal growth through experiential learning. They sought out experiences that challenged them and then integrated what they learned into their professional lives. They took risks by delving into their personalities and contemplating their successes and failures. Metaphors were used to express their changed perspectives and helped them to express evolution of their personal growth.

The presidents described incidents of struggle and vulnerability through discovery in self-reflection. The “fish bowl environment” of the presidency caused feelings of vulnerability and stress. They described times of personal devastation and vacillation when they struggled to act authentically. These became fertile times for self-reflection and for self-understanding.

The final theme of authenticity embodied the outcomes of self-reflection. In striving for congruence the presidents stated their values, and then measured them against their behaviors. Questioning contributed to self-scrutiny and aided in the process of self-criticism and self-understanding. Being congruent as a leader not only meant achievement of personal understanding, but also acting with consideration for others in the institution. The presidents admitted that it was not always possible act congruently with their beliefs and values, but the process of self-examination helped them to uncover personal truth.

Acting authentically expressed the purpose of the self-reflective process, which was to express outwardly what was inward and ultimately to express their unique selves. The presidents spoke of the importance of acting rather than mirroring in academic

conversations. Demonstrating authenticity as a leader involved acting in accordance with chosen values, which was not always easily achieved. Leading people in a reflective culture not only meant searching for personal truth, but it also meant encouraging others to listen to each other, and participate in rituals and celebrations that promoted reflection. A reflective culture promoted an atmosphere of personal and collective self-care.

In summary, the essence of reflective leadership was the presidents' conscious decision to make time for self-care. This deliberate act involved introspection on present action and on the antecedents and consequents of action. It was deliberate, rational contemplation originating out of awareness of origins, values and past experiences. Reflective leadership involved self-inquiry using questions in the quest for personal truth. Attending to self-care made it possible for the authentic expression of self. Self-awareness brought insight into behavior and resulted in changed perspectives. Reflective leaders supported reflective culture encouraging others' self-awareness and personal self-care. By taking time for self-reflection reflective leaders were able to lead and care for others.

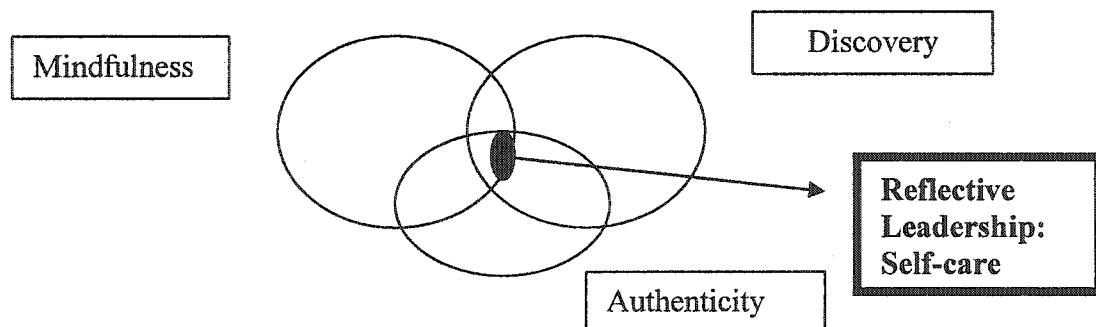


Figure 2. Visual of the findings of the study. Reflective leadership was revealed in the themes of mindfulness, discovery and authenticity, with the essence being self-care.

Connection of Findings to the Literature

In this section the themes of mindfulness, discovery, and authenticity will be discussed in light of similarities and differences that were revealed in the literature review. The essence of reflective leadership, self-care, will also be addressed.

Brown and Ryan (2003) described mindfulness as a process of enhanced attention to and awareness of current experience or present reality. Langer and Moldoveanu (2000) described a similar process of enhanced sensitivity to the environment, openness to information, and awareness of new and different perspectives. These presidents supported these descriptions of mindfulness by being acutely aware of their internal process, their external environment, and people around them.

The presidents were often cued to reflect by a problem or a feeling. This finding resembled Boyd and Fales (1983) first and second stages of reflective learning, which they described as (a) being triggered by a sense of inner discomfort and (b) identification or clarification of the concern. Schon (1991) described reflection being initiated by a feeling of surprise. The presidents spoke of being cued to reflect by feelings such as helplessness as well as by events, problems, and goals. They acknowledged that at times they postponed reflection due to having other more pressing issues.

A finding was that self-reflection involved the paradoxical processes of focusing the mind and letting the mind wander. The presidents described times of intense focusing and others of letting the mind drift. Habermas suggests three primary cognitive levels of reflection (a) the technical (concerned with instrumental action), (b) the practical (concerned with clarification of conditions for communication and inter-subjectivity), and (c) the emancipatory (concerned with moral, social, and political reality and its

implication for self-knowledge (as cited in Griffith & Tann, 1992). These levels point out that reflection is more than a process of problem solving. The presidents used self-reflection not only to deal with issues and problems, but also to envision the future by utilizing intuition and creativity. Hart (1990) states that “The progression of thought that links and expands complex elements (in reflective thought) contributes to complexity, creativity, and surprise as ideas are sometimes followed to unexpected conclusions (p. 163). The outcome of Goodman’s (1984) case study of reflection and teacher education supported the finding that reflective thinking occurred with the integration of rational and intuitive thought processes, and supported the blending of focusing and wandering.

Clearing the mind was a meditative technique used by the presidents to calm the mind and elevate consciousness. Wilson (1985) described this process by saying “Thoughts are always coming from one place to another: moving from one concept to the next. If, by some means or other, you halt this restless process and the mind is no longer preoccupied with unsolicited thoughts, it soon becomes completely stilled. Only consciousness remains. And when you can achieve an absence of thought, you will know what your mind really is; or more importantly, what your self really is” (p. 22). This could explain the need for the presidents in this study to pause or stop to center and focus the mind.

The presidents described being physically active before and while reflecting. They walked, hiked, worked out, danced, sang and drove as part of reflection. Activity provided an outlet for preparing to reflect and as a means of clearing the mind. The kinesthetic part of reflection, however, was not clearly addressed in the literature. Daudelin (1987) spoke of reflection occurring in less formal ways such as jogging, showering, or mowing the

lawn, but my study would suggest that physical activity plays a more significant role in the process of self-reflection. The presidents made a conscious choice to reflect and placed importance on doing activities that encouraged self-reflection.

A common finding among the presidents was that they were intentional about taking time to self-reflect. The hectic life of a community college president caused them to sometimes postpone reflection, but they made conscious choices to take time to reflect. Goodman's study on reflection and teacher education supported this finding (1984.) He stated, "It is not enough to e simply be open to a variety of ideas. "(In reflection) there must be a desire to synthesize diverse ideas, to make sense out of nonsense and to apply information in an aspired direction" (p. 20). Goodman also noted that to be reflective "one must be willing to tolerate ambiguity and search for one's own solutions" (p. 19). The presidents demonstrated motivation and willingness to encounter the unknown.

The community college presidents interviewed for this study were PhDs with significant life experience and a reputation for being self-reflective leaders. This placed them at the highest levels of Kitchner and King's (1981) stages in the development of reflective judgment. Their voices revealed the ability to integrate knowledge and to form and modify objective judgments based on emerging evidence. Boyd and Fales (1983) concluded that by studying individuals who naturally used reflection, the process could be uncovered in order to develop concepts and facilitate its use with others.

As part of the integration process the presidents used tools to connect and relate information that helped them to analyze their thoughts. This was achieved through journaling and the use of concept maps and diagrams. The use of tools in the reflective process allowed the presidents to express what they were thinking and view the "big

picture” of issues they were facing. Griffiths and Tann (1992) supported the use of images and metaphors in the crafting of personal theories of practice in teacher education. In a similar way the presidents used metaphorical images such as a trees and clouds to show relationships. Journaling was a part of the reflective process of two of the presidents in this study. Support of journaling as a means of reflection came from Short and Rinehart’s (1993) analysis of graduate students’ journal entries, which revealed an increase in the level of reflection and complexity of thinking over time.

Disengagement from people was another aspect of reflection that the presidents expressed. The literature did not directly address the need for solitude during reflection; however, Boyd and Fales (1983) found that awareness of changed perspectives usually occurred when an individual was alone. Most literature on reflection described only prescribed, formal settings such as a classroom, business boardroom or leadership development seminar as places of reflection (Daudelin, 1987; Campbell, Dardis & Campbell, 2003). My findings indicated a need for leaders to retreat mentally and physically from the routine of life in order to reflect. Louden (1997) described this type of retreat by saying” retreat is about stepping out of your ordinary existence to listen and attune to your truest most authentic self. It is about being self-referenced, to become self-restored. It is setting apart time to tend the hearth of your inner life, feed your muse, reclaim your dreams” (p. 12). The concept of self-care was addressed by Palmer (2000) “Self-care is never a selfish act-it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have...anytime we can listen to self and give it the care it requires, we do so not only for ourselves but for the many others whose lives we touch” (p. 31). These presidents

indicated a need to disengage from people in the reflective time. They spent time in retreat as a part of self-care.

The literature did not reveal specifics about a reflective environment. However, these presidents created individual reflective spaces that mirrored their interests and personalities. They retreated to those places when they needed to. They surrounded themselves with art, sculpture, and other artifacts that were meaningful to them. A common place for retreat was their homes. Home was considered to be a safe, peaceful, and familiar place. However, the place of reflection was less important than being mentally disengaged from activities and people. Enjoying nature, making music, reading poetry and prose helped them connect with their inner selves. Reflecting early in the morning before rising was common. Although they sometimes reflected spontaneously, it seemed that for these presidents reflection was an activity they engaged as a discipline. The literature did not explore the time or place of self-reflection.

People played an important part in the reflective process of the presidents. The presidents chose carefully the people with whom they reflected. Within the college, they often selected people based on job title. It was common for them to reflect with members of their executive staff and with others having positional power. They spoke of bouncing ideas off of people. This resembled Senge's (1990) description of reflective openness in which members of a team were encouraged not only to examine their own ideas, but also mutually examine each other's thinking. They set boundaries for self-revelation in order to protect themselves. They sought affirmation and honest criticism from people they trusted in and out of the college. The literature did not specifically explore presidential self-reflection with people.

A common finding in my study was the persistent self-questioning in which the presidents engaged. They asked hard questions of themselves and even appeared to lead by questioning in some cases. This concept of reflective questioning was based on Socratic principles that include the importance of (a) self-understanding being the basis for authentic living (b) questioning “conventional wisdom” to verify the truth for ourselves, rather than rely on tradition, and (c) using logical thinking (Gross, 2002, p. 2). Reflective questioning was described by Lee and Barnett (1994) as “a technique in which one person prepares and asks questions that are designed to provide opportunities for the respondent to explore his or her knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, beliefs, and values “ (p. 17). The literature revealed little information concerning the process of self-questioning, but the interviews showed self-questioning to be a very important part of the presidents’ self-talk. Gross states that the Socratic method “provokes us to think things through, consider alternatives, and sometimes make surprising discoveries”(p. 11). Self-questioning proved to be an integral part of the self-reflective process.

The study showed that examining personal values was a part of the president’s journey of personal discovery. Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest that leaders should be reflective regarding their own core values and beliefs. Boyd and Deal’s (1983) stage of establishing continuity with self with past, present and future self was similar to what was found in the study. The presidents brought all of their experiences to the reflective process. Shapiro and Stefkovich (1994) found that views of ethics were different depending on family background, field of specialization, work experience, and social interactions. The presidents in this study spent time reflecting on their family origins and significant life experiences. They shared personal experiences that affected their approach

to leadership. Hart said, “reflection raises to conscious level the unconscious thoughts, assumptions and patterns that guide behavior making change possible” (p.155). The presidents engaged in the process of values clarification; they stated their beliefs about community colleges and about leadership.

Schon’s (1991) theories of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action were revealed in the presidents’ stories. They identified experiences where they learned while they were in the leadership role. It seemed that insights usually came from reflection after their experiences and involved critical analysis of their feelings and knowledge. The outcome of analysis resembled resolution, the fourth stage identified by Boyd and Fales (1983). This was described as the “aha” stage in which there was as a sense of being changed and of having learned something new (Boyd & Fales, 1983). This resembled the presidents’ description of epiphanies that occurred during self-reflection. Self-criticism also played a role in reaching this point of acceptance. They used a variety of means to examine themselves including, personality and learning inventories such as the Myers-Briggs Indicator and the Kolb Learning style Inventory (Kottkamp, 1990, p.189). The presidents integrated cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of themselves in their reflective process. This was supported by Maslow’s concept of integration, which involved blending of thoughts, feelings, emotions, and perceptions towards the goal of self-actualization (Hirst, 2003). Ardel (2003) described reflection as a similar process in which she equates the attainment of wisdom with reflection. She defines wisdom as the “integration of cognitive, reflective and affective dimensions “ she goes on to say that self-reflection reduces one’s self-centeredness, subjectivity, and projections and increases one’s insight into the true nature of things, including the motivations of one’s own and

other people's behavior" (p. 5). Reflection on-action contributed to the presidents' self-knowledge. They spent time learning about themselves and integrating new perspectives into their personal value system.

The presidents spoke of the body, mind, and spirit connection. Some of them shared their spiritual beliefs. Myran, Myran, and Galant (2004) described the need for community college leaders to embark on an inner journey in which there is "a search for one's spiritual core and essential nature, for meaning and significance in life" (p. 12). They go on to say that "community college students, faculty and staff members seek a leader who models spiritual awareness and growth, and who creates a spirit within the college within which they experience a sense of purpose and deep meaning in their study and work" (Myran, Myran, & Galant, 2004, p. 11). The spiritual component of presidential reflection was revealed in the presidents' search for a meaning greater than themselves. They expressed this by praying, by listening to music and engaging in activities that put them in touch with their core beliefs.

The presidents described feelings of vulnerability and struggle in their reflective time. Trapnell and Campbell (1999) stated that increased levels of self-reflectivity enhanced self-knowledge, but resulted in higher levels of psychological distress, possibly due to bringing to mind personal shortcomings. This may explain some of the struggles experienced by the presidents; however, it was also noted that they sometimes made choices that put them at risk for failure. They sought out opportunities for personal growth and challenge. The presidents used metaphors to explain their changed perspectives through the experience of struggle and vulnerability. The use of metaphors was discussed in the literature as a powerful and flexible means for reflection (Kottkamp, 1990; Griffiths

& Tann, 1992). The presidents described images of trees, clouds, and anchors to express what they learned in the reflective process.

Striving for authenticity described the outcome of self-reflection. This involved measuring behaviors against values. Argyris and Schon (1974) differentiate between espoused theory and theory-in-use. The latter being a statement of how they intended to act as opposed to how they actually expressed their values and beliefs. This was useful because awareness of incongruity between what an individual espoused and what he or she actually does is one of the strongest motivations for personal change (Kottkamp, 1990). The presidents stated their philosophies and beliefs about community colleges. One president had a written leadership philosophy that he used as a basis to lead. This resembled Kottkamp's (1990) description of a platform, a written statement of "one's stated beliefs and assumptions for guiding professional practice...one's philosophy of education or administration" (p. 195). Measuring actions against actions was a critical part of the self-reflective process.

The presidents spoke of acting out their beliefs rather than mirroring in academic conversations. They were doers, using reflection to be engaged in leading their organizations, not watching from the sidelines. Hart supported this view of reflection by saying, "(Reflection) can encompass the integration of knowledge and action through thought" (p. 153). Acting authentically mirrored Boyd and Fales' (1983) final reflective stage, deciding whether to take action. This stage resembled problem solving and decision-making, and resulted in a changed perspective whether or not the decision was made to act. The presidents used reflection in decision-making. The literature did not confirm that reflective thinking produced successful decisions, however Hart stated "The

more sources and ways of knowing, and the more skilled the reflection resulting in connections and consequences, the more varied and complex the responses available, and the greater the likelihood that these choices will be creative and appropriate” (1990, p. 164). The presidents acted out their beliefs in their leadership role.

The concept of a reflective culture was revealed in this study of reflective leadership. The presidents supported college environments in which people were listened to and encouraged to be self-aware. Wheatley (1996) said that, “Only when we join with others do our gifts become visible, even to ourselves” (67). Palmer (2000) described how people supported one another in community by saying “Inner work, though it is a deeply personal matter, it is not necessarily a private matter: inner work can be helped along in community. Indeed, inner work together is a vital counter point to doing it alone. Left to our own devices, we may delude ourselves in ways that others can help us correct” (p. 92). Reflective culture was not addressed in leadership literature, but clearly the past two decades have produced a need for changes in leadership perspective. Myran, Myran, and Galant (2004) described the community college leadership movement away from an industrial model to a value centered model emphasizing self knowledge of the leader, relating to others with compassion, empathy and generosity, and modeling teamwork, cooperation, unity and spiritual awareness and growth (2004, p. 12). Amey (2004) envisioned leaders in the community college as learners. She identified active reflection as “a critical aspect of everyday leadership activity” (p. 8). Building a reflective community college culture may be a powerful means of bringing together multiple perspectives in the effort to face leadership challenges of the future.

In summary the findings of this study include that the experience of self-reflection involves (a) taking time for self-care, (b) deliberate introspection and inquiry, involving integration of cognitive, affective and spiritual responses, (c) using physical activity as a stimulus and support for self-reflection, (d) disengagement from people as a form of personal retreat and renewal, (e) selecting honest, caring people to reflect with and promoting a reflective culture, (f) self-questioning that probed personal behaviors and motives particularly in times of struggle and vulnerability, (g) seeking out personal growth through experiential learning, (h) measuring personal behavior against stated values as a part of values clarification, and (i) expressing outwardly what was inward as a means of acting authentically.

Applicability of the Findings

Past research on self-reflection concerned reflection in prescribed formal settings, and did not examine personal self-reflection. This study of community college presidents focused on the lived experience of self-reflection, and therefore presented a new perspective. The findings of the study increase understanding of the structure of self-reflective process, and how it is experienced in the leadership role. Findings are applicable for leaders and for leadership development. Based on this, the following applications of the findings are offered:

1. Reflective leaders build their own personal disciplines of self-reflection. Self-reflection was found to be a deeply personal, individual experience that did not always happen in prescribed settings. Models of self-reflective learning may be useful as teaching tools in leadership development, but leaders should be

encouraged to identify their individual process. The goal should be to develop a personal discipline of self-reflection.

2. Reflective leaders take time to reflect. The findings of this study suggest that the presidents should be intentional about taking time to reflect and that this was a critical piece of the experience of self-reflection. Taking time to reflect should be a part of a philosophy of self-care that supports growth in the leadership role.
3. Reflective leaders retreat in order to encourage self-reflection. Although prescribed leadership activities can expose individuals to leadership principles and challenges, it is necessary for leaders to set aside specific private time for analyzing and understanding the basis of their leadership philosophies. Although writing or journaling may assist in self-exploration, the self-reflective process may involve time thinking alone. A part of the personal work of reflection was identifying the places, times and activities that worked best for individual leaders to practice self-reflection.
4. Reflective leaders engage the reflective process with people. Reflecting with others promotes new perspectives and personal growth through learning. The concept of the leader being all knowing is outdated and unrealistic. Leaders must utilize the creativity and expertise of other people in and out of the institution. Leaders should explore ways to build reflective environments in which individual self-reflection is promoted and new ideas are encouraged. This involves letting go of assumptions and taking a learning perspective towards leadership. A reflective culture grows from an environment that is safe, trustworthy and caring.

5. Reflective leaders participate in a process of values clarification enabling them to clearly articulate a personal statement of values and leadership philosophy. They should be encouraged to seek out experiences that challenge them and help them grow their leadership abilities. It is important to act on values and beliefs and not just engage in academic discussions. Measuring behavior against values in self-reflection is an important aspect of acting congruently. This exercise in self-reflection is part of striving for congruence with espoused values.
6. Reflective leaders develop self-questioning as a means of probing their leadership motives and behaviors. Spending time inquiring into their beliefs and actions contributes to self-understanding. Leadership development activities should encourage self-questioning. Asking tough questions can serve as an internal leadership checklist.
7. Reflective leaders acknowledge the importance of taking time for self-care. Self-care promotes growth in the leadership role. Self-reflection brings about renewal and self-awareness. Being self-aware enables leaders to understand their behavior and how it impacts others. This awareness contributes to self-understanding in the leadership role. It is only by dedicating time to self-care that leaders are able to care for and support others.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. The personal process of reflection could be investigated with leaders in a variety of leadership roles to find differences and similarities in the experience of self-reflection.

2. Further study is needed to examine factors such as environment and activities that support self-reflection.
3. The concept of a reflective culture could be studied.
4. Gender differences in self-reflection could be investigated.

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APPENDICES

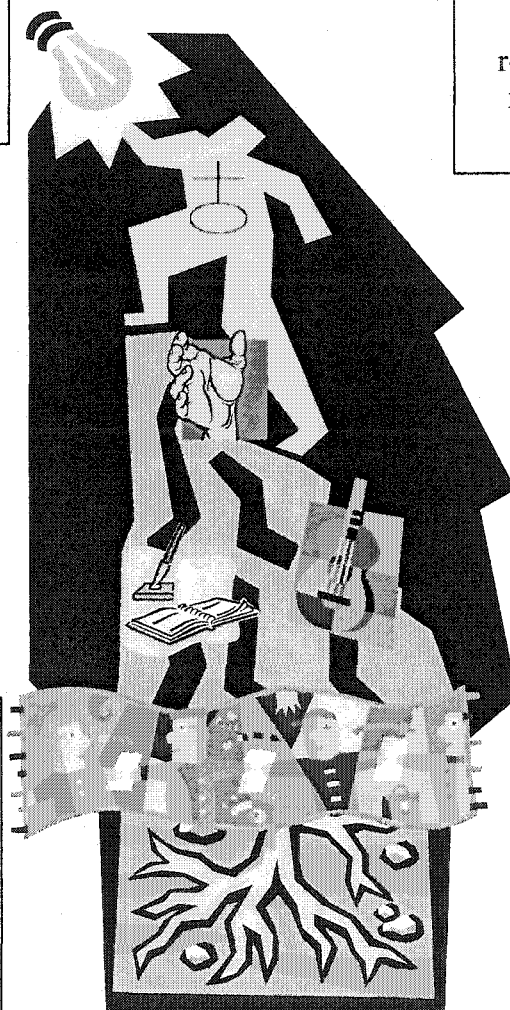
APPENDIX A
CLIP ART IMAGES OF PARTICIPANTS

Joshua

“A View From the Mountaintop”

In reflection there is recognition of the need to look to something greater than self. He sees a calling/vision to make change in institutions

Prayer, journaling, songwriting and relationships with people frame the experience of reflection



Reflection is rooted in spiritual values and being engaged in a life of service to humanity, Personal growth was experienced through self-reflection

In reflection home life, work life, school life, artistic life and spiritual life are woven together into one garment symbolizing authenticity

Martin

“Body Mind Health”

Reflection happens in the interaction of the grains of sand moving in the hourglass

A reflective culture meshes the home and work environment into authentic life.

There is interactive group process but also an individual internal process.



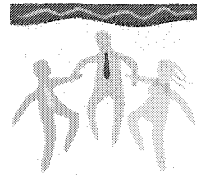
Grains of sand representing aspects of the reflective culture flowing back and forth in the hourglass



Joy
Laughter
Caring
Rituals
Valuing reflection



Personal work
Personal space
Thinking
Internal connection



Getting to the core of an issue
Tending to each other's needs



Gardening
Speaking
Listening
Labyrinth
Mentoring
Reading
Conferences



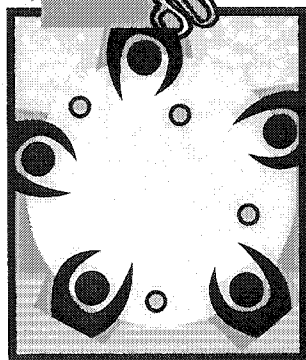
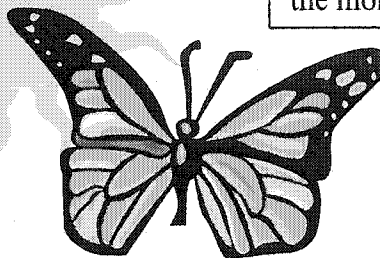
Taking care of the physical self
Traveling/replenishment

Helen

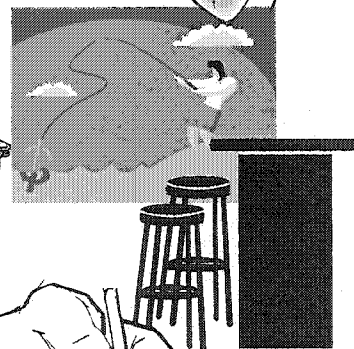
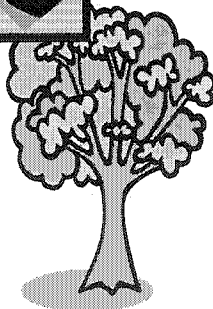
“Transparency “

To know who you are...to know what you care about, to know what you value...tell people share it... people know who you are and they will work with you

Reflection is experienced by drawing, writing, mind maps, self-talk, exposure to nature and time with friends and family. Being in the moment



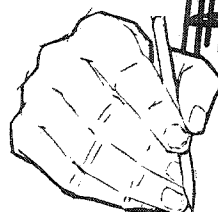
The president experiences reflection centering herself and asking what am I doing? Why am I doing this?



Reflection begins in the group by asking what do you think? Let people shoot holes in your arguments.

The community college staff contributes ideas that expand and grow through reflection (discussion)

The president asks how am I going to explain how I am thinking about this? Metaphors such as the tree are used to communicate.

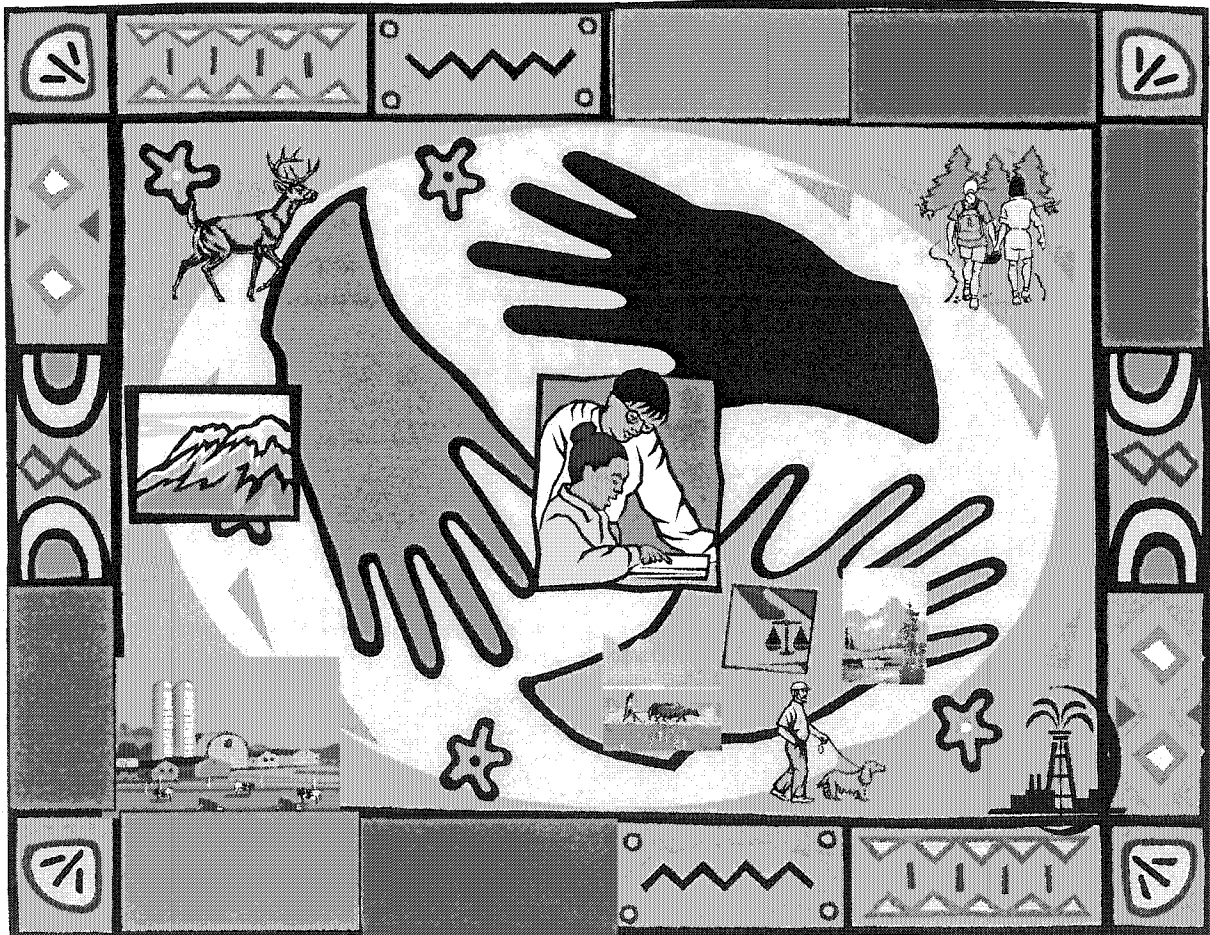


President Jack

“Collective Reflection”

The perimeter of the square is the tapestry of life in which reflection happens. The orange area in the square is the community in which the college resides. The light circle in the center is the college with student learning at the center. The hands represent the leadership through the executive council. The light hand in the lower right is the president.

A dedicated and loyal group through discussion and consideration of values and needs/issues of the community considers topics. Collective reflection is used for group decision-making. The president does not make decisions unilaterally. Details of problems are not always worked out.



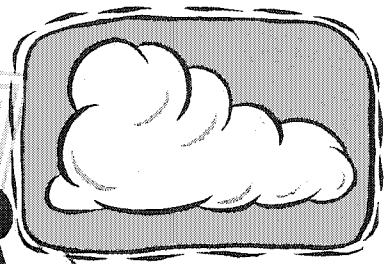
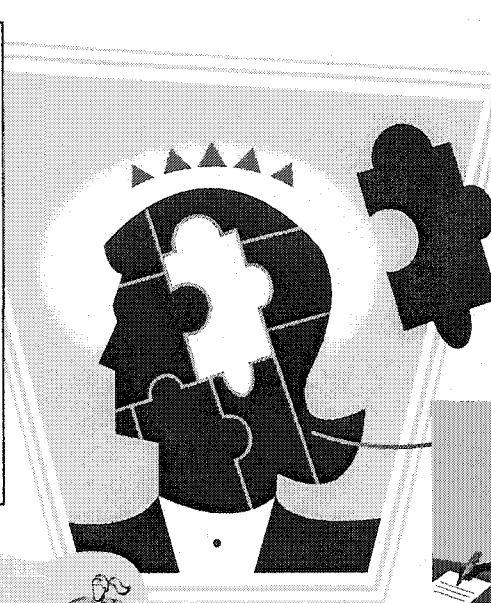
“Life is a tapestry and the experiences make up the pattern that makes up the tapestry and the kind of weave that you have.”

President’s personal reflection is a solitary internal experience when walking. Values, family morals and past experience influence the thinking process. Thoughts stimulate action.

Liza

“Finding the Pieces of the Puzzle”

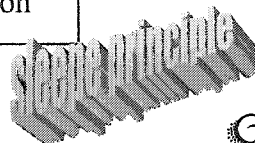
Reflecting is when thoughts are flowing in the head trying to come up with the right pieces that fit together. An issue rolling around in the mind is like a cloud. It has to be tended to but must wait until fires are put out and commitments are met.



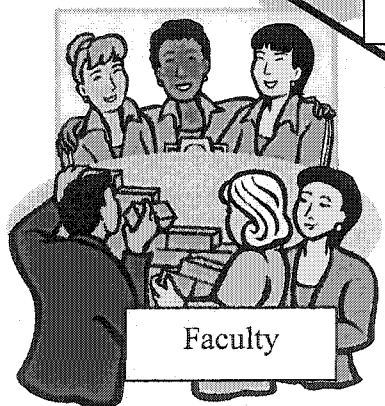
Reflection happens at night, while journaling the ideas flow and she can't write them quickly enough.



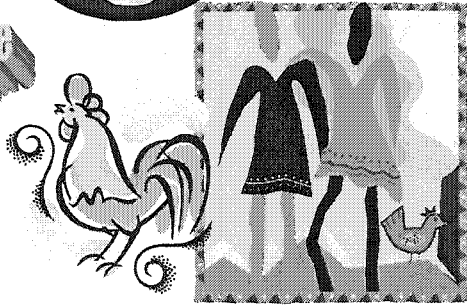
Administration



Dividing Line



Faculty



A barrier exists between faculty and administration. The president must be cautious in sharing herself. Reflection in teams brings out everyone's viewpoint to aid in understanding.

Being a president who is also a person of color in a white culture is lonely and isolating.

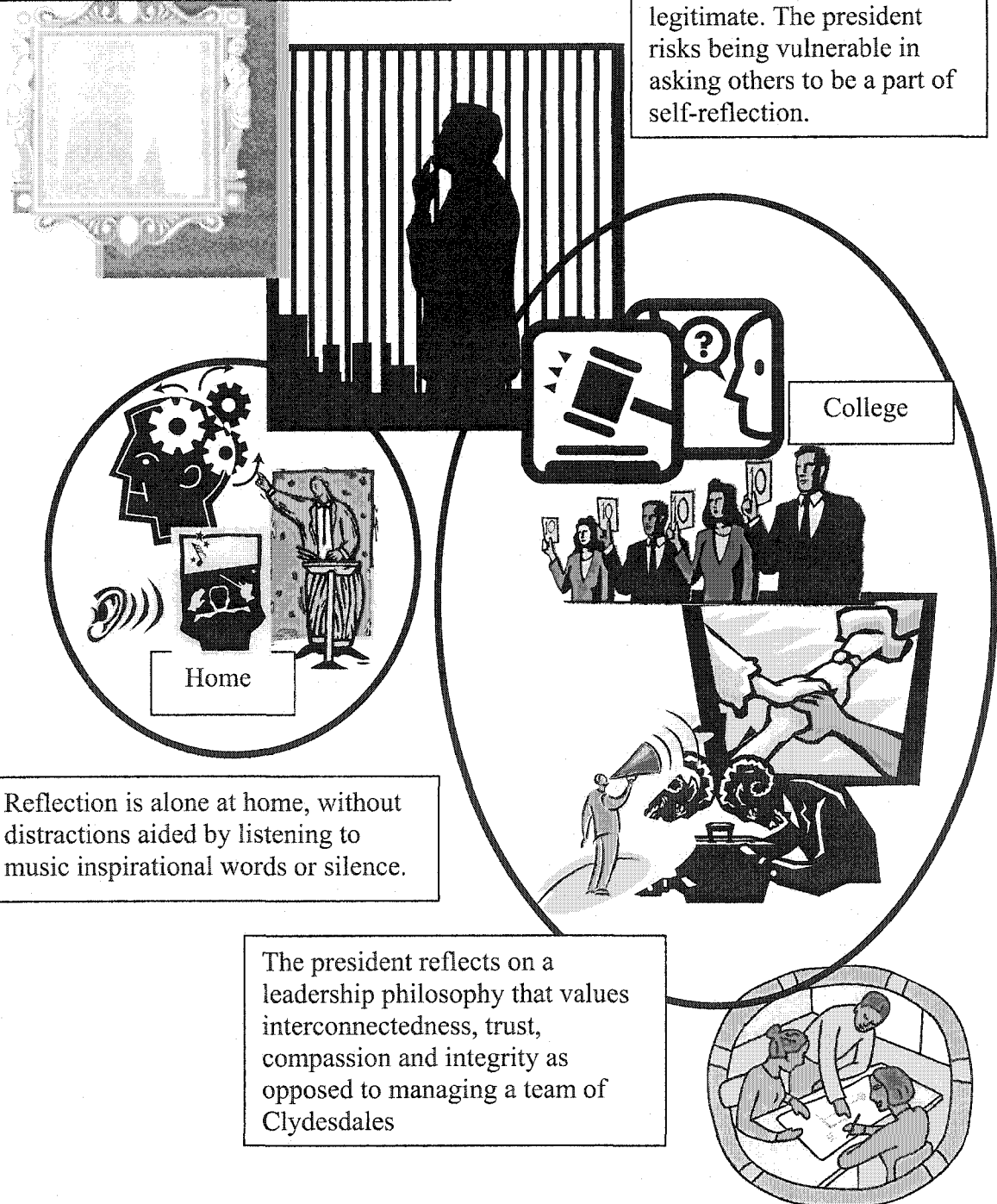
Reflection is talking and sharing with trusted friends who give affirmation and honest feedback. This creates a place of authenticity where there is no risk to the relationship. Reflection may also take place in her office as she looks at the art on her walls remembering the stories behind them.

Matthew

“The Mirror of Self Criticism”

Two types of reflection a) formal college evaluation and b) when the mind drifts to dreams and aspirations. In both there is willingness to be honest with self as if looking into a mirror. Ego is put aside.

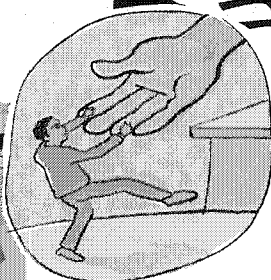
Reflection is developing the art of deciphering what is legitimate. The president risks being vulnerable in asking others to be a part of self-reflection.



Sarah

“Big Picture Thinking”

Big Picture Thinking-is vision, anticipation of change, looking at the past, and connecting with values. It is mentoring one-to-one and admitting that the president does not have all the answers



Line of Self-exposure & Vulnerability



Reflection occurs when disengaged, at night, alone, when exercising and/or holding her child.

Reflection means pulling away being with private thoughts, examining values, thinking about the past, dealing with anxiety, asking questions, internal self-talk.

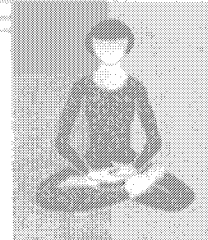
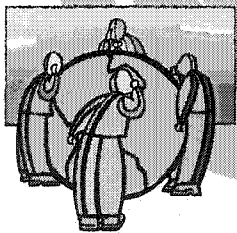
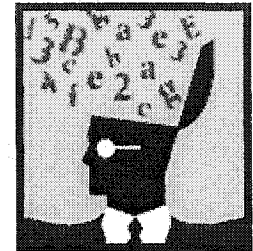
Sharon

“Envisioning What Could Be”

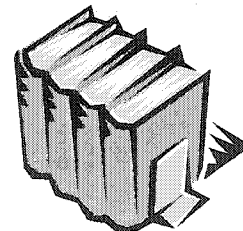
College Life



Internal Life



Reflection with people involves listening, making connections, and feeling safe sharing ideas. Underneath is commitment to the institution and a spirit of honoring each other.



Reflection is about personal growth through learning. The mind is cleared so that issues can be examined by letting the mind wander and envisioning what could be. Physical exercise, relationships with friends, and a quiet environment help the process. Poetry and fiction are inspirational. In the end there is a decision to act but not without self-doubt.

APPENDIX B

INITIAL E-MAIL CORRESPONDENCE WITH PARTICIPANTS

(Date)

(President's Address)

Dear Dr. (Name),

I am a PhD student in Community College Leadership at Colorado State University. I am writing my dissertation on "Reflective Leadership of Selected Community College Presidents." During the next ten (10) weeks I will be interviewing eight (8) community college presidents on their campuses to collect their insights on the topic of self-reflection in the leadership role. I would like you to consider being part of the study.

Your participation will include:

1. Completion of a demographic survey requiring ten (10) minutes of time.
2. A one (1) to two (2) hour interview in person, at a mutually agreed upon place at the campus, audio taped with your permission.
3. Review of the interview transcript estimated time one (1) hour.

The interview will remain confidential. The only identifiers in the dissertation will be through a pseudonym used for demographic description. The institution will not be identified by name and will be referred to only by the size and location within the United States.

I appreciate your consideration of this project. I believe that this research will contribute to knowledge of community college presidential leadership. The principal investigator for this research is Timothy Gray Davies, Ph.D. His telephone number is 970-491-5199, his email address is davies@cahs.colostate.edu. If you would like additional information about the study please contact me, the co-principal investigator, at 970-351-1694 or by email at pamella.stoeckel@unco.edu.

I have enclosed my personal biographical information, a form to gather demographic information and a consent form. If you would like to participate please sign and return the consent form and complete the demographic information. These can be returned in the addressed stamped envelope. I would appreciate you filling in a phone number and an email address that I may reach you at to set up the time and place of the interview. I look forward to meeting you in the future.

Sincerely,

Pamella Stoeckel

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

TITLE OF PROJECT: Reflective Leadership by Selected Community College Presidents

NAME OF PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Timothy G. Davies, Ph.D.

NAME OF CO-INVESTIGATOR: Pamella Stoeckel

CONTACT NAME AND PHONE NUMBER FOR QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS: Pamella Stoeckel (970) 351-1694 and email address at pamella.stoeckel@unco.edu.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:

Community college presidents face the challenge of guiding their institutions into the future. This task makes the role of community college presidential leadership tremendously important. You are agreeing to participate in a research study for a doctoral dissertation that will examine the process of self-reflection used by community college presidents in the leadership role. The Stryker Leadership Institute is a sponsor of this research.

PROCEDURES/METHODS TO BE USED:

A brief demographic form requiring ten (10) minutes of time will be requested before the interview. The interviewer will ask you several open-ended questions concerning your process of self-reflection in the role of community college president. There are no right or wrong answers. You will be asked to share your process of self-reflection. The interview should last only approximately one (1) hour and no more than two (2) hours. To assist in the interview process, the interviewer will be audio taping the conversation. Taping will allow me to transcribe your words exactly as you spoke them. To confirm the accuracy of your statements, I may ask you to review the interview transcript later to determine the accuracy of my observations.

RISKS INHERENT IN THE PROCEDURES:

There are no known risks to you in this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researcher has taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

BENEFITS:

Your willingness to be open about your process of self-reflection will contribute to better understanding of community college presidential leadership. Current and future community college presidents may gain insight into their own process of self-reflection and its impact on the leadership role.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Participant's real names will not be used in this study. I will ask you to choose a pseudonym. This name will be used in describing demographic information and findings of the research; therefore, no one reading the dissertation will be able to identify you. Additionally, I am not identifying the name of the college from which I am drawing the participants. The college will be referred to by the location and size within the United States; therefore, it is unlikely that anyone could trace any comments to you. I will transcribe the taped interviews to paper so that I can analyze the results; however, I will destroy the tapes and all records after three years. I will not be revealing your identity to anyone. Any forms that include your name and means of contacting you will be kept in a locked file drawer and will also be destroyed three years after the study is completed.

Page 1 of 2 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

LIABILITY:

The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act determines and may limit Colorado State University's legal responsibility if an injury happens because of this study. Claims against the University must be filed within 180 days of the injury.

Questions about participants' rights may be directed to Celia S. Walker at (970) 491-1563.

PARTICIPATION:

Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Your signature acknowledges that you have read the information stated and willingly sign this consent form. Your signature also acknowledges that you have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 2 pages. Please return this form and the demographic information in the addressed envelope enclosed.

Participant name (printed)

Phone # to set up Interview

Participant signature

Date

Witness to signature (project staff)

Date

Page 2 of 2 Participant's initials _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

THANK YOU AFTER INITIAL INTERVIEW

(Date)

(President's Name)
(Office of the President)
(Community College)
(Street Address)
(City, State, Zip)

Dear President (Name),

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in my dissertation research. I enjoyed my visit and our conversation about self-reflection. Your insights and perspectives provided valuable data for my research.

I have transcribed our interview, and am forwarding it with this letter for your review. Please review the transcript to make certain the comments appropriately reflect your thoughts, and email your comments back to me. My email address is pamella.stoeckel@unco.edu. The purpose of the transcripts is to convey ideas, and the form or flow is secondary to the richness of the responses.

Again, thank you for participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Pamella Stoeckel