

DISSERTATION

SHARING POWER IN THE CLASSROOM:  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSORS WHO FACILITATE  
STUDENT CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Submitted by  
Connie Kay Humphreys

School of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Colorado State University

Fort Collins, Colorado

Spring 2009

UMI Number: 3374669

### INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

UMI<sup>®</sup>

---

UMI Microform 3374669  
Copyright 2009 by ProQuest LLC  
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against  
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

---

ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Copyright by Connie Kay Humphreys 2009

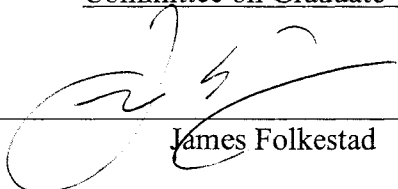
All Rights Reserved

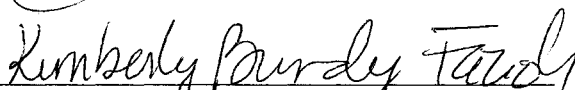
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

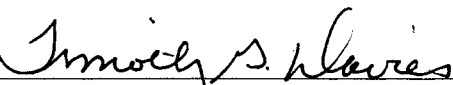
March 3, 2009

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE DISSERTATION PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY CONNIE K. HUMPHREYS ENTITLED SHARING POWER IN THE CLASSROOM: COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSORS WHO FACILITATE STUDENT CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING IN PART REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY.

Committee on Graduate Work

  
James Folkestad

  
Kimberly Bundy-Fazioli

  
Timothy Davies

  
William Timpson  
Advisor

  
Timothy Davies  
Director

## ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

### SHARING POWER IN THE CLASSROOM: COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROFESSORS WHO FACILITATE STUDENT CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

College faculty can try to increase student character development by offering more choices and by sharing some of their power in the classroom. Power sharing is a participative gesture, and participative teachers can encourage students to be engaged in their own learning processes. This requires students to make decisions about how they will learn and to be responsible for their choices. Through the practice and habit of making decisions about power and assessment of learning, students may be able to promote their own character development. To facilitate this development, faculty members may focus on awareness, care, student engagement, academic integrity, and a sharing attitude.

This phenomenological study examined the reflections, values, relationships, challenges, and successes of community college teachers who try to promote student character development. Using qualitative research methods, a complex picture with findings that were textural and meaningful was created. Seven community college faculty members who teach using a developmentalist focus in an attempt to facilitate student character development were chosen for the study.

The essential theme of **building up** emerged from my reflections of the data gathered from the face-to-face interviews. The common themes were **self-identity, diversity, commitment, sacrifice, and becoming.**

Connie Kay Humphreys  
School of Education  
Colorado State University  
Ft. Collins, CO 80523  
Spring 2009

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Although it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone who has supported and encouraged me during this very long journey, I must offer my special thanks to a few people. First, my family's pride and encouragement were constant. My gratitude for their understanding and love is difficult to express in words. My brother's constant reassurance urged me forward, and his questioning about my progress spurred me to continue. I am thankful for my husband Keith who spent several summers and a Christmas vacation traveling across country for my interviews with participants. He has patiently listened to my challenges and successes, offered suggestions, and provided support concerning my study.

Also, the positive influence and inspiration I received from the multiple cohort groups and professors at CSU over the 10 years' span was immense. I will always be thankful for Dr. Tim Davies, my methodologist, mentor, and special guide. Every step along this journey, he has encouraged, supported, and offered his wisdom. As well, I am thankful for Dr. Cliff Harbour who served as the original chair of my committee. His skillful guidance and constant support throughout the proposal process was exceptional. Also, I want to thank Dr. William Timpson for his insight and knowledge. He assumed the chair role of my committee when Dr. Harbour left CSU. In addition, I want to acknowledge and thank my other committee members, Dr. James Folkestad and Dr. Kimberly Bundy-Fazioli.

Next, I want to acknowledge the assistance and encouragement I received from many people at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colorado. From the Computer

Services staff who helped me use Pic-Tel to attend classes at a distance, to the many faculty and staff who have encouraged me every step of the way, I am grateful.

Last, I will be forever grateful to my seven participants who made this research possible. I have learned so much from listening to each one of them. With each interview, I was inspired to be a better teacher and to try new things. Because they were so enthusiastic about their teaching methods, their passions were infectious. Their wisdom and positive influences will be with me forever.

## Table of Contents

Chapter One: .....	1
Background/Overview .....	1
Some Faculty Members Share Power .....	2
Purpose of the Study .....	4
Theoretical Framework .....	5
Researcher’s Perspective .....	7
Why Qualitative Research.....	9
Research Questions .....	10
Significance of the Study .....	11
Definition of Terms .....	13
Synthesis.....	15
 Chapter Two: .....	 18
Overview .....	18
Historical Perspectives .....	19
Modern Perspectives .....	21
Moral or Character Development Theorists.....	23
Kierkegaard .....	24
Piaget.....	26
Kohlberg.....	28
Gilligan.....	30
Perry .....	31
Teaching for Character Development .....	33
Leading by Example.....	34
Sharing Power .....	35
Promoting Openness with Dialogue.....	37
Nurturing Students .....	38
Higher Education and Differing Perspectives On Character Development.....	 39
Higher Education is not the Solution .....	40
Goals of Higher Education.....	41
Not Teaching Character is Impossible .....	46
Higher Education is Responsible for Character Development.....	47
Faculty Members Can Foster Self-Identity .....	50
Synthesis.....	52
 Chapter Three:.....	 55
Research Design and Rationale.....	55
Participants and Sites .....	58
Data Collection.....	60
Data Analysis .....	61
Trustworthiness .....	64

Synthesis.....	65
Chapter Four:.....	67
Introduction .....	67
Section One: Describing the Participants.....	67
Katie .....	68
Mary .....	69
Dawn .....	70
Sandra.....	71
Cheryl.....	72
Tamera.....	73
Lea.....	74
Section Two: Developing the Textural Descriptions Into Structures .....	76
Sharing Meaning/Importance .....	76
Understanding Personal Values/Worldviews.....	81
Experiencing Student Character Development—Linked with Teaching Methods...91	
Creating an Environment .....	92
Teaching the Whole Person.....	100
Modeling Behavior.....	113
Experiencing Negative Aspects of S.C.D. ....	116
More Time and Work.....	116
Risks .....	119
Changed Relationships.....	121
Challenges .....	122
Experiencing Positive Aspects of S.C.D. ....	125
Great Relationships .....	125
Positive Aspects for Students.....	128
Personal Rewards .....	131
Summary .....	133
Section Three: Synthesizing the Phenomenon .....	134
Synthesis of Sharing Meaning/Importance .....	134
Synthesis of Understanding Personal Values/Worldviews .....	134
Synthesis of Experiencing S.C.D.—Linked with Teaching Methods.....	136
Synthesis of Experiencing Negative Aspects.....	138
Synthesis of Experiencing Positive Aspects .....	140
Summary .....	141
Section Four: Presenting the Essential Meaning.....	142
Introduction .....	142
Self-Identity.....	143
Diversity .....	145
Commitment.....	146
Sacrifice.....	148
Becoming .....	149
Summary .....	150
Epilogue .....	151

Chapter Five: Summary and Discussion .....	152
Introduction .....	152
Summary of the Study .....	152
Problem .....	152
Methodology .....	153
Analysis .....	154
Relating the Data to the Literature .....	155
Common Themes and Meanings .....	156
Shared Governance .....	160
Dialogue .....	161
Teaching the Whole Person .....	162
Other Revealed Truths .....	163
Recommendations for Additional Research .....	165
Personal Reflections .....	166
Sharing Meaning .....	166
Sharing Values .....	167
Sharing Teaching Methods .....	168
Sharing Challenges .....	171
Sharing Positive Experiences .....	172
Concluding Reflections .....	173
Conclusion .....	174
Epilogue .....	175
References .....	180
Appendix	
A Initial Correspondence .....	187
B Question Protocol .....	188
C Participant Informed Consent .....	189
D Participant Thank-You .....	192
E Analysis Code .....	193

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### *Background/Overview*

Most college teachers, who truly are interested in their students' learning, work hard at achieving objectives for students and assessing what their students have learned. Many dedicated teachers work nights as well as weekends preparing for classes, grading students' work, and staying current in their areas of study. However, these long hours and heavy workloads during the academic year can cause many college professors to become frustrated and tired early in their careers. During a study of college professors' lives and values, Astin and Astin (1999) found that most respondents felt tired and experienced stress. As well, all reported a lack of time to meet their professional and personal responsibilities during the academic year.

Even though many college teachers feel over-extended, some still are able to focus on teaching and learning beyond course content. For instance, if a professor wanted to focus on student character development by helping students become more autonomous, additional planning would be required beyond the traditional content lecture (Weimer, 2002). Instead of focusing exclusively on the delivery of information, professors could engage students in the learning process and allow them some control over what and how they learn, including methods of self-evaluation. Sharing control, therefore power, in the classroom is a participative-style of teaching which focuses on more than appropriate delivery of course content. A participative style of teaching promotes student decision making and this, in turn, promotes character development. This type of character development will be defined more fully later in this chapter.

Teaching focused on any type of student development is referred to as a developmentalist teaching style (Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996). A developmentalist teaching style requires more time and energy but yields few rewards for the professor (Dahlin & Abbott, 2000). However, even without such rewards, some professors still make a passionate commitment to their students' character development (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003). Being aware of these teachers' commitments, I chose this dissertation topic to better understand how such commitments occur and what challenges these teachers face. Using qualitative research methods, I examined the perspectives of the community college professors who teach using a developmentalist focus in an attempt to facilitate student character development. This study focused on the challenges and successes they experienced, what teaching methods they used, and how teaching in a participative style affected their relationships with their colleagues and students?

In this chapter, I explain how some professors share power with students to assist in their students' character development. Then, I discuss the purpose of the study. Next, I introduce the two substantive theorists who provided the impetus for this study and were a fundamental part of my perspective as a researcher. Afterwards, I clarify why I chose qualitative methods for the research. Then I provide the research questions that guided my study. At the end of the chapter, I explain the significance of the research and offer some preliminary definitions of concepts used in this study. These definitions will help the reader understand how I analyzed character development for this study and identified my participants.

### *Some Faculty Members Share Power*

Some professors try to promote character development by sharing power with their students. In the literature, researchers refer to power sharing in the classroom in different ways, such as “teaching toward freedom” (Ayers, 2004), “using the vocabulary of promises” (Bain, 2004), “sharing power,” and “learner-centered teaching” (Weimer, 2002). These educators share decision making with students to encourage them to participate in their own learning.

College professors who share some of their authority feel as though they can make a difference in student engagement. When students are engaged in their own learning processes, they become more autonomous decision-makers (Ayers, 2004; Weimer, 2002). The more decision-making is practiced, the more it becomes a habit (Aristotle, trans. 2001). Students’ good habits can cultivate a moral maturity, which might include self-esteem, confidence, commitment, and responsibility. These attributes of student character development are important for self-actualization which is an ongoing process of becoming (Kierkegaard, 1846/1992; Perry, 1970). A synthesis of these observations from Aristotle (2001), Ayers, (2004), Kierkegaard (1846/1992), Perry (1970), and Weimer (2002), is presented in Table 1 and this shows how such development might occur:

Table 1  
Visual of Teaching for Student Character Development

Participative Teaching → By Sharing Power	Student Engagement →	Practice & Habit of Autonomous → Decision Making	Student Character Development Based on Self-Actualization
--	----------------------	---	--

Perhaps, teachers can encourage self-actualization by sharing power and decision making with students. This participative style of teaching may develop into a partnership between

students and teachers. While this teaching style is slowly becoming more popular, it is not universally practiced (Ayers, 2004).

Faculty members who practice a more participative style of teaching facilitate student character development by encouraging their students to self-reflect, self-evaluate, and self-empower themselves (Ayers, 2004). According to Gibran (1923/1996), a wise teacher should not try to pass on his or her own wisdom, but instead through lovingness, the teacher leads students to their own ideas and beliefs. Instead of merely teaching to instill knowledge, a wise teacher allows students to engage in discovery, problem solving, and critical and creative thinking which might lead to improved decision making and a transformational-type of learning which can be more beneficial for the student's lifetime (Ayers, 2004; Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996).

Even though the literature indicated participative teachers facilitate student development, there was a lack of qualitative research reporting the reflections, understandings, and experiences of these teachers. In the following section, I explain how this particular phenomenological study contributes to the body of knowledge on teaching and learning for student character development by ascertaining the perceptions of these teachers.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The argument of whether or not higher education is responsible for students' character development has been explored by many researchers (e.g., Berkowitz & Fekula, 1999; Colby, et al, 2000; Fong, 2002; King, 1997; Kuh, 1998; Mathiason, 1988; Sandalow, 1991; Thompson, 1991; Wathington. 2002; Wells, 2000). I did not join this particular dialogue. I believe that whether institutions accept responsibility or not,

students' character development occurs throughout their college experiences and then, later throughout their lifetimes. The purpose of this study was to better understand faculty members' experiences and roles in student character development. Specifically, I examined the challenges and successes these teachers experience daily when they share power with students to engage them in their learning experiences. My desire to research teachers who promote student character development was embedded in the ethical theories of Kierkegaard (1846/1992) and Perry (1970).

### *Theoretical Framework*

According to Creswell (2003), certain qualitative studies (e.g. phenomenology) do not require any basic theoretical framework because the researcher is creating the essence of the experience from the participants. This project, however, began with Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) proto-existentialism and Perry's (1970) work on student character development. These two theorists' ideas are explained more fully in Chapter Two's Literature Review, but in this section, I explain how their theories grounded my research on student character development.

Kierkegaard is regarded as one of the precursors to the philosophical school of existentialism because many of the basic themes later used by modern existentialists originated in the writings of Kierkegaard (1846/1992). The existentialist movement began after World War II in French cafes and was best known for its focus on the existing human being and daily experiences. Existentialists rejected universal and objective knowledge and embraced relativistic and subjective knowledge. Common existentialist themes include concerns for basic human existence, the conditions to and

awareness of how humans live each moment, the need for humans to freely choose and be responsible for their choices, and the construction or creation of one's life.

Kierkegaard (1846/1992), referred to this awareness and freedom of choice as "conscious participation." He believed people could be distinguished as those who actively participated in life and those who did not. He used the example of two men driving wagons drawn by horses. The one man held the reins, but he was asleep. The other man held the reins and was fully awake, steering the horses in a chosen direction. Both men experienced a ride, but the man who was awake was going in the direction of his choosing. The other was not. Both men existed, but only the man who was involved in conscious participation was involved in existence (Stumpf, 1989). The same distinction could be made about two hypothetical students. Two students enrolled in college are headed toward an education, but one student is passive, allowing others to make his or her decisions, and the other student is actively involved in making decisions for his or her education. Existentialists would say the passive student is experiencing learning, but the student who is actively making choices is not only experiencing learning but is consciously participating, therefore, involved in self-actualization. For Kierkegaard (1846/1992), self-actualization occurs when people become passionate about discovering how it is they truly exist and consciously participate in their existence.

The other substantive theorist who influenced my conceptualization of this study was Perry (1970). Perry also believed in the existentialistic idea of subjective knowledge. For Perry, subjective knowledge referred to everything individuals knew, which was limited to their experiences; therefore, knowledge was relative to each person. Perry (1970) believed students move from a level where they believe all knowledge is absolute

and resides in the person of authority to levels where they realize knowledge is diverse and relativistic. At the highest levels of development, students experience self-identity and a commitment to what they value most. Perry (1970) believed commitment was needed in order for people to make their own decisions and to develop to the highest levels of morality. This view is similar to Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) belief that people at the highest level of development exhibit a passion for what they value most.

These key points abstracted from theories developed by Kierkegaard (1846/1992) and Perry (1970) served as the foundation for this study. Both theorists believed subjective or relativistic knowledge was necessary for moral growth. Moral maturity, in turn, allows individuals to self-construct and become self-empowered. Kierkegaard and Perry referred to this self-construction as a type of autonomy which gives individuals their own decision-making power. The motivation for this type of personal growth is passion and commitment, which I regard as based on existentialistic ideas. These ideas and theories have been an important part of my life and provide part of my perspective for this research.

### *Researcher's Perspective*

My interest in existentialism and phenomenology developed during my graduate studies of Martin Heidegger, and this interest continues today. My Master's thesis compared Heidegger's and Rainer Maria Rilke's subjective realities of "openness." This study transformed my ideas about reality and the importance of existing in a more conscious and reflective state. Through my research, I found existentialism and phenomenology to be connected theories. Heidegger, who was considered an existentialist, was influenced by Husserl's (1907/1999) theories of phenomenology.

After acquiring my Master's Degree at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, I taught philosophy there as an adjunct instructor. Also, I taught philosophy at Edison State Community College in Piqua, Ohio. Becoming a teacher, however, was not a lifelong dream. I taught my first class at Wright State University because a mentor and professor, Dr. Orenstein, convinced me to try it. I had been one of his teaching assistants for two years. As such, I primarily graded students' essays, helped with exams, and met with students during office hours to handle simple problems. Since I enjoyed helping students, I thought I would try teaching one class for the experience.

Today, I am a professor of philosophy at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colorado. I teach all of the philosophy courses, but ethics is my favorite class. Exhilaration drives me to teach, yet it isn't the only reason or benefit of a teaching career. I also teach for my own personal lifelong learning opportunities and for positive interactions with my peers and my students. Also, teaching is an opportunity to have a positive effect on another person's life. Influencing another person in a positive and educational way is a duty. According to Plato, the person who is led from the cave into the sunlight must return to those who are still in the cave. "...The educated must impart to one another any benefit which they are severally able to bestow upon the community..." (1961/n.d., 520a). Helping others to learn and to achieve whatever they are capable of learning is a way of giving back part of the gift I have received.

My interest in student character development matured during coursework in the Community College Leadership Program at Colorado State University. During a student development class, I was surprised to find Perry's (1970) moral development theories so confluent with Kierkegaard's (1846/1992). Both theorists believed that most individuals

progress from the lowest level of moral thinking where they are completely controlled by those who are in authority toward a higher level of moral thinking where they begin to understand the importance of self-realization and to feel a commitment to what is valued most in their lives. These two theorists also shared beliefs about the importance of personal identity and subjective knowledge. While studying Perry's (1970) theories, the ideas for my dissertation research began to form. I had never studied Perry's theories, yet they were instantly familiar because of their connections with existentialism and Kierkegaard. These two moral development theories became the soil from which the rest of my research could germinate.

As a student, teacher, and researcher, existentialism affects my life daily. Existentialism is the theory of being consciously aware of one's existence. For example, as I write down learning objectives for a class before I teach, I am being consciously aware of what I want the students to learn for that particular class. Subjectivity is concerned with existing as authentically as possible in each moment and being as aware as I can of those who are sharing my life's journey. Existentially, qualitative research is a construction of reality.

#### *Why Qualitative Research?*

My research methods are discussed in detail in chapter three, but this section explains why I chose qualitative methods for my study. I wanted to observe, listen, and understand faculty members who strive to promote character development. "In its most basic terms, qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning" (Shank, 2002, p. 5). Qualitative research is systematic because it is done in an orderly and planned way. It is empirical because it relies upon sense experiences of the researcher

and participants (Shank, 2002). As I experienced the data, I wanted to create a complex picture with findings that were rich, textural, insightful and full of meaning. As Shank (2002) suggested, I wanted to shine a light into places never seen before in order to illuminate and therefore expand an understanding of my participants' views on teaching as they tried to promote student character development. For these reasons, qualitative research was a better choice for this study. My desire was to record my participants' stories through a dual lens of interviewee and interviewer that is non-judgmental of the phenomenon (Creswell, 1998).

Also, I chose to do a phenomenological study because it was well suited to uncover the essence of experience as framed by existentialism. This type of study permitted me to stand back from the experienced existence in order to try to understand it, and then to describe the data in a way that created the reality of the moment. My research was a quest for the attitudes and feelings often referred to as *spirit*.

Quantitative research methods would not have been appropriate because I was not interested in measuring data, comparing groups, establishing causes and effects, or searching for connections and relationships between variables (Creswell, 1998). The variables in my study were not known, and a quantitative study would not have allowed me to be a co-constructor of meaning. In order to be a co-constructor of meaning, I needed to allow meaning to reveal itself through open-ended questions; therefore, a qualitative study was necessary.

### *Research Questions*

Based on my interest in student character development, teachers who share power with students, my personal experiences and values, and my methodology, the following open-ended questions guided me in my inquiry:

1. What are the reflections, understandings, and experiences of participative faculty who allow freedom in the classroom to promote student character development?
2. How do participative faculty's values and worldviews play a role in their commitments to make a difference with their students' character development?
3. What challenges and successes have participative teachers experienced by sharing power in the classroom?
4. How might the promotion of student character development change these participative teachers' relationships with their students?

The term *participative teachers* will be defined later in this chapter under the heading *Definitions of Terms*.

#### *Significance of the Study*

The reason for teaching is for learning to occur. A developmentalist approach to teaching requires more effort but has the potential for students to become more engaged and to take responsibility for their learning (Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996). As students become more autonomous learners, character development can occur. For students to become more autonomous learners, however, faculty members must share some of their power. My qualitative study examined the perspectives of these faculty members. This research could be important for faculty members, administrators,

researchers, and students. Also, the research might be meaningful in the following ways: (a) add to the dialogue on student character development, (b) improve relationships amongst administrators and faculty in higher education, (c) advance teaching and learning in the classroom, and (d) contribute to the scholarly literature on student development. Each of these different points is connected to the discussion of character development.

According to Bolman and Deal (1995), more public discussions on morality are needed. They believe that moral discourse has been privatized; it is not discussed in public because words like “morality” or “spirituality” have become taboo. Because moral dialogue is becoming less and less a part of public discourse, people lack even a common language to discuss moral issues. This situation can create moral isolation of individuals and rob them of the courage to talk about what they believe is right (Bolman & Deal, 1995). Researching faculty perspectives on student character development added to the public dialogue because the conversations and reflections obtained during the interviews moved from the private to the public realm.

Second, this research could increase administrators’ understanding of what motivates faculty members. Hopefully, administrators care about all forms of student development. But, even if administrators are not interested in student character development as their primary objective, understanding why faculty are willing to make personal investments of time and energy should prove to be beneficial to engage faculty in other areas more important to the leaders of the college (Colby et al, 2003).

Third, this research may advance classroom teaching and learning practices. The challenges of facilitating student character development are the same as those

encountered in helping students learn new knowledge and skills (Ayers, 2004). Good teaching goals are focused on helping students become successful and better human beings. Most teachers want students to understand difficult issues or ideas. Also, they want to engage them as learners so the knowledge they gain is useful for their lives, increases their passions and commitments, and basically improves their lives on an intellectual, emotional, and spiritual level (Colby et al, 2003).

Last, findings from this research add to the scholarly literature on student development. By eliciting the experiences of these faculty members, a contribution was added to the body of knowledge on student character development and the role that a participative style of teaching plays in enhancing student development. Also, this study added to the scholarly literature on the challenges faculty experience when sharing control in the classroom and how sharing governance affects their relationships with administration as well as students.

For these reasons, a qualitative study of faculty perspectives on student character development was meaningful. More public dialogue, increased awareness by administrators and faculty members, advanced methods for teaching and learning, and a contribution to the scholarly literature on student development were important reasons for this research.

As with any research, clarifying the meanings of important concepts within the study is helpful. In the next section, I offer a few basic definitions.

### *Definitions of Terms*

The following are the key definitions:

Character development is defined in this study as the changes that occur from daily choices and habits which transform individuals, enabling them to attain personal and academic goals (Schwartz, 2000). The freedom and responsibility involved in the daily choices promote personal autonomy and encourage self-actualization. A person's character is constantly changing and forming; it reveals a person's identity at any given moment. According to Kuh (1998), character is the internal compass which helps to guide individuals to live with integrity. According to Flexner (1993), *character* is the moral or ethical qualities of a person. These qualities might include one's honesty, courage, or the like, which would be linked to one's integrity. Student growth in these areas is considered character development.

Participative teachers are those who give up some of their power and control in order to share decision-making with their students. The word *participative* means to share or to provide an opportunity for sharing. Shared power could occur in many different ways and degrees. Teachers who share decision-making with their students usually embrace some or all of the following practices: they foster a safe and caring classroom environment, encourage dialectical conversations about the subject matter, prompt students to be self-assertive, use various assessment techniques including self-assessments, and allow students to set personal standards (Ayers, 2004; Palmer, 1998; Timpson, 2000; Weimer, 2002). According to Bain (2004), the best college teachers are those who do not display power, but instead concentrate on learning.

Traditional teachers are specified as those who maintain control of the classroom and make all important decisions, lecture the subject matter, do not encourage discussions, control the assessment of the students, and do not encourage their students to debate

assignments or outcomes. They do not encourage their students to take an active role in their own learning and tend to stifle any attempts (Weimer 2002). According to Bain's (2004) study of what the best college teachers do, some of the teachers who were rejected from the study were referred to as "control freaks." This type of teacher wanted the students to know who had all the knowledge and power, and it certainly was not the students.

It is important to note there are many teachers who fall in between these two rather extreme groups of educators. These few definitions are intended to serve as a guide for the reader.

### Synthesis

*Participative Teaching.* According to Dahlin & Abbott (2000), some community college faculty members participate in student learning; even though, it requires additional time and provides few extrinsic rewards. Their teaching style is referred to as developmental since their interest goes beyond teaching the content from their field of study and incorporates student development. These faculty members are interested in increasing student character development by helping their students become more autonomous. Student character development begins and continues both as a subjective and intersubjective journey because humans do not live in isolation and are affected by those around them. If students are encouraged to participate in their own educational choices and practice doing so by making decisions, they will become aware of their own self-identity. In other words, when teachers share some of the decision making, students are more likely to become engaged in their own learning. Then, through the practice and habit of decision making which includes accountability and responsibility, students'

character will evolve. This process begins with teachers who are able to share some of their power with their students. To better understand these faculty members' experiences, challenges, and successes was my goal.

*Purpose of the Study.* This phenomenological study focused on the perspectives of community college faculty members who are interested in promoting student character development. Using an existentialist perspective, I constructed meaning from the lived experiences of teachers who are interested in promoting student character development. Using an existentialistic perspective, I explored meaning through the everyday choices and experiences of my participants to interpret the existent reality of what it was like for them to try to promote student character development. I discovered what they valued and what occurred in their pasts and is still occurring in their lives, which enables them to care about the special ways they teach.

*Theoretical Connections.* The relativistic ideas embedded in existentialism serve as a foundation for understanding and are an important part of the two substantive theorists used in this study. By using Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) and Perry's (1970) theories on moral development as the theoretical framework, this distinguishes the type of character development referred to in this study. Both of these theorists refer to autonomy, commitment, and self-empowerment as moral development.

*Significance of the study.* This study revealed some community college teachers' perspectives and experiences with student character development. The data from these stories could increase understanding and improve relationships between administrators and other faculty members. By learning and understanding what motivated these teachers who care about student character development, other teachers and administrators are

offered a better understanding of this phenomenon. As well, the research adds dialogue on student character development, advances teaching and learning in the classroom, and contributes to the scholarly literature on student development.

In the next chapter, I reviewed some of the literature connected to character development and the type of teachers and environments that seem to promote it.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Overview*

In this chapter, I report on my review of literature concerning character development, ethical theorists, participative teaching, and higher education's roles in character development. The literature selections included were purposely few instead of being exhaustive (Wolcott, 2001). I wanted to provide only a vague framework to guide my research. Since my study was phenomenological, my engagement with the literature unfolded during and after my interviews which allowed me to "bracket" my preconceived ideas and better understand through the voices of my participants (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994; Wolcott, 2001). As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggested, I wanted to "...weave (my) literature throughout the dissertation from beginning to end in an attempt to create a seamless link between the theory and the practice embodied in (my)...inquiry" (p. 41).

The literature I reviewed begins in the second section with historical perspectives of character development, which started with ancient Greek philosophers and moved through the Middle Ages. The third section focuses on modern views of character development. In the fourth section, I review the literature on moral development theorists, including Kierkegaard (1846/1992), Piaget (1932/1997), Kohlberg (1958), Gilligan (1982), and Perry (1970). In the fifth section, I review literature concerning teachers who believe in leading by being a good example, sharing power in the classroom, promoting openness with dialogue, and nurturing students. The sixth section reviews literature concerning higher education's roles and perspectives on character development, and the chapter ends with a synthesis of the literature review. Because the

ancient Greeks have had such a lasting effect on the issues to be addressed in my study, it seemed appropriate to begin with them.

### *Historical Perspectives of Character Development*

Western society's most basic theories concerning character development were connected to Greek virtues and originated in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. According to Hamilton and Cairns (trans.1961), Socrates stated in Plato's *Meno*, "...virtue is knowledge" (87b). For Socrates, virtue included wisdom which people gained by examining their lives. People's actions reflected their self-knowledge. Socrates believed people made morally significant decisions by choosing and acting in accordance with their level of knowledge about themselves. Socrates believed people would not willingly choose anything which would ultimately make them unhappy. For instance, if individuals chose to steal money, Socrates believed they did so because they believed stealing the money would make them happy. The key was self-knowledge about personal happiness. According to Socrates, as people became more knowledgeable about what really made them happy as a long-term goal, this personal wisdom guided their actions.

Also, according to Plato's (n.d./trans. 1961) *Meno*, Socrates did not believe that a virtuous character was something one was born with; instead, it had to be developed. As well, Socrates thought the end purpose for virtue was serving others, especially the state. In Plato's *Meno*, Socrates stated the following:

...Good men cannot be good by nature....If they were, there would probably be experts among us who could recognize the naturally good at an early stage. They would point them out to us and we should take them and shut them away safely in

the Acropolis, sealing them up more carefully than bullion to protect them from corruption and ensure that when they came to maturity they would be of use to the state. (trans. 1961, 89b)

According to this quote, Socrates believed character would not just surface naturally for a person; it was something a person learned through gaining personal knowledge through dialectical conversations.

A second ancient example of character was provided in Hamilton and Cairns' (1961) translation of the *Republic*; where Plato explained how a person in the ideal state should be "groomed" to be a virtuous and just person. For Plato, developing one's virtue was a constant struggle between the three parts of one's soul: reason, spirit, and appetite. Character growth occurred when people's reason was in control of their spirit and appetite. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, he metaphorically compared this three-sided relationship to a charioteer who had to rule over both a well-behaved, spirited horse and an unruly horse. The charioteer represented reason, and the two horses represented spirit and appetite (trans. 1961).

Another ancient example of character is Aristotle's (trans. 2001) *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle believed humans developed their character by using reason to determine the mean for each decision. A person's mean was found somewhere in the middle of the possible extremes involved in the choice. Aristotle referred to this as the "Golden Mean." Through daily habits of choosing wisely, people developed a more excellent character.

These ancient Greek theories concerning character changed during the Middle Ages as virtue ethics and character merged with religion (Rosenstand, 2003). The dialogue concerned with "character" changed to dialogue concerned with the word

“morals,” and such dialogue was usually connected to religious dogma. For example, instead of referring to people’s character, wise choices depended upon personal beliefs about following God’s will. Rosenstand (2003) stated that the Western outlook was altered with the monotheistic belief in one God. God became the reason for choosing the right thing to do. During this time, morals and religion flowed together as Christian scholars rewrote and melded ancient philosophy into Christian doctrine. The separation of philosophy and Christian doctrine began during the Renaissance Period.

### *Modern Perspectives of Character*

From the Renaissance Period to the twentieth century, moral theories in the Western World were concerned with ethics of conduct and not character (Rosenstand, 2003). Answers were sought for the question, “What should I do?” instead of “How should I be?” According to Rosenstand (2003), modern theories developed to answer this question focused on action instead of being. For example, Immanuel Kant’s theories of Deontologicalism based the answer to moral action on duty and obligation. Kant (1785/2002) stated the imperative of duty was to “act as if the maxim of thy action were to become a universal law of nature” (p. 145). Kant believed everything in nature worked according to certain universal principles; therefore, he believed moral laws should also be universalizable for humans. The projected consequences of people’s actions should not enter into their decisions; humans should instead choose based on consistency with universalized principles. Another example was John Stuart Mill’s Utilitarianism. Mill’s theories answered the same question, “What should I do?” by stating that people should act or choose such that the consequence of the act or choice would produce the greatest good for the greatest number of people (Rosenstand, 2003).

Then, during the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, character ethics has experienced a revival, and the question about ethics has been refocused on “How should I be?” (Rosenstand, 2003). Many modern philosophers such as Heidegger and Sartre have revived the ancient Greek ethical theories regarding questions of being; therefore, character ethics is becoming more popular again.

Because morality in the past has been so closely linked to religion, some people, today, misunderstand what educators are saying when they refer to moral or to character development. As soon as the word *morals* or *character* is mentioned, some people automatically associate it with their religious beliefs. According to Sommer (2005), because our society is so pluralistic, the first question asked about morality is often the following: “Whose morals are we talking about?” People are concerned with whose religious beliefs the moral or character development is connected. Because ethical relativism is a popular moral theory today, agreement on common values is difficult (Sommer, 2005). Ethical relativism is the theory that whatever is believed to be morally right by a certain culture is morally right. Most people would agree on the benefits of character ethics if they realized it involves such qualities as rational decision-making, autonomy, and self-empowerment; however, people do not always associate these personal qualities with character development.

Today, many educators who support character development in higher education use the term “character” to refer to students’ positive aspects, responsibilities, and virtues without connecting the development to any religious affiliation (Colby et al, 2003; Rosenstand, 2003; Schwartz, 2000; Sommer, 2005). According to Schwartz (2000), if educators could just come to the general agreement that “...a person of character is

someone who displays both personal and civic responsibility,” it would be hard to imagine that any college campus would not want to try to help their students with character development.

In summary, “character” is not a new concept. The ancient Greeks considered character the most important personal quality to possess, and this reveals it was one of the earliest known ethical concepts in the Western Hemisphere. People’s ideas concerning ethics, however, changed during the Middle Ages to focus on morality and the question of what people should do. This change to the use of the words *morals*, *morality*, and *moral development* continued until the twentieth century. Today, many people embrace pluralistic or relativistic ideas; therefore, the concept of morality has become less palatable because it is usually associated with a universal code of behavior for everyone. A refocus or preference for *character* and *character development* has occurred because it is more subjective and autonomous; it is not premised on a universal code of behavior, and it does not need theological or ideological sanction (Sommer, 2005). The diverse ideas from the following developmental theorists will emphasize this point.

#### *Moral or Character Development Theorists*

Many philosophers and educational theorists have offered moral development theories that posit stages in moral and character development (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Kierkegaard, 1846/1992; Kohlberg, 1958; Perry, 1970; Piaget, 1932). These theorists believed people progress in regard to moral and character development by experiencing new information, by making choices and evaluating their lives and environments, and this reflects a better way of existing. In this section, I reviewed several of these theories. This review was not meant to be a complete list of theorists; I included those who were

relevant for this particular study. The theorists I chose were Kierkegaard, Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Perry.

*Kierkegaard's Theory of Moral Development.* Kierkegaard (1846/1992) was interested in passion, commitment, and self-reflection to discover one's identity. He believed quantitative methods of discovery were futile for investigations of these subjects because knowledge about one's self is qualitatively dialectical. For example, a person could read a self-help book which included research, statistics, and a list of suggestions for self-improvement, but since this is objective information, it would not be truly helpful until the person internalized or assimilated such information in a self-reflective way. What was essentially important for Kierkegaard was subjective understanding.

According to Kierkegaard (1846/1992), "...Every human being is something of a subject ... the most difficult of all" (in becoming) ... is what you already are "...because every human being has a strong natural desire and drive to become something else and more" (p. 130). Part of *becoming subjective* is having the passion to find out how it is that one exists.

For many, "becoming what you already are" might sound very simple. They would probably believe they have already arrived at "what they are." Kierkegaard (1846/1992) stated that many might not realize how much they actually rely on their peers, their family, and society, in general to tell them "what they already are." Kierkegaard referred to these people as outward-searching people. For these outward-searching people, existing means conforming to objective standards. For Kierkegaard, *becoming subjective* is an inward search that is connected to passion. The inward search

requires a person to reflect on what he or she truly values. The goal is self-actualization and it is a developmental process.

Kierkegaard (1846/1992) stated that people develop ethically by being passionately committed to what they value. He believed self-development included three moral stages: *The Aesthetic Stage* is the first level of development, *The Ethical Stage* is the second level, and *The Religious Stage* is the third and highest level of development. A feeling of commitment motivates a person's movement from one stage to the next, and a movement to the highest stage is based on a "leap of faith." By using one's imagination, one is able to grasp the future as possibility.

In Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) aesthetic stage, people are focused on themselves. Their interests are material possessions and personal pleasure. Their ethical decisions are based on what is individually good or beneficial. In order to move from this stage to the ethical stage, a person must feel a commitment to someone other than him or herself.

The second stage of development is focused on one's society and what has been determined as ethical for that particular society. For the ethical stage of development, Kierkegaard (1846/1992) used the example of a person who chooses to be married. When one chooses this particular social life, he or she also chooses an obligation to that relationship. This is an accepted relationship within society. While the individual is making choices for him or herself during the ethical stage of development, at the same time, the individual imagines him or herself making ethical decisions which will please society. The individual is forming a self-identity based on what he or she imagines the universal ethical person to be. Being ethical is acting in accordance with society's norms and values. Kierkegaard stated that individuals move from the ethical stage to the

religious stage, when they are able to make decisions that transcend their society's morals.

For Kierkegaard (1846/1992), the religious stage of moral development requires a personal commitment to whatever is most important in the person's life. This highest level of development is one's ability to have faith and feel a passionate commitment to one's values. Kierkegaard's highest level in a secular sense is whatever a person feels most "religious" or committed to. In this highest stage of moral development, the imagination is important because it directs the individual beyond society's norms and allows for expectation and creativity (Gouwens, 2001). According to Kierkegaard (1846/1992), few people are able to rise to the highest level of moral development because few people are willing to go against society's norms to imagine a different, better society. In this highest stage of development, individuals do not worry about pleasing themselves or society; instead, they feel a passionate commitment to whatever holds the most value for them.

Many educational theorists have generated similar ideas about moral development since Kierkegaard's writings in the nineteenth century. For instance, most moral development theories start at a materialistic and/or selfish level and then progress to include others. Since many of these more modern theorists have built their theories on the groundwork of Piaget, the review of twentieth century theorists begins with him.

*Piaget's Theory of Moral Development.* Piaget's (1932/1997) earliest research was done by watching children play games. By observing children's behavior with special attention on how they understand the rules of a game, Piaget came to believe there are just two different levels of morality. The first he referred to as *The Morality of*

*Constraint*, and the second level is called the *Morality of Cooperation*. Morality of constraint usually covers the first five years or so of a child's moral development, and it is concerned with following the caregiver's rules about right and wrong. Children at this age (up until about 10-12) tend to be characterized by egocentrism, and they regard rules as absolute. Their primary focus is on consequences and conformity; whereas, the second level of morality usually covers ages 11 and older, and this is where cooperation is a child's own construction and is based on his or her interactions with peers. The primary focus at this stage is on the child's intentions. The child is concerned with giving-and-taking, sharing, looking out for others, and maintaining justice.

Piaget (1932/1997) offered the following explanation of how children from the two different levels of moral understanding responded in experiments. A child was given two examples of children breaking cups. He was first given the example of a child who was helping his mother do dishes and broke 15 cups in the process. The second child broke one cup while he was stealing cookies. A younger child who has been given these examples will focus on the results and look at the consequences and say the first child who broke 15 cups was bad. An older, more morally mature child, however, will also consider the intentions and motives that are involved in the action and say that the second child who broke just one cup but did so while stealing was bad. Piaget (1932/1997) referred to this change children make at approximately 10-12 years of age as a shift from egocentrism to perspective taking. At this higher level of cooperation, a sense of reciprocity and mutual respect is formed from interpersonal relationships. Later, Kohlberg (1958) added three additional stages to Piaget's theories to cover adult stages of moral development.

*Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development.* Kohlberg's (1958) work focused on how children, adolescence, and adults make moral judgments. Kohlberg believed people progress through stages when they are motivated by social interactions and are given the opportunities to make their own decisions. Also, emotions are motivating factors in making moral decisions. Kohlberg (1958) believed six developmental stages occur in three levels: the *Preconventional*, *Conventional*, and *Postconventional*. Each of these levels has two stages of development.

At the Preconventional Level, stage one occurs as *Heteronomous Morality*. Obeying rules and avoiding punishment is the motivation at this beginning stage. Behavior at this stage is based primarily on pleasure and pain. Moral value is not significant since actions are motivated by the expected outcome or consequences. Stage two is called *Individualistic, Instrumental Morality*. At this stage, individuals follow rules when the rules are in their best interest to do so. They also understand others have needs, and these needs or interests might interfere with their own. The motivation at this stage is still based on pleasure and pain, but reciprocity is recognized. The other person is viewed in terms of his or her utility.

Next is the Conventional Level. *Interpersonally Normative Morality* occurs at this level. At stage three, individuals live up to the expectations which have been set for them. They play roles, such as good mother or good aunt. Focus is on gaining the approval of others. Behavior is often motivated by the acceptance of society's norms or the standards within one's group. Retribution at this stage is collective, so the whole group might shun a person for his or her behavior. The fourth stage is called *Social System Morality*. At this stage individuals do what society expects of them in order to

uphold the laws that have been established by society. This is the role of the good citizen. Authority figures are not questioned because at this stage, the person would naturally assume the person in charge is right. Kohlberg believed that most people remain at this fourth stage of development.

Third is the Postconventional or Principled Level. The fifth stage of development is *Human Rights and Social Welfare Morality*. Right conduct is based on basic human rights for all people. A social contract is entered into for one's own protection and for the protection of all other people. Public good and individual rights can be critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. Rules and checklists are abandoned for logical reasoning, and decisions might be based upon universal principles of right action. The individual or group would decide the best course of action for the specific situation of the moment. Justice would be based on the circumstances, and any punishment for crimes would be imposed for deterrence, rehabilitation, or the protection of future victims. The sixth stage is next. It is referred to as *Morality of Universalizable, Reversible, and Prescriptive General Ethical Principles*. What is right is right in a universal way. Equal consideration is given to all persons. Most people do not reach this stage of development because the same principle applies to universal situations. Decisions are motivated by and based on the equality and intrinsic value placed on all human beings.

Kohlberg (1958) believed individuals could only progress through these stages one stage at a time, and once individuals reached a certain stage, they would not revert to a previous stage for decision making. Also, Kohlberg theorized that individuals developed through experiencing and resolving moral conflicts or struggling at their

current stage of moral development. Social interaction and discourse enabled personal moral growth to take place. Kohlberg believed development would occur in an environment in which each person was given the opportunity to make his or her own decisions. Later, Gilligan (1982) responded to Kohlberg's theory by including feminine voices, relationships, and the concept of caring as important considerations for moral decisions.

*Gilligan's Theory of Ethical Development.* According to Gilligan (1982), Piaget and Kohlberg had been the "norm setters" of research in this area, but the absence of the female participants in their studies indicated their findings might be biased. Gilligan (1982) argued different stages of ethical development emerged than Piaget's and Kohlberg's when she studied females instead of males. Her research showed that female voices were more concerned with relationships and conflicting responsibilities; whereas, the male responses in the past research studies were focused on rights and justice.

Gilligan (1982) explored identity and moral development with a group of twenty-nine women between the ages of fifteen and thirty-three who were referred to her by an abortion and counseling service. While trying to place her research data into Kohlberg's levels, Gilligan found her female subjects' responses did not apply to the categories. Gilligan's participants did not use the same type of reasoning that Kohlberg had experienced in his research. The women were more interested in relationships, so their responses to case study questions like Heinz's dilemma were focused on how their decisions might affect their relationships with others. Gilligan's research reflected that women base their ethical decisions on caring and maintaining relationships instead of legal consequences or justice, as was the case with Kohlberg's research participants.

Gilligan's (1982) theory on ethical development is based on care. There are three moral stages that create movement to the next level. The first level is referred to as Individual Survival. A transition from this level to the second level of Self-Sacrifice involves movement from selfishness to responsibility. At this second level of development, Gilligan found her participants became very altruistic to the point of neglecting themselves. The movement from this second level to the highest level of development Caring for Both Self and Others requires a transition; whereas, the self-sacrificing person struggles to include the self.

Like other ethical development theories, the person starts at an egoistic level (Kierkegaard, 1846/1992; Kohlberg, 1958). Then the women in Gilligan's (1982) study showed moral growth when they were able to recognize their responsibilities to others. This created a pendulum-like swing of self-sacrifice for the other people in their lives. The highest level of development occurred when the participating women were able to recognize that they and others needed nurturing care. The importance of Gilligan's theory in this study is to draw attention to the inclusion of all voices which requires a special level of listening. While Gilligan's theories were based on care and a sense of interconnectedness, Perry's (1970) theories were linked to autonomous decision-making.

*William Perry Jr's Theories of Moral Development.* Perry (1970) believed that moral development and intellectual development were linked. He referred to the *forms* within people's minds shaping how people view experiences. Perry's theories included three basic positions with levels of development in each position. *Dualistic* thinkers are on the lowest levels of position one, and they believe answers exist for everything, and someone has those answers. In fact, they wait for someone else to give them the answers.

Perry (1970) stated at this beginning dualistic position, people view the world in opposing terms such as absolute right and wrong or good and bad. According to Perry, most first year students in college are at this level of development when they enroll. At this lower level of moral development, students are more comfortable when there is structure in place, and they thrive on organization.

If students are able to transfer to the second position of *Multiplicity*, they begin to hear and understand diverse voices. Eventually students begin to understand multiple answers exist for the same problem. For instance, they might hear three different perspectives on poverty from their philosophy, sociology, and political science professors. They realize there are multiple, valid arguments. Developing students begin to think more analytically and independently when they are transitioning through these middle positions (Perry, 1970). Multiplicity thinkers are able to transition intellectually to pluralistic and relativistic views and choices because they recognize diverse opinions.

Eventually, some students are able to move toward Perry's (1970) highest level of *Commitment*. The commitment process is concerned with relativistic choices and autonomy. An example would be a self-directed student who knows she wants to become a veterinarian, so she commits her time and passion toward learning so she will have a better chance of getting into graduate school. According to Perry (1981), when people affirm their commitments, it is an indication they have found their identity, which until that time has been elusive. By understanding one's values, one is able to commit to personal decisions.

In conclusion, these theories of moral development explained how individuals develop from the lowest level of dependence to a decision-making mature individual.

Kierkegaard (1846/1992) believed individuals are in a constant state of becoming subjective or autonomous. For Kierkegaard, becoming autonomous is an inward search based on one's passion to understand oneself and to attain self-actualization. According to Kierkegaard (1846/1992), morally mature individuals are autonomous decision makers who are passionately committed to what they value most in life. Similarly, Piaget's (1932/1997), Kohlberg's (1958), Gilligan's (1982), and Perry's (1970) theories assert that individuals move from an egocentric position, usually obeying someone else's rules or the demands imposed by individual survival to a position where they are autonomous decision makers. The common threads throughout these moral development theories are focused on self-identity, social interaction with others, and opportunities to make decisions. During a student's college experiences, many opportunities arise for decision making connected to the student's social life, but in the classroom, the college professors often allow few choices for ways of learning and assessment.

#### *Teaching for Character Development*

From a 2002 survey of college professors, seventy-four percent of respondents indicated they still relied primarily on lectures for their teaching method (Colby, et al, 2003). While this might reflect how the majority of college professors approach teaching and learning today, a growing number of professors are developing many other strategies, including shared power, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, and service learning. The college professors who use these participative teaching styles are usually attempting to accomplish a broader range of goals than merely transmitting information, and they are focusing on a more transformational form of learning (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Colby et al, 2003; Weimer, 2002). For these faculty members, teaching goals go

beyond content material. Participative teachers try to match their students' learning more closely with broader goals than professors who use more traditional methods of teaching. An example of a broader teaching goal is promoting student character development.

Professors who are interested in learner-centered teaching approaches share power with student in order to engage students in their own learning process and decision-making. When college professors share some of their power with students in order to engage them in their own learning processes, students are allowed more autonomous decision-making. The more students practice making decisions, the more it becomes a habit, which leads to a moral maturity that might include self-confidence, commitment, and responsibility, therefore, student character development (Ayers, 2004; Kierkegaard, 1846; Perry, Jr., 1970; Weimer, 2002). The literature reviewed in this section explains several participative teaching techniques, such as faculty leading by example, sharing power by allowing choices, promoting openness by using techniques of dialogue, and nurturing students with care and love.

*Leading by Example.* In the past, one way teachers have led in the classroom was by setting a good example (Colby et al, 2003; Klein, 2005; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002; Thompkins, 1991). Faculty members taught values by modeling their own values and ethics; this showed students that professors not only have values and ethics but also are willing to act upon them. According to Morrison (2002), what people did or chose reflected their values, automatically; therefore, what educators chose even as part of the curriculum reflected their values.

According to Klein (2005), college professors are obligated to lead by example, but Klein's concern was many teachers lack any formal training in ethics; therefore, some

display unethical behaviors and are unqualified to lead. Klein claimed some of the unethical behaviors by professors included the following: being late for class, using vulgarity, showing favoritism toward certain students, engaging in personal relationships with students, ignoring students who cheat, using grading measures which do not accurately assess students' work, and giving the highest grades to all students regardless of the quality of the work. Klein believed professors have a moral obligation to their students as well as a professional one.

Professors' actions are just as important as what they say. According to Thompkins (1991) a college classroom is a microcosm of the larger world, and professors have the opportunity to reflect how an ideal society should work. Thompkins believed college professors show students what behaviors and actions they most cherish by creating the situations and a certain atmosphere in the classroom, which reflect the professors' ideals. A professor who practices sharing power in the classroom reflects the ideal of a democracy (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Colby et al, 2003; Weimer, 2002).

*Sharing Power.* A prominent feature of a democracy is shared governance. Governance involves power. The sharing of power is linked to sharing ability. Participative teaching occurs when the professor focuses on developing students' capabilities as learners by preparing them to be more active and to take more responsibility for their own learning (Weimer, 2002). Possibly, professors merely awaken students to their own power. This is sometimes referred to as self-empowerment (Weimer, 2002).

Sometimes, students are not aware of their inner power. Perhaps, the question is not how faculty members can give their power to students; instead, it

might be how teachers can help students become more aware of their own inner power. Participative faculty members have recognized sharing some of their power and classroom control has provided students with decision-making opportunities, which in turn has promoted student development. According to Weimer (2002), the goal is to create able students. Weimer believed this does not happen all at once; it is a gradual process. As she stated, “Power is redistributed in amounts proportional to students’ abilities to handle it” (p. 29).

Sharing power in the classroom is not, however, what usually occurs. In fact, according to Weimer (2002), teacher authority is so accepted that most teachers do not even realize the extent to which they control students and their learning. Weimer stated while today’s college students are hopeful when they enter college, they are not confident, empowered learners. Students like and want professors to tell them exactly what to do, and they wish their majors (whatever they are) did not include so much science, math, and/or English. Generally, they search for what they hope are the easier classes, and they are anxious to know whether there will be a lot of work in a particular class.

When college students are given more freedom in making decisions, however, they grow intellectually and emotionally, and some of their ideas about independence and power sharing are restructured (Ayers, 2004; Weimer, 2002). According to Boud (1981), the objective for education should be the formulation of independent, autonomous students who are able to make decisions and assume responsibility for their own learning. This can be facilitated by faculty sharing power with students. As Weimer (2002) stated, this requires faculty to reassess their traditional views of the teacher as the exclusive

expert and authoritarian. Weimer believed faculty could share control of the classroom with students and at the same time provide structures that would promote student development. An important element in providing these structures is dialogue, which includes two-way conversations and good-listening skills.

*Promoting Openness with Dialogue.* Openness to change and to engage in dialogue are important components for participative teaching and for student character development. According to Senge (1994), "...Openness emerges when two or more individuals become willing to suspend their certainty in each other's presence" (p. 284). In other words, openness and dialogue occurred when participants were willing to listen as well as speak. Encouraging dialogue is one way a teacher can share control of the classroom by giving students the opportunity for equal voice.

When college professors can provide an opportunity and create a climate in a classroom to promote dialogue, this welcoming and trusting classroom environment encourages student engagement and student-driven forms of learning (Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996). Teaching with this developmental focus, college professors place more importance on student interaction, decision making, and responsibility (Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996).

Dialogue is about listening deeply, inquiring, and advocating to understand the other person's intentions or meanings (Flick, 1998). This sharing process involves a nurturing attitude and openness to the other person and his or her ideas. According to Timpson (2000), teachers can use non-directive interactions where active and reflective listening is the focus, and this practice will create a nurturing environment that will encourage students to make decisions and assume responsibility for the decisions they

have made. Creating a nurturing environment requires open dialogue. As Senge (1994) stated, “the impulse toward openness... ‘is the spirit of love’” (p. 285).

*Nurturing Students.* According to Bolman and Deal (1995), “Caring begins with knowing about others—it requires listening, understanding, and accepting. It progresses through a deepening sense of appreciation, respect, and ultimately, love” (p. 103). Love is an often overlooked but important element in teaching and learning. Participative teaching, whereas the professor shares power with students, involves a passionate commitment to allow students to question, inquire, and discover.

According to Timpson and Bendel-Simso (1996), the teacher’s role should change from information giver to nurturing facilitator or guide. They stated teaching this way allows students to become more responsible for what they learn. As students become more responsible for their learning, they self-reflect and question more.

In summary, the literature reviewed in this section indicated sharing power in the classroom was evidenced by professors being good examples and displaying the same character ideals they wished students to develop, such as integrity, trustworthiness, honesty, and good citizenship. As students became more capable of sharing some of the control and power, it becomes a win-win situation. As students become more aware of their own inner power, they become more engaged. When this occurs, students are less likely to resist requirements for the class and are more likely to learn (Weimer, 2002). A stronger sense of ownership is felt by everyone in the class. Professors promote openness by practicing and promoting good dialogue skills, allowing voice to all participants and developing better listening skills. All of these aspects of a participative teacher occur because there is a profound sense of nurturing, involving care and love. Some of the

aspects are also involved in higher education's role of character development which is discussed next.

### *Higher Education and Differing Perspectives on Character Development*

College professors' perspectives of student character development reflect a wide range of theories. For instance, some faculty members believe higher education is not the solution for a lack of character development (Thompson, 1991). In some cases, higher education may have contributed to a lack of character development because faculty members have encouraged students to believe all ethical theories were valid; therefore, no ethical theories were valid (Colby, et al., 2000). In addition, two separate studies of faculty members' goals indicated that student character development did not rate as a significant priority for many college teachers (Kuh, 1998; Trice & Dey, 1997). On the other hand, some theorists believed that character development occurred without specific attention given to its development (Colby, 2002; Sandalow, 1991). Additionally, some educators believed faculty members played a major role in all types of student development (Kuh, 1998; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002). These theorists claimed professors were obligated to create learning environments and to develop curriculum which facilitated or helped shape student character development. Other educators believed faculty members have a specific role of fostering student character traits like self-identity and citizenship skills. These educators believed higher education must be part of the solution for strengthening character. Enhancing students' citizenship skills would be one way to begin addressing some of society's problems (Colby et al, 2000). But is it feasible to facilitate character development in higher education? Some educators believe it is not higher education's responsibility to do this.

*Higher Education Is Not the Solution.* According to Thompson's (1991) opinion article, neither college administrators nor faculty can be responsible for character development of their students. Thompson believes higher education cannot be seen as the remedy to a problem that he regards as widespread throughout society. Thompson claimed the lack of moral leadership is apparent everywhere in society, including businesses, politics, the media, and colleges. When students arrive at college, they are considered adults, and it is not higher education's role to generate character which has not been passed on by all the social levels preceding higher education. If character development has not been facilitated earlier by elementary schools, secondary schools, parents, or churches, then colleges and universities cannot be held responsible for this work. According to Thompson, educators should contribute in any way they can to solve this problem; however, they are not responsible for this outcome.

Some educators believe colleges and universities are responsible for the lack of character development in students. According to Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Rosner, & Stephens (2000), higher education has usually been seen as more of a hindrance or as part of the problem instead of the solution to character development. In their opinion, even in humanities classes, teachers have avoided offering any central rationale which might help college students to make civic and moral decisions. Many faculty members have taught students that all philosophical theories have many shortcomings; therefore, all moral theories have the same limitations. This teaching may leave students with the idea that there are no valid moral theories to help in their moral decision making. If all ethical theories are presented as relative for a certain culture at a certain time, ethical theories could be viewed as more of a confusing obstacle than as a guide for decision making.

Also, problems have existed with higher education's stated goals and what has actually occurred.

*Goals of Higher Education.* Faculty members play an important role in the teaching and learning processes of higher education; therefore, their goals, which direct their curriculum and choices of delivery method, are significant. Understanding the importance of the connection between teacher goals and what occurs in the classrooms, Trice and Dey (1997) studied the trends in college professor's goals to determine what changes had occurred in faculty's opinions over several decades.

The data gathered by Trice and Dey (1997) synthesized twenty-four years of data collected from previous studies. The data included a 1968 study conducted by Platt, Parsons, and Kirshstein. This study included 3,045 faculty members in 115 colleges and universities. Also, a 1973 survey was completed by the American Council on Education and included data from 42,000 surveyed faculty members from 301 colleges and universities. During both 1984 and 1989, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching studied approximately 5,000 college and university faculty across the United States. Then, in 1989 and 1992 the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) gathered additional data from faculty surveys. Trice and Dey were searching for general shifts in the teaching goals of faculty.

Table 2 below reports the data Trice and Dey (1997) assembled. The surveyed faculty members ranked their goals from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most important goal and 10 being the least important goal. A dash indicated the goal was not presented as an option for ranking in the particular study.

Table 2

Faculty Teaching Goals as Recorded by Rank from Six National Surveys: 1968 to 1992

Faculty Goal	Year of Survey					
	1968	1973	1984	1989	1989	1992
<b>Master knowledge in a discipline</b>	1	2	6	4	-	-
<b>Develop the ability to think clearly</b>	2	1	-	-	1	1
<b>Develop moral character</b>	3	9	-	-	6	6
<b>Prepare students for employment after college</b>	4	5	5	5	5	3
<b>Enhance creative thinking</b>	5	4	2	1	-	-
<b>Prepare students for graduate or advanced education</b>	6	8	-	-	7	7
<b>Increase the desire and ability to undertake self-directed learning</b>	7	3	-	-	2	2
<b>Enhance students' self-understanding</b>	-	6	1	-	3	4
<b>Provide an appreciation for the liberal arts</b>	-	7	3	2	-	-
<b>Provide for students' emotional development</b>	-	10	-	-	8	8
<b>Help students develop personal values</b>	-	-	4	3	4	5

The results of this longitudinal study reflected a mixed pattern. The ranking of the faculty goal to “Develop moral character” exhibited a sharp decline from 1968 to 1973 and then moved back up to a “6” in the HERI surveys in 1989 and 1992. The goal to “Develop the ability to think clearly,” however, was fairly stable over the 24-year period. According to Trice and Dey, the overall results of the study indicated more stability than change over time, at least in the areas of thinking, preparing students for additional studies or employment, emotional development, and personal values. Also, “the ability to think clearly” remained fairly constant for the surveys in which it was a category; therefore, according to this study, faculty members have remained fairly stable in their goals for student learning from 1968 to 1992.

Although not specifically discussed in Trice and Dey's (1997) article, the areas presented or not presented for assessment in the different surveys were interesting. For instance, the survey in 1968 did not present the last four questions, which deal with self-identity issues or personal development and appreciation for the liberal arts. Also, in the two columns representing data from the Carnegie Foundation in 1984 and 1989, the focus was on mastering knowledge in a discipline for employment, creative thinking, appreciation for the liberal arts, and helping students develop personal values. These numbers were also fairly consistent between the two surveys, but not as consistent with the surveys from the other institutions. Another interesting thought was whether the two categories "Develop moral character" and "Help students develop personal values" were basically the same question with a little different wording. These two categories seemed to be closely related.

As reported by the HERI surveys in 1989 and 1992, faculty's interest in moral character development was consistent. According to Trice and Dey the change in this category from twenty-four years ago could be contributed to a change in definition of moral character. They listed this as a limitation to the study because there was no way to know for certain how the participants perceived the definition of character. In the 1970s, "moral character" could have referred to particular values, most likely connected to a religion; whereas, in 1992, faculty's views about moral character could have been more relativistic.

According to Trice and Dey, another possible limitation was the study's results reflected faculty attitudes and not necessarily their behaviors in class. There could be a difference between what faculty members believed should be a goal and what actually

happened. The responses reflected their stated attitudes, but that was all. Faculty reports of their teaching goals may not have been identical with their actual teaching goals.

A similar study concerned with higher education goals was completed by Kuh (1998) who visited dozens of colleges and universities, as well as, studied information from the College Student Experiences Questionnaire's (CSEQ) national data base. This data base contains over 200,000 student responses from several hundred colleges and universities. The CSEQ addresses issues involving character development with the following four categories: (a) developing ethical standards and values, (b) understanding one's interests, abilities, and self-identity, (c) developing empathy for others and developing the ability to get along with others, and (d) becoming aware of other philosophies, cultures, and lifestyles. Each of these categories was in some way related to the development of student character. For a contrasting view of students' perspectives, Kuh also randomly selected and surveyed students from two other types of universities: general liberal arts colleges (GLAs) and public universities (PUs). Kuh's primary motive for this study was to research students' perspectives on character education to develop criteria for the best way to create a character-building college.

Kuh's (1998) study of the CSEQ national data base and his data from the randomly sampled students from GLAs and PUs provided several interesting points. First, the students' experiences, including how they spent their time, were generally about the same regardless of the college or university. Second, the perceived increases in students' character development differed in ways consistent with each college's or university's mission statement and adopted values. For the most part, those students who received a consistent message from administration, faculty, staff, and peers developed

congruently with the received message. Also, their growth was connected with how they spent their time and effort. For example, students who spent time focused on cultural events gained more understanding of diversity and how others think. In the same way, if policies about academic integrity were consistently presented, students spent more time and effort to put these theories into practice. Third, the Coalition of Christian Colleges and Universities had the greatest impact on their students' character development, and the Templeton Honor Roll Colleges followed in second place.

According to Kuh (1998), the gains in character development were not attributed to student characteristics, such as parents' educational levels, economics, goals, etc, but were more closely influenced by the relationships the students formed while in college and the student activities in which they were engaged. How students spent their time during their college experiences mattered more than other factors such as institutional resources and students' backgrounds. The close relationships with faculty, staff, and peers were what students perceived to be the most important aspects for changing their values and developing their character. These findings point to the importance of the social and psychological factors on character development.

Also, Kuh (1998) used data from a 1995-1996 Faculty Survey from the Higher Educational Research Institute. This survey indicated only 60% of sampled faculty believed it was important to help their students with any type of character development, including personal values, respect, honesty, or self-understanding. Surprisingly, some of the professors surveyed were teaching at the universities or colleges where character development was stated in the mission statements; however, character development issues had never actually been addressed by faculty or administrators.

Kuh (1998) concluded “faculty support for educating the whole student is declining and is reflected by smaller proportions of students reporting substantial gains in character development” (p. 5). With all of society’s current problems, he believes colleges and universities could be emphasizing character development more. While some colleges and universities’ actual goals concerning student character development were aligned with stated policies, many others were not. Many colleges and universities endorsed the importance of student character development, but evidence indicated that it was not practiced. Other colleges and universities both endorsed and took character building seriously. Those colleges and universities whose goals were aligned with stated policies realized the potential gains for student development because they invested both human and monetary resources to help accomplish their stated goals. According to Kuh, if the college mission statement underscored the importance of character development, but was the only place it appeared, not a lot happened. Kuh claimed that leaders needed to clarify what they meant by character development, to explain why it was important, and to discuss how it fit into the daily habits of the institution. While doing nothing to improve character development is an option, it still has certain effects according to the next section.

*Not Teaching Character/Morality/Values is Impossible.* It is Colby’s (2002) opinion that teachers do not really have a choice about teaching values because not teaching values is impossible. When faculty members avoid values altogether, they are making an indirect statement about the lack of importance values play in the issue they are studying. Also, when teachers focus on developing critical thinking skills or help

students increase their epistemic beliefs, moral development will naturally be linked to these efforts.

According to Colby (2002), a lot of curriculum content in higher education has traditionally involved morality. When teachers attempted to avoid moral issues embedded in course content, Colby believed they were teaching students indirectly to turn a blind eye to morality. If students link moral or character values to the content, but the professor purposely ignores this link, the students might interpret this omission as a subtle message from the professor—either moral dialogue was not important or should be avoided.

In Sandalow's (1991) opinion, faculty members have indirectly contributed to students' moral development by adding to their capacity to make sound moral decisions. Educators have done so, even, without it being their main objective. Sandalow stated professors have played an important role in the development of morals when they have helped students develop critical thinking skills. For instance, when students have studied ethics, literature, humanities, law, and other similar disciplines, these studies have made ideas available, which have helped students to think about moral issues. Whether intended or not, faculty members have indirectly taught character development while promoting intellectual development. On the other hand, some educators teach with character development as an objective and believe doing so is a responsibility of higher education.

*Higher Education Is Responsible for Development.* According to Makarushka's (2002) opinion article, faculty members can influence character development by creating environments, developing curriculum, and helping to shape character. Makarushka (2002) found that when faculty are able to foster an environment of tolerance, care,

respect, and civility for one another, this demonstrates to students that embodying values in one's everyday life is what morality and character development is all about. As Makarushka (2002) stated, "embodying the values we hope students will learn is a powerful reminder of Diogenes' belief that virtue is best demonstrated through action" (p. 27). Actions promoting character development can become daily habits in higher education.

According to Morrison (2002), one way student character development can be promoted in higher education is by having faculty create the learning environments conducive to this kind of change. When they do this, they are trying to educate the whole person instead of focusing on skills development and disciplinary understanding. Educators are affirming the idea students need more than the skills or discipline knowledge to do a job (Dahlin & Abbott, 2000; King 1997; Morrison, 2002).

Also, expectations for student character development can be communicated formally in the curriculum. In King's (1997) opinion article, Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is an example of a student character building college. Faculty at Alverno have included a wide variety of courses in their curriculum to help their students achieve a competency called "valuing in decision-making." At Alverno, administrators, faculty, and staff believed these were the kinds of skills they wanted their graduate students to carry with them to the workplace, the community, and their families. King (1997) stated such programs help students develop character and a sense of self-identity which emphasizes such personal qualities of integrity, honesty, compassion, and cooperation.

Also, King (1997) stated faculty should help students develop the skills to make value-based decisions wisely. King stated “helping students develop the integrity and strength of character that prepare them for leadership may be one of the most challenging—and important—goals of higher education” (p. 87). Part of the development King advocated would move students from totally self-centered individuals to people who would consider the needs and rights of others, as well.

According to King (1997), “successful programs are essential if colleges are to achieve their mandate to instill in students the leadership skills they need to address the demands of the twenty-first century” (p. 92). King proposed that most students enter college not knowing what to expect concerning any type of development. Many are at college to get a degree in order to get a better paying job. They are not prepared to examine, change, create, or maintain their basic values. Most have never considered their self-identities. Few have thought about values and decision-making as part of their education or collective being (King, 1997). These deficiencies in development can be overcome if faculty members are willing to take this challenge. Only with colleges and universities working to shape character will students be able to develop the skills needed for managing life transitions, such as managing job changes, learning to work independently, as well as, working as a team member which is often required in our postmodern global world with many multi-cultured people.

Similarly, it is Wells’ (2000) opinion that students arrive at college carrying many objects, memories, values, and lifetime stories with them. Then, during their years at college, students develop many new narratives and values. Wells’ concluded teachers facilitate the development of new narratives as they introduce students to stories and

problems which include moral reasoning and decision making. By introducing students to ethical narratives, faculty members help students develop values such as, responsibility, loyalty, work ethics, and integrity which will aid students in decision making throughout their lifetime. The ability to make personal decisions promoting students' well-being begins with a better understanding of one's self and society. Student character development can occur when higher education is aware of the need for character development, has knowledge about how to promote it, and cares about taking actions through the curriculum and teaching environments. Character development can begin with self-identity and citizenship skills.

*Faculty Members Can Foster Self-Identity and Citizenship Skills.* According to Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, Rosner, and Stephens (2000), students have the ability to make moral judgments. The authors stated, in addition to their ability, students need to feel a moral commitment for action, which includes morally responsible conduct both to the students and to their community. They stated moral conduct includes the responsibility to act on personal beliefs. This can be a problem if students are not sure about their beliefs and values, but faculty members can help students understand through self-reflection. A key to student success at moral understanding and reflection depends on how and to what extent the students' moral concerns are significant to their identities. Faculty members can promote students' understanding of themselves, both as morally committed individuals and as engaged citizens (Colby et al, 2000).

To summarize, some educators in higher education do not believe it is their responsibility to develop student character, and some do. For example, Thompson (1991) stated colleges and universities cannot remedy a problem which is so wide-spread

throughout society. In fact, it is possible higher education does more harm than good when it focuses on character development (Colby et al, 2000).

Also, data from Trice and Dey's (1997) and Kuh's (1998) studies showed faculty members' goals for student character development were sometimes not a top priority or a priority at all. Also, research showed having certain goals documented in higher education was not enough. In some cases, goals were not even a part of the mission statement of a college or university. Consequently, even when goals were publicly announced, if they were not communicated to administrators, staff, and faculty as important, then little occurred (Kuh, 1998). Most faculty members agreed clear thinking or intellectual development was important, but this was not the case for student character development (Kuh, 1998; Trice & Dey, 1997).

Nevertheless, some educators believed character development was still a responsibility for higher education (King, 1997; Kuh, 1998; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002; Wells, 2000). For instance, Kuh (1998) asserted faculty members have an obligation to help students develop to their full potential. Kuh stated there are no limits to the human capacity to realize personal goals, and during college, faculty members have a great opportunity to help students develop and realize their goals. These authors asserted that student character development can be promoted through the curriculum and the teaching environment (King, 1997; Morrison, 2002). Also, according to Colby, et al. (2000), faculty should have a common view of desired experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, which contribute to identity development and citizenship. In order to educate the whole student, character development is important (Colby et al, 2000). Faculty members have the unique opportunity to engage and to

influence students daily; it is within these types of relationships faculty members can attempt to make a positive difference.

### *Synthesis*

According to Creswell (2003), the literature review is a work-in-progress for a phenomenological study. The literature review helps to frame the problem, to explain particular viewpoints, to present certain theories already researched, and to compare and contrast findings at the end of a qualitative research (Creswell, 2003; Hart, 2002).

Because qualitative research is concerned with emergent interpretation rather than a fixed understanding, the literature review continued throughout my research. This literature provided a brief and selective account of past theories, perspectives on character development, participative teaching, and both the negative and positive perspectives of higher education's role in character development.

My review of the literature validated a gap in understanding some of the problems with promoting student character development in higher education. This was due, at least in part, to the absence of an accepted or fixed definition of "character" (Colby et al, 2003; Rosenstand, 2003; Schwartz, 2000; Sommer, 2005 & Trice and Dey, 1997). To help elucidate this abstract term, the literature review included some historical versus modern perspectives which clarified some of the changes which have occurred for the definition of "character."

Next, my literature review focused on the theories of relevant researchers for this study (Gilligan, 1982; Kierkegaard, 1846/1992; Kohlberg, 1958; Perry, 1970; Piaget, 1932). These theorists have framed the basic ideas of character development progressing from dependence and reliance on authority figures to a level of independence which

allows an individual to be committed to whatever he or she values most. The different theorists provided various values, which are important to the type of student character development in this study, including integrity, passion, justice, commitment, and cooperation. My research was directed toward faculty who encouraged this type of character development which encourages the student to progress from the lowest level of dependent learner to a learner who is more self-actualizing.

This process begins with faculty who are willing to share power with students; therefore, the researched literature linked character development with students having an opportunity for a shared voice in the classroom to make choices and decisions. When students are encouraged to participate in their own learning processes, they become more engaged in the curriculum (Ayers, 2004; Weimer, 2002). According to the literature reviewed, faculty members can promote student character development when they set good examples, share some of their control and power with students, permit openness through dialogue, practice the goals stated in mission statements, and nurture students (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Boud, 1981; Colby, 2003; Klein, 2005; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002; Thompkins, 1991; Weimer, 2002). By being involved in faculty members' actual experiences with power sharing for character development, my research added to this literature, the interactive, personal, and humanistic perspectives.

Nurturing student learning and development in a caring way requires faculty members to become aware and more involved. One way to begin nurturing is through conversation. There is a lack of dialogue concerning character development in colleges and universities (Kuh, 1998; Schwartz, 2000). How will student character development ever become part of the curriculum if faculty members are unaware or do not discuss it?

A desire to discuss issues of student character development begins with the notion of caring about students as individual human beings.

During my review of the literature, I found no qualitative research of faculty members' perspectives on promoting student character development. In order to better understand faculty members' experiences, including their successes and challenges, I present in the next chapter how my research has contributed to the literature on this important issue.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

While my review of literature was not exhaustive, it presented multiple perspectives and various quantitative studies examining student character development as perceived by faculty members and administrators in higher education. Since no qualitative studies of faculty members' perspectives on student character development at the community college were found, this qualitative study adds to the literature on this subject. In this chapter, I explain my research methods and reasons for using phenomenology for this study. Also, I identify the type of participants and sites, as well as, describe my data collection methods and reveal my data analysis procedures. Finally, I address some of my ethical concerns and explain how trustworthiness was addressed in my study.

### *Research Design and Rationale*

The purpose of this study was to better understand the perspectives and experiences of faculty members who are committed to a participative style of leadership and who share some of the decision making in the classroom to promote student character development. In a more general way, this study adds to the dialogue for community college leadership, and in a more specific way, this study adds to community college dialogue of student character development from the faculty members' perspectives. Since I wanted to examine these faculty members' experiences and reflections within their natural settings, it was important for my study to be done with a qualitative approach (Creswell, 1998).

My aspirations were to gain a holistic, but detailed view by not limiting my research to firm guidelines or specific procedures that are entailed in quantitative

research; instead, I wanted to let a picture evolve during my study (Creswell, 1998). Using a phenomenological method, I was able to describe the lived experiences of faculty members concerning their roles in student character development. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative data has a quality of truthfulness because the participants' stories are from lived moments, and they are often more convincing and meaningful than the summarized numbers which quantitative researchers gather and interpret. A qualitative study allowed me to use words in place of numbers to provide a rich and more meaningful description of my data. According to Shank (2002), meaningful descriptions are based on the researcher's skill for conceptualization and reconceptualization, which must continually take place until a holistic focus comes into view for the researcher. This holistic focus became the meaning within the study. To accomplish this, I used Moustakas' (1994) transcendental phenomenology, which places an emphasis on Husserl's (1907/1999) *epoche*, Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, Imaginative Variation, and Intersubjectivity.

First, by using *Epoche*, I tried to suspend or set aside my value judgments and preconceived notions about teaching and character development in order to consciously experience the phenomenon in a more original, naïve, and authentic state through the voices of my participants (Husserl, 1907/1999; Moustakas, 1994). This important step was the most difficult challenge for me because I feel so passionate about the subject of character development. I fully realized my biases could never be totally separated from me, but my goal for this phenomenological study was to better understand and to tell the story of how my participants have constructed meaning in the past (and are continually constructing meaning) from their lived experiences. As I attempted to set aside my

biases, I was able to search for the essences or most important common elements which connected these teachers' experiences (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994; Shank, 2002). I focused on the whole experience rather than the parts by starting with a conscious awareness, carefully transcending that consciousness by setting aside my presuppositions, and seeing the experience in a unique way (Shank 2002).

Next, in accordance with Moustakas (1994), I used Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, which is a way of knowing things. It requires looking many times and describing the phenomenon until the observer can reduce the information gained to an interpretation of meaning. At this second stage, each participant's experience was recognized as a single entity. Later with analysis, I was able to develop composite descriptions of the essences of the phenomenon. As later explained in data analysis, this composite was a textural description explaining what occurred in the study.

According to Moustakas (1994), Imaginative Variation follows Phenomenological Reduction, and it involves approaching the reduced essences with varying perspectives. Using my imagination, I described the reflections of faculty members who have tried to facilitate student character development. This was an attempt to avoid facts and quantitative-like measurements and to intuitively discover and to describe any imaginable ways in which the participants experienced the phenomenon of student character development. In doing so, I found how my participants experienced the phenomenon of participative teaching for student character development and what these experiences have meant to them.

Also, intersubjectivity was important to my phenomenological study because through my participants' stories, empathy allowed me to co-exist in their experiences.

Following Moustakas' (1994) theories, I was able to develop a co-presence with my participants, and this allowed me to understand the essences of their experiences. While my own perceptions were my primary knowledge, the perceptions of my participants allowed me analogical knowledge through their perceptions, as well (Moustakas, 1994).

### *Participants and Sites*

Before collecting data, I obtained approval for my proposal and permission from the Colorado State University's Human Subjects Committee to search for volunteer colleges and faculty members for this study. I followed all CSU guidelines and protected the confidentiality of my interviewees to the best of my ability. According to Punch (1994), the best safeguard against invading the privacy of participants in any study is to promise confidentiality. As suggested by Punch, I clearly explained in my Participant Consent Form (Appendix C) that the information gained from the private interviews might be used in a doctoral dissertation and future publications. This consent form was signed by each of my participants before I collected data.

During the research, I shared specific material from the participants' interviews with them and allowed them to remove any data from the transcriptions of the first interviews. The participants received the transcript of the first interview in advance of the second interview. During several second interviews, the participants were asked to clarify information given from the initial interview. In addition, I made it clear from the beginning they could withdraw from my study at any time (Moustakas 1994). During the interview, none of the participants showed any evidence of potential psychological distress. If that would have occurred, I would have immediately suspended the interview.

Also, I promised my participants confidentiality. All interviews were private and confidential, and pseudonyms were used for the participants and their institutions.

As I searched for my research participants, I kept my study's essential criteria in mind (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). I looked for participants who have experienced the phenomenon of trying to promote student character development. Also, I searched for participants who were intensely interested in understanding the nature and meaning of student character development. I looked for participants who were willing to engage in a lengthy interview of one-to-two hours and a shorter follow-up interview if needed. I also looked for participants who were willing to consent to an audio recording of the interviews and to publication of the data (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994).

I chose faculty members who were interested in student character development and a participative style of teaching. To accomplish this, I prepared a statement describing the purpose and the nature of my study. I e-mailed this statement to various faculty members at community and two-year colleges to invite participants to my study (Moustakas, 1994). I began the selection method with community college faculty members who have attended and/or presented at the annual conferences of The Center for Academic Integrity. Another possible option for locating my study's participants was using the contacts I have received from other students in the Colorado State University's Community College Leadership Program. I contacted faculty members who responded affirmatively and set up a ten-to-fifteen minute phone pre-interview (Moustakas, 1994). I was also able to contact other participants through a networking or snow balling technique and/or the use of opportunistic sampling by obtaining new leads during my interviews with participants (Patton, 2001).

### *Data Collection*

I obtained my data with at least one private interview from each participant, using open-ended questions (Riessman, 1993). According to Patton (1987), qualitative interview questions should be open-ended, sensitive, and clear to the interviewee. Also, Patton (1987) advised to start an interview by asking the interviewee easy questions and then to proceed to more difficult questions. When necessary, follow up interviews were conducted by phone or e-mail. As well, where the interview took place was important. I did all of the initial one-on-one interviews at the teachers' colleges (Creswell, 2003; Shank, 2002). For this study, I did in-depth individual interviews with seven faculty members at various community colleges. I audio recorded these interviews and took notes as soon as possible after each face-to-face or phone interview. The first interview was a confidential 60-90 minute interview. Then, any follow-up interviews were approximately 30-60 minutes, depending on what clarifications or additional information was necessary. When the follow-up interview could not be done at the participant's location, I interviewed the participant by phone or by e-mail. I encouraged collaboration with the interview questions; however, since I was a novice interviewer, I began with a semi-structured approach (Shank, 2002). To construct meaning, it is desirable to let participants take an active role in nominating questions of interest for the study; however, I began the interview by preparing a short interview protocol, which was forwarded to the participants ahead of time (Creswell, 1998).

As Chase (2003) suggested, I wanted only to facilitate the opening questions and allow the participants a free rein with their own self-reflection, so my questions often followed the participants' thoughts. I was prepared with a list of back-up questions, but I

used these questions only if certain topics seemed to be exhausted (Chase, 2003). Mostly I tried to listen closely to the narrator's experiences rather than ask questions from my back-up interview guide. Listening to my participants' inner voices, I constructed meaning with them and invited in-depth, concrete, and personal life experiences (Chase, 2003; Clinchy, 2003).

After I audio recorded the interviews, I listened to them and personally transcribed each of them. I used the interviewees' offices for the face-to-face interviews when possible, so they would feel more comfortable in their own setting, but when this was not possible, we met at a mutually agreed site or by telephone (Creswell, 1998; Creswell, 2003). As Chase (2003) has recommended, I wrote summaries after each interview and not only focused on the content of the interview, but also the nonlexicals such as pauses, body language, facial expressions, stammers, sighs, and laughter. I wanted to gather as much data as possible about their experiences and also to allow my participants control in telling their stories (Creswell, 2003). After I transcribed all interviews, I used "member checking" by returning the transcripts to my participants to verify that the information was correct (Creswell, 1998).

For reflexivity purposes, I kept a field journal and recorded additional phenomenon by jotting reflections after each interview of non-verbal issues, such as body language (Creswell, 2003). Also, I asked the participants if I could analyze certain documents, such as their college's mission statements or their syllabi to better understand their language and expectations for students (Creswell, 2003).

### *Data Analysis*

The data analysis from my research followed Moustakas' (1994) "modification of van Kaam's (1959, 1966) method of analysis of phenomenological data" (p. 120). I tried to make sense of all the information that I was able to collect from my in-depth interviews, field journal notes, and documents (Creswell, 2003). According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the data analysis approach for phenomenology includes developing empathy with the participants which involves living through reflection with the subject one is researching. I began this process by organizing the data and thoroughly reading through all of it many times to obtain a sense of the overall meaning of the information (Creswell, 1998).

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the process of phenomenological analysis is not about coding or condensing the material as much as it is about allowing the essence of the data to come forth. Therefore, I composed notes in the margins and wrote reflective memos summarizing my field notes. The process entailed a continuous reflection upon the collected data and constant journaling. A spiraling journey is preferred over a linear one (Creswell, 1998).

After reading through all the data many times and making notes, I began analyzing each transcribed interview using the methods and procedures listed earlier for a phenomenological study. First, using Moustakas (2003) analytical steps, I attempted to bracket or suspend my biases. With this bracketing in mind, I organized the data by listing every significant sentence or phrase relevant to a participative-style of teaching and character development. Each phrase or sentence was given equal value as I tried to uncover the essence within the words. This procedure is called *horizontalization*. As in any journey, horizons are limitless because researchers are always able to see new things

each time they re-look or reconsider the experiences. A new horizon appears as the previous one recedes (Moustakas, 1994).

From the initially chosen sentences, I used my imagination to list meaning units from them, and then I clustered these meaning units into themes or common categories of meaning. As I analyzed these meaning units, I removed the sentences and phrases which were redundant or overlapped with other meanings. Then, the themes or categories were used to develop the textural descriptions of what the participants experienced. I analyzed these thematic experiences on both a manifest and latent level. According to Boyatzis (1998), latent interpretations are more difficult and time-consuming, but they yield richness from the data that might otherwise be lost. From the textural descriptions, I was able to use my imagination to think of all possible perspectives to put these descriptions into a structural description that represented not just what was experienced but also “how” the phenomenon was experienced by my participants.

These descriptions revealed the constructed, combined meanings or underlying essences of their experiences of teaching for student character development. This method of revealing synthesized essences by using my imagination was the most interesting and exciting part of the data analysis because of the creative possibilities. Imaginative Variation reminded me of writing poetry. The poet starts with a specific topic and intuitively knows there is a poem from a particular phrase or an image recently recorded in his or her memory. The poet feels an urgency to capture the moment with words. She or he does not know where it will lead, only that it needs to be written. Lines are formed like the first cuts in a marble statue, but the completed idea has not revealed itself yet. After much work, a type of understanding is revealed as the poem unfolds and the

meaning is disclosed. Likewise, the revealing of the essences and the focusing on the potentiality of all various possibilities of the qualitative data became the primary focus for the Imaginative Variation process (Moustakas, 1994). Bringing those essences together represented understood ideas for the particular moment and place.

I chose phenomenology because it allowed me to consciously look anew at particular experiences, and it encouraged inter-subjective relationships and ways of knowing. According to Moustakas (1994) ultimate knowledge resides within the self, and one's ability to share knowledge with another is accomplished by using familiar analogies that bring the two into a co-presence of understanding. The final task of the analysis was to construct meaning and to provide understanding for the revealed essences of the experiences in a trustworthy way (Creswell, 1998).

#### *Trustworthiness*

I used triangulation in several different ways and clarified my biases to validate and to add credibility to my research study. For instance, I used my memos from my observations, field journal, and document analysis to triangulate my interview findings to give me a more complete picture of the phenomenon (Creswell, 1998). As I analyzed all of my data collection methods, commonalities or corroborating themes revealed themselves. I also used theoretical triangulation by returning to past literature (Creswell, 2003; Moustakas, 1994).

As stated earlier, I used member checking after transcribing the interviews to make sure I had the participants' stories correct. According to Creswell (1998), member checking is one of the most important techniques for establishing credibility. After interpreting and constructing categories and patterns from the data, I did not do member

checking again; however, I shared my final interpretations with several of my participants (Creswell, 2003).

I tried to be as self-reflective, honest, and open as possible during my research study and writing. I clarified my biases for a participative style of teaching and my biases for student character development. To help do so, I began a reflective journal before starting my interviews and continued writing in it throughout the process of my study.

### *Synthesis*

In summary, this chapter addressed the ways and means used by the researcher to hear the voices and to better understand the experiences of faculty members who try to promote student character development. As I attempted to set aside my prejudices and biases, I tried to be completely intuitive, open, and receptive to listening and to hearing my research participants describe their lived experiences. This openness and receptiveness are similar to the intersubjectivity required in the teaching and learning relationship.

Similarly, any phenomenological study relies in differing degrees on intersubjectivity between the researcher and his or her participants because the researcher is trying to understand what the participants' experiences have been (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994). By bracketing out my preconceptions, I was able to capture the universal structures that appeared from the participants' experiences (Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), because this research is a phenomenological study, it will be an individual, heuristic process; however, the understanding and interpretations will also have a social significance because qualitative research is a quest for meaning. I

was able to find and to illuminate meaning as I worked from my strengths and corrected my weaknesses in my first journey as a qualitative researcher.

## CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### *Introduction*

Chapter Four presents the analysis and results of *Sharing Power in the Classroom: Community College Professors Who Facilitate Student Character Development*. This phenomenological study examined the definitions, values, experiential reflections, negative issues, and positive aspects for seven community college professors who try to promote student character development (SCD) by offering choices, sharing some of their power in the classroom, and requiring students to make decisions and be responsible for their choices. In the first section, my participants are introduced with brief biographical details, demographical information, the settings in which the interviews occurred, and brief statements of their interests. The second section presents the textural descriptions of the faculty members' perspectives concerning SCD. Most of the results are presented by using direct quotes to provide the rich, lush text which is so important for a qualitative study. This second section describes the *what*, *why*, and *how* of faculty members' perspectives of student character development that emerged from the data analysis. In the third section, the phenomenon is synthesized, and finally, in the fourth section, the essential meaning of the phenomenon **Building Up** is presented.

### *Section One: Describing the Participants*

In this section, I introduce my participants with brief biographical details, demographical information, the settings in which the interviews occurred, and brief statements of interest. While all seven participants' voices were strong and offered a

different but important approach to student character development, the order in which they are presented reflects who seemed to share power in the classroom the most to those who seemed to share power in some lesser degree.

### Katie

Katie is an assistant professor of English at a large community college in a metropolitan area located in the Southeast. She has been working on her PhD in Educational Psychology and Collaborative Learning for the past several years. She teaches English composition, American Literature, and developmental writing classes.

Katie was the first participant I interviewed for this study, and our first interview occurred at her college in a small conference room in the Science and Technology Building. Since I arrived early for the interview, I walked around the campus, went to the bookstore, and listened to some group tours for future students and their parents.

During the interview, Katie was very relaxed and self-confident. Her eyes remained alert and animated, and her voice was soft and kind. She used a lot of hand gestures as she spoke, and when she spoke of her “center,” she often gestured to her chest. Even though our interview took place during the summer, Katie was dressed very professionally. She was very friendly and had a great sense of humor.

Katie became interested in student character development when she became a mother. She almost became a Waldorf teacher, but she found the training to be too demanding. The Waldorf schools were founded by Rudolph Steiner and were based on teaching in a developmental manner which included a focus on a child’s physical, emotional, and intellectual growth. In Waldorf schools, teachers are expected to develop their own curriculum based on Steiner’s theories of peace and tolerance and are

encouraged to function independently of direct supervision. Instead of pursuing this career, Katie channeled all of her knowledge and energy into a degree in literature. She started her graduate degree in philosophy and later switched to education. Katie linked student character development to the importance of creating moral communities with collaborative learning.

### **Mary**

Mary is a skilled and passionate educator. She is a reading specialist at a rural community college in the West and has been involved in developmental education since 1994. Mary received her MA in Secondary Education with an emphasis in Adult Ed and Multicultural Studies in 1994.

Mary was the fourth participant of my study, and our first interview occurred at her college in a small conference room. Since the interview occurred during regular school hours and Mary's office is in her college's learning center, the conference room was chosen to avoid interruptions from students and staff.

During the interview, I noticed that Mary had such a soft presence about her, both in voice and mannerisms. Even though her voice was soft, her remarks were very confident, thoughtful, and strong. She used her hands to emphasize some of her points. Also, her body language indicated she was listening. From time to time, she leaned forward, seemingly engaged in understanding the dialogue.

Mary believes very strongly in a connection between helping students develop their character and understanding who each individual student is as a learner and on a personal level. For Mary, an important part of knowing the student involves authenticity

or subjective honesty. Specifically, Mary believes that ownership and accountability are very important in character development.

### **Dawn**

Dawn is an experienced educator who began her career as a preschool teacher in an urban area. She taught preschool children for eighteen years before teaching adults. Dawn's Master's degree is in education, and she has been teaching at the community college level for seven years. Currently, she is the Director and principal faculty member for the Early Childhood Program at a small, rural community college in the West.

Dawn was my third participant, and our first interview occurred at her college in a small conference room opposite her office. Since the interview occurred during regular school hours and her office is located in a high-traffic area, the conference room was chosen to avoid interruptions from students and staff. While waiting briefly at her office door, I noticed the room was small, cluttered, and comfortable. She had teaching "props" such as small stuffed animals and hand puppets. A large bulletin board filled with cartoons and funny pictures was on the wall outside her office.

While we did not follow the list of questions in any order, almost every question was addressed during our conversation. Dawn sat at the head of the table and seemed at ease. She started the conversation in a somewhat loud joking manner, but her countenance quickly changed to a serious softness as she began to speak intensely and passionately about the teaching and learning processes. Her hands helped her describe certain techniques or situations. Dawn's thoughts were organized, and she spoke with a lot of confidence and conviction. Her ideas concerning character development were linked to analytical thinking.

## Sandra

Sandra retired from teaching two days after our interview. She earned a PhD and taught music and humanities classes at a large urban community college in the Southwest for thirty-five years. Sandra was the seventh participant.

I was about twenty-five minutes early for our appointment, so after finding her office, I decided to explore the building and some of the campus. I saw many bulletin boards in different buildings with flyers advertising academic integrity and honesty. On Sandra's door, there were cartoons and quotes—one from Chief Seattle. Sandra was making copies of her syllabi and handouts for a couple of assignments, so I met her in a hallway. We returned to her office by cutting back through the stage where 4 or 5 students were rehearsing for a play. She joked with them about giving her the spotlight.

Sandra's office was filled with packed and partially filled boxes. Pictures were still hanging, the bookcases were still partially filled, and her desk was very cluttered and messy. She joked about it and said she had always heard a messy desk was a sign of genius. She apologized for her attire of shorts and a 2007 Disney World t-shirt and mentioned something about it being summer. Sandra was funny and relaxed with a sense of elegance and refinement even in her casual attire. She had one of the most distinctive, beautiful voices I have ever heard, and she engaged me immediately in conversation as if she had known me for a long time. During our conversation—when I asked about why she cared so much, she became tearful, and I could tell how really impassioned she is about student character development. Standing up for what a person believes in, being honest, and developing academic integrity were her main focuses. In her opinion, these character building skills often equate to a person having courage. Sandra referred to it as

“having a backbone.” She believes courage for one’s beliefs develops by making small decisions every day. After awhile, this develops into what she referred to as “character muscle.”

### **Cheryl**

Cheryl has a PhD and is a professor of English at a large community college located in a metropolitan area in the Midwest. Her decision to teach English was based on its wide perimeters. Teaching English gives her the opportunity to talk about any topic including character because students write about everything.

Cheryl was the fifth participant I interviewed for this study, and our first interview occurred at her college. As I walked into her office, I noticed the large poster of the world on the facing wall. Her office was messy in an organized way. For instance, in the nearest left-hand corner just inside the door, manila folders were scattered ... lots of them. If they had been stacked before, they were now strewn all over the floor. Two desks directly opposite of each other faced each side wall. The office was small, especially narrow. She had a hanging vine on the file cabinet and five or six plaques on the wall of degrees and awards, including an award for promoting diversity at her college. The office indicated a lot of work in progress, but she said most of the mess was from last semester. She commented that she wanted to get her syllabi done first and then she would clean her office. She continued to work at her computer for a few minutes indicating that she wanted to save her work.

Cheryl’s understanding of student character development was centered on political development and social awareness of one’s world. She labeled herself as a passionate person who has been a fighter since childhood. Also, since childhood, she has

been very conscious of race and class conflict. After her parents divorced, she moved from an affluent all-White community in a New York suburb to inner city Manhattan. She grew up in the projects as a minority White student in a majority Black and Puerto Rican elementary school. Cheryl believes her experiences as a minority influenced her being drawn to politics and interested in power structures. As an undergraduate, she did anti-nuclear work and in graduate school she was drawn to Marxist theory and feminist theory courses. Also, she identified herself as being a feminist since the age of eleven when her mother brought home the first issue of *MS. Magazine* in 1972.

### **Tamera**

Tamera has earned a PhD and has taught computer science classes at a large urban community college in the Southwest for over twenty-eight years. Tamera was the sixth participant.

I was about twenty minutes early for our appointment, so after finding her office, I walked throughout the halls of the building where her office is located. I saw a large computer lab that had no students in it. My campus visit was during the middle of summer, so this was not unusual. I heard voices and noticed a class was in progress down another hall. Most of the hallways had bulletin boards with the usual college flyers, but they also had posters advocating academic integrity and honesty. One poster had the word “HONESTY” across the top and just below that—a slightly tilted box with the phrase “TOP PRIORITY.” Below these two headings, the poster said, “Be proud of your degree or certificate. Do your own work.” At the very bottom of the poster was the web address for their college’s academic integrity program. Another poster had a picture of a nurse. Across the top of this poster were the words “CHARACTER MATTERS,” and

directly below this larger title it said, “In the Health Profession.” I walked back to Tamera’s office and was reading the different things posted on her office door. Most of these postings were cartoons, but there were also several newspaper articles about a student and a colored picture taped on her door. Tamera came walking up the hall and introduced herself.

Tamera’s office was small and very messy with the usual computer equipment and desk on one side of the narrow room and bookcases on the opposite side of the room. She said, “I know it looks cluttered, but I know where everything is.” There was no place to put my recorder except on top of a pile of folders and papers. The desk was very small but comfortable with pictures hanging on the walls. Directly across from where I sat, there was a picture of Westminster Abby in London.

At first, Tamera’s voice sounded a bit stern when she talked about students, but as she continued talking, her voice softened. For example, at first she talked mostly about her rules and how she wanted to enforce them, but later, as she talked about different examples of students she knew well and offered some of their stories, her tone and demeanor were caring and authentic.

For Tamera, student character development is linked to academic integrity. Her interests seemed to be focused on helping each student to become the best person he or she can be. Teaching the “whole person” was very important to her.

### **Lea**

Lea is a reflective educator who believes in teaching with a soft approach. She began her teaching career approximately 6 years ago. Her Master’s degree is in English, and she is the Writing Specialist at a small, rural community college in the west. Also,

Lea teaches two to three development classes in writing each semester and one creative writing class a year as extra load duties to her regular job in her college's learning center. Lea was my second participant, and our first interview occurred at her college in a faculty lounge on the second floor of the campus library. Since the interview occurred during regular school hours and her office is located in the learning center, the conference room was chosen to avoid interruptions from students and staff.

Lea seemed to be having a stressful day. She commented on the challenges of making it to mid-semester break and suffering from "shell shock." Then she said in a soft voice, "Well, I've read over your questions, and I'm not sure I do anything to promote student character development. I haven't had a chance to look at them again since you first sent them to me, but I've been thinking about it."

Because Lea and I are in a teacher's reflective study group together, I am confident from our past discussions that she does promote student character development by sharing power and by teaching with Parker Palmer's "soft eyes." So, I mentioned several examples of past reflections and she said, "Oh, okay," as if I had clicked her thinking into gear. Then, she began to narrate several different students' stories to emphasize her perspective that character development is linked to a student's motivation and is a very accidental or "hit and miss" process.

In summary, the brief introduction of each participant provides some biographical details, demographical information, the settings in which the interviews occurred, and brief statements of interest. Each participant shared a self-reflective involvement and great passion for teaching. All seven participants spoke about their students using soft voices and kind eyes. The participants were confident, but not overly confident as if they

are still seeking answers. The participants' campuses differed in size and were located in both large metropolitan areas and rural areas. The campuses were located in the Southeast, Mid-East, Southwest, and West regions of the United States.

### *Section Two: Developing the Textural Descriptions into Structures*

This second section presents the textural descriptions of the faculty members' perspectives concerning SCD. Most of the results are presented by using direct quotes to provide rich, realistic text. The section describes the *what*, *why*, and *how* of faculty members' perspectives that emerged from the data analysis: *what* the meaning of student character development was to the participants, *why* the participants cared, *how* they used different teaching methods, and *what* negatives and successes were experienced.

### *Sharing Meaning/Importance*

*Introduction.* The meaning of student character development was slightly different for each of the seven participants. The differences included environment issues, self-identity, good citizenship, political and social awareness, better persons, and motivation.

For Katie, the meaning and importance of student character development were connected to providing the environment for students to find their "center." Character development is connected to providing an atmosphere for authenticity, finding a place where the students can be themselves. This occurs through responsible negotiation. Katie referred to the process as "Levelizing." Care and attentiveness are the driving forces behind her teaching methods. Katie stated,

It's different things to different people and different terminology with that and so, from my standpoint, what morality is in the classroom experience doesn't necessarily come out of any kind of imposed thing from me to the students. It has

more to do with providing the atmosphere where they can find their center ... where they can be most themselves ...

For Mary, the meaning and importance of student character development were connected to learning who each student is and then helping the student realize who he or she is as a learner. The self-identity process is encouraged through dialectical conversations—listening and sharing conversations. She stated, “I think the main thing is getting students to recognize who they are as learners and to be honest with themselves. You know, these are my strengths, and these are my weaknesses.” When the students are able to accomplish this insightfulness, then they are able to own the responsibilities for their own learning. In this process, Mary also gains insight of the student’s abilities.

Having insight about the students helps Mary be a better mentor for the students. This requires good listening skills. She listens and gives advice when she feels it is wanted. She has learned not to jump right in with the advice, but to let the students decide when it is needed. Mary stated,

I try to be the listener, the non-judgmental listener. I will listen to what’s going on. ... And I’ve learned it’s easy for me to jump in and give ... lots of suggestions, but I know that, that’s not what’s needed, so I try not to do that. ... And I’ll ask, ‘Do you want me to do something to help you? Do you want me to make this phone call, or would you like to make this phone call? Do you want my assistance in this decision, or do you want to handle this on your own?’ And that’s something I’m doing more and more. ... I let them decide.

Decisions are a big part of student character development, and these decisions are sometimes the topic of the conversations. Mary often comments on both the bad and good decisions. She commented,

... I will have a lot of conversations with students about ‘... these are the choices I see you making. Why are you doing that?’ Or on the other hand, I will say, ‘Wow, you have made some really nice choices. I really like what you are doing.’ Or I’ll ask them, ‘What really is your goal here? What do you want to come of this?’

Dawn connected the meaning of student character development to citizenship.

Becoming a good citizen is an important issue for a democratic society. She stated,

...I think it's really important to lead them [students] into self-directed learning, so that they can get those analytical skills and things that they are going to need to do to be able to be successful citizens in a democracy. It's really important, especially with the glut of information they get, that they are able to analyze it and look for issues that are important to be able to see when there are flaws in logic and ... because if they can't do that, they are easily led, and that can be a problem in a democratic society.

For Cheryl, the meaning and importance of student character development were focused on self-identity, political, and social aspects. Her belief was that students need to find out who they are as citizens and then make the world a better place. She claimed that she did not always refer to this type of student development as “character”; instead, she used phrases such as “education for citizenship” or “development of an ethical sensibility.” However, she agreed that the meaning was the same.

Cheryl stated, “Character development is about having a sense of political awareness. To me that's very important.” While her meaning of “politics” covered the usual aspects of being a good citizen, she also clarified,

I define ‘politics’ very broadly in terms of understanding power dynamics. And so, when we're talking about literature and each other's work and each other's background, we're always working toward a consciousness of who we are in a social and political system, and to me that's really an important part of character.

For Cheryl, another aspect of character development is how students interact with each other. Cheryl added, “...They [students] need to maturely and with respect for each other deal with whatever challenges come up. And you know, I call that ... character development.”

For Sandra, the meaning and importance of student character development are concerned with developing a better person—someone who has the backbone to stand up

for his or her beliefs. She referenced Gus Lee's book *Courage: The Backbone of Leadership, Chasing Hepburn and China Boy* when she described character. She stated,

He discusses every integrity challenge not as a crisis, but a challenge, and it's a river. And you have a choice of wading in and drowning, running away, building your own bridge, or just wading in and standing tall and keeping your head above water. He says that every challenge creates some type of barrier. And he says that it's fluid; it doesn't always have the same shape. He's rather Heraclitian in that way. And how we confront the little ones, day-to-day is how we develop our moral muscle. We can't wait to show integrity when it's a huge crisis because then we won't have the moral muscle to deal with it. He says that will power has to be practiced. Moral ethics have to be practiced. So even in the littlest things, we behave in an integrous way. When you get to the big crisis, we know how we can behave. We find that we have developed our backbone.

Sandra believes the process of student character development relies on daily decisions; whereas, with practice the student becomes morally strong. By practicing with small daily decisions, the student develops ways to deal with bigger moral problems when they arise.

Also, the issue of respect is a factor in student character development for Sandra because it is an underlying cause for the rules that faculty and administration initiate for their student academic integrity policies. She explained,

The bottom line of an integrity study, an integrity policy, a disruption policy, an electronic policy, and an attendance policy is respect for your fellow students, respect for the teachers ... respect for yourself and your education—a respect for your own future as a place of integrity where you will live a life you can be proud of.

Tamera's meaning of student character development is concerned with helping the student become the best person he or she can be by teaching in a way that develops the whole person instead of merely teaching content. The focus is on the person—someone who is "... able to deal with what comes along." For Tamera, developing one's integrity to deal with everyday problems is important in the academic setting but also

afterwards in one's career. Tamera stated "I want them to learn. I want them to get out of here knowing something, and if somebody else does their work, that's not going to be the case." She continued, "We're here to educate, not only academically, but also morally and ethically."

Also for Tamera, becoming an ethical person extends beyond one's job or career.

She stated,

One of these days, your job is going to go away. Your profession is. You're going to retire, and you're going to hopefully at that point in time, have what it takes to enjoy the rest of your life, to be a good family member, to be a good citizen for your community, to be a good whatever. You know, if you're going to be a politician, be a good one; be an honest one.

Lea connected the meaning of student character development to motivation and to successful learning. She used narration to explain connections to character development and told several stories of students who have motivation and students who do not.

Later in the interview, she added to the meaning of student character development by talking about how students' motivations are affected by personal writings and self-identity. She stated,

... It just confirms my idea that personal writing [and] being able to use 'I' and to do narrative is so important because that's how we connect with who we are, and that's how we connect with expressing ourselves, and that's how we connect with writing. And the writing becomes important because it is used to explore something meaningful which is who am I in this world and what do I have to say?

*Summary.* As the participants discussed the meaning and importance of student character development, many different definitions emerged from the interviews. The first definition involved a prepared environment or atmosphere where students could be themselves. The second definition focused on self-identity and included mentoring and listening skills from the teacher to help students with decision-making skills. The third

definition included good citizenship and focused on analytical skills. The fourth definition involved political and social awareness. These types of awareness included developing an ethical sensibility to world problems, understanding power dynamics, and becoming skilled with human interaction. The fifth definition for student character development concerned helping students to become better persons. This included developing a “backbone” to stand up for what students believed in and creating moral muscle. The sixth definition involved student motivation and successful learning. While all of these definitions differed, the common thread throughout this section included the development of the whole person. This development was viewed through different lenses, but the views were always focused first on the betterment of the individual. From the betterment of the individual student, the focus often broadened to a better class as a whole, then a better community, a better country, and a better world.

#### *Understanding Personal Values/Worldviews*

*Introduction.* The participants’ personal values and worldviews were very diverse. They included spirituality, religions, political and social positions, and good character attributes, such as freedom, truthfulness, integrity, fairness, and self-discovery through reflection.

Katie’s personal values include a spirituality that allows for a subjectively created reality, a direct relationship with God, Christianity, and Sufism. Also, she believes in the importance of Social Constructivism and the relationship of self and other.

Being spiritual is an important and personal element that motivates Katie’s methods of teaching. Part of being spiritual is filtered through her beliefs that truth and reality are subjective. She stated,

I don't think that there's some objective reality out there, you know, that we're all trying to get at. I think that we are creating it together, self and other, in any given moment, and within that there's this huge moral ... nugget that we have to deal with. On the other hand, what also informs my outlook with the students is this very deeply spiritual sense of ... the divine in us and of course that is covered up, I think, through the veils of conditioning [and] whatever we do to get through daily life. And so, whatever we can do with each other to help see that in each other, that is the moral place that I hold deeply personal. I don't share that with the students.

Also, Katie admitted that she "...wants to have a direct experiential relationship with God." There have been times in her life when that relationship has been missing, and she stated that she is miserable without it. Also, she explained her beliefs in Anthroposophy, Christianity and Sufism by continuing,

I grew up very connected to God. We were Episcopal, but my whole life has been trying to find my way back to that place I felt at five when I could talk to the birds .... It was just a very different thing. So, my spiritual leanings are very much aligned with Anthroposophy. I really appreciate, cognitively, what Steiner is doing with that whole honorable ... Christ-impulse thing. The whole Pauline experience, not I, but Christ through me [is] fascinating stuff. You know, that's being a Christian. What's that? The hardest work there is on the planet. At the same time, I practice Sufism, so I'm a Sufi, and yet universal Sufism allows you to be whatever you want. You can be a Buddhist or whatever, but I do the mystical practice of Sufism because it amplifies my Christianity. There's no church that I can go to that makes me feel the way the Sufi practices do. And so, it works.

Although Katie tries to avoid placing labels on herself, she also admitted to being a Social Constructivist. Being a Social Constructivist is linked to her strong beliefs in the importance of the relationship between self and other and how that becomes a community. She stated,

By the end of the semester, you're a community. How did that happen? What's that about? ... Maybe [it is] the human need for creating narrative—creating metaphor and autonomy out of the moments together and their meaning. Or another way to look at that is the whole Bakhtinian thing ... the whole self and other meeting at the crossroads of their voices and creating this thing together to go on.

Unlike Katie's religious beliefs, Mary's commitment to student character development is connected to her own personal values, which include freedom, uniqueness, and a spirituality that centers on mindfulness and caring. She admitted,

I know that I like to work under pretty free rein. I don't want to be micro-managed. I want to be independent. I want to know what my jobs are and let me do them. ... I think that guides my work with the students. I want them to have a sense of independence and a sense of voice. 'I'm different from him, so I need to do things this way.' So, that's okay with me. ...I would say that's the main value.

As well as valuing independence and freedom, Mary also values uniqueness both for herself and for her students. Differences are qualities that should be honored. She said,

I kind of march to my own drummer. I think differently than other people. I live a life that's, you know, unique. I think it's not very common. And so, I ... like finding who is the individual deep down inside, so I can honor who he or she is.

When asked whether or not she was a spiritual person, Mary clarified that she was definitely spiritual, but "...not in the traditional religious way...." Although she never mentioned Buddhism, she did describe her spirituality, using Buddhist concepts. She stated, "...That's part of the spiritual piece, you know. That presence ... try to be here now ... be mindful, be attentive, but also, holding them accountable, not just being nice all the time." Later, she referred to the Dalai Lama by saying "that's the great thing about liking what the Dalai Lama says. I mean how could you go wrong with compassion and mindfulness and caring?"

Dawn's interest in student character development is linked to good citizenship. She believes that being a successful participant in a democratic society partially entails the citizen's ability to analyze information and make logical decisions. Not only is it faculty members' jobs to prepare students to be good citizens, but also, part of faculty

members' responsibilities is to talk about morals and values and how they influence the way one teaches. She stated,

We talk about that in the classroom and look at what kind of experiences you had growing up and what you emphasize, what's important to you ... and often times the major conflicts come up when there are differences in values or morals...

Dawn wants her future teachers to realize the diversity of values and how their own values might not correspond with their future students' values or their future students' parents.

When I asked Dawn what was in her background that made her care so much about teaching in a developmental way, she responded,

I think it's because of my background as an early childhood teacher. I taught preschool for eighteen years. So teaching young children, you teach hands-on. I mean that's how children learn. ... And when I started [teaching college] ... because of that background, [I saw] ... how powerful that is as a teaching tool. ... So, I think I bring my early childhood background into training adults....

Sandra admitted that she is proud of her values. This pride extends from her personal life to her career as a teacher. Her worldviews and personal values are based on family influences that aided her as she was growing into adulthood, her day-to-day experiences, and her admiration for certain historical examples.

Family influences created the basis for Sandra's spiritual background. Her father was a minister and she stated, "Maybe, you're born with it. Maybe, it's in the cradle. My brother and sister and I are the same way. ... So I guess it's a family thing ...." She indicated that while integrity and character might start in the cradle, it is not where it ends. Becoming a person of character is a process throughout one's life. She continued, "I hate it when people take advantage of other people, and I always have. When I was a little girl, I stood up for people who were being taken advantage of in school." Standing

up for one's beliefs was an important issue for Sandra's family. She stated that her mother's favorite phrase was "have the courage of your convictions." Sandra grew up believing "if you can't stand up for it, you don't really believe it."

Another family value was truthfulness. Sandra explained,

It was inculcated very young in all of us that we tell the truth in all things. And we learned that if we told on ourselves before we got caught, it was better. We felt better, and the punishment was less. We even got a say in what the punishment would be. That was my mother; she was a childhood educator, and my father was an educator theologian.

Sandra's day-to-day experiences have led her from having integrity as a student to being an integrous teacher. When questioned why it was so important to her, she responded,

How much of your homework did you have stolen from you when you were in school? How often were you tempted, you know, when you were a kid, and you managed not to? You know, you managed not to cheat, and you took the bad grade because you didn't. ... I have always hated to see people taken advantage of...and to me, cheating off of someone else is taking advantage of their hard work, and I hate that. I hate it when somebody cheats from me.

Sandra continued with a story about a fellow-classmate who wanted to cheat from her during her school years and what happened to him later in life. She stated,

There was a fellow when I was in school who tried to cheat off my paper, and I wouldn't let him, and he started the most vicious rumors. Happily, I have lived through them, and I don't know if you heard about the case of the fellow in Christian broadcasting. He was one of the first Christian music entertainers who was indicted on federal fraud for embezzling from his company. ... That was him. But you see, they never caught him; even though, we had an honor system, and I was on the honor jury. They never caught him, so he wasn't stopped when it didn't matter so much—when he could have learned something. And then here he is in his late fifties, and he's under federal indictment, felony fraud for embezzling from a Christian recording company. And I think, you know, this was a brilliant musician who started in a fledgling industry; contemporary Christian music was brand new. He was the first recording artist that worked. He could have been stopped and taught. If anybody had listened to those of us that he was cheating from. So there, I do feel very strongly about it as you can tell.

Sandra felt passionately about academic integrity as a student and still feels that way today. She said, “I believe in what we’ve done [at our college]. I believe in Honor Codes, and I believe in putting this concept [academic integrity] and some discussion of it in every single point of our curriculum.” She hopes that one day someone at a university where her students have transferred will say, “We find that your students have a stronger moral center.”

For Sandra, developing a strong moral center is not just influenced by one’s day-to-day experiences; it can also be influenced by persons or events in history. She stated,

I enjoy the Romans. When we get to the Roman culture [in our Humanities class] people tend to think of the Romans from the viewpoint of the early Christian historians who only speak of the decadence. And they don’t see the Roman emphasis on loyalty, integrity, and family values that was more of Rome—for a good part of Rome’s history in that way. And so when we get there, we spend a good bit of time with Marcus Aurelius and his *Meditations*, and then I ask them to write their own meditations on what is the major part of man. What is the ruling part of your personality? And they have to make a statement, ‘My ruling part is...’ because, you know, Marcus Aurelius gives us a list. Is it nature? Is it authority? Is it tradition, you know, whatever, and it’s hard for them to make up their minds.

Cheryl’s values and worldviews stem from her Jewish background, her political views, and her experiences of being a minority student in her elementary school. From these experiences, she has developed certain passions. Cheryl stated, “Fighting for what’s right certainly imbues my work.”

Cheryl stated that she would not label herself spiritual, and while she does not desire a great deal of religion in her life, she understands the role her Jewish faith plays in her life. She stated, “Being Jewish is an important part of my cultural idea. I am more culturally Jewish than religiously Jewish.” For Cheryl, being Jewish is connected to her passions for her values, both socially and politically. She admitted,

First of all, they don't call us 'People of the Book' for nothing ... and, you know, because of the history of the oppression of the Jews, you'll see a disproportionate number of American Jews involved in social causes. Jews were disproportionately involved in the Civil Rights movement among whites who were involved in it. And ... there's a high degree of political involvement in the Jewish community. Now, there is a religious mandate to perform what we call "dikunolam" repair of the world. But for me, that mandate suits what I want to do; it's language I can use with my son to explain why it's so important that we do good works. ...I didn't even hear that word in childhood, but I think that that value is just sort of culturally imbued.

So, Cheryl's Jewish faith was one reason for her involvement; however, she also believed that when and where she grew up helped to mold her values.

Cheryl claimed she has been a political activist her whole adult life, and she believed that this was rooted in the social unrest during her childhood. She was a child during the turbulent sixties. She admitted,

I was touched by the activism of that era. I remember Kent State day very well. I was a child but it stands out. As a child, I was wearing anti-Nixon buttons. So, you know, I came of age in a particular period. I'm sure that had some impact.

Also, circumstances of Cheryl's childhood and her environment affected her ideas and values. She continued,

I also became very conscious of race and class conflict during childhood as a minority white student in a majority Black and Puerto Rican from the projects elementary school. Of course, I didn't really understand at the time, all that was going on. But ... my parents had gotten a divorce, and I moved from a very affluent all-white community in the suburbs into Manhattan—into what we now call the inner city, but we didn't call it that back then. And there was a lot to adjust to, and so having had the experience of being a minority and seeing how race and class were working to create huge conflict in my school, I'm sure that had an impact, as well.

Another possible influence on Cheryl was feminism. While her mother was not part of the feminist movement, she was interested in it. Cheryl stated,

Well, my mother certainly identified as a feminist, and I identified as a feminist from the age of eleven when she brought home the first issue of *MS. Magazine* in 1972, and I remember that well. But I wouldn't call her an activist really, but she

certainly was a pioneer to some degrees in terms of moving in the work place, but no one else in my family I would describe as an activist or my peers, particularly. But there was a certain amount of stuff in the air, you know, as I was coming of age ... I was always involved in politics to some degree or another.

Also, during her years as an undergraduate in college, Cheryl became politically active and did some anti-nuclear work. This interest continued into graduate school. She stated,

I think in graduate school is when ... well, one thing that happened was that I majored in American studies under-grad. And I chose that because it was so broad because I couldn't settle on a particular discipline, but it turned out that I was reading the same 19<sup>th</sup> century New England lost men over and over in religion and philosophy and literature, etc., etc. So I graduated from college. I took two years off before full-time grad school. I went to grad school part time during some of that time. I started reading the stuff I hadn't gotten. So, I started immersing myself in African-American literature among other things and women's literature .... So, when I got to grad school, I was really excited to read the stuff that I hadn't gotten to read as an under-grad and was just drawn very heavily to the literature that was the most political. And I took a few Marxist theory courses and feminist theory courses and so on. And, you know, I was drawn to it, and it suited me when I got there.

These social constructivist theories continue to suit Cheryl, as she influences her students to be interested in their world around them. This is evident in her teaching styles and assignments that she gives her students. For example, she encourages group work and assigns her students essays on social and political problems in America's 21<sup>st</sup> century. [This is discussed in more detail under the section "Experiencing Student Character Development—Linked with Teaching Methods."]

Tamera's values and worldviews stem from her Christian background, her pride for her college, and her sense of fairness and equality. She wants her students to be able to handle any problems that come their way and to become the best people they can possibly be when they leave her college. While she does not speak of being a Christian, she hopes to influence them by being a good example.

Being a Christian is very important to Tamera because she grew up in that faith and links her religious background to her moral choices. She stated, "I was just raised in a Christian home. You do your own work. You don't cheat." Also, she believes that her faith gives her the foundation and strength for dealing with problems. She pointed out, "... I've dealt with a lot of things in my life, but I've got what it takes to deal with them. I've got the background; I've got the support system to deal with them."

Another personal value for Tamera is being a good teacher and having pride in the reputation of her college. She stated,

I care about the reputation of this college because I've been here since I was 17 years old, as either a student or an instructor, and it's just home to me. Yeah. It's my college, and I don't want the college to have a bad mark on it because of a student or something I've done.

She includes some of the other faculty, as well. She pointed out,

... One thing about this campus and it's getting to where it's not so much that way anymore because so many of us are retiring, but many of them [faculty] are just like me. They've been here their whole life. This is their home and it is very important, and the students are very important because we are having second and third generation people ... going to school here. So you know that person's mother or that person's grandmother or grandfather.

Also Tamera believes a sense of fairness is an important value. For instance, a person should do his or her own work and not cheat. Also, Tamera stated, "It's not fair for some students to get extra time after certain students work hard to turn something in on time." So, for Tamera, fairness involves students receiving the grades they have earned and finishing their work with the same amount of time as everyone else in the class.

Lea's spirituality involves being a "Buddhist practitioner," and the values that she mentioned during the interview included the "clear-seeing" that includes not caring, compassion, and reflection.

For Lea, "clear-seeing" is the ability to transcend the suffering of emotion-filled passion in order to remain neutral to manipulation and to experience compassion for others. It involves a process of not caring. She offered the following steps for not taking a student's behavior personally:

Number one, to recognize his behavior for what it is—it's pure manipulation from my point of view. Number two is not to take it personally, and number three is not to go into a punishing mode in response to it, but to maintain a neutral stance and just try to be as civil as possible. And it has worked. In my mind, those three things are a quality of not caring. I don't care so much that his behavior is like this because I'm not trying to change his behavior. I'm trying to change my response to his behavior, so that his behavior doesn't get in my way as I teach this semester.

Lea continued with her own question, "... How do you develop compassion out of ... passionlessness?" She admitted that it was an interesting question for which she does not have the answer. Then, she added, "Perhaps, I'm not compassionate. I don't know."

Later in a second interview when asked for some clarification, Lea offered that being compassionate was having an open heart. She said, "There's a phrase 'Idiot Compassion' in Buddhism that refers to someone caring too much and not taking care of oneself." Lea believes that compassion comes from a place of no pity and is an equal exchange. It is not condescending in any way. She offered the example of Mother Theresa and added, "She's energetically involved."

Another value that is very important to Lea is reflection. She stated, "I put a very high value on self-reflection." With reflection, a person becomes a better writer and thinker. She stated, "Students don't get enough mirroring. They don't know who they

are.” She continued, “The disease of the world is not knowing who you really are as a compassionate person.” Reflection allows one to self-discover.

*Summary.* The participants’ spiritual and non-spiritual views were varied. Their spiritual views ranged from Eastern to Western philosophies and included Sufism, Anthroposophy, Christianity, spiritual mindfulness, Judaism, and Buddhism. Their secular or non-spiritual values and worldviews included political stances, social positions, historical perspectives, and good character attributes, such as caring, freedom, truthfulness, integrity, fairness, and self-reflection. Katie, Sandra, and Tamera shared a spiritual value of God and Christianity; however, Katie was also interested in the spiritual values of Sufism and Anthroposophy. In addition, Katie shared a common value of Social Constructivism with Cheryl who was culturally Jewish. Both Mary and Lea valued mindfulness of the moment; however, Lea was a practicing Buddha and Mary was not. Mary believed in the importance of being autonomous and living a unique lifestyle. Both Cheryl’s and Dawn’s values were connected to good citizenship. Cheryl, however, was interested in political activism and the Jewish ideal of “fixing the world.” So, the participants were a diverse group. Only two participants were close in sharing the same religion of Christianity and some of the same values and worldviews, Sandra and Tamera. The one value they did all seem to share was their love for teaching.

#### *Experiencing Student Character Development—Linked with Teaching Methods*

*Introduction.* All of the participants used some type of participative teaching methods to facilitate student character development, and they were all interested in teaching beyond the content material. The three structures that appeared for *how* the

participants experienced this teaching phenomenon were creating an environment, teaching the whole person, and modeling behavior.

*Creating an Environment.* A purposely prepared space or atmosphere was created for students by all seven participants. Their prepared settings were physical and mental and included relationship changes, dialogue, and high expectations.

For Dawn, group assignments create a certain space. They are a good way for students to form connections and to develop relationships with other students. Dawn believes these relationships can increase student character development. She stated,

So, we get really nice dynamics. And part of that with Early Childhood happens because they are in multiple classes together. So, they really get to know each other. And those are the ones who really feel responsible to their groups, so if they're doing group projects, they'll do everything possible to get everything there. ... [Groups] give them an opportunity to share with each other ....

Similar to Dawn's method of using group assignments to create an environment, Katie uses a participative style of teaching that is based on a learning environment for building relationships. A moral learning environment is created by providing a place for shared learning. Katie stated,

If you create the space for free interaction ... people will find their way with one another. ... I use lecture, sure. I mean, we all do. And I think it has its wonderful uses, but very early in the semester ... I share with them [the students] my philosophy of teaching and learning. That we have all these ways at our disposal, and I teach them ... actually, I use Peters and Armstrong's "Typology of Teaching and Learning." They call it T1, T2, T3.

After Katie works to create a learning space by introducing these theories to her students, she further prepares her students by stating the following to them,

We can relate this way, with each other, about the information. ... We can break from that [lecturing] and use small group activities and therefore you get to be dialogical with your peers and you know, you are still reporting back to me, and we may have a discussion about the material that way. ... And then, also, when we're ready, let's look into collaborative learning.

The created moral community is based on cultivating trust and finding one's center. Katie explained,

Something has shifted. Now, maybe we go back to that idea that the students have found their center, so that they can operate out of that in a way that doesn't inflict their view on somebody else in such a way that it's hurtful or that it's ... reacting to one another out of the periphery. You know, students—any of them can do that. It's something else. So, you know, the mystery is in between.

Creating a moral community together within a classroom becomes a narrative of “self and other” through an organic process Katie referred to as being alchemic. She stated,

I never really thought about it in narrative terms before. There's something interesting about that. You know, we have these classes where we just wonder at the beginning of the semester, how are we ever going to gel? ... And then something shifts. I like to use the word “alchemy” for it because it really is like turning it into something else. By the end of the semester, you're a community. How did that happen? What's that about? And so ... maybe [it is] the human need for creating narrative, creating metaphor and autonomy out of the moments together and their meaning. Or another way to look at that is ... the whole Bakhtinian thing. Of course, it's nice and handy that he's a literary critic, and he can put it in those terms too, but [it is] the whole self/other—meeting at the crossroads of their voices and creating this thing together—to go on.

Sandra's focus is on creating a different type of environment; she is interested in providing an atmosphere of academic integrity. At Sandra's college academic integrity is a top priority, so it is very important to set standards and to make the students aware of the policy expectations from day one. Sandra stated,

I give them the first day handout with what is required in the course, and the college academic integrity policy is there for them to check out. I tell them to read, first the handout, then to go to the websites that are given there. One is on attendance and one is on academic integrity. And anything on the syllabus and what we talk about the first day is fair game for the first three pop quizzes. So, right off the bat, I quiz them on our academic integrity policy ...

The success of an academic integrity policy relies on students understanding exactly what is expected, so Sandra has tried to make it very specific on her assignments when they are permitted to work together. In most cases, when students are permitted to work together, they are still expected to write up their own answers. She continued with the following example:

... Their first assignment to be graded that they take home and work on is this great flood assignment. And, I ... make a specific recommendation or requirement that they may work on it together but each of them must turn in his own work, and that I expect the final answer on that to show individual thought but to feel free as a group to war game it with their friends, family, ask anybody ...

Another method of making the students aware of expectations is by using posters on the bulletin boards throughout the buildings on campus. Sandra commented, “They’re just kind of cheeky if you noticed ... our posters, ‘Prioritize honesty.’ “Make it your goal to be honest.”” The posters are a constant reminder to all students that academic integrity at TC is very important.

Sandra gave several additional examples of how the atmosphere in classrooms is created for high expectations at her college. Sandra stated,

... The teacher who’s teaching piano down the hall has ... a new one [poster] on her board every semester for each of her sections. And the students are invited without her watching to sign. They put their signature on it to say, “I embrace this policy.” And then after that, they do group work and if somebody is sponging off the rest of them, [they might say something like] ‘Excuse me. We did our work. You go sit over there.’ And she has actually watched her students exile people from ... Fundamentals of Music and Music Appreciation. These are core courses. And the students will actually exile [students] who didn’t do their homework. If they’re not bringing anything, and if they’re going to get a grade off of what everybody else did, they won’t share. And she said, ‘It’s just a scream to watch them defend their own good work.’

Sandra continued, “That’s sort of the atmosphere that I love to see created....”

Because she also hears some students talk about how other teachers do not focus on academic integrity. She admitted,

... I hear my high school voice students say, ‘I wish we had something like this because nope, the teachers don’t even care.’ It isn’t that they don’t care—they’ve given up and so have a lot of college teachers.

Sandra is not one of those teachers. She has not given up and believes that teaching integrity is part of a college teacher’s job. She stated, “But, that [integrity] has to be taught. You’re not born with that. I don’t know if we’re born cheaters; I don’t think I’m that cynical. I just think that ethical systems have to be taught.” By creating an atmosphere of academic integrity, students are taught the importance of good character.

Dialogue was another technique used in various ways by the participants for creating effective learning environments. The methods included discussing values and morals, creating classroom narrative, addressing diversity, making students aware of policy expectations, and practicing compassionate dialogue.

Some participants helped students develop relationships by using dialogue to discuss values and moral concerns. Dawn stated,

...In some of the ... Early Childhood classes, one thing we look at is what are your values and morals and how does that influence how you teach? We talk about that in the classroom and looking at what kind of experiences you had growing up and what you emphasize, what’s important to you. ... Sometimes when you’re teaching, the conflicts that come up, not so much with the young children, but with the parents of young children, often times the major conflicts come up when there are differences in values or morals where they don’t see that, that’s a problem, and you see it as a major problem. That’s where some of those conflicts come in because “I can’t back down from that. I truly believe in that. I truly value that.” So how can I say, “Oh well, no problem.” I can’t do that. For one example, when I taught preschool in Denver, we had a huge mix, it was in the heart of downtown Denver, and I had a little boy who would call all the African-American children “Niggers.” And I said, “You can’t use that term here. That’s

not acceptable.” You know ... and I talked to the parents, and I said that he’s saying this, and they said, “So?”

In the home, Dawn knew she had no control over what words were being used because people have different values, but she wasn’t going to allow degrading words to be part of her classroom environment.

For Dawn, discussing issues by talking, listening, and telling stories of past experiences are techniques that she uses to emphasize certain points to her students. Often these narratives are based on morals and values and how they influence teaching. Also, Dawn uses case studies because they promote dialogue. They can be analyzed and discussed by teams or groups.

Katie and Lea both use dialogue to create classroom narratives, but their methods are different. Katie’s focus is on community building, and Lea’s focus is on helping the individual become a better person.

For Katie creating narrative includes instructions to students on how to dialogue about diverse issues in a moral way. She explained,

It’s very dialogical ... and that aspect speaks to that shared power thing. You know, it’s not a monological system going on. ... What I bring into the classroom really early is instruction on how to dialogue with one another ... in a very respectful way, which is lecture, but then we actually play with it and do it, and they get better and better at it. And then they start asking as soon as ... [they] come into the room, “Can we dialogue today?” Then you know you’re getting closer to that whole collaborative learning thing. And then I also, especially in freshman comp, purposely provide assignments on very polarizing issues: race, violence, and ... gay marriage. ... Students are then in situations where they see their bias come right up in front of them. And because I’ve already taught them how to dialogue through that when that does come up, then we have to kinda’ go back and use that skill in order to work through those frames because sometimes you can get really divisive and that to me, is the essence of moral work. If you can help facilitate somebody seeing their own crap and dealing with somebody else seeing their own crap, and then here you are working it out. Oh, my gosh! You know, how do we go on now? Because this is the world, we’re all different. So I provide a place for that. I think that’s basically the nuts and bolts of it.

Katie believes that through conversations, students can learn a great deal about diverse ideas. By allowing the classroom to become its own story, it causes students to realize how important each student is to the other person. Katie clarified,

It's also I think what's in the back of my mind all the time is how we're all waking up on each other. And that's a feeling—you can take that a lot of ways, but we're slowly waking up on each other, how important we are to each other through dealing with these issues. Maybe, it's a pressure aspect. You know how I said with alchemy, you have to have time and pressure. Maybe that's the pressure.

On the other hand, Lea's method of classroom narrative was focused more on just the individual. She confronts students directly and honestly. Lea used the following example of a conversation she had had the morning of our interview with a student who has taken her class several times and has never purchased the book:

So, this morning in class, there he is and I say, 'Ahh, Mr. Underachiever.' And so we started talking about that and this is right in front of all the other people in class. Because he is this kind of character, he did not mind being out in the spotlight and talking about what is going on with him.

Lea believed she could have this type of conversation with this particular student because he respected her, and she respected him. She continued,

You have this ... kind of underachiever approach. And because you are getting a psychology degree, you are going to be so valuable out there. You are going to be able to help so many young people who have the same exact approach as you do. And he said, 'Yeah, I hope so. And I'm already gonna' know where they're coming from.' I said, 'Exactly.'

Lea felt she was not addressing him in a sarcastic way that would actually be putting him down for his behavior. She felt as though she was lifting him up with encouraging words as if to remind him of what his goals are, so that he will see how important his classes are to reach those goals. Lea admitted,

There had to be a gentleness in that conversation because it was very exposing to the student. ... I wasn't angry; I wasn't irate; I wasn't accusatory. We were

having a type of exploratory conversation about issues that could be very inflammatory. So, that to me was the beauty of that conversation and that he allowed that to happen. He allowed himself to be put on the spot. So I think that he's a person who grows from that kind of encounter.

Tamera's focus is on creating an atmosphere of academic integrity with dialogue. She believes many of the students arrive at college deficient in "good moral, ethical character. ... If it's not being done until they get here, this is where the buck stops."

Because academic integrity is a top priority at Tamera's college, it is very important to make the students aware of the policy expectations by using dialogue. As Tamera pointed out, "If you don't tell them [students] what's going to happen or that we have this in place, how are they going to know?" To help create awareness, Tamera stated,

... We let our students know right up front, the very beginning of the semester that we do have this policy. It's in our student handbook. We go over it with them, not reading it to them, but just letting them know. Hey, this is how it is. We take it very, very seriously and tell them what's going to happen if they're caught cheating ... doing any of the things that we feel would be against the integrity policy. ... If we have to, we may talk about it again during the semester if something comes up, and it always does.

Also, students are made aware of the academic integrity policies in their orientation classes and their master student classes, which teach their students about the college and how to study. The students are also taught how to avoid cheating. Tamera continued,

We're trying to give them tools that will teach them how not to cheat with the online tutoring that will allow them to submit a paper and get critiqued on it and then get it back because some of them just don't know. They've never been told.

Another indirect way of communicating the importance of character and integrity is using posters on their bulletin boards throughout their campus. When I mentioned seeing those posters, Tamera replied,

We've got those in every building on campus. And that was something we did before we ever put this policy in place. When we first convened the integrity committee, that was something we felt we needed to start from the very beginning. Let them know, you know, it's important. Your integrity is all you've got really when the day is done—so to start thinking about it.

Mary's participative style of teaching includes compassionate dialogue with each individual student. When asked about compassion, Mary stated, "I think it's very important. And you know we spend a lot of time listening and questioning and asking and allowing them (students) to talk." Even if a student's story sounds fictional and Mary disbelieves the story, her caring attitude toward the student does not change. She commented, "...The individual is still the important point. I may choose to disbelieve the particular story, but I still care about the person."

Also, Mary believes that other faculty and her immediate administrators share in compassionate dialogue of students to help them succeed. Mary commented,

I obviously care about students because I will go to other faculty on a one-one-one basis and ask, "What can you tell me? What can I do?" You know, I communicate with their coaches, their advisors, other instructors ... so, the one piece that comes across is that hopefully that compassion piece. I will follow up on a student; I will go and ask. I will share my concerns or my successes. My administrator (and I) ... talk regularly, and I tell her what goes on in the class. So, I think, that she knows that I am very student, individual focused. And even ... our V P of Academics has sat in my classes, and he has remarked that it's obvious that ... I care. 'It's obvious you know a lot about these students. You addressed everybody by name. You asked about—what about this and what about that? You knew the details,' so that comes across in my teaching.

For Cheryl, high expectations are part of an effective learning environment. She believes that teaching is "... caring about the development of people's sense of ethics and political consciousness." Teaching in this manner requires a delicate balance of requiring certain high expectations that include setting standards, requiring respectful dialogue, and caring enough to make the environment a safe place for students. Cheryl explained,

So the challenge is to learn how to push each other while respecting each other and laying a safety net at the same time for people's feelings, but to be able to engage in intellectual discourse, which by its nature is challenging, without feeling like one's self is at stake here. And so, I tell them [the students], for example, not to pick topics that are too close to their hearts because they've got to work on topics that they can see multiple sides of that they can discuss and be challenged on without turning purple.

In summary, all seven participants were interested in creating an environment or atmosphere for their students. The prepared settings were physical and mental and included relationship changes, dialogue, and high expectations.

*Teaching the Whole Person.* Teaching the whole person involves different layers of teaching strategies. For the participants in this study, teaching methods included focusing on personal development, collaborative learning, choices and accountability, and self-directed learning.

All of the participants focused on teaching beyond the course content material in order to facilitate the student's personal development, as well. They were all interested in the student as a person and helping him or her develop into a successful family member, better citizen, and effective employee.

Cheryl's participative style of instruction is focused on teaching the whole person. When I asked Cheryl during our second interview to clarify what she meant when she talked about the "whole person," she answered,

When I refer to teaching 'the whole person,' I do mean teaching for intellectual and personal development. By 'personal development' I mean in part psychological development (their self-confidence, their comfort with examining their own assumptions and reflecting on their experiences and biases, their self-respect and willingness to take action to empower themselves (relevant for example for women in abusive relationships), the growth of their ambitions (i.e. helping somebody who has set themselves the goal of becoming a paralegal think about striving for a law degree), overcoming a fear of failure or debilitating perfectionism that can interfere with academic productivity, and so on. 'Personal development,' as I use it, pertains as well to my students' ethical development and

citizenship, i.e. commitment to the community through everything from voting to taking an active, advocacy role in issues that matter to them.

Cheryl believes her college, as a whole, is interested in promoting personal development and being conscious of students as “whole people” who require more than an academic education. Part of her college’s mission is preparing students to become good citizens and successful employees. Cheryl stated,

We are very conscious of students as whole people, in part because they come to us with such complicated lives ... lots of baggage, families, responsibilities, and so there’s really no escaping from that whole person. ... We’re dealing with their tragedies, constantly.

For Dawn, teaching students to be successful citizens in a democratic society requires faculty to prepare students in a more holistic manner which includes more than just teaching course content. Preparing them to be good citizens is part of faculty members’ responsibilities. According to Dawn,

Part of our job as faculty is to prepare them to participate in a democratic society, and you have the role of colleges not only preparing them for work...[but also] allowing them to have experiences that are going to force them to think on deeper levels....

Another strategy that was used for teaching the whole person was collaborative learning. This allowed for the following to occur in the classroom setting: dealing maturely and respectfully with each other, “Levelizing” for equal voices, sharing opinions, and developing lesson plans together.

Cheryl requires students to be more respectful of others when they learn in collaborative ways. For this reason, Cheryl uses group work in her classes. Cheryl stated,

They work in writing groups. ... Sometimes the small group work is designed for some other purpose. For example, each group will be assigned a poem at one point of the semester that they then need to work on and teach to the rest of the class. So, all that group work is also designed to help them deal with each other respectfully. There are challenges that come up, of course, with group dynamics.

And they need to maturely and with respect for each other deal with whatever challenges come up. And, you know, I call that a part of character development, as well.

Cheryl also allows students to facilitate some group activities to enhance collaborative learning. She explained,

They work a lot in their small groups, and sometimes, again depending on the task, sometimes what I do is I assign someone to be in charge of the group, someone to chair it, to facilitate it, to basically do my job. Sometimes, it's a small enough group that that's not necessary. Most of their writing workshops are in groups of three or four, but sometimes they're doing things in large groups and in those situations, I want someone to be in charge.

For Katie, "Levelizing" the classroom is a technique she uses to provide for collaborative learning through equal voices. This technique focuses on teaching beyond the curriculum material. The collaborative learning style Katie referred to was the Peters and Armstrong model. Katie explained why she prefers their model,

I find that so often it's really cooperative learning. The thing that makes it truly collaborative, at least in their model is—and I guess I'm kind of privileging their model because it's a little freer—is that there is an equality. There really is an equality among the teacher and the students in how she positions herself and how they can therefore position her. So, it is a container where something new can be created about the subject matter. You are not focusing on the authority in the room. So I share with them that there are all these different ways that we can negotiate this space in this classroom. And they like that. They like doing it and they ask early on, "When are we going to do this collaborative-learning thing?" And it just kind of organically comes into happening. So, one day we just sit down and we do this. We arrange the chairs differently, and then we operate with one another very differently from then on—in that space, doing the regular lecture—the authority model thing or a shared peer thing, or—"let's all sit around here and create something new out of this."

When I questioned Katie about the "organic timing" of collaborative learning and how the organic process occurs, she replied,

It happens. You kind of know when it's not time. But then when it happens, it happens. Very early in the semester, it's almost like we don't know the ground rules of each other yet. So, what happens—this is an interesting question because what's happened in between the first day and the point where we can interact that

way is—something moral has been built up between us. We know how to responsibly negotiate that space of freedom. You know, when you are sitting around and you are sharing power around the table and you are discussing or you're dialoguing about X, there is a moral community there already.

For Mary, another method of collaborative learning that focuses on teaching the whole student is a technique that gives students added confidence. There are times when Mary does not take the stance of having the most important opinion or the most knowledge about a particular issue. She stated,

I encourage students to question me on things in class and often concede, "You're right. I was wrong. Or good point! That goes in addition to what I've said if you look at it in this point of view." And I don't have a problem with that.

One of Dawn's methods for teaching the whole person instead of just content is to allow her students to work in teams or groups, and she acts as the facilitator instead of a lecturer. As her students work collaboratively, their confidence grows. She stated,

...In Early Childhood, they (students) are going to be planning as a team, so sometimes they develop lesson plans together. And I've provided the materials that they are going to need to be able to do that and any questions, so I'm more there as a facilitator for that and allow them to generate their ideas. And if they are way off track, I'll try to lead them back. ... Some classes will be really verbal and say, 'Oh, I wish we could do more lesson planning' ... or whatever it is, and I find that a lot with my Early Childhood classes because they're small classes. ... They are very comfortable saying, 'Oh, can we do this?' or ...they're very free about asking questions and that kind of thing ...

For the seven participants, teaching beyond the course content to include methods of collaborative learning that might facilitate personal growth and character development for the students was the focus.

Allowing their students to make choices and requiring accountability were both a part of another effective teaching strategy used for teaching the whole person. The participants utilized this strategy in various ways, including the following: providing structure but allowing students to make choices within that structure, permitting students

to make decisions and be responsible, allowing students to choose projects, involving students in social issues and world problems, empowering students and allowing them to share governance, and involving students in rule and policy making. Also, students were given the following options: choosing projects, deciding on due dates, helping to grade others in group projects, taking ownership in their own learning, and being accountable.

Cheryl believes that providing structure in the classroom allows students to make decisions and to be accountable for those decisions. First, she allows students to personalize their assignments. For example, in her composition classes, she offers them suggestions for their topics, but they are not limited to her suggestions. She said, “They’re just ideas to get them started.”

Second, while Cheryl claims it is more of her classroom than her students’ classroom and she does not run it like a true democracy, she uses a participative style of teaching that moves some of the decision making to her students. She offered,

... There are ways in which it is our classroom. So, most of our time is spent discussing and so, in my ideal classroom, I am simply facilitating their discussions. Those ideal moments don’t come every day. But that’s what I’m always working toward, a situation where I’ve sparked something and they take the ball and run with it. And I’m just facilitating it and making sure that people aren’t talking over other people. ... I don’t take votes, except on very rare occasions when ... if for example, we have a day where we could be doing small group workshops or a full class workshop where all of us talk about one or two people’s papers. Sometimes we’ll take a vote on that. ‘What do they think is the best use of our time?’

Third, allowing students choices is effective when students realize they are responsible for their own learning. For Cheryl, freedom requires structure if you want students to succeed. After discussing a certain assignment where she allows students to make decisions, she explained,

There's a lot of freedom in there. I have found in my years of teaching that structure is critical for my students, but at the same time, they need some wiggle room within it. But when I first started teaching, I had much less structure in my assignments, and they floundered. And, I would say that my development of my courses, of my composition courses in particular over the last twenty years has been largely a process of increasing the structure. And now I'm very happy with the degree of structure I've had for the last several years ...

When Cheryl was questioned if her technique of providing structure in order to allow freedom was to eliminate chaos, she quickly added,

It's not only that I don't want chaos; I want them to succeed, and I want them to learn specific skills. And, you know, when I first started teaching in the 80s, there were a lot of comp textbooks that had this notion that you would give your students a bunch of things to read. And then they would often be inspired and write something, some how, some way that was triggered by those readings. Well, that doesn't work. And I had to learn it the hard way because you know I started thinking well the textbooks must know what they're talking about, and they didn't. They really didn't. Students could not cope with that, and so ... I just got more and more and more structured as the years went by. And my syllabi are the longest on campus.

So, freedom is created within the space of the allowed perimeters. This is part of the safety net mentioned earlier that Cheryl tries to provide because she cares that her students succeed.

By allowing her students to make choices, Mary encourages them to take ownership of their learning and their decisions about learning. Mary's classroom set-up lends itself to accomplishing one-on-one conversations with students because she allows students to do their lab reading when it is convenient for them. Mary stated,

... It's not me leading the class but them coming and going and doing their lab work sort of on an independent basis. ... I sit down and I check-in with everybody at that time, face-to-face, very quietly, very intimately ... because the individual insight is really important to me.

Mary makes it clear to her students that she "...does not want to own their responsibilities ...." She has said the following to students, "I'm giving you this freedom

to come at a time that works better for you ... but you're responsible, just like everyone else, to have the work done."

Mary admitted she even allows students to take responsibility by deciding what they are going to do for the class period. She stated,

There are times when I'll say, 'Hey! This is what I intended to do today, but are we needing something different?' And if they can come up with a good alternate ... I don't do that very often. But if it comes up ... 'You know, we'd really like to work in the library. We'd like to do this, this, and this.' 'You know, that's a great idea! Let's go.' And those can be some of our most productive days.

As well as encouraging her students to be responsible for a class period, Mary has also allowed her students to choose certain projects. She gave the following example:

I had always given a class various different projects, you know, typically, I would assign three projects. Finally, I said, 'Hey, normally, I would assign three projects and this is what they would be. I've asked you to do the first, so that one's out, but normally, I would go ahead and assign two more projects: one would be community service and one would be a presentation. But you guys are clever ... Why don't you choose what your next project is? These are the things I would have made you do, but I'm going to open the floor. What would you like to do?' And each and every person can make his or her own decision. And it was interesting in how difficult it was for them to grasp what I was allowing them to do. And I admitted to them. I said, 'I'm giving up a lot of control here. This is really hard for me, but ... you design the project. It has to be about reading, and it has to relate to our topic ...' So, that took days—literally, two ... class periods or more to process. 'Well, what do you mean? Well, what if we did this?' 'Yeah, that would work.' 'Well, what if we did that?' 'Yeah, that would work but ... I think you need to add something to it.' ... 'Well, could we work as a group?' 'Yeah, but ...' You know, I kind of guided them because everything they hit me with was brand new information. I had to reconsider. And I had them sign contracts. 'I intend to do this ... by this date.' So, I even let them choose the due date.

Mary offered another example of allowing her students choices. She sends her students out into the community to share their reading expertise. She mentioned the following possible locations: a nursing home, hospital, or elementary class. The students are permitted to choose where they go, to make the arrangements, and to decide what

reading materials they want to take with them. After they complete this community assignment, each student has to write and to reflect about his or her experience.

For Cheryl, character development is connected to problem solving as citizens. Therefore, analytical skills are an important part of student accountability. She integrates this higher level of thinking into their writing assignments. Cheryl explained,

... Each of them [the students] has to identify some social-political economic problem they see in America of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, now or coming down the pike at us. And then they have to come up with an analysis of the problem that lends itself to proposing solutions to the problem; maybe not solving it entirely, usually not solving it entirely, but ameliorating it in some degree. ... For me that is also an important part of this idea of character, to get students to understand that they all just can't sit back and say, 'You know, the world's going to hell in a hand basket,' but there are ways we can think about things and take action about things. And that we are responsible for trying to make the world a better place.

Involvement is a requirement in Cheryl's classes and critically thinking about world issues is not always comfortable for the students. She added that her students are "... taken aback sometimes by the requirement to think as much as they do ...." But this approach is successful for her, and some of them [the students] "... will choose a topic they've already been activists on and some go on to become activists in the areas that they've worked in ...."

Dawn believes that faculty members can facilitate student character development by empowering students. This is more likely to occur when students are able to make decisions and direct their own learning. She said,

I think it [empowering the students] is an important part of [student character development] because if they don't have a sense of ... 'I can have some say in what goes on in this classroom,' ... if they really don't feel like 'I have power, it doesn't matter, so just give me whatever I need and I'm done.' But if you say, 'You are responsible for your own learning,' ... [this gives them more power].

Also, Dawn facilitates student character development by sharing governance with her students in the classroom. She wants her students to analyze, make decisions, and be responsible for what they choose. Some of the projects and activities are accomplished individually. For example, she stated the following:

Last year was the first year I tried doing learning contracts with them (the students)...where they had to set up...What is it you want to learn? And they chose their own projects. And I did have some students who were very much tell-me-what-to-do kinds-of-students. And you just have to give them more direction, helping them think things through.

As well, when Dawn's students are involved in collaborative projects, she allows them choices about forming the groups. Dawn clarified, "I let them do that. They self-select. And sometimes, I'll have some that will change groups." This is one more way that she shares control in the classroom.

Tamera believes involving students in policy making is an important way to share governance. She stated that when the administration and faculty members of her college were "looking at what ... [they] wanted to include in the policy, there were some students involved. Not only from the survey that ... [they] did, but there were some students involved in the development of it."

For Sandra, a way of empowering students is allowing them to voice their opinions in setting up policies and making decisions. She shares governance with her students by allowing them to make their own rules. She stated, "I learned this when I had a dormitory. If the students write the classroom rules, they abide by them better."

Also, Sandra shares governance with her students by allowing them to make decisions for themselves. She stated, "... In the voice classes, we set goals together. In my humanities and music lit classes, we even set goals at the beginning of the semester."

By making rules and setting goals, her students gain power to direct some of their learning experiences. At her college they usually do not refer to this process as “power sharing”; instead, they call it “responsibility sharing.” Sandra agreed that it is semantic.

Tamera holds her students accountable for their actions. Methods utilized include the consequences for cheating and strict policies on late work. Her college’s academic integrity policy allows some cheating students to expunge a grade of “XF” from their record, which indicates a student received an “F” for cheating. Tamera explained the process by using a certain student as her example,

One that I’m thinking about, the student was expelled from the class he was in; he got an “XF,” but he was given a year. He had to take online ethics courses. He had to keep a journal and keep in contact. He had ... a mentor of one of the committee members and had to meet with them many times. And then part of the process was he had to go to two venues, two different venues and do sort of like the AA thing. “Hey, I’m John Doe, and I cheated.” And this was a dual credit high school student, so the committee decided they had to go to not only their high school because there were many in that high school that knew what happened and then one other high school and do a little speech. And then once he completed that, the classes and those two things at the different high schools, then he could get the “XF” off.

Tamera continued her explanation of the students’ responsibilities in more general terms,

... They have a certain amount of time to do it, and they have to check off all of those different things. So if they’re really serious about it, and they’re really sorry about the fact that they cheated or they plagiarized or whatever it was they did, then they do have the opportunity to get that off. If it had been a repeat offender, then they might not have had that opportunity to take it off. But it just depends on the committee.

Another way Tamera holds students accountable is by not allowing them to turn in late homework or other assignments. She said, “I don’t take late papers because I feel like that’s another character building trait.” She feels that when students graduate college and are on the job, they will need the skills for accomplishing tasks on time.

Students will also be required to make some type of decisions when they are on the job; therefore, Tamera believes sharing governance with the students is another character building process. Several ways she shares governance in the classroom is by allowing students to help manage cheating in the class, to do group work and grade other classmates in the group, to accomplish tasks on their own, and to involve them in some decision making.

Students help to control the cheating in classes by reporting on each other.

Tamera gave the following conversations as examples,

Some of the students came to me and said, 'Ms. TB, I hate to be a tattle-tale, but so-and-so went in there and took a blank Scan-Tron, picked up somebody else's, and was copying it down with the other students there.' I had not gone in yet because they'll get in there early some times. If the class is at 9:30, they may get in there at 9:20, 9:25, lay their homework...because I've told them, 'Put it there at the very beginning or I won't take it.' And they just walked up and answered theirs off of somebody else's paper, turned it in, and they had their homework. So, I went and got me a little box, and it was just a plain old shoebox and cut a hole in it. And I said, 'Okay, put them in this box.' Well, down the road another student came to me and said, 'I witnessed so-and-so going up, taking somebody else's paper out of the box, (because I didn't have a lock on it) and answering their homework and putting it back in.' I even had somebody say. They did it in pencil. This person who did it in pencil said, 'I watched so-and-so walk up, erase somebody else's name at the bottom where you put your name on the Scan-Tron, put their name, and put it back in.'

Tamera offered another example of how she shares governance with her students.

Sometimes she allows her students to grade each other when they work on group projects. She stated,

We'll give group projects sometimes. And I have the final say on the grade, but in those team projects, they are allowed also to grade each other, based on the amount of work or whatever it is. They are allowed to write a little paragraph, give the grade that each member of the team should get, and the other members of the team are doing the same for them, and then explain either why they gave them this good grade or why do you think they should get marked down? You know, did they not participate? Did they not do their share of the work? Whatever they feel and then they turn that in and their final grade is based not only on my

observations, but also, their input to the grade, and they know it. And many teachers in this department do that because we do a lot of team work, knowing that once they get out of here, they're probably going to be on a team somewhere in some computer department.

Also, students are encouraged to share governance of themselves by Tamera trusting them "...to do what they are supposed to do." She continued, "I leave it up to them. I don't remind them all the time what assignments need to be done."

Lea has firm beliefs about issues of accountability and students meeting her half way. She said, "Your engagement as a teacher with the students is based on their engagement with you." If students are not interested in being engaged, she believes it is not her problem. She continued,

I'll bend over backwards for students ... and once they've realized that's the way to get my attention, then more and more of them will do it. And that's what I see in my Monday night class. More and more of them are engaging me through, 'Hey, Ms. Williams, I've got this ready. Could you look at it?' Then through, 'Oh, I left it in my room.' That's been a very interesting discovery for me.

One of the strategies the participants used for teaching the whole person was allowing their students to make choices and requiring them to be accountable in various ways. These are lifelong learning and living skills.

Making choices and being responsible for those choices is closely related to self-directed learning. Most of the participants focused on self-directed learning as another strategy to teach the whole person. One participant opposed self-directed learning because she saw it as an antithesis of community building.

Tamera believes self-directed learning is recognized when students become more responsible for their academic actions and choices. This allows students to be empowered. She stated, "[I] ...trust the students to do what they are supposed to do. ... I

leave it up to them ... what needs to be done. You know, assignments ... that's their responsibility."

For Dawn, self-directed learning is important for student character development because that type of learning is based on analytical thought. Analytical thinking is important for understanding societal issues and for making good decisions that lead to good citizenship. Dawn has experienced the classroom becoming a shared space where students can self-determine what they need to learn. Dawn explained,

... We really do have that sense of this is our classroom. It's not mine; it's not yours; it's ours, and we're working on this together. And I can bring in my expertise and experience in the field...and the theory part on a deeper level, but they can determine what aspects of their learning they want to do or go into deeper.

Also according to Dawn, self-confidence is part of the motivation involved in self-directed learning. She discovered this when she asked students to set up their own learning contracts and to choose their own projects for the semester. She said,

...Part of it's confidence, I think. I think there's a huge aspect of self-confidence that comes with self-motivation ... "Oh yeah, I can do this." ...Those self-motivated students didn't need that much direction. And they could say, "This is what I want to do."

Cheryl encourages self-directed learning by allowing students to be in charge during small group work. She explained,

... And then there are opportunities where they [the students] are told, 'You need to now take charge of your own learning, and you're going to do that by working in these small groups. Whether that's to discuss a piece of literature or work on each other's drafts, you're in charge of what you learn today.'

Katie questioned the whole idea of self-directed learning. She does not believe it is a viable theory because it goes against her theories of collaborative learning. She stated,

I did a paper on self-directed learning for a conference back in 2005. You know, that's a huge field. It's been around for a long time. But the idea was that self-directed learning is truly something that you can not do alone. Which is why I think they let the paper be at the conference because I was questioning this entire thing, you know. But what I was thinking, though, and it's been awhile since I've looked at that paper; again, it's a very Bakhtinian thing. We are always connected to the other. Always. And yet we can participate in this thing and call it self-directed learning and use resources, and okay, what I'm doing is neat. I'm doing this thing. Is it really? And we are **so** connected; although, at times we may not want to acknowledge that. We are in the soup together.

In summary, all seven participants believe in the importance of teaching the “whole person.” Teaching beyond the course content involves various teaching strategies. For the participants in this study, teaching methods included focusing on personal development, collaborative learning, choices and accountability, and self-directed learning.

*Modeling Behavior.* Another teaching method to facilitate student character development is modeling the type of behavior that faculty members want from their students. Some of the participants spoke of modeling behavior in the following ways: cultivating trust, being prepared for class, and mirroring integrity.

Katie explained how she tries to model the behavior she wants when she is creating a moral community in her classroom. For a “Levelized” environment, she must build trust. Katie explained,

How do you cultivate trust? I guess it starts with me and how I interact with them from day one. You know, if I don't model it, they sure aren't going to do it. And what is that? Well, I have to be in the space, responding out of my center with them. They have to see me doing that, and maybe there's a little bit of invitation there involved—and trust that's going to happen.

Also, Cheryl focuses on modeling the behavior she wants her students to adopt. She pointed out that modeling good character is extremely important for student development. Since she wants her students to turn assignments in on time, then she feels

that she needs to return assignments in a timely fashion. Doing so is related to being respectful. She offered the following:

I can't say that I am always modeling it as I would like to, so for example, I tend to get behind in my grading. Last semester was an extreme example. I was sick; I had a car accident, and it was a disaster. But, I certainly believe that if I want them to get things in on time for me that I need to get things back to them on time, and I'm always trying to improve on that. I think it's important that I model treating everybody very respectfully, and ... being prepared. So, I certainly expect my students to show up prepared, so I wouldn't show up unprepared. So, it's, I think, critical for faculty to model what they want.

Having integrity is a good character trait that teachers are able to model to their students. Several of the participants offered examples of trying to influence their students' integrity.

Lea stated, "... As a teacher, if I'm going to influence a student's character development, my character has to be upright."

Sandra offered a similar statement, "... We have to be role models first." As an example, she offered a story about a world music course that she took with the College Music Society, and she was introduced to an instructor from Ghana. She stated,

West African drumming percussion practices taught us drumming techniques by teaching us some songs ... of his people. The songs that they sing are either 'Good morning; it's a happy day; let's all have a good day together; everybody be good to everybody in the village' is one of their biggies to 'The child is running to the pit; the entire village must stop him. Quick everyone run.' These are the translations of the lyrics of the songs, and we learned to sing the songs and he said, 'Only the elders are allowed to sing these songs because they are the wise ones. Children may not sing these songs; they may only listen. They get to participate after their rite of manhood or womanhood. But, they learn. And by not letting them sing them, they want to sing them.' And he said, 'Music and the lyrics of songs are the strongest teaching tools we have in a non-writing society.' And I thought, in any society.

The two points Sandra was making were that ethical behavior can be taught by modeling behavior and sometimes it is taught indirectly. She continued with an example of this from her college,

So in our department, we've sort of worked off of that principle in the performing arts—that putting a bad performance on is an act of non-integrity. Integrity is doing the best you can do when you perform. You put it in everything.

In addition, integrity is important in Sandra's department, and it is important to the whole college, and everyone who is involved. She stated, "T. C. is committed to a high standard of integrity. The board, administration, faculty, and staff pledge to model the integrity we expect of our students."

For Cheryl, modeling the actions of good citizenship is important if a teacher wants her students to be good citizens. She explained,

It's really important to me that my students vote. So, you know, I don't vote because I want my students to vote, but I think it would be really awful if I told them to vote and then didn't vote. Yeah, I think that modeling is important. And part of what I'm modeling for them is a kind of way of being a thinker in the world, so I will model intellectual challenge for them.

Modeling the behavior that teachers desire of their students is another teaching method to facilitate student character development. Some of the participants spoke of modeling behavior in the following ways: cultivating trust, being prepared for class, and mirroring integrity.

In summary, participative teaching methods were used by all the participants in this study to facilitate student character development. The three structures that appeared for *how* the participants experienced this teaching phenomenon were creating an environment, teaching the whole person, and modeling behavior. The importance of creating an environment was revealed by all seven participants. These purposely created

environments were both physical and mental, and they were geared toward changing relationships, encouraging dialogue, and maintaining high expectations. The second structure to appear for how the participants taught was expressed as teaching the whole person. To accomplish this way of teaching, a focus was placed on personal development, collaborative learning, choices and accountability, and self-directed learning. The third structure that appeared for how the participants experienced teaching for student character development was modeling behavior. This occurred by cultivating trust, being prepared for class, and mirroring integrity.

#### *Experiencing Negative Aspects of Teaching for Student Character Development*

*Introduction.* For the participants, a few negative aspects exist for teaching in a participative way to encourage student character development. First, this type of teaching takes more time and work. Second, a certain amount of risk is involved. Third, changes can occur in relationships. Fourth, certain challenges can arise.

*More Time and Work.* Most participants experienced the negative aspects of taking more time and work for teaching with a focus on students' character.

Katie admitted, "I'd say that a ... negative would be that it takes more time. And we're not about time, here, right ... or extra time?" So in order to teach this way, the teacher must always think about what she or he needs to cover "...how one is going to allow for what one has to do." Katie continued,

You know, it's interesting in a session of collaborative learning ... you have to be completely over-prepared with the subject matter because you're not doing the whole lecture thing ... you have to know the moment to come in and give it at a certain time to elucidate whatever particular thing you're actually giving them. And that's another possible negative for a lot of people because that's a lot of work.

When Mary allowed her students to decide on their own projects, it took a lot of extra classroom time. She stated, "...that took days—literally, two class periods or more to process."

For Dawn, engaging students by using hands-on learning and group work requires additional planning versus offering a traditional lecture. According to her, some of the challenges involved in the planning are as follows:

...They (the students) don't see all the planning that goes behind that (group work), so I can hand that to them and say, 'Okay. Now, you have to develop those levels that are going to help you be able to work together.' And looking at ... Okay, is this a project that would work best with just pairs of students? Is it broad enough that you could do the whole table? Because if you don't plan it well, and you say, 'Okay, this is a group project,' but really there's only a few things to do, ...you end up with two of the five of them doing it and the rest are sitting there drawing or whatever. ... So there's a lot of work that goes in the front of doing the group work or hands-on kinds of things that they may not see.

Dawn tries to plan her Child Development classes as three-hour classes because involving students in hands-on learning and group work requires more time; however, having the longer chunks of time also requires more planning. Dawn explained,

...Longer classes ... challenge me to make sure that I'm really pacing it well and changing methods and doing a variety of things because to keep them engaged for an hour and a half to three hours, you have to do more hands-on and involve them more...

For Katie, more effort was also involved in teaching for student character development because of pre-conceived traditional roles. She stated,

... I think that's an exceedingly difficult thing to encourage [providing an atmosphere for character development] in any classroom because we come to the teaching and learning situation with so much conditioning. You know, I'm the teacher; I'm supposed to do this. I'm the student; I'm supposed to respond this way. So, traditionally, we act out of these roles that maybe keep us from really getting to whatever is really there.

For Katie, traditional teaching styles do not provide classroom atmospheres where students are able to find out who they are or to create anything new together. The information is flowing in one direction from the teacher to the student. No space is provided for creating any new reality by questioning and discussing. It takes more time and work to create these leveled spaces where power is shared.

For Dawn, planning a class setting for hands-on learning and group projects requires additional work and time before class, and teaching this way can also create more work and time during class with students who are not as prepared or motivated as other students. Dawn stated,

...The ones who needed more help ... I met one-on-one with them and they could say, 'Oh, well you know, I'm not sure.' So having discussions about 'what have we looked at so far or when you look at the Table of Contents in your book [what] would be something that you're interested in.' And taking a lot more time with them to determine what might be something ... [they're] interested in.

According to Sandra, a focus on academic integrity is more work. She was in charge of the task force that wrote and implemented their academic integrity policy for their college. The task force knew that implementing this policy was going to be a lot of extra work. So, before the group wrote the policy, Sandra went to the board of trustees and said,

We're about to tackle something enormous, here. We're going to study the situation and write a policy, but we aren't even going to address it if you're not going to back us up. If you don't want to do it and if when we have students challenge it, once we've written it and you've approved it, if afterwards you know you're going to waffle, we don't want to start. This is a lot of work and it's all extra, and you're not paying us for it.

For Cheryl, extra time is spent "... ruminating and worrying ... both before and after class. She added,

Could I have done this differently? Better? How else could I have handled that? How do I want to handle this tomorrow? How am I going to start this discussion? How do I want to direct this discussion? So yeah, it is challenging, but it's the challenge that makes it worth my while. I have to do this because I think it has meaning. And if I'm not talking about things that matter, then this profession has no meaning to me. ... I have to do something because it matters. And ... so, yeah! It certainly has its challenges. I have certainly had my share of them.

Tamera stated that it requires additional work. A long, arduous process occurs when a student receives an XF grade for cheating and wants to expunge it. For many teachers, it would be much easier to just turn their heads and pretend they did not see it occurring; then, they would not have to take the time and effort to help the student progress through the various stages required to remove their "F" from cheating.

*Risks.* Additional negative aspects of participative teaching included risks and the feelings of vulnerability experienced by some of the participants. The risks were associated with faculty members exposing themselves to inquiry that might lead to a critique of their professionalism, failing their students in some way, or being deceived by their students.

By choosing to teach differently, some instructors risked feeling vulnerable, opening themselves to peer scrutiny and criticism. For Katie, the risk of peer scrutiny reminded her of a Goethe poem about stepping out and being vulnerable to grow and to become more than just a troubled guest on Earth. She admitted,

You make yourself entirely vulnerable. And that's scary for a lot of people. If you don't operate on a philosophy of trusting that you must die before you die... that whole wonderful Goethe poem "The Holy Longing" thing. So, you have not experienced this to die, and so to grow, you are only a troubled guest upon the dark earth. But that whole process of being vulnerable in the moment to criticism, to someone coming in and negotiating that moment together. That's scary.

Katie continued,

I think that you run the risk of not being taken seriously by your peers if you talk about it with people in such a way that it's open game, and in a way, operating through life with that as your paradigm is very sacred stuff. . . . It just means that you're working on it in a different frequency. So if you are kind of spreading it thin for everybody to see, everybody's going to poke holes in it, which is fine. I mean, that's what people do. It's a critical world, but that's not what it's about necessarily. It's for people to look at and then try out through experience themselves if they want to because you did it and they have to follow it. That's the other part. That's what's even so awful to me about giving a collaborative learning talk during in-service because I can say all this and I've been doing this and students love it and great. But it doesn't mean a barrel of monkeys until somebody actually goes down that road and tries it. So, in a way, it's its own worst enemy. So, those are the negatives if you want to call them that, but I guess, for me, I couldn't teach any other way.

For Mary, there was the risk involved with students not passing because they failed to come up with a project. Mary added, "I tried it for, I don't know, maybe two, three semesters, and in the end it just eventually fell apart. They wouldn't take enough ownership to continue the process."

Also, Mary believes faculty members risk being deceived by students when they are compassionate and try to build relationships with them. She likes to spend time listening and questioning them, but at the same time, she realizes that certain risks are involved with this type of open dialogue. Mary continued,

There's always the risk of being lied to. You can be very compassionate, and oh my gosh, they've got your ear and they will tell you stories. And, I try to listen . . . up front in a nonjudgmental way but I also try to keep my filters on inside to decide—when am I being worked? And when am I hearing the truth? So, a student can come and give me a long, long story about the death of whomever and part of me will just be compassionate up front, yet there's a piece behind that's . . . "Well, golly. Situation A has happened and situation B has happened, and so geez this story now is a little bit suspect. I'm not going to call you on it. I'm going to let you tell your story, and I'm going to make decisions as I would for any student.

For Cheryl there are always risks of someone being offended or having different values. She stated, “Yeah, you run a risk when you talk about issues, but I wouldn’t want to be in it if I wasn’t running that risk.”

In the first interview, Lea expressed no negative aspects for teaching with student character development as a focus. In the second interview, she spoke about “stepping out on campus” and how that is a type of sacrifice of oneself. It is a type of daring to be different. As an example, she used a Zen expression, “Don’t move—just die.” She continued, “Stepping out allows the criticisms.”

*Changed Relationships.* For several of the participants, classroom climate and relationship changes were discussed as negative aspects of teaching with a focus on student character.

For Sandra, the negative aspects of atmosphere and relationship changes were addressed. When honor codes exist, sometimes students struggle with issues of peer pressure and relationships. Sandra explained,

It can build suspicion. It can build barriers. It can create difficulties for students—of ‘do I turn this person in?’ The social stigma can be there; there’s plenty of that. And I have no magic way of confronting that. But I do think that is a negative side that really scares people off from trying to do anything.

Also, faculty members struggle with how to handle atmosphere and relationship changes when they need to report students who are cheating. Sandra continued,

Then you just have an atmosphere of suspicion, and that was brought up by one of our faculty members. ‘I don’t want to live in an atmosphere of suspicion.’ Another one said, ‘I’m not a policeman.’ And I said, ‘Well, that’s fair. I’m not asking you to be a policeman at all. I’m asking you to be a champion for your honest students. Make it positive, not negative.’ ‘How do you do that?’ ‘Well, I don’t know; somebody tell me.’ Then the conversation begins.

Tamera experienced having three students turn in exactly the same assignment. When she confronted them, “One of the girls just really got upset....” She was not upset that she had cheated, but she was upset with Tamera because they all received zeros on the assignment. Tamera stated, “It ruined the relationship we might could have had.” She continued, “...It can cause a riff in the communication between you and the student.” So, relationships can suffer.

Being too honest can affect relationships with students in a negative way. Mary stated,

I try to be very honest with my students. But being honest can have a negative side for her relationships with students. There are times when definitely I’ve been too honest, or the honesty was too pointed. And that sends them running. They can’t face you again because they are not ready to hear that about themselves. So, yeah, the negative is—you may lose them because they’re not ready, and perhaps I misread them or maybe I read them too carefully.

So, one of the negative aspects of trying to promote student character development is that relationships and classroom climates can change if students are caught cheating or they are confronted with information they are not ready to hear.

*Challenges.* For some participants, various challenges emerged involving specific management issues, feelings of failure, assessment problems, classroom conflicts, definition issues, and perceptions.

For Mary, a participative teaching style for student character development has several negative aspects, including problems with management and failures. Allowing students to do their own planning versus offering a traditional lecture requires more management. According to Mary, some of the challenges involved in the management of participative teaching were keeping track of students and what they intended to do. She stated,

...Each individual would say, 'This is what I intend to do and this is the day I want to have it done by.' So, I mapped it all out on an Excel spreadsheet, saying, 'Okay, students 1 through 17 said they are going to do X by these dates.' So the management was checking in. How are you doing? Did you remember what date this was due on? You said that you were going to have this done on April 1<sup>st</sup>. So, that was an issue. I had to ... I tried to stay on top of that when I didn't need to, but they would often forget that they had that contract.

Another management issue for Mary concerned grading and maintaining fairness.

She explained,

Because I had loosened it up [by sharing governance]—what's ... [the] common criteria you grade something by? Student A chooses to do a literary view of African-American literature; Student B chooses to interview someone and write that up, and Student C goes out into the community reading with the pre-schoolers. You know, even though I thought it was a great idea to let all three students do what they wanted to do, how do you tie all that together and come up with a single grade without creating a new rubric for each individual? So, perhaps what needed to happen was they needed to determine how it was graded, also.

Another challenge for Mary was dealing with student/faculty relationship

disappointments. She stated,

So another negative aspect is the amount of energy you put into these students only to have them ultimately make a choice that's so disappointing. It's like you believe in them and believe in them, and you encourage them and you work on them and you help them make good decisions. And you guide them forward saying positive things. And gosh, you build and you build and you build, and in the end, they choose to go back on drugs or they choose to ... you know, they make a lousy decision over the weekend. And they're in jail, and it's the third time. ... I tend to really reach out to those kids who are the riskiest, but it's so disappointing; it's just so heartbreaking that there is so much potential there.

According to Sandra, another challenge for teaching focused on student character

development is the lack of assessment or assessment difficulties. She explained,

Somebody has to hit a crisis, and you hope they never do, but for you really to know if you made a difference—unless some student just says something random you have a moment of spark. Most of the time, you really don't know if you've had an impact, especially in a community college.

For Cheryl, allowing students to work together in groups instead of lecturing provides for the possibility of conflict. Cheryl commented, “There are challenges that come up, of course, with group dynamics.” Students are required to be mature in this type of teaching and learning setting. Sometimes, the students do not react in a mature way. Cheryl stated,

We talk about always challenging each other’s ideas and not attacking each other as people. We talk about the ad hominem logical fallacy in the argument class in that context, and...there are some topics that are harder than others when they come up. And I’ve dealt with all sorts of hard situations over the years. Dozens! Dozens of situations!

When Tamera begins to talk about academic integrity, several challenges arise at the beginning of each semester. For example, she has found that “... Some people don’t know what academic integrity means.” She explained, “If you don’t come right out and say cheating or something like that, they don’t know what the word ‘integrity’ means.” Also for Tamera, another negative challenge is being “looked at as a fuddy-duddy ... [or] as a hard-nosed whatever.”

In summary, some negative aspects exist for teaching in a participative way to encourage student character development. First, more time and work are involved. Some reasons for this include preparation issues, extra time for classroom groups and projects, preconceived traditional roles, student choices which take more one-on-one conferences, implementation of academic integrity policies, worry, and rumination. Second, certain risks are involved. These risks are associated with exposing oneself to questioning and critiquing from peers and administration, not being taken seriously, failing students in various ways, and being deceived by students. Third, some changes can occur in classroom environments and relationships. Honor codes and academic integrity policies

cause some students to worry about their peer relationships. Also, student and faculty relationships can change when students are caught cheating. As well, relationship changes occur when dialogue becomes too honest. Fourth, certain challenges can arise. These include special management issues, feelings of failure, assessment, classroom conflicts, definition problems, and perceptions.

*Experiencing Positive Aspects of Teaching for Student Character Development*

*Introduction.* The positive aspects of teaching in a participative style are the great relationships and community building that can occur. Another aspect is the positive effects for students. Last, it can be more challenging and rewarding on a personal level.

*Great Relationships.* The ability to create relationships and moral communities with students was a positive aspect of teaching for Katie. She believes that the teacher must provide a “levelized” space for students to find their “center” and to create meaning together. When this occurs in the classroom, a community of attentiveness and care emerges. Katie stated,

Our classrooms are everyday life contingency-laden Petri dishes. And so, it works for me to ... be able to, now, put this into other terms that are only intuitive, but it's helpful for these theorists [such as Goethe] to come in. I can put it [as] a different aesthetic ... a name for the different aesthetic that I'm using in the classroom with the students that allows us to create community. ... It's one that allows for contingency ... the percessual, the process of your coming to know each other in the subject matter—something that also uses time to become the thing itself. And that's alchemy. Alchemy is time and pressure to create something new.

Katie continued,

It [teaching] is very pro-perceptive. You know, we kind of feel-out what it means to be in community with our students through how we teach. And here's the other noun coming into play with us. It's 'self.' They have their 'selves.' [They are] negotiating each other. This is really wonderful soup.

Another important part of creating a community and constructing something new together is the cycling of action and reflection that occurs. Katie said, “It’s creating a way of going on together, which is a very moral project. You essentially train yourselves how to look at yourself doing what you’re doing as a group, calling attention to that as you’re doing it.”

Another way to build relationships with students is by being honest with them. According to Mary, some students are not ready to hear honesty, but “on the other hand, other students will come right back, ‘You’re right. That’s what I needed to hear.’ So, they kind of turn to you to become that person who ... keeps guiding them and helping them to grow.”

Also for Mary, mentoring processes allow the professor to witness his or her students’ growth and to create good relationships. Mary stated,

...Just watching these guys thrive, watching them become independent individuals. You know, I love that transformation of the timid. ‘I hate it here. I hate school. I hate everything about where I am,’ from a freshman, first semester freshman to this sort of blossoming sophomore or super sophomore who is kind of ... you know, kind of holds his head up high and looks people in the eye and says, ‘Hello.’ And, will have conversations and will influence others in a positive way, maturity. That’s the benefit. The success is not necessarily the grade in the class, and sometimes it is; sometimes a grade in the class is very successful, but the success [is] the person who has started to become his or her own person over the course of time.

For Mary, there is a strong connection between student character development and learning who each individual student is. An important part of knowing the student involves authenticity or being honest with both oneself and the student. For the student, authenticity involves recognizing who one is as a learner and taking responsibility for the choices one makes.

Cheryl conceded that if she taught differently, she would not get to know her students like she does teaching in a participative style. Cheryl stated,

I work best when I can make that one-on-one connection. And that's what I do. And as much as I can't stand grading massive piles, responding to their writing is a very big part of how we make that connection. I see what's in their head; they see what's in mine. We have an ongoing dialogue. Yeah, it's critical.

For Tamera, the positive aspects of teaching with a focus on character development are the great relationships and influences experienced by faculty members. One of the rewards of teaching is the formation of relationships. She stated, "If there's a mutual respect and mutual integrity between instructor and student, it's great."

Relationships are possible even after some students are caught cheating.

According to Tamera when students are caught cheating, it can be a negative aspect to the relationship with that student, or it can actually improve the relationship. She said,

... Not being a counselor, I don't really understand that, but it [being caught cheating] can make it [the relationship] better. I guess they just want to know how far they can push you...kind of like they do their parents. And, you know, there's more respect, I guess from one to the other.

When Tamera was asked whether she thought some of the students wanted to be caught or stopped from cheating, she added,

Yes, I have had some thank me later. Now not immediately, but on into the semester a little bit, [they] come back and say, 'You know, I really appreciate the fact that you did what you did.' So, I guess maybe some of them do want to be caught; most of them don't.

As a positive aspect, Lea spoke about the change in relationships she experienced in one evening class when students chose to be more responsible for their decisions and changing their attitudes. She stated,

I feel like there's been a huge shift in the Monday night class, when I think back to the beginning and how disrespectful and wild they were, and now how they're all coming along. ... I got pretty strict. Some of them came in late, and I said,

'I'm taking points off.' And then I relaxed in the course of the evening and I said, 'Okay, this has been a warning.' But now they're all there.

The class had a large group of students who all knew each other and Lea wondered, at first, how she was going to manage the rowdiness of the class. She was able to do this by improving the relationships one at a time. Lea stated,

...Then I just started making connections with each one. And they began to realize that I was okay, and I began to realize they were okay, too. There were a couple of girls I was worried about. Lo and behold, they were just fine.

*Positive Aspects for Students.* According to the participants, teaching for student character development yields some positive effects on students. Successful dialogue with students is accomplished both by listening and interchanging ideas. Mary stated, "I try to be the listener, the non-judgmental listener. I will listen to what's going on" with the students. Often times, this dialogue is about withholding her suggestions and allowing the students to make their own decisions. Other times, "...the positive aspects are just ... really good interchanges of conversations." These positive interchanges with students are usually focused on meeting the needs of the student.

The additional plans, time, and effort required to set up a group project can be a negative at first, but if Dawn is successful in motivating or having a positive influence on students, she believes that it later becomes a positive. She stated,

And again, that's more effort for me...at the beginning, but if I can get them engaged in it then...I have less work as I go through the project because they have that motivation now.

A positive aspect of participative teaching is influencing students and meeting their needs, which for Dawn should be the reasons for teachers to be in this profession. She said, "... Teaching is one of the professions that if someone no longer likes what

they're doing, or ... are burnt out, it shows so strongly and ... [they should] get out of the field...

For Dawn, the classroom is a setting for combined ownership, and power is shared to give the students opportunities to make choices about their learning. With these opportunities to make decisions and to be responsible, a student's analytical skills can be improved. When this occurs, the student becomes an independent thinker and becomes more self-guided. According to Dawn, forcing students to think on deeper levels is part of a teacher's responsibility.

Sandra's task force did surveys and talked with faculty and students before writing their academic policy. During conversations with students, Sandra realized that students accepted the importance of accountability when discussing academic integrity. Sandra stated,

I've asked the students, 'How can we make this positive?' And they all came up with the same thing. 'Everybody takes responsibility for his own work, and everybody protects his own work by not sharing it and not letting students get away with it.'

Another positive aspect is hearing about success stories from former students. When Sandra was at the 2006 Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) Conference in Boulder, Colorado, several other conference participants who taught at four-year colleges asked her if it was difficult teaching at a two-year college because there is so little time with the students. Teachers can plant seeds but never see them produce any fruit before the students transfer to a four-year university. Sandra responded to the question,

Ah, but this is a community college; people come back to the community, or they don't leave, and somebody that you taught, and you hoped you had an impact on, suddenly shows up and is a local high school choir director or the new football coach. ... I've had students who I felt were pretty iffy—about how they were handling integrity, getting their homework done and taking tests, and I had to

have some serious chats with them. And yes, do a little threatening and then later on have one of those students work in a bank and tell me that she just got promoted at her bank, and one of the reasons was because she was seen as a person of integrity that they could count on to do her job right. That's enough. One of the millions—that's the deal, you know.

During rare moments of conversations, a teacher catches a small glimpse of having made a difference in someone's life. Sandra continued,

I've noticed now that I'm retiring, I guess I'm more aware of it but it seems that every business I've been in, in the last two months in town for whatever reason, I have talked to a former TC student and almost everyone of them is someone who came through one of my classes: bank, grocery store—"I just heard you were retiring. Oh, I loved your class." It makes you feel just wonderful. ... [There is] the young lady at the bank who said, 'I remember what you said.'

Giving rewards to students who act courageously is also a positive aspect of focusing on student academic integrity. When Sandra found out about one of her students who stood up to her peers for what she believed in, Sandra "gave her a hero party." She told the courageous student to invite the other students who had backed her up to come along as well. Sandra stated,

It was so much fun. We went to a local tea house here. We have a tea room; it's just a little British tea room in a house downtown, and she could invite as many people as absolutely backed her up without any question of what she did and how she did it. It broke my heart; I only had to pay for three people plus me. I said, 'Is this all?' She said, 'Yes, the other people said I did the right thing, but I took too much of a chance.'

Another example of giving a student an award occurred when Sandra discovered that a student had accidentally been sold an instructor's text which had all the answers in the book instead of a regular copy, and the student told his teacher about it. Sandra pointed out,

A student of less integrity could have said, 'Yippee, I'm not going to show this to anybody.' She asked the teacher. And the teacher said, "Well, you know, I couldn't get one of those. Why don't we trade?" They traded, and then when I came to hear about it, as head of the task force, I created a certificate. I invented

one. We've never done that before. I do it in my classes. 'Caught you being honest.'

For Cheryl, her students find out who they are as citizens and then make the world a better place. Her students develop character by discussing and writing about literature. Cheryl knows she has succeeded when she sees her students grow in "...community commitment, ethics, confidence, and the like." She stated, "I chalk it up to the rewards of the profession and just take pleasure in witnessing it."

The students gain pleasure as well. Cheryl added, "Certainly, my students have a lot more fun than they would if I was standing up there lecturing about grammar."

For Tamera, being able to influence students is a positive aspect of teaching for student character development. She feels very strongly about her own spirituality and hopes to influence others indirectly. She stated,

I'm not going to preach to somebody. I don't want to turn somebody off, but I do find ways to interject my feelings and my beliefs just with a word or two. And I don't know that it'll ever make a difference, but that's something we'll never know. But I do bring that with me, and it's very important to me. So, I wish it was for everybody.

The participants felt that some of the positive aspects for students included successful dialogues, more engagement, motivation, opportunities for decision making and responsibility, improved analytical skills, and more pleasant learning environments.

*Personal Rewards.* Some of the participants mentioned the positive aspects of personal growth when they were tested or were made to feel vulnerable. For Katie, the criticisms and the feelings of vulnerability promoted personal growth. Also, it could help a teacher become more authentic by gaining self-knowledge. Katie added, "...You can look at it as a negative or you could look at it as putting the pressure on, so that you become more yourself because you've had that tested."

For Cheryl, teaching in a participative style is what makes her job worthwhile. The positive aspects of teaching in a collaborative way are that it is more challenging; therefore, it is more interesting. Cheryl admitted, “It is more fun. I mean, really, grammar is boring ... and we’re not here just to talk about grammar.”

In summary, many positive aspects of teaching for student character development emerged. First, great relationships and community building can occur. For one faculty member, teaching in a participative way focuses on creating leveled spaces for narrative to occur by coming to know each other in the subject matter. Also, honesty and authenticity help the students to grow through ongoing dialogue. Additional aspects of community building are achieved by making one-on-one connections and experiencing mutual respect and integrity. Second, students enjoy positive effects. One way this is accomplished is through successful dialogue that involves speaking, listening and interchanging ideas with other students and faculty members. Students also enjoy more engagement both in the classroom and in the community. This gives them the opportunities to make choices and to be responsible for their learning. Also, a focus on creating a better world and better citizens with improved analytical skills are goals for some faculty members. Other positive effects include receiving rewards for courageous or honest behavior, experiencing more fun while learning, and being indirectly influenced by some faculty members’ spirituality. Third, personal challenges and rewards emerged as positive aspects of teaching in a participative way for student character development. Some of the faculty members made similar comments of not wanting to teach in any other way because it makes their job worthwhile. Some talked about their personal

growth that was experienced from being critiqued or from feeling vulnerable. Some felt they grew in self-knowledge from being tested.

*Summary.* To summarize, the second section presented the textural descriptions of the faculty members' perspectives concerning SCD. Most of the descriptions were presented by using direct quotes from the participants to provide a richer text. The *what*, *why*, and *how* structures formed from the data analysis describe the phenomenon of teaching for student character development. The first structure answered *what* the meaning of student character development was to the participants. The various meanings included the following: providing a welcome environment that allows students to become who they are, encouraging self-identity development, evolving into good citizens, developing political and social awareness, becoming better people, and improving student motivation. The second structure focused on *why* the participants cared. Their diverse answers were linked to their personal values and worldviews and included both spiritual and non-spiritual responses, including spiritual mindfulness, Anthroposophy, Buddhism, Sufism, Christianity, Judaism, political and social positions, and good character attributes. The third structure responded to *how* the participants used different teaching methods. Participative teaching methods were utilized by all participants and included creating an environment, teaching the whole person, and modeling behavior. The fourth structure revealed *what* negative aspects were experienced. These included additional time and work, certain risks, changes in relationships, and specific challenges, such as assessment difficulties and conflicts. The fifth structure disclosed the description of *what* positive aspects were experienced, which included the following: great relationships and communities were formed; positive effects for students occurred, and the participants felt

challenged and rewarded on a personal level. These five structures are synthesized in the next section.

### *Section Three: Synthesizing the Phenomenon*

This third section synthesizes the textural descriptions of the faculty members' perspectives concerning SCD: *What* the meaning or importance of student character development was to the participants, *why* the participants cared, *how* they used different teaching methods, and *what* negatives and successes were experienced.

#### *Synthesis of Sharing Meaning/Importance*

All but one participant immediately answered the question of what student character development meant to them. The participant who did hesitate did so for just a few minutes. All of the participants answered the question with sincerity, as if it were a topic very close to their heart. The expressed meaning or importance of student character development was slightly different for each of the seven participants. The differences included issues involving environments, dialogue, citizenship, political and social awareness, academic integrity, and motivation; however, the common theme that prevailed was **self-identity**. All participants were interested in helping their students with lifelong transformational-type changes to become better and stronger persons.

#### *Synthesis of Understanding Personal Values/Worldviews*

The diversity of the seven participants' personal values and worldviews was extraordinary and unexpected for such a small group of faculty members. For example, their spiritual views ranged from the more liberal position of no spirituality mentioned, spiritual mindfulness, Anthroposophy, Buddhism, and Sufism to the more conservative

positions of Christianity and Judaism. Remarkably, six of the seven participants mentioned some type of spirituality.

Five of the six participants who identified some type of spiritual values linked those values to their family backgrounds. Their backgrounds were varied, but the values were linked to the faith or a variation of the faith in which they were raised. For example Katie mentioned Anthroposophy and Sufism as values she gained after she was an adult, but they were both additions to the Christian faith of her childhood. It was also interesting to note that the three participants who commented on being raised in the Christian faith remained connected to that particular faith as adults.

The participants' non-religious values and worldviews were just as diverse as the spiritual ones. They included political stances, social positions, and good character attributes, such as caring, freedom, truthfulness, integrity, fairness, and self-reflection. Two of the participants spoke about these values being important for the individual; however, the other five participants linked the importance to community and world values, such as being a good citizen or being socially active.

All seven participants were taught to have certain values. Their influences included the following: family members, religious organizations, friends, teachers, cultures, historical events, and self-reflection. Likewise, they all shared the common ideal of influencing their students in a positive way.

The common theme that prevailed was **diversity**. All the participants care deeply about the ways they teach, but they offered different reasons for why they cared. They spoke in different voices of different backgrounds and different values, but they all did so with a passion for their profession.

## *Synthesis of Experiencing Student Character Development—Linked with Teaching*

### *Methods*

This section synthesizes how the interviewed participants used different teaching methods to promote student character development. All seven participants used some type of participative teaching methods to help their students develop character. As well, all seven participants were interested in teaching beyond the content material. The three structures that appeared for *how* the participants experienced this teaching phenomenon included creating an environment, teaching the whole person, and modeling behavior.

A purposely prepared space or atmosphere was created for students by all seven participants. Their prepared settings included relationship and community building, dialogue, and high expectations.

Preparing an environment through relationship and community building included creating a classroom narrative together. The methods for creating this type of narrative included forming connections with group assignments, cultivating trust, finding one's center, focusing on an atmosphere of academic integrity, and providing a space for free interactions.

Encouraging dialogue was another technique used by the participants for creating effective learning environments. The methods included discussing values and morals, authoring classroom narratives, addressing diversity, making students aware of policy expectations, and practicing compassionate dialogue.

Also, high expectations were part of an effective learning environment. Requiring high expectations included setting standards, requiring respectful dialogue, and caring enough to make the environment a safe place for students.

Teaching the whole person required different teaching strategies. At times, the traditional lecture was appropriate for intellectual development; however, other instructional methods were used for promoting other areas of student development. These other teaching strategies focused on the following areas: personal development, collaborative learning, choices and accountability, and self-directed learning.

Teaching with a focus on the student's personal development meant the participant was interested in teaching the student more than the content material for the course. The emphasis was placed on more than academic development. Several of the participants were interested in preparing their students to be good family members, better citizens, and successful employees.

Collaborative learning was another teaching strategy used with an emphasis on teaching the whole person. This teaching strategy allowed for the following to occur in the classroom setting: dealing maturely and respectfully with each other, "Levelizing" for equal voices, sharing opinions, and developing lesson plans together.

Another strategy used for teaching the whole person was allowing students choices and requiring them to be accountable for their choices. The participants utilized this strategy in various ways, including the following: involving students in social issues and world problems, developing learning contracts, sharing governance, empowering students, holding students accountable, and involving students in rule and policy making. Also, this teaching strategy gives students more options, such as choosing topics or projects, deciding on due dates, grading others in group projects, and taking ownership in their own learning.

Self-directed learning was a teaching strategy employed by all of the participants except for one. The reason offered for the exception was that self-directed learning is focused on the individual; whereas, her preferred teaching strategies were completely focused on community building.

Another teaching method to facilitate student character development was modeling the type of behavior that faculty members wanted from their students. Some of the participants spoke of modeling behavior in the following ways: cultivating trust, being prepared for class, and mirroring integrity.

The common theme for all the different teaching strategies linked to the participants' experiences with student character development was **commitment**. All participants shared a strong, passionate commitment to their students. These faculty members were all committed to their students' successes—not just in college, but for their futures. They all knew their students' stories, and these stories became an important part of the classroom narrative. Their commitment to know their students and their students' needs was directly linked to their teaching methods.

#### *Synthesis of Experiencing Negative Aspects of Teaching for Student Character Development*

For the participants, some negative aspects exist for teaching in a participative way to encourage student character development. First, this type of teaching takes more time and work. Second, a certain amount of risk is involved. Third, changes can occur in relationships. Fourth, certain challenges can arise.

Six of the seven participants depicted the negative aspects of taking more time and additional work for teaching with a focus on students' character. The discussions of

more time and work included problems with the following issues: projects, collaborative learning, or group work. Also some participants felt a need to be over-prepared. For others, problems arose for accomplishing everything or covering all the material, and the timing of activities was difficult. Some faculty members spent extra time and effort worrying about conflicts and how things were proceeding in the classroom. For two participants, academic integrity policies took a lot of time to develop and to implement. For one participant, the necessity of dealing with unmotivated students was a problem.

Four of the seven participants focused on the negative aspects of risks and vulnerabilities for teaching with a focus on students' character. Some of the risks mentioned included the following: peer scrutiny, students not passing or failing because they did not complete projects, heated conflicts, and the dare to be different or to "step out" on campus.

Three of the seven participants worried about the negative aspects of relationship or atmosphere changes that occur due to a focus on students' character. The reasons or results included the following: changes due to suspicions, barriers, or social stigmas; changes due to students reporting cheating incidents on other students, and changes due to faculty being too honest with students.

Also, three participants reported miscellaneous challenges, which included the following: management issues, failures, group dynamics and conflicts, responsibility issues, grading and fairness problems, frustrations of lost potential, and disappointments experienced with students including engagement issues.

The common theme that emerged from reading and rereading these negative aspects was the concept of **sacrifice**. An act of sacrificing is an act of valuing. When a

person places a higher value on one thing rather than another, he or she is making a statement of what is more important to him or her. The willingness to sacrifice one's time and energy for another's well-being or betterment is a noble ideal. Goethe captured this idea in the following lines taken from his poem "Blessed Longing":

... No distance holds you fast;  
Winged, enchanted, on you fly,  
Light your longing, and at last,  
Moth, you meet the flame and die.

Never prompted to that quest:  
Die and dare rebirth!  
You remain a dreary guest  
On our gloomy earth.

There are life challenges to master. To be more than just a "guest" on this earth, a person should take a chance on being vulnerable and risk the sacrifice for what he or she believes is important. The rewards are a rebirth to a more virtuous level of being.

So, within the negative aspects of participative teaching, there is the hope of something more important. As most of the participants indicated, they would not want to teach any other way. Daring to be different is a form of "stepping out" and being noticed. It is very difficult to step out of traditional roles to try new ways of teaching. Others are always ready to be critical.

### *Synthesis of Experiencing Positive Aspects of Teaching for Student Character*

#### *Development*

The positive aspects of teaching in a participative style are the great relationships and community building that can occur. Another aspect is the positive effects for students. Last, it can be more challenging and rewarding on a personal level.

Most of the participants were interested in building relationships and communities with their students. This ranged from preparing an environment of equality to one-on-one connections with mutual respect and integrity. The success of self-identity or “finding one’s center” was important for some, and others were more interested in honesty and creating mentoring relationships.

Other positive aspects were focused on the effects for students. These included meeting students’ needs through conversation, engagement, citizenship, and spirituality. One of the participants was interested in helping students develop analytical skills that would be necessary for good decisions, and another participant was interested in giving rewards to students for integrous actions.

Two participants spoke of the positive aspects of personal growth for the teachers, themselves. Challenges and pressures can create self-identity for the faculty member. Also personal growth can occur because participative teaching is more challenging and interesting.

The common theme that prevailed from this section on positive aspects was **becoming**. Both the students and the teachers are growing and transforming to a higher level of learning and teaching. The phenomenon is anti-quiescent as teacher and student become for him or herself and for each other. A participative style of teaching is not a static or fixed phenomenon.

*Summary.* This third section synthesizes the textural descriptions of the faculty members’ perspectives concerning SCD: *What* the meaning or importance of student character development was to the participants, *why* the participants cared, *how* they used different teaching methods, and *what* negatives and successes were experienced. The

essential theme for the meaning or importance of student character development was **self-identity**. The common theme for personal values and worldviews was **diversity**. The core theme for the teaching methods linked to student character development was **commitment**. The theme that emerged for negative aspects of teaching for student character development was **sacrifice**, and the common theme for positive aspects was **becoming**.

*Section Four: Presenting the Essential Meaning*

“Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.” (1 *Corinthians* 8:1)

*Introduction.* This section presents the essential meaning of **building up**, which emerged from my reflections on the lived experiences of participative teachers who focused on student character development. My reflections focused on the theme of **self-identity** that emerged from asking the question of *what* the meaning of student character development was to the participants, the theme of **diversity** came forth from asking the question of *why* the participants cared, the theme of **commitment** appeared from the question of *how* they used different teaching methods, and the theme of **sacrifice** and **becoming** emerged from the questions of *what* challenges and successes were experienced.

Etymologically, the word *build* shares the same Old English root word of *byldan*, which means *dwelling*. If we think of dwelling as a place to live; mentally speaking, we can also think of it as a way of living. In this sense, *build* becomes a way of life. To build up was a way of teaching that emerged as I analyzed the seven participants in this study.

Traditional teaching and participative teaching both focus on the student gaining knowledge. The two teaching methods differ, however, since the traditional teacher’s

delivery is lecturing, and the sole purpose is dispensing knowledge. Whereas, the participative teacher uses both collaborative and self-directed learning techniques, and multiple purposes exist. Participative teaching becomes a joint effort between teacher and student, and it is based on a passionate desire for the student to find his or her “way of living” to become a better person.

According to the apostle Paul, the act of building up involves love. In order to build students up with love, it would be important to find out who they are individually. Self-identity is important and helps the person to evolve into the person he or she desires to become. Since each person is different, this growth depends upon the concept of diversity. Even though the participants used different methods for teaching in a participative way, all of them were committed to their students’ character development. Also, they were willing to make sacrifices for the sake of something more important. That which was more important was the idea of transformation or becoming someone better than before. This was their wish for their students and for themselves.

*Self-Identity.* Self-identity appeared as an important concept for the participative teachers interested in student character development. Even though the meaning of student character development was slightly different for each of the seven participants, all the participants were interested in helping their students with lifelong transformational-type changes to become better and stronger persons. In order for this development to occur, the basic element was helping the students to know themselves better. This self-knowledge was worded a little differently for each participant. One participant used the phrase “finding their center,” while another participant spoke of helping the students

discover what type of learners they were. Several other participants understood it as helping the students understand who they were in the context of becoming better citizens.

The different definitions for student character development included environment issues, good citizenship, political and social awareness, better persons, and motivation. All of these issues are linked to students gaining self-knowledge. It is not a new connection. Socrates promoted the idea with the phrase “Know thyself” which he adopted from the inscription at Apollo’s temple in Delphi.

To answer the question “What is student character development?” the participants focused on providing an environment for the students to learn about themselves and to become better individuals. But self-knowledge for the individual is just the first step; otherwise, it would become a glorified ego trip. Yes, student character development is about **building up** the individual to become a better person through self-identity, but it is also about **building up** relationships, communities, and the world.

I tried to capture the essence of those ideas in this poem about a student finding him or herself which interprets character development by building up through self-identity. It is written in the voice of the female student first and then switches to the male student’s voice.

#### Finding Me

Do I know who I am?  
Graceful, ruled by my body’s desires  
My mirror assures me of the image I seek  
My cell phone and iPod connect me

Can I know who I am?  
Bold, ruled by my wants and needs  
Sensuous, beautiful bodies allure me  
Text-messaging in the back row of chemistry

I search to find myself  
In thin muslin curtains  
Fluttering at open windows ... struggling  
To drape the warm sunny breezes

Students struggle to know who they are when they come to college. Often, it is the first time they have been away from home for an extended period. They are free of parents and their rules. Their identity is often wrapped up in their appearances and material possessions. They have many desires. Often, they do not immediately know that one fundamental human desire is self-knowledge.

If students can find classroom environments where they feel welcomed, the experience is similar to an atmosphere of warm, sunny breezes. A thin muslin curtain is an all-purpose cotton. The material is inexpensive and simple, but muslin is very strong and durable. It can be of use every day in life. Muslin curtains are like a person's self-identity. While one's identity is that which is most obvious and familiar, it requires a struggle. The struggle includes caring for, and about, our environments, which are our dwelling places. Like one's identity, developing character does not occur without some type of effort or struggle.

*Diversity.* The theme of **diversity** came forth from asking the question of *why* the participants cared. Their responses to the question "What are your values and worldviews?" presented spiritual views ranging from no mention of any spirituality to spiritual mindfulness, Anthroposophy, Buddhism, Sufism, Christianity, and Judaism. Their non-religious values and worldviews were just as diverse as the spiritual ones. The common theme of **diversity** emerged because all the participants offered different reasons for why they cared about teaching for student character development. The following poem is an attempt to capture the essence of building up with diversity.

## The Diversity of Character

Character has as many names  
As Jacob's coat has colors  
A remnant sewn with many seams  
The essence of love and struggle

Character has as many passions  
As spirituality and secular visions dare  
A diversity of worldly views  
Political and social values of care

The experiences of character development  
Are not easy nor quiet times  
Dialogue, differences, and risks  
Strengthening community ties

The promise of making something from nothing  
In "contingency-laden Petri dishes"  
Alchemic forces prevail with purpose  
Building from many wills and wishes

The concept of diversity was important for building up students with love because the participants were focused on helping students become better people, but the participants were coming from different backgrounds with different ways of accomplishing participative teaching for student character development.

*Commitment.* The theme of **commitment** appeared from the question of *how* the participants used different teaching methods to promote student character development. A commitment to make a difference in their students' lives was the catalyst for the participants to teach in a participative way. All seven participants used some type of participative teaching method and were interested in teaching beyond the content material. The three structures that appeared for *how* the participants experienced this teaching phenomenon included creating an environment, teaching the whole person, and modeling behavior.

The commitment to prepare a space or atmosphere was based on building up classroom narrative. Their different beliefs for student character development were the basis of what their classroom story would become. For example, for the participants who were interested in academic integrity, the classroom narrative would include issues of honesty, respect, and doing one's own work.

The participants' commitment to teaching the whole person focused on personal development, collaborative learning, choices, accountability, and self-directed learning. A commitment to teach beyond the course content to build up the lives of the students in a transformational way involved the desire for each student to become a better person for individual success, the betterment of society, and the betterment of the world.

For these same reasons, a commitment to facilitate student character development caused some participants to model behavior by cultivating trust, being prepared for class, and mirroring integrity. These are all factors related to good character, and these techniques were used by some participants to help students build up their character.

The following poem about commitment to building up students was written as my interpretation to these different teaching methods.

#### Commitment to Character

Being in the center of tomorrow's occurrences  
Committed to sharing, trusting, waiting in ...  
The created core for what is yet to happen  
Through negotiated narratives—  
Cores are filled; Centers are found.

Anticipated moments supply pressure  
Like oyster shells yielding pearls  
Strings of rosary beads  
Adorn a laughing Buddha.  
For some ... "Dikunolam" is sought.

Some will oppose the contingency  
Lying in the Petri dish  
Some will shade the sunshine for the Other  
Building up each individual  
While the waking up occurs—with loving care.

In the poem, I tried to present the three structures that appeared for *how* the participants taught; they created an environment, taught the whole person, and modeled behavior in order to build up the student's character. The participants were committed because they cared.

*Sacrifice.* The theme of **sacrifice** emerged from the question of “*What challenges or negatives were experienced?*” while teaching in a participative way to encourage student character development. The participants found that this type of teaching took more time and work, a certain amount of risk was involved, changes occurred in some of their relationships, and certain challenges arose. The sacrifices that were involved with these negative issues were experienced for the sake of something the participants considered more important, student character development.

The poem I wrote to capture the essence of building up through sacrificing is called “Daring.” Some of my ideas evolved from Goethe’s poem “Blessed Longing.”

Daring

Nesting pheasants are oblivious of numbers  
They crouch ... aware of the earth's dangers  
Awaiting the unknown narrative—Yet to Be  
Born in the space of nothingness  
The nesting ground builds up a place

Anticipating new ways  
Intellectual midwives wait,  
Open to the birth of something beautiful.  
Wings become grafted to grounded ideas  
Building, willing, longing to ascend

When the hunter appears  
The hen squats close to the earth  
The mystery of consciousness emerges  
Knowledge and action become centered  
Like Goethe, she is willed, willing, longing,

To die for the dare of her rebirth.  
So she flies.

Building up with love sometimes requires sacrificing something of value for something else of higher value. The willingness of sacrificing one's time and energy for another's well-being or betterment requires the person to care deeply about the other person. Feeling vulnerable to peer criticism, some of the participants were willing to die in a sense for the rebirth of something new.

*Becoming.* The theme of **becoming** emerged from the question of "What successes were experienced?" The positive aspects of teaching in a participative style were the great relationships and community building that occurred, the positive effects for students, and the challenges and rewards that were felt on a personal level. Both the students and the teachers grew and experienced transformations to a higher level of learning and teaching. The phenomenon was anti-quiescent as teacher and student experienced transformations for themselves, for each other, and for the world in which they lived.

The poem that I wrote to capture this essence of building up for becoming someone new is entitled "Patience."

Patience

Pod of silky sheath ... Like  
Papyrus coated with brown sugar  
Crisp seams glisten with  
Anticipation for something new

Gathering within cocoons  
Pollinating narratives  
Promising birth  
Sharing poetical space

Awaken little pupa  
From your quiescent nap  
Building up ...  
Becoming

The becoming or transformation involved with building up with love for student character development is a metamorphosis. All transformations take time and require patience. It reminds me of watching a cocoon, waiting for it to reveal new life.

*Summary.* The essential meaning of **building up** emerged from my reflections on the lived experiences of seven participative teachers who focused on student character development. Building up with love was purposeful work for them. It began and ended with becoming. The transformation involved **self-identity, diversity, commitment, sacrifice** and **becoming** for the students as well as for the teachers. Love in the form of passionate caring was the difference in teaching by passing on information to gain knowledge and teaching by helping the student to grow.

### *Epilogue*

Through my professional interactions with Lea as community college practitioners and participants in a teachers' reflective study group, I was expecting her interview to be very optimistic about teaching, in general. However, that is not how her interview was perceived. It emerged as quite negative. So, since I was inquisitive about the outcome, I went back to her and asked her how she perceived her interview. I asked her if she remembered whether she was experiencing a bad day when the interview occurred. She smiled and quickly said, "I know; you are right. Bad day? No, it was a bad

semester!” She continued, “It is a classic example of how just one or two negative students can twist the atmosphere of a whole class.” She assured me that the day we talked was a particularly bad day, and she was worried about how to handle the negative situation in one of her classes.

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Change and growth take place when a person has risked himself and dares to become involved with experimenting with his own life” (Herbert Otto as cited in Buscaglia, 1996, 24).

### *Introduction*

Chapter Five presents a final discussion of *Sharing Power in the Classroom: Community College Professors Who Facilitate Student Character Development*. This final discussion is presented in five sections. The first section offers a short summary of the study. The following section links the analyses and interpretations to some of the theories which were used as the basis for this study. The third section suggests recommendations for additional research, and the fourth section offers personal reflections from the researcher. The final section brings the discussion to a conclusion.

### *Summary of the Study*

This first section of Chapter Five touches briefly on the problem that motivated the research, the methodology that was utilized, and the analysis that was completed with the gathered data.

*Problem.* According to the reviewed literature, faculty members can promote student character development when they set good examples, share some of their control and power with students, permit openness through dialogue, practice the goals stated in mission statements, and nurture students (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Boud, 1981; Colby, 2003; Klein, 2005; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002; Thompkins, 1991; Weimer, 2002). However, during my review of the literature, I found no qualitative research of faculty members’ perspectives on promoting student character development. In fact, there seemed to be a lack of dialogue concerning character development in colleges and

universities (Kuh, 1998; Schwartz, 2000). For faculty to become more aware of student character development and for it to become part of the curriculum, discussions are important.

The purpose of this study was to create dialog for a better understanding of faculty members' experiences and roles in student character development. Specifically, I wanted to understand the teaching methods, challenges, and successes that were experienced daily when faculty members used participative and engaging teaching methods with students to facilitate student character development.

The following basic questions guided the research: (1) What are the reflections, understandings, and experiences of participative faculty who allow freedom in the classroom to promote student character development? (2) How do participative faculty's values and worldviews play a role in their commitments to make a difference with their students' character development? (3) What challenges and successes have participative teachers experienced by sharing power in the classroom? (4) How might the promotion of student character development change these participative teachers' relationships with their students?

*Methodology.* "In its most basic terms, qualitative research is a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning" (Shank, 2002, p. 5). This type of research is empirical because it relies upon sense experiences of the researcher and participants (Shank, 2002). For these reasons, qualitative methods were chosen for this study. Also, since I wanted to interview faculty members who were interested in promoting student character development and since I wanted to create a complex picture with findings that were textural, insightful, and meaningful, a qualitative research was preferred. Also, I

chose to do a phenomenological study because it is well suited to uncover the essence of experience as framed by existentialism.

Seven participants were chosen for this study. The criteria included faculty members who a) taught at a community college, b) were interested in student character development, and c) practiced some type of participative style of teaching. I relied upon community college faculty members who have attended the annual conferences of The Center for Academic Integrity, and I was able to contact others through a snow balling technique.

Data was obtained through private in-depth interviews with each participant. Follow-up interviews were conducted as necessary by either phone or e-mail. In addition, notes were taken in a field journal throughout the process.

*Analysis.* After audio recording the 60 – 90 minute interviews and taking field notes as soon as possible after each face-to-face meeting, the interviews were transcribed and sent back to the participants for member checking. Then, I began the process of organizing the data by reading through each participant's transcriptions several times to obtain a sense of the overall meaning of the information.

I began analyzing each transcribed interview using the methods and procedures listed earlier in Chapter Three for a phenomenological study. First, using Moustakas' (2003) analytical steps, I tried to bracket or suspend my biases. With this bracketing in mind, I organized the data by listing every significant sentence or phrase relevant to a participative-style of teaching and character development. Each phrase or sentence was given equal value as I tried to uncover the essence within the words, which is a procedure referred to as *horizontalization* (Moustakas, 1994).

From the initially chosen sentences, I used my imagination to list meaning units from them, and then I clustered these meaning units into themes or common categories of meaning. As I analyzed these meaning units, I removed the sentences and phrases which were redundant or overlapped with other meanings. Then, the themes or categories were used to develop the textural descriptions of what the participants experienced. From the textural descriptions, I was able to use my imagination to think of all possible perspectives to put these descriptions into a structural description that represented not just what was experienced but also “how” the phenomenon was experienced by my participants.

These descriptions revealed the constructed, combined meanings or underlying essences of their experiences of teaching for student character development. The revealing of the essences and the focusing on the potentiality of all various possibilities of the qualitative data became the primary focus for the Imaginative Variation process (Moustakas, 1994). As I brought the emerging essences together, it represented the ideas I understood at that particular time and place. (See Chapter 3 for additional information concerning the data analysis of this study.)

#### *Relating the Data to the Literature*

This section examines five specific findings that emerged through this study. The first four categories were linked to the reviewed literature, but the fifth category represents findings that add to the literature: 1) common themes and meanings in the participants’ perspectives for student character development, 2) the teaching methods of sharing governance by the seven participants in this study, 3) the importance of dialogue experienced by the seven faculty members, 4) the participants’ experiences of teaching

the “whole person,” and 5) the revealed truths relating how the participants in this study went beyond the findings in the reviewed literature.

*Common Themes and Meanings.* My desire to research teachers who promote student character development was embedded in the ethical theories of Kierkegaard (1846/1992) and Perry (1970). The following theories from these two famous writers can be linked to related themes and meanings from this study.

Kierkegaard (1846/1992) was interested in passion, commitment, and self-reflection to discover one’s identity. What was essentially important for Kierkegaard was subjective understanding. According to Kierkegaard (1846/1992), “...Every human being is something of a subject ... the most difficult of all” (in becoming) ... is what you already are “...because every human being has a strong natural desire and drive to become something else and more” (p. 130). Part of *becoming subjective* is having the passion to find out how it is that one exists. The goal is self-actualization, which is a developmental process of realizing one’s self-identity throughout one’s lifetime.

In this study, self-identity appeared as an important concept for the participative teachers interested in student character development. Even though the meaning of student character development was slightly different for each of the seven participants, all the participants were interested in helping their students with lifelong transformational-type changes to become better and stronger persons. In order for this development to occur, the basic element was helping the students to know themselves better. This self-knowledge was worded a little differently for each participant. One participant used the phrase “finding their center,” while another participant spoke of helping the students

discover what type of learners they were. Several other participants understood it as helping the students understand who they were in the context of becoming better citizens.

Also, Kierkegaard (1846/1992) believed self-development included three moral stages: *The Aesthetic Stage* is the first level of development, *The Ethical Stage* is the second level, and *The Religious Stage* is the third and highest level of development. In Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) *Aesthetic Stage*, people are focused on themselves. Their interests are material possessions and personal pleasure. Kierkegaard realized that some individuals live their whole life at this bottom level of development. In order to move from this stage to the *Ethical Stage*, a person must feel a commitment to someone other than him or herself and is focused on societal issues and what has been determined as ethical for that particular society. Most individuals are able to move to this level of cooperative development.

Similarly, the seven participants in this study felt self-knowledge for the individual was just the first step; otherwise, life would become an egoistic journey. While student character development was about helping the individual to become a better person through self-identity, it was also about relationships, communities, and the world. Again, the participants' methods were different, but the end objective was the same. Some participants used groups; others focused on citizenship, created environments, integrity, or collaborative learning to help facilitate student's character development.

Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) third stage of development is referred to as the *Religious Stage*. He stated that individuals move from the *Ethical Stage* to the *Religious Stage* if they are able to make decisions that transcend their society's morals. For Kierkegaard (1846/1992), the *Religious Stage* of moral development requires a personal

commitment to whatever is most important in the person's life. This highest level of development is one's ability to have faith and feel a passionate commitment to one's values even if those values are not shared by one's society. Kierkegaard refers to the movement to this highest level as a "Leap of Faith." Few people are able to rise to this highest level of development.

While certain levels of commitment were experienced by the participants in this study, the specific "Leap of Faith" required in Kierkegaard's (1846/1992) highest level of moral development was not evidenced in the faculty members' interviews.

The other substantive theorist for this study was W.G. Perry Jr. (1970). He believed that moral development and intellectual development were linked. He referred to the *forms* within people's minds shaping how people view experiences. Perry's theories included three basic positions with levels of development in each position. *Dualistic* thinkers are on the lowest levels of the first position, and they believe answers exist for everything, and someone has those answers. In fact, they wait for someone else to give them the answers. According to Perry, most first year students in college are at this level of development when they enroll. At this lower level of moral development, students are more comfortable with structure and thrive on organization.

Likewise, some of the participants realized the importance of giving their students much-needed structure. Cheryl believed that providing structure in the classroom allowed students to make decisions and to be accountable for those decisions. She found that structure was critical for her students, but at the same time, they needed freedoms within it. Also, Katie used an organizational technique she referred to as *Levelizing* in her classrooms before allowing her students to engage in collaboration.

When students are able to transfer to Perry's (1970) second position of *Multiplicity*, they begin to understand diverse voices. Eventually students begin to understand multiple answers can exist for the same problem. They realize there are multiple, valid arguments. Developing students begin to think more analytically and independently when they are transitioning through these middle positions (Perry, 1970). Multiplicity thinkers are able to transition intellectually to pluralistic and relativistic views and choices because they recognize diverse opinions.

Also, diversity was a key issue in this study for the seven participants. The purpose of using dialogue and preparing an environment for discussions to occur was sought to help students "deal" with opposing and diverse ideas. So the issue was important to the participants, and they wanted their students to understand its importance. For example, Dawn discussed how she wanted her future teachers to realize the diversity of values and how their own values might not correspond with their future students' values or their future students' parents.

Eventually, some students are able to move toward Perry's (1970) highest level of *Commitment*. At this highest level of development, students experience self-identity and a commitment to what they value most. Perry (1970) believed commitment was needed in order for people to make their own decisions and to develop to the highest levels of morality. An example of academic commitment could be a self-directed student.

In this study, self-directed learning was a teaching strategy employed by all of the participants except for one. For example, Dawn thought it was really important to lead students into self-directed learning, so that they could develop analytical skills to be

successful citizens in a democracy. Also, Mary allowed her students to choose their own projects in hope of encouraging her students to self-direct their learning.

Another example of Perry's (1970) highest level of commitment reflected in this study might be reflected in the results of Cheryl's assignment for her students to choose a social-political problem that they see in 21<sup>st</sup> century America and then try to solve it, at least partially. She reported that some of her students would choose a topic they had already been activists on, and afterwards some would become very impassioned activists in the areas that they worked on for the assignment because they developed a sense of commitment to the particular issue.

*Shared Governance.* The reviewed literature reported that when college students are given more freedom in making decisions, they grow intellectually and emotionally, and some of their ideas about independence and power sharing are restructured (Ayers, 2004; Weimer, 2002). According to Boud (1981), the objective for education should be the formulation of independent, autonomous students who are able to make decisions and assume responsibility for their own learning. This can be facilitated by faculty sharing power with students. Weimer (2002) believed faculty could share control of the classroom with students and at the same time provide structures that would promote student development.

Similarly, a common teaching strategy used by the participants in this study was allowing students to share in the governance. This sharing occurred in various ways as was evidenced in the analysis in Chapter 4. These various methods have been summarized in the following bulleted list:

- Levelizing the classroom—creating a space for equal dialogue
- Allowing students to make rules and develop policy

- Offering group work
- Allowing students the freedom to make decisions and be responsible
- Monitoring other students
- Trusting students
- Encouraging self-directed learning

*Dialogue.* According to Senge (1994), "...Openness emerges when two or more individuals become willing to suspend their certainty in each other's presence" (p. 284). In other words, openness and dialogue occurred when participants were willing to listen as well as speak. When college professors can provide an opportunity and create a climate in a classroom to promote dialogue, this welcoming and trusting classroom environment encourages student engagement and student-driven forms of learning (Timpson & Bendel-Simso, 1996).

Also, according to Timpson (2000), teachers can use non-directive interactions where active and reflective listening is the focus, and this practice will create a nurturing environment that will encourage students to make decisions and assume responsibility for the decisions they have made.

Likewise, encouraging dialogue was another teaching technique used by the participants in this study. Dialogue was a key issue in creating a welcoming environment.

The various methods revealed earlier in chapter 4 included the following:

- Discussing values and morals
- Using case studies
- Authoring classroom narratives
- Encouraging equal voices by *Levelizing* the classroom
- Addressing diversity
- Making students aware of policy expectations
- Creating an atmosphere of academic integrity
- Practicing compassionate dialogue
- Listening and questioning

Also, some participants helped students develop relationships by using dialogue to discuss values and moral concerns. Katie used dialogue to create classroom narratives for relationship and community building. For Katie, creating classroom narrative included instructions to students on how to dialogue about diverse issues in a moral way. She believed that the openness to listen to others was an important component for narrative to occur. As well, Tamera and Sandra used dialogue to create an atmosphere of academic integrity. For Lea, dialogue was used as a tool to motivate her students.

*Teaching the “Whole Person.”* Teaching the whole person involves different layers of teaching strategies. According to the literature, a growing number of professors are developing many strategies besides lecturing, including shared power, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, and service learning. The college professors who use these participative teaching styles are usually attempting to accomplish a broader range of goals than merely transmitting information, and they are focusing on a more transformational form of learning (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Colby et al, 2003; Palmer, 1993; Weimer, 2002). For these faculty members, teaching goals go beyond content material.

Also, for the seven participants in this study, teaching the whole person was an important aspect of their focus on student character development. The following summarized bullets representing their teaching methods are brought forth from the analysis in chapter 4:

- Welcoming students
- Preparing students to participate in a democratic society
- Promoting respect and skills needed for collaborative learning
- Offering choices and accountability
- Encouraging self-directed learning

All of the participants focused on teaching beyond the course content material in order to facilitate the student's personal development, as well. They were all interested in the student as a person and helping him or her develop into a successful family member, better citizen, and effective employee.

*Other Revealed Truths.* By eliciting the lived experiences of these seven community college practitioners, a contribution can be added to the body of knowledge on student character development and the role that a participative style of teaching plays in enhancing student development. This study adds the challenges and successes these participants experienced to the scholarly literature. The following bullets represent the summarized challenges developed from the analysis in chapter 4:

- More time and work was involved
- A certain amount of risk was encountered
- Changes occurred in some of their relationships
- Management issues emerged
- Feelings of failure were realized
- Assessment problems were recognized
- Classroom conflicts were encountered

The sacrifices involved with these challenges were experienced for the sake of something the participants considered more important, student character development. Some of the faculty members felt as though they were daring to teach differently. Also, for some of the participants, the challenges actually made teaching more interesting. Other participants reported that even with the challenges, they would not want to teach any other way.

The following positive aspects of teaching in a participative style were experienced by the participants. The bullets summarize the information brought forth from the analysis in chapter 4:

- Great relationships were formed
- Community building occurred
- Meaning was created
- The cycling of action and reflection was experienced
- Mutual respect and integrity were realized
- Positive aspects for students emerged
- More challenges and rewards on a personal level were encountered

Creating good relationships with students was a positive aspect for most of the participants. Most of the faculty members were committed to knowing their students on a more personal level. Cheryl conceded that if she taught differently, she would not get to know her students like she does teaching in a participative style. She worked best when she could make one-on-one connections with her students. Similarly, Katie, Mary, and Lea believed there was a strong connection between student character development and learning who each individual student was. Katie believed that knowledge could occur in the subject matter as students and teachers were creating narrative together. For Mary, an important part of knowing the student involved authenticity or being honest with both oneself and the student. Lea appreciated the changes in relationships that she experienced.

Also, creating better citizens and building community were common positive aspects that most of the participants shared. According to Palmer (1998), “Community, or connectedness, is the principle behind good teaching, but different teachers with different gifts create community in surprisingly diverse ways, using widely divergent methods” (p. 115). This was true with the participants in this study. Cheryl believed her students find out who they are as citizens and then make the world a better place. Similarly, Dawn believed that teaching for student character development was important because students needed to develop analytical skills to live in a democratic society. Katie focused on

building community in the classroom by creating a learning space. Mary sent her students into the community to complete reading projects. Sandra and Tamera provided an atmosphere of academic integrity to build community at their colleges.

This section examined four specific categories that were linked to the reviewed literature, and a fifth category that added to the literature. These categories included the following: 1) common themes and meanings, 2) shared governance 3) dialogue, 4) the “whole person,” and 5) other revealed truths in this study that went beyond the findings in the reviewed literature.

#### *Recommendations for Additional Research*

From this study of a selected group of community college faculty members who teach with an interest in promoting student character development and from the review of literature, several recommendations emerged for additional research.

First, a follow-up phenomenological research study based on students’ perspectives that models this study is recommended, adding classroom observations and focus groups with students. The data from such a companion study would either agree and support the findings in this study or contrast them. Either way, it would be an interesting comparison and add additional data on the themes identified in this study. I would recommend the same questions (with one exception concerning teaching methods).

Second, a follow-up phenomenological research study based on male community college faculty members’ perspectives that models this study is recommended. The data from such a companion study would either agree and support the findings in this study or contrast them. It would provide an interesting comparison. I would recommend that the

same questions and all other aspects of this study be repeated to ensure consistency in the compared data.

Third, a future in-depth analysis of the link between a participative style of teaching in the college classroom and student academic integrity is recommended. This proposed study could include a study of students who have served on honor committees and feel that they have shared governance in their classrooms. Some important questions to ask would include the following: What does student character development mean to you? What types of power did you feel you shared in the decisions regarding your learning? When you were offered the chance to self-direct your education, how did that alter any decisions concerning academic honesty? How did it change your relationships with peers who came before your academic honor committee? How does group or collaborative learning affect cheating in the classroom?

### *Personal Reflections*

This reflective section describes the *what*, *why*, and *how* of the researcher's perspectives that emerged during this research: *what* the meaning of student character development is to me, *why* I care, *how* my teaching methods have changed because of this study, and *what* challenges and successes I have experienced.

*Sharing Meaning.* I believe when a teacher is concerned with student character development, he or she experiences both the prideful realization that a person is capable of making a difference in another person's life and the humble awareness of one's own limitations in that process without the assistance, admiration, and love of others. As a community college practitioner, my struggle to understand student character development is an on-going, personal passion. My interest in character began when I studied ancient

Greek philosophy as an undergraduate, and my interest continues today as I work on this research.

I believe Socrates was correct that the meaning of character is linked to virtuous thinking and virtuous actions. For Socrates, people gain wisdom by examining their lives. Then people's actions reflect their self-knowledge. In my opinion, the key is self-knowledge because character development is driven by knowledge of oneself. Today, this is also referred to as self-identity.

When referring to a person's self-identity, in my opinion, nothing is more important than his or her character? I believe that character is the conscience and reflection of a person's soul. The character of one's soul becomes stronger or weaker through one's trials and suffering. But it does not end with oneself because the end purpose for developing one's character is helping and serving others. Intersubjective relationships are a participative way of building and dwelling with other people and with the world.

*Sharing Values.* My values are grounded in Christianity and family. I care because I was taught to care by people and stories in my past: parents, grandparents, siblings, teachers, pastors, students, and books. My maternal grandmother and my older brother have been the biggest influences in my life. Although I did not know the correct "labels" for them while I was growing up, I now realize that they were the first existential and constructivist philosophers in my life. Like Socrates, my grandmother received very little education, but her lifelong passion for learning matched his. My brother has a college degree and has spent his whole life helping others. He has always been a very unique person. My grandmother and brother are very self-reflective, and they taught me

to doubt and to question at a very young age. Both my grandmother's and my brother's successes in life are due to two great personal qualities: passion and what Kierkegaard (1846/1992), Buber (1976), and many others since have referred to as inter-subjectivity or an "I-Thou" relationship with people. They both have always possessed the ability to see and to understand the *other* person as a connection to themselves.

Many influential teachers, mentors, and writings have influenced me since then. Even my students have the capacity to influence me. Allowing time and creating a space in the classroom for students to share questions, encourages students to voice their opinions and tell their stories. The more we listen and talk about influential experiences of kindness, empathy, and compassion—the more these stories become our created reality.

I care about character development because it has the power to help direct the course of people's lives. It's a process that we work on our whole life if we are interested in becoming someone better tomorrow than we were yesterday and are today. The desire to *become* creates the space for the *becoming*. Desire provides the energy or potentiality for transformation. Our lives are transformed by the help of others and by our own determination to evolve. As Zukav (1990) stated, "...Your contribution to the evolution of your soul is precisely the decisions that you make at each moment" (p. 230).

*Sharing Teaching Methods.* Because I am constantly *becoming*, my teaching methods are constantly changing. Through my graduate studies at Colorado State University, my literature review on student character development, and the seven interviews with my participants, my teaching methods have become more participative than ever before. I have tried many new things based on the courses I have taken in the

Community College Leadership program, the literature I have studied, as well as, on my participants' experiences.

For example, with the idea of allowing students more choices in order to involve them more in their education, in one Introduction to Philosophy class during the Spring 2006 semester, I offered my students a buffet of choices for the methods in which they would be assessed. I purposely chose a small class of 18 students to do this experiment. The idea came from Weimer's (2002) book *Learner-Centered Teaching*. She suggested giving students various choices and then asking the students to come up with a contract. Once they have chosen, then they are responsible for that work and cannot change their minds.

Two of the students did not come up with a contract, and I prepared a generic plan for them. The rest of the students chose the assessment methods they felt most comfortable doing. Some chose all papers instead of any exams. Others chose oral presentations and journals. They were very excited about their freedom.

At the end of the semester, I decided that it was a disaster because I had allowed them way too much freedom. Because of my heavy teaching load of 6 other classes, I was not keeping track of which students were missing assignments until the end of the semester. I had told them at the beginning that they needed to keep a copy of their contract and be responsible for turning in the chosen assignments when they were due. Almost half of the students had to take an incomplete grade because they were missing assignments. They were not very happy about the outcome and neither was I. So, that semester, at least at first, I felt that it didn't work very well.

My first inclination was to scratch the whole idea. After some reflection, I came to the conclusion that there was no way for me to know what the longer term benefits or influence that experiment might have had on the students who were involved. Then, I decided to “tweak it” and make some changes; whereas, the students would have more structure and choices for one-half of their assessment methods. After five additional semesters, I am still using this method of allowing students’ choices and requiring them to be responsible for their decisions. What seemed like a disaster at first, later seemed to be a good lesson for both the students and me. I realized that I had given students more freedom than they were ready to handle. According to Weimer (2002), the goal is to create able students, and she believed this does not happen all at once; it is a gradual process. As she stated, “Power is redistributed in amounts proportional to students’ abilities to handle it” (p. 29). Also, according to Palmer (1993), “When students are put at the center of the circle, teachers may yield too much of their leadership...” (p. 119). He believes it is important to provide structure, limits, and boundaries with care.

In addition, I have made various changes in my other classes. I have expanded this idea into some of my other classes—offering limited choices and requiring responsibility from the students for their choices. Also, I have changed assignments, requiring students to think about possible solutions for problems in their community, state, or world. As well, some of my lectures have been changed to include more dialectical conversations, and I try to be ever aware of what space I have created for these exchanges to occur.

Existentially speaking, all seven participants seemed to be authentically and consciously participating in the moment. For example, Katie spoke of recording her

classes, so she would remain more conscious of herself as she taught. I try to do this as well. For example, as I write down learning objectives for a class before I teach, I am being consciously aware of what I want my students to learn for that particular class. This keeps me organized and focused. Consciously participating in the moment can also be apparent in unorganized, spontaneous moments when I allow students to take the discussion of the subject in a direction of their choice.

*Sharing Challenges.* I have experienced many of the same challenges that my participants have reported in their interviews. The biggest obstacles are time, work, and risks of peer criticism. To plan, implement, and keep track of different students completing different assignments takes additional time and work. Because I want the students to be responsible for their decisions, I do not want to remind them of their assignments. I do, however, keep track of the students' choices on an ExCel spreadsheet. Also, extra time and work is involved in planning for classroom discussions, case studies, and projects.

Another negative is peer criticism. Some faculty members do not want to change how they are teaching; therefore, they are quick to criticize anyone else who is doing something differently. Some phrases I have encountered are as follows: "Catering to students' wishes," "dumbing-down the curriculum," "teaching for character development should occur in elementary school—not college," or "fixing their personal problems is not my job."

An additional, important challenge for participative teaching and student character development is the difficulty of assessment. The difficulties lie both with administration and with students. First, quantitative measurements are often desired by administration. If

there are numbers, then it is “clear” proof or so it seems. What is the evidence? How do you know that it works? According to Arroyo and Selig (2004), another problem when discussing assessment is student differences. College students enter college at different levels of character development. One of the challenges is assessing what level most students are currently at and then adjusting the course plans accordingly. Each individual student is very important, so one size of character development does not fit all students.

As mentioned earlier, one big challenge for me was trying to move students to Perry’s (1970) and Kierkegaard’s (1846/1992) highest levels of development which might include self-directed learning, when they were on the lowest level of development which meant they were interested in self-absorption. I was skipping the middle level of development; whereas, they learn to help others and be in community with each other.

*Sharing Positive Experiences.* On the other hand, many positive aspects for attempting to teach using participative methods to promote student character development exist. Most of my positive experiences are similar to my participants’. The most important success is the positive effects for students. In addition, the positive effects of relationships, community building, and personal rewards are significant.

In my opinion, one of the more important positive effects on students is the empowerment they feel when they are offered the opportunity for choices and assume responsibilities for those choices. When they feel their opinion is respected, they are more engaged and feel the class belongs to them.

Building relationships and community within the class are both important positive experiences, as well. Similar to the cohort groups established in the Community College Leadership program at Colorado State University, students placed in permanent groups at

the beginning of a class build their own little communities. While it is true that some groups never gel—for the most part, they do. The relationships often continue after the class is over. Often, I witness several individuals from a group walking together across campus or working together in the library.

This research project has been a very positive experience. Positiveness begets positiveness and vice versa. The seven participants I interviewed were very positive educators. After each interview, I felt energized for the teaching and learning process. Immediately, I wanted to try some of their techniques, and I did so. After several of the interviews, I researched some of the theories my participants mentioned. Because they were so enthusiastic about their teaching methods, their passions were infectious. The same is true of the positive articles and books I have read about teaching and learning.

*Concluding Reflections.* In this reflective section, I have described the *what, why, and how* of the researcher's perspectives: *what* the meaning of student character development is to me, *why* I care, *how* my teaching methods have changed because of this study, and *what* challenges and successes I have experienced.

Facilitating student character development is similar to building a snowman. I believe this “building” process involves love and three other critical considerations: climate, coalescence, and commitment.

Anyone who has ever built a snowman knows the importance of climate when it comes to rolling the snowballs. Similarly, I believe teachers should focus and plan for the “climate” within their classrooms. These teachers can create an environment for their students to learn the course material and self-knowledge. If students can find welcoming classrooms, they are more apt to attend classes, and they have a better chance for

academic and personal growth. According to McKeachie (2002), “Welcoming involves not only being personally sensitive as the instructor, but also helping all students to display welcoming behavior toward one another in the classroom” (p. 133). Teachers can allow problems that arise between students to be teachable moments. This type of teaching is also about “building up” relationships.

Another important issue in building a successful snowman as well as the successful classroom is coalescence. A snowman is built by rolling individual snowballs and then combining them into one. Likewise, one method for teaching the “whole person” is to allow students to combine their efforts and assign work in teams or groups. As students work collaboratively, their confidence and relationships grow. It gives the students a chance to be in community with other students and to learn negotiation skills.

Commitment is another important attribute in building a snowman or facilitating student character development. The amount of commitment is often evidenced in the end product. It is important for faculty members to feel a strong commitment to their students’ successes—not just in college, but for their futures. The key is taking the time and making an effort to know their students’ stories.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the findings from this study and the relevant literature concur that some faculty members feel as though they can and do affect student character development by building learning communities, setting good examples, sharing power with students, permitting openness through dialogue, and nurturing students (Ayers, 2004; Bain, 2004; Boud, 1981; Colby, 2003; Klein, 2005; Makarushka, 2002; Morrison, 2002; Thompkins, 1991; Weimer, 2002). This study does not debate whether faculty

members should or should not try to facilitate student character nor does it debate whether or not character development occurs. Instead, this study adds to the literature by offering the lived experiences of seven community college faculty members' perspectives on this subject.

By focusing on these faculty members' values, teaching methods, challenges, and successes, this study offers a better understanding of faculty members' experiences and roles in student character development. Even though these seven participants' values were very diverse, the study revealed that all seven participative teachers were committed to transforming their students' lives through self-identity and a greater awareness of others. Through reflecting, sharing, planning, worrying, modeling, and "Levelizing," the participants in this study taught in ways that might possibly "build up" their students. Building up with love was important work for them. It began and ended with purposeful becoming—the will to make a difference in another person's life. They shared a passion for making a difference by helping their students to grow. Transformational growth occurs not only when a person is willing to risk and dare to participate in his or her own life experiment, but also, the life experiments of others. Student character development is about building up the individual to become a better person, but it is also about building up relationships, communities, and the world.

### *Epilogue*

As with most educational endeavors, facilitating student character development not only begins, but also ends with questions. Educational practitioners who are constantly asking questions are searching for ways to improve. Also, questions are important for growth and change to occur. According to Aristotle (n.d./trans. 2001), an

occurrence or event is comprised of four rational causes: a material cause (what is needed), the efficient cause (who will make it happen), the formal cause (what form will it take), and the final cause (what is the purpose). These four Aristotelian factors are used to summarize and to present the important questions and thoughts that emerged from the defense of this dissertation.

Summarized under the first material cause (What is required?) were the following questions: (1) How might educators develop a common language to talk about student character development? (2) How can professors prepare a more welcoming and safe environment for online courses? (3) How could we make faculty development more effective?

The key requirement linked to these three questions is reflective dialogue with peer educators, administrators, and students. This reflective dialogue could occur in oral discussions or written ones. When educators discuss teaching and learning practices and problems with other educators, they gain a wealth of information. Sometimes, hearing a problem spoken aloud causes an answer to reveal itself. If the discussions are dialectical, then a common language could emerge. Reading and publishing articles is another way that common language emerges.

Any welcoming and safe environment requires boundaries, great attentiveness, and relationship building. While this might be more challenging for an online course, it is still possible. Allowing students to share power with the boundaries is often helpful. The first discussion board assignment could be designed to dialogue about what the students think the discussion rules should be. Also, the instructor needs to be attentive to the discussions that are taking place on a regular basis and immediately discuss any problems

that arise. As well, virtual “ice breakers,” group projects, and cohort groups can be effective tools in building welcoming and safe on-line environments. A good example of this would be the cohort groups in the Community College Leadership Program at Colorado State University.

The following questions were linked to the “efficient” question—who or what is going to make this happen: (1) How can the importance of this issue be “pushed up” to the level of administration? (2) How can we make faculty members more aware of what they are already doing that facilitates student character development? Or in other words, can faculty members facilitate student character development if they don’t know they are doing it?

For the people who are going to make something happen, awareness is the first step. Making administrators and faculty members aware of the importance of student character development is important; even though, there is no guarantee that they will share an interest. Attempts to make others aware could occur during one-on-one conversations or with larger audiences, such as in-service workshops.

Faculty members can and do facilitate student character development even if they do not know they are doing it. This was evidenced in my study by several participants. In several instances, the confusion was a matter of definition. Another participant said that she believed she was not doing much to promote student character development; however, as we discussed it, she changed her mind.

Recapped under Aristotle’s third formal cause were questions concerning what the results would look like? Or how would the process take form? The following questions were asked: (1) How would the institutional commitment for effective teaching

and deeper learning take place? (2) What would a similarly designed research study have shown with seven negative instructors or a more diverse selection of participants?

I do not have definitive answers for these two questions. It is my opinion that educational institutions want successful results for their students, but collaborative efforts between administrators and faculty members are often lacking. Until educational institutions become more participatory and team-oriented with a sense of real inclusiveness, they will continue to operate in a partially fragmented way. Most of our educational institutions still force teachers and classrooms into producing cookie-cutter students. Because many colleges have turned into huge learning factories, creativity is often squelched for the sake of convenience, time, and economic factors.

The fourth and final causal factor focuses on the purpose or final outcome. The questions associated with purpose or the outcome included the following: (1) How could we share this information with community colleges? (2) How would you put together a pragmatic practitioners' piece based on this data? (3) How could we track student development over several semesters, share the results, and develop appropriate curriculum and delivery?

These three final questions are springboards for additional dialogue with administrators and colleagues or for additional research in the student character development area. This dissertation provides some shared information to community colleges. Also, a pragmatic practitioners' guide could be provided from this dissertation's section on the seven participants' teaching methods, combined with additional research. Assessing student learning and sharing information go hand-in-hand with changing

curriculum and delivery. My passion for this topic motivates me to continue with additional researching and writing in this area.

Overall, the two common themes that prevailed in this *Epilogue* were dialogue and action. According to Gibran (1996), “You talk when you cease to be at peace with your thoughts; and when you can no longer dwell in the solitude of your heart, you live in your lips...” (p. 60). I will continue to ask questions and to search for ways to improve the craft of teaching and learning, especially in the area of student character development because I am not at peace with my thoughts on this topic.

Also, a stronger institutional commitment to professional development is extremely important. At many community colleges, a majority of faculty members have been employed for years, and they believe that their methods of traditional teaching styles are adequate. Administrators can encourage change by offering professional development opportunities to faculty members in several different ways, including in-service training, tuition reimbursements, workshops, and conferences.

## References

- Aristotle, (2001) *Nicomachean Ethics*. (C. Rowe, Trans.). Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press. (Original work published n.d.)
- Arroyo, A. & Selig, G. (2004). Differential Assessment and Development of Character [Electronic version]. *NASPA—Journal of College and Character*, August 24, 2004. Retrieved January 5, 2009, from <http://www.collegevalues.org/journal.cfm>
- Astin, A.W. & Astin, H.S. (1999). *Meaning and spirituality in the lives of college faculty: A study of values, authenticity, and stress*. Los Angeles: University of California, Los Angeles, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Higher Education Research Institute.
- Ayers, W. (2004). *Teaching toward freedom: Moral commitment and ethical action in the classroom*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Bain, K. (2004). *What the best college teachers do*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Berkowitz, M. & Fekula, M. (1999, November-December). Educating for character. *About Campus*, 17-22.
- Bolman, L.G. & Deal, T.E. (1995). *Leading with soul: An uncommon journey of spirit*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Botella, L., Figueras, S., Herrero, O., & Pacheco, M. (1997). Qualitative analysis of self-narratives: A constructivist approach to the storied nature of identity. *Workshop presented at the XIIth International Congress on Personal Construct Psychology*. Seattle, WA.

- Boud, D. (Ed.). (1981). *Developing autonomy in student learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information*. London: Sage Publications.
- Buber, M. (1976). *I and thou*. (W. Kaufman & S.G. Smith, Trans.). New York: Simon & Schuster. (Original work published 1958).
- Buscaglia, L. (1996). *Love: What life is all about*. New York: Random House Publishers.
- Chase, S.E. (2003). Learning to listen: Narrative principles in a qualitative research methods course. In R. Josselson, A. Lieblich, & D. McAdams (Eds.) *Up close and personal: The teaching and learning of narrative research*. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association.
- Clandinin, D.J. & Connelly, F.M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Clinchy, B.M. (2003). An epistemological approach to the teaching of narrative research. In R, Josselson, A. Lieblich, & D.P. McAdams (Eds.) *Up close and personal: The teaching and learning of narrative research*. Washington, D.C: American Psychological Association.
- Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., Rosner, J. & Stephens, J. (2000) Higher education and the development of civic responsibility. In T. Ehrlich (Ed), *Civil responsibility and higher education*. Phoenix: The Oryx Press.
- Colby, A. (2002). Whose values anyway? In W. Damon (Ed.), *Bringing in a new era in character education* (pp.149-171). Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press at

Stanford University.

- Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., & Stephens, J. (2003). *Educating citizens: Preparing America's undergraduates for lives of moral and civic responsibility*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Crewsell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Inc.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dahlin, D.C. & Abbott, J.W. (2000). Character and under-graduate education. *Education*, 120, (2). 204-207.
- Flexner, S.G. (Ed.). (1993). *Random house unabridged dictionary* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Random House Publishers.
- Flick, D.L. (1998). *From debate to dialogue*. Boulder, CO: Orchid Publications.
- Fong, B. (2002, Summer). Of character and citizenship. *Peer Review*, 4, (4), 8-9.
- Gibran, K. (1996). *The prophet*. NY: Knopf Publishing Group. (Original work was Published 1923).
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gouwens, D. (2001). Kierkegaard on the ethical imagination. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 46, (40), 204-220.
- Hart, C. (2002). *Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science research imagination*. London: Sage Publications.
- Husserl, E. (1999). *The idea of phenomenology*. (L. Hardy, Trans.). New York: Kluwer

- Academic Publishers. (Original work published 1907).
- Kant, I. (2002). *The groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*. (T.E. Hill, Ed.). (A. Zweig, Trans.). NY: Oxford University Press. (Original work published 1785).
- Kierkegaard, S. (1962). *Works of love*. (H.V. Hong and E. H. Hong, Trans.) NY: Harper & Row Publishers. (Original work published 1847).
- Kierkegaard, S. (1992). *Concluding unscientific postscript to philosophical fragments*. (H. V. Hong and E. H. Hong, Trans.). Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. (Original work published 1846).
- King, P.M. (1978). William Perry's theory of intellectual and ethical development. In L. Knefelkamp, C. Widick, and C.Parker (Eds.), *Applying new developmental findings*. New Directions for Student Services, no. 4. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- King, P.M. and Kitchener, K.S. (1994). *Developing reflective judgment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- King, P.M. (1997, Summer/Fall). Character and civic education: What does it take? *Educational Record* 46, (40), 87-93.
- Klein, J. (2005). A collegiate dilemma: The lack of formal training in ethics for Professors [Electronic version]. *Journal of College and Character*, 2, [www.collegevalues.org](http://www.collegevalues.org).
- Kohlberg, L. (1958). The development of modes of thinking and choices in years 10 to 16 (Doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago, 1958). Dissertation Abstracts International
- Kuh, G.D. (1998, Summer). Shaping student character. *Liberal Education*, 84 (3), 18-26.
- Makarushka, I. (2002, Summer). Embodying the values we teach. *Peer Review*, 4, (4), 27.

- Mathiasen, R. (1998, September). Moral education of college students: Faculty and staff perspectives. *College Student Journal* 32, (3) 374-378.
- McKeachie, W.J. (2002). *McKeachie's teaching tips*. (11<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, M.A. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Morrison, T. (2002, Summer). How can values be taught in the university? *Peer Review*, 4, (4) 4-7.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Palmer, P.J. (1993). *To know as we are known*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.
- Palmer, P.J. (1998). *The courage to teach: Exploring the inner landscape of a teacher's life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.
- Patton, M.Q. (1987). *How to use qualitative methods in evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M.Q. (2001). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). London: Sage Publications.
- Perry, Jr., W.G. (1970). *Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years: A scheme*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Perry, W.G., Jr. (1981) Cognitive and ethical growth: The making of meaning. In A.W. Chickering & Associates, *The modern American college: Responding to the new realities of diverse students and a changing society* (pp. 76-116). San Francisco:

- Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.
- Piaget, J. (1997). *The moral judgment of the child*. (M. Gabain, Trans.). New York: Simon & Schuster. (Original work published 1932).
- Plato (1961). *Meno* In *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (E. Hamilton & H. Cairns, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published n.d.)
- Plato (1961). *Phaedrus* In *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (E. Hamilton & H. Cairns, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published n.d.)
- Plato (1961). *Republic* In *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (E. Hamilton & H. Cairns, Trans.). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. (Original work published n.d.)
- Punch, M. (1994). Politics and ethics in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. (pp.83-97). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Riessman, C.K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Rosenstand, N. (2003). *The moral of the story*. New York: McGraw Hill Companies, Inc.
- Sandalow, T. (1991). The moral responsibilities of universities. In D. L. Thompson (Ed.), *Moral values and higher education: A notion at risk* (pp. 149-171). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Schwartz, A. (2000, June 9). It's not too late to teach college students about values. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 46, (40), A68.
- Senge, P. (1994). *The fifth discipline*. NY: Doubleday.
- Shank, G. D. (2002). *Qualitative research: A personal skills approach*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Sommer, C. (2005). *Character under attack & what you can do about it*. Houston:

Advance Publishing, Inc.

Stumpf, S.E. (1989). *Philosophy: History and problems*. NY: McGraw-Hill Publishing.

Thompkins, J. (1991, August). Teaching like it matters. *Lingua Franca*. 24-27.

Thompson, D. L. (Ed.). (1991). *Moral values and higher education: A notion at risk*.

Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Timpson, W. (2000). ED 629 Communications and Classrooms Handout/Syllabus. Fort

Collins, CO: Colorado State University Publication.

Timpson, W. & Bendel-Simso, P. (1996). *Concepts and choices for teaching*. Madison,

WI: Magna Publications, Inc.

Trice, A. & Dey, E. (1997, September/October). Trends in faculty teaching goals: A

longitudinal study of change. *Journal of College Student Development*, 38. (5), 527-534.

Wathington, H. (2002, Summer). Values and conflict on campus? An interview with Alan

Wolfe. *Peer Review*, 4, (4) 20-22.

Weimer, M.E. (2002). *Learner-centered teaching: Five key changes to practice*. San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Wells, L. (2000). The things they carried: character, narrative, and the

liberal arts. *Boston University Journal of Education* 182, (2). 45-54.

Wolcott, H.F. (2001). *Writing up: Qualitative research*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Zukav, G. (1990). *The Seat of the Soul*. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc.

## APPENDIX A

### **Initial E-mail to community college faculty requesting their participation in the study.**

XXXXXX

Instructor

Dear XXXX (Name of Instructor),

I am a doctoral candidate in the Community College Leadership Program at Colorado State University located in Fort Collins, Colorado. In XXXXXXXXXXXX, I attended the Academic Integrity Conference at Kansas State University. Your interest in moral development is connected to my doctoral dissertation topic, which is a phenomenological study examining the lived experiences of community college faculty who try to promote student character development. Would you be interested in participating in my study? If so, the audio-recorded interview would take 60-90 minutes at an agreed location, and there would possibly be a second follow-up phone interview of 30-60 minutes, depending on what clarifications or additional information is necessary. I promise you and your college complete confidentiality.

Also, I would be interested in contacting any other community college faculty members associated with your college, or that you know, who share an interest in teaching focused on student character/moral development. I would be happy to call you to discuss the study briefly if you would please e-mail me your phone number and a time to call. I look forward to hearing from you and hope you consider participating.

Sincerely,

Connie Humphreys, Co-PI  
Address: Northeastern Junior College,  
100 College Avenue, Sterling, CO 80751  
Tel: 937-857-9130 Summer; 970-521-6764 Fall-Spring  
E-Mail: [connie.humphreys@njc.edu](mailto:connie.humphreys@njc.edu)

Clifford P. Harbour, J.D., Ed.D., Principal Investigator  
Associate Professor,  
School of Education,  
Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 80523  
Tel: 970-491-5425  
E-Mail: [cliff.harbour@colostate.edu](mailto:cliff.harbour@colostate.edu)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Question Protocol**

The following are the interview questions used in this study:

1. What does “student character development” mean to you?
2. What are your experiences in promoting student character development? This might include collaborative learning, power sharing, dialogue, issues addressed in classes, etc.
3. If you share governance with your students, how do you do so, and what have your experiences been?
4. How is your commitment for student character development linked to your own personal values or worldviews?
5. What are some of the positive and negative aspects of teaching for student character development?
6. How does communication play a role in teaching for student character development? [With students...other faculty?...administrators?]
7. How might the promotion of student character development change the relationships you have with your students?

## APPENDIX C

### INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

**TITLE OF STUDY:** Sharing Power in the Classroom: Community College Professors Who Facilitate Student Character Development.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

Clifford P. Harbour, J.D., Ed.D., Associate Professor, School of Education, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 80523 Tel: 970-491-5425 E-Mail:

[cliff.harbour@colostate.edu](mailto:cliff.harbour@colostate.edu)

**CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:**

Connie Humphreys Address: Northeastern Junior College, 100 College Avenue, Sterling, CO 80751

Tel: 937-857-9130 Summer; 970-521-6764 Fall-Spring

E-Mail: [connie.humphreys@njc.edu](mailto:connie.humphreys@njc.edu)

**WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?**

You are being invited to participate in interviews for this study because you have been identified as a community college faculty member who facilitates student character development by sharing power in the classroom.

**WHO IS DOING THE STUDY?**

This research is being done for a dissertation that the Co-Principal Investigator will complete at the School of Education at Colorado State University.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?**

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of community college faculty who promote student character development by sharing power in the classroom.

**WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?**

All interviews will be conducted in locations and at times that are convenient to you and the Co-Principal Investigator. The study includes 1 to 2 interviews. The first will last 60 to 90 minutes. The second will last from 30 to 60 minutes and may be conducted by telephone or e-mail. These interviews will be conducted from July 2006 through December 2007.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?**

You will be asked to participate in 1 to 2 interviews. The interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. You will receive the transcript of the first interview in advance of the second interview. During the second interview, you will be asked to clarify information from the initial interview.

Page 1 of 3 Participant Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**ARE THERE ANY REASONS WHY I SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?**

No participant meeting the parameters of the study will be involuntarily excluded.

**WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?**

It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the investigators have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential, but unknown, risks.

It is not anticipated that participation in this study will affect your current or future relations with your teaching institution.

**WILL I BENEFIT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

There are no known benefits to participate in this study, but we hope that others will learn about the lived experiences of community college faculty who share governance in the classroom to promote student character development.

**DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?**

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.

**WHAT WILL IT COST ME TO PARTICIPATE?**

There are no costs associated with participation in this research.

**WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?**

We will keep private all research records that identify you, to the extent allowed by law. Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write about the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about the combined information we have gathered. You will not be identified in these written materials.

We may publish the results of this study; however, we will keep your name and other identifying information private. We will assign you a pseudonym to conceal your identity. We will also use pseudonyms for any named persons in the interviews and will use fictional names of any locations described or discussed in the interviews.

All records will be maintained in a locked file. During the project, recordings of interviews will be stored in a password protected digital file on the Co-principal Investigator's personal computer. Only the researchers will have access to these recordings, which will be erased at the end of three years.

**CAN MY PART IN THE STUDY END EARLY?**

The Investigators may choose to limit your participation in the research to one of the two interviews.

**WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

You will not receive any compensation for taking part in this study.

Page 2 of 3 Participant Initials \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM INJURED BECAUSE OF THE RESEARCH?**

The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act determines and may limit Colorado State University's legal responsibility if an injury happens because of taking part in this study. Claims against the University must be filed within 180 days of the injury. Questions about subjects' rights may be directed to Janell Meldrem at (970) 491-1655.

**WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the Co-Principal Investigator at 970-521-6764. If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact Janell Meldrem, Human Research Administrator at 970-491-1655. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

**WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

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 3 pages.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name of person agreeing to take part in the study

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person providing information to participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Research Staff

## APPENDIX D

### Participant Thank-You

<Date>

<Participant's Name>

<College Name>

<Street Address>

<City, State Zip Code>

Dear XXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thank you for participating in my research study and allowing me to audio record your interview. I appreciate your time and willingness to share your experiences concerning the promotion of student character development by allowing students to make decisions and direct their individual learning.

I am enclosing a transcribed copy of your interview for your review. After reviewing the transcript, you may remember a significant story or experience which was neglected during the interview. Please feel free to make notes in the margins of this document, further elaborating any missed experiences. I will contact you soon to schedule another short interview to clarify any corrections or additions to the transcript.

Please return the corrected transcript in the stamped, addressed envelope which is included for your convenience.

I value your participation and cooperation in this research study. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call (970) 521-6764 or e-mail me at [connie.humphreys@njc.edu](mailto:connie.humphreys@njc.edu).

Sincerely,

Connie Humphreys

## APPENDIX E

### [8<sup>th</sup> EXPANSION OF ANALYSIS CODES]

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Descriptions</u>
Di	Dialogue/Communications
Di-Au	Authenticity
Di-Cr-Aw	Creating Awareness
Di-Cr-Na	Creating Narrative
Di-Cr-Re	Creating Reality
Di-CT	Cultivating Trust
Di-DC	Dialectical Conversations
Di-FA	Faculty/Administration
Di-Fb	Feedback
Di-Iv	Invitation
Di-Li	Listening
Di-Na	Narrative
Di-Ng	Negotiation
Di-Nj	Nonjudgmental
Di-QB	Questioning Beliefs
Di-Rf	Reflection
Di-SG	Shared Governance
Ep	Epistemology/Ways of Knowing
Ep-AS	Analytical Skills
Ep-CL	Collaborative Learning
Ep-CP	Conscious Participation
Ep-Dv	Knowledge through diversity/diverse thinking
Ep-Em	Knowledge as being Empowerment
Ep-PT	Peer Tutoring
Ep-Sj	Subjectivity
Ep-TP	Theory and Practice
Ex	Experiences
Ex-Cm	Experiences with Community
Ex-FA	Experiences with Faculty or Administration
Ex-FI	Experiences with First Interests
Ex-SD	Experiences with Student Character Development
Ex-SD-Ac	Accountability/Responsibility
Ex-SD-AD	Assessment (Including Difficulties)

Ex-SD-AF	Students Agree with Faculty
Ex-SD-AI	Academic Integrity (Honesty/Cheating/Plagiarism)
Ex-SD-CE	Cheating is Easier
Ex-SD-Cg	Challenging
Ex-SD-Ci	Citizenship/Political Awareness
Ex-SD-CL	Collaborative Learning
Ex-SD-Cm	Community
Ex-SD-Co	Commitment
Ex-SD-CT	Cultivating Trust
Ex-SD-Cu	Courage/Standing Up For What You Believe
Ex-SD-De	Decline in Character
Ex-SD-Di	Dialogue
Ex-SD-Dv	Diversity
Ex-SD-Em	Empowerment
Ex-SD-En	Engagement
Ex-SD-Eq	Equality/Fairness
Ex-SD-Fa	Failures
Ex-SD-Fn	Friends/Friendship
Ex-SD-Ha	Habit/Practice
Ex-SD-In	Inadvertent (Accidental or w/o Influence)
Ex-SD-La	Laughter/Light Climate in Classroom
Ex-SD-Lg	Legal Issues
Ex-SD-LS	Lack of Spiritual Values
Ex-SD-MB	Modeling Behavior
Ex-SD-Mo	Motivation
Ex-SD-Mu	Music (Use of)
Ex-SD-PR	Positive Reinforcement
Ex-SD-PS	Teaching People Skills
Ex-SD-Re	Respect
Ex-SD-Rf	Reflection
Ex-SD-Rp	Reputation (Importance/Caring about)
Ex-SD-QB	Questioning Beliefs
Ex-SD-SA	Self-Assessment
Ex-SD-SC	Self-Confidence
Ex-SD-SG	Shared Governance/Shared Power
Ex-SD-SI	(Promoting) Self-Identity
Ex-SD-SL	Self-directed Learning
Ex-SD-SN	Students Not Agreeing W/Faculty
Ex-SD-Su	Success in Learning Promotes Motivation
Ex-SD-WE	Work Ethics
Ex-Th	Experiences with Theories/Theorists

Mn	Meaning
----	---------

Mn-AI                      Academic Integrity

Mn-An	Analogy/Metaphor
Mn-AS	Analytical Skills (S.C.D. is gained through using these)
Mn-Au	Authenticity (Being honest to oneself)
Mn-Ci	Citizenship/Political
Mn-Cu	Courage
Mn-Dv	Diversity (S.C.D. is gained through diversity)
Mn-Lo	Love/Caring
Mn-Re	Respect
Mn-WE	Work Ethics
Mn-WP	Teaching the Whole Person

NA	Negative Aspects
----	------------------

NA-AD	Assessment (Including difficulties)
NA-At	Atmosphere/Climate Changes
NA-Cg	Challenging
NA-Fa	Failures (Including disappointments)
NA-GP	Group Problems
NA-PI	Planning Issues
NA-RC	Relationship Changes
NA-Ri	Risks
NA-Ti	Time
NA-Vu	Vulnerability
NA-Wo	Extra Work

PA	Positive Aspects
----	------------------

PA-Ac	Accountability/Responsibility
PA-AD	Assessment (Including Difficulties)
PA-Au	Authenticity
PA-Cg	Challenging
PA-Cm	Community
PA-CT	Cultivating Trust
PA-Di	Dialogue
PA-Fu	Fun
PA-GI	Good Influence
PA-KS	Getting to Know Students
PA-LW	Less Work (As a student becomes more self-directed)
PA-MN	Meeting Needs of Students
PA-RC	Relationship Changes

PV	Personal Values/Worldviews
----	----------------------------

PV-Ac	Accountability
PV-AI	Academic Integrity
PV-AW	Awareness
PV-Ch	Character of Faculty Member
PV-Ci	Citizenship/Political Awareness
PV-CT	Cultivating Trust
PV-Dv	Diversity
PV-Ed	Values linked to education
PV-Eq	Equality/Fairness
PV-Fm	Family Values
PV-Fr	Freedom/Independence/Voice
PV-HX	History Example
PV-Lo-Cm	Love of Community
PV-Re	Respect
PV-Rp	Reputation (Individual or College)
PV-SC	Values linked to Social Constructionist
PV-Sp	Spiritual/Religion
PV-Ti	Being on Time
PV-UW	Understanding Why
PV-WE	Work Ethics

RC	Relationship/Changes
----	----------------------

RC-Au	Authenticity
RC-Cm	Community
RC-CT	Cultivating Trust
RC-Di	Dialogue
RC-Fa	Failures/Disappointments
RC-Re	Respect
RC-SO	Self/Other—Intersubjectivity
RC-Ss	Successes

Qu	Queries
----	---------

Qu-!	Surprises
Qu-?	Questions

Tg	Teaching
----	----------

Tg-Ac	Teaching for Accountability
Tg-Ac-AI	Accountability through Academic Integrity
Tg-Ac-AS	Accountability through Analytical Skills
Tg-Ac-Ci	Accountability through Citizenship
Tg-Ac-CL	Accountability through Collaborative Learning/Groups
Tg-Ac-Cu	Accountability through Courage
Tg-Ac-HE	Accountability through High Expectations
Tg-Ac-HX	Accountability through History Examples
Tg-Ac-Lo	Accountability through Love/Caring
Tg-Ac-MB	Accountability through Modeling Behavior
Tg-Ac-SL	Accountability through Self-Directed Learning
Tg-AD	Assessment (Including Difficulties)
Tg-Ho	Hands-On
Tg-If	Influencing
Tg-Li	Listening
Tg-Lo	Love/Caring/Passion
Tg-LS	Learning Styles
Tg-MB	Modeling
Tg-MP	Motivating Through Personalization
Tg-Ob	Observation
Tg-OO	One-on-One
Tg-Pa	Participative/Freedom/Choice
Tg-TR	Traditional Role/Style
Tg-WP	Whole Person (Teaching Beyond Content)