Out-of-Step: Experiences in Teaching

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

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ABSTRACT

This ethnographic inquiry centres on the narratives of five elementary school teachers and inquires into what happens when they realize that they are thinking and feeling differently, about a particular issue, from the majority of their peers on staff. The study explores the nature of that experience and how it affects the well-being of the teachers. It also looks at the context in which the teachers work, and wonders what factors contribute to creating an atmosphere in which to think differently from the majority, is to be vulnerable and sanctioned by one's peers. A social constructionist approach is used to inquire into the role and function of emotions in these interactions. Emotions have often been thought to be a characteristic of the individual, however, the social constructionist approach holds that they are constructed within a relationship, in accordance with the "rules" of the culture.

The teachers were interviewed and their stories transcribed. The results of the analysis are presented in four "rounds." The first round comprises the individual teachers' stories told in their own words. The second round presents the themes of the shared experience which include: recognizing that one is out-of-step; the moral voice, which seems to indicate that the issues involved the participants' values; the decision-making process which the participants engaged in, to decide whether they would allow themselves to be witnessed as being out-of-step by their peers; the inner, subjective experience of the participants; and the reactions of their peers. The third round looks at the impact of the experience on the individual teachers and is discussed under the headings of: talking about health and emotions; meaning-making and resilience; feeling alone; protection and fear; and coping. The fourth

round concerns the school context and looks at administration, staff dynamics, "rules," and communication, including silence.

The inquiry raises several issues of concern regarding the interpersonal strategies engaged in by peers towards a person who holds a different opinion, and the influence of the principal in setting the tone for a context in which this could happen.

Implications for counselling include the need to pay attention to systemic issues which might be contributing to a client's distress, and the need to raise awareness of socio-cultural factors which may be taken for granted and yet be related to oppressive structural situations. Implications for school staffs and suggestions for building healthy workplace communities are also discussed.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Community and relationships are important to me and form a strong thread throughout my research. Indeed, I have often thought about the phrase "It takes a village to raise a child" and reworded it as "It takes a community to raise a thesis student." I wish to acknowledge the support I have received from my community.

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge, the support of those those who participated in my inquiry. John, Lily, Paul, Kate, and Lynne trusted me with their stories and their vulnerability, and live here in the pages of this book.

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My friends from other areas of my life have supported me in

innumerable ways. It was Leslie's statement that I had to begin with my own story that set me off on this path. Jytte and Val were willing guinea-pigs when I was trying to construct my interview guide. Everyone has been wonderfully consistent in asking how things were going. They have helped me gain clarity by listening as I articulated my ideas.

My family has been unstinting in their belief in me and their encouragement. From each of them I have received gifts throughout my life which are woven into the fabric of this work. From my father, both in his actions and in his support of my activities, I received a strong belief in social justice and social activism; I am sad that he did not live to see me complete this work but know that he would be proud of me. From my mother who, in her early forties, attended teacher training college, an occurrence which was decidedly out-of-the-ordinary in those days, I received the inspiration that it is never too late to do what you want. From my daughter, Suzanne, I have relearned the meaning of idealism and the belief that individuals can make a difference. My son, Mark, has taught me the importance of compassion, hope, and trust; and from my granddaughter, Jade, I have learned to pay attention to, and enjoy, what is happening in the moment.

And what can I say of the support I have received from Charles? He has taken care of shopping, cooking, and household maintenance; he stood aside while I took over the computer room; he has listened to what has been important to me; and he has been an intellectual foil with whom I could discuss and debate ideas. Above all, he has been genuinely interested in my work and believed in its significance.

To all of you who make up my community, I want to say a sincere "Thank You." Each of you has contributed to this work.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This inquiry centres on the narratives of five teachers who perceived themselves to be in situations in which they were thinking and feeling differently from the majority of their peers on staff, an experience which I have called "out-of-step." The purpose of the research is to inquire into the nature of that experience, particularly whether the teachers voiced their differences or not, what factors influenced their decision to speak up or to remain silent, and how their peers reacted. This inquiry asks two further questions: What did the teachers perceive to be the repercussions of the experience on their well-being? What were some of the conditions in the teachers' workplace which contributed to the experience of being out-of-step?

On a more subtle level, the inquiry asks about the role of emotions in these situations, especially the emotions of the individuals who were out-of-step and the emotions of the other teachers on the staff. It also asks how emotions are expressed both implicitly and explicitly in the teachers' professional settings. In the everyday life of teachers, the emotional components of communication are often not attended to, and therefore cannot be processed (Moursund, 1993). This inquiry draws attention to those components and asks how do they affect the individual teacher's emotional and overall well-being?

From the counselling perspective there are times when attention needs to be paid to the client's professional or workplace context. Emotional issues such as anger and fear may arise as a result of hierarchical structures. The feminist counselling perspective recognizes that emotions can be used as a

momentum to achieve change (Griffiths, 1988). A parallel could also be drawn with multicultural counselling in which attention is paid to cultural issues; in my inquiry each school has its cultural context in which people find themselves in subordinated positions. Systemic approaches to therapy would also pay attention to the individual as part of a larger context (Hackney & Cormier, 1996).

Situating Myself As Researcher

Situating myself as researcher was, and continues to be, a recursive process. In order to impose some structure I have organized this section under six headings:

1) The Importance of Situating the Self
2) Class Presentation Story
3) Journal Extracts
4) Reflection
5) Standpoint and Research Question
6) Postscript and Research Question

The Importance of Situating the Self

The impetus for this inquiry emerged from personal experience. In my application to graduate studies I identified "Teachers and Emotions" as my area of research interest. The what, why, and how of the topic eluded me until a friend advised, "You have to start with your own story." At the beginning of my second graduate year, I registered in a Writing Research course which I used as a support and motivation for exploring my story. That exploration lasted a year until I reached the point at which I had gained

enough clarity to start writing the proposal.

As I embarked on the process of proposal writing, I found myself referring to my year's exploration as a "prelude" to writing my thesis. I realized I was discounting it because it was not the "formal" part of my process. However, as I progressed with the so-called formal part, I became clearer that the year's work and my personal writings were, in fact, an integral part of my thesis. They were important for several reasons. First, since I am writing about the subject of emotions, it is important that I understand my own emotions, positions, and perspectives as clearly as possible. Second, my personal writings allow me to make my own biases and perceptions clear to the readers of this work. Third, my writing enabled me to be honest with the people I was interviewing. Reconnecting with my own experience meant that my relationship with the participants was based on common understanding. I was no longer a distant researcher. Fourth, one of my intentions in writing this thesis is to affirm the value of taking oneself and one's emotions seriously. Therefore, to call my year engaged in writing a "prelude" devalues the process and perpetuates the very attitude I am wanting to discourage. Last, my personal story is important because, no matter for what, or for whom, I might think I am writing, ultimately I am writing to try and understand myself better.

Class Presentation Story

In situating myself, I will start with an excerpt from a presentation I made to my Writing Research class. I actually told this story in November 1997 after I had been journalling for a few weeks, but I decided to place it here because it helps to set the context.

The Pink Slip

In January 1986, as part of the cutbacks in education, fourteen teachers in the school district in which I was teaching, were handed pink slips. A rehiring process took place before the expiration of the month and all but two of the teachers were hired back, most of them to the positions from which they had been let go. They were allowed to choose, in order of their seniority, what job they wished to have, from the list of available assignments. However, the district administration had told the Teachers' Association that they expected the teachers to request to be rehired to their former positions, to facilitate continuity for the students. At that time I was about three above the cut-off line. I was outraged by the process and thought that as an association we should protest the manner in which this was being done. The teachers did not make a collective stand and I, too, was silent.

In May, four months later, I was one of the twenty-five who were handed pink slips. Again, there was the "Cattle Market" rehiring process. I was close to the top of the seniority list and, when it was my turn to go in to the rehiring room, I chose not to pick the assignment from which I had been laid off. Instead, I selected a position which had been filled on a temporary basis for a number of years, the Hospital Homebound post - one of those positions which no one knows too much about, and which is funded on an inconsistent basis. That was not a popular choice with the district administrators, since I had been let go from a part-time job and I was now selecting full-time employment. The administration tried to rule me disqualified, however I had previously consulted with the executive of the Teachers' Association and I knew I had their backing. I knew, too, that the regulations were on my side.

The following May over sixty of us were laid off, going back ten years. To me it was clearly a political move by the district administration. They were able to eliminate whatever programmes they chose. They also "protected" some positions and personnel, thus making them immune to the effects of the seniority clause. They knew they needed to cut only about ten full-time positions, but the way in which they chose to do it kept people in a state of

fear and uncertainty, and pitted teacher against teacher. This time I was a long way down the list, and, when my turn came to go into the "Cattle Market," I was faced with the situation of either choosing a position in the school at which my ex-husband was principal, or "bumping" a friend from the library job she had held for a number a years. I chose the latter. My friend elected to stay on in the same school in another position. A week later the principal of that school announced at a teachers' meeting that no one who had taken a job from one of "his" teachers was welcome in "his school." He was referring to me and the new kindergarten teacher. I learned later that the kindergarten teacher's husband had confronted the principal. I did nothing. I felt guilty and ashamed.

I spent that summer backpacking in Peru and Ecuador, in a completely different world. When I thought about my work situation, I decided that I was a professional and would go into the school and do a professional job. However, when September came, it was a different matter. My friend had removed anything that could be of help from the library. I felt the wrong-doer rather than a victim of the system. By the end of the first week, I found myself unable to face going into school. I went to see my doctor who recommended I take time off. That time stretched into eighteen months until I decided to resign. I couldn't see myself going back as "I hadn't really resolved anything." I did not have another job to go to and, in fact, had no idea what I would do.

While I was on leave, I started volunteering at a local wellness centre. The centre staff were asked to present a workshop for the local School District Professional Development day. It turned out that none of the staff was available to do the workshop at that time, so they asked me if I would be willing to take it on. I struggled with the decision of whether I would go back into the system which I had left with so much anger the previous year. I decided I would. I put on two half day workshops which, in my naivete, I called "Wellness is .... Loving Yourself." They were a great success. People came to the first session and returned for the afternoon session. At that point I realized that here was something I could offer, which would be of value to teachers.

For the next three years I travelled throughout the province presenting ProD workshops for teachers. I then decided that if I was to go deeper into what I was doing, I needed to return to university. In my application to the counselling programme, I stated as my area of research interest, "Teachers' Emotional Well-being," since that was the theme that had arisen, time and again, during the workshops.

Journal Extracts

In this section I trace my journey from questioning why I want to research teachers and emotions to "finding" my research question.

September 11, 1997 I'm taking Leslie's advice and starting to write my own story. It was far easier to write and talk about issues from an impersonal (so called) perspective. I have successfully managed to distance myself from my feelings during the last few years, as I have been presenting workshops to teachers, and now I need to reconnect with my subject, to move into the feeling place, not just talk about emotions. I feel very vulnerable. Why is it so important for me to write about teachers and emotions? What is it about emotions that moves me?

October 14 Facing my emotions all these years later - so much anger and so much pain. I walk around, avoiding sitting down to write - when I'm walking around and when I'm driving the car, there's so much I want to say, and when I sit down, it dissipates. Why teachers and emotions? because of my experience of not valuing my emotions and not feeling supported? Why am I doing this? to keep my connection with teaching? I can feel tears. Heidegger says that things go along until something breaks; what is the meaning of that broken piece? I had never really believed that I would not have a job, not teach. What I need to write most is what I am not saying and not feeling. I am

thinking too much about what I need to write instead of writing it. I think I'm afraid of an immense sadness, of a loss. I miss teaching, I miss the children.

I'm not a teacher any more. That seems poignant. I lost my community and I lost my life work. I haven't realized until now how important that was. It was, and is, important for me to do something which I believe is making a difference and to express who I am through my work. I had not fully realized that. The loss of identity with a community, a group of people coming together with a common purpose.

October 22 I've just realized something very significant. I've been looking back in my journals to the years when I was laid off. I haven't written a thing about it - I have concentrated on everything else that was going on in my life at the time. I have looked for the letters and papers I received at the time. I have destroyed everything. Such a lot of pain.

October 28 Standing up for what I believe has always been important to me. On my travels I have been moved by visiting places where I've known that people have stood for what they believed in; standing in Wenceslas Square and remembering the students who stood their ground, knowing they could face death from the invading Russian troops; crying in the Plaza de Maio in Buenos Aires, as the Madres de Maio walked around in solemn procession with pictures of their "disappeareds" around their necks, and names embroidered on their kerchiefs; sailing past the monument in the dockyards in Gdansk; and even sitting in a café in Berkeley remembering the students' uprising. It seems that a large part of my emotion about the layoffs is shame and guilt at not standing up for what I believed was right, of not acting on my values.

I let myself down. I did not stand up and speak out against the way the

layoffs were handled the first time, before I was involved personally. Because I had not stood up for others, when my turn came, I could not really expect others to stand up for me and yet I experienced anger at the complacency of my colleagues who did not want to rock the boat; those who, because of their seniority, would never be affected by layoffs and who wanted to protect their mortgages, boat loans, and condos in Hawaii.

As a teaching community we were becoming divided. Between February and May several seniority lists were sent around to schools for teachers to check their names and service records to make sure all was correct. I remember how picky we became; checking that all our substituting time was included. There was considerable jockeying for position.

I let myself down by betraying my own values. I fought for myself. I used the lay off procedure to get a full time job. I had the backing of the teachers' association to do that, but I faced censure from my peers despite the fact that they also benefited because I had led the way. The shame led me to withdraw from my peers. I isolated myself.

November 7 So what else was there besides the shame, guilt, and loss? There was anger. I was angry we were not valued. I felt anger at the system and I felt powerless to do anything about it. I keep remembering the scene at the Cattle Market where the male administrators were ranged around the tables, flaunting their egos. I get angry all over again. What's the relevance of understanding my process all that time (ten years) ago? how does that add to the body of knowledge? how can I apply that to teachers today? Maybe it's the fear that I won't be taken seriously (rewrite: I won't take myself seriously) that holds me back.

So how would I proceed with this research? Ask other people who

received pink-slips what their experience was and how is it affecting them now? What was my experience? Why did it impact on my life? Why was it a significant life altering event? How did I see myself? Why didn't I return to teaching? What happened to others?

I could use the experience of the pink slip within the larger picture of teachers and their well being. The topic is important because it affected and continues to affect many teachers. It erodes self-esteem. It pits teacher against teacher. It drives a wedge in the teaching community, in schools. It is a drain of energy. Children are being short-changed. Teachers are not being treated with respect. Do I use just my story? Do I contact others who were laid off? Would they want to talk about it?

Jan 7th 1998 I met J. out shopping today and, as we were talking, I suddenly remembered that she was one of those teachers who received pink slips a number of times. I started telling her about my research; her face went stiff and stern and really fixed - no other response from her. Obviously it would not be a good idea to interview her! I wonder how many other teachers would not wish to be interviewed. I imagine them saying "That's all past. We just want to get on with our job now."

Why am I doing this? to understand myself and my process. How many of my feelings about the way the layoffs were handled did I allow myself to express? How do I go about this? Use narrative to explore meanings in retrospect? emotions at the time, and in retrospect? social construction of emotions? What is not allowed to be expressed? .... my story, teachers' stories and culture - emotions, not being able to express in the culture.

Jan 21 As I talk to people, I hear my passion and my pain. I wonder if it sounds as though I'm whining. I need to sort out the pain and the politics.

Autobiography - constructing a self - honest - "looking in - journeying out" cycles. How will this be? How will I allow myself to dive into the depths of anger? Unless we (I) deal with our (my) own anger... and despair - how do I bottom out in despair? - separate peace. Am I prepared for what might come up? How am I feeling? My head and neck have been aching; I have been up for two nights this week till four and five o'clock. I am feeling scared that maybe there isn't anything "out there" to investigate.

When I talked to B.,*(a friend who had suddenly quit teaching)* , today I could feel myself getting passionate and then she is saying "But Judith, it's not like that anymore." Is this my hag? - I need to connect with "women and power" issues - I need to recognize what I am fighting for - a place to be heard and recognized. I need to hear and recognize that too. I have every right to be angry. I feel angry at what happened back then, anger at the people (men) who did it, anger at the teachers who were complicit, anger at myself for not speaking up, and then becoming complicit.

Feb 4 Politics of emotions within the system; betrayal; loss of innocence. Trust and trustworthy come into this; whom can I trust? myself? others close to me? the community? the world? loss of innocence can bring disappointment, cynicism, denial, anger, perhaps acceptance of a new reality - but reality is always changing and our new ideas might be founded on false premises - so I wonder if I am cynical now; how can one (I) be vital? and let go of expectations and anger too? but we (I) need anger as a motivator - do I?- not necessarily; what do I need as a motivator? Realization that the school board did not care about its teachers and maybe never had.

Why do I want to write about this? - the pain is still there. What was it about the pink slip? It was the way in which it was handled by the

administration that violated my sense of fairness. Why was it so potent? because I had to rewrite my own story and recognize and acknowledge that I was part of it. I cannot locate myself outside. I was complicit. It was teacher against teacher. I acted and they reacted. It was an impossible situation.

I'm not sure what it is I want to find out. I could do an interview and ask about emotions: tell me about a time when ----- . Trusting emotions; what do my emotions tell me? When I do ProD workshops my experience is that a lot of emotion is expressed and that there is relief, freedom, and sometimes, action. I want it to be wider than just the pink slip phenomenon.

Feb 18 It is reading break. I am at Long Beach in a water-front cabin with three of my women friends. I'm sitting at the picnic table - the surf is pounding, the light is fading. It's wonderful. What am I feeling? I am feeling content. Where in my body? - my breathing, around my heart chakra. My thoughts are quite still. What's important for me? healing is important - not keeping anger "there" but coming from another place, and yet I need to get past "there." I cannot go "past," I have to go "through" it. I need to forgive and release energy so I can move forward. What's involved in forgiveness? It always sounds so self-righteous. Try sentence starters. "I forgive ----- ." That doesn't sound right. So much shame and anger and hurt. If I forgive these people what does it mean? It means I won't be able to hold them in anger any more (and if I forgive myself??!!)

Feb 21 Last morning. I am sitting outside the cabin, the tide is high and it is still raining; it's not really cold though. Last night we talked about what we wanted to shed in the sea - for me it was shame about my work situation. Where am I now? how do I see myself? - arguing; arguing for emotions to be respected and validated as information about ourselves. Looking, not for

antipathy, but a way to contain everything, a way forward - not stuck in that place. I want to be a part of facilitating change. A transformative vision; the change has to come from the inside. Building communities - how would I do that? Talk to people about how their schools could be more nurturing and caring? What is community building?

Something has happened this reading break - the "company of women," non-competition, reaching a heart-space and sitting in peace with nature. Looking for wholeness in my writing - not an embodiment of anger, but a place to deal with conflict, and recognizing that, at times, anger will come back but I don't have to keep it there. So - being here now, and looking forward. I feel I have pivoted on the spot. I have been facing the past, looking back, and now I'm firmly rooted on this spot and looking forward.

Feb 26 The epistemology of emotions. Do I want to ask others about their experiences, about emotions in school, about an incident in which they couldn't or didn't express their feelings? If we acted as if our emotions and bodies delivered us trustworthy knowledge, how could we change the system? What's my intention? - to produce something that helps other teachers to explore, trust, and value the information that their emotions give them (to help me to explore, trust, and value the information that my emotions give me!)

March 17 I feel like a "Reluctant Feminist." I wonder why I seem to be resisting going to that feminist place and yet that's where I've found the most hopeful words and phrases. That's where I feel at home - the politics of emotions, the philosophy of emotions. Why am I so reluctant? It has something to do with the fact that every time I hit that feminist space I access anger. I don't mean to. Maybe I've spent so much of my life appearing "nice"

that I still resist going to a place where I am not nice (inner/outer tension). In "Women Who Run With the Wolves" there is a chapter entitled "Marking Territory: the Boundaries of Outrage and Forgiveness." Pinkola Estes says, "once women remember the origins of their rage they feel they may never stop grinding their teeth. Ironically, we also feel very anxious to disperse our rage for it feels distressing and noxious. We wish to hurry up and do away with it. Chronic rage confines access to the collective unconscious. Untransformed rage can become a constant mantra about how oppressed, hurt, and tortured we were. When a woman has trouble letting go of her anger it's often because she's using rage to empower herself. While that might have been wisdom at the beginning, now she must be careful, for ongoing rage is a fire that burns her own primary energy."

March 22 My experience is that I feel anger which then leads me to believe that there are things within the system that need to be changed. I want to find out what other people experience when they perceive they have been dealt with unjustly by the system or when they didn't feel respected. "Talk to me about respect within the system." I have been trying out questions on friends to try to get at the experience. I asked A. and P. about incidents and they said, "So you want negative emotions and experience." I don't like that word "negative" it is so judgemental. I became defensive.

One of my dilemmas is how to reconcile post modernism with action. If I accept that there are multiple realities, where is my basis for social action? Donna Haraway combines post modern with a socialist, feminist perspective to argue for situated knowledges in which the only way to find a larger vision is to be "somewhere in particular."

My research question is closer to asking about the emotional experience

of not being respected. The fact that we often don't respect our own emotions also ties into this. I could start with my own story and then I could ask other teachers about a time when they did not feel treated with respect. As I have been reading about, and reflecting on, emotions, I have been drawn to the social constructionist approach in which we construct our emotions according to our interaction within our contexts. I have also been drawn towards the feminist approach because I see emotions as being a way of knowing about what is going on in our world. I am also interested in embodied emotions.

I wonder about the issue of "making a difference." Do I have a vision of changing the system? If so, how ethical is that? If there are many realities, who is to say mine is more "right" than what is already in place? If I wish to replace what already exists with something else, as soon as that happens I have privileged another system. I am interested in a system which works for everyone. What I perceive to be issues of social justice are important to me.

April 6 Compassion - I'm reading Borysenko's (1997) book, "The Ways of the Mystic"; she talks about responsibility. What's my responsibility? - to come from a place of compassion - not "holier than thou." "The Buddha in me sees the Buddha in you." Peace; how can we have world peace if we don't have it in our homes and in our workplace? Emotions are socially constructed in the workplace culture - places of tension and difficulty - how do we resolve? Beware of being evangelical! How does one help with humility? Ask, "What do you need?" "How can I help?" Don't go in and say, "This is what you need."

May 5 "The marriage of mysticism and social justice, whose proper name is compassion." " Feminist consciousness and its discovery of new images and symbols for our shared deep common experience" (Matthew Fox,

1990). "Compassionate action is not done for others, it is done with others, for ourselves, because we can no longer avoid it. It helps fulfill our lives" (Ram Dass, 1992). Forgiveness and compassion. Instead of coming from a place of anger, which is reactive, I could come from a place of love, which is centred and strong.

May 15 What is my question? I seem to have run out of steam and lost my inspiration for what I was going to do - what do I really want to do? Do I want to look at how power is structured in schools? Now I have lost my anger-edge, what do I think about the system? I'm quite at a loss - maybe I look at how we become complicit. Using emotions for reform. If you were going to trust your emotions and learn from them, what would they tell you? I'm writing this in hopes of shaking something loose. I've lost my question and my focus.

June 5 I am registered in "Interpretive Inquiry II" with Vance Peavy. Our text is "Interpretive Ethnography" by Denzin (1997). What is my question? The topic is around emotions. How do teachers experience their emotions about their job? could be their peers, or the system. The topic is large and has to do with hierarchy, power, and values. Ethnography can take a critical look at "suspected systematic injustices." I spent yesterday reading the Denzin book and making notes of excerpts that "spoke" to me:

> A feminist, communitarian moral ethic .... seeks to produce narratives that ennoble human experience while facilitating civic transformations in the public (and private) spheres. This ethic promotes universal human solidarity. It ratifies the dignity of the self and the value of human life. It is committed to human justice and the empowerment of

> groups of interacting individuals. (p. xiv)
>
> If the biographical is to be taken seriously, then each writer has an obligation to create a body of work that embodies a particular ontological, epistemological, and political vision of how things can be made better. (p. 226)
>
> ..... ethnography's central purpose: to produce meaningful, critical discourse about the many worlds we all inhabit. (p. 227)

June 11 I am really excited and engaged by what I am reading and discovering. I can use ethnography which looks at culture, so I could look at the teaching culture and, specifically, emotions within that culture - and the tacit norms and collective meanings which influence the experiencing and expression of emotions. Control - how the group polices themselves; what is expressed and not expressed. Should I ask about pink slips? It's emotions I'm interested in; what emotions? How experienced? How expressed? In what place? In relation to whom? Are they validated? Knowledge content of emotion? Relationship to thought and actions?

Reflection

September 1998 I have been reading through my journals and tracing my journey thus far. My earliest writings led me to my grief and loss of teaching - a disenfranchised grief because I had chosen to leave. It was necessary for me to contact that loss and grieve it for my own emotional health as an individual and as a counsellor. It was also important for me as researcher, to become conscious of what was moving me so I could guard against my research being motivated by anger, or a desire for revenge

(Polkinghorne, 1989). It is similar to bracketing, becoming transparent, disclosing my assumptions and biases. It seemed especially important since I am inquiring about emotions, mine and others.

I am aware that I have made several choices on my way. As far as the pink slip incident was concerned, there were several themes which emerged. The incident challenged, in a way I could not ignore, my assumptions about fairness, respect, and justice. It illuminated the workings of power within the institution, and the positions of men and women in relation to that power. So one choice would have been to concentrate on the pink slip incident itself and interview other teachers who had been through that experience, although I'm not sure that they would have been willing, if they were still in the system, to revisit that time.

Moreover, if I wrote about something in the past, my inquiry could have been dismissed as irrelevant. Many of the components of the pink slip phenomenon exist in other situations in schools today, so I made the decision to write about something contemporary, which could not be so easily dismissed and could be seen as having more relevance to teachers today.

I realized that much of my distress, the shame and isolation I felt, was a result of how my peers reacted to my challenging authority and how I, in turn, reacted to them. I recognized that, while I had broken some of the tacit rules, I was also bound by others. It was also apparent that as a group we, the teachers, had policed ourselves. I had been just as silent as my peers, so I could not approach my inquiry from a self-righteous position. It was important for me to acknowledge that and to recognize how easy it is to become complicit. In acknowledging this I began to understand how emotions are socially constructed and some of the personal and political

repercussions of that. One theorized purpose of co-constructed emotions is to keep the group together by discouraging the challenging of the status quo. Those who do step outside and question are often isolated or ignored (White, 1993).

There are many instances throughout school life in which teachers feel very strongly about an issue but do not allow themselves to speak up about it because of the rules concerning appropriate behaviour in their setting, or they may speak up and suffer the repercussions. There are often emotional repercussions either way. I have therefore decided to interview teachers and invite them to tell me about a time when they perceived themselves to be out-of-step with their peers, that is, thinking and feeling differently from their peers about an issue. By focusing on peer relationships rather than relationships with administration, I am attempting to equalize the power dynamics within the system. Within the experience of being out-of-step, there will be an emotional component. I am also interested in finding out how that emotional experience affects the individual teacher's well-being and the well-being of the staff.

Standpoint and Research Question

I need to take a standpoint, realizing that things are always changing and so this is where I choose to take my stand. For this thesis my research questions are:

> What is the nature of the experience of teachers who perceive themselves to be thinking and feeling differently from a majority of their peers over an issue about which they feel strongly?
>
> What do they perceive to be the repercussions for their personal well-

being and for the well-being of their school?

Postscript and Research Question

It is several months since I wrote those questions. During the intervening time I have conducted the interviews, completed the analysis, and written the report section. It became clearer, as I was progressing through the analysis, that I did not have data which answered the question about the repercussions on the school well-being. What the data did speak to eloquently was, "What are the conditions in a school in which someone could experience being out-of-step?" Therefore, the research questions are now:

> What is the nature of the experience of teachers who perceive themselves to be thinking and feeling differently from a majority of their peers over an issue about which they feel strongly?
>
> What do they perceive to be the repercussions on their personal well-being?
>
> What are some of the conditions in the schools in which the participants experienced being out-of-step?

Rationale

I believe on a very fundamental level that the primary reason I am engaged in this research is to understand myself better, to learn to take my emotions seriously, and to recognize that I can use my emotions in the same way as I use my other senses, to find out about the world around me and my position in it. This is not something I set out intentionally to do, but each time I came to write the rationale and justify my research, something seemed to be missing. This does not invalidate or diminish my other purposes, it just

gives them a more honest basis which needs to be acknowledged. I am reminded of the quotation from Ram Dass (1992) about compassion: "Compassionate action is not done for others, it is done with others, for ourselves, because we can no longer avoid it. It helps fulfill our lives" (p. xii). If I am not aware of my personal reasons for conducting this research, then all the other reasons I describe have a hollow ring to them.

The site of my inquiry, that of teachers feeling and thinking differently from their peers, presented itself to me as I was writing to find out what was important to me about teachers and emotions. This site presents the opportunity to illuminate the aspect of emotion as being socially-constructed and illustrate the political purpose of emotions in a group. The occurrence of being out-of-step brings together inner experience and outer expression in the body of the individual; it represents the tension between the two forces and is therefore a "good" site to explore this subject. In the situation of thinking and feeling differently from the rest of the group, a person has the choice of either speaking out or keeping silent. There may be significant emotional repercussions to both positions. This may, in turn, affect the individual's long term overall well-being. When expressions of diversity are silenced or ignored within the group, there are also implications for the well-being of the group and for the workplace. An important corollary to this is establishing how to do things differently, how to create healthy communities, while still respecting the individual.

This research is important for many reasons:

1) Little attention has been paid to emotions of teachers and yet, teaching is a very emotional business (Coleman, 1994; Emmer, 1991; Nias, 1996; Noddings,

1996). The exploration of emotions is important to teachers as individuals and to their work.

2) Emotions have often been thought to be the province of the inner part of a person (White, 1993). This inquiry approaches emotions as constructed socially and culturally within relations of power (Boler, 1997; Frijda & Mesquita, 1994; Griffiths, 1988) and identifies some of the influences at work in that process. From a counselling perspective this highlights the counsellor's need to be aware of the context of the client. Clients sometimes put themselves down for "overreacting" or they question whether their feelings are "justified" without realizing the significance of the situation in which those feelings occurred.

3) The workplace can be a source of support or it can be a source of anxiety. It is important to look at what contributes to this climate and to bring to light practices which are not nurturing and caring for the staff. Peer relationships have been identified as a source of teachers' stress (Blase & Anderson, 1995; Kelchtermans, 1996). This inquiry illuminates some of the factors involved in those relationships. I am interested in looking at how caring communities, which engender respect for all their members, are created. By listening to teachers' stories about their experiences, I hope to come a little closer to understanding how this can be done.

4) In writing my own and other people's stories, I am validating personal experience and emotions as sources of knowledge, and recognizing that they can be powerful tools in addressing issues of injustice and power. In valuing emotions, I am supporting the view that emotions are sources of information

which, according to Lazarus (1994), "we ignore at our peril" (p. 224).

5) Many people have stories of being silenced. As I have talked to friends about the topic of my inquiry, they say: "That happens in other places as well." "That happens all the time." "Look at what happens to whistle-blowers in science research and medical fields." At these times I have questioned the importance and significance of what I am engaged in. However, I believe that these kinds of stories need to be heard again and again. They need to be heard in many different locations and situations. The importance lies both in the content of what the people are saying, and in the fact that they have been "discouraged" from expressing their opinions.

6) My concern for the health of individual teachers is another reason for undertaking this inquiry. There is increasing information about the link between emotions and overall well-being. Current research in fields like neuroscience has confirmed the importance of the role of emotions in overall health; Candace Pert (1997) stated:

> We tend to deal with the physical aspects of keeping ourselves healthy and ignore the emotional dimension... yet, in light of the new knowledge about emotions and the psychosomatic network, it's obvious that ... the emotions are a key element in self-care. (p. 284)

In talking with colleagues and with teachers at professional development workshops, I have realized that there are many teachers who walk a thin line. In their study "Striving for Health: Living with Broken Dreams. A Study of Teacher Health In Alberta," Jevne and Zingle (1992) interviewed teachers who had been identified as healthy by their school

administrators and they found that "the distance between health and unhealth is small. Healthy teachers are not substantively healthier than their ill counterparts. The margin is slim and it would appear that a large portion of educators are potentially at risk" (p. 237). Since teaching is an emotionally involving occupation it is reasonable to assume that "emotional self-care" would be an important element of overall health care.

Conclusion

There are several interconnected aspects to this inquiry: the experience of being out-of-step; the emotional component of that experience; the effect of those experiences on the well-being of the individuals; the role played by the teachers' context; and the validation of personal experience as a way of knowing. Each one of these factors affects and is affected by the others. This inquiry explores the interplay between them.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review, I have assembled the discourses and articles which influenced me, contributed to my understanding, and "informed" my inquiry. In my readings I found myself crossing and recrossing the borders between sociology, anthropology, organizational theory, feminism, education, and psychology. It was a recursive process. I would write some more of my own story and read another article or book and understand in a different way. Similarly, after I had interviewed the participants and transcribed our conversations, I would reread an article and realize a new connection.

I begin with literature about the social-construction of emotions, as this is the lens I used to understand the emotional experiences of both myself and the participants. Secondly, I look at feminist perspectives, particularly with reference to the epistemology of emotions and the politics of emotions. Their perspectives also fall within the social construction approach. Thirdly, I write about the research and literature about teachers' emotions, from a historical perspective and then from a current perspective. Next, I move into the teachers' context. The literature in this section is from a variety of discourses which have some relevance to teachers' peer-relationships, including the micro political perspective. Lastly, I look at the connection between emotions and health.

Social Construction Approach

> The better a person understands the degree to which he [sic] is externally determined, the closer he comes to understanding and exercising his real freedom. (Bahktin, as cited in Freeman, 1993, p. 22)

The set of emotion theories which have recently emerged in philosophy, social theory, psychology, and anthropology, and which are united in the principle that emotions are socio-culturally constituted, form the basis of the social-construction approach to emotion (Armon-Jones, 1986; Oatley, 1993). Expanding on the role of culture in constituting emotions, White (1993) explained that until recently the study of emotion has tended to be the study of the individual person and that academic and popular theories of emotion have tended to privilege inner characteristics over social ones. He suggested we need to think of emotions as being outer and public, as well as inner and private, and to pay more attention to the social processes which produce culturally meaningful emotions. Thus, context and setting are important. Harré (1986) alluded to the tendency of emotional theorists to abstract an emotion and to try to study it in isolation, but, he argued, there are "angry people, upsetting scenes, sentimental episodes" (p. 4). In other words, "there is a concrete world of contexts and activities and many emotions only exist in social interactions" (p. 5).

Social constructionists regard emotions as being ways of relating to the environment (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994). Through them we are able to monitor how we are doing with regard to our physical and cultural surroundings. This is an interactive process through which we try to achieve a degree of adaptation to our cultural environment. Emotions both allow and foster this adaptation. As individuals, we appraise how a situation might affect our own interests, which could include our goals, motives, or values. Then, according to the way we interpret the situation and the meaning we construe, we experience an emotion (Frijda & Mesquita). In other words "emotions are a product of personal meanings that depend on what is

important to us and what we believe about ourselves and the world in which we live" (Lazarus, 1994, p. 289). Emotions also allow us to remain responsive to the environment and flexible in the way we respond. Thus, our emotions can protect us by alerting us to an event's potential for harming our well-being (Ellsworth, 1994). The meaning which we ascribe to an event depends on our past history and experiences, as well as the cultural significance of the event. Cultures attribute particular meanings to different events so that some situations are considered to be more significant than others within a particular culture (Fischer, 1995). For instance, a teacher challenging the administration in a staff meeting might be considered a "focal event" in an autocratically run school. Thus, when we are appraising events as to how they might affect us, the particular context is important (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994).

The norms of the contexts in which we interact, influence emotions in many important ways (Kemper, 1993). Each culture has its own "feeling rules" about how it regards certain emotions and events. Hochschild (1983) explained "feeling rules" as:

> those which inform us that what we feel may be inappropriate (too intense or too mild, too long or too brief in duration, suitable or unsuitable for someone with our social identity) or that our manner of expressing our feeling is acceptable or outré. (p. 48)

Cultures vary in their attitudes towards, and beliefs about, emotions; there are dominant beliefs about which emotions are considered to be "good" and "bad" and which are appropriate to particular social roles or social settings (Ellsworth, 1994). Each culture's attitude towards emotions is reflected

in the dynamics of everyday interactions in which certain feeling states are highlighted and celebrated, while others are ignored (Markus & Kitayama, 1994). Thus, the most significant emotions of any group are related to the group's collective understandings of what is "good" and what is "moral" (Markus & Kitayama). Social constructionists place no emphasis on the intentions, thoughts, feelings, or wishes of the individual human mind in isolation, whether they are conscious or unconscious (Rosen, 1996).

The norms and feeling rules are taken for granted, as being the natural state of affairs. The way we respond within our cultural environment is influenced and shaped by these norms. Our responses, in turn, support the cultural group's core ideas and values (Markus & Kitayama, 1994). In this reciprocal interaction we perpetuate the groups' core ideas and values, however we are not normally aware that this is what we are doing. In fact Markus and Kitayama speculated that "societal integration" may well require this unawareness, since it keeps core cultural ideas from being challenged and, therefore, helps to preserve the culture and the status quo. This reciprocal relationship is summed up by Averill (1986):

> Emotions are a socially prescribed set of responses to be followed by a person in a given situation. The response is a function of shared expectations regarding appropriate behaviour. ... The social constructionist view assumes that emotional schemas are the internal representation of social norms or rules. They are institutionalized ways of interpreting and responding to particular classes of situations. (p. 101)

Kemper (1993) asserted that emotions function as a basic internal mechanism of social control in maintaining a stable, social order. If we

transgress the norms which govern the way we are supposed to feel about a particular event or interaction, there are social consequences. Social control may be external, as in the case of the police and other agents of conformity, or it may be internal as when our conscience or emotions bar us from doing something "wrong." Armon-Jones (1986) stated that the expression of the appropriate emotion in a given situation demonstrates to the community an individual's commitment to the cultural values of that community. Emotions serve to restrain undesirable attitudes and behaviours and to sustain and endorse cultural values.

Developing this idea further, Frijda and Mesquita (1994) maintained that certain emotions actually exist because of what they motivate us to do or avoid doing. Within a group context, anger's aim is to ensure conforming behaviour and regulate power relations. Shame stimulates behaviour that leads to acceptance by the group and avoids group rejection. In order for emotions to serve these social functions we, as individuals, must have corresponding emotional sensitivities. For example, shame presupposes sensitivity for group exclusion (Frijda & Mesquita). Thus, a major social function of emotions appears to be modifying interactions between group members according to what seems to be the group's best interests at the time. Our social environment provides us with feedback about our emotions; this feedback might strengthen an emotion or might encourage its repression. In other words, social feedback supports self-regulation.

Each of us is influenced by being a member of many groups, including a particular ethnic group, generation, gender, age, geographical region, and so on (Markus & Kitayama, 1994) as well as occupational and social groups. Each of these groups has its own norms about feelings. These norms might conflict

with one another. Markus and Kitayama posited that it is our immediate interpersonal settings that determine largely what we feel. There is variability in emotional experience within cultural groups because we each have our own interpretive frameworks which we have developed as a result of our previous emotional experiences and our past efforts at meaning making. Also, each person has a different predisposition, for instance, some people are cheerful, while others are melancholy or anxious (Ellsmore, 1994). It is, therefore, unlikely that two individuals will have the same emotional response to a given event (Markus & Kitayama).

Feminist Perspectives

Feminist philosophies of emotion also challenge traditional philosophical and popular views of emotions as individualistic, natural, private, and universal (Boler, 1997; Griffiths, 1988; Griffiths, 1995; Jaggar, 1989; Longino, 1995; Stanley & Wise, 1993; Wilshire, 1989). Nancy Goldberger (1996) said that she and her colleagues fall into the social constructionist movement. They believe that personal theories of knowledge and experiences of gender and self are culturally embedded. "One shapes and is shaped by one's cultural context. Meaning-making is both an intrapsychic and extra psychic phenomenon" (p. 169).

Many feminists have proposed an epistemology of emotions (Boler, 1997; Griffiths, 1988; Griffiths, 1995; Jaggar, 1989; Longino, 1995; Stanley & Wise, 1993; Wilshire, 1989). Stanley and Wise argued that within traditional epistemologies, emotions are perceived as disruptive and subversive of knowledge. However, they maintained that "emotion is vital to systematic knowledge about the social world and that any epistemology which fails to

recognize this is deeply flawed" (p. 193). They considered emotions to be a legitimate source of knowledge, because they are "minded and rational responses to given situations" (p. 196).

I was introduced to feminist philosophies of emotions and to the politics of emotions in an article by Megan Boler (1997) called "Disciplined Emotions: Philosophies of Educated Feelings." Boler's primary aim in the article was to provide an overview of approaches to the study of, and conceptualization of, emotion. She hoped to provide a foundation for a systematic approach to the study of emotion and power relations in educational studies. She believed this was urgently needed because of the advent in the USA of the curriculum of "emotional intelligence." She feared educators are implementing the curriculum without looking at the underlying philosophical assumptions. She was concerned that this programme will perpetuate the duality between rational and irrational because it reconceptualizes emotion as "rational" and, therefore, acceptable. She was also concerned that, despite the central position that emotions have in education, educators do not question their own understanding of emotions, by asking questions such as: "How do emotions define what counts as knowledge? How do emotions inform our ethical values and actions? How are social hierarchies established through unspoken emotional rules?" (p. 203).

She perceived that education does not aim to challenge the fundamental social structures, neither do schools aim to alter social inequities, but to adapt individuals to the existing system. In the past, "character" and "moral" education were concerned with emotions as a site of social control, and the new curriculum of emotional literacy seems to

replicate these models of social control. The new programmes are partly directed toward behavioural modification. They do not address questions of social hierarchies or power relations with respect to emotion. Boler (1997) asked, "Who gets to decide what counts as good and appropriate emotional behaviour for the next generation?"(p. 227) She believed the most promising direction for critiquing existing philosophies of emotions comes from feminist theorists. She maintained that:

> Contemporary feminist philosophies of emotion can be characterized, in part, by the following:
>
> 1) They challenge the traditional separation of emotion and cognition
>
> 2) Emotions are not private but, rather, must be understood as collaboratively constructed
>
> 3) Emotions are viewed not as gender specific but gender related - for example, it's not that women don't get angry in public or that men don't feel shame, but there are gendered and cumulatively specific patterns to emotions that can be identified. (p. 222)

Another feminist philosopher, Morwena Griffiths (1988) agreed that feelings are a source of knowledge and, as such, should be treated seriously. When we communicate feelings and share experiences with others, we may generate new knowledge and new understandings of social and political relationships and of power structures, as happens in consciousness raising groups. Griffiths claimed that, within western cultures, people have been encouraged to control and even suppress emotions, but, she contended, we need to be in harmony with them, attend to them, and reflect on them. We are more likely to be influenced by our emotions when we are unaware of

them.

She maintained that emotions are constructed on several levels. On one level children are taught deliberately what their culture defines as appropriate responses to certain situations. On a less conscious level, children learn what their culture defines as the appropriate way to express the emotions it recognizes. In this way emotions reflect the prevailing norms of social life. A person could not feel betrayed if there was not a norm of fidelity. If we describe ourselves as angry, that presupposes that we view ourselves as having been wronged or victimized by the violation of some norm.

Griffiths (1988) also maintained that in a hierarchy, the social norms and values that predominate tend to serve the interest of the dominant group, so the emotion responses constituted within the group, help to ensure its own perpetuation. We accept that these responses are the "natural" responses, the way things are. Jaggar (1989) claimed that our embedded reactions prevent us from seeing alternatives. "They limit our capacity for outrage, prevent or encourage us to despise, lend plausibility to the belief that greed and domination are inevitable, universal, human motivations" (p. 159). However, Jaggar said, people do not always experience the conventionally acceptable emotions. Sometimes we may feel satisfaction instead of embarrassment when leaders make fools of themselves, or resentment rather than gratitude for welfare, or revulsion for socially sanctioned ways of treating animals. Jaggar called these "outlaw emotions" and suggested that they are usually experienced by subordinated people; so that a person of colour may be angry rather than amused, at a racist joke.

When individuals experience these unconventional responses in isolation, they may be concerned, confused, and even doubt their sanity.

However, when these responses are shared with, and validated by, other people, those individuals can form a subculture defined by norms and values different from the prevailing ones. These outlaw emotions can motivate new research by providing the political motivation for investigation. Outlaw emotions enable us to see the world differently (Jaggar, 1989). Sometimes we experience what seems a puzzling discomfort or irritability with a situation, and when we reflect on that discomfort, we may bring to conscious awareness that we are in a situation of coercion or injustice. Jaggar suggested these emotions should be attended to seriously and respectfully, rather than be condemned, ignored, discounted, or suppressed. They should be acknowledged and subjected to critical scrutiny. She argued that this type of critical reflection is not a self-indulgent substitute for political analysis and action, but a political process.

Teachers and Emotions

> The everyday transactions of life are premised on a certain steadiness of conduct that belies the minor and sometimes major turbulence beneath. This is by all accounts as much true of schools as of any other institution. Indeed, the special concern in schools with social order may mean that quite large emotional sacrifices must be made by teachers and taught. (Golby, 1996, p. 424)

The topic of teachers and emotions has received sporadic attention in the research literature. The humanistic education movement of the sixties stressed the importance for teachers, of self-knowledge and emotional self-

awareness (Brown, 1971; Combs, 1965; Gorman, 1974; Moustakas, 1966). Carl Rogers, speaking at the Humanizing Education Conference in 1967, emphasized the importance of the emotional content of the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and student. Teachers' acknowledgement of their own feelings was seen as crucial in encouraging emotional development in children, and in creating the type of interpersonal relationships with students which enhance learning. Patterson (1973) in "Humanistic Education" claimed that the person of the teacher is more important than the methods he or she uses. He also stated that the atmosphere created by a good interpersonal relationship is the major condition for learning. A teacher cannot create a good interpersonal relationship if he or she is not genuine and retreats behind a façade. Patterson also regarded the effort to eliminate emotion from our lives as being responsible for many of society's problems. He claimed that feelings must be integrated with cognitive learning.

Other articles about teachers' emotions were written from various perspectives. Bowman (1989) and Goodenow (1992) proposed that the ability of teachers to reflect on what they feel and why they feel that way, places them in a better position to understand their interactions with others. Emmer (1991) called for a systematic study of teachers' emotions in the classroom. He maintained that the research on teachers and teaching has emphasized cognitive and behavioural aspects and placed too little emphasis on teacher emotions. He claimed that emotions play an important part in the lives of teachers and influence the decisions they make about discipline and managing their classrooms. Patterson and Purkey (1993) advocated educating teachers in human relationships, including emotional self-awareness. They

asserted that society in the next millennium will need people not only with cognitive abilities, but also citizens who can relate to one another.

Marshak (1996) discussed loss and grief in connection with school change, and referred to the norms of schools as not supporting the expression of feelings or the communication of emotional vulnerability. Lieberman and Miller (1995) suggested there are two rules which the teaching profession has developed: (1) be practical and (2) be private.

Coleman (1994) maintained that few researchers have looked at the emotional experience of teaching. He claimed that the act of teaching is a "volatile emotional experience" and that:

> Emotions may be one of those things teachers do not talk about ... it may not be acceptable to talk about how one feels about an ordinary teaching situation. Perhaps the fact that there are so few studies of the emotional life of teachers in general is an indicator of the regard for emotions or the way in which emotions are dealt with in our society. (p. 152)

This oft-noted lack in research was addressed in the fall of 1996 when the Cambridge Journal of Education published an issue wholly devoted to the subject of teachers and their emotions. The articles represent many different countries, England, Canada, Australia, USA, and Belgium, and were about teachers of all ages of students. I have chosen to include four articles which had relevance to my study, those by Nias, Golby, Keltchermans, and Noddings.

In her guest editorial Nias (1996) observed that there is no recent research into the part played by, or the significance of, teachers' feelings in their lives, careers, and classrooms. She also remarked that teachers' feelings

are seldom systematically considered in teacher development or teacher education. This omission implies that teachers' emotions are not thought of as worthy of serious academic or professional consideration. The lack of an established discourse and theoretical framework for the inquiry into, and discussion of, teachers' emotions, rendered it difficult for the authors of the journal articles to move beyond descriptive and analytical levels, to explore deeper layers of meaning. Nias suggested that anyone who has been a teacher could experience difficulty with this topic "since a serious consideration of others' feelings may lead one too close for comfort to ones' own" (p. 295).

Teaching is charged with feelings, some aroused by and directed towards people and others connected with values and ideals (Nias,1996). Teachers often make a distinction between their work and their workplace. This distinction is encapsulated in a remark made by a teacher and quoted by Nias, "I love teaching. I hate schools." Nias commented on the increasingly political nature of teachers' emotional responses to their workplace conditions. In considering teachers' emotions from the perspective of their impact on teacher effectiveness, she suggested that:

> affectivity is of fundamental importance in teaching and to teachers. Teachers cannot teach well if any part of them is disengaged for long. Increasingly social and political pressures give precedence to head and hand, but if the balance between feeling, thinking and doing is disturbed too much or for too long, teaching becomes distorted, teachers' responses are restricted, they may even cease to be able to teach. (p. 305)

She asserted that feeling cannot be separated from perception or judgement,

because emotions are rooted in cognition. Therefore teachers cannot be helped to develop their classroom and managements skills without addressing their emotional reactions and responses, together with the attitudes, values, and beliefs which underlie them.

Emotions are experienced individually; however, they are a matter of collective concern, because the actions that individual teachers take in response to what they feel, affect the social and political contexts in which they work. Thus, the individual teacher's experience of emotion and the social context in which it happens are interdependent.

Nias (1996) labelled one of the themes which she identifies as recurring in many of the articles, "hostile passions." She noted that "the teachers' most extreme and negative feelings appear when they talk about their colleagues, the structure of schooling, or the effect of changing educational policies upon them" (p. 300). Teachers often find themselves in positions where they have to defend their sense of who they are, and what they are. This is difficult, because there are no agreed upon standards or moral principles which they can use to justify their professional judgements. Teachers, therefore, have to rely on the validation of their peers and colleagues, which, by the same token, is open to challenge. Teachers also experience strong emotions about their values and beliefs. The more they are committed to particular ideals or goals, the more extreme their reactions when these are threatened. Acting consistently with beliefs and values is a source of self-esteem; therefore, teachers do not feel good about themselves if they perceive they are acting in ways which do not support their beliefs and values (Nias).

Golby (1996) entitled his article, "Teachers' Emotions: An Illustrated Discussion." His orientation, also, was from a professional development

perspective. He maintained that since education should be the education of the whole person, teachers need to be "wholly" present. However, traditionally the head has been celebrated over the heart; education emphasizes the intellect and is inherently competitive. In order to address this neglect of the emotional aspect, Golby maintained it is necessary to understand the structure of teachers' experience, since teachers cannot be "developed" except through their understandings of their own work. He argued that educational development must proceed at the level of the whole staff as well as the individual teacher, since personal experience, including emotional experience, is structured by institutional characteristics as well as personal characteristics.

Golby (1996) interviewed two teachers in England, one from a primary school and the other from a comprehensive school. His research questions were: "What is the emotional experience of teachers in schools? How is this occasioned? How might teachers' emotional experience be brought into view, its significance evaluated, and its potential for professional development explored?" (p. 425). In his interviews he asked the teachers direct questions about their feelings towards, and emotional reactions to school life. What gave them joy? What gave them stress? In his analysis he identified several themes, including: having a defined sphere of activity and control; having a proprietorial interest in children; liking and disliking pupils; distractions and frustrations; parents; the wider school environment.

The teachers' principal emotional satisfaction was in the teaching of "their" children, which they perceived to be their main purpose, and around which they drew tight boundaries. They defined other events as "intrusions" and "distractions." Golby (1996) believed that the teachers exercised tight

control over their emotional lives, especially when their sense of what was right and appropriate was challenged by outsiders. In fact, the theme of control, both inner and outer, seemed to predominate. Golby wondered, in a very respectful and sensitive way, whether the intensity and exclusivity of emotional investment of these teachers in their own classes is altogether healthy for the children, the teachers, and the school.

He concluded that there is a place in the profession for work which takes the emotional lives of teachers as a serious and fundamental element of professional and educational practice. From a professional development perspective, he suggested that it would be possible to engage teachers in an analysis of their working situation and the emotions that arise in it. This could be done by locating areas of difference on the staff and, using a cognitive approach, identifying the understandings on which the teachers' emotional reactions are based. The teachers could then be encouraged to talk through their understandings of the situation and challenge their deeper assumptions (Golby).

Geert Kelchtermans (1996) explored primary schoolteachers' experiences of vulnerability which, she said, encompass not only emotions or feelings, but also cognitive processes such as perception and interpretation. She was especially interested in the moral and political roots of vulnerability. Kelchtermans undertook the study because she recognized that vulnerability in teaching profoundly affects teachers' job satisfaction and the quality of their professional performance. She observed that understanding this vulnerability is crucial to understanding teachers and the development of their teaching. She maintained it is essential to acknowledge and understand the moral and political dimension in teachers' emotional experience of their work, in order

to reduce the negative effects of teacher vulnerability and to open up perspectives for the development of successful coping strategies.

Using professional biographies which she had collected in a study on professional development, Kelchtermans distinguished three major categories of sources of vulnerability: the classroom; the school; and the educational policy makers. Relationships with principals, colleagues, and parents are among the in-school sources of vulnerability. Schools are characterized more by disagreements over goals than by consensus over goals. Principals and teachers do not necessarily all agree on the best way to "be" a school or have the same vision of what "good education" is. Teachers find themselves in organizations where individuals and groups "seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests" (Hoyle, as cited in Kelchtermans, 1996, p. 311).

Different members of the school strive for, or try to maintain, different "workplace conditions." These workplace conditions include material needs, for instance books; and resources, including time, funds and infrastructure facilities. They also include organizational and social interests, for example, people's roles and positions in the organization and the types of interpersonal relationships which are developed. In addition, workplace conditions refer to self-interests, which include such factors as self-esteem and social recognition. Another of these workplace conditions is the process of social construction which determines what norms and goals get acknowledged as legitimate within the school. Who controls these conditions influences how teachers feel about their workplace. Kelchtermans asserted, "Vulnerability occurs when teachers feel *powerless* or politically ineffective in the micro political struggles about their desired workplace conditions" (p. 312).

Kelchtermans (1996) believed that the basic structure of vulnerability is one of feeling that one's professional identity and moral integrity are questioned and that one's self-esteem and social recognition by colleagues, principal, and others, are threatened or lost. She stated that vulnerability for teachers involves moral and political issues because the emotions in teaching are often linked to ideals and values. Teachers find themselves continually forced to make decisions with moral consequences. She quoted Hargreaves' (1996) argument that in the postmodern era there are no universal principles for deciding what to do, and that the moral dimension of teaching usually consists of distinguishing between better and worse courses of action, rather than right or wrong ones. Kelchtermans said that teachers can rely only on their personal basic value positions to guide their decisions between different alternatives of action.

Vulnerability is inherent in the job of teaching and is not completely avoidable, concluded Kelchtermans (1996). She was of the opnion that it is important to acknowledge this and attempt to lessen its effects. From her experience of collecting and working with teachers' autobiographical accounts of their careers, she had come to the conclusion that a systematic form of autobiographical reflection and storytelling could contribute to successful coping. Although the experience of vulnerability is always a personal experience, Kelchtermans maintained that acknowledging and understanding one's own story, especially in the company of others, is a step towards effectively coping with the uncertainties of the postmodern world. It also provides a perspective for moving beyond vulnerability.

Noddings (1996) claimed that in western thought, affect has been distrusted and denigrated and, therefore, it has been neglected in education.

Emotions have been kept out of education because of concerns about rational and professional functioning. Some people fear that professional judgement will be impaired by emotion. Others believe that professionals need to protect themselves from the burnout which could result if they felt too much for their clients. Noddings observed that to be detached, cool, and dispassionate has become a mark of professionalism. The acknowledgement and expression of emotion may be regarded as signs of unprofessional demeanor and not desirable in the campaign to achieve professional status. There is little evidence to support these claims. Noddings asserted that some educators have expressed concern about the professionalization of teaching, insofar as it requires detachment and the concealment of feeling.

Teachers' Context

> Physically teachers are often alone in their classrooms. Psychologically, they never are. What they do there is powerfully affected by the outlooks and orientations of the colleagues with whom they work now, and have worked in the past. In this respect, teacher cultures, the relationships between teachers and their colleagues are among the most educationally significant aspects of teachers' lives and work. (Hargreaves, 1992, p. 218)

I am including literature about the teachers' context since, from a social constructionist perspective, context is important (Harré, 1986). In the research on teachers also, context has come to be recognized as important. According to Goodson (1997) stories of teachers' lives need to be located in their full context since historical, social, political, and economic factors interact with, and shape

how, individual teachers experience their lives. In fact, he has said that "the teachers' work intensifies as more and more central edicts and demands impinge on the teachers' world leaving the space for reflection and research progressively squeezed"(p. 111). He feared that "teachers will become divorced from the knowledge of political and micro political perspectives, from theory and broader cognitive maps of influence and power" (p. 111).

A perspective which takes context into account is the micro political perspective. This approach focuses on individuals and groups and their interactions in the everyday life of an organization. Micro politics refers to the use of power, both formal and informal, for the purposes of influence and protection (Blase, 1988). It also examines conflict and how people compete with each other to get what they want, and it examines cooperation and how people build support among themselves to achieve their ends. It is the politics of everyday life (Ball, 1994). Hargreaves (1991) asserted that a key concern is the way that some groups can realize their values at the expense of others, or have power and influence to shape others' values in the image of their own.

These everyday political actions may be consciously or unconsciously executed (Blase, 1991). Conscious actions are intentional and calculated; unconscious actions include routine, habitual actions, resulting from socialization, which are taken for granted as being the normal course of events. They also include actions that prevent others from exercising influence, as well as times of "not-acting," as in the failure to make a decision or the failure to act (Blase).

Marshall (1991) claimed that there are distinctive qualities in the micro politics of schooling as opposed to other organizations. The importance of

informal power, and the diversity and conflict surrounding goals and values, have been identified as significant within educational settings. In addition, most political acts in schools are viewed simply as part of the daily routine. They go unnoticed. These routine actions incorporate the outcomes of previous, now forgotten, political conflicts. Educators often privatize their conflicts, agreeing to keep their differences quiet and within the school walls, in order to avoid exposing their vulnerabilities to the public. There is a continuous, informal negotiation between administrators and teachers which means that much of the micro politics in schools is the avoidance of overt conflict (Marshall). Blase (1988) alluded to this when he said that public school principals depend heavily on the cooperation of teachers to get their core administrative, custodial, and political tasks accomplished. This cooperation would be endangered if the principal were to start closely supervising the teachers since the teachers have many subtle ways of retaliating, for example, by forgetting requests or overloading administrators with trivial demands. He observed that teachers are aware that administrators are judged by district administration primarily on the "semblance of maintaining control, harmony, and parental inactivity, with instructional effectiveness as a secondary goal" (p. 47). Marshall noted that the work of schooling goes on in spite of built-in, never resolved, conflicts. Programmes, curricula, policies, and procedures are carried out even though the people involved have not agreed upon whether quality, equity, efficiency, or choice should be the dominant value driving schooling. Thus teachers carry on working even though they may be implementing programmes with conflicting goals.

Blase's study (1987) looked at political vulnerability experienced by

teachers in one high school. He focused on describing the teachers' perspective. In reporting on political interactions among teachers, Blase stated that teacher interactions can be viewed, in part as political, because they affect, and are affected by, the school's social structure and cultural orientations. He maintained that "interpersonal politics capture the sensitivities that emerge from the teachers' power relationships with each other in the school" (p. 288). These sensitivities seem to lead the teachers to be increasingly concerned with self-monitoring and adjusting their behaviour in anticipation of their peers' reactions. He suggested that the teachers in his study engaged in the strategic use of power for protection, to defend against threats to their status, and to influence others. He classified as "negative political transactions" those which are linked to teachers' use of aggressive and manipulative tactics usually "to attain individual, self-centred ends, at the expense of others" (p. 289). "Positive transactions," on the other hand, lead to "diplomatic strategies with mutually benefiting outcomes" (p. 289). In these cases, individual ends were still important, but teachers were concerned with presenting themselves in ways that would lead to the development of reciprocal relationships for mutual assistance and support.

The teachers described themselves as changing during their careers (Blase, 1987). Initially they were concerned with classroom competencies. They characterized themselves as having strong values and idealistic expectations of administration, colleagues, parents, and students. Through their experiences of teaching in a school, through trial and error, the teachers became aware of the political nature of their interactions with others. The teachers considered that the way in which they approached each other was critical. They perceived themselves to be "fragile" and did not want to be

"brow beaten." They wanted to be treated with respect. They learned to play the game, "to get along with" peers, in order to survive in the workplace. Nias (1985) noted that teachers need the affective and affiliative support of each other, especially if they feel themselves to be under threat from pupils. They may make "political" decisions to secure this support.

Blase (1988) found that teachers worked to create a "political self," based on two sets of considerations; one, of needing to protect themselves from others and the other, their need to proactively influence others. He identified six strategies teachers evolved to deal with their vulnerability and accomplish their goals: acquiescence, conformity, diplomacy, passive-aggressiveness, ingratiation, and confrontation. He observed that teachers were sensitive to praise and punishment. They engaged in protectionist actions designed to avoid the impact of threatening behaviour, for example, criticism, gossip, and rejection, of others. He quoted Marland (1982) as writing:

> the most potent pressure is the individual's fear, pride, protection of easily hurt feelings. I would suggest that this is one of the most often deployed forces in a school and links to the need for security, which appears to be extra-powerful in the teaching profession. (p. 3824)

In managing themselves politically, most teachers conformed to norms of politeness. They were aware of their ability to make life miserable for each other.

The principal was identified as being a key factor in influencing the nature of teacher interactions (Blase, 1987). Ineffective leadership (as defined by the teachers) appears to provoke negative political interactions and consequences. Principals who practise favouritism precipitate feelings of

jealousy, anger, suspicion, and futility. They also foster competition among the teachers for resources, such as status and recognition. They create a climate in which the other teachers, the non-favoured ones, use strategies of ingratiation and avoidance. These teachers also sabotage the "favourites" and create further splits. Cliques and alliances form around the in-groups and out-groups. Some teachers retreat to the classrooms. Effective leadership, on the other hand, promotes positive political interactions and consequences. Friendliness on the part of the principal is seen as promoting friendly interactions with the teachers and leads to increased cohesion, trust, respect, communication, support, and collaboration.

Other important factors influencing the political environment in Blase's (1988) study, were the conditions of the work setting, especially the problems of time, excessive work demands, and isolation. A tight time structure and excessive demands served to reduce or eliminate the teachers' opportunities for active political involvement. He found that the teachers "did what's expected" in order to survive. The routineness and sameness of everyday, deprived teachers of the kind of emotional energy they needed to persist and try to change things within their school. Emotional and physical fatigue were linked to a survival mind set, concerned largely with efficiency and getting through the day. Blase reported that teachers said that their knowledge of, and understanding of the school as a whole, was superficial. Real communication was almost nonexistent; small talk and "griping" dominated conversations. The teachers in his study tended to become more conservative, passive, and submissive, as the sources of vulnerability increased. To decrease their vulnerability, the teachers tended to reduce their involvement with the school and the community, both in their level of

interest and in the amount of time and energy they expended. The teachers considered that these were nonpolitical actions, however, Blase commented that the teachers' influence on decisions and outcomes was diminished. Their passive responses, combined with their tendency to withdraw from sources of vulnerability, helped to sustain the existing political structure of the school, thereby demonstrating that non-action is also a political act.

Micro and macro factors frequently interact. An organization's external environment interacts with its internal political domain so that each influences the other. One dynamic which has influenced the micro politics of schools has been the focus on collegiality as the vehicle for school improvement (Hargreaves, 1991). After the publication of Lortie's book "The Schoolteacher" in 1975, in which he identified teachers as being isolated, there was a movement to lessen this isolation in order to improve teacher and school effectiveness (Rosenholtz, 1989). Hargreaves pointed out that collegiality has been used as a managerial, manipulative technique and has been mandated in various contrived forms. He contended that collegiality has been promoted on the assumption that organizations share a culture consisting of values, habits, norms, and beliefs. He maintained, however, that schools do not necessarily share a culture and there may be more things that are disagreed with than agreed with. Smyth (1995) argued that the notion of collegiality as an expression of professional development is not just a matter of teachers conferring with each other. "It is an emerging form of central control in the guise of local autonomy. Collegiality is, therefore, much more than a desirable teacher to teacher relationship. It is being used to control and engineer consensus" (p. 81). Learning from colleagues is possible in many formal and informal ways. Hargreaves (1992) asserted that:

> collegial energies may be harnessed, less for the purpose of giving teachers a say in the development of their own initiatives and the management of their own professional growth, than to squeeze out dissentient voices and secure commitment and compliance to changes imposed by others. (p. 217)

From the micro political perspective, collegiality is often bound up with either direct administrative constraint or the indirect management of consent (Hargreaves, 1991). The micro political perspective also raises question about the rights of the individual and the protection of individuality in the face of group pressure. Hargreaves contended that norms of collegiality are sometimes treated as if they were administrative laws and that teachers who prefer to continue working alone, all or some of the time, can be unfairly ostracized. He asserted that the protection of their individuality and discretion of judgement is also a protection of their right to disagree and reflect critically on the values and worth of that about which they are being asked to collaborate.

Emotions and Health

There has been a growing awareness during the past few decades of the connections between the emotions and health. Research in several areas has contributed to this knowledge. One of those areas is the mind/body model of behavioural medicine as proposed by Herbert Benson (1975, 1992). Benson (1992) stated that the mind/body connection is based on a well documented series of research studies conducted over several decades. According to the mind/body model, an individual's general health depends on a multitude of

factors, including genetics, health habits and lifestyle, emotional state, social support, and environment. The mind/body model recognizes that people's thoughts, emotions, and behaviour directly influence their health. Their physiological state is determined partly by the way they react psychologically and emotionally to their environment. Benson claimed that these so called psychophysiological interactions are an important component of living. One of these psychophysiological interactions has been termed the "fight or flight response," an integrated reaction controlled by the hypothalamus. This response is activated when a person is confronted by a physical or emotional threat. It is significant that the response is activated when a threat is imagined, as well as when it is real (Benson, 1992). The hypothalamus causes the sympathetic nervous system to release epinephrine or norepinephrine, also called adrenaline and noradrenaline, and other related hormones. When these chemicals are rapidly released, they propel the body into a state of arousal. Research indicates that "prolonged and frequent activation of the fight or flight response may, in the long term, lead to permanent, harmful, physiological changes" (p. 34). Thus people's emotional reactions may have an impact on their overall health.

Research in the area of psychoneuroimmunology has also shown that emotional processes are inherently related to an individual's health and well-being (Mahoney, 1992). Candace Pert (1997) researching in this field, established chemical connections between emotions and the immune system. Pert claimed that studies have shown that cancer patients who kept emotions, such as anger, under the surface and remained ignorant of their existence, had slower recovery rates than those who were more expressive. In addition, the studies showed that self denial, stemming from patients' unawareness of

their own emotional needs, also affected recovery time. People who were in touch with their emotions had stronger immune systems.

Pert (1997) maintained that all emotions are healthy because they unite the mind and the body. She noted that anger, fear, and sadness, the so-called "negative emotions," are as healthy as courage, peace, and joy, and she contended that people need to claim all their feelings because they are vital for survival. Anger helps us to define our boundaries, grief helps us deal with our losses, and fear alerts us to protect ourselves from danger. It is only when emotions are denied and cannot be processed through the system and released, that they become toxic. Pert articulated the connection between the expression of emotion and disease in the following way:

> To repress these emotions and not let them flow freely is to set up a disintegrity in the system, causing it to act at cross purposes, rather than as a unified whole. The stress this creates, which takes the form of blockages and an insufficient flow of peptide signals to maintain function at cellular level, is what sets up the weakened conditions that lead to disease. ... When emotions are expressed, the substrate of biochemicals are flowing freely and all systems are united and made whole. ... The chronic suppression of emotions results in a massive disturbance of the psychosomatic network. (p. 273)

Pennebaker (1995) has been researching for a number of years in the field of emotion and disclosure. He has maintained that an important feature of therapy is that it allows individuals to translate their experiences into words and he has suggested that this disclosure process might be as important as any feedback the client receives from the therapist. He speculated that

through translating experiences into words, people are able to organize, structure, and assimilate both their emotional experiences and the events that may have provoked the emotions. Talking both allows and reduces anxiety, and repeated disclosure over time, gradually promotes the assimilation of upsetting events. When individuals in laboratory conditions write or talk about emotional events, their blood pressure, muscle tension, and skin conductance are reduced during or immediately after disclosure. Some studies have indicated that long-term health benefits of disclosure are apparent only if individuals write about or express their emotions, as opposed to providing factual accounts of their experiences. Pennebaker explained, "Once the disclosure is made the person becomes an internally consistent creature, wherein all features of mind and body become synchronous" (p. 8).

Petrie, Booth, and Davison (1995) focused on the effect of repression on the immune system. They have maintained that there are considerable data to suggest that when individuals inhibit emotional expression, they show immunological changes consistent with poorer health outcomes. They have contended that if an individual's ability to express emotions is restricted because of negative social consequences or personality style, the result may be a compromised immunological function and, consequently, an increased risk of health problems. This may be because the effort required to suppress painful or threatening emotions over time, compromises immunological function. Petrie et al. also reported that spontaneous verbal or non-verbal expression of emotion is related to immediate reductions in autonomic nervous system activity. They linked the expression of emotion to health through the effects both on the immune system and the autonomic nervous system.

Social factors are also important in the area of emotional and physical health. It has been suggested that many people share most of their emotional experiences with others, and this social sharing is powerful in reducing anxiety and psychological distress (Pennebaker, 1995). However, this tendency to share is likely to be blocked for the emotion of shame. Leventhal and Patrick-Miller (1993) supported the perspective that emotions are social processes. They asserted that acceptance and rejection are related to group formation and bonding, and anger and fear are related to hierarchical group structure. They submitted that data from health research have reinforced the emphasis on the social function of emotion and have affirmed that social support has an important effect on health. Individuals with extensive support are healthier and less likely to become emotionally distressed and physically ill when they experience negative life events.

From a counselling perspective, Greenberg (1996) stated that people entering therapy often need to learn to allow and accept their feelings rather than try to control them. He considered that the development of an open attitude toward feelings and an appreciation of their "process" nature, "the acceptance that feelings come and go, arise and pass way" (p. 316), is an important therapeutic goal. He claimed that therapy needs to help people become more aware of what is disowned and of how they themselves interrupt the natural process of emergence and completion of emotional experience. He has taken the view that emotions are adaptive and help us deal with our environment. They often result from our appraisals of situations, first in relation to our needs, and then in relation to our coping abilities.

> Appraisals can be both rapid and automatic ... and slow and deliberative, making emotion a culturally and socially based consequence of reflection and decision making. Emotions ... lead to actions designed to change the organism-environment relationship so as to make the emotion no longer necessary. (p. 317)

He argued that feelings enhance our capacity to cope. If we avoid our emotions, we do not have the adaptive information they bring us and we are left disoriented. In addition, avoidance does not make the feelings disappear, instead it interferes with our ability to cope with them effectively. Since feelings involve automatic physiological responses, their avoidance leaves the system unintegrated and in disharmony. The spontaneous, natural flow of how we automatically experience ourselves is disturbed. We no longer automatically attend to our experiences so we do not "symbolize them in awareness, create new meanings, and promote action, thereby enabling us to carry forward our experience to a next step; rather, we remain stuck in a state of continued avoidance" (p. 321). The aim in counselling, then, is to allow the experience of previously disallowed emotions. This appears to facilitate an accepting stance, a reowning of the feelings and their associated thoughts, and a sense of agency, confidence, and hope.

In discussing these areas of literature: the social-construction approach to emotions, feminist perspectives, teachers' emotions, teachers' context, and the connection between emotions and health, I have reviewed some theories and concepts which have influenced my orientation and provided a foundation for my inquiry into the nature and repercussions of the teachers' experience of being out-of-step.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Ethnography

Choosing a research approach and design which both addresses my research questions and reflects my own beliefs and assumptions has been a challenging process. It has engaged me in an exploration and critique of my world view and a quest for integrity of question, method, and my personal perspectives and values.

As I contemplated my research questions and wondered how I would proceed with my inquiry, I reflected on my own understanding of what emotions are and how they come into being. I thought about my new understanding of my experience and expression of emotions at the time I was laid-off, and I realized that I believe that, in some circumstances, emotions are a product of internal and external factors. I might encounter a particular incident in my place of work and a similar incident in my home, but the emotions I experience as a result of those incidents may be different, partly because of the cultural influences operating in each context. I also believe that we are often unaware of the many ways in which cultural influences act to silence our expression of emotion and we are frequently unaware of whose interests are being served by those cultural influences.

The approach which I originally intended to use was that of critical ethnography which addresses the issues of culture and power, and results from the merging of ethnography with critical theory. Critical ethnographers are interested in the cultural construction of meaning and their goal is to clarify the way in which hidden forces underpin social relations and work to disempower people (Quantz, 1992), or, in Britzman's (1991) words, "How

systemic constraints become lived as individual dilemmas" (p. 10).

However, after conducting the interviews, I realized the data I had did not really speak to the issues of power. With a topic as sensitive as the one I am inquiring into, I need more than one interview to obtain the relevant data. I found that there was not enough time in the interviews, nor was it necessarily appropriate, to move far beyond the storytelling.

In light of this, the research approach which seemed to fit best with my question and my underlying assumptions is that of a more traditional ethnographic approach. According to Atkinson and Hammersley (1994), the definition of the term ethnography has been subject to controversy. They maintain that some people use it to refer to a philosophical paradigm to which they make a total commitment, while others use it to describe a method which they use as and when appropriate. In practical terms, however, they say it usually refers to forms of social research in which there is a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of a particular social phenomenon, a tendency to work with unstructured data, and an investigation of a small number of cases in detail. These are all characteristics of my inquiry.

Boyle (1994) asserted that a central tenet of ethnography is that people's behaviour can be understood only in context and that the ethnographer cannot separate the elements of human behaviour from their relevant contexts of meaning and purpose. In fact, it is the context which provides the understanding of human behaviour. My lens of the social construction of emotion, which holds that the emotions are a product of the interactions in which the participants are involved, ensures that the participants are not separated from their context. Boyle also asserted that the ethnographer needs to do more than just describe behaviour. "He or she must understand *why*

the behaviour takes place and *under what circumstances*" (p. 162). A primary purpose of the "holistic approach," in Boyle's terms, is to make explicit the interrelationships among the various "systems and subsystems" in the group under study. This is generally achieved through an emphasis on the contextualization of data.

Many different approaches to ethnography have been developed and have evolved over the years. The type of ethnography referred to as "particularistic" by Boyle (1994) seems to best describe my inquiry. She has explained that it is the application of the ethnographic approach to any social unit or isolatable human group. In my inquiry the group is those teachers who perceive themselves to be out-of-step. She has suggested that the ideal size may be about five members. These particularist or focused ethnographies help with the understanding of cultural rules, norms, and values.

Ethnographic approaches embrace an element of social purpose. Denzin (1997) asserted that "ethnography's central purpose [is] to produce meaningful, critical discourse about the many worlds we all inhabit" (p. 227). He also contended that, "a text must do more than awaken moral sensibilities. It must move the other and self to action. Ethnography's future can only be written against the history of a radical democratic project that intends humane transformations in the public sphere" (p. xvi). I hope that this inquiry provokes thoughtfulness and action.

A description of the research design follows and is organized in seven sections: participants, interviewing, transcribing, analysis, presentation, verification, and ethical considerations.

Participants

In selecting participants for my study, I kept in mind that "in research in which the goal is to achieve perspectival understanding of a phenomenon, it is necessary that the participants are people who have experienced and can illuminate the phenomenon" (Osborne, 1990, p. 82). I used what Lincoln and Guba (1985) have called "naturalistic sampling," which is very different from conventional sampling since "it is based on informational considerations and its purpose is to maximize information, not facilitate generalization" (p. 202).

I did this through talking about my research with ex-colleagues over a period of time and gradually building up a list of people who might be interested in participating. I wanted to invite people who would be interested in the topic of the inquiry for its own value and who might have given it some thought. Merriam (1988) and Patton (1990) have suggested researchers select "information rich cases," people from whom they can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the study. Thus the most important consideration in qualitative sampling is the selection of individuals who can provide the researcher with the information needed to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 1996).

I had planned to reach prospective participants through informal contacts within the teaching community. I am in frequent contact with some of my ex-colleagues and many teachers had indicated that they or someone they knew, would be interested in participating. I contacted those people first. I gave prospective participants a letter of introduction explaining what the research was about and what would be required of them in terms of time and participation (Appendix A). I then talked to them on the phone to answer questions and clarify what the interview would entail. It was important that

they understood that I was interested in hearing stories about being out-of-step with peers rather than with the system or administrators. Once we had arranged a time for an interview, I mailed a letter of informed consent (Appendix B) informing the participants about the ethical considerations involved in the research. The form was signed before the interviews took place.

The first two participants were John and Lily, both of whom were known to me professionally. Kate was referred to me by a fellow student in an Interpretive Inquiry class. Lynne was a peer in some of my university courses. I had interviewed three women and one man and wanted to include another man, so I used the "snowballing" method by which the researcher asks current participants for suggestions of others (Bogdan & Taylor, 1994), for contacting Paul. He was suggested to me by one of the other participants and he was also known to me slightly as he was a former colleague. The participants are from three different school districts on Vancouver Island and the Vancouver area.

One teacher was interested but declined to participate because she thought it would be too upsetting emotionally for her. I also interviewed two other teachers, however, when I reviewed the tapes it was clear that their stories did not fit the research criteria. One participant chose to tell a story about when she was a student teacher and this invalidated the levelling of power I wished to achieve by specifying peer interactions. The other participant's story involved local administration, the local teachers' association and other agencies. When I realized I would not be able to use these stories I wrote to the participants explaining my reasons and then I followed up with a phone call. This might have been seen as excessive but I

felt these people had made themselves vulnerable and had entrusted me with their stories. I therefore wanted to acknowledge that. I also asked them if they would like to be informed of the results of the research and if they wished me to destroy the recording of their interview or to send it to them.

Interviewing

I decided that the most appropriate method for collecting data for my inquiry was through interviewing participants, since, according to Kvale (1996), the main purpose of a qualitative interview is to describe and understand central themes, and it was this description and understanding I was seeking to reach. I prepared for the interviews by informing myself of the theory of interviewing and by establishing an interview plan. Kvale described an interview as a conversation between the interviewer and participant about themes of common interest. The interview can then be "analyzed with respect to the life world" (p. 29) of the subject. In this way the interviewer seeks to understand the meanings of the participants. The purpose of the in-depth interview is to invite the participants to talk about their experiences, feelings, opinions, and knowledge, as well as their interpretations of those experiences, since it is impossible to observe directly how people organize and interpret the world (Patton, 1990).

I constructed an interview guide (Appendix C) as recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (1997). In order to make the best use of the interview time, I needed to clarify for myself "the parameters and dimensions" of the experience before interviewing participants, which meant that I needed to know what issues were important enough to ask questions about (Patton, 1990). McMillan and Schumacher characterized the interview

guide approach as relatively conversational and situational, allowing the interviewer to make use of emerging themes and to keep in mind the structure and focus. While proposing an overall strategy of grouping questions by topic, McMillan and Schumacher recognized that in many instances participants cover the topics in earlier replies so the interviewer can ignore the script sequence. I found that this was very often the case. Within the telling of the story, the participants covered some of my other questions.

Patton (1990) has suggested beginning with an opening statement which frames the interview so that the participants know what they are going to be asked to describe. This opening statement also gave me a chance to ground and focus myself, as sometimes I found that I was little nervous. Once the participant has described and relived an experience, the interviewer can ask about interpretations, opinions, and feelings as these are more likely to be relevant and meaningful after the participant has established a context (Patton). At the end of the interview plan, I placed questions which asked participants to reflect on taken-for-granted ways of being and doing and to speculate on how they could see themselves acting differently (Britzman, 1991). These questions comprised the critical component of the interview.

Throughout the interviews I was aware of, and attentive to, other themes which the participants introduced and I made decisions about whether to follow them. The interview is an interaction which is being socially constructed by the researcher and participant. Ball (1993) expressed it thus:

> Data are a social construct of the research process itself. Data are a product of the skills and imagination of the researcher and of the

> interface between the researcher and the researched. The choices, omissions, problems, and successes ... indeed what is seen and unnoticed, what is and is not recorded, will depend on the interests, questions, and relationships that are brought to bear in a particular scene. (p. 32)

The following excerpts illustrate two points in the interview with John where I had to make a decision about whether I would follow my interview plan or go with what John wanted to share. In this way we constructed the conversation between us.

John: Would you like another story, would it help?

J. M: No, no, I don't think- I think there's plenty. Do you have another story?

John: Because there's another one.

J.M: Do you want to tell me? OK, why don't you tell it to me?

John: OK. It's a very brief one, and it happened at....

J.M: And then if it goes wrong, you've talked about depression, how long would that last afterwards?

John: Oh. It could last a long time. I guess we don't have time for more stories, but there are literally tons that I've dealt with.

J.M: Just go on because your own experience is the most important.

These decisions to go with what John wanted to tell me, resulted in descriptions of additional incidents and a much greater level of emotional openness than would probably have happened, had I held to my prearranged plan.

The interviews took place at a mutually convenient location either in the participants' homes (John, Lily, and Lynne), in my home (Paul), or at the university (Kate). On a technical level, although I had previously tested the recording equipment, there were often glitches; for instance, in Lily's case the tape did not wind around the take-up spool and became unraveled so we lost some of the interview. In the interviews with John and Lynne, although the microphone was placed well enough for normal voice levels, when the participants became emotionally involved, the level of their voice dropped and not all of their words were recorded.

Each interview lasted from one to one and a half hours. All of the participants would have been willing to carry on; in fact, some of our conversations did carry on after I had turned off the tape recorder. It seemed that the participants were happy to have someone to talk with about these topics. I was seen as a safe and neutral person. I could not help wondering about the cumulative effect of not having discussed these issues with anyone previously, and the impact on their well-being. Paul expressed how he felt about the interview thus:

> Well in some ways, whether this information I've given you about myself is any use to you, it's been therapeutic for me, just being able to talk to you about it or let it out. We're not entirely strangers with each other, but in some senses you're like a neutral party that I'm speaking to here. It's just kind of fun to be able to talk about things like that without somebody saying, "Oh geez, what a drip that guy is. All he wants to do is talk about himself." You've invited me to do that and I guess I've done so.

It was interesting for me to look at my part of the conversations and see

how they differed. With each person I formed a different relationship. In my journal after my first two interviews, which were on the same day, with John and Lily, I wrote:

> Home from interviewing. I felt very touched by John. He made himself vulnerable. What helped me in my own process was being taken seriously; is that what I have done for him? How do I feel? My neck hurts and my head aches. It could be lack of food. How satisfied do I feel? It's a big subject and I need to listen carefully. I didn't cover everything and that is ok. I didn't get to the critical questions because the time went too quickly. I could really do with two interviews. Nias was right about triggering own emotions. One of the things I had hoped for was to get at the subtleties of what happens in interactions, but John and Lily were so relieved to have someone to talk to and share their experiences with that we didn't get there.

In another journal entry I reflect on my skills as interviewer.

> I don't always stick to the questions. I am caught between wanting to hear what the person wishes to tell me, as with Paul wanting to tell me about eccentricity, and covering the questions. I really need to have another interview. There's so much that I want to follow up on.

In interviewing, the research instrument is the self (Merriam, 1988). It is important that the researcher is sensitive to underlying meanings. Trust and rapport are essential in any interview and especially in one which involves potentially vulnerable issues like emotions. An attitude of genuine respect for the people being interviewed is essential. Osborne (1990) believed

that many of the characteristics and skills of counselling are used in the interview; skills which include active listening, open-questions, and knowing how to question for concreteness and meaning.

As the researcher I need to be aware of my own assumptions, values and biases. The acknowledgement that research is ideologically driven removes the need to pretend that it is value-free. Polkinghorne (1989) stated that interviewers should also be free from having an investment in being right or being vindicated. I recognized that it was important for me to pay attention to this concern and that the process of writing my own story was critical in becoming aware of my reasons for pursuing my inquiry.

At the beginning of each interview, before I turned on the tape recorder, I reviewed the interview procedure with the participants and reassured them that they could stop at any time if they were not feeling comfortable. When I was planning the interview, I had assumed I would sit down with the participants and we would go through the process in an uninterrupted fashion. That did not happen. There were times when we stopped the tape recorder to check that it was recording; we stopped it when Lily wanted to hear what it sounded like half way through the interview; during the interview with John, we had an unexpected interruption; and in my conversation with Paul, I switched the recorder off, because I did not understand him completely. Also, I realized afterwards that I did not agree with his opinion, and I needed to give myself time to breathe and really listen to him and try to understand him.

It was not until I was sitting in the first interview, which was with John, that I realized the importance of exploring and reconnecting with my subject. I would not have been able to sit with him in a compassionate, open

way had I not been aware of some of my issues. Similarly, in other interviews, I was able to pursue questions with sensitivity which otherwise I might not have been able to do. Nias (1996) speculated that one of the reasons there is so little research on teachers' emotions, is that it is a difficult undertaking for researchers who have been teachers, because they may come close to their own emotions.

During the interviews, I found that, despite my questions, the participants would tell me what they wanted to or needed to, as the following excerpts from Kate's interview demonstrate:

Kate: So that's how I deal with it. I don't know if that was even your question.

J.M: I was asking you what your take was on emotions; where do they come from? What is their function?

Kate: So I don't know, I think that it's always a learning experience. I think I forgot the question again.

J.M: That's ok. It was about how did it affect your well-being? You've kind of answered that.

Kate: It's made me stronger.

I was unrealistic in thinking that we would have time to get to the "critical" questions. I also recognized that the questions about implicit rules are difficult to answer unless one has an understanding and has thought about social processes like John has.

As I review the questions I asked, I realize that I used a number of techniques. Some questions were closed:

J.M: So do you find that happens?

Lynne:Oh yes, yeah.

Some were asking for concrete details as this one from John's interview:

J.M: That's interesting, so you've brought up an awful lot of points that I'd like to follow up on. One I'd like to just go back to for the moment is, if you could go back to that staff meeting where you were hearing another person raising the concern, and then just round about when you spoke, you said that you'd heard them and then you'd spoken, you felt passionately about it. Can you tell me a bit more about how you were thinking at the time, and what you were actually feeling at the time?

This question about meaning is from Lily's interview:

J.M: Just now you said about "being right"; you mentioned "being right" a couple of times. Do you want to tell me a bit more about what that means to you, "being right"?

Sometimes I asked for details and clarification:

J.M: How many were on the staff? How many are we talking about?

Lynne:There were about ten.

During the course of an interview I would sometimes make a note of something that was said that I wished to pursue further. One of the things I also learned to do was to describe the person's gestures if I thought they were significant, because I realized that I would probably not remember them

clearly and they were an important part of the communication, as in the following example:

Kate: The other people looked at each other and then they looked at the speech therapist.

J.M: What sort of look?

Kate: Well you know....

J.M: Eyes (*yeah eyes*) .. rolling, kind of thing? You're bringing your eyes up in your .. so what would be the words that would go with the expression there? If you could imagine them doing that in a cartoon and a bubble coming out, what would be the words?

Kate: "Ooh, she's not cooperating" or "This isn't working" and also I think that they were sort of saying - they really looked at the speech therapist, so it was as if she was going to take it from there.

After each interview we left the tape running while we debriefed. I encouraged the participants to share their reflections and impressions of the interview process. They all described it as a positive experience and felt validated. Kate expressed it this way:

> I think it was really a positive experience because I think that we all want to be validated and these issues were issues that really affected me and, somehow, by me telling them to you and your skills as an active listener, have somehow validated my right to those feelings and so I feel good; I feel "wow"; I feel really good. So I felt that it was positive.

Transcribing

I audio taped the interviews, allowing me to concentrate on what was being said and how it was being said, so that I could "read between the lines, seek out what is implicit and make it explicit" (Kvale, 1996,p. 162). I transcribed the tapes myself which gave me an opportunity to familiarize myself with them. In some places the voices were very soft and the words were inaudible. When I had finished, I sent a copy of the transcription of their interview to the participants. I asked them to notice any places in which the text did not represent what they recalled saying, and to fill in the blanks, if they remembered the parts that were inaudible. I also asked them to reflect on their interview and to note any insights or thoughts they had. Some of the participants wrote more than others. A reaction that I had not anticipated was that three of the participants were disturbed by the way they "sounded" in print. They said it was difficult at first for them to get past their judgements about their lack of articulation and reflect on the content of the interview. However, after I talked to one participant and realized that the others might have similar reactions, I phoned them and talked to them about it.

Analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is a "messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111). Merriam (1988) has characterized data analysis as "a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation" (p. 17). Huberman and Miles (1994) pointed out that

analysis is inherent throughout the inquiry, in the choices made regarding the study design, the conceptual framework, the research questions, and the participants. Boyle (1994) described ethnographic analysis as the search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain the existence of those patterns. She maintained that the process starts very early in the data collection and continues throughout the project.

Little did I realize, as I was writing about how I proposed to carry out the analysis, how overwhelming I would find it at times. One of the characteristics of qualitative inquiry which excites me, is its emerging nature and so I was aware that, while I needed to have in place a broad outline for data analysis within which to proceed, I also needed to allow myself flexibility, freedom within structure. As I transcribed the tapes, I was familiarizing myself with their contents, not only the words but the way in which they were said. I enjoyed listening to the stories over and over again. I felt like a young child who gets to know every word of her favourite stories and can repeat them along with the narrator. I made notes in my journal of things that caught my attention.

The strategy I had preselected for analyzing the data was the approach described by Kirby and McKenna (1989). However, as I became more familiar with the participants' stories, it did not seem to fit. Dividing the transcripts into "bibbits" (p. 135) would yield thousands of little pieces and would be fracturing the experience. I then looked at two approaches from van Manen (1984), who advocates using both the highlighting approach in which "we ask 'What statements or phrases seem particularly essential or revealing about the experience being described?'" and the line-by-line approach in which "we look at every single sentence and ask, 'What does this sentence or statement

reveal about the experience being described?'" (p. 61)

While I was at this stage I was due to present papers at two conferences and I wanted to present some of the themes I saw emerging, so I took the first four interviews and identified some common structural themes; for example: a description of the incident; a description of how the participants felt as they were speaking out; a description of how they perceived their peers reacting. When I returned to the data, I went through the first three transcripts in detail, noting repeated words and patterns. I looked at the vocabulary the participants used; at the emotions implicit in their tone of voice and words; at the different selves participants had identified, for instance, the professional self and the personal self; at the threads that seemed to appear often and in more than one interview, like risk, roles, beliefs, values, silence, not-knowing. I looked at what emotions were named; the ways the word "feel" was used; the links made between cognition and feeling. I began to feel overwhelmed. I had a lot of information and needed to refine and refocus.

In the "Guide to Reading Narratives of Conflict and Choice for Self and Moral Voice" Brown (1988) proposed "four readings as a way of putting into action our research finding that people have more than one way to tell a story and can see a situation through different lenses and in different lights" (p. 10). After discussing my analysis with my peers and my supervisor, I decided to adopt this approach and "read through" using different lenses. The lenses I chose were: "the experience of being out-of-step"; "power," since that was one of my interests and had been significant, implicitly and explicitly, in the interviews; "emotions," as that was another of my interests; and "values or a moral voice," as that was a strongly recurring theme. I read through the transcripts four times, using each of the four lenses and highlighted the

relevant passages for each. I then took each passage and used key words to identify the topics in each one. For instance, when I was reading for "power" in Kate's interview, I included the following response: "I thought 'Oh God, I don't want anything to do with that' and that was my sort of... 'I'm going to resist that' but I was quiet about it. I didn't say anything." The key words I used for this passage were "resistance" and "silence." After I had allocated key words to the passages in all five interviews for one reading, I assembled the key words and put them into categories. By this time I had five hundred pieces of paper and was only a quarter of the way through! Again, I needed to pull back and refocus. I needed a way to structure my data and so, after further discussion, with my supervisor, I decided to return to my original research questions:

> What is the nature of the teachers' experience of being out-of-step?
> How do they perceive it impacting on their personal well-being?
> How do they perceive it impacting on the well-being of their school?

I used each of these questions as a focus and realized, with excitement, that not only did I have enough information to respond to them, but the themes I had seen emerging, structured themselves in the responses.

Various features of the experience appeared to be common to all of the participants. For each of them there was a connection with values, a moral voice; they all used the words "right" and "wrong." There was also some sort of decision-making process about whether they would allow themselves to be seen as being out-of-step. The decision involved an inherent risk and cost. There was the moment of being seen by one's peers as being out-of-step, which was a subjective experience of that moment; and there were the

reactions of their peers. Those common aspects of the experience seemed to speak to the first part of the question: What is the nature of the experience? The second question was answered by the information about personal well-being and coping which was fairly explicit in the data.

In considering the question about the well-being of the workplace, I looked at the data which spoke to the interpersonal aspects and the context of the workplace. I had asked only two of the participants a question about how they perceived the impact on the school and that question seemed to draw a blank. I realized that it was not a case of how it impacted the well-being of the workplace, it was more an issue of how did conditions in the workplace contribute to a person being out-of-step, when they held an opinion which appeared to be different from the majority of their peers. One of the features that became clear was the amount of influence the principals had in setting the tone of the school. They seemed to influence the dynamics and the atmosphere. Issues of power and leadership, as well silence and underlying emotions, were also present.

I used my journal extensively during this process and talked to fellow students to help me get clarity. When I look at the quote from Kirby and McKenna (1989) that I had included in my proposal, I realize that it describes my process.

> The general analytical design consists of examining how data items and groupings of data items generate specific and general patterns. This is done primarily through the constant comparison of data items with other data items until sections that 'go together with' or 'seem to help describe something' can be identified and located together in a category file. (p. 130)

As I was looking at one transcript I would make a note of similarities with others.

> November 6 I have just gone through Kate's, Lynne's, and John's for "out-of-step." Many similarities e.g., "taking a stand," boundaries, "when push comes to shove" etc. One essential component of being out-of-step seems to be not so much having ideas that are different, but being willing to stand up for them. Another essential component is that it happens within a context that does not listen or respect. These people could all have had the same issues in a different school and been able to express them without fear of being shunned or isolated.

Presentation

Boyle (1994) stated that "most ethnographies are sprinkled liberally with direct quotations from the informants that summarize or illustrate a point the ethnographer is trying to make" (p. 164). Indeed, letting the informants speak for themselves, is an important part of writing up the ethnography. In whatever way it is presented, an ethnography provides insights about a group of people and offers an opportunity to see and understand their world.

I chose to present the Results and Analysis in "Rounds." While I was analyzing the data I seemed to be going in a circular movement. I would move through "reading" for one theme, then move through reading for another. There are four rounds in all. In the First Round the participants tell their own story. I have used their words and edited them slightly for concision and chronology. I have limited the story to a description of the

main incident about which they chose to speak. The Second Round speaks to the question: What is the nature of the experience of being out-of-step with one's peers? The Third Round addresses: What do the participants perceive to be the repercussions of the experience on their well-being? The Fourth Round responds to: What conditions in their schools contribute to the experience of being out-of-step? The rounds seem reminiscent of a talking circle, as though the participants are sitting in a circle and take turns speaking about their experiences. In a circle no one person is more important than another. These circles or "rounds" exist on the same level, there is no hierarchy.

Verification

Creswell (1998) has suggested using the term verification instead of validity because, "it underscores qualitative research as a distinct approach, a legitimate mode of inquiry in its own right" (p. 201). There are a variety of perspectives regarding the importance of verification in qualitative research, the definition of it, and procedures for establishing it. Some writers search for concepts which are equivalent to those used in quantitative research, others use alternative terms which, they claim, are more in keeping with the axioms of qualitative research, while still other writers reconceptualize verification (Creswell).

In my approach, I have revisited the underlying assumptions from which the original concepts and procedures of validity, reliability, and generalizability proceeded. Quantitative approaches are based on an assumption that there is a single objective reality which can be observed, measured, and known; and also that the nature of reality is constant.

Moreover, quantitative approaches focus on outcomes (Merriam, 1988) and seek the development of universal laws which assert "definite and unproblematic relationships and explain actual and real events in the world in a deductive fashion" (Altheide and Johnson, 1994).

On the other hand, interpretive inquiry assumes that there are multiple realities; that the world is not objective but a function of personal interaction and perception. It is highly subjective and in need of interpretation rather than measuring. Beliefs, not facts, form the basis of perception (Merriam, 1988). What is being observed are people's constructions of reality and how they understand the world (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus, research is exploratory, inductive, emphasizes process (Merriam), recognized that there are many possible interpretations, and recognizes that the world is not stable. Replication is not possible as "one cannot step into the same river twice" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). The purpose of qualitative research is the elucidation of meaning and understanding human existence from an individual's point of view (Osborne, 1990).

Taking these differences into account, how can interpretive research be assessed? What constitutes "good" research? What does "valid" mean? What criteria can be used to judge and evaluate? Is "assessing" even a valid concept, since it presupposes privileging some points of view over others? Denzin (1997) referred to this dilemma as the "legitimation crisis" (p. 13).

I have chosen to approach the verification issue by reflecting on what I am attempting to do in my inquiry and by seeking out practices which are congruent with those intentions and will facilitate fulfilling them. In describing my approach below I have used terms and concepts from various researchers.

Participant Validation

Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) used the term "respondent validation" to refer to participants recognizing the validity of their accounts. Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) referred to the "credibility of portrayals of constructed realities" and assert that "credibility is only awarded when the constructions are plausible to those who constructed them" (p. 151). The practice of being true to the participants and ensuring I represent them authentically, was carried out in all stages of research. In fact, paying attention to representation of participants' perspectives is built into the design (Creswell, 1998). Towards the end of the interviews I invited the participants to share other experiences and opinions which they wished to express but had not had the opportunity to do so previously in the interview; as I do in Paul's interview:

> Two things; to ask you if there's anything else that you want to say, because I'm winding this up now; so to ask you if there's anything I haven't asked you about that you think is pertinent to this particular issue or topic, and then the other thing is just to maybe reflect on the conversation and see how it's gone. So is there anything else that...?

By audio taping the interviews I ensured as complete a record as the situation permitted; I gave the participants a transcription of the interview to amend; they then mailed me back the transcripts with their editing and we also talked about it on the phone. After I had completed the analysis I sent a copy of the results chapter to each participant and, again, discussed it with them. I have incorporated their feed back in the final analysis. In the written account I

have include the participants' words verbatim and in context.

Reflexivity

"One meaning of reflexivity is that the scientific observer is part and parcel of the setting, context and culture he or she is trying to understand and represent" (Altheide & Johnson, 1994, p. 488). According to Gitlin, Siegel and Boru (1993), reflexivity "puts the researcher back into research, acknowledges embedded prejudgements and allows them to be critically scrutinized" (p. 205). This being so, it behoves the researcher to be self-reflexive. Richardson (1994) asserted that "self-reflexivity unmasks complex political/ideological agendas hidden in our writing" (p. 523). As a researcher I need to be aware of my presuppositions and assumptions and to be constantly reflective about how my values and ideologies influence my work (Thomas, 1993). According to Janesick (1994):

> The qualitative researcher early on identifies his or her biases and articulates the ideology or conceptual frame for the study. By identifying one's biases one can see easily where the questions that guide the study are crafted. As we try to make sense of our social world and give meaning to what we do as researchers, we continually raise awareness of our own biases. There is no attempt to pretend that research is value free. (p. 212)

Self-reflexivity is a continual self-monitoring in all stages of the inquiry. I have facilitated this process by keeping a journal in which I have recorded my thoughts and feelings about the details of my study, my assumptions and prejudgements as I have become aware of them, the

decisions I have made, areas of difficulty, and ethical issues. I have engaged in discussions with peers and with committee members and I have asked myself "what am I taking for granted?" (Beck, 1994). I have written in a style in which my voice is evident (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Britzman (1991) maintained that this is important because it draws attention to the fact that the story is the researcher's interpretation. No matter how closely the researcher works with the participants and has them read for accuracy of meaning, the final document is still the researcher's representation and it is important that this is evident.

Political Validity

Denzin (1997) and Kincheloe and McLaren (1994) have asserted that a good text exposes how race, class and gender work their ways into the concrete lives of interacting individuals. Lather's (1991) catalytic validity is "the degree to which a given research project empowers and emancipates a research community and directs attention to possibilities for social transformation" (p. 52). This directing of attention to possibilities for social transformation can happen in many ways. As I have been reading, writing, and reflecting while undertaking this study, many political themes have been illuminated for me. As I share my enthusiasm and excitement about new ideas with my family, friends, and peers they, too, have been influenced by new awarenesses. When I have talked with the participants since the interviews, they have described how participating in the research has influenced them and raised their awareness.

Transferability

In interpretive research it is not the author but the reader who does the generalizing, since the reader interprets the text which the researcher produces. It is therefore up to the reader to decide what aspects of the case apply in new contexts (Wehlage, cited in Peshkin, 1993). All readers bring their own context of meaning and interpretation to an account and interpret it accordingly (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Interpretive accounts rely on empathic generalizability found in the experience of others, on their capacity to evoke, resonate, or touch a cord (Osborne, 1990). As Richardson (1994) expressed it, " There is no such thing as right - evocative writing touches us where we live in our bodies" (p. 521). Some of my peers and other people who are interested have read my analysis and presentation and found that it resonated with them.

Ethical Considerations

The relationship between the researcher and participants should be one of dignity and respect. I tried to ensure that this was implicit in all our interactions. There were also ways in which I made this explicit. These issues were addressed through the requirements of the University of Victoria Human Subjects Ethics Committee. In other matters I was guided by the principles in the Ethics Guide of the Canadian Counselling Association (1989).

CHAPTER FOUR: OUT-OF-STEP

Introductions

As I described in the previous chapter, I have chosen to present the Results and Analysis in rounds. In this introduction I outline each round briefly and introduce the participants in the order in which they appear throughout the rounds.

The First Round: The Participants' Stories

These are the teachers' stories about a time when they had experienced feeling and thinking differently from their peers. I have used their own words. Only minor editing was required to remove some repetitions and structure the stories chronologically.

The Second Round: Shared Experiences

As I was reading and immersing myself in the stories, I would become aware of common themes which appeared in one or two stories. I would then check the other stories to see if the same themes were apparent. These themes, which I describe in the Second Round, speak to the first part of my question, "What is the nature of the experience?" The specific themes are:

Recognizing One is Out-of-Step

The Moral Voice

The Decision-Making Process

The Participants' Inner Experience

Peer Reactions

The Third Round: The Impact on the Participants

This round explores how participants perceived the experience impacted on their well-being. I have also included details of how they coped with the repercussions of the experience. The participants' perspectives are described first, followed by the analysis, which is organized under five headings: Talking about health and emotions; Meaning-making and resilience; Feeling alone; Protection and fear; Coping.

The Fourth Round: The School Context

This round addresses the part of the research question referring to the school; it concerns the contexts in which the participants were interacting. As in the previous round, the participants' perspectives are first described and then discussed. The following headings are used in the analysis: Administration; Group dynamics; Rules; Communication.

Introducing the Participants

John is in his thirtieth year of service and teaches Grade Two in a smallish, rural school of seven rooms. This is his eleventh year in the same school.

Lily started teaching over thirty-seven years ago and, like many women of her age, resigned her position when her daughter was born. She continued to teach either part-time or substituting until she returned to full time teaching in the mid-eighties. She has been at her present school, where she now teaches Grade Two, for fourteen years.

Paul is an elementary school teacher who is currently teaching Grade Five in a school of eighteen rooms. He has been teaching for thirty years, twenty of them at his present school.

Kate did not enter the teaching profession until nine years ago when she was in her mid-forties. She spent the first seven years substituting. This is the second year she has been teaching full time. Her assignment comprises a library position in the morning at one school at which she has often substituted and where she taught part-time last year. She feels very comfortable at this school. Her afternoon assignment is a Kindergarten position at another school, which is a large city school of twenty rooms. It is her first year in this school.

Lynne was in her early thirties at the time of the incident she recounts. She was in her third year as a Learning Assistance teacher at the school in which the incident took place. The school had eight rooms and was an independent elementary school which received half of its funding from the government. The incident she was recalling happened eight years ago. After that time she left teaching for a few years but has since returned.

The order in which I present the participants reflects, in part, the order in which I conducted the interviews. John and Lily were first and second. I present Paul next since he, like John and Lily, has perceived himself to be out-of-step a number of times. As mentioned in Chapter Three, I began the interview by asking the participants if they had a story about a time when they had been out-of-step. John, Lily, and Paul all indicated that they had several stories and during the course of our conversations told about several such incidents. Kate and Lynne, whom I present fourth and fifth, did not have such a history. They had been teaching a fewer number of years than the other three and focused only on their one story.

The First Round: The Participants' Stories

The following stories are excerpted from the interviews and form a brief introduction to the participants and the situations in which they found themselves out-of-step with their peers.

John's Story

It was a school staff meeting and we were talking about disaster preparedness. We had had a whole professional development day which we had devoted to disaster preparedness. During the course of the simulation which we had on that day we had all done things that I felt went far beyond what you could reasonably expect of our role as teachers.

We then had a follow-up staff meeting in which the administrator of the school immediately took a lead role around "How do we implement, prepare for, plan for a disaster?" Without even a hint of dissent, the staff began to follow the administrator's lead and talk about how we should prepare. They did not give a thought to the appropriateness of what they were being asked to do, or to the fact that the process was proceeding with very little preliminary discussion. A very few members of staff raised some concerns about this and those concerns seemed to get brushed aside.

I hadn't spoken until that point and, because I could see where it was going, I did then speak and say, "The point that so-and-so made a little earlier is extremely important. We need to pay attention to that. Do you realize we're on a path now where we're heading towards taking on something that is way beyond what I would consider reasonable to expect? It's yet again, something else we're going to have to find time for, manage, and practise. We do that all the time. It's symptomatic of the kind of thinking that we're into these days.

We need to slow down, back right off this, and think, 'Is it appropriate for us as teachers to be taking on the role of fire fighter, demolition expert, paramedic, and so on?'"

It was only at that point, after I spoke quite forcefully and passionately, that people did begin to stop and think, and the administrator could see which way the mood and the view of the people were going and a decision was made not to proceed any further with the topic at that point, and to do some research, to look into the legal aspects of all of these expectations, and also into whether it's really feasible to take all of this on. Nobody had really given any thought to "what is the responsibility of the teacher?" in regard to the children.

So, we slowed things down and we got a change of direction at that point. But I felt that the concern, that was raised initially by others, was going to be dismissed and ignored and we would have gone ahead with this plan to get prepared regardless of a lot of other issues. At that moment I really felt I was out-of-step. But not out-of-step in the sense of being wrong, but actually out-of-step by being right, and everybody else was just being bamboozled and pushed and cajoled into doing something and feeling awkward about voicing concern, which so often happens.

Lily's Story

During the past few years it has become a policy that teachers are requested to do Individual Educational Plans on a student that goes for special help with learning assistance. We have to have a meeting consisting of an administrator, a classroom teacher, a parent, the learning assistance teacher and, maybe, the school counsellor. We have these meetings together and

write this IEP. Each of these meetings takes about half an hour. So I said I did not wish to do these IEPs any more. I think they are an absolute total waste of time, especially to do them in the meeting where they all sit down in this room, and the learning assistance teacher knows nothing about the kid, and the administrator knows nothing about the kid, and the parent does know something, but basically it's me sitting there wittering [sic] on about this child and the learning assistance teacher sits there and makes a bunch of notes. She's called the meeting and yanked me in to do the meeting, basically because I'm the one that knows. So I said that I wasn't doing any of those meetings. I realize, because of Ministry regulations, something does need to be documented. We can do that, but I don't wish to do those meetings.

When our administrator came to see me I said, "I was at a meeting yesterday and I was told by the district special needs supervisor that you could work thirty hours without there being an IEP necessary." So I asked our administrator to clarify the situation. I said, "This is administrative. It's between the administration and the learning assistance."

Since that time they presumably sorted it out and nothing at all has been said to me. Nobody has come to me and said, "Thank you, Lily, for informing us about that." My other two colleagues, who have probably had about ten of these stupid meetings and been obedient and been trailing off to school at some ridiculous time in the morning, having them before school, after school, at lunchtime and during prep time, have looked at me down their noses because I'm not doing them and they've gone and done them. I'm sorry they did them, but I tell you now, that next year, I'll bet my money on it, they're not going to do as many because I've led the way for them. I've said "no" and why does it have to be this way?

I think the unfortunate part for me is, Lily was right. That can be a very unfortunate situation to be in. Since this incident has been resolved, guess what the reaction to me has been? Because I have sorted it out, presumably in ignorance, nothing has been said. So I'm going to school thinking, "Nobody has brought that matter up again, nobody has said anything about it. Are they going to say anything about it?" Nobody's speaking a pip-squeak. I can only conclude that if I want to know, I'm going to have to ask. But what I think it's done, I have spoken up, I think they've all gone running for cover. That's what I think must have happened. No and's, if's, or but's.

Paul's Story

The current bullshit surrounding the reporting procedures regularly gets under my skin. We're seeking euphemisms for reporting, we're looking at various ways of doing it, we're trying to be humane I think, largely, but I very much resent being told what to say and how to say it.

I think that dividing an experience in education into learning outcomes and then reporting those outcomes fractionates it; it cleaves it once and then it cleaves it many more times. I don't find it acceptable and I don't think parents understand quite what's going on. Most parents are interested in learning if their child is accepted by his peers and is moving along in what they hope is his or her proper position with that group. That sort of reporting doesn't seem to be happening in the current process, although teachers are devising ways of making reporting in an anecdotal way a little less time consuming.

Most teachers have taken a one and a half unit course in statistics and measurement, because it was necessary. I struggled through that along with

everybody else, but later on after I finished my degree, I got more interested in testing, measurement, and statistics and took a three unit course, which is by no means exhaustive on the subject, but it set my thinking straight on the purposes of tests and the biases that exist in tests. I believe that properly constructed classroom tests can be fair. I believe it was the the lack of background on the part of a lot of people that developed current reporting procedures that led us to some very fuzzily worded learning outcomes and reporting procedures, that really weren't germane to the subject matter.

At one staff meeting I offered to our principal at the time (who was a man of strong opinions, but not much on research) some pretty good information and it was just rejected out of hand and I thought, "Well, if this is the way the administration feels, I'll just be quiet for a while, listen and see what happens." It's surprising but what I learn later is, that people sitting in staff meetings won't necessarily speak up for their beliefs, but they'll come later on and say, "I'm glad you said that, I was thinking that same thing." So I was vindicated a little bit.

So I was out-of-step, not so much [for] my educational philosophy over testing and measurement, but I was out-of-step in that I was willing to stand firm on a point, and not acquiesce to a direction that I felt, and still feel, is wrong.

Kate's Story

In Greystone School we have primary committees and intermediate committees and, as a primary teacher, it's my responsibility to attend the primary meetings. At the January primary meeting, there were about nine teachers there, not a whole lot of people, but it always seems to be the same

core group that has more "dedication" (that's a nice way of putting it) to running things of the school. The primary rep said, "We have this money and we need to use it for some funding" so the teachers who were there started to talk about getting this programme called "Animated Alphabet." It's a very phonics based programme and it doesn't fit into my philosophy. There's not anything wrong with learning phonics, but I like to use phonics and whole language, but the the staff is very phonics based and don't seem to value whole language. The first time that it came up at this meeting, I just kept quiet and I said to myself, "Oh gosh. I don't want to be involved in that."

Some teachers went off to a workshop and purchased a couple of these Animated Alphabet sets. In the meantime a couple of people talked to me about it. I was very polite but I didn't say that I would do it. I said if they wanted to use it, that was fine with me, but I did not agree to use it.

At the next staff meeting they were talking about it again and somebody said to me, "Well Kate, you really need to start using this" and I said, "Well no, I'm not going to use this." And I felt that all of a sudden about six people said, "Well, you know, we want to use this programme and you have to use it because you're part of the staff and we want to use it."

I'm a union rep so I know that no one can come into my classroom and say "You have to use this programme" so I said, "No, I don't know that programme and I'm not using it" and they said "Well you agreed to use it" and I said "No, I did not agree to use it." So then it was, "Why not?" "Well why won't you use this programme?" and "This is what we want in our school" and "Our kids learn this way."

I found this statement really offensive "Our kids learn this way" and "You need to do it this way because we want our kids to learn." It was like

saying, "The kids at Greystone can only learn one way." So I said, "I won't use this programme. For one thing, I have never seen it used and I have not had any experience with it. I know nothing of it. I'm working two jobs. I don't have time to learn this programme and I'm not doing it."

Lynne's Story

There was an incident in our school where the staff felt that the principal wasn't pulling his weight and he was making comments that were inappropriate about kids in the school, about other staff members, and was dividing the staff in groups. As a staff we felt that this was very inappropriate and that something should be said to the parent group who were the people in charge of the school. I was at the point where I couldn't stand it any more, that it was wrong and I needed to say something. So I was the person that went up and said something.

Every one had agreed with me and backed me up and I had gone to the PAC [Parents' Advisory Committee] person and explained my concerns, more or less on behalf of the staff. It was at the point where push came to shove and I said I was going to do it and I did do it. I did speak to her, but I didn't know that she would tell him a staff member had approached her. It could be interpreted that it was behind his back and I was the tattle tale. It was scary after that. I came in to work on Monday morning after knowing that she had let the cat out of the bag and he wasn't saying anything to me. I knew he had known and I was very scared because I thought, "What's going to happen to me? I can't imagine."

He went into individual's classrooms and said "Whose side are you on, their side or my side?" I don't know whose side "their's" was but no one

really spoke out. My friend Rachel may have said a few things but nothing to the extent of what was going on. She basically said she was pretty happy about things. She may have said in a vague kind of way, "Yeah I'm not happy with the way some things are but I just do my job and that's it."

The rest of the staff didn't say anything so I was basically on my own with that. I felt that I didn't have a lot of back up after we had all discussed it. I don't know if I'd call it conflict with staff, but I was disappointed. I was let down.

I knew I was out-of-step because I was getting, not shunned by the staff, but more "I'm glad it's you and not me." I felt the rest of the staff didn't have any guts to do anything and, although they said that they admired me and were glad that I did that, I didn't get the back up that I thought I would when he confronted everybody.

The Second Round: Shared Experiences

This round speaks to the question: What is the nature of the experience of being out-of-step? I have included themes which seemed to resonate with all the participants. I was alerted to the themes by words and phrases which were common to two or more participants. I would then check the other transcripts to see if those themes were present in them, too.

The phrase "I knew I was out-of-step because..." prompted me to look for a theme of *awareness* and *recognition* of being out-of-step; all the participants used the words "right" or "wrong" which alerted me to the moral voice; phrases like "it's not worth it," "I judge when to...," and "I make a conscious decision" suggested there was a decision-making process; references to "my heart rate," "I felt anxious," and "flushed" spoke to a fairly specific

moment in time, which on closer investigation, turned out to be the moment the participant was witnessed as being out-of-step; words like "shunned," "paranoid," "ganged up on," and "threatened" made me realize there were definite reactions from peers.

The themes are:

Recognizing One is Out-of-Step

The Moral Voice

The Decision-Making Process

The Participants' Inner Experience

Peer Reactions

I introduce each theme, present the Results, and follow with the Analysis. I discuss some points in more detail in the Third and Fourth Rounds. In instances where this occurs, I make a note of it.

Recognizing One is Out-of-Step

Results. Recognizing that one is out-of-step happens in many ways. It can become suddenly apparent at a meeting. For instance, Kate recognized she was out-of-step when everyone else at the primary meeting was enthusiastic about the phonics programme. At other times the realization that one is becoming out-of-step can develop over a period of time as one stays committed to one's beliefs while the rest of the staff change theirs, as in Paul's case where the rest of the staff embraced the new provincial reporting procedures while he continued to support the reporting grades.

Also, the experience of being out-of-step could last over a period of time. For instance, the issue Lily described had already been in process for a week and was still continuing at the time of the interview. Paul's issue was

an ongoing one.

John described an incident that took place in a staff meeting. The previous week the staff had spent a Professional Development day on disaster preparedness for which they had simulated a disaster and been engaged in activities, like fighting fires and treating people with life threatening injuries, which he considered inappropriate. At the follow-up meeting the staff were discussing what they should be doing in order to get prepared. John was concerned that there had been no preliminary discussion or consideration of the appropriateness of what they were planning to do. He described his inner experience of knowing "that you are out-of-step because you see and hear what the others are doing and thinking and you know what your own thinking is on these things." He spoke up at the meeting and was successful in getting the staff to agree to slow down and look at the repercussions of what they were planning to do. He said that at that moment he really felt he was out-of-step. "But not out-of-step in the sense of being wrong, but actually out-of-step by being right, and everybody else was just being bamboozled and pushed and cajoled into doing something and feeling awkward about voicing concern."

Lily was taking issue with having to meet as part of a team to write up IEPs for students in her class who were going to learning assistance for a small number of sessions. She was not objecting to documenting the case but she thought that the meetings were a waste of time since she was the only person present who was familiar with the student's academic record and so it was she who did the bulk of the work at the meeting. She felt that she could have done the work just as well on her own and in less time. When she found out

that the district policy stated that IEPs were not required if a child was to receive less than thirty hours of learning assistance, she talked to the administrator of her school and said that she did not wish to continue doing them. Later, the administrator started to discuss the subject with her in private, but Lily suggested that it be discussed in front of all the staff because it concerned them all. In the ensuing general discussion Lily did not receive the support that she expected from her peers. They kept quiet and seemed to resent her dealing with an issue which would seemingly benefit them all by reducing their workload. Instead of looking upon her with appreciation and thanks, they were "looking down their nose" at her, which she thought was probably because they had already participated in many IEP meetings. She was out-of-step because she questioned the status quo and received no support for her position. "I have spoken up and they have gone running for cover."

Paul expressed his disagreement with the current provincial reporting policy, developed during the last few years, which requires anecdotal reporting for intermediate grades. He believes that children of that age and their parents are better served by reports which assign grades rather than anecdotal reports. Ironically, there was a time when, holding the very same beliefs, he was "in vogue," however the trend has changed and so he found himself out-of-step, not only with provincial policy, but also with many of his peers. He has expressed his view several times at meetings at both school and district levels. He said that he sees himself out-of-step, "not so much in my educational philosophy over testing, as in my willingness to stand firm on a point and not acquiesce to a direction that I felt, and still feel, is wrong." He experienced his out-of-stepness as an ongoing state.

Kate recognized that she was out-of-step when she was at a school primary meeting, consisting of teaching staff only, and the subject of buying and using a certain phonics programme was raised. As she listened to the discussion, she thought, "Oh no I don't want to be involved in that" but she kept quiet. She described herself as "silently resisting." When the staff asked her about participating in the programme, she answered that she did not know the programme and, because she had two jobs, she did not have time to learn it. Her unexpressed, main objection was that it did not fit into her belief system. She regarded phonics as a valuable part of a balanced language programme, whereas the rest of the staff favoured a phonics-based programme and were dismissive of "whole language." She also did not like the programme itself which involved the teacher "jumping around and acting out these big letters." She did not express her basic reason for not wanting to participate. She lived with the internal experience of knowing she was out-of-step for a period of weeks.

At Lynne's school the staff were disturbed by what they considered inappropriate behaviour by the principal who was making comments about the children and staff members, and was "throwing rages." They informally agreed that something needed to be done about this and it was decided that Lynne would approach the chairperson of the parents' group whom she knew personally. Since it was an independent school the parents' group were concerned with matters of personnel and administration. After their talk, the chairperson told the principal, not only that she had been approached by a member of staff, but also, who that member of staff was. The following day the principal went into each teacher's classroom individually, saying that

someone had complained about him to the parents' committee, and asking the teachers whose side they were on. None of the staff backed Lynne up. This was the point at which she realized she was out-of-step. She said she knew she was out-of-step by the reaction of the staff towards her, "I was getting, not shunned exactly, but more 'I'm glad it's you and not me.' I felt the rest of the staff didn't have any guts." The staff appeared to be distancing themselves from her.

Analysis. John said that you can be aware that you are out-of-step by hearing what is going on around you and recognizing that you are thinking and feeling differently from what appears to be the majority view. The majority view can be made explicit in words, as in the way Kate's staff were talking about the Animated Alphabet, or it can be implicit in actions, as in the way John's staff were proceeding. In these situations the individuals who do not agree, have the choice of speaking up or keeping quiet. If they want to voice their opinion, they are in a reactive position. This can be difficult, because people holding the dominant view often try to discredit a different point of view by labelling it "negative." Kincheloe (1993) talked about the culture of conformity which "often creates an atmosphere of hostility toward those who are in some way different" (p. 11). Caputo (1987) asserted, "One enlists the authority of the institution in the service of one's own ideas. And those who dissent have to show they are not against reason or the country - that they are not mad or traitorous, when they are only against the ideas which currently prevail" (p. 229).

Another way of realizing that one is out-of-step is by speaking about something, initiating a topic, and then realizing that one has no support; the

rest of the group either keeps quiet or expresses a contrary position. Lily and Lynne both found themselves in this position. Lily had not consulted with her colleagues in the school before she broached the subject of IEP meetings. She had attended a district meeting and knew that what she was suggesting to her staff was accepted policy in other schools. She therefore had every reason to expect that her colleagues would support a move which would lighten their workload. However, she realized by their silence and by their looks that she did not have their support for her proposal and was, thus, out-of-step.

Lynne's situation was slightly different. When she approached the PAC chairperson she was ostensibly "in-step," since the group had agreed that she would do this on everyone's behalf. Her awareness that she was out-of-step came when she realized no one else was supporting her in voicing their concerns to the principal.

Paul's situation was brought about by changes at the external macro-level of government policy-making which affected what was going on at the micro-level of the school (Blase, 1988). In one way he became out-of-step because he did not change his philosophy to conform to what he sees as a "trend," however he perceived that he was out-of-step more because he was willing to stand up and speak out for what he believes rather than because his philosophy was different. He knew that other people agreed with him, because they told him so privately, but they did not state their opinions publicly.

In both John's and Paul's cases there was a two-fold "out-of-stepness." They were out-of-step with the content of what was being discussed and they were out-of-step, on a meta-level, with the process by which discussion was happening or not happening. In John's case the administrator suggested

something and the rest of the staff followed without questioning basic assumptions, and in Paul's case, he put forward a point of view and even those who agreed with him did not stand up for their beliefs.

The length of time, and the number of times, that people experience being out-of-step can have many repercussions. As discussed later, the period is often one of anxiety which could affect the person's state of health. It could also affect group cohesiveness.

The Moral Voice

Results. "Moral Voice" was a theme which became apparent in the first interview. John used words which had a moral tone: right, wrong, duty, principles. I subsequently found that all of the participants used the words "right" and "wrong." The moral voice was apparent in interviews with varying emphasis or intensity; Lily's and John's were the most intense. In some of the interviews I asked what being right meant. I had not anticipated this theme; however, on reflection, I realized that an incident in which the participants perceived themselves to be out-of-step over an issue about which they felt strongly, was likely to have a moral component.

Gilligan (1982) identified two moral orientations, those of *care* and *justice*. These two orientations are not dichotomous but represent two perspectives on moral problems. The care orientation is concerned with the complexities of maintaining relationships, while the justice orientation is concerned with issues of fairness, individual rights, and adherence to standards or principles.

As previously indicated, John used words with moral connotations

throughout our conversation. He described a situation at a regional committee meeting of the teachers' federation. The group was involved in a discussion in which he perceived they were talking themselves back into agreeing with a position against which they had previously taken a stand. When John pointed this out to the rest of the group, they said to him, "You're right. You're right" and then refocused the discussion.

John's perspective is interesting because he characterized himself as taking on the role of "outsider" which he described in this way: "In being an outsider you play in some ways an important role. It's almost like a duty to pull the group around and ... try to get them back and correctly focus." He appeared to perceive this as a moral role, with attendant responsibilities, one of which was the responsibility for the outcomes of the situations in which he was involved.

> If it goes right you have a feeling that you've done something in preventing something that nobody would have wanted happening and you've got people on the right track....When I feel that things have gone wrong [I think] why did it go wrong? How much was I responsible?

In his reflections on what motivates him to speak out at times, he talked about:

> preserving the search for those high moral principles of justice, fairness, equality. The very basics around the way people are treated, treat each other, consent to be treated, and the way our society and its various power structures work.

These moral concerns are what motivates his commitment to, and involvement in, the teachers' federation:

> I can't imagine being in education without being involved in that organization because there's nothing in it [classroom teaching] that deals with some really important stuff, in my view, and it goes back to life seeming relatively pointless for me.

The caring orientation of his moral perspective, which was implicit when he talked about the basics of "how people treat each other," is illustrated in his caring at the staff meeting where, he said, he was angry at what he perceived to be the thoughtlessness of some teachers in their treatment of, and attitude towards, another teacher who had spoken up before him, and also in his description of some staff members in the teachers' federation who, he said, are thoughtful and sensitive to people's needs.

As Lily talked about the IEP issue she said, "I feel quite strongly that it's not right. It's not right; I feel powerfully it's not right and I feel powerfully that I am going to do something about it."

She described another incident in which she lobbied at school board level for her class, which was being taught in isolation in a one room school, to be moved into another school. She was successful in getting the class moved, however, she said, "The unfortunate part for me is 'Lily was right.' That can be a very unfortunate situation to be in." When I asked her what "being right" means she answered:

> It means to me that I felt strongly about something and that it needed to

> be changed and I may well have had colleagues that did not wish to change it and so I may have faced opposition to the change, but in the end it was changed.

She said that "right" also to her means a sense of justice, fair play, and equality.

Paul's concern with the current reporting procedures was that he believed they are not fair to the children. He said, "I don't believe we're honestly preparing these kids by giving them ego salving report cards without actually grading them." His belief about the fairness motivated him to say that he is "not willing to acquiesce to a direction that I felt and still feel is wrong." He observed that when grading "was in vogue I worked very hard at making it fair and applicable." He was aware this was not necessarily the case with all of his colleagues. When I asked him what "right" meant to him, he particularized his answer to the grading practices:

> With grading practices, I suppose correct, just, fair, reliable. Another aspect to the justness and fairness is that the justness and fairness has to also be fair to the people that are providing the educational service.

There is an aspect to Paul's moral voice which is not apparent in the other participants, and that is his seeming questioning of the usefulness of being entrenched in a "right-wrong" position:

> I sometimes see myself saying things that are provocative and there's another me just watching this performance because I'm wondering if really and truly I care. I feel, in a way, that while I think this direction is

correct, obviously other people aren't interested and maybe it really isn't that important. In a hundred years will it matter?

The caring moral voice is very strong in him also, "I don't honestly believe that my opinions, as strong as they are, have ever caused pain or grief to students." His concerns about the grading procedures are prompted by his concerns for the students. "What can be kinder than preparing people well to go out and face whatever they are going to face, even if it's just the perils of the seventh grade?"

Kate's particular issue was initially about not wanting to use the phonics programme because it did not fit into her belief system. However, as she engaged in dialogue with her peers, she became more and more upset by their attitude towards the children and their teaching practices. Thus, the issue took on deeper moral implications, concerned with philosophy and values, as illustrated in the following excerpt from her interview:

J.M: What is it about something being an issue? You've used the words "philosophy," "belief system," "principle." What does that mean to you?

Kate: Well I think my teaching philosophy is that every child is individual and you can't say, "Our children at this school, only learn this way." I find that very offensive, because to me it just says that they are all little robots and they don't have any thoughts, and they can't think for themselves. At the school, the feeling I get is "Oh these people are just kids. They have no value. Who cares what they think? We don't want them to get any big ideas." I was so shocked. That

> whole philosophy just pervades the school and it upsets me to think that children have to be put into this box and they can only learn by rote learning and this is the way it has to be done.

Her issue was also to do with treating children with respect and recognizing that they learn in many different ways. "I have to do my best for each child ... Children deserve to have the best. They need it and they deserve it. We need to give it to them."

Lynne's issue was clearly a moral one for her: "I was at the point where I couldn't stand it any more, that it was wrong and I needed to say something." Even as she was reflecting on how she handled the situation, she was certain the action she took in going to see the PAC chairperson rather than approaching the principal in person, was the appropriate action. "I don't think I'd say 'I did something wrong' because it was what I believed was right, but at the same time the consequences could have taken me out of my job."

Analysis. The theme about moral voice reflects the fact that the participants based their actions on their underlying values. John, Lily, and Paul talked about *justice* and *fairness*. Paul particularized fairness in regard to grading practices. To Lynne, the principal's behaviour was not "right" and to Kate, the attitude of the staff towards the students was not "right." All of the participants displayed both the caring and justice moral orientations. This is not surprising. It would be hard to work with children without caring. Also, education involves values and standards (Hargreaves, 1995) which makes the justice orientation salient.

Keltchermans (1996) alluded to the frequency with which teachers find themselves forced to make decisions with moral consequences. In making these decisions teachers often have to deal with contradictory demands of their different responsibilities, including those to their students, the administration, the curriculum, their own philosophy and the community. Hargreaves (1995) contended:

> teaching is a moral undertaking, firstly because it contributes to the creation and recreation of future generations and thus, is inherently moral, and secondly, because of the innumerable small, but significant, judgements teachers make in their interactions with students, parents and one another. (p. 15)

In this postmodern age of moral relativity, the traditional moral assumptions of the Judeo-Christian era have been questioned and are collapsing. Hargreaves contended that moral decisions in teaching now usually involve deciding between "better and worse courses of action rather than right and wrong ones" (p. 15) and teachers have to rely on their own reflective resources as a basis for moral judgement. In the light of this, it is obvious that there are going to be conflicting moral opinions within a staff.

In the particular situations in which these five participants found themselves, voicing their moral concerns put them in danger of being seen as being out-of-step, with all the repercussions that entails. One wonders what it is about these school contexts which makes expressing one's moral orientation so problematic. For some people their moral orientation is central to their identity (Nias, 1996). In order to be true to themselves they need to act in accordance with their values or suffer a loss of self-esteem and self respect.

This puts them in the vulnerable position of having to choose between a possible loss of self-esteem or alienation from their peers.

The Decision-Making Process

Results. Several words like "worth," "cost," "risky," "conscious decision," and "more satisfactory" indicated that the participants seemed to recognize there would be a cost to being seen to be out-of-step. They therefore, engaged in some sort of decision-making process which involved weighing up the risks before they made the decision to act on their beliefs and to allow themselves to be witnessed by their peers as being out-of-step. John, Lily, and Paul, who have had previous experience of being out-of-step, realize it is a risky business and have evolved their own methods of assessing the situation. They have developed criteria to guide them in their decision-making process. For example, Lily said she "has her little think" and asks herself if she feels strongly enough about an issue to do something about it. Weighing the risks includes taking into account what it will cost them personally if they do not speak up. Paul talked about it sometimes being more satisfactory to speak up than go home and "stew" about it.

John said that he chooses carefully the issues he speaks out about as he is aware of,

> the danger that, if you're always seen as being out-of-step, that you will be dismissed without any just reason or cause; but if you speak occasionally, and with conviction and passion, and people know you are not always trying, as they would see it, to subvert everything then they will give you some time.

He judges when to make interventions so that they will be most effective. He chose to intervene in the disaster preparedness issue because he perceived it had serious implications concerning the general welfare of teachers.

The cost for him is the anxiety he experiences, which at times, depending on the context, can be overwhelming. He is concerned about about how other people perceive him, so when he allows himself to be seen as out-of-step he becomes very anxious and wonders whether others view him in a judgemental way and if it will affect their attitude towards him. "How am I going to be treated after this? Is this enhancing or wrecking the view they have of me?" He said he must be careful how often he intervenes because of the emotional cost. He judges when he can intervene at "minimal cost" to himself. He also thinks that other people know intuitively that the cost is great which is why they choose to not speak up. However, he maintained that in the long run:

> The satisfaction I get from having brought important things to the fore, and that feeling of being true to what you feel it is necessary to do, outweigh the pain that I have sometimes had to endure and deal with.

As someone who has often experienced being out-of-step, Lily knows there is a cost to speaking out. She said that she used to act spontaneously on her feelings without thinking. The cost has sometimes been separation from her colleagues which has been hurtful and isolating.

> I have offended people or, as you could put it, people would be against me, and I had to just learn to bear that and so I bore it alone. It had the effect of putting me on one side of the fence and my colleagues on the

> other side of the fence so I just had to bear with that.

She said she dealt with her hurt feelings by herself "it has not been shared by anyone." The result of that was that it made her "stand alone, emotionally speaking." She described how she has learned through those experiences; she has had her "bumps" in the past, "I took my blows as life went on." Lily said that she has now evolved a decision-making process.

> So if there's an issue that's to be dealt with, I think to myself this way: "Do I wish to deal with that? Do I feel strongly enough to deal with that, or do I wish to ignore it?" and I make a conscious decision.

Paul recognized that speaking out takes its toll on his health. Ten years previously he had "lost" fourteen months of work because "largely of upsets and trouble" he maintained he had caused himself through his questioning stance. He alluded to his father's wisdom in avoiding confrontation because, he said of himself, "while I can put on the performance, I don't have the viscera for it." His criteria for speaking out on an issue are whether he thinks he can influence the direction being taken, and how strongly he feels about it. He said that he is willing and open to being "persuaded otherwise, by evidence or by somebody whose opinion I really respect." Unless that happens, however, he will "continue going forward as if I'm right."

His time of illness seems to have alerted Paul to the potential costs of confrontation. He said when he speaks up he sometimes wonders if it's worth it.

> I'd like to monitor my blood pressure and heart rate as I put some of these

> arguments forward, and I wonder if it's worth it, worth defending a minor point for health reasons. I used to rise to those sorts of things [minor points] and found it futile and frustrating, but I won't let a contentious point that I think's important go by without challenging it, if I feel if that there's any chance I can influence what ultimately happens.

When he is weighing up the cost of speaking out, he also takes into account the cost of remaining silent.

> People have come to expect that I'm not afraid to stand up and state my views, where in fact, I'm terrified to stand up sometimes and state these things. But if I feel it has to be said, it's more satisfactory for me to say it than leave it unsaid and stew about it.

When the issue of the phonics programme was first raised, Kate kept quiet. She saw herself as the "new kid on the block" and place, security and "getting along" with others were important to her. She found herself in the position where she had to choose between keeping quiet and possibly being accepted, or expressing her opinions and probably being rejected.

> I felt fear and anxiety that I wasn't getting on board, that if I don't do this, it was going to make my life miserable. So I felt that anxiety, that "Oh no", between myself absolutely not being able to do that kind of thing (it's just not the way I do things) and fear of rejection, that they would dislike me because I didn't do it their way.

Kate's decision was to take a course of action which she hoped would avoid an open conflict of beliefs. At first she kept quiet, then, when pressured by her

peers, she stated that she did not wish to do the programme because:

> I have never seen it used and I have not had any experience with it. I know nothing of it. I'm working two jobs. I don't have time to learn this programme and I'm not doing it.

She hoped that her peers would accept these practical reasons for her non-participation. By not being seen to have differing beliefs, she hoped she would not be seen as being out-of-step. As the weeks went by and her peers continued to pressure her, she said that she became frustrated and restated her position but still did not reveal her fundamental reason for not wanting to participate in the programme.

Lynne did not make a conscious decision to allow herself to be seen as out-of-step. In fact, in the beginning, she was "in step" with the majority of her peers since they all seemed to be in agreement that the principal's behaviour was inappropriate and that Lynne should raise the issue with the PAC chairperson. Lynne made the decision to act and to speak up for what she believed. "I was at the point where push came to shove and I said I was going to do it and I did do it, I did speak to her." She had not intended to be out-of-step. She had not foreseen what the consequences would be.

> I did speak to her but after that ... I didn't know that she would tell him a staff member had approached her. ... It was scary after that. I came in to work on Monday morning after knowing that she had let the cat out of the bag and he wasn't saying anything to me. I knew he had known and I was very scared because I thought, "Well what's going to happen to me?"

She had not foreseen that the principal would talk to each teacher individually and that those teachers would not back her up. There may have been indications which could have alerted Lynne to the possible train of events. Lynne said that the principal had fired a teacher that year for no apparent good reason.

> I don't know what the basis was, but he never liked this guy from day one. He was against him. This person was a good teacher in lots of ways. We were really in disbelief; we didn't know what the issue was and why, and I don't know to this day.

Another cost to Lynne was that of the support of the staff. As a group they had criticized and complained about the principal behind his back. She put herself in a vulnerable position by going out on a limb and risking not being backed up and supported by the staff.

Analysis. Making a decision presented a dilemma for the participants because they were aware that the norms of their group did not support the action they were considering. The norm might have been "we all think the same way here" or "if we think differently from the in-group we keep quiet." Whatever the norm was in their particular school culture, the participants were aware that they were contemplating breaking that norm. They probably would not even have been able to articulate the norm since it would be just considered that "this is the way things are here" (Jenkins, 1994). There are repercussions for breaking the norm and those repercussions usually take some form of group censure (White, 1993) as described in the section, "Peers' Reactions." The form that it takes varies.

Kate, being new to her situation and in a culture which was strange to her, was in a better position to perceive the norm, which she expressed as "we all get on board." She set store by expressing herself politely and pleasantly, acting on the assumption that the other teachers would follow that code also. Blase (1988) has reported that staff generally adhere to the norms of politeness because they realize that otherwise they can make life miserable for each other.

On one hand the participants risked censure from their group if they spoke out. This is significant because, for most people, social interaction is necessary for their well-being. Nias (1985) said:

> [Teachers] need the affective and affiliative support of their colleagues ... They may therefore be under strong emotional pressure to conform to the norms of the staff membership group even when they lack the desire to do so. (p. 116)

Kate experienced this dilemma. She expressed the tension she felt, "I felt that they were a unit, that I would never be able to break into that unit, but I didn't want to anyway."

On the other hand, the alternative to speaking out was keeping quiet. That also has repercussions for the individual, since acting consistently with one's beliefs and values is important for self-esteem, and "teachers do not feel good about themselves if they perceive they are acting, albeit under pressure, in ways which do not support their values and beliefs" (Nias, 1996). John and Paul supported this statement when they said that it is more satisfactory for them to voice their opinions than to keep quiet.

The stakes are high whichever course of action one takes. Thus, the

decision making process is important. Lily's strategy for making decisions in interesting because it reflects Blase's (1988) observation that teachers start off being idealistic and naive, then, as they learn through their experiences in school that politics are involved in interactions, they create a political persona for their own protection. Lily said that she has evolved from the "joy and spirit of youth to now, the total rational 'Do I wish to deal with this or am I going to leave it?'" She also talked about her "thinking " as being a protection of her emotions. Lily's strategy also illustrates the interaction between the emotions and cognition. Moursund (1996) believed that clients need to feel and to process information when they are involved in decision making. She claimed that they need to experience the emotions that accompany their decision making dilemmas and to think clearly about their emotions as well as the decisions themselves.

Participants' Inner Experience

Results. The inner, subjective experience of being out-of-step is very powerful, whether the person speaks out and is witnessed by others as being out-of-step or whether the person remains silent. Some participants talked about how they experienced being out-of-step in their body. For instance, Paul said, "My heart rate probably went over a hundred and my face was flushed." Others talk about their emotional feelings and their thoughts, Lynne said, "I was very scared" and "I thought 'Well what's going to happen to me?'" With some of the participants there was a discrepancy between their inner experience and what they outwardly expressed. For instance, John talked about "keeping a cool exterior" while he was experiencing an inner turmoil.

John described both his physical feelings and the emotions that he has experienced when he has allowed himself to be seen as out-of-step. He said he has a "tightening inside and my heart rate increases, becomes erratic with major thumps, and all of a sudden nothing." He also experiences a tension which leads him to stutter. His internal experience is one of anxiety. As he described the sources of his anxiety, he conveyed a sense of some of the invisible dynamics involved in his interactions.

> I feel anxious, because you're walking on an edge, because unless you really pay attention to the mood [of the group] and what people have said, and if you don't provide the proper acknowledgement for where they are, they'll just let you drop. But they can be a very powerful force in keeping you there if you tap in.... But the anxiety comes in wondering initially whether they're going to keep you up there or whether they're just going to dismiss you too, and let you drop. So I get very anxious about that. I get very anxious about how they're perceiving me. What kind of perception do they have? Do they view me in a judgemental way? So much can hinge on this, so a tremendous amount of anxiety.

Sometimes the anxiety escalates, "I feel sometimes as though things are spinning and are almost out of control. You can get feelings of panic in situations like that."

John talked about the difference between his inner experience and his outer expression. "I felt very much in turmoil and panicked at that time, even though I tried to maintain a fairly rational and cool exterior, and was literally just doing somersaults inside." There was a lack of congruence between what he was experiencing and what he was expressing.

During our conversation, Lily did not allude specifically to how she experienced being out-of-step in this particular issue, either emotionally or physically, however her tone of voice and vocabulary conveyed strong feelings. "I think they (the IEP meetings) are an absolute total waste of time." "And she's called the meeting and yanked me in." "So I wouldn't back down on it. I mean, why? Why are we doing this absolute rubbish?" "I am definitely not going to support something I don't believe in. It hasn't worn me down."

It is clear from her reports of her conversation with the administrator that she did not try to mask how she was feeling or present a different exterior. When I asked her if she had said she was angry she responded,"I didn't need to use the word 'furious.' It was evident."

Paul, like John, described his physical sensations when he stands up at a meeting; "dry mouth, faster heart rate and quicker respiratory functions." He said that he is nervous about getting up and challenging authority and that his peers have come to expect that he is not afraid, but sometimes he is terrified. It appears that he does not outwardly express what he is inwardly experiencing and, because of this discrepancy, his peers do not know what he is truly feeling.

Kate's situation is different from those of John, Lily, and Paul. She did not speak out when the topic is first raised at a meeting, so she had the inner experience of knowing herself to be out-of-step but not expressing it. During this time she felt anxiety and fear, then frustration and anger as her peers did not leave her alone but continued to put pressure on her. She consulted with the union representative at her other school and was told that no one can

force her to use the phonics programme. She felt stronger knowing her rights and it was this information that, in the end, gave her the courage to make a clearer statement about what she would and would not do.

After one staff meeting, she was walking down the hallway with a teacher whom she had known for seven years, whom she respected, and who used to share the same philosophy. Kate was airing her concerns about the philosophy of teaching in the school and her colleague said, "Let's face it, Kate, we aren't going to see any doctors or lawyers coming out of this school." Kate reported that at that point she felt desolate; the one person who she had thought might be an ally turned out to think the same way as the rest of the staff. She described herself as feeling "crushed." She also experienced feelings of panic, "What am I doing here?" and anxiety that she was "doing something wrong." Later she felt frustration that, despite the fact that she had been polite and indicated that she did not wish to do the programme, it was being pushed on her. She recognized that it took her a lot of courage to say "No."

While Kate was experiencing these inner feelings she was trying to maintain a polite, professional exterior. The closest she came to acting congruently was one lunchtime when she felt "ganged-up on."

> I adamantly stated that I was not going to do that, that I had two jobs, and that I did not have time to pursue that, and that I wasn't interested in pursuing it. I said that clearly and my body language said, "Get off my case."

She described herself as having "her back to the wall" at this point and she said she "reacted" to the pressure she felt.

Lynne's predominant inner experience was one of fear and anxiety. She described feeling fear about going to talk to the chairperson of the parents' committee. She also described the anxiety she experienced when she realized that the principal knew that it was she who had complained about him and that the rest of the staff were not giving her the back-up she had been counting on. She said she was anxious because she did not know what was going to happen to her, "It was scary after that." "I was very scared because I thought 'I can't imagine what's going to happen to me.'"

Analysis. A noticeable feature of these descriptions is the allusion to anxiety and fear. All the participants except Lily talked about feeling anxious, scared, or terrified. Greenberg (1996) described fear as "highly unpleasant, with a compelling survival-oriented function to precipitate one's escape from danger" (p. 194). Denzin (1984) said that "the meaning of fear lies in the past as the past comes forward to threaten the subject in the present" (p. 221). However, if we bear in mind Harré's (1986) assertion that emotions do not exist by themselves, that there are "upsetting scenes," "angry people," and so on, and Frijda and Mesquita's (1994) contention that a major social function of emotions appears to be modifying interactions between group members, we can speculate that the context in which the participants are interacting is perceived by them as very threatening, and that the group norms are constructed in such a way as to discourage people from taking the kind of action they are taking. This concept is explored in greater detail in the Fourth Round.

Both the men mentioned physical symptoms, including heart-rate. John described both physical and emotional experiences, but none of the

women mentioned physical stress. This raises the question of whether this is just a coincidence or if it is more usual for men to experience and report stress in terms of physical symptoms and women to experience and report in terms of emotional stress. The harmful effects of frequent or prolonged physiological and psychological stress on general health are well documented (Benson, 1975, 1992; Borysenko, 1987).

Kate and John talked about presenting a cool or professional exterior. In expressing concern for the lack of emotional expression in education, Noddings (1996) said that it has become a mark of professionalism to be detached, cool, and dispassionate. Paul mentioned that his peers do not realize he is terrified to stand up and challenge authority sometimes. This would seem to indicate that his inner experience and outer expression are not congruent. His lack of congruency probably results from the fact that to show anxiety is to admit vulnerability, or even weakness, and it may be safer to seem "cool." The lack of "authenticity" displayed by John, Kate, and Paul could have implications for their well-being. Talking about well-being from an existential perspective, Francis Vaughan (1995) said:

> Authenticity implies consistency between inner experience and outer expression, and congruence between beliefs and behaviour. When thoughts, feelings, words, and actions are in harmony, when they do not contradict one another, one develops a sense of integrity and inner consistency that is essential to existential well being. If, on the other hand, one thinks one thing and says another, one creates an internal conflict rather than coherence. (p. 19)

The display of emotion is important to communication and group interaction

(Greenberg & Pavio, 1997) so a lack of authenticity and congruence affects group communications. Pennebaker (1995), Pert (1997), and Greenberg (1996) also referred to the repercussions of disharmony on personal well-being.

Peers' Reactions

Results. One of the reasons people think carefully before going out-of-step is that they know there will be repercussions. This is an intrinsic part of the experience. Their peers react to them in a variety of ways. For instance, Paul said he "receives blank looks" and Lily said her colleagues "look down the noses at her." Lynne felt excluded by her staff. John sensed some of his peers were happy he spoke up. The participants, in their turn, respond to those peer reactions. Some of those interactions are described in this section.

John's peers listened to him and acted on his suggestions. He was successful in getting the group to take another look at what they were planning to do and to undertake some research before deciding on any action. He described their reaction thus:

> I think they were pleased. I think one of the reactions that I sensed was "I'm glad that he persisted with that, or brought that again to our attention and was insistent around that, because I felt there was something wrong with all of this but I didn't really know how to say it, or what to say." So I sensed some relief on their part, and pleasure, that it actually had been dealt with to a degree and people afterwards were thanking me for that.

His peers thanked him after the meeting, however, they did not voice their support during the meeting after he had spoken out. He speculated that

people feel awkward about voicing their concerns within the staff meeting for fear of both the formal and informal hierarchies.

He enjoys the "positive feeling and experience" he gets from people thanking him and being appreciative. However, he has also experienced reactions from his peers which have not been so supportive. He recounted one incident which took place at a teachers' federation meeting. He was approached by two powerful members of the organization who threatened that if he did not change his stand on an particular issue, they would ruin him politically and make sure he did not get re-elected to the executive. He refused to change his position and was not re-elected. He said he has been marginalized within the organization ever since.

Lily perceived that her colleagues react to her by "looking down their noses" at her, by "running for cover," and by not communicating with her about the issue. She said that the two teachers who have already attended "about ten" of the IEP meetings have "looked down their noses because I'm not doing them and they've gone and done them." She supposed they were upset because they have "been obedient" and "gone trailing off" to attend meetings in their own time and they resented her for not doing the same. "That's not a good place to be, because people resent you. There's not a celebration when something is changed." She also experienced silence:

> So this issue last week, since it has been resolved, guess what the reaction to me has been? Because I have sorted it out, nothing has been said. So I'm going to school thinking, "Nobody has brought that matter up again, nobody has said anything about it. Are they going to say anything

> about it?" Nobody's speaking a pip-squeak. How do you understand that?

I responded to this by asking her how she understood it, to which she replied:

> I can only conclude that if I want to know I'm going to have to ask. But what I think it's done, I have spoken up, I think they've all gone running for cover. That's what I think must have happened.

Her colleagues were not communicating with her about the issue, and there was no sense that the rest of the staff appreciated her action in lessening their work-load. "Since that time presumably they sorted it out and nothing at all has been said to me. Nobody has come to me and said, "Thank you, Lily, for informing us about that." She realized that next year things will be different. "I bet my money they won't do them next year because I've led the way for them. I've said 'No' and why does it have to be this way?"

She also reported reactions from her peers at district meetings. She sometimes sees them looking at her as if they have heard that she has been creating a stir.

As some one who has been out-of-step many times, Lily is used to having reactions from her peers. She maintained that other people's reactions don't affect her much these days. It has not always been so. She said she used to feel hurt earlier in her career, but she has learned to cope and she said that she is used to standing alone and has the strength to do so. Her imaginary response to her peers was, "OK, you think there's strength in numbers, you band together and I'm standing alone. Dear God, I thank you that I can stand alone. Yeah, I'm standing alone and I don't care."

Lily's attitude towards her peers seemed to be one of anger which was expressed implicitly in the language she used, "They've been obedient and gone trailing off." "Next year they'll come crawling back." "I don't want to rub any one's nose in it, but unfortunately, Lily was right."

Paul said his peers react in a variety of ways when he speaks about certain subjects on which he holds a contrary opinion. "Oh, I think you can see the blank stares, that 'That's just Paul tub-thumping again. He's on his favourite topic' or no comment at all." These responses seem to indicate a lack of taking him seriously, of trivializing and dismissing what he has to say. When he described how he responds to his peers' reactions, he says he may feel hurt if he thinks his ideas are not being taken seriously by his fellow teachers.

> I guess it would hurt my feelings to a certain extent that if I felt it was really important, that these people weren't taking it seriously. But not so much from, say, how you feel about me in that particular meeting, but the fact that I think the idea that I put forward is important to the job we're doing, and it shouldn't be taken personally by people who may hold differing opnions.

He talked about separating the idea from the person and being able to debate and discuss ideas to encourage diversity.

Paul also described reactions he has experienced in other situations like district teachers' meetings. Often, during a meeting, he has expressed his point of view and no one else has spoken up in support, but after the meeting, people have approached him and said that they agree with him. He

does not find this "amusing."

> I think one or two usually have said, "Hey, I'm glad you said that. I was thinking that" and I thought, "Why am I always the guy that gets shoved out front?"... I don't think it's very amusing. It's like, "Can I have a volunteer step forward?" and there are ten people standing in line and nine of them step backwards one step, so there you are....I felt I could have used a little support from my colleagues saying "Hell, no, we won't go. Hell, no, we won't go" but it didn't happen.

The most dramatic reactions were from the staff at Kate's school. On several occasions they tried to persuade her to use the phonics kit. Here Kate describes what happened at a staff meeting:

> And then somebody said "Well Kate, you really need to start using this" and I said " Ah well no, I'm not going to use this." And I felt that all of a sudden about six people said, "Well, you know, we want to use this programme and you have to use it because you're part of the staff and we want to use it." I said, "No, I don't know that programme and I'm not using it" and they said "Well you agreed to use it" and I said "No, I did not agree to use it. I did not say I would use it. I said if you wanted to use it, you could use it." And so then it was, "Why not?" "Well why won't you use this programme?" and "This is what we want in our school" and "How do you think we... our kids learn this way."

On the day they were in the lunch room Kate felt "ganged up" on. Like Lily, Kate used the word "paranoid." She said, "I know that sounds really paranoid."

> I think I pulled back. I felt like everyone was leaning over me, and actually I believe a couple of people were standing up, and directing their.. even though the speech therapist was talking to me, people weren't looking at the speech therapist, they were looking at me and so I felt like a naughty child that would not listen up and cooperate. I felt that they were really focusing in all their concentrated energy to bend me to their will. I felt that that was a unit, that I would never be able to break into that unit, but I didn't want to anyway; I just felt a lot of power coming at me, and disapproval.

After that incident she felt that, "I was .. I wouldn't say shunned exactly, shunned is a pretty strong word, but excluded." She said that field trips were arranged at times that her class couldn't go, and decisions that affected her were made without consulting her. "It's like a 'Well we'll show you' kind of a deal." She commented that if they want to be mad at her that's ok "but don't take it out on the children."

Lynne also mentioned the word "shun." She said, "What happened? Well basically I just was getting..... not shunned by the staff, but more kind of 'I'm glad it's you and not me.'" Her colleagues reacted to her by distancing themselves from her and her opinion when the principal interviewed them separately and asked whose side they were on. Lynne described her response to her peers: "I was probably cold and standoffish 'Don't talk to me. You never backed me up. I don't want to have anything more to do with you' kind of attitude." She said that everyone was acting "nice" towards her because they probably realized that she was hurt and were trying hard to make amends. "But," she said "when someone lets you down constantly and then they are

trying to be nice, it's hard to let that go." Lynne felt deflated and mixed up. It was at this point that she started going to counselling. She felt trapped in the school and considered transferring or resigning. She ended up resigning.

Analysis. Lily, Kate, and Lynne all described a degree of alienation from their peers. Both Lynne and Kate used the word "shunned" and Lily said she was "standing alone." Paul felt unsupported by his peers and John described both being appreciated and being threatened. These reactions are the consequences they suffered for having transgressed the norms which governed their groups. Blase and Anderson (1995) described dissent as being silenced through "the common practice of labelling resistant subordinates as, for example, 'negative,' 'not a team player,' troublemaker,' and 'emasculating'"(p. 138). In this way, criticism of the institution is turned back onto the individual who is marginalized and pathologized through labelling. It is interesting that Kate refers to herself as "troublemaker," "bitch," and "difficult person." She has internalized the language and used it to silence and discredit herself.

The reactions varied in intensity and persistence. Kate's peers were persistent over a period of weeks. They were also aggressive in their tactics. In Lynne's case, her colleagues were passive and submissive in their attitude towards the principal and in not standing up for her.

The experience of being alienated can have an impact on the individuals' well-being and on their enjoyment of their work. Lynne felt so "mixed up" that she started counselling and temporarily left teaching. Lily has felt hurt by the reactions of her peers, and Kate felt undermined and started to lose confidence in herself. These factors are discussed at length in

the next two rounds.

One wonders why the expression of a different opinion should provoke such a reaction from the rest of the group. Ball (1987) believed that the social relations of the staff room are often a near direct reflection of the micro political structure of the institution. If this is true for the participants' schools, then the sanctioning strategies employed by the in-groups and other individuals reflect the predominant attitude towards challenging the status quo. The social relations also are the arena where the "emotional life" (Ball, p. 216) of the organization is played out. "This emotional milieu is not separate from the world of micro politics; at this level the personal is political, and the political is personal" (p. 216).

Second Round: Summary

In this round I focused on the nature of the experience of being out-of-step and described five common themes: the recognition of being out-of-step, the moral voice, the decision-making process, the participants' inner experience, and peers' reactions. When the participants described their experiences there was a lot of emotion, both explicit and implicit. All of the participants mentioned feeling anxious, fearful, or terrified. They also experienced themselves as being alone, at least at some time. John and Paul described themselves as experiencing the physiological symptoms of stress. All of the participants felt isolated from the support of their staff and there were few people in their immediate professional community with whom they could discuss the incidents and their impact. These factors and their repercussions will be discussed in the next round.

The Third Round: Impact on the Participants

Part of my inquiry was directed to exploring how people who had experienced themselves as being out-of-step perceived the experience impacted on their well-being. I included a direct question in my interview plan and took my cues from the participants as to when and how I asked it. For instance, John had indicated that one of his out-of-step experiences had a "tremendous emotional impact" on him, so at that point I asked him how he perceived the impact on his emotional well-being in a general sense. I did not ask Lily directly at all. She started the interview by talking about the emotional experience of being out-of-step on a number of occasions throughout her teaching career. I asked Paul about the impact on his overall health and Kate and Lynne about the impact on their well-being.

I was also interested to know how the participants coped with their situations, as I thought this would be related to their well-being. Sometimes, as with Lynne, I asked the question, "I'm curious as to how you coped." In other interviews, when the participants talked about activities that sounded as though they were coping mechanisms, I asked, "So that's how you coped?"

Results

John responded to my question about the impact on his overall emotional well-being in the following manner:

> It's a tough one to answer. It's one that I've thought about, because at times people have said to me, "You know this is not a good environment for you, you should consider just clearing the decks and detaching from all of this and the tension that this leads to."

He said that there is justification for that advice and for taking that course of action because the impact can be severe, however, he perceived that he does seem to have:

> the ability to deal with it in the long term, and to ultimately keep going even within in the same organization and with some of those same people, and just continue to do what I feel needs to be done. And at the end of it, I feel greater satisfaction, I suppose personally, in having done that, rather than having kind of swept everything aside, and said,"I am out of here. Look at what you've done to me" or "I can't tolerate what you stand for any more."

He added that he still feels anger towards the people in the organization who were implicated in the political maneuvering which resulted in his not being re-elected and in what he described as his "marginalization." He said he cannot look at the people involved without thinking of them as "turncoats and treasonists" which, he said, "gives me a kind of sick feeling too, it sort of mounts up inside." Despite this he is still interested in directing people's attention to what he considers are important issues. It is important for him to feel he is being true to what he needs to do in the role of "outsider."

When I asked him about how he copes, he replied that he has taken up physical activities which he considers are very important because he meets people purely on the basis of friendship and a common interest in what they are doing. He is "in touch with a whole dimension of people that know nothing of your particular turmoil." He also recognizes that some of his coping patterns are not necessarily healthy. One of the ways he has coped in

the past is by getting immersed in relationships in the hopes of burying his troubles and anxieties. He realizes he needs to reflect and not fall into the same patterns as previously.

Lily did not speak specifically about how the experiences had impacted her well-being, but she did talk about how she feels and has felt emotionally. She referred a time when she felt out-of-step at the beginning of her teaching career. She had discovered that elementary school teachers were paid less than secondary school teachers in her district and "having been brought up to believe that there is nothing more important than early childhood education" she organized a petition to have that policy changed.

> So that issue met with success and I was naive and new. So I'm not quite sure how many people I offended or exactly what happened then. Later on I could be in a conflict situation where I was more knowing and realized that I had offended people, or, as you could put it, people would be against me and I had to just learn to bear that and so I bore it alone and, I suppose what you could say is, it strengthened me.

At one point in the interview she asked, "So have my emotions turned to stone? What's happened to my emotions?" In reflecting on this question, she realized that they had not turned to stone but they had changed. "What I suspect has happened is, they may be have been suppressed and that thinking has come more to the fore." She referred to herself as "an extroverted feeling type" who used to act spontaneously on her feelings. If she thought a situation was "not right" then she would take whatever action she thought was needed to address it. In so doing she gradually learned that "people were

offended and it had the result of putting them on one side and me on the other side, of the fence."

She reported she has "known conflict" and used to be hurt by other people's reactions. However, she has "stood alone and endured alone" and the aloneness has "strengthened" her. Now she says, "I don't care."

She has coped in a variety of ways. One way was to evolve a strategy for dealing with issues by reflecting and making a conscious decision about whether she feels strongly enough to take action. She described her "thinking" as a protection for her emotions. She reflected that now her emotions are "not such sunny ones, they are more jaded." However, her emotions are still a motivating force, "they fuel the action." Another of her coping activities was to buy a cabin by the water as a retreat for weekends. She also collects antique jewelry which, she said, "to me, is like a walk in the park," by which she meant it is relaxing and a source of pleasure. She maintained that if something bothers her at school it is no good going home and letting it "eat away at your soul."

I asked Paul, "What do you see as being the repercussion on your health of taking this stance of questioning?" to which he replied:

> Oh, negative, for sure. I lost respect for my father because he would simply walk away from trouble. I would watch him just shun any kind of confrontation, even the most trivial sort. And as a young man growing up and also being mentored by an uncle who was just the opposite, who waded into a confrontation, there's polarization. I suppose I admired one over the other. I was being pulled in two different directions.

Paul remarked that, in retrospect, his father was very wise because "while I can put on the performance, I don't seem to have the viscera to carry it off." He said that ten years ago "I lost fourteen months of work because of largely upsets and trouble I've caused myself that way." After that time he "changed a lot of attitudes and diet to a certain extent." He has:

> the "Serenity Prayer" taped inside my desk drawer. You know it just says we'll change the things we can change, live with the things we can't, and have the wisdom to know the difference. So that philosophy, and at that time I did read through the Twelve Steps. I thought, "These don't just apply to people that can't handle alcohol. These rules apply to everybody." And that book actually came along at the right time.

Since that time his well-being has been far more balanced, not just in teaching but in the rest of his life. He was ill again three years ago and was considering leaving teaching because he thought this was a second warning. But he had

> already enrolled in a French immersion course at the University of Victoria which was a two week live-in thing, and there, mixing with younger colleagues, people that were more enthusiastic, having a lot of fun, and learning the language too, which was important, but I think it was just mixing with those people made me think, "Hey I'm not absolutely alone out here. I do have some ideas that are worthwhile, and these people seem willing to listen to me anyway." So maybe I felt less eccentric then and more likely to want to come back in.

One of the ways he copes is through his interest in old cars. He writes

for a magazine and has made many friends and contacts this way. He mentioned an occasion when he was in Montreal for a French course. He looked up one of his auto contacts and spent a wonderful evening with him.

In response to my question about how her overall well-being had been affected by what she had experienced, Kate stated that it had been a very difficult year. She found it stressful to teach in two places and to have to deal with everything new. Not having had "the luxury of being in one place," she had been unable to focus. She said she feels disheartened because she thinks she has not been at her best and been able to meet her goals. However, she also contended that:

> as my friend Jane says, what doesn't kill us makes us stronger; I've become stronger because of everything that I've had to face, adversity, and I didn't want to... even though I feel when I express it, that I've been a bitch, but I know what I've really done, is face adversity and have come through it.

She does not want to be "out in the world" next year, she wants to have her own space. Nevertheless, she thinks she is strong enough to survive even if she does not have her own space.

> I know when I look back and I say "Ok well I've had to deal with this, and this, and this, and this, and I've never quit. I kept on going." I subbed for seven years. I'm really strong, you know. I'm stronger than I give myself credit for, and I think that one day.... I think that it's a learning curve, you keep on going and I don't ever want to get to the end because

> that would be quitting.

Her overall feeling was that the experience had made her stronger and that she had learned a lot. "Emotionally I don't like conflict, but it's part of life; you learn from it; that's all you can do, and I think I've done this in my life. I just keep on going and don't look back." Kate related her past year's experience to the rest of her life in which she has had to deal with loss and illness in her family and has learned to live for the moment:

> and so I learned to just live for the moment, just live now, just get through. And I think that's all through my whole... who I am now is - maybe I have a horrible day and people are sort of ganging up on me and I'm not going to survive, but tomorrow's a new day - "There's no mistakes in it yet" as Anne of Green Gables once said.

She coped by turning situations into "positive" experiences and making them work for her. She described how she did this with the Christmas concert at which her class were a great hit. She also sought out support. She had one particular friend who was a colleague at the other school at which she taught who gave her advice on how to handle her situation at Greystone. Her friend advised her to "use your professionalism as a shield and don't react. Don't let yourself be hooked in."

When Lynne described how her peers reacted and what she felt towards them she said, "I was just so mixed up so that's when I started counselling." She described how she became aware "of my patterns of communications. I'm aware of my emotions and what it takes for me to let

them out. When I first went to counselling we looked at different patterns from childhood."

She described her incident as being instrumental in her leaving teaching at that time and altering the direction of her life. It was a key incident in her life.

> I've often thought about that, because it was a really good staff. I've often thought how fun it was before any of this mess started and I'm just wondering if I'd stayed, what my life would be like. And then I'm also aware of my whole pattern of communicating my feelings and emotions. I still struggle with getting them out.

Analysis

These descriptions of the perceived impact on personal well-being will be discussed under five headings: Talking about health and emotions; Meaning-making and resilience; Feeling alone; Protection and fear; Coping.

Talking about health and emotions. I realized that this could be a sensitive area for some people to discuss. Health, especially emotional health, is often considered a private area and not necessarily one to be shared openly in a research interview. Moursund (1993) has maintained, "Feelings are important and omnipresent. They are also the doors to the most private and protected parts of ourselves" (p. 30). In addition, people are often unaware of discomfort or unease. "Many people spend years repressing painful feelings, learning to push them out of awareness, to think about something else" (Moursund, p. 28). In the early stages of this inquiry, when I talked to friends,

ex-colleagues, people in the academic community, about what I wanted to research, many responded with questions asking whom I would interview. Some wondered if people who were still teaching would feel safe enough to talk about a topic which could potentially be very vulnerable for them. As it turned out, two teachers who were interested, after talking to me and thinking about it, decided against participating because they thought it would be too emotionally "hot" for them.

If I put myself in the participants' position, in other words, if someone had interviewed me, while I was still teaching, about having received a pink slip and gone through the "Cattle Market," I think I would have been extremely protective of myself. I might not even have been aware of what I was feeling or believe that I had the right to express it.

In the interview with Lily, I may not have asked her about the effect on her well-being because, on an implicit level, she was setting her boundaries about what I could ask her. With the other participants, I asked them in different ways when what they were saying seemed to lead there naturally. It was evident that the participants did perceive there were repercussions for their overall health. John, Kate, and Lynne described the emotional impact. For Lynne it was severe enough for her to seek counselling. John described the "sick feeling" mounting up. At another point he talked about an accumulation of anger. Paul attributed his illness to his questioning stance. The effects were not limited to their professional lives but involved their personal lives too.

Meaning-making and resilience. John described some intense emotional experiences; his physical symptoms, feeling in a panic and

overwhelmed, and being in a turmoil. He found it difficult to express what he was feeling in words at times because the impact was so great, and yet he has the ability to keep going. The key seems to be that he is bringing meaning to his life in his search for justice and fairness and his concern with how people treat each other. Mahoney (1991) stated "Research ranging from health psychology, trauma counselling, and psychotherapy has extensively corroborated that personal meanings and their change lie at the heart of psychological well-being and resilience "(p. 93). For John, the fact that his role of outsider is connected with making meaning in his life gives him the strength to carry on.

Mahoney noted that resilience also refers to the "individual's capacities to endure, survive (effectively cope with), and master, severe challenges; and to maintain and sometimes enhance the quality of one's psychological integration in the process" (p. 158). Kate, after describing what she had experienced during the year, said that it had "strengthened her" and she had "learned" from it; she knew she would "survive." Lily, too, in her descriptions of her experiences said that it has strengthened her. It is interesting to speculate what "strengthened" means to Kate and Lily. Does it have a rigid quality? John, Lily and Kate all talked about enduring, surviving, and learning. They perceived themselves as being able to cope and, in that, exhibited resiliency.

Lynne's situation was different. It led to her leaving teaching for a while and, because it had happened a few years ago, she was able to look back on it with the perspective of distance and time, and to reflect on it. She no longer felt so vulnerable, however there were times in the interview, as she became more emotional, when her voice went so quiet that it was not

recorded.

Feeling alone. "Aloneness," a state that may affect well-being, was mentioned in the second round. It was connected with how the participants experienced their peers' reactions. Most of them talked about feeling alone. Kate said how isolated she was at her school, Lily talked about having to stand alone and endure alone. Paul, too, had felt alone. In recounting his interaction with the younger teachers at the French course, he said that he thought to himself:

> "Hey I'm not absolutely alone out here. I do have some ideas that are worthwhile, and these people seem willing to listen to me anyway" So maybe I felt less eccentric then and more likely to want to come back in.

This seems as though it was a critical factor in his decision not to leave teaching. Being listened to and esteemed are necessary to healthy relationships (Nias, 1996). Participants described how the group isolates dissenting voices by applying sanctions aimed at making life so "miserable" that people will either leave the group altogether, or else will fall back in line. "Making life miserable" was a phrase that came up many times in participants' conversations. If one is out-of-step then, by definition, one is probably going to be feeling alone. There could be consequences for this. Support is one of the mediating factors in health (Leventhal & Patrick-Miller, 1993), and although these teachers may have a support network outside of the workplace, for some of them it was unpleasant and uncomfortable to spend working hours in an atmosphere of estrangement.

Protection and fear. Most of the participants mentioned protection. When John was talking about the emotional impact on him, he said he has feelings of wanting to protect himself. Lily said that her thinking is a protection of her emotions. Paul reflected that his question to himself "Is it worth it?" "may well be protective." Kate used her professionalism as a shield. The fact that they perceived they needed to protect themselves jibed with their experience of fear. Pert (1997) has suggested that fear protects us from perceived threat or danger. As discussed in the sections on "Decision-Making" and "Peer Reactions" in the second round, the participants realized that there would be consequences to speaking out. Fear and anxiety are connected with the fight or flight response, and, if they are experienced frequently and for prolonged periods, they could have a deleterious effect on the well-being of the individual. Also, living with fear and anxiety is likely to diminish the enjoyment of the job.

Protection is also one of the reasons teachers create a political persona Blase (1988). As Kelchtermans (1996) suggested, vulnerability is inherent in the job of teaching and is not completely avoidable, so teachers perceive a need to protect themselves in the micro political arena of school. "Protectionistic actions" are designed to avoid and ameliorate the impact of threatening behaviour, for instance, criticism, gossip, rejection, and sabotage from others (Blase).

Coping. Coping refers to active efforts to master, reduce, or tolerate the demands created by stress. These responses may be healthy or they may be maladaptive (Weiten, 1992). Benson (1992) has maintained that successful coping is the art of finding a balance between acceptance and action, of letting

go and taking control. Weiten listed a number of maladaptive strategies including aggressive behaviour; avoidance; giving up or withdrawing; self-indulgence - that is, engaging in unwise patterns of eating, drinking, using drugs, and so forth; and, excessive use of defence mechanisms. Constructive or healthy coping strategies include confronting problems directly; getting adequate sleep, nutrition, and exercise; the use of humour; active relaxation; social support (Weiten); self-nurturing, self-soothing, self-empathy, and self-compassion (Greenberg and Paivio, 1997); reframing (Hackney & Cormier, 1996); distraction; and, spirituality (Benson).

In response to the question about how they coped, the participants described a range of activities, including antique jewelry collecting, writing about antique cars, and physical activities. The common factor seems to be that the coping activities are far removed from teaching and put the participants in touch with a completely different group of people. These activities would probably fall into the categories of distractions and exercise. The activities may also have been a source of social support, which is very important to well-being; indeed, it has been expressed that even a perceived support network is beneficial (Benson, 1992). Lynne, Paul, and Kate utilized other healthy coping strategies. Lynne started going for counselling; Paul became familiar with the "Twelve Steps," the Serenity Prayer, and changed his eating habits and some attitudes; and Kate reframed her experiences and "made them work" for her.

John recognized that his pattern of seeking refuge in a relationship is not a healthy coping strategy. Lily's "I don't care" may be an avoidance technique which alienates her further from the group. It is not clear to what extent the participants acknowledged and processed the emotions aroused in

their situations, a practice which would be necessary for healthy coping (Benson, 1992), and which dynamic theories of counselling would hold as being critical (Greenberg, 1996) to well-being.

When stress management workshops became popular a few years ago, many people were encouraged to use exercise, relaxation, and breath work as a means to cope with their stress. If the stress is due to anger at unfair treatment, or fear of threats and intimidation, an additional important component of coping would be acknowledging and processing the emotions, and using them as an impetus for changing the circumstances. Many of the participants engaged in active confrontation in addressing the original problem, for instance John challenged the way in which the discussion at the staff meeting was being handled and Lynne confronted the question of the principal's behaviour. However, the participants did not appear to engage in a dialogue with their colleagues about their reactions. Interpersonal relationships with peers appear to be a source of vulnerability.

Summary of the Third Round

During the interviews, some of the participants named a number of emotions they experienced in the course of being out-of-step. At other times emotion was conveyed in the words people used, as in "bullshit," and in other non-verbal ways, such as teary eyes and lowered voice. A lot of emotion accompanied the experiencing of and the telling about the incidents. Such emotion, if it does not find acknowledgement and expression, cannot be processed and could contribute to ill health (Greenberg, 1996; Pert, 1997).

The concept that feelings are individual matters and are the responsibility of the person experiencing them, mitigates against sharing and

coming to a realization that a certain feeling may be socially constructed. At one point in our conversation, Kate talked about how the exclusion of her and her class had affected her. She said, "I feel that my confidence has been undermined" and in the next breath amended it to, "or I've allowed it to be undermined." This change in her language seemed to suggest that she was assuming total responsibility for how she was feeling.

While taking ownership of our feelings is desirable, it is also important to recognize how the context has contributed to those feelings. The feminist consciousness-raising practice encourages people to come together and realize that a number of them are feeling the same thing in similar situations. In this way they generate new knowledge and new understandings of social and political relationships and of power structures (Griffiths, 1988). One wonders what the outcome would have been if the participants in this inquiry had engaged in such a practice. During a subsequent conversation with Kate, I mentioned the concept of structural violence; she later reported that it had helped her re-assess her situation and lessen her self-blame.

The Fourth Round: The School Context

My original intention had been to ask the participants what they perceived to be the repercussions of their out-of-step experience for their school, or, more specifically, their staff. However, as I previously mentioned, I realized that it was not so much an issue of how the experience impacted the school or staff, it was more how the school context contributed to the participants being out-of-step. The participants provided a lot of information about the school context within the interview. Hargreaves (1996) observed,

> People on the margins of their culture or group often have the greatest insights into its workings. They are well placed to possess a kind of perspicacity, throwing a broader light on the cultural order that others take for granted. (p. 17)

People who are out-of-step are, for a time at least, on the margins.

In the Results section below, the participants are presented in the same order as previously. Each person has a slightly different emphasis and different perspective but they all talk about the administration, group dynamics, and the climate of their schools. The Analysis section is organized under the headings: Administration; Staff dynamics; Rules; and, Communication.

Results

John noted that at the staff meeting, the administrator took a lead role, asking how would they, as a staff, prepare for a disaster; how would they implement the plan; and for which tasks would they each assume responsibility. The rest of the staff "without a hint of dissent," and "without even giving a thought to the appropriateness of what they were being asked to do," began to follow the administrator's lead. John recalled that after he had spoken, the administrator could see which way the mood and the view of the people were going and a decision was made not to proceed any further at that point. John described his anger at being manipulated. The administrator was obviously seeing the discussion going the way she wanted it to go and was "moving it along." He didn't like the feeling of being pushed. He observed that other teachers were being "bamboozled, and pushed and

cajoled" and were feeling awkward about voicing concern. They were fearful of the hierarchy, "whether it be the formal or the informal hierarchy."

The informal hierarchy is made up of "powerful group members who often set the agenda over and above the administrator him or herself and they can be as big if not more of a problem than the formal administration." These individuals are viewed by administrators and other teachers as:

> model teachers who work hard in the sense of putting in a great number of hours, producing a great deal of material; their children are always incredibly busy and their walls are loaded with "stuff" and there's a kind of unquestioning acceptance that wonderful things are happening in those rooms, that the kids are learning masses, and an aura begins to develop around certain individuals, in relation to how they go about doing their job.

Even when these teachers disagree in private with what's being asked of them, they will go ahead and not only do it, but do it to excess. As a result of this, other teachers feel they have to:

> ... revere, respect, and listen to these individuals. They see others doing that. They see the administration beaming and sort of giving regular praise and obvious nods to these individuals and they attain their power and significance in that way.

If the other teachers do not "go along with" this group they run the risk of being "badmouthed." John has seen many people hurt by badmouthing, which, he observed, is completely against the code of ethics.

John identified the "shutting down of questioning" which he attributed to two factors. One is that people do not confront the use of directive language as in "we should," because "it is used so frequently and so forcefully that teachers lose the impact of what it means." The other factor is what he terms "the developing competitiveness of generating additional things within the group." Adding more activities and responsibilities means that people "get totally overloaded, bothered, and boggled by everything that they've got to try and manage and that puts them in a very vulnerable and weakened state." Teachers feel vulnerable about looking inadequate in comparison with the "model" teachers. He said he has seen a change over the years; twenty years ago there seemed to be a lot more openness on staffs.

> Now there are tremendous pressures to be working all the time, in the sense of the busy type of work, and an endless round of tasks that you could be doing, such that you would appear to be busy and working hard all the time.

John perceived that the general rules of the staff are to get along with people and not buck the system. The teachers on his staff don't want to hear about any social causes. When they get angry, they get angry "about" each other rather than "with" each other because there's no real confrontation. He puzzled over the willingness of members of staff to consent to the leadership of the informal hierarchy. He said that the group "somehow becomes complicit in manufacturing that seeming togetherness, harmony, and consent, so that others who aren't comfortable with it will not say anything, even if they disagree." He believed that people reveal very little of themselves and just want to get on with the job.

> There's a lot of difficulty in relationships teachers have with each other, a tremendous amount. Now maybe it happens in other work places, I don't know, but I think there's a lot of tension between people, that doesn't get dealt with or recognized but you can tell it's there under the surface.

Lily expressed her fury at administration and, at the end of the interview, said, "I do enjoy the children. I have not enjoyed administration. I think it stinks. They have not had a real interest in what would be the best thing to do for the children." Lily also experienced an alliance between the administrator and the learning assistance teacher when she challenged the policy on IEPs. The administrator said she would have to phone the LA teacher, who was part-time and not at school the day the issue was discussed, because "she might fret." Lily said she was thinking, "Well, I'm standing here. What about my emotions?" She talked about weakness in the administration, "This is not right and to me it's sloppy and it indicates to me a weakness from the administration."

The silence that follows Lily's questioning of the IEP procedure has been alluded to in the second round in "Peers Reactions." She described her peers as having "gone running for cover."

> Nothing at all has been said to me. Nobody has come and said, 'Thank you, Lily.' Instead of it being a celebration of a success ... it's rather a little bit as though there is a combat in a way and they stage a retreat.

She said that next year they "will come crawling back" and say, "Isn't it nice that we don't have to do this?"

This silence surrounded other issues on her staff. At a recent staff meeting she put forward an idea for organizing the Heritage Day activities. The idea was adopted, written up, and posted on the staff room notice board. It was then that she:

> detected emotionally from one of my colleagues that she maybe felt that she hadn't had a say in it. I didn't know until I saw the look on the face, which was a week or so after the meeting was held, that I saw the look on the face which let me know, "Hey, this person maybe didn't want that."

Lily then went on to wonder why the teacher feels that way and realized that she's the one that in the past has "told us all what to do." Lily said that she will have to bring the subject up again and say, "I didn't mean to tread on anyone's toes" and back off.

In response to my question regarding rules about expressing emotions on her staff, she said that she doesn't think that there are any rules. The group dynamics are interesting and there may have been rules originally but "they've all been knocked out through the window." They would be would "knocked out through the window" by:

> Ignoring. Say, for instance, originally one member of staff would decide that this would be a good thing for us all to do, and so we all sort of did it. But then someone came along and maybe, I might have been one who said, "Well I don't think I'm going to do that," so that puts everything in a different perspective.

Lily believed that, as a staff, they have come to know each other better over

the years and that they are more open about discussing various topics. She said that they are so "squashed up together that you couldn't not get to know anybody." However, closer to the end of the interview, she contradicted this and wondered whether the staff actually do know each other or not.

Paul has experienced different administrators at his school. He said that they had a very confrontational administrator at one time and there would be "shouts and arguments and fighting going on." During that period, he said, "there was really no animosity on staff that one could define," but when the whole group was together "the dynamics were not right." The situation was alleviated by some members of staff moving schools and a change of principal.

The next principal they had was more conciliatory and would listen to all points of view. His manner seemed to affect the staff in so far as they were more respectful to each other, "We've shown more courtesy towards each other in recent years. I think people who are angry, at least in this school year, have been given a forum to express that in a constructive sort of way." However, it seems that both administrators discouraged expression of diverse ideas. Even with the more conciliatory principal, Paul said that diverse arguments were actually discouraged and he described the way in which this was done. "Well, I guess the discussion would just peter out, or be limited, or we would move on to something else, and nothing would really change, all the usual platitudes that are put about." The platitudes included, "Well, yes, we know that this is something, but we don't really think it's all that serious at this time." "We can't really change that because this is a direction that the Ministry has put out" or, "If you look in your learning outcomes you'll see

that that is not one of the outcomes for that grade." Paul said that these platitudes would be spoken by "a member of the administration. They tend to be pretty diplomatic generally, and you say, 'Well, why bother?'"

As he reflected on the fact that diverse opinions are actually discouraged, Paul wondered if his "tendency to be polarized" on certain subjects may be because "I would take a polarized position and argue it to the death, as it were, just to keep that diversity open" rather than through any true convictions about the subject per se. He thinks that discouraging diversity "makes for a lot of grumbling. It causes people to move, change schools that is."

The idea of being able to keep diversity open and separate ideas from people is important to Paul. "It's like being on a debating team and you flip the coin as to which side of this argument you're going to carry forth." Yet, as mentioned in the second round in "Peers' Reactions," Paul finds that sometimes his ideas are not listened to because the other members of staff take his difference of opinion personally.

Paul regards the staff as a team with each person having their role to play and all being equally important. He said that because he chooses to work in a quiet way behind the scenes in an advocacy role, he is not "less than" someone who likes to make a splash in the local paper. Regarding the staff dynamics in the period when they had the confrontational principal, Paul said "we were all paddling our canoes in slightly different directions; philosophically we didn't go together. We couldn't respect that diversity." So I asked him, "How does a staff manage to be healthy as a group and to be able to have these diverse opinions?" He responded:

> The only way that I can see it, is that we agree on some goal that's on the horizon and that's the one we're aiming for and we will get there in our own way and if I choose to go this way then I hope you'll support my decision and if you chose to go that way then I'll support yours but let's try not to quibble.

In talking about getting along, he said:

> Sometimes, if two people have a major disagreement, there are many other points of agreement so if the conversation or whatever starts to go down that route they can agree not to go there now, and that seems to work very well.

There are issues beyond the school which affect what goes on at the school level. These may include policies handed down from government or local district levels. Paul said, "I resent being told what to do and how to do it" when he is referring to the reporting "bullshit." Elsewhere he referred to "trends" in education and said he doesn't have much time for people who jump on the trend band-wagon for the mileage they can get out of it.

Kate's experience was that her afternoon school is "a school without leadership." "I feel that there's not good leadership at that school, so the power base is not where it should be; the power base is with this core group of people rather than with the administration, and because of that, I think there are all these little camps."

Kate described the group which tried to pressure her, as a core group who were running the school.

> But it's like this is a really powerful little group and they're used to having it their way and I can see that because you can see that most of the staff members don't come to the meetings. So my feeling is this small group has got control of the school and they're directing it. Also my perception is that if you don't get on board at this school you will be somewhat shunned.

In Kate's case the pressure from the power group was not subtle. During the first few encounters they tried directive language. "Well Kate you really need to start using this." "Well we want to use this programme and you have to use it because you are part of the staff and we want to use it." It reached its peak in the incident in the lunchroom where she felt ganged up on:

> I was just sitting there and I felt like there was so much pressure.... I felt like a naughty child. I felt that they were really focusing all their concentrated energy to bend me to their will. I felt a lot of power coming at me and a lot of disapproval too.

In her interactions with the staff she had tried to be pleasant and polite but firm. "I tried to be really nice and I wasn't going to use the programme." "So that was my cue that I was giving, 'Don't ask me, because I'm not going,' but in a pleasant way." "I try and maintain a professional [demeanor] even if I don't really approve what's happening, or what's being said, or that's being said to me. I try not to react." "My tone of voice was very clear it wasn't unpleasant but it was adamant."

Kate found her schedule isolating because she did not arrive at the school until lunch time when she had to go into her room to prepare. However, she also got the impression that there was little interaction among the rest of the staff, except at meetings, and even these were held separately as it was a dual track French and English school, and the primary and intermediate staff also met separately.

> So I just feel that the homogeneous and cooperative element is really missing. I have actually stated this before, that working at this school is like working in an office building; you go in, you go into your space, you do your thing, you go pick up your mail, and you go home; and it seems like there's no unity.

Kate felt isolated because her beliefs and philosophy were different from the rest of the staff's. "I would always feel isolated, because I think I would always have to be fighting the battle of what I believe in, because I wouldn't be able to compromise my beliefs." In her other school not all teachers shared the same beliefs, but there was no pressure to "get on board."

She described an interaction at a primary staff meeting at which the teachers were deciding which Math programme to buy. She had spoken in favour of using a specific programme because she found it interesting and challenging.

> And at that time three or four people said, "Oh no, no, we don't like that programme. That's a terrible programme and we're not getting it in this school." And then somebody said, and she kind of waved her hand in the air and said, "We don't want that airy-fairy, thinking, kind of programme at

> Greystone; our kids don't learn that way. They learn by drill, drill, drill. We don't want that kind of a programme here. We haven't got time for our kids to be thinking."

Kate's perception of rules at that school was that "if you don't get 'on board' you will be somewhat shunned. Get on board with this power group, not the administration, because there isn't any." I suggested that, by indicating that she was not going to "get on board," she had broken the rules, and I asked her, "What happens when someone breaks the rules?" She replied, "Well, I felt after that, for quite a while that I was ...I wouldn't say shunned exactly ....shunned is a pretty strong word... but excluded."

Lynne was teaching at her school for three years. During her first year they had a principal who was due to retire. Lynne said of that year that they were a "close staff and had lots of fun. It was great. The principal said 'I'm going to have each different staff member chair the meeting'" and there was plenty of discussion. When the new principal came, he "just sort of bulldozed over everybody." It was the staff's concern about this principal that led Lynne to talk to the chairperson of the parent committee. Besides believing that the principal wasn't pulling his weight and was making inappropriate comments about the students, the staff also felt that he was dividing the staff into groups and showing favouritism. Staff were fearful of him.

> Everybody was just tippy toeing around school. This person would just throw rages at kids and at the janitor and at whoever he didn't like. It was pretty scary to hear that sort of tone and think also that "God it could be me next if I am out-of-step."

He not only made people fearful by throwing rages, he also made them fearful by threatening their job security. "He had the power to actually fire a teacher, and I don't know what the basis was, but he never liked this guy from day one." At staff meetings no one said anything. "He rambled on and on for two hours, and we just sat there." In the early days, people did try to say things but they weren't listened to and there was no acknowledgement of what anyone else said.

> We just felt pretty powerless because, in a way, we weren't allowed to express our feelings, or emotions, or our thoughts for that matter. It was this, this, and this, then we were dismissed. But we just allowed it. We didn't stand up.

This created the climate in which the staff complained to each other about his behaviour behind his back. "We would phone each other at night and talk about this problem." When she went into school the day after talking to the chairperson, Lynne knew that the principal knew it was she who had complained but he did not say anything to her. Instead he went into each classroom and asked the teachers, "Whose side are you on? Mine or their's?" Lynne said that he did not go into all the classes. "I don't think he went to everybody. Yeah, and there were groups too, so there was a teacher there that was on his side very much. He would converse with her." In confronting the teachers individually, he isolated them and Lynne, and "nobody really spoke up." After three or four days of silence Lynne summoned up the courage to go and talk to the principal. "It got to the point where I couldn't handle the unknown, wondering what's going to happen. I was so angst about it all and

not knowing what was going to happen to me."

When the principal asked Lynne why she had not approached him directly, she told him that she found him "scary" and unapproachable. During their discussion she talked about getting a transfer. He offered her a better job if she stayed. He also said he wouldn't give her a letter of reference for a transfer. Lynne reported in our conversation that, at that point, she was unconcerned about him denying her a letter of reference. She had spoken up and was no longer afraid. As it turned out, he changed his mind, but in the meantime she had decided to resign.

Lynne mentioned that the principal divided the staff into groups and had favourites. There seemed to be a key group at the school; teachers who were involved in putting on plays, coaching teams, and extra-curricular activities. Lynne identified herself as being part of this group and described herself as a key staff member.

She also alluded to another member of staff who had arrived at the school after her second year and who Lynne perceives was "a lot of the cause of it all."

> I was there for three years and she came on the last year. I was always a sort of a lead staff member or a key staff member and she came in and kind of took my role and we were doing things in a certain ways for a couple of years and she came in and wanted to do it this way.

When I asked Lynne, "How does that type of incident impact on the well-being of the school?" she replied, "Well I don't even know if you can call it well-being. How did it? I mean people just left, so there was a whole change over of staff." Seven, out of ten or eleven, teachers left. Lynne also heard that

"there was a clean slate with new teachers, and teachers coming out of university. I heard that the staff weren't allowed to go out for lunch; they used to go to MacDonald's just to get out of the building."

Analysis

This section is organized under the following headings: Administration; Staff dynamics; Rules; and Communication.

Administration. According to Lieberman and Miller (1984), "The principal, especially in the elementary school, makes it known what is important, what will not be tolerated and, in a strange way, sets the tone for tensions, worth, openness, and fear" (p. 28). This was certainly true in the participants' schools. It appears that the principal influenced the creation of a climate in which a teacher expressing a different view could be out-of-step. Each participant talked about the leadership, or lack of it, although I had not asked any specific question about the administration. I had intentionally limited my questions to interactions with peers because I thought that would equalize the power differential. I was surprised to discover just how powerful an influence the principal was.

Lynne and Paul had both experienced two principals at their schools and were able to compare the climates in the different administrations. The principal in Lynne's first year fostered a climate of openness in which each member of staff chaired a staff meeting. The next principal "threw rages," practised favouritism, and divided the staff into groups. Paul stated that when a more conciliatory principal replaced the confrontational one, the staff followed his lead and were more considerate of each other. Blase and Anderson (1995) have stated that "the micro political research has shown that

a school's micro political culture is, in part, a reaction to the type of leadership present in the school. Indeed a negative and reactive micro political culture is in large part a response to a particular type of leadership exercised by principals" (p. 1).

John expressed his anger at the manipulation he saw happening when the principal was using her own power and the power of the informal hierarchy to "push" the staff along. In their research on leadership styles and feelings of teachers, Blase and Anderson (1995) found that "the use of control-manipulative political behaviours by some school principals has serious negative effects on teacher involvement and performance. Anger was the most predominant feeling that teachers expressed in regard to principals' use of control and manipulation" (p. 41).

Lily's attitude towards the children and the administration was typical of the reaction Nias (1996) mentioned when she quoted a teacher saying "I love teaching. I hate school." Much of the frustration and anger in the job of teaching is directed towards the system and the administrator in a school represents that system. Lily might have had a little more time for the administrator if she had perceived her to be less "weak." One wonders how the situation would have turned out had the administrator responded to Lily's information about IEPs differently, perhaps saying, "Well, Lily, that sounds like a good idea. Why don't we all discuss it? It would certainly lessen your workload." Instead, Lily experienced the administrator's fear of how the LA teacher would react.

Lynne's principal exhibited abusive use of power. He threw rages, and intimidated the staff so that they were "tippy toeing around." He also used the strategy of approaching the teachers one by one and asking then whose side

they were on, thereby intimidating them and isolating Lynne. They knew that he had fired a teacher so they were aware of the extent of his power. When Lynne went into see him, he threatened to deny her a letter of reference for a transfer.

Kate said the administration at her school was absent and this had given rise to little "camps" and power groups. Blase and Anderson's (1995) found that "principals who were seen as being 'ineffective' by teachers, also seemed to affect the quality of interpersonal relationships and contribute to the development of patterns of decreased cohesiveness, distrust, suspicion, non-support and poor communication" (p. 66).

Staff dynamics. John and Kate were very clear about the power groups in their schools. John termed the group in his school "the informal hierarchy" and Kate referred to "the core group." Blase and Anderson (1995) in their research on the negative results of principals' behaviour on relationships among teachers, named as consequences: "undermining staff cohesiveness, high levels of resentment associated with increased competition and conflict, development of cliques with in-groups and out-groups, favoured versus non-favoured, power imbalances and abuse" (p. 66). They also observed that principals who practised favouritism towards "selected" teachers precipitated feelings of anger, jealousy, suspicion, and futility.

These results seem to hold true in John's description of the "informal hierarchy" and the way it conducts itself. They are the favoured group and are in competition for the rewards of "praise and recognition" (Blase and Anderson) given out by the administration, or in John's terms of "beaming

and obvious nods." John discussed the seeming competitiveness to create and take on more work among the "in-group." This group also wields substantial power within the school. He observed how "they will give you time to speak if you are not always seen as being out-of-step" and he gave the example of the person who had raised the issue at the staff meeting before him, being "brushed aside" because his concerns were not seen carrying the same weight as John's. This teacher was "dismissed" for what John perceived to be irrelevant reasons and yet, to the informal hierarchy, they were apparently very relevant.

Blase (1987) has discussed the political self teachers create for protection and influence. Protectionist behaviour is designed to "avoid and/or ameliorate the impact of threatening behaviour of others e.g., criticism, gossip, rejection, and sabotage" (p. 297). The creation of a political self stems from a sense of vulnerability to criticism and attack from others. Political strategies used by teachers include, acquiescence, conformity, diplomacy, passive aggressiveness, ingratiation, and confrontation (Blase).

Some of these strategies appear to be used in John's school. One wonders if some of the "model teachers" were indulging in ingratiation. They were, perhaps, constructing a political self in order to exert influence and obtain what they wanted, which may have included career advancement and recognition. Although the model teachers do not disagree with administration in public but carry out what was expected of them, they do express disagreement behind the administration's back. This could be interpreted as an act of passive-aggression.

According to John, the other teachers, those not favoured, feel they have to "revere and respect" the "model teachers," or think they should "go

along" with them, because otherwise they might be "badmouthed." He referred to the fear these teachers have of looking inadequate. The teachers in this out-group seem to have taken on protection strategies of acquiescence and conformity.

John alluded to the creation of an atmosphere of "groupthink," a term coined by social psychologist Irving Janis. Johnson and Johnson (1991) describe groupthink as a situation where a group "fails to critically search for and evaluate alternative courses of action and relies on shared illusions to bolster the option preferred by the leader" (p. 235). One of the features of groupthink is that there is an illusion of unanimity where everyone falsely assumes that everyone else is in agreement with what has been decided. They assume that silence implies agreement. Any one expressing doubt is pressured to conform. Within the concept of groupthink there are certain group members, called "mind guards," whose function is to try to prevent dissenters from raising objections. One could speculate that there were people who played that role on John's staff. According to him, people felt very awkward and fearful of expressing opinions and concerns which were not in agreement with those of the group.

In Kate's school, the core group occupied the space left by the principal's lack of leadership. Kate knew that the group was used to having its own way because only members of the in-group attended the primary meetings, other teachers stayed away. There were no administrators present at these meetings. She observed that, because of the size of her school, there were several such groups, each with their own "turf" delineated. It could be that, from a micro political perspective, the other teachers had withdrawn from the meetings as a protection. Blase (1988) commented that, although people see withdrawing

as not being a political act, in fact it is, because the teachers are no longer there to influence decision making. In this way their vulnerability serves to sustain the existing political structure. Kate said that about twenty of the staff left the school at the end of the year in which her incident took place. However, those who were in the core group remained.

An interesting dynamic took place in Kate's incident. In her narrative she mentioned a couple of times that she made her statements politely and pleasantly. However the group acted confrontationally towards her. Blase (1988) and Nias (1996) have noted that teachers tend to conform to the norms of conventional politeness. Teachers seem to view this as helping to reduce the harmful effects which might have been generated by negative feelings and by their differences in values and goals. They also recognize a need for "getting along" with each other. Kate, being new to the school, followed her usual polite approach, not knowing that there were other norms operating within the "core group." She said that on various occasions she felt hostility, disapproval, and animosity coming from them, and they were aggressive both verbally and non-verbally towards her.

Of interest also, is Kate's interaction with the other teacher with whom she had once shared a similar philosophy of education. When she expressed her dismay at the attitude of the other teachers, this colleague replied, "I used to feel the same way as you." It would be interesting to know what caused her to change, how long she had been teaching in that school, and whether she had been influenced by her experiences there. Another similarity between Kate and this other teacher was that "like me she had been kicked around from school, to school, to school." One wonders how much the "kicking around" had affected her.

The other three participants did not specifically allude to groups and power within their schools. When Lily talked about the incident which occurred over the idea which she had for Heritage Day, she said that the teacher who, she "detects," is not too happy about the arrangement, is "the one that in the past has told us all what to do." She then wondered if that fact has something to do with the teacher's attitude - if she is upset because Lily had more influence than she did, in that incident.

Paul conceptualizes his staff as a team who all have roles which should be equally respected. He observed that when they had the confrontational principal, the staff could not get along, "the dynamics were poisonous." The situation changed when there was a change of staff and of principal.

Lynne's situation is interesting. The staff at her school displayed some of the features Blase (1988) mentioned in connection with schools run by principals who practise favouritism. A teacher who was new to the school appeared to take over Lynne's role as a key staff member. It appears there was competition over resources and feelings of anger, resentment, and jealousy. The climate fostered by the "raging" principal was one of fear in which people talked behind his back. As in Kate's school, a large proportion of the staff, seven out of ten teachers, left Lynne's school at the end of the year.

Rules. Jenkins (1994) has suggested that in everyday life culture is something that people come to take for granted; it embraces their way of feeling, thinking, and being in the world. Cultures develop norms which are the beliefs about correct action in specific situations (Triandis, 1994). Carspecken (1996) said there is a difference between rules and norms in that rules are more rigid than norms. However, for the purpose of the interviews

I used the word "rules" loosely to cover both terms. Since culture is what we come to take for granted, it is often difficult to see what the norms are. As Hargreaves (1996) observed, people in the margins are often better placed to perceive norms, so are people who enter a new situation, like Kate. Very often people who are new to a group will keep a low profile until they have grasped tacitly what the norms are, "how we do things here." In the interviews, John and Kate are the participants who most clearly express what they perceived to be the "rules" in their groups.

John saw one rule on his staff as: "you have to be enthusiastic about getting on with the job. You can't be enthusiastic about being critical." Also, he said, people want to lead a very quiet existence "where there's a lot of harmony and good thoughts and wanting to please." You are not supposed to buck the system. If you disagree, you don't do it in public. These rules create an illusion of harmony, rather than real harmony. If one breaks the rules, one could be ignored and "dismissed," or "badmouthed" which, he said, has hurt a lot of people.

Kate observed that a rule at her school was "get on board" but get on board with the group, not with the administration. Breaking this rule meant that she was harassed, shunned, and excluded.

At first Lily commented that she didn't think there were any rules, that the staff had got to know each other, and that anything and everything could be discussed. However, towards the end of the interview she realized she was contradicting herself and started to wonder if they actually did know each other. Had we pursued the topic further she might have begun to realize that there were some rules. For instance, in the incident concerning the Heritage Day idea, it seemed that it was not acceptable for the member of staff who was

possibly upset about not having input, to say that she would like to revisit the idea, nor was it acceptable for Lily to act on her "detecting" and ask the teacher what she was feeling. It also seemed that it was not acceptable for Lily to say something to her colleagues when she saw them "looking down their noses" at her, nor was it acceptable for them to express verbally what they were feeling at the time. It is difficult to become aware of the rules when one is embedded in the culture.

Communication. In this section I have included explicit and implicit communication because so much of what went on in the staffs in question was implicit. I have also included silence as a form of communication.

Staff meetings figure in all the interviews. It appears that the only experience of open communication was in the staff meetings during the administration of Lynne's former principal. The other meetings described by Lynne, as well as those described by Paul and John, were ones at which what was discussed and how it was discussed were controlled by the principal, sometimes with the support of the in-group. Paul found that it was difficult to communicate and discuss a contrary point of view because some teachers took it personally, as if he was arguing against them rather than their ideas. It is interesting to note that both John and Paul had the experience of colleagues approaching them after a meeting and telling them that they agreed with what they had said. However, they were not willing to express their agreement in the meeting. At Kate's meetings there were no administrators present. Ideas that were not in line with those of the core group were not considered in an open manner. Kate's opinion about the math programme she had used was not heard and considered by the other teachers.

From recent conversations that I have had with teachers, I have realized that there is an understanding that people do not necessarily speak up at staff meetings. They are regarded as rituals to give the illusion that a democratic process is happening. The fact that it is accepted that nothing "real" happens at staff meetings seems to have become part of the culture of many schools and is taken for granted. Ball (1987) said that discussions in staff meetings are typically initiated and controlled by the head teacher and the staff find themselves in a passive role. They become the recipients of information, rather than participants in a discussion. Ball quoted Gronn's perception that in staff meetings administrators direct their staff to see part of the organizational world in their terms. "He [sic] has defined the situation and they are expected to fall in line with that view" (Gronn, as cited in Ball, p. 238).

Communication of opinions that diverge from those endorsed by the group was not encouraged at Paul's school, even with the conciliatory principal, who had strategies for diffusing unwelcome discussion. Ball (1987) claimed that a staff meeting is a camouflage, a diversion. "The ritual of information-giving and consultation is asserted over any substantive involvement in decision-making" (p. 240). The administration treats potential challenges to important matters as disruptions to the orderly conduct of the meeting or as beyond the scope of the agenda. Paul believes that the discouragement of diversity in his school leads to grumbling from some members of staff and causes people to change schools.

The participants reported the use of "directive language" by staff members. John alluded to this when he talks about the shutting down of questioning. Teachers say, "This is what we should be doing." "We've got to

do this." These things are said in such a way and so often that other teachers do not confront what is being said, but just go along with it. Kate also quoted members of her staff as saying, "You've got to use this programme." "This is the way we do it." The "we" represents the dominant group view which often goes unchallenged.

Much of the interpersonal communication was non-verbal. People communicated by looks, body language, and silence. The group in Kate's school communicated with her non-verbally. She felt animosity and disapproval from them. At Lily's school people communicated messages of disapproval and resentment by body and facial expressions. These messages are communicated through the emotions. A person puts out a message of resentment through the body, or language, or tone of voice, and the message is picked up by the other person who in turn responds non-verbally with anger, resentment, or fear. In this world of tacit communication there is a lot of silence and "not-knowing." Lynne ended up going to see the principal because she could not stand the silence any more. She needed to hear what was going to happen to her. In Lily's school there was silence after she had raised the issue of the IEP meetings. She indicated that she was going to have to take the initiative and ask what had happened. John talked about not knowing who makes the decisions about how the professional development day should be spent.

Regarding communication of selves, John thinks that people don't reveal very much of themselves. "They just want to get on with the job." In the discussion about authenticity in the second round, it was suggested that if people maintain an exterior different to what they are inwardly experiencing, not only do they find themselves out of alignment, but also they do not

communicate who they really are to other people. Paul said that his colleagues do not realize that sometimes he is terrified to stand up and speak. This probably happens because he does not express it. I asked Lynne if she had said anything to her friend on staff about how she had felt about being let down. Lynne replied, "Knowing me, I probably didn't say much."

The habit of silence means that people use other ways to try and find out what is going on. They sense, look, catch an expression, feel, detect and intuit. A few weeks after our conversation, Kate said that one of the things she learned from it was that "you have to say things out aloud and not expect people to read your mind."

The notion of silence is complex. Voices can be silenced, silent, or unheard; being silenced "often requires collaboration and complicity with the cultural norms which have been structured and accepted as normalcy" (Shapiro & Shapiro, 1995, p. 63). Silencing and self-silencing seem to be cultural features of the participants' schools. Such a feature is not conducive to a healthy, participatory workplace.

Summary of the Fourth Round

The participants were out-of-step with others and within a particular context. These particular contexts were highlighted in this round. The headings of administration, staff dynamics, rules, and communication were used to organize the Analysis. The context is integral to the experience. Kate was quite clear that in her morning school not all the staff have the same opinions and beliefs but people are valued and ideas are respected and listened to. This means that Kate cannot be dismissed as a "trouble maker," or a "difficult person." She was not the cause of her out-of-stepness. In her

afternoon school, she was in a context, as were the other participants, where to voice a different opinion from the majority is to be out-of-step. An important factor in creating that type of context appears to be the leadership style of the administration.

Summary of Chapter Four

This chapter described four rounds of data analysis. In the first round I introduced the stories in the words of the participants themselves; in the second round I presented the common themes regarding the nature of the experience; the third round concerned the repercussions on the well-being of the participants; and the fourth round pertained to the context of the school.

While the story can be told in terms of characters and plot, the thread that connects everything is the energy of emotions (Kemper, 1993). The participants' schools were experienced as unsafe places, where some people feared to speak out. The rules about what could be expressed and in what way it could be expressed, appeared to be created and upheld by the culture of the school. Although emotions are constructed in the social arena of the school, they are experienced by the individuals. The acknowledgement, acceptance, and processing of these emotions is important for the individuals' health. (Greenberg, 1996; Pert, 1997).

The five participants in this inquiry experienced varying degress of emotional distress. They were aware of the possible risks of their actions but decided to go ahead because they felt strongly about their issues. They demonstrated courage in speaking out for what they believed was morally "right." Their school environments did not appear to encourage or support a stance which was different from the majority view. According to Klette (1997),

Hanna Arendt asserted that "human plurality, together with the existence of disputing communities, is a guarantee and a prerequisite for democracy and humanity. It is through participating in disputing communities that one forms one's opinions and enlarges one's mentality" (p. 256). In light of this, these five teachers are to be respected and appreciated for upholding their belief in the democratic process.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMPLETING THE CIRCLE

It was apparently said of Truman Capote that he never finished a book, the publishers simply took away what he had written. As I contemplate writing the conclusion to my inquiry, I rather wish that someone would come along and just take away what I have written so far. There are so many seemingly loose ends, that tying them up tidily is not possible, nor perhaps, desirable. The first part of this chapter is a retrospective. I look back at what I set out to do and reflect on whether I accomplished that. I then focus on aspects that emerged from my inquiry which concerned me. Next I consider the implications for counselling, both individual counselling and working in a group situation with a school staff, or a group of teachers. After that I address the limitations of the study and make suggestions for future research.

Retrospective

What did I set out to do? I set out to ask questions about the nature of the experience of being out-of-step and how that experience impacted on the well-being of the teachers and their schools. I wanted to explore how emotions functioned within the culture of the school. I undertook this inquiry to illuminate what happened when teachers experienced being out-of-step because they held an opinion that was different from the majority of their peers. I also wanted to see how the experience affected the well-being of the teachers involved.

Did I achieve what I set out to do? In interviewing the five participants I discovered that there were aspects of the experience which seemed to be similar for all them. Also, they did perceive the experience to have

implications for their well-being. Paul was ill and off work for an extended period; Lynne left teaching temporarily; and John said that it affected his personal life as well as his professional life. Kate and Lily spoke about the stress and emotional isolation which accompanied the incident but they also said that the experience strengthened them. Regarding the school, I was surprised to find that it was not a so much a question of how the experience affected the school but more of how the school context contributed to the experience. The matter of the emotions is far more complicated. Emotions are subtly embedded in every aspect of communication and I realize it is beyond the scope of this study to tease out the intricacies of emotions in the group interactions.

Another of my intentions was to try to understand myself better. As I became familiar with the participants' stories and observed the dynamics that were at play, I came to understand the complexities of my own situation when I received a pink slip. One of the differences between the people I was interviewing and myself was that they spoke up and I didn't. Also, I felt shame; none of the participants mentioned shame, perhaps because they <u>did</u> speak up. As I became more acquainted with the subtleties of the social-construction of emotions, I was more understanding of the difficult situation in which I found myself. Through listening to the stories of others, I have learned how easy it is to become "complicit." It occurred to me that we pay attention to what we perceive to be the problems of peer pressure for students in our schools and yet the very same phenomenon may be happening in the staff rooms.

One of the highlights of the thesis experience for me was my contact with the participants. I was moved and touched by their stories and the spirit

with which they were told.

Concerns

Several issues which concern me emerged from the study. They have implications for the well-being of the individual teachers, the staff, and the students of the schools.

The Influence of the Principal

When I was asking the participants for stories, I asked specifically for incidents involving peers because I wanted avoid situations which might be complicated by "legitimate" power (Johnson & Johnson, 1992) issues between teachers and administrators. However, in their narratives, all the participants talked about the administrators at their schools, and gradually it became clear that the principal is very influential in setting the tone for the school. I had assumed that the teachers' interactions would not be as influenced, albeit indirectly, as they were, by the principal. However, since this is so, it underlines the importance of hiring principals who are leaders rather than managers, who are knowledgeable about group dynamics, and who are capable of balancing "task" and "maintenance" orientations (Johnson and Johnson).

The Nature of Peers' Reactions

I was surprised by the deliberate unkindness of some of the peer reactions, the "bad-mouthing," the harassing, and the exclusion. The participants knew there might be repercussions, which is why they deliberated about whether they would allow themselves to be witnessed as being out-of-step. However prepared one might be, when repercussions occur,

they are emotionally upsetting, hence John's comment that other people know intuitively the cost will be great and so they don't put themselves in that position. Ironically, some of these schools may have been involved in anti-bullying programmes for the children while these things were going on amongst the staff.

Silence and Silencing

The participants in the study were actively discouraged in one way or another from expressing a different point of view. Kate said of her school, "the overall philosophy is to be multicultural and community oriented, but it's not modelled [by the staff]." The lack of tolerance for diversity may be reflected in the classroom too. The discouragement meant that people did not speak out at staff meetings. Teachers did not voice their support even after the out-of-stepper had spoken. This is disturbing. It seems that other staff members are fearful. There are many reasons why people choose not to express an opinion, but fear of retribution is not a healthy reason for doing so. In these schools there appeared to exist a climate where the expectation was that everybody would fall into line; it was not acceptable to speak out if one disagreed with the majority view. Most people adhered to this expectation. Those who did not were sanctioned.

Not-Knowing

In many of the schools in the study there was also an air of "not knowing." People watched faces to "detect" if others are "pleased" or not. This situation bears a resemblance to a dysfunctional family where there are secrets which people fear to question and where no one wants to rock the boat.

Health and Enjoyment

Situations like those in which the participants found themselves, may have repercussions on the individuals' health and on the enjoyment and satisfaction they derive from their work. They may also affect the spirit and morale of the workplace. It is possible to be kind, considerate, and respectful to others at the same time as disagreeing with their ideas and opinions.

Implications for Counselling

While I was in conversation with the participants I was mindful that research interviews are not counselling interventions. On occasions the "witness" part of me was aware of how I would have responded had this been a counselling session. Those instances gave rise to the implications for counselling noted below.

Self-Care

Therapists and counselling textbooks stress the need for therapists to take care of themselves. This includes paying attention to their own emotional work. The significance of this became very clear to me during the interviews. It was important that I had processed my own issues about being out-of-step before I sat down with the participants. It allowed me to remain open to what they were saying and not get "hooked" in.

Self-Awareness

I was reminded in my interview with Paul of the need to be attentive to what I am experiencing. I have mentioned how I turned off the tape recorder during our interview. At the time I thought it was because I was not understanding what he was saying and I wanted to ask him to clarify what he

meant; however, in retrospect, I realized that it was more that I found myself in disagreement with his ideas. I took advantage of the break in our interview to pay attention to my breathing, to release the tension I was feeling, and to centre myself. It is important for counsellors to monitor themselves and be aware of when they find themselves in conflict with what the client is expressing.

Awareness of Context

Attention needs to be paid to the context in which emotions are experienced in order to be able to help the client understand how emotions are sometimes socially constructed. A consideration of factors in the external environment may help the client develop a critical consciousness of how the socio-cultural context has contributed to the issue. Sometimes this may be related to "unfair" or oppressive structural situations. The counsellor would need to help clients evaluate their situations. It would be important to acknowledge the systemic issues and to support clients in deciding how they will deal with the situation. The participants all talked about protection; it would be important for the counsellor to help clients understand the function of that protection.

Interaction of Personal Issues and Context

I was aware in some cases that there seemed to be a connection between what the participants described as being their "personal issues" and the features in the group context which makes the individual vulnerable to the repercussions. Working on the personal issues could lessen the vulnerability and anxiety, and maybe allow the person more alternatives.

The Use of Immediacy

I realized during the interviews the many ways in which emotion is expressed non-verbally, for instance in the choice of words, the tone of voice, gestures, and facial expressions. Often a client is unaware of these emotional "messages." Had these been counselling sessions I could have used immediacy to direct the client's attention to these gestures and, perhaps ask about their meaning or facilitated more direct expression of emotion if that was appropriate.

Therapeutic Value of Storytelling

The experience of listening to the participants' stories reminded me of the value of telling one's story to another person. I witnessed the participants having insights about themselves, realizing they were contradicting themselves, and reflecting on question they had posed themselves, as when Lily said, "What's happened to my emotions?" Telling their story helps people organize and make sense of their experiences. Narrative therapy can be used to help clients examine their story and make changes if it no longer fits.

Implications for Schools

The schools in this research were not experienced as nurturing workplaces. The question arises, "How can these and other similar schools be encouraged become healthy, enjoyable, places to work?" There are several ways in which this can be approached. I suggest two here. One approach would be for the staff of a school to engage in interactive sessions directed towards building a healthy community. Another approach could be for

teachers from various schools to attend sessions which address issues of common interest. By exploring these issues in a group of their peers, the teachers become aware of common concerns and explore them on a personal level in a non-judgemental and supportive setting.

When building a healthy workplace community, the staff may choose to develop their own criteria for what they would like to see in their community, or they could choose to take a list of characteristics that has already been developed and customize it. Peck (1987) named a number of characteristics of a healthy community, including the following: a healthy community communicates and listens; supports and respects its members; develops a sense of trust; has a sense of play and humour; exhibits a sense of shared responsibility; has a balance of interaction between its members; respects the privacy of its members; acknowledges and confronts conflict; treats conflict functionally as a means to growth; monitors its own wellness; addresses the issues, does not attack the person. In engaging with these issues the staff would probably need to address fundamental skills like communication skills, problem solving strategies, and conflict resolution. It might also be necessary to "deconstruct" their current interactional patterns and rules. In many situations these are so embedded and taken for granted, that they could sabotage efforts to build community.

Sometimes a staff's attempt to engage in community building is hampered by the belief that everybody has to participate. Community that is mandated from without, even if it is by members of the staff themselves, is not usually successful. It needs to grow organically from within. Some members of staff for various reasons, may not wish to participate. The secret is to start with whoever is willing and ready to take action. Little (1996) used

the word "niche" to denote a group of teachers getting together to form community. The word "community" itself has been used in many different ways. Some people have expressed concern that it has been used to stifle difference, to strive for unanimity. Members of a group need to clarify what they mean by community to ensure they have a common understanding. McLaughlin (1993) asserted that metaphors of a school workplace as a formal organization direct attention to incentives, management, structures, oversight and accountability, governance, technology and the material aspects of the workplace, whereas the community metaphor draws attention to norms and beliefs of practice, collegial relations, shared goals and problems of mutual support.

When considering the idea of teachers working in a group on common issues, both Noddings (1996) and Keltchermans (1996) have advocated telling stories as a way to develop communication and connection. There are many themes which are common to teachers, one of those is loss (Nias, 1996). As teachers go through their careers they often experience the loss of their original vision and of their idealism. These losses need to be grieved in order to release energy for re-visioning. Teachers could tell their own stories about their losses and connect with each other in this way.

As I contemplated the situations in which the participants in my research found themselves, I wondered if any of them were carrying the role of "troublemaker" for the group; in Jungian terms they would be considered to be carrying the shadow for the group (Wilber, 1991). It can happen that a teacher will be seen as the member of staff who is "always negative or angry," who represents a characteristic that people have difficulty accepting in themselves. The group projects its "shadow" onto an individual and is then

in a position to point the finger of blame and disapproval at that person.

In their discussion of transformative leaders sharing power "with," Blase and Anderson (1995) have said that in the real world achieving this kind of approach is always partial and always tentative. Community must be constantly recreated as teachers, students, parents, and administrators come and go:

> Moreover because democracy is fundamentally process oriented, each school must forge its own approach to democratic, empowering, leadership. Although models can be suggestive and helpful, the specific issues that must be tackled will vary from school to school. Furthermore because schools are part of larger social systems and communities, they are limited by both policy and custom in what they can do. The dilemma is to create power-with organizations that can thrive within a power-over world. (p. 130)

Limitations of This Study and Future Directions

The scope of this study is broad. More time would have been needed to arrive at more in-depth observations. The topic is also a very personal one and there was barely enough time in one interview to establish rapport and to hear the participant's story. I would need to conduct further interviews to allow time for the participants to reflect on their situation and have the opportunity to observe and become more aware of the implicit rules in their schools. The study is also limited by my inexperience as a researcher.

All of the participants except Lynne, were in their fifties. It would be

interesting to conduct the same inquiry with younger teachers. I wonder how much influence being "children of the sixties" had on these teachers, whether that has affected their attitude towards standing up and questioning. It would also be interesting to see what the results would be if this was carried out with secondary school teachers.

As Nias (1996) noted, there is no established discourse of teachers' emotions so any research would contribute to creating such a discourse. There are several directions for further research. One would be to pursue the subject of teachers' emotions about their work, another would be to continue investigating the role of emotions in interpersonal and group dynamics and making it explicit. Another area to research would be to contact people who resigned from their teaching positions and enquire why they left. A further area to research would be that of the health of teachers who are still teaching.

It would also be interesting to interview teachers on the same staff for their perspectives of a particular situation. I sometimes found myself wondering how the other teachers in the schools experienced the incidents that the participants were describing. Such a project could deconstruct incidents and illuminate areas of difficulty which arose because of different perceptions.

Coming Back to Myself

This is where I began my inquiry and this is where I end it. Krieger (1991) said:

> It is important, I think, to become less silent than we have been about our inner experiences in social life, particularly when these experiences seem wrong or deviant. One consequence about being more specific

> about the self is that in the end one becomes more general. One person's idiosyncratic experience speaks to the experience of another. People find likeness despite difference and they find it all the more when more is said about the self (p. 48).

I started with my own story, as Leslie suggested, then I listened to those of my participants. Now I have come back, richer and wiser, to the site where the inner and outer meet, to myself.

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APPENDIX A: Invitation to Participate

Dear

Thank you for your interest in my research. In this letter I introduce myself, explain what the research is about, what your involvement would be as a participant, what the ethical considerations and implications are and how they are taken care of.

My name is Judith Martin and I am a graduate student in Counselling Psychology in the Department of Psychological Foundations in Education at the University of Victoria and I am undertaking this research as the thesis requirement for a Master's Degree. My supervisor is Dr. Anne Marshall.

I am interested in exploring how teachers experience and express their feelings about situations in which they find themselves "out-of-step" with the majority of their colleagues on staff (or in the district, if the issue is a district-wide one). This could be a one-off issue which a teacher feels very strongly about, or it might be an ongoing issue about a school policy, or some other situation.

I will be interviewing five teachers to hear about their experiences. I anticipate that the interviews, which will be audiotaped, will last about 90 minutes. Participants will be asked to look over the transcription of their own interview to make sure it is as they remember it and to jot down any reflections or observations they have afterwards. I will also ask them to respond to my synopsis of the themes I identify as emerging from all the interviews.

APPENDIX B: Participant Consent Form

I, _____, consent to participate in the study "out-of-step: teachers' experience and expression of emotion" conducted by Judith Martin under the supervision of Dr. Anne Marshall at the University of Victoria, Department of Psychological Foundations in Education.

I understand that:

my involvement in this study is completely voluntary and I may decide to withdraw at any point without negative consequences and without giving a reason.

the interview will be tape recorded and the tapes will be erased on completion of the project.

if I decide to withdraw before the end of the study, the tape will be erased and any notes shredded immediately.

only the researcher will have access to the tapes.

I may refuse to respond to any question during the interview and I may turn off the recorder at any time.

if I have any questions at any time during the study I will be answered as quickly as possible.

my name will be protected in all reports by replacement with a code name identifiable only to the researcher. All information obtained will be kept confidential and interview results will be kept in a locked cabinet. On completion of the study the identifying information, transcripts, and audio tapes will be destroyed.

the results of the study, published or unpublished, will in no way identify me, any school, any school district, any location, or anyone I have mentioned in my interview.

Signature:

_____Date:_____

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

Opening statement.

In this interview I am interested in hearing about things that guide how you feel,think, and act in a particular situation. I have some questions to help lead you through it, or once we start, your story might just evolve without any prompting. There is no right or wrong way to do this; the important thing is that I am interested in hearing your story, your experience.

I am interested in hearing about a time when you have felt out-of-step with the rest of your staff or with a majority of your colleagues in the school district. This might be over an issue that you felt very strongly about and the rest of the staff didn't seem to think it was very important or when there was an open conflict of opinions. You might have spoken out about it or you might have kept quiet and said nothing.

Concrete experience

Have you experienced such an incident?

I would like you to take a few moments to recall it.

Could you tell me about it? (Probe for details.)

Subjective experience

Can you remember what you felt at the time? (Probe for exploration)

How did you express your feelings? (Probe for details)

What did you think and do?

Interactive experience

I'm interested in hearing about how other people reacted to you and how that affected you.

(Probe for details of feeling, saying, doing, interpersonal relationships)

What was your response?

(Probe for details of feeling, saying, doing, interpersonal relationships)

If you were quiet, tell me more about that.

What do you imagine would have happened if you had spoken out?

If you spoke out, tell me more about that.

Were your relationships affected? (Probe for exploration)

Are they still? (Probe for exploration)

I'm curious about how you coped with the situation.

Specific experience of emotions

Description

I would like you to go back to the feelings you had at the time, which of them seemed to be the most powerful?

Can you tell me about how comfortable you were experiencing them at the time? How do you feel about them now?

Interpretation

I'm interested in hearing about where you imagine they came from?

What were their meaning and function?

General experience of emotions

If you have experienced a similar incident in a different setting, I'm wondering how it felt.

Is there anything else about the incident(s) you would like to tell me?

What would you say is your attitude towards your emotions generally?

Are you comfortable with them? (Probe for details - some? not others?)

What purpose do you think emotions serve? (Probe for details)

What purpose did they serve in the incident you were telling me about?

Cultural rules

What do you perceive to be the "rules" about emotions on your staff?

(Probe for exploration - What emotions is it ok to express? Is there any group on staff in particular who express them?

How can they be expressed? What emotions can't be expressed?

Why not? Who says? How do you know what the rules are? Who makes the rules?)

Does anything happen if a person breaks these "rules"?

How do you see yourself participating in these unspoken rules? (Probe for details)

Do you think these rules affected what happened in the incident you described?

I'm curious about what you are feeling now while you are remembering and talking about it?

This phenomena we've just been talking about - I'm wondering if there were/are repercussions on your well-being? (Probe for details)

On the well-being of your staff?

Do you suppose there are other people on your staff who experience this?

Critical perspectives

If a similar occasion arose in the future how would you like to see yourself handling it?

What possibilities do you see for change in the way different opinions are handled?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

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