

Smells Like School Spirit:
An Annotated Bibliography to Acknowledge, Honour, and Nurture the Spirit in Schools

by

Nichola Jeanne Kach
B.Sc., Augustana University College, 2000
B.Ed., University of Calgary, 2006

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

© Nichola Jeanne Kach, 2019

University of Victoria

All rights reserved. This project may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without the permission of the author.

Smells Like School Spirit:
An Annotated Bibliography to Acknowledge, Honour, and Nurture the Spirit in Schools

by

Nichola Jeanne Kach
B.Sc., Augustana University College, 2000
B.Ed., University of Calgary, 2006

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Michelle Wiebe, Supervisor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Ted Riecken, Department Member
Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Table of Contents

Supervisory Committee	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Dedication	vi
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Chapter Two: Literature Review	5
2.1 The East	9
2.2 The South	12
2.3 The West	16
2.4 The North	22
Chapter Three: Annotated Bibliography.....	28
3.1 Belonging	33
3.2 Mastery	39
3.3 Independence	55
3.4 Generosity	65
References	76
Appendices	84
Appendix A	84
Appendix B	85
Appendix C	86

List of Figures

Figure 1: The four dimensions of learning	31
Figure 2: The Circle of Courage	32

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge with respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the University of Victoria stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Retrieved from <https://www.uvic.ca/home/about/about/indigenous/index.php>

I would like to personally acknowledge the W̱SÁNEĆ people whose language and teaching I am grateful to be learning.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to the staff and students of ŁÁU, WELNEW Tribal School who have enriched my life with spirit as well as rekindled my love of teaching. Witnessing the soul of every student being honoured at ŁÁU, WELNEW served as the inspiration for this project and has renewed my faith that this can be done in schools everywhere.

HÍSWKE SIÁM NE SCÁLEĆE.

I would also like to thank my family for their support through all my flights of fancy.

~

Elder Danny Musqua speaks on the soul in its physical journey on Earth:

Your tears will fill an ocean for the amount of pain and suffering that the spirit will experience because it is lost. Along its pathway there are a thousand distractions. The body has a thousand wills. Yet, the spirit in you has only one will—to go back to where it came from and reunite with the Creator. (Stonechild, 2016, p. 55)

~

When my pain became the cause of my cure
 my contempt changed into reverence
 and my doubt into certainty.
 I see that I have been the veil on my path.
 Now my body has become my heart
 my heart has become my soul
 and my spirit, the eternal Spirit.

~ Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

~

“We are all connected: to each other biologically; to the Earth chemically; to the rest of the universe, atomically.” ~ Neil deGrasse Tyson

~

“For we each engage the wider intelligence from our own angle and place within it, each of us entwined with the breathing Earth through our particular skin.” ~ (Abram, 2010, p. 126)

~

It is early morning and the first bell has rung. The sound of beating drums echoes through the halls of the elementary school, beckoning staff and students to congregate in the Multipurpose Room for the morning prayer and song. All stand to express gratitude and ask for mercy and strength from the Creator. Both the song and prayer are spoken in SENĆOTEN, the language of the WSÁNEĆ People. Not everyone knows all the words or all the meanings behind them, however, the sentiment and reverence is profound. It is part of the school culture and ritual and, in these moments, the feeling that washes over me tells me ‘this is it; this is where I belong.’

I come from a settler background where both my parents, mother and step-father, emigrated from Europe to live in Canada. They raised me and my sister in a Christian household in an affluent city outside of Edmonton, Alberta. Our father, by comparison, was born in a hamlet within a small farming community in eastern Alberta and raised Ukrainian Orthodox. He classifies himself as an atheist, but funnily enough, is the only person I know who has read the Bible from cover to cover multiple times. Plagued with many questions about my prescribed faith, I began exploring other philosophies and belief systems once I left home at eighteen. My spiritual exploration continues today, and it has become very apparent that it motivates many of my choices. This includes, without exception, the schools in which I have chosen to work. My first teaching job over ten years ago was at a charter school for English Language Learners where the students and majority of the staff were Muslim. Being a public school, some of the more conventional protocols were followed but their religion was not in the foreground of daily school activities. Students were invited to go to Friday prayers in the small mosque on campus if they so chose. After several years at that school, I began working at a Sikh private school where almost all aspects of school life were infused with religious practices. Each morning, we congregated in the gymnasium to sing prayers. In addition to regular school subjects, each

student studied Gurmat (tenets of the Guru) and attended music classes with traditional instruments of harmonium and tabla. All staff members were asked to eat vegetarian meals and wear a head covering while on campus and were also expected to visit the Gurdwara (Sikh temple) a few times a year. Here, I experienced a cultural and spiritual richness I had not seen before. It was in stark contrast to the secular schools where I occasionally worked as a substitute teacher. Before I could get my foot in the door teaching in Victoria, I served a short stint as an Education Assistant at a private Catholic elementary school and witnessed again a strong infusion of their faith within their daily activities, for example, saying a class prayer before lunch. It was with a kind of reverence that I acknowledged what seemed to be missing from other public schools.

To truly speak to the inspiration of my research topic, however, I must share my experience at ŁÁU, WELNEW Tribal School because it is there that I felt a real sense of ‘school spirit’. Located on the TSARTLIP Reserve, the WŚÁNEĆ School Board serves the people of the four reserves and surrounding communities, TSARTLIP, PAUQUACHIN, TSEYCUM, and TSAWOUT. The school is dual stream, where instruction of the provincial curriculum occurs in English and SENĆOTEN from kindergarten to grade five. The SENĆOTEN immersion program supports the important goal of language revitalization and signifies vital steps in the movement toward decolonization. What stood out most, almost immediately, was the welcoming spirit of the school. From the first days as a Teacher on Call, I felt an almost tangible atmosphere created by both staff and students that did not allow anyone to feel like a stranger. To me, this has made all the difference. I spent most of last year substitute teaching for both the WŚÁNEĆ and Greater Victoria School Boards and would often find myself comparing experiences at different schools. Now that I have been working solely at ŁÁU, WELNEW, I am better able to articulate the many

aspects and facets of the school that assure me this is where I belong. Every effort is made to honour the spirit of each child and it is evident in the intricate connections between students and colleagues. One of the school's biggest strengths is the quality of relationships you find there, which I attribute largely to the leadership of care and compassion. It is this honouring of spirit that I have always strived for with my students, although it is only recently that I've attributed that name to it. Like learning itself, I believe that life is about making meaningful connections, and this happens when one is in touch with spirit. Spirit referring to "the inner space [that] is that universe of being within each person... synonymous with the soul, the spirit, the self, or the being" (Ermine, 1995, p. 103). In teaching, making human connections is not only part of the job, it is essential to it. My project seeks to explore the vital component of making connections to others through acknowledging the spirit, within ourselves and in others.

Acknowledging the spirit at LÁU, WELNEW is observed even within the organization of the school day. Each morning, we pray and sing together about the mountain (the school's namesake) that saved their people from the flood many years ago. Within the immersion classes, a prayer is also said before partaking in their lunchtime meal. In his short book regarding reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective, Michell (2017) relays that "protocols, prayer, and ceremonies of thanks before a meal reinforce our relational worldview and ethic of reciprocity" (p. 13). These protocols and rituals are performed as expression and perpetuation of the culture of the school and these are often missing in secular schools. Although the reasoning behind this is understandable in a school composed of diverse religious and cultural components, the question remains of how the central core of one's being (however one chooses to refer to it) can be acknowledged in school.

Upon examination of the current trends, topics, and catch phrases prevalent in education theory and practice today, several recurring themes can be discovered and named. Efforts to provide a holistic approach to pedagogy that is personalized, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive, must consider the fundamental needs/drives that humanity shares to find common threads. Parallels can be drawn between what developmental psychologists have found as universal human patterns of attachment: achievement, autonomy, and altruism, and the four developmental needs of children: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001). It brings to bear that, as educators, we look to how these fundamental needs are answered within the context of our classrooms. On our own personal journey, it is important to reflect on why we educate. What called us to this profession and where do we find purpose? To me, teaching is lighting a fire and I want to inspire young human beings to discover themselves, be the best version of themselves that they can be and share their gifts with the world. I applied for the Curriculum Leadership in BC master's program, in part, due to the word 'leadership' in the title. Teachers are leaders within the context of their school community but there is also potential for so much more. Aoki (2005) affirms that "curriculum developers need to be sensitive to ways in which the curriculum can influence the ways people can be attuned to the world" (p. 360). As Indigenous resurgence takes hold and the movement to indigenize the curriculum grows, we can incorporate more ways of knowing to advance how all of us find our place in the world.

Troubled by questions all my life
 like a madman I have been
 knocking at the door.
 It opened!
 I had been knocking from inside.

~ Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

Considerable thought went into how to proceed with a literature review that would reflect my learning, synthesis, and thinking in an authentic way. Feeling somewhat constrained by the prescriptive methodology of current academia, this review is my best attempt at communicating the collection of ideas, interpretations, and insights gleaned, making up the spiral of my mind throughout this journey through the literature. Should it take on an iterative feel, it is to mirror and humbly honor the writers I found influential and is meant to reflect the cyclical movement or process of life — which is to some, including myself, how the spirit comes to know itself. From my place of privilege, as an educated white settler who acknowledges the many opportunities afforded me, I hope to give back and contribute to the forward movement of a curriculum, a way of knowing and being that is holistic in/as nature. My intellectual and academic development was shaped within the context of a colonial mindset yet, if this is all I’ve known, why does it feel like it has never quite fit? I have spent the better part of my life looking for its meaning, throughout many endeavors trying to find a purpose. My life’s path has been, and continues to be, an existential quest to find the answers to life’s big questions: “who am I?”; “why am I here?”. I believe these universal questions need voice because the answers to these Great Mysteries lies in the asking.

In British Columbia, the latest revision of the provincial program of studies reflects evolving values and the mandate of schooling to prepare students for an unknown future. While the need for specific skill sets may be unclear, the list of core competencies as themes

permeating through the curriculum speaks to a demand for both critical and creative thinkers, as well as an exploration into different ways of knowing and being in the world. The culmination of efforts to indigenize the curriculum demonstrates not only a response to the *Calls to Action* put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, but also acknowledgement that there are alternate understandings and teachings about the world around us that have previously been ignored, negated, or suppressed. To view indigenization of the curriculum as a process versus an end goal, educators and developers must consider education of the whole individual. As Cajete (1994) contends, “we learn through our bodies and spirits as much as through our minds” (p. 31). This consideration is evident within the ‘personal and social’ component of the three core competencies listed as integral to the education of all children. The Personal and Social core competency includes “the set of abilities that relate to students' identity in the world, both as individuals and as members of their community and society. [It] encompasses the abilities students need to thrive as individuals, to understand and care about themselves and others, and to find and achieve their purposes in the world,” (<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies>). To truly understand yourself within the context of your community and society, to have empathy and care, to thrive versus merely survive, and to explore and find your purpose in the world are deeply part of the human experience and speak to the ‘moreness’ of life, a reference to the spirit made by Huebner (1999, p. 344). It provides an opening for spirit to be acknowledged in schools. If we are looking to create culturally appropriate pedagogy, we must take the spirituality of our students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, into our circle of concern. Curwen Doige (2003) contends that a focus on students’ spirituality is “the missing ingredient that makes traditional Aboriginal education and the Western system of education compatible” (p. 144).

My literature review is the result of an inquiry into the metaphysical, the philosophical, and the spiritual within the context of pedagogical practice. A special examination of Indigenous epistemologies will be included as important work is being done to not only indigenize but decolonize our institutions and long-held views of knowledge systems and education. The rationale for my focus on spirituality in schools follows Stonechild's (2016) contention that "among the litany of ills identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is the erasure of the Aboriginal spiritual world view" (p. 15). In recognition of the fact that the spiritual element has been missing in the public education of Indigenous students, I assert that to authentically indigenize the provincial curriculum, aspects of spirituality must be recognized and infused within it. An extension of this belief is that acknowledging, honouring, and nurturing the spirit would benefit all students. We begin without a working definition of spirituality and this is intentional. For many, the spiritual is the common thread that runs through every aspect of existence (see Bell, 2011; Morcom, 2017) and it is therefore difficult to extract a singular definition that captures what it could potentially entail. My intention instead is to provide a comprehensive view of spirituality through various lenses so that it may be integrated into today's pedagogical discourse.

After exploring the literature regarding recognition of spirit, the driving question became how this is done in schools with respect to individual learners and the learning community. While the research revealed many topics related to spirituality and education, it was often intimated in the titles but not always made explicit. It became clear that, just as there are many ways to experience it, spirituality had many forms of expression and it was often alluded to without being given a name or place. My intention became bringing to light the many ways schools and curriculum can honour the spirit of teachers and students. The discussion that

follows centers on the model of a medicine wheel, symbolizing the balance and harmony of cycles and interconnection (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001). Each piece of literature explored in this review offers a picture of the spiritual and what it means within the context of teaching and learning. As a symbol that originated with Plains Nations, the cosmology of the Medicine Wheel continues to be well known in aboriginal communities in general as it facilitates understanding of many aspects of life (Huber, 1993). It is important to acknowledge the diversity of aspects that can be reflected on the Medicine Wheel as well as their placement. Based on the teachings from *The Sacred Tree*, we journey around the wheel using the four cardinal directions and the unique gifts they bring (Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1984). Utilizing the sacred circle “as a model of what human beings could become if they decided and acted to develop their full potential” (as cited in Huber, 1993, p. 358), I use this conceptualization to frame my discussion of recognizing and honouring spirit.

weweni bizindan
omaa ashi awe asemaa
 listen careful
 put the tobacco here

lay it soft upon the Earth and pray
 say great thanks to your Mother
 for everything she gives to you
 and walk this way
 in the path of the sun across the sky
 for this is the trek
 we all must make
 so that we can gather medicine
 to make this life a ceremony
anami 'aawin — a prayer
 to all that is
 and everything that will be
 upon our journey's end

a great walking
 this path whose final gift
 is vision

(Richard Wagamese, “Medicine Wheel - part II”, 2011)

The East

The place of the East —the spiritual— is considered the place of all beginnings as it is the direction from which light first comes into the world (Bopp et al., 1984). East is associated with opening and orientation and this is our point of entry. We set the climate or ‘touch the spirit’ (Huber, 1993) through an opening poem. Our ideas about teaching and learning can be expanded as we explore Indigenous epistemologies with respect to educational philosophy. Epistemology is used in plural form to acknowledge differences among tribal philosophies while finding common threads (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001). As Cajete (1994) relays the unique feature of unity in diversity throughout Indigenous spiritual traditions, he connects all tribes at the level of what he calls ‘spiritual ecology’. He describes spirituality as coming to know the living energy that moves through us, and places learning about the nature of spirit at the central core of Indigenous education. Brendtro & Brokenleg (2001) point out the lack of separation between education and spirituality in tribal cultures because of how they are “intimately interwoven into the fabric of daily living” (p. 43). A glimpse into Indigenous spirituality based on the literature sheds some light on new ways of viewing the purpose of education. Brendtro & Brokenleg (2001) elucidate that the foundation of Indigenous spirituality is the belief that “all children are sacred spiritual beings” (p. 44). In Stonechild’s *The Knowledge Seeker*, the author uses discussions with Elders to relay elements of the Great Principle. He begins by revealing that the key to understanding Aboriginal spirituality is first to acknowledge that spirit exists. According to Elder Barry Ahenakew, we are all born with a “soul flame” and as it is believed that newborns are the closest humans can be to the Creator, the Cree word for child, *awâsis*, means ‘sacred flame’ (Stonechild, 2016). Elder Musqua explains that our journey on Earth comes from the soul’s desire to experience life in a physical form and that the purpose of life is a struggle to learn. What we learn about on this earth is knowledge, how to live in the order the

Creator put ‘in the universe of time’ (Stonechild, 2016). Musqua reveals that “the spirit inside of us has become caught in the darkness of time” and our quest for knowledge is, in actuality, coming to know *Manitow* - Creator (Stonechild, 2016, p. 55). The way to do this, according to the Elder, is to reach back into your mind. Ermine (1995), speaks to this in his discussion of the voyage of discovery into the inner space. Highlighting the validity of subjective inner knowledge, he discloses “in their quest to find meaning in the outer space, Aboriginal people turned to the inner space. This inner space is that universe of being within each person that is synonymous with the soul, the spirit, the self, or the being” (p. 103). The current trend in approaches to mindfulness and meditation in schools discussed later in this review addresses growing recognition of the need for this inward journeying. Further, Little Bear (2000) adds that children are valued greatly because they are considered gifts from the Creator. It is the responsibility of adults to encourage, nurture, and guide them. Thus, the purpose of education becomes a transmission of culture to new generations (Battiste, 2000) and is meant to “maintain the relationships that hold creation together” (Little Bear, 2000, p. 81).

According to the Great Principle, learning is itself a sacred undertaking where building positive and respectful relations is emphasized (Stonechild, 2016). Traditional Indigenous education considered the wholeness of students. Similar to a medicine circle, humans are considered to have four dimensions: spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental (Anuik, Battiste, & George, 2010; Morcom, 2017; Stonechild, 2016). The spiritual dimension is that part of ourselves concerned with belonging to all that surrounds us. As Curwen Doige (2003) explains, it is “the inner resource that facilitates knowing oneself, one’s surroundings, and finding meaning for oneself in connection or relation to those surroundings” (p. 147). Feelings of belonging come from sensing and experiencing relationship with others, and spirituality is an

ongoing process that allows individuals “to move towards experiencing connection—to family, community, society and Mother Earth” (Graveline, 1998, p. 55). Several authors describe the importance of balance with respect to the four dimensions (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001; Stonechild, 2016). A deficiency in the spiritual aspect will influence all the other aspects of life and this is often where the imbalance occurs, according to the Elders. Aboriginal lifelong learning acknowledged all aspects of the learner (Anuik, Battiste, & George, 2010). This personal and holistic approach, common to Traditional learning, exemplifies an understanding of relationship and connection between all things. In stark contrast, Western education has been described as using the objective, rational, and linear approach to knowing (Graveline, 1998). Battiste (2000) maintains that the projection of Eurocentric knowledge as universal and ideal within the Canadian curriculum has marginalized Aboriginal cultures and ways of knowing and can be considered a form of cognitive imperialism. To begin to decolonize institutions such as education, a more thorough and current understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing must take place. We must re-evaluate the past by looking at who wrote our history. According to Stonechild (2016), much of the current information about Indigenous people’s history is, in fact, due to the revelations of Elders. European recorders, anthropologists, and historians studying First Peoples failed to acknowledge spirituality and its influence on daily life, which meant that the most fundamental aspect of Indigenous life has been overlooked. Stonechild reveals that, although the role of spirituality has been ignored by Western institutions, Indigenous peoples continued to practice their ceremonies and “invoke advice of the spirit world throughout the historical experience of contact” (p. 112). Morcom (2017), citing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, contends that curriculum and pedagogy continue to reflect Eurocentric educational philosophies and disregard Indigenous ones. Giving our attention to the role of spirituality in

schools leads us to an examination into the processes of both decolonizing and Indigenizing the curriculum. This requires an honest look into the past and how Western schooling has marginalized and suppressed Indigenous ways of knowing and education. Grounding the discussion in the realm of the spiritual provides a safe space for emotional expression and eases the discussion of difficult issues (Huber, 1993). The wisdom in *The Sacred Tree* reveals that a good leader learns in the East to see things as they are connected to all other things and begins to trust her vision (Bopp et al., 1984). As it rises in the East, we move forward, following the Sun to the South.

The South

The South represents the sun at its highest point. It is the place of summer but also the time to prepare for the coming fall and winter (Bopp et al., 1984). This time of preparation for the future can be paralleled with the current curriculum and its goal to prepare learners for a future that is unknown and unpredictable. The provincial curriculum has and is being redesigned to “respond to this demanding world our students are entering,”

(<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/overview>). Some key features of the redesign include a focus on more personalized learning, developing educated citizens who can thrive in a multifaceted society, and an orientation toward success for all learners. In addition, the BC Ministry of Education’s website reveals a significant feature of integrating Aboriginal perspectives into the entire learning journey of all students, rather than into specific grade levels or courses. This aligns with Battiste’s (2000) call for more than just classroom supplements or add-on courses in dealing with the most oppressive force of Indigenous culture, the educational system. She advocates for the rights of Indigenous peoples to exercise their own cultures and to have that exposure within educational institutions. She also asserts the benefit Western education

can derive from these cultures. Considering Indigenous people are the fastest growing demographic in Canada (Anuik, Battiste, & George, 2010) and that society is becoming ever more pluralistic, it follows that educational institutions evolve to become more inclusive of diverse worldviews and approaches to knowledge.

In his discussion of Aboriginal ways of knowing, Ermine (1995) demonstrates a broad distinction between Aboriginal thinking and the search for knowledge in the Western world. He discloses that, for Indigenous people, the approach to understanding the reality of existence and harmony with the environment is an inward journey, and this alternate, incorporeal knowledge form constitutes Indigenous epistemology. Blossoming from what some philosophers term ‘inwardness’, was a wholeness permeating throughout, providing the insight that “all existence was connected and that the whole enmeshed the being in its inclusiveness” (Ermine, 1995, p. 103). The presence of this immanence or mysterious force is what connects and gives meaning to existence. Ermine (1995) describes the limits of Western science seeking to understand the ‘outer space’ (or physical world) objectively. In this pursuit, the quest for answers to the grand questions of existence and place in the universe were kept separate from those who were searching. Attempting to comprehend external space and all its complexity, he asserts that this approach led to a ‘fragmentation of the universe’ and an understanding limited to the corporeal or material level (Ermine, 1995, p. 103). This type of objectivist research, according to Cajete (1994), put limitations on the multidimensional and relational reality of Indigenous people. Marian de Souza (2016) reiterates that western education systems, influenced by an objective and reductionist scientific worldview, have failed to recognize a holistic nature of learning that reflects the human experience. Traditional tribal education, according to Cajete (1994), involved more of the affective elements— “the subjective experience and observations, the communal

relationships, the artistic and mythical dimensions, the ritual and ceremony, the sacred ecology, [and] the psychological and spiritual orientations” (p. 20). Stonechild (2016) reminds us that spirituality was the foundation of all aspects of Indigenous education and suggests ways to extend incorporation into the curricula of areas such as psychology, social work, and justice. He contends that the development of this new curricula will assist in the implementation of the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and help to decolonize spirituality itself.

The South symbolizes the place of the heart or emotional dimension of one’s being as well as sensitivity to the feelings of others (Bopp et al., 1984). Huber’s “Mediation Around the Medicine Wheel” uses the direction of the south to symbolize telling the story. The ‘truth’ component within Canada’s aims of truth and reconciliation allows for space to be given for Indigenous peoples to tell their stories. Stonechild (2016) argues that “among the litany of ills identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada is the erasure of the Aboriginal spiritual worldview” (p. 15). Transforming education to become more personal and inclusive requires acknowledgement of the cultures and knowledge systems that have been marginalized by Western education systems. Battiste (1998) aptly summarizes the need for a transformed education when she relays:

Instead of an education that draws from the ecological context of the people, their social and cultural frames of reference, embodying their philosophical foundations of spiritual interconnected realities, and building on the enriched experiences and gifts of their people ... education has been framed as a secular experience with fragmented knowledge imported from other societies and cultures. (p. 21)

Shahjahan, Wagner, & Wane (2009) agree with Graveline (1998) that examination into Indigenous knowledges are an important entry point for theorizing about spirituality as well as

critical in the process of decolonization. Transformative or culturally responsive education calls for a simultaneous decolonizing and Indigenizing of the curriculum. According to Curwen Doige (2003), it is important to address the relatedness of spirituality to learning and she contends that focusing on students' spirituality is the missing link between Aboriginal education and the Western education system. Her primary interest involves empowering education for all students and Aboriginal students in particular. She advocates for three influential principles behind curriculum and pedagogy: accepting Aboriginal epistemology as a basis for learning; creating relational learning environments where children are valued; and authentic dialogue. Those concerned with culturally appropriate education will take into consideration the purpose of education within a culture. Regarding Indigenous education, the purpose is not individual achievement or status, but rather to serve the people. Success is not seen as victory over others, but as success for the group (Hampton, 1995). Graveline (1998) reveals the belief that the greatest strength of Aboriginal culture is community-mindedness. In this regard, a prosperous culture is one that follows the fundamental laws of reciprocity where individuals give back to the community. While accepting that schools prepare students for economic survival, Brendtro and Brokenleg (2001) maintain that spirituality in education "can provide an alternative to the dominant culture's stress on competition and accumulation beyond need" (p. 44). They maintain that education for economic development must be shaped by cultural values, relationships, shared benefits, and respect for the environment. Education is both a learned external orientation to family, community, places, and society as well as an internal orientation to self and spirit according to Cajete (1994). This inner exploration of self involves learning of one's special gifts and competencies and how this leads to discovering one's purpose. We now look to the West to discover what nurturing inner journeys to the self and spirit can do for our students.

The West

“For when we look at our lives in a spiritual way, we come to understand why it is that we have been sent to the world by the Creator” (Bopp et al., 1984, p. 60).

The West is the direction from which darkness comes (Bopp et al., 1984) and it is in the metaphorical shadows that we will take some time to explore. Throughout my review of the literature on spirituality, I discovered many shared concepts among aspects of Indigenous epistemology and the ideas of several Western thinkers who did not subscribe to the common views of dominant society. I refer to these unpopular notions as ‘whisperings from the West’ and have attempted to make parallels when it seems fitting. The emotional expression of the South is followed by self-reflection and introspection (Huber, 2005) as the West represents the place of the unknown, going within, as well as dreams, prayer, and meditation (Bopp et al., 1984). To help our children come to know the world outside, we can encourage the journey inward and find ways to recognize and engage the spirit. We begin with the breath, as Capra (2002) explains the languages of ancient times used the metaphor of the breath of life to describe the soul or spirit. Cajete (1994) tells of the Indigenous belief that the breath represents the most tangible expression of spirit in its manifestations of language, song, prayer, and thought. With respect to the spirit being expressed through language, positive steps are being made to preserve many of the Indigenous languages that were decimated due to being targeted by colonialism and specifically education (Graveline, 1998). Indigenous language revitalization programs throughout the province demonstrate, at last, an acknowledgement of their value by the dominant culture. As language is both an expression of spirit and perpetuation of culture, this is integral to the indigenization of education. Battiste (1998) clarifies the vital importance of preserving Aboriginal languages as she describes them as “the repository of vital instructions, lessons, and guidance given to our elders in visions, dreams, and life experiences” (p. 18). The resurgence of

these languages within schools and society promises the promotion of Indigenous ways of knowing as Little Bear (2000) contends that language embodies the way a society or culture thinks. Indigenous languages that are, for the most part, rich with verbs reveal more process-oriented thinking with a focus on describing ‘happenings’ rather than objects. According to Little Bear (2000), the languages of Indigenous people allow for a transcendence of boundaries thereby avoiding the dualistic thinking prevalent in dominant society saturated with dichotomies such as either/or, good/evil, or animate/inanimate. Little Bear (2000) maintains that everything is more or less animate and provides the line of logic that “if everything is animate, then everything has spirit and knowledge. If everything has spirit and knowledge, then all are like me. If all are like me, then all are my relations” (p. 8). Abram (2010) reveals similar ideas from Western philosophers who did not conform to predominant views. In reaction to Descartes’ separation of mind and body, Spinoza insisted that every material body contained a mental aspect and that essentially ‘all things were ensouled’ (as cited in Abram, 2010, p. 197). Capra (2002) shows his agreement when he contends that human reason does not transcend the body but, rather, is shaped by our physical nature and bodily experience. “It is in that sense,” Capra (2002) argues, “that the human mind is fundamentally embodied” (p. 61).

Related to language and integral to cultures rich in oral tradition is the act of storytelling. Graveline (1998) describes story as a living thing, a process, and a way of life. Among Indigenous cultures, stories were a method of teaching and learning through others’ experience. According to Cajete (2017), stories are sacred to Indigenous people because they instruct them on how to live a good life in right relationship to all things. Cajete (2017) insists that young people should understand that they will always be growing in relationship to their own story and maintains that “children’s psychology and social development are enhanced through the telling

and processing of stories” (p. 114). Graveline (1998) points out that in seeking knowledge through experience and stories, we use our own bodies and senses to learn. The physical dimension can be symbolised by the direction of the west as it represents the bodily aspects of knowing (Walker, 2001). Prayer is revealed as a significant aspect of the inner space and is described as “a medicine where all life begins, exists within, without and between us and our relationships” (Colorado, 1988, as cited in Ermine, 1995). A study of the literature on prayer by Francis & Fisher (2014) reported a connection between prayer during childhood and adolescence with a greater sense of purpose in life, more positive school-related attitudes, and higher levels of pro-social values. Although prayer within culturally diverse and secular schools is not plausible, activities that are similar in nature, such as meditation, have served as interventions to increase well-being among students (Duthley, Nunn, & Avella, 2017). In their research, Duthley, Nunn, and Avella (2017) found that the secular practice of meditation (tested in both clinical and educational settings) had a positive affect on young people’s behavioral, mental health, and academic outcomes. Although prayer can be considered both private and public behavior, it remains an expression of breath that reflects a connection to one’s innermost self (Ermine, 1995). The act of praying before partaking in a meal, for example, could be translated into an exercise of gratitude. An initial study in heart-centered, gratitude-meditation demonstrated that a grateful outlook significantly increased life satisfaction and optimism as well as diminished negative emotions (Duthley et al., 2017).

From the West, we can look directly across the Medicine Wheel to the East, “to the place of innocence and first beginnings and there we can see ourselves standing naked to the universe, vulnerable and small before the stars” (Bopp et al., 1984, p. 58). Here we receive the greatest lesson from the West, acceptance of who we really are, both spiritual and physical beings. Our

gaze over to the East also encompasses aspects of Eastern mysticism and philosophy that have been adopted by Western contemporary culture. As we consider the breath, we look at the role of meditation in promoting mindfulness in schools. In his book on holistic education, Miller (2007) lists using meditation in a curriculum for the inner life. Kessler (2006) maintains that students long for moments of silence and solitude. To her, mindfulness practices in the classroom can serve as a respite from the busy-ness and noise of every day life, where silence “may be a realm of reflection, of calm or of fertile chaos: an avenue of stillness and rest for some, of prayer or contemplation for others” (p. 248). A common theme exists throughout the literature on Aboriginal education that all people have a purpose for being here in this life (Hanohano, 1999; Katz, 2018; Stonechild, 2016). Anuik, Battiste, & George (2010) reveal that everyone is endowed with gifts from the Creator to fulfill that purpose. To nourish the learning spirit, the authors advise educators to recognize learners as “spirit, heart, mind, and body, a part of creation, and hav[ing] a purpose that is, most importantly driven by their spirit” (p. 65). The question now becomes what educators can do to honour the spirit in all their students. Coe (2016) insists on teachers’ recognition of the uniqueness and individual gifts of each student to fully support their learning. By making ‘a place for soul’ (Kessler, 1998), educators can create safe environments to explore the existential questions they have as well as provide experiences that allow students to give their gifts to the world through school and community service, and creative expression. Kessler (1998) claims that fostering the creative drive is the most familiar way to nourish the spirit in secular schools. “In acts of creation,” she maintains, “students often encounter a process infused with depth, meaning, and mystery” (p. 51). She finds agreement with de Souza (2016) who promotes the use of the arts because of the potential to tap into students’ imagination and transform their vision of the world and their relation to it. Giving students the

space and time for introspection develops a deep connection to the self. This self-discovery, according to Kessler (1998) helps students encounter a strength that is the basis of developing autonomy, as well as discovering purpose and unlocking creativity. Connection with self can be nourished by giving students time for solitary, including classroom exercises that encourage going within and self-expression through writing or art. Here, students have the opportunity to access the inner self while in the midst of other people. Other activities such as drama or storytelling give students the chance to express themselves orally while discovering more about themselves at the same time.

As the sun sets in the west, this direction represents darkness as well as overcoming challenges with perseverance (Bopp et al., 1984). In this respect, some attention must be given to the neglect of the spiritual dimension. With respect to the medicine wheel, when spirituality is left out of our lives and learning, an essential part of our being is ignored, and the circle is broken (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001). The mental health and well-being of children and adolescents has become a growing concern in schools (de Souza, 2016; Duthely, Nunn, & Avella, 2017; Katz, 2018; Stonechild, 2016). There are likely many contributing factors, however, de Souza (2016) considers many young people to be “spiritually impoverished and disenfranchised” (p. 127). She attributes some of this to the current educational situation that, in general, ignores the spiritual aspect of students’ lives and their learning. Palmer (2003) describes the cost of an education system “so fearful of soulful things that it fails to address the real issues of our lives, dispensing data at the expense of meaning, facts at the expense of wisdom” (p. 379). Although the issues of the day around students’ well-being may seem prevalent now, within Western cultures there have been many calls to pay attention to the much overlooked spiritual / metaphysical aspects of life. In 1961, Huebner lamented “today’s inadequacy is not a lack of

knowledge about the world, although our knowledge is far from sufficient, but a lack of responsibility for the world. It is not a deficiency of skill or skills to make a living, but a lack of feeling for the life we have made and a lack of compassion for the lives that others have made” (Huebner, 1999, p. 11). Much of the same could be said to apply to today’s society. In a world with easy access to information and technology that enables instant global communication and connection, many people complain about a lack of genuine connection in their lives, a ‘distant connectedness’ (deSouza, 2016). The Circle of Courage developed by Brendtro and Brokenleg (2001) was based on a synthesis of their research of tribal wisdom and reflects the four developmental needs of children: belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Cross-culturally, developmental psychologists have found universal patterns that parallel the four dimensions and have offered the terms attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism. The universality of these basic needs speaks to the common threads across cultures regarding what it means to be human. The “ancient and abiding quest for connectedness” (Palmer, 2003, p. 380) runs its course through them all. Human beings are sacred because they are all really an expression of the Great Spirit (Sioui, 1992, as cited in Hanohano, 1999). It is this ‘being in relation to the cosmos’ (Ermine, 1995) that leads to the realization that one is related to everything else and gives a true sense of belonging to the world. In answer to the concerns expressed by Huebner, de Souza (2016) claims that “a sense of belonging to a group provides a person with their sense of self and place which, in turn, inspires in them a sense of purpose as they see themselves as having some responsibility to and for their group” (p. 128). In the West, we discover what is most important (Huber, 1993). As it also the place of testing, we find that the closer we get toward our goal, the more difficult the journey becomes (Bopp et al., 1984). Having learned to listen to our inner voice, we look up to the North to respect the vision of the

Elders who bear the responsibility of parent, teacher, community leaders, and spiritual guides (Hanohano, 1999).

The North

The North represents winter where the white snow brings to mind the white hair of our elders (Bopp et al., 1984). It also symbolizes the intellect, the place of wisdom and farsightedness, and is the place for creating solutions and solving problems (Huber, 1993). As we reflect on the journey around the Sacred Circle, we contemplate the role that schools have played in honouring or neglecting the spirit of students and teachers and look once again to the traditional wisdom of Indigenous education. The revised curriculum indicates a growing recognition of spiritual development within the personal and social competencies and shows promise and potential with respect to answering the calls to action for reconciliation. Battiste (2011) contends that education is one of the most critical areas for reconciliation work due to the fact that modern systems of education and economics have been based on Eurocentric ideals. She maintains that curricula can either maintain domination or decolonize and therefore can present both a challenge and an opportunity. A decolonizing of the education system, then, can occur through curricula reform and teacher education (Battiste, 2011). Morcom (2017) insists that education be re-designed to incorporate Indigenous educational philosophies, highlighting the concept of holism which she defines as “one’s understanding of the self and one’s relationship to the community, other living things, the earth, and the divine” (p. 121). According to Morcom (2017), holism recognizes the four dimensions of a person, extends to include ‘connecting beyond the self’—between the individual and the family, community, nation, and the world, and emphasizes interconnectivity and relationships in cross-curricular learning (p. 126). It is argued that incorporating holism is fundamental to decolonizing education as educational opportunities

are created “that are not anti-colonial...but truly decolonized, in that they authentically reflect Indigenous ways of knowing, understanding, doing, and honouring” (Morcom, 2017, p. 129). Bell (2011) connects the premise of holism in traditional Indigenous education with J. Miller’s (2007) description of holistic education and asserts the common theme of connection and inter-relationships over sustaining binaries such as the mind / body dualism.

In addition to being holistic, Indigenous education holds the belief that learning is also personal, subjective, spiritual, and transformative (Curwen Doige, 2003; Kanu, 2011; Morcom, 2017). The movement toward both revising and indigenizing the curriculum speaks to a need to transform education. For Aoki (2005), “education must be transformed by moving toward a reclaiming of the fullness of body and soul” (p. 359). Through our efforts as educators and curriculum developers, aspects of spirituality can be instilled in schools to honour learners, make connections with the community, and transform education. According to Van Brummelen, Koole, and Franklin (2004), spirituality can be a way to contemplate the fundamental mysteries of the universe and can “prompt students to ponder the diverse ways humans have made sense of the world” (p. 238). Stonechild (2016) maintains that the connections spirituality in schools provides can help students to understand and appreciate the beliefs of others. As we look from our position in the North, we receive the gift of detachment which allows us to stand apart from strong feelings or beliefs and gain greater vision (Huber, 1993). Here, we must learn to balance intellect with wisdom (Walker, 2001). Transformative and culturally responsive education are the response to a pluralized world, and it will become increasingly important for students to learn about cultural differences and communicate effectively with diverse groups (Van Brummelen et al., 2004; Zhou & Fischer, 2013). An important step in developing this kind of cultural intelligence will be to “use cross-cultural knowledge reflectively to understand one’s own

cultural heritage and appreciate the diversity of knowledge of others” (Zhou & Fischer, 2013, p. 229). Maged, Rosales-Anderson, and Manuel (2017) claim that “transformational learning takes place when individuals connect and reclaim their sacred stories, images, symbols and ways of being from their home cultures” (p. 273). Shahjahan, Wagner, & Wane (2009) explain that in order to benefit from the richness of diverse spirituality and cultures in the world, we need to express our own spiritual worldviews, locating them within the context of teaching and learning rather than maintaining it as individualistic practice. An overview of the new curriculum speaks to a more holistic approach with its description of an educated citizen within the context of a “quality education system assists in the development of human potential and improves the well-being of each individual person in British Columbia society.”

(<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/overview>).

Authors Tan and Wong (2012) promote the idea of emphasizing spiritual ideals in schools to address the ‘big questions’ that all students, including those in public schools, have regarding living a meaningful and purposeful life. Some examples of spiritual ideals are “a sense of awe, feelings of transcendence, a searching for meaning and significance, self-awareness, self-knowledge, salvation and prayer” (p. 28). Through her exploration into the fields of psychology, science, and ancient wisdom and traditions, Sisk (2016) discovered common themes that lead to strategies for developing spiritual intelligence. She focused on the core values of community, connectedness, and oneness of all, compassion, a sense of balance, responsibility, and service. Van Brummelen, Koole, and Franklin (2004) highlight the importance of helping students see that the particular values most spiritual and religious traditions have in common contribute to the good of humankind. They contend that, for students to be fully prepared to live in Canadian society, they must comprehend how religion— one facet of spirituality— has been and still is a

crucial component to understanding different cultures. If we are educating for wholeness, citizenship, and leadership in a democratic society, Kessler (2000) asserts that spiritual development belongs in school. For Sisk (2016):

Educating for spiritual development and higher consciousness has within it the hope and goal of developing students who can use their spiritual intelligence to discover what is essential in life, particularly in their own lives, and what they can bring to nourish the world. (p. 207)

Despite being given little attention in academia compared to topics in the rational scientific field (Maged, Rosales-Anderson, & Manuel, 2017), there is an ample amount of literature regarding spirituality in education. There are several areas, however, where significant research can be done. Moore, Talwar, and Bosacki (2012) comment that a growth in research on religion and spirituality has not yet lead to a consensus on these two terms. It is suggested that like William James (prominent figure in the psychology of religion) has done, spirituality could be closely associated with socio-emotional well-being (Moore et al., 2012). Several components within the personal and social core competencies within the BC curriculum appear to approach spirituality from this angle. It was also noted that much of the literature discussed spirituality of older students, from middle school to post-secondary. Moore et al. (2012) attribute this to conceptions of children's cognitive development being limited with respect to concrete and abstract thought. The authors relayed research pointing to the possibility that young children can understand more than was once thought. Results indicated that children may be innately spiritual and further exploration was suggested (Moore et al., 2012). In their discussion of some of the limitations to the research being done, the authors claim that the study of spirituality mainly focused on religious practices, which does not account for the subtle differences between

religious and spiritual experiences. Moore et al. (2012) suggest that further research is needed to develop “measures of spirituality that capture the diversity and breadth of children’s spiritual beliefs within a multicultural context” (p. 232). According to Pandya (2017), another facet of the study of spirituality and its place in education that could use further exploration is the views of teachers. If teachers are to be instrumental in acknowledging the spirit in schools, it is worthwhile and important to understand their views. Educators who work to honour the spirit of their students must be in touch, on some level, with their own spiritual or metaphysical experience, or ‘inner lives’ (Palmer, 2003). Pandya (2017) explains how especially crucial this examination into self is for teachers of early years schooling because of the pivotal and influential role they have in shaping children’s moral and spiritual selves.

Without a contextual differentiation between what is spiritual versus religious, a tenuous line exists between the two and the term ‘spirituality’ remains an elusive yet powerful word in the discourse of many disciplines. Within the field of education, the aversion to addressing the spiritual in schools has several explanations. While Palmer (2003) attributes the missing component to the separation of church and state, de Souza (2016) maintains that, in the Western world, the close association with religious life placed spirituality in the domain of one’s personal life. Further exploration into acknowledging and honouring the spirit of students within secular schools must proceed with respect and reverence (Dei, 2001). Perhaps the emphasis on spiritual values (Tan & Wong, 2012) can speak to what is ‘universal’ in spirituality which “exists in the particulars of knowing and asserting who we are, what our cultures are, and where we come from” (Dei, 2001, p. 131). As Pandya (2017) suggests, this kind of curriculum could include the universal values of peace, unity, equity, love and forgiveness. To view education, like Huebner (1999) and many others, as a spiritual journey aligns with the idea of continual development and

self-realization. As put forward by Freire (1998), it is our incompleteness, and awareness of it, that makes education a permanent process (as cited in Kanu, 2011). Therein lies the infinite potential of the human spirit in its endless cycle of discovering itself in connection with and as part of the Great Spirit. “In this sense,” Kanu (2011) exclaims, “education is a spiritual quest for newness and moreness of self, others, and the world” (p. 207). As Elder Starblanket points out, all endings of a circle include the beginning of a new cycle of development (Stonechild, 2016).

“There is no ending to the journey of the four directions. The human capacity to develop is infinite. The medicine wheel turns forever” (Bopp et al., 1984, p. 71).

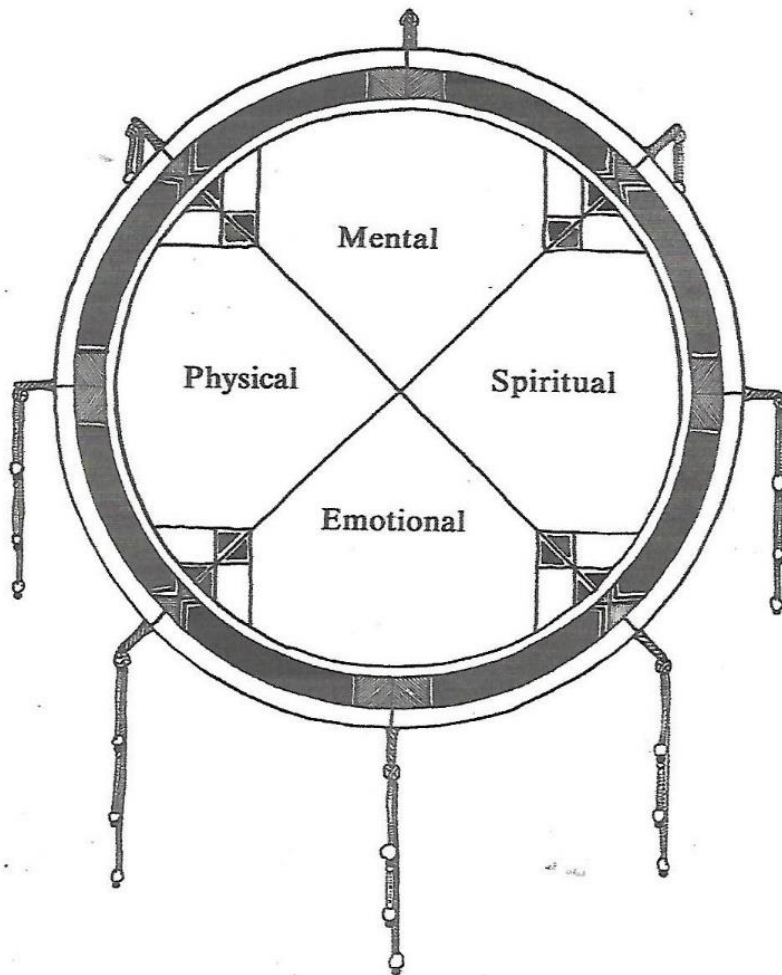
Out of the news stories surrounding the recent shootings at two mosques in New Zealand, many topics have emerged. Below the surface of anti-immigration and white nationalism talk that emerges in events like this and others (i.e., the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting in 2018), exists an underlying thread of continuing religious intolerance which should give us pause. Perhaps it is our avoidance and, at times, complete omission of the topic of religion in secular society that has left several holes in the discourse between different cultures and faiths. We are then left to our own devices to fill them. Maybe our reluctance to hold meaningful discussions about religion has meant that ignorance prevails. While my research centers around spirituality in schools, and the subject of religion is too broad and tenuous for the scope of this project, I believe it is something that should no longer be neglected in the curriculum and in schools. It was, in fact, a passage within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Calls to Action* (2015) that led me to this particular vein of study. Under the heading of 'Education for Reconciliation', it states: "We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders" (p. 7). While the benefits of comparative religious study in denominational schools seem quite clear, we could extend the idea in two ways: studies could involve the exploration of different worldviews and ways of knowing; and extend to take place in all schools, perhaps one day to be included in the curriculum. As secular schools become richer with cultural diversity, one can anticipate a growing need to learn about and experience diverse epistemologies and knowledge systems. This type of inclusion would not only be a response to calls for both decolonizing and indigenizing the curriculum but could also serve as a method to link existing education systems (Curwen Doige, 2003). Examination and dialogue

between different viewpoints, faiths, and belief systems may be one way to provide culturally responsive pedagogy in an increasingly globalised world (de Souza, 2016).

Spirituality and religion exist in similar spheres and while the intention to avoid religious dogma is understandable, much like light itself, religion can be viewed on a spectrum. Talk of spirituality in schools is not a new subject and much of the recent discussion involves bringing certain elements from the world's religions — moral guidance; common spiritual values like love and compassion; meditation and / or prayer — into the fold of secular education (see Dei, 2001; de Souza, 2016; Duthely, Nunn, & Avella, 2017; Sisk, 2015; Tan & Wong, 2012). The idea for an annotated bibliography stems from a proposition from Huebner (in Hillis, 1999). He contends that talk of the 'spirit' or the 'spiritual' in education can occur, even though the "veins of language" about the spiritual are typically within the realm of various religious traditions. Huebner insists that "they should be mined for the educator. They contain centuries of experience and experiencing of the supra-sensory, the qualitative, the transcendent—experiences that are stored in histories, stories, myths, and poems" (p. 344). The result of this 'mining' is a critical review of some of the more recent research into expressions of spirituality in schools, as well as relevant and related foundational theory, epistemologies and literature that inspire acknowledgment of the spiritual dimension of learners. The purpose of the bibliography is to provide contemporary educators with a guide to honouring the individual spirits of students in their classrooms. For me, the underlying belief in doing so is not only to move toward a more holistic and culturally responsive pedagogy, but to provide learning experiences for 'the educated citizen'. To borrow from Aoki (2005), "being an educated person is more than possessing knowledge or acquiring intellectual or practical skills, ..., it is being concerned with dwelling aright in thoughtful living with others" (p. 365).

Should the goal, as stated on BC's New Curriculum website, be to provide "a quality education system [that] assists in the development of human potential and improves the well-being of each individual person in British Columbia society" (*Curriculum Overview*, 2018), one can draw connections to the need for spirit to be acknowledged in schools. In conjunction with literacy and numeracy foundations and essential content and concepts, three core competencies, including Communication and Thinking, are at the heart of the redesign of curriculum and assessment. The collection of resources that follow focuses specifically on the Personal and Social competency and various elements from its three main components. Several parallels are drawn to what some developmental psychologists deem universal human patterns (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001). These four universal needs are portrayed in the Circle of Courage model by Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern, 2014 (see Figure 2) and provide the framework for my annotated bibliography. Descriptions of written text and audio-visual clips are presented in a manner aiming to reflect the circular, process-oriented way each fundamental need fits within a Medicine Wheel. The intent behind this is to demonstrate their innate interconnectivity and their universality, needs that a holistic education would encompass. The reader is invited to examine the two diagrams that follow and imagine an overlay of one on top of the other. My rationale for choosing different orientations in this section was to maintain the integrity of the Circle of Courage elements framing the discussion. Laid out for the interested educator is first a grounding in acknowledgement of the spiritual at the level of deep connections, a follow through towards honouring and developing each individual's particular gifts, to recognition of our interconnectivity and interdependence, and onwards toward building nurturing and reciprocal relationships that create communities of further learning and compassion.

Figure 1 The Four Dimensions of Learning



There are four dimensions of "true learning". These four aspects of every person's nature are reflected in the four cardinal points of the medicine wheel. These four aspects of our being are developed through the use of our volition. It cannot be said that a person has totally learned in a whole and balanced manner unless all four dimensions of her being have been involved in the process.

Figure 1 Reproduced from J. Bopp, M. Bopp, L. Brown, & P. Lane (1984) *The Sacred Tree*, p. 29.

The reader is asked to consider an overlapping of these four dimensions onto the four directions used in the literature review. Authors of *The Sacred Tree* and several others (Bell, 2011; Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001; Huber, 1993; Stonechild, 2016) explain that there are many ways the concept of the Medicine Wheel can be expressed displaying the four orientations, i.e., the four grandfathers or the four winds.

Figure 2 The Circle of Courage

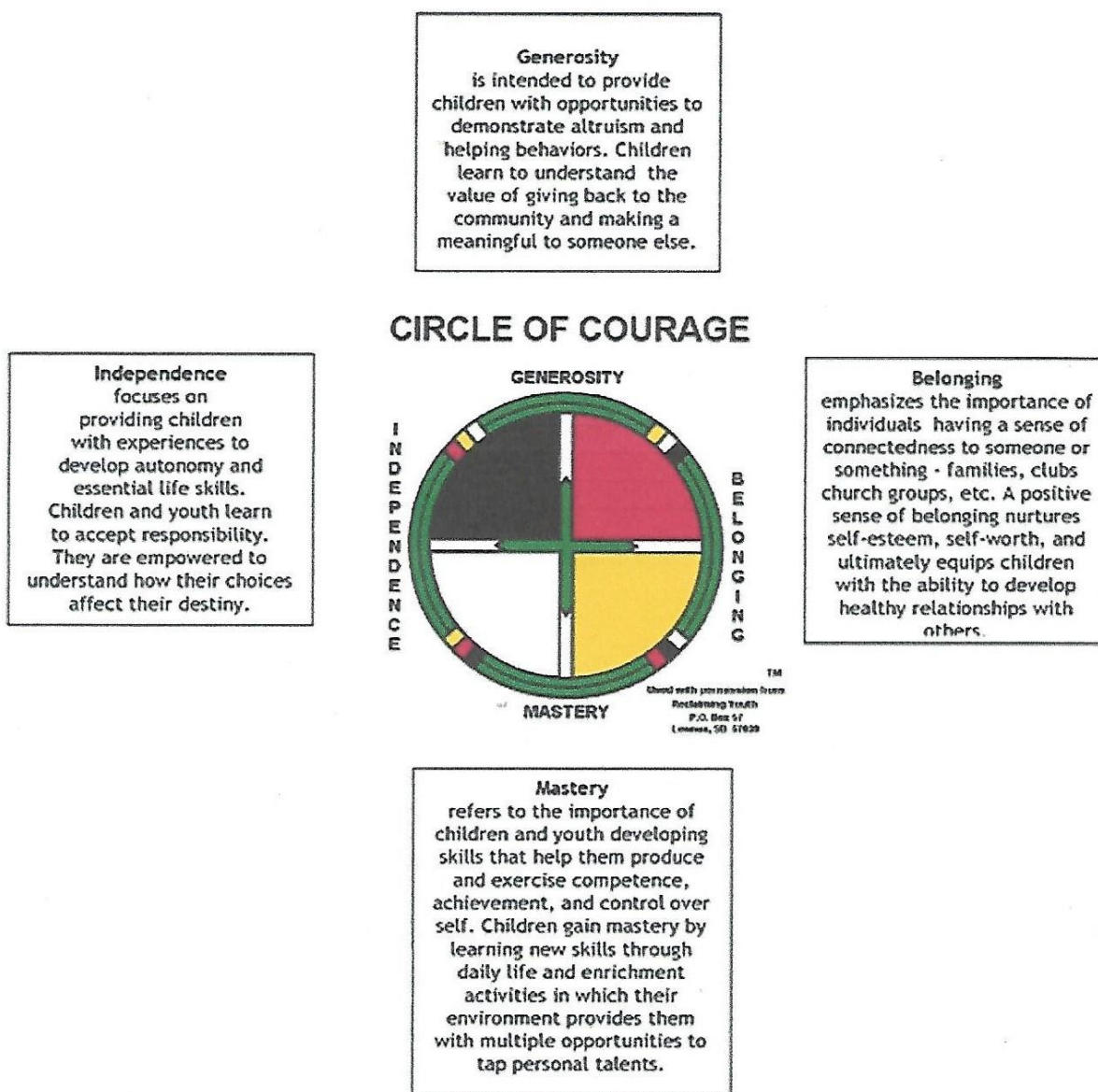


Figure 2 Reproduced from Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming youth at risk: Our hope for the future*. New Jersey: National Educational Services. Retrieved from <https://blogs.ubc.ca/afclc6/2011/04/29/reading-circle-of-courage-framework/>

BELONGING

Returning to Aoki (2005), “an educated person, first and foremost, understands that one’s way of knowing, thinking, and doing flow from who one is. Such a person knows that an authentic person is no mere individual, an island unto oneself, but is a being-in-relation-with-others, and hence is, at core, an ethical being” (p. 365). This definition speaks to the necessity of understanding oneself in relationship to everything else. The component of the Personal and Social (PS) core competency concerned with positive personal and cultural identity aims to help students understand that their relationships and cultural contexts help shape who they are. It is within the context of connection to others and place that defines us and this need for connection is also termed belonging. The sources that follow highlight this universal human drive and aim to relay how acknowledging the spirit means acknowledging the uniqueness of each individual in the context of the classroom. The redesigned curriculum’s focus on personalized learning relates well to the recognition of diversity in the classroom.

Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (2014). Environments where children thrive:

The circle of courage model. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 23(3), 10.

The authors in this article make the case for consilience, a long-held principle within the philosophy of science which combines diverse knowledge from different fields to produce strong conclusions. The focus on the impact of caring relationships is at the centre of the evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence gathered from both the natural and social sciences in the challenge to “identify powerful simple truths” (p. 11). Their motivation for this stems from the belief that powerful living and learning environments require a “unifying theme of values and beliefs to address the needs of those being served” (p. 12). The authors contend that their model

of universal needs integrates principles from Indigenous communities which rear children in cultures of respect, practice wisdom from pioneers of youth work, and strength-based developmental research. The Circle of Courage model contains the dimensions of: Belonging—building trusting connections to caring adults and peers; Mastery—exploring, learning, and developing abilities and talents; Independence—strengthening self-control and responsible decision making; and Generosity—developing empathy, prosocial values, and altruistic behavior—as the four universal developmental needs of children. They cite evidence to back up the claim that these growth needs are not only essential to well-being and are coded in the brain by DNA, but also transcend culture as similar dimensions are paralleled in Maori culture, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, and Positive Peer Cultures’ components of attachment, achievement, autonomy, and altruism. Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern remark on the observation by philosopher Mortimer Adler that “universal needs are reflected in the values of all cultures” (p. 13) and that because it is grounded in these universal needs, the Circle of Courage transcends culture, age, and diverse settings. The authors point out that fifty years of research on the psychology of attachment documents the centrality of the need to belong and is the rationale for the title of this subsection of resources.

Miller, J. (2007). Soul connections. In *The holistic curriculum* (2nd ed., pp. 178-189).

Toronto;Buffalo;London: University of Toronto Press.

In this chapter of his book on holistic curriculum, Miller stresses that through connections and relationships, students realize their true nature. In his exploration of how the soul can be nurtured in students, in schools and ourselves, he proposes a *curriculum for the inner life* and provides several ways to stimulate and nourish the ‘inner life’. Before modern society became so visually

focused, people would listen to stories being told. Storytelling, the author insists, is an art and teachers need to practice their stories using their own language and mannerisms to develop their personal style to help capture the imagination of their students. Teachers can also use imagery and visualization or meditation to help students connect with their inner worlds with what the author calls a “listening mind” (p. 179). Two breath meditations and a lovingkindness, or ‘metta’, meditation are offered in this chapter. Journal writing, which already occurs in many schools, is another way to communicate with one’s inner life and encourages self-reflection. In addition to these practices, Miller promotes the study of world religions during adolescence when the “conscious search for meaning takes hold” (p. 184). He offers an example of some topics that can be explored in a ‘Themes in World Religions’ course. Here, students can explore such themes as creation stories, conduct and morality, the true purpose in life, death and concepts of an after-life, and religious symbolism. The author adds to this approach, the study of the mystical element of each faith with respect to the notion of the soul. Fairytales, myths, stories, and other forms of children’s literature from around the world can also nourish the child’s self. These types of literature can bring us “back to experiencing our earliest and deepest feelings and truths. It is our link to the past and a path to our future. And in it we find ourselves” (Cott, 1981, as cited in Miller, 2007, p. 187). Lastly, exploring the story of the universe is mentioned as a means to discover the self and awaken us to the wonder of existence. Although based on scientific observations, the humanities such as literature, myth, poetry, music and the arts express the wonder and mystery around the story of the universe.

O'Connor, J. (2008, Spring). Acknowledge me. [Web log post]. Retrieved from

<http://www.goodlifeconnoisseur.com/>

A printout of this article was given to me by my stepdad in my first year of teaching when I was home visiting from Calgary. Without any explanation, he handed to me and it immediately spoke to me as I read it (as I'm sure it did him). This article profoundly changed my teaching practice, my presence in the classroom, as well as my general approach to others. Rereading it has reminded me of why I have kept it with me for over ten years. A copy of this article has been provided (see Appendix A) as it is no longer accessible online. O'Connor opens with the claim that what every individual truly wants is to be acknowledged. She states that our egos convince us that we need money or success to be happy, when deep down our spirits know that we are complete. Looking outside ourselves believing that we constantly need to acquire things leads to it never being enough. When we are acknowledged by others, she contends, we feel it. The first step to acknowledging another is to look them in the eye and hold that moment. This is how you let them know you are really seeing them as a whole person, not just a part of them or in a particular role. Just the action of looking my students in the eye changed how I dealt with them in class, especially at times when they were acting out in some way. By letting them know that I was seeing the person beyond the behaviour, it changed the nature of our interaction. As I remembered to do this with each of my students, our relationships became stronger and the misbehaviors decreased. By viewing others as entire beings, you recognize that the spirit or energy within them is the same energy that's inside you. "Once you have done that," the writer relays, "you have done everything. You have completed a connection within you" (p. 66). This is the connection that everyone is looking for and it only takes one person to initiate it. According to O'Connor, the second step in acknowledging one another is staying open. To allow this

connection, we need to be receptive and this requires energy that is gentle and still. When faced with problems in any kind of relationship, the writer recommends starting with acknowledgement first.

Vokey, D. (2001). Longing to connect: Spirituality in public schools. *Paideusis*, 13(2), 23-41.

Retrieved from <http://edst-educ.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2013/06/Longing-to-Connect.pdf>

Vokey opens his discussion with three overlying themes within the literature on spirituality in public education within the framework of what the many initiatives have to offer. Advocates insist that renewed life, energy, and enthusiasm can be brought back into the classroom through appeals to the mystical. Curiosity is sparked when “students are invited to step to the edge of human knowledge and peer into the mystery beyond” (p. 2). This involves encouraging the big questions and having faith in not holding the answers. Many authors insist that this is not necessary for younger children who bring with them a natural curiosity and thirst for knowledge, and instead these tendencies should be fostered. Classrooms can be energized when a higher purpose is linked to the learning along with more connections to students’ real-life experiences. The second theme presented in the article contends that spirituality in schools will help students to accept themselves and feel compassion for others by inviting students to encounter their ‘inner selves’. Through spirituality, students will discover a common humanity within their differences, where once we recognize the spirit within ourselves, we then recognize it in others. Vokey relays further that compassion is extended to all beings as appreciation of our interdependence grows. For several authors, these elements parallel closely with what is needed for education of the whole person. While holistic educators believe that schools are responsible for all dimensions of human development—physical, emotional, aesthetic, social, moral, and spiritual—as well as

intellectual, they maintain that “spirituality within public education will alleviate its chronic crises by addressing the needs students have for acceptance, community, and moral guidance that are too often neglected in schools” (p. 5). The final theme mined by the author is the promise of a transformed consciousness we need in the world today. He argues that the situation in public schools is symptomatic of a larger scale social crisis of human alienation. The call for a more holistic education that includes both personal and social developmental goals is again made. Although the paths to transform consciousness are not clear, the author sums up the one overarching theme in the literature on spirituality in schools as that of *connection*. Here, he relays that experiences of connectedness exist between the student and “a) their deepest selves; b) other human and non-human souls; c) the natural world and the cosmos beyond; and d) the larger purposes, potentials, and powers that transcend ego’s limited concerns” (p. 6). After a brief review of potential obstacles to including spiritual development programs in secular schools, the author outlines three potential projects to pave the way for spirituality to be incorporated. His first proposition includes working toward a general agreement on the basics of a new view of the world where the ideas of science and spirituality could be reconciled. A consensus on a set of elemental moral principles would also benefit increasingly pluralistic societies. This would be achieved only through on-going critical dialogue between differing points of view. Successive generations can learn how to engage in productive critical dialogue by creating conditions such as “fostering open-mindedness, supporting critical and creative thinking, and building communities of inquiry within diverse student populations” (p. 14). The author also proposes the promotion of holistic education and suggests that educators nurture their own spiritual connections as there is nothing more powerful than leading by example.

MASTERY

Mastery involves opportunities to gain knowledge, develop competence in many areas, and to discover one's particular gifts. Two of the three components of the Personal and Social Core Competency contain elements that relate to the drive for mastery. Under the Positive Personal and Cultural Identity profile, students are encouraged to acknowledge their strengths and abilities, how these make them unique, and how these strengths can help them in all aspects of their lives. The Personal Awareness and Responsibility profile highlights self-determination, self-regulation, and overall well-being where students learn to take on increasing responsibility for caring for themselves. The selections that follow highlight the imperative for the need for mastery to be met. Continuing with the idea connecting with our inner selves, ideas behind creating environments that encourage this inner dialogue are offered. The topics that arise are applicable to students and teachers alike as the concepts of honouring spirit are meant to include everyone in the school community.

Fox, J. (1995). Return to the most human: The need for poem-making in our lives. In, *Finding what you didn't lose: Expressing your truth and creativity through poem-making* (pp. 1-29). New York: NY: Penguin Putnam Inc.

Our deepest desire is to share our riches, and this desire is rooted in the dynamics of the cosmos. What began as an outward expansion of the universe in the fireball ripens into your desire to flood all things with goodness. Whenever you are filled with a desire to fling your gifts into the world, you have become this cosmic dynamic of celebration, feeling its urgency to pour forth just as the stars felt the same urgency to pour themselves out.

(Thomas Berry, as cited in Fox, 1995, p. 1)

Fox opens chapter one of his book with several quotes, the first of which speaks to the aspect of mastery in discovering and sharing our gifts. He relays that poetry uses the language of our hearts and can give expression to all that we are. It can shape the way we view the world and reach a depth that pure cognition cannot. Writing poetry, he insists, can return us to our 'most human'. It can help you find your way, through lightness and dark, and can be a place of healing by exploring your deepest feelings and drawing out your unique voice. Fox emphasizes how poetry enriches our everyday lives and provides examples of public appearances of poetry that, to him, demonstrate the occurrence of a great renaissance, including poems inscribed on bridges and 'poetry writing walks' on Alcatraz Island. He speaks of an increasing recognition of the healing power of poetry and dedicates the topic to a later chapter in his book. After sharing two stories of individuals who discovered the power of poetry, Fox describes the need for awakening our poetic voice as such: "for too long we have waited and allowed ourselves to live life without the scent of roses, without using our voices to respond to life's beauty—or to speak of our pain (p. 9). He offers three meditative practices to help get in touch with the poetic voice within. Beginning with breathing, the focus on breath brings you into the moment and in touch with feelings and sensations. Being attuned to the 'particulars of life' is what gives a poem focus. Breath also makes words come alive as our words are made of our breath. The author suggests sending your breath into your words by speaking your writing out loud and provides an exercise on conscious breathing. The second practice Fox discusses is stillness where we root ourselves in a much larger plain of being. Because we are often so caught up in the image we present to the world, he contends, we do not make time for the poet within. Amidst the swarm of activity of our daily lives, it is vital that we get in touch with the inner place that can be an instant retreat. He recommends taking a moment to really feel your breathing as a way to quiet the mind and

recover a sense of inner stillness and peace. As you do this, acknowledge the buzz of thoughts in the mind, but visualize them as ripples on the surface of a still lake. Fox also suggests making a quick connection with a tree or bush by simply standing near it to feel its stillness. Lastly, the act of listening is described as “a way to go beyond the rational, chattering, divisive mind and feel the language of connectedness among all things” (p. 13). Three different exercises for deep listening are listed, including one where you take ten minutes, wherever you are, to just listen to your surroundings. Without identifying the source, listen to the ebb and flow of the sounds as if listening to a symphony. Pay attention to only one or two sounds that stand out and take notice of where you feel these sounds in your body. Write down your impressions and look further into how these sounds connect to where you feel them. Practicing the act of deep listening will allow the poetic voice to emerge and we are able to “catch word phrases, feelings, and images—the suggestions of a poem’s initial impulse” (p. 15). The author offers two general suggestions of receptivity and permission for starting the writing process and keeping creativity flowing. To begin, you must trust that the words will come to you. Using the meditative practices can help center yourself and open up to each moment. The author suggests an entrance meditation or silent kind of prayer, a gesture to connect with your Muse. An example of an activity to practice receptivity includes keeping your pen moving, even if what you are writing sounds silly. The second suggestion involves giving yourself permission to write by addressing the incessant ‘editorial drone’ that cuts off creative impulses. Fox advises addressing these censor voices by “answering them directly will give you the permission you deserve to follow the flow of your imaginative ideas” (p. 19). The author comments on how resistance is another obstacle to poem-making. He explains that for many, the first experience of expressing their poetic voice and truth may not have been a positive one, where they felt unheard or unacknowledged. It could also

depend on how poetry was taught in school. Teachers, the author maintains, may not have treated poetry as if it had to do with real emotions and real-life experiences. Perhaps, Fox contends, students were forced to memorize the words of poems, but were “never encouraged to breathe in their inspiration” (p. 23). Without an effort to develop meaningful relationships with poetry, students will have a very shallow experience of it. The opportunity for self-expression and understanding is replaced with an impression of poetry as dull and irrelevant. What we don’t learn in school, the author asserts, is that poetry and poem-making are related to the soul. According to him, our inborn sensitivity to poetry’s relationship with spirituality is why we are attracted to the creative use of language. Our souls respond to it with a desire to grow. Poems can act as bridges to that sacred part of ourselves that ordinary verse cannot reach. In discovering our poetic voice, we discover our truth. Writing poems “giv[es] voice to those aspects of ourselves which usually remain hidden—the sensitive, beautiful, vulnerable, and courageous as well as the dark, the shadow, the rage, the anguish” (p. 25). Our connection to poetry can be very deep and personal, where we reveal hidden parts of ourselves, and in doing so, we come to understand others in a deeper way.

Many of the activities suggested in Fox’s book can be easily used in the classroom. Breathing exercises and deep listening strategies can spark creativity as much as mindfulness. A questionnaire to reconnect with students’ inner poets is offered in chapter three. The chapter that follows proposes several exercises that promote language as play. ‘Setting the Strawberry Alarm Clock’, for example, suggests choosing adjectives that sound unexpected or strange when paired with common nouns. Another activity involves ‘shopping’ through magazines, books, or newspapers for words that stand out, writing them down and creating a poem from them. Poetry could also be explored through studying popular songs or performed as spoken word. The

tremendous potential of poetry offers experiences as unique as the teachers and students themselves. Invoking our poetic voices is but one way to encourage the arts in our schools. Nurturing our students' natural creativity is an important aspect of developing mastery. Exploring such things as poetry and creative writing allow young people to tap into their inner voice and experience the freedom and power of self-expression. The resurfacing of the arts in schools can also give voice to other ways of knowing and being beyond the empirical and rational forms of knowledge that have been traditionally emphasized in education. Eisner (2008) asserts that, throughout history, art has not been recognized as a valid form of knowledge and has been merely regarded as ornamental or emotional. He argues that, in fact, the arts play a significant role in enlarging our human understanding. Through the arts, people are able to participate vicariously in a situation. To him, experiencing something in a way that allows you to walk in another's shoes is a way to know empathy. Art can provide a means through which feelings can come to be known, knowledge that cannot be expressed in ordinary discourse. It helps us connect with our inner subjective emotions, and through the process, "enables us to discover our own interior landscape" (p. 11). The arts also evoke emotions, which have to do with the ways in which we feel. For Eisner, "becoming aware of our capacity to feel is a way of discovering our humanity" (p. 11). To recognize the various forms of representation we see in the arts acknowledges that there are multiple ways of knowing. The emphasis on written text within modern schooling not only negates the value of oral tradition from various cultures, but words themselves have their limits. According to Eisner, except when used artistically, words are only close approximations to direct experience. Poetry, on the other hand, "was invented to say what words can never say" (p. 8).

One of my roles this year involves working with the grade 4/5 SENCOTEN Immersion class at my school. What began as a type of intervention to develop English literacy, morphed into a condensed English Language Arts class two times a week. During my short time teaching this class, I have witnessed the joy the students get from the arts, including performing. As an antecedent to our final unit in reader's theatre, the class will be exploring poetry. I plan to use many of the exercises Fox has described in his book. While I aspire to bring the beauty of poetry to these students, I want to empower them through creative opportunities of self-expression. The hope is to introduce it in a way that inspires them to fall in love with words and to find their truth and their voice.

Education is not the filling of a bucket but the lighting of a fire.

(W.B. Yeats, as cited by Fox, 1995, p. 23)

McGreevy, A., & Copley, S. (1998/1999, December-January). Nurturing connections in schools and classrooms. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/classroom-leadership/dec1998/Spirituality-and-Education.aspx>

Based on their belief in a powerful connection between the spiritual nourishment of teachers and students and the quality of education a school provides, the authors offer a variety of strategies for improving the quality of life in schools. In this online article, they allude to the growing possibility that nurturing spirituality may one day be a part of educational reform and cite Parker Palmer's argument that it may need to start with the "transformed heart of the teacher" (p. 1). Drawing from their own experiences and from listening to participants in their seminars where questions such as 'How do you offer your students a sense of hope, connectedness, and

community?’ are posed, McGreevy and Copley suggest several connections between education and spirituality through many practical examples. The authors open with the claim that beauty counts and recommend planting flowers, ornamental trees, or gardens to make a strong caring statement. They explain the virtues of recognizing accomplishments and responding to real life events as a way to honour milestones and achievements in the lives of both staff and students. Related to this concept is the use of traditions and rituals to give meaning to ‘beginnings and endings’, whether that be how people are welcomed each morning or in respect to bringing closure to each day. Spirit is also nurtured by sharing stories and it is proposed that we are all storytellers by nature. Students learn from both sharing their own stories and listening to those of others. Expression through the visual and performing arts relates to the idea of storytelling, and the authors insist that “students are hungry for the chance to experience the joy, intensity, and discipline of the arts both as performers and creators and as members of an attentive audience” (p. 3). Absorbing energy from the power of silence is another suggestion put forth with the disclaimer that children’s lives are often surrounded by a lot of noise. Creating times of silence or quiet allows students to be still and connect with their inner selves as well as their surroundings. Involving children in community service is way experience generosity as volunteering can light one’s passion for making a difference in the lives of others and foster connection with community. By giving them opportunities to observe the wonders of the natural world, children have to the chance to explore their world and develop mastery through the deep learning place-based education provides. McGreevy and Copley provide the example of playing and running freely in fields or woods to experience nature with children. One teacher, who encourages students to spend time outdoors reflecting in journals, calls it her “outdoor write” time.

See also Alexandros Stavrianos' article "Green Inclusion: Biophilia as a Necessity" that argues for the strong link between environmental education and pedagogy for inclusion. The human drive for belonging involves not only the need for connection with community, but also with the environment and sense of place in the world. The article relays the biophilia hypothesis (Kellert, 1993, as cited in Stavrianos, 2016), the theory that people need contact with the natural environment in much the same way that they need contact with other people for healthy development. According to the author, the values of respect and diversity as well as the philosophy of inclusion and intergenerational equity are shared by both special education and environmental education, however, there is a lack of research literature connecting them. Education in social orientation, also known as ecological training, is place-based education that emphasizes the educational 'place' as part of the wider environment in which it is situated. This approach aims at holistic learning and allows for issues of sustainability and social justice to be addressed. With respect to special education, research has shown that fostering active interest in the environment can facilitate the development of self-esteem, peer to peer as well as teacher-student relationships, in addition to a positive attitude toward school. The author uses the example of school gardens as places of learning, citing the belief of several educators (Montessori, Steiner, Dewey, to name a few) in the educational value of these gardens in offering 'learner-led learning'. Stavrianos also contends that running a school garden extends the connection beyond students and teachers to potential relationships between the school and local community. He states that a school garden "can be a complex reality, but it can also provide a framework that transforms the relationship with the child that experiences it since it provides opportunities for exploration of and connection to the natural, cultural, historical and social inheritance of the community" (Stavrianos, 2016, p. 424). To him, environmental education

promotes inclusion by allowing everyone to face issues that concern the environment that surrounds them, on both a small and large scale. Together, they can identify the causes of those issues and work toward strategies and solutions to help solve them.

Palmer, P. (1997). The heart of a teacher: Identity and integrity in teaching. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 29(6), 14-21. doi:10.1080/00091389709602343

Palmer opens with a description of how, at different times, teaching can oscillate between the ‘finest work’ he knows to the equivalent of mastering an occult art. He suggests that “the tangles of teaching” (p. 15) have three main sources, the first two he considers commonplace and manageable, the third being fundamental but often overlooked. To begin with, educators must continually hold a grasp on the subjects they teach which are as big and complicated as life itself. The students, he argues, are even larger than life and even more complex. To truly see our students, to see them whole, and respond to them with wisdom and compassion is a remarkable feat. These two considerations alone ask a lot of the educator, but it is the third component which drives the topic of his article, that we teach who we are. To him, teaching emerges from our inwardness, for better or for worse. When we teach, we project the conditions of our inner worlds onto our students, our subjects, and our moments together. He insists that “the entanglements I experience in the classroom are often no more or less than the convolutions of my inner life. Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a mirror to the soul” (p. 15). Educators who are willing to look into this mirror have the opportunity to gain self-knowledge which is as vital to our teaching practice as knowing our subjects and students. Extending further, the author contends that knowing both students and subject in deep and meaningful ways heavily depends on self-knowledge. Without knowing yourself, you cannot see your students clearly and, in turn,

cannot teach them well. It is also not possible to know your subject, he insists, at the “deepest levels of embodied personal meaning” (p. 15). For Palmer, good teaching moves beyond technique and comes from a strong sense of identity and integrity of the teacher. Years of asking students about the qualities of good teachers reveals little similarities in their techniques, but rather sharing a strong sense of personal identity. This sense of self is so infused into the teacher’s work that “they are able to weave a complex web of connections between themselves, their subjects, and their students, so that students can learn to weave a world for themselves” (p. 16). The connections made by good teachers, the author states, are not in the techniques they use but are held in their hearts. He uses heart in the ancient sense, meaning where intellect, emotion, and spirit converge. Palmer explores the capacity for connectedness manifesting itself in diverse ways through his description of two great teachers of his who were polar opposites with respect to substance and style. Both were able to be ‘weavers of connectedness’, doing so by trusting and teaching from their true selves and employing very different techniques that “allowed them to reveal rather than conceal who they were” (p. 17). The place for technique, is not to distance the self from work but to help bring forward the gifts of self on which good teaching depends. Palmer clarifies what he means in using “identity” and “integrity” to include the shadows and limits of good teachers as well, while admitting that his definitions only touch on what these two ideas encompass. Identity is the moving intersection of inner and outer forces that make you who you are, and integrity lies in relating to those forces in ways that are life-giving and bring wholeness. According to the author, we become teachers for reasons of the heart, including passion for a particular subject or a deep desire to help people learn. This is why teaching can be so heartbreaking at times. The courage to teach, therefore, “is the courage to keep one’s heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able” (p. 18). In those

times, the heart is looking for insight and understanding, and it is truth, not special techniques, that will heal and empower it. Teaching is a daily exercise in vulnerability because the things we teach are things we care about, and what we care about defines our selfhood. In efforts to reduce this vulnerability, there is a tendency to disconnect from our students, from subjects, and even ourselves. As Palmer describes, “we build a wall between inner truth and outer performance, and we play-act the teacher’s part” (p. 19). He explains how academic culture encourages this separation of personhood from practice because it distrusts personal truth. The emphasis on objective ways of knowing does not regard the self as a resource to be tapped but rather as a threat or obstacle to be overcome. The devaluing of inner reality is reflected in the attitudes of our students who do not see the true gifts of insight and understanding as the real payoff of education. By dismissing the inward world, all the big questions we have become problems to be solved objectively. The result is that both students and teachers lose heart. Recovering the heart to teach entails getting in touch with the teacher within, the person you are when all externals are stripped away. The teacher within knows what fits who we are and what doesn’t. It is the voice that determines what insults or affirms our integrity and speaks up about it. The inner teacher of both educators and students alike must be acknowledged as it is the living core of all of our lives. Although it can be referred to by many other names, the author insists that teaching that transforms people must appeal to students’ inner truths. To attend to the voice of the teacher within, he lists solitude and silence, meditative reading and walking in the woods, or keeping a journal as some ways of ‘talking to ourselves’. When we do attend to that voice, “it responds by speaking more gently and engaging us in a life-giving conversation of the soul” (p. 20). Palmer’s final recommendation with respect to the ‘inner landscape’ of teaching is to encourage conversations about it in the workplace. Although a foreign concept in academic culture, the

importance of educators talking to each other about their inner lives is stressed. As we become engaged in these conversations, we become more familiar with our inner terrain and, in turn, more “surefooted” in our teaching and living. To believe, as the author does, that “to educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world” (p. 21), means that, as teachers, we must explore this terrain ourselves, together.

Roth, L., & Thomas, T. (2013). Spirit books: Promoting conversation with picture books.

International Journal of Children's Spirituality, 18(4), 351-368.

doi:10.1080/1364436X.2013.858664

Over seventy carefully chosen picture books in addition to guidelines for reading these books to children ages three to nine are offered in this annotated bibliography. Citing findings from *The Spirit of the Child* (Hay & Nye, 2006), that children begin to suppress their spiritual experiences around age seven, the authors respond with a list of books that speak to the interplay between children’s psychological development and the emergence of literacy. Roth and Thomas believe that adults can foster authentic spirituality in children by honoring children’s experiences and teaching them respect for diverse perspectives and religious views. To create occasions for children and adults to talk about spirituality, they have compiled an extensive list of beautifully written and illustrated books to spark engaging dialogue. The authors attribute rapid globalization, leading to increased secularization, and conversely the rise of world-wide religious fundamentalism as great obstacles for children “to regard their spiritual experiences with open hearts and minds” (p. 353). Part of the difficulty, they contend, is the lack of an adequate language around spirituality, mentioning Vygotsky’s assertion that language is necessary for thought development. A child having a spiritual experience, for example, must have language to

express it in order to make sense of the experience, or ‘lay hold of it’. In this sense, the authors argue that the development of literacy is closely linked to spiritual development. Most religious language is too abstract to be meaningful for children. The authors were thereby motivated to select books that relayed day-to-day experiences familiar to most children and that provided scaffolding for talking about the spiritual. According to Roth and Thomas, “reading and conversation with children supports the acquisition of language, including a spiritual vocabulary, and it also heightens the child’s growing awareness of the world and his place in it” (p. 354). A brief description of theoretical approaches to children’s spiritual development is provided to contextualize the framework of six central themes under which the books have been organized: The Golden World; Alone Unplugged; Widening the Circle; Wisdom-seeking; Becoming Your Own Person; and Peacemaking. The authors use the language and focus on the first three of seven sequential stages in Fowler’s model of faith development but ask the reader to consider a less linear continuum. They cite Parks’ description of development as a series of concentric circles where, “spirituality grows from a Center even as the boundaries of a child’s consciousness, both inner and outer, are continually being enlarged” (p. 354), offering the imagery of nesting Matryoshka dolls. The core of trust is established in the ‘primal stage’ where immediate caregivers serve as the infant’s first experience of God or a Higher Power. A child around age two or three, starts to acquire language as a way to relate to others and enters the ‘intuitive-projective stage’, which lasts until about age six. During this stage, the child learns to make sense of her perceptions, feelings, and dreams through play and “with scaffolding, these experiences find form in symbols and stories” (p. 354). Parks refers to the settings of home, school, and the social environment as shaping the central nest. Children in the intuitive phase are open to the world and see it as full of wonder and discovery. The readily believe in talking

animals and fantasy characters, enjoying rhyme and repetition. The first of the six themes, ‘The Golden World’, was coined by the authors to reflect what Montessori sees as a unique gift of early childhood: an innate sense of awe and curiosity “in the face of Creation and the unfolding universe” (p. 355). Books that celebrate the beauty, mystery, and wonder that are an important part of childhood, portray this Golden World. Included in this category are books about worlds that exist beyond the world of the senses, books that suggest a sense of transcendence. As the authors maintain, “we believe that experiences of wonder are not taught but *caught*; they can be awakened and affirmed” (p. 356). *Grandad’s Prayers of the Earth* is a story of a boy and his Grandfather walking in the woods as the Grandfather explains how all things in nature have their own way of praying and giving beauty. Teaching the value of time spent Alone Unplugged is also ideal at the ‘intuitive stage’, where children are encouraged to play alone some of the time and entertain themselves without technology. The authors cite the importance of time spent in solitude and silence, not just for introverted individuals but for all children. They claim that this component is least affirmed by Western culture with its inundation of technological devices but have found in their experience that children are most attracted to time Alone Unplugged. *A Quiet Place* explores the many places a person can go, for example the woods, seashore, library, or even inside oneself to find quiet. Lastly, Widening the Circle fits nicely with the stage where children are discovering the world around them. Citing Hay and Nye’s term ‘relational consciousness’, which is “a heightened sense of being connected to things, other beings, oneself, and the divine” (p. 357), the authors claim that children sense the interconnectedness to all things, hence their keen interest in animals. Due in part to their dependence on parents and other adults, children do seem to experience a heightened sense of this connectedness and the image of an ever-widening circle is a helpful metaphor. The book *Our Nest* offers a rhyming description

of nests close to home and seen in the context of larger nests. “All things together are in the same nest”. Entering formal school marks the beginning of the ‘mythic-literal stage’, which lasts throughout early school years from age six to around age eleven. Gradual socialization into the worldview of the child’s particular culture, as well as a ‘venturing out’ occurs at this stage. The authors highlight the importance of continuing to read aloud to children throughout the elementary school years. As Montessori insists, it is during these years that they internalize the values and narratives of their culture. According to her, children are not simply discovering the world, they are making sense of it. Deepening from the wonder at the Golden World, the child is developing his sense of self in the context of all creation. Not only does reading aloud deepen the bond between child and adult, it continues the association of reading with pleasure. The theme of Wisdom-Seeking encompasses big questions about values, life’s purpose and meaning, finding happiness, and the consequences of actions. Wisdom-seeking may involve the exploration of other wisdom traditions including world religions and because of its gravity (that has captivated philosophers for centuries), the authors emphasize the importance of being patient “when living with questions that have no easy answers” (p. 358). The books listed under this category foster discussions with children about how others have sought and gained wisdom. *The Other Way to Listen* is a story where the narrator, with hopeful efforts, finds a way to hear the hills singing. In the mythic stage, children venturing forth must look more deeply into their lives. They become concerned with finding themselves by discovering their unique gifts and “becoming who they were born to become” (p. 358). *Becoming Your Own Person* speaks to this discovery process where the child grows in self-knowledge and learns to apply their talents and interests to making the world a better place. Books under this theme include biographies of people who had dreams and aspirations and overcame obstacles to pursue them. Dr. Seuss’ *Oh, the Places You’ll Go* is a

rhyiming and humorous look at the ups and downs a person may encounter in life. Lastly, the authors claim that Peacemaking becomes increasingly more important as children grow older. They relay Montessori's belief that individuals who learn to seek peace in childhood will work for peace in society as adults. Grace and courtesy, according to her, should be just as valued as academic subjects and learned traits such as respect and empathy should be taught in school. On the theme of Peacemaking, the selections depict many ways that children can foster peace in their home and school environments. The first centerpiece following the authors' rationale, 'The Spirit Book list', is a briefly annotated list of ten to fifteen books under each of the six themes. The second centerpiece, 'Guidelines for Reading Aloud and Talking About Books' offers recommendations for preparing to read, suggestions for reading aloud, and prompts for conversations after the read aloud. The many components of this article highlight the authors' conviction that picture books can serve as springboards for conversations between adults and children, and among children themselves. These conversations introduce questions, concepts, and values that they believe help children explore their spiritual paths.

The emphasis the authors put on formative years of spiritual development coincides with the belief in Indigenous epistemology that children are more in touch with the spiritual realm (Stonechild, 2016). Holding the belief that we are spiritual beings who are on a physical journey as humans, Stonechild reveals the words of Elder Danny Musqua. "Prior to birth the spirit knew everything about the spiritual universe from where it came...[spirit] has to go into the same state as the body that it has adopted. Its human vehicle is childlike, and the spirit also becomes childlike" (p. 51). According to this traditional wisdom, the soul's journey on Earth is to experience a physical body while learning and moving toward discovering itself as spirit. As educators, our efforts to nurture the spirits of our students can serve as avenues to the deeply

embedded understanding of interconnectedness innate in children. Presenting children with stories from picture books is just one way to ignite their naturally spiritual way of seeing the world.

In as much as educators can teach children about mindfulness, the reverse can also be said. One only need to watch a child living in the present moment, doing a simple action such as blowing bubbles and experiencing true joy, to see that we can learn a lot from them. When we consider the reciprocal and dynamic relationship between the role of learner and teacher, respecting the ‘inner teacher’ of our students can help foster the drive for autonomy.

INDEPENDENCE

To gain independence students must be given opportunities to demonstrate responsibility, mainly for themselves. This entails learning self-regulation and being trusted to make responsible decisions. The sense of autonomy grows from feelings of competency and through experiences that develop their abilities to cope with challenges. The Personal Awareness & Responsibility competency profiles highlight that self-determination of students stems from a growing awareness and confidence in oneself. Closely tied in with this, self-regulation encompasses setting goals and looking at their progress as well as understanding and regulating their emotions. As they come to understand how their actions affect themselves and others, students also learn that they are responsible for mental, physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual wellness. The growing interest in mindfulness and meditation provides opportunities for both students and teachers to go within and become more self-reflective individuals. Exercises in mindfulness such as breathing exercises is one avenue secular schools can take to foster honouring the individual spirits of students.

Harris, D. [Talks at Google]. (2014, October 21). 10% happier [Video file]. Retrieved from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt5Qv9tUObI>

In this Talks at Google video, Nightline anchor Dan Harris frankly describes his journey to meditation as reflected in his 2014 book, “10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works — A True Story”. His use of humour and genuine humility captures even the most resistant to ‘mindfulness speak’. Humbly opening with footage of his panic attack on national television, he attributes this mortifying experience as the catalyst to significantly improving his life. Harris candidly explains the events leading up to his mental breakdown, beginning with his motivation to succeed driving him to become a workaholic. His work involved extensive trips to war zones in the Middle East which led to a depression of which he was not aware. To deal with the symptoms, he began to self-medicate with illicit drugs. An enlightening visit to the doctor pointed out this may have been the trigger for his panic attack and convinced him to make some changes. It was an assignment through ABC news to cover faith and spirituality, however, that Dan believes changed the course of his life. While reading a book by Eckhart Tolle, the notion of the inner narrator resonated with him, and so was Tolle’s answer with how to deal with that narrator, take one conscious breath. Following the trail of other prominent speakers in the self-help sphere, Dan discovers Mark Epstein and begins to research Buddhism and eventually meditation. Initially repulsed by the idea with images of hippies living in yurts, “using Namaste unironically”, he uncovered a long list health benefits of meditation according to scientific research. Of particular interest to him was mindfulness meditation because of its simplicity where the focus is only on coming back to the breath. He describes remaining in the present moment as a radical act that is “breaking a lifetime’s habit of walking around...in a daydream of

projection into the future and rumination about the past”. In this way you are focusing on what is happening right now and that, is where he claims, your life is at “and yet most of us don’t live there”. He started meditating just five to ten minutes a day, stating it wasn’t easy, but he quickly began to notice benefits of improved focus and increased mindfulness. As humans, we have the capacity to step out from our thoughts and witness them and what mindfulness gives you, Dan says, is “the ability to respond wisely to things that are happening instead of reacting blindly”. After listing several areas where meditation is being incorporated, Dan predicts that meditation will be the next big public health revolution. His proposition is that if you remove a lot of the annoying, “saccharine” language used to promote meditation, it would be more accessible to smart, skeptical people who would normally avoid it. He further argues that at the center of it, meditation negates the notion that our happiness depends on external factors and instead turns it into a skill, something you can train like your muscles at the gym. That, in itself, can be liberating for everyone. Dan encourages people to give it a try, despite any preconceptions they have, even if it’s only for five minutes and closes with the tagline: “if it can work for a fidgety, skeptical newsman, it can work for you.”

This video was included to reach educators who are apprehensive around using the common vernacular associated with mindfulness and spirituality. Dan Harris’ straightforward discussion about meditation addresses the spirit in non-secular, everyday terms. Engaging older students in many of the strategies suggested throughout this bibliography may prove challenging and showcasing a more practical approach may appeal to those who remain skeptical of mindfulness practices. The overarching theme of his talk is that no matter which angle from which you approach it, meditation or mindful breathing can help develop the inner control and self-discipline needed for independence. In addition to his book, Dan Harris has a website at:

<https://www.10percenthappier.com/> offering an exclusive library of video lessons and guided meditations, as well as an app titled “Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics”. Another useful app for individuals interested in trying meditation work and wanting some guidance comes from neuroscientist, philosopher, and author Sam Harris, who wrote “Waking Up: A Guide to Spirituality Without Religion”. This application with the same title offers daily meditations usually no longer than ten minutes that take the listener through different types of practices. There are also longer meditations for occasions when one has more time as well as a growing collection of lessons related to the topic of meditation, such as “Working with Pain” and “What is Real?”. Although there is fee for this app, the website states that individuals unable to afford a subscription can send an email to receive a free account.

Kaiser Greenland, S. (2002, May 2). TEDx Talks: Teaching the ABC’s of attention, balance, and compassion. [Video file]. Retrieved from

<https://www.susankaisergreenland.com/inner-kids-index>

Susan Kaiser Greenland is an internationally recognized leader in teaching mindfulness and meditation to children, teens, parents, and professionals. She is the co-founder of the Inner Kids Foundation, a non-profit organization that taught secular mindfulness in schools and community programs for several years. Having studied meditation with teachers from the Tibetan Buddhist tradition for over twenty years, she has authored two books, *The Mindful Child* and *Mindful Games* (which offers simple games to bring mindfulness into the daily routine). Susan opens her talk with the claim that the education system is broken, with the good news that teachers can transform the system through practicing the ABC’s of Attention, Balance, and Compassion. Her discussion of strategies that educators can use combines extrapolation from neuroscientific

research on adults who practice mindfulness and tenets of classical mindfulness training.

Offering a working definition based on this training, she defines mindful awareness as meaning to remember or to ‘check in’. She suggests further to consider mindfulness as a way of looking at life, both inner and outer experience as well as both together, within the context of the three elements of the ABC’s. When we’re being mindful, we remember to check-in by asking “Where is my attention?”, on the chosen object or elsewhere. With respect to balance we look at the quality of our attention, for example, am I feeling drowsy or, conversely, alert and giving my full attention to the moment? Thirdly, we consider if there is a bias to our attention, without holding judgement of being right or wrong, but simply increasing awareness of what is going on in our minds. When talking about mindfulness with children, we can frame it as paying attention with kindness to yourself, other people and the world around you. Awareness through attention, balance, and compassion provides a way to look at the world and, the speaker offers, “as we look at the world in a particular way, we tend to be in the world in a different way”. Susan describes this alternate way of being in the world as ‘love with legs’, which stresses the importance of taking mindfulness or contemplative practice “off the cushion and into real life” — the integrative process of looking within and taking our learning from looking inside, outside.

Greenland offers seven strategies within mindfulness that parallel those of many different disciplines with respect to ways of being and ways of seeing, putting them in the context of the ABC’s. Mindfulness differs from them, the speaker says, in its history of thousands of years of training in focusing, and it is therefore held at the centre of the other strategies. The two strategies associated with Attention are focusing and choosing. Research in neuroscience has found that repeated focusing on particular objects or processes changes the neural pathways in the brain and strengthens the brain. This concept can be taught to children with metaphors of

walking on a path to the beach, using hand motions of walking fingers to facilitate deeper understanding. Focusing and choosing go hand in hand, the speaker insists, stating that we focus our attention and make choices about maintaining that focus as well as our corresponding actions. Mindfulness is being aware of where our focus is and of our ability to choose. Greenland also emphasizes that mindfulness is not about changing or hiding our emotions, but more about being able to turn inward and notice them with the intention to understand versus judge. Firstly, this requires strong attention skills, which explains the central role of focusing. The speaker shows how to point out different parts of the brain to children using fists, where teachers can demonstrate the loud talking of the emotion part of the brain that often takes over the front part, or problem-solving, part of the brain. Balance incorporates the strategies of quieting and seeing, where students learn that mindfulness helps move brain activity from the emotional part to the problem-solving part of the brain. Additionally, neuroscience points to evidence that the reverse can also occur where strengthening the front part of the brain can quiet the emotional part so it can see more clearly. The strategies of caring and connecting fall under Compassion and the speaker relays the long-understood notion that developing empathy for others helps one understand and have empathy for oneself. Research has found that this also works in reverse where introspection, leading to a better understanding of the self, strengthens the brain's ability to understand other people. In working both ways, caring and connected relationships are formed. The speaker highlights that an important facet of mindfulness is that we always start with ourselves, and that wisdom does not come from being perfect but from being present. The emphasis on perfection the speaker believes exists in education today needs to be let go. Instead, she maintains, our way of being in the world or 'presence' can be developed and practiced in schools through the acts of attention, balance, and compassion. Susan concludes with a song and

hand motions that she uses with the children she works with which goes: “Follow the light within; follow the light within; It’s your heart that’s telling you where is your freedom; follow the light within.”

Kessler, R. (2000). Silence and stillness. In *The soul of education: Helping students find connection, compassion, and character at school* (pp. 36-57). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

This chapter in Kessler’s book encourages teachers to devise a “rest note” into the symphony of the human day. She examines the ways that brief periods of silence and solitude can create stillness and spaciousness for the soul and discusses many examples of such exercises. As overstimulation of children’s nervous systems becomes the norm, these exercises answer to the “timeless longing of human beings for silence” (p. 37). Although she cautions that silence and stillness may be unnerving for children, even if they are initially agitated, most settle quickly into silence. Times of silence provide rest and renewal for the nervous system, respite from outside demands, and a chance to visit one’s own inner life. Silence and stillness can also help to develop emotional intelligence as they give an opportunity to restore equilibrium. Quiet reflection allows students to encounter their own inner turmoil and begin to sort it out. Short periods of silence are a chance to check in and allow space to sort out feelings, thoughts, and sensations that may be buried beneath the commotion of the day. In those moments, students can get some distance and perspective on how they are feeling so that they are less likely to be reactive in social situations. Additionally, Kessler maintains that periods of silent reflection gives room for the kind of inner dialogue needed for goal-setting and decision-making, as well as strengthening personal identity. As many students struggle with concentration and attention, the author discloses that simple acts such as one minute of silence, muscle relaxation or breathing

exercises can enhance the ability to focus. With respect to introducing silence into the classroom, the author assures that what was once considered “down time” is backed by research and considered to be productive with respect to consolidating learning and memory. In response to encountering resistance by students to sitting in silence, quietly doing artwork or guided muscle relaxation are nondisruptive alternatives. The author explains that teachers themselves need ample practice with silence if they are to carry it out effectively in their classrooms. Silence can offer ‘sorting’ time for teachers and help them to be fully present for their students. Just as students do, teachers can come to school with their mind preoccupied. Kessler suggests visualizing the day or class, deep breathing, and “forced” yawning. Brief periods of solitude can be used to enhance the benefits of silence and much of what is done will be age dependent. What is emphasized is that students are never forced beyond their comfort zone and must know at all times the teacher is there to guide and support. The author insists that students be shown that solitude can be a respite from stress and a way to grow their own identity. Developing the capacity to be alone is linked to self-discovery and self-realization. Nourishing growing self-awareness is not to be confused with selfishness, the author warns, rather integral to strengthening a core identity. Exercises in solitude can exist within the context of the classroom where students are engrossed in activities of reflection and expression in journals, creative writing, or art. By encouraging our students to go ‘inward and downward’, teachers need to have faith that “silence and solitude can become catalysts for deep connection and for the search for meaning and purpose, for transcendence, joy, and creativity” (p. 56).

Nhất Hạnh, T., & Weare, K. (2017). The breath. In *Happy teachers change the world: A guide for cultivating mindfulness in education* (pp. 2-19). Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

In this introductory chapter to a book of cultivating mindfulness, the authors open with a discussion of how mindful breathing helps the mind attune to the body and attention is brought to the present moment. As you focus on only on the breath, you are brought to the here and now so thoughts of the past or worries about the future can be let go. Nhat Hanh maintains that teachers should first master the practice of mindful breathing before offering it to their students. The practice of it, according to him, is an act of love, stating that if teachers have peace, relaxation, and joy, then they can become instruments of peace and joy for others. Once this type of exercise occurs in classrooms, the result is happier and more relaxed students which helps the work of teaching and learning becomes easier. Mindfulness of breathing, he says, is very practical and everyone can do it. As simple as noticing your breaths, there is no thinking involved. It is merely recognizing what is going on, your ‘in-breath’ and your ‘out-breath’. Because your mind is consciously being made aware of the bodily process of breathing, there is a mind / body connection with far-reaching effects. As Nhat Hanh suggests, “if we know how to be in touch with our body and connect with our body, we will connect with Mother Earth and the whole cosmos” (p. 4). The list of reasons why it is helpful to get in touch with our breath includes: helping us ‘return to ourselves’; increased ability to concentrate and focus as well as recognize how we are feeling; to calm the body in order to manage difficult emotions; to relax and relieve stress; and to “help us be more present and ‘there’ for others, to enable us to listen more deeply and communicate more empathically” (p. 6). These benefits apply to students and teachers alike. The authors point out the mindfulness is always being mindful of something, and the breath is easily available for our attention as it’s something we do every day, all day. The more we

practice and become in touch with our breath, the authors claim, it becomes “a thread of mindfulness” throughout our daily activities. Mindful breathing is considered a gift with the capacity to transform lives. An exercise in getting in touch with the breath is provided with instructions in this chapter, with the recommendation to read further chapters about the use of an inviting bell. Included are several variations teachers can use, to make the activity age-appropriate or simply for the sake of variety. When first introducing mindful breathing in the classroom, it is recommended to include options like leaving the eyes open for the more apprehensive students. According to the authors, when teachers practice mindful breathing themselves, not only does it help them stay centered, it can help them teach better. Several personal anecdotes by teachers are shared in their journeys of using and teaching mindful breathing, touting the benefits and giving examples of variations they’d used. One teacher explains she relates their breathing to ocean waves coming in and out. Lastly, because the breath is a “reliable anchor because it is always there”, some young people may eventually find the practice boring, the authors warn. To mix up the routine, it is suggested that teachers find lively and varied ways to teach mindful breathing. It may be a good idea to use some of the reflection questions for breath practice that are provided in this chapter. The authors suggest that the reflection takes place after the exercise and only a few questions are asked in an open, nonjudgmental, and encouraging manner. This gives the students time to reflect on what is going on for them and the teacher some valuable feedback.

As inner control and self-discipline are developed, one’s eyes are opened to the interdependence and interconnectivity of all things, which leads to the prosocial need for altruism or generosity.

GENEROSITY

Having given students opportunities to discover and actualize their own unique gifts, the next step is to guide their search in finding ways to share them with their community and the world at large. A developed sense of independence opens students' eyes to the fact that they are connected and therefore interdependent on others. Generosity involves prosocial values and altruistic behavior which are in place because caring for others is basic to human survival (Gibbs, 2014, as cited in Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 2014). The Social Responsibility competency in the revised curriculum addresses four aspects that altruism embodies: contributing to community and caring for the environment; solving problems in peaceful ways; valuing diversity; and building relationships. As noted by Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, as well as within the competency profiles, there is considerable overlap among the elements necessary for self-actualization. The model of a sacred circle or medicine wheel is suitable then, because forming relationships and acting altruistically leads back to belonging.

Brokenleg, M. (2016, January 15). First Nations principles of learning [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://nationtalk.ca/story/first-nations-principles-of-learning>

Dr. Martin Brokenleg discusses the tenets from the Circle of Courage and parallels its teachings with the First Peoples Principles of Learning. Used as the framework for *Reclaiming Youth at Risk*, a book he co-authored with Brendtro and Van Bockern, the Circle of Courage model was an attempt to show the world some of the wisdom of Aboriginal culture with respect to rearing strong children. Acknowledging the importance of educating the mind in order to succeed in Canadian society, Brokenleg explains that the ancestors specialized in educating the heart. He differentiates the two by stating that learning in the mind can take place through talking whereas

learning in the heart requires experiences. He cites over a century of research pointing to four important experiences of significance, competence, power, and virtue that lead to a strong human being. You can know that you are significant, for example, if you are told that you are important. Believing it or knowing it your heart, however, is learned from how people treat you. Brokenleg maintains that every human being needs to know these four things: “that I am significant; that I am capable, that I am powerful *on the inside*, and that I’m a genuinely good human being”. He and his coauthors took these four needs and, in combination with traditional wisdom, superimposed the ideas onto a medicine wheel. Specific terms were given to reflect what their ancestors knew, and the Circle of Courage was created with the component parts of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Belonging, he insists, is the most necessary human experience as it is deeply intrinsic. It can be thought of as a strategy or philosophy where “everything belongs somewhere”. He believes we should train ourselves to respond with belonging and include it in every policy. Despite the belief that schools are ‘belonging places’, Brokenleg argues that when young people are in crisis, the response is often the opposite, e.g. time outs, out of school suspensions. Instead, they should be surrounded with special connections. This should be the philosophy, he continues, where techniques are developed to give students more experiences of belonging. The philosophy behind the Circle of Courage is to turn young peoples’ trauma or weaknesses in a positive direction. Responding to distrust and detachment with trust and inclusion will provide experiences of belonging. The desire to succeed exists in every individual, and this speaks to the need for mastery. It is not simply getting something done, the speaker explains, mastery is discovering what you can do. Because this drive naturally occurs in students, it makes sense to provide many opportunities for this discovery. Independence is used in the sense of responsibility, specifically being responsible for

yourself. Brokenleg asserts that the task for educators and adults is to teach children that they don't need you. This is done through appropriate discipline that is used to empower young people rather than control them. "Real discipline", he tells, "gives you a person who makes a decision because it is right, not because anybody's watching". Traditional approaches to child-rearing empowered the young to become people who contribute to their communities. Lastly, the speaker contends that if we want people who are empathetic, kind, and respectful, educators need to provide opportunities for generosity. Using the custom of the Potlatch on the West Coast, where more than enough food is made and no one goes away empty-handed, he reveals that real generosity is sometimes difficult and has to cost. The Circle of Courage can be considered a resiliency code, where any strong human being will need to have these four kinds of experiences over and over again. Brokenleg concludes with the affirmation that "you will see in the heart of [a] child, everything that we can be. And we can become that, if we use these themes of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity".

The requirement to experience things over and over again in the process of self-discovery fits accordingly with the framework of the medicine wheel. As some authors have explained (Brendtro & Brokenleg, 2001; Stonechild, 2016), the use of a circle gives an impression of movement and process. Although the entries under Generosity serve as our 'last stop' on our journey around, Elder Starblanket points out that "all endings of a circle include the beginning of a new cycle of development" (Stonechild, p. 58). The intention of this annotated bibliography is to ignite that part of the teacher's soul that wants to be more and do more and, so inspired, the teacher begins to explore ways to nurture the spirits of their students as well as their own.

Miller, R. (1999). Holistic education for an emerging culture. In, S. Glazer (Ed.), *The heart of learning: Spirituality in education* (pp. 189-201). New York, NY: Penguin Group Inc.

In this chapter, Miller explores the evolution of spiritually influenced education and its role in transforming society into the emerging culture he predicts will be radically different from our current one. His discussion centers on various elements of holistic education that have influenced and have been influenced by this slowly evolving transition. Modern schooling, he states, ascribes to the dominant worldview that values capitalism, competition, and meritocracy. This system of education, with its built-in procedures of grading and standardizing, does nothing to serve the “spiritual unfolding of children or the building of community” (p. 191). The emerging culture, the author assures, arises out of a critique of the reductionism and hierarchical structures of the current age. The 1960s marked the start of a different way of thinking about who we are as human beings and, Miller comments, a growing infusion of new spiritual perspectives began to emerge in the fields of psychology and science. By the late 1970s, the notion of ‘holistic education’ began to take hold, even though the ideas expressed can be traced back hundreds of years. According to the author, progressive educators like Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf schools) and Maria Montessori as well as other pioneers set off the holistic education movement. In contrast to modern schooling, Miller explains four basic principles of holistic education. Primarily, it is based on the deep belief that people are complex existential beings made up of many different layers of meaning. Humans are biological and ecological creatures with psychological, emotional, and social dimensions who have a ‘spiritual core’. Holism, as a point of view, recognizes this complexity. In the face of the long-held reductionist view of the student and the factory models of modern age schooling, the author maintains that education must “address or at least respect the multifaceted mystery of human existence, or else it damages the delicate process

of human development” (p. 194). Holistic education not only considers stages of child development but acknowledges that development has a universal or spiritual dimension. This principle encompasses the view of the human being as “composed of many, many layers of wholeness, layers of meaning” (p. 195) and does not project spirituality as ‘otherworldly’, but rather as enfolded in these layers of meaning. Our spiritual nature is believed to be embedded within social and cultural contexts and cannot be addressed as separate. Holistic education maintains that spirituality is a way to engage students with the world in its complexity. Miller’s final principle of holistic education is it is the art of cultivating meaningful relationships, “a dialogue between teacher and student within a community of learners” (p. 196). There is no technique, he insists, as it comes from teachers being authentic, and being who they are. The author next provides an overview of practices in holistic education beginning with early childhood, such as Montessori and Reggio Emilia schools. For older children, Waldorf schools were early and important models of holistic education, where educators are highly trained to be sensitive to the ways in which the soul unfolds within each student. Dynamic and multiaged learning communities indicate progressive movement within education and the author remarks that the notion of emotional literacy has made a comeback. People involved in these movements need to be encouraged, the author contends. We can learn from these methods but ultimately, “it is up to each of us to come to our students, [and] come to our learning communities with an openhearted responsiveness...This is the heart of holistic education” (p. 201).

Moran, M. (2014). *Becoming Better Listeners*. *ASCD Express*, 9(18).

<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol9/918-moran.aspx>

This article from the ASCD's free e-newsletter discusses how technology can be used in differentiated instruction, particularly in teachers' efforts to truly listen to their students. Moran explains that differentiation is about teachers really knowing their students, not just their specific learning needs and goals, but knowing who they are as people. One very effective way to get to know them is by listening to them and she points out that technology, perhaps ironically, can assist with this teacher-student connection. The author contends that using technology can help teachers keep track of their students' development, recognize patterns in their changing interests, and "make visible that which is often hidden". There are several apps that can aid teachers in taking and keeping searchable digital notes from observations of their students. Evernote is an online application where notes can be typed or spoken into a smartphone, tablet or computer and then later synced across devices. Observations, Moran claims, can then be stored and organized in one place as digital files with ready access to the information. A visible display of class patterns can serve as indicators for where to modify instruction. By asking meaningful questions more frequently and purposefully, teachers can get to know their students on more than just a surface level. The author insists that technology can help engage in more systematic inquiry. Socrative and Google Forms are two examples of online applications that allow teachers to ask open-ended questions to which their students can answer privately. The results can be downloaded and sorted into searchable spreadsheets and can give insight to teachers on what their students know and don't know about course content or about themselves. The author's last point on listening to students is a recommendation to let students tell their stories. She relays an anecdote about StoryCorps, a non-profit agency that provides public recording booths where

anyone is free to share and record their personal stories. Technology can assist in the storytelling process with applications like Vocaroo or Photo Booth which digitize and preserve people's stories. A link to a short animation by StoryCorps titled "Listening is an Act of Love" is provided in the references and is included below. Several standout points are made in the short animation relate how listening to others fosters connection. People like to be listened to, it claims, because it tells them how much they matter. It closes with imagining "what would happen if everyone stopped and listened... We'd see we're not as different as we think. We'd see a little bit of ourselves in the stories of strangers" (21:18 mins).

StoryCorps. Listening is an act of love: A StoryCorps special. (2013, November 28). Online video clip. StoryCorps Official Site. Accessed on April 1, 2014. <http://storycorps.org/animation/listening-is-an-act-of-love/>

Souers, K. (2016). *Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Souers' book offers an informative and compassionate look into trauma-informed practices in schools. As a mental health therapist, she uses research and her own experiences to discuss strategies for creating trauma-sensitive classrooms, acknowledging the growing need to address these issues in schools. With a focus on encouraging resilience in trauma-affected students, the suggestions she provides could be applied to honouring the spirit of all students. In her discussion of what constitutes trauma and how it affects the brain, learning, and development, she maintains that the biggest factor in making critical repairs to the brain is relationships. In this vein, educators should see students as more than their story. Whether they are aware of students' particular past traumas or not, teachers need to look beyond a student's behavior to see a young

person who is struggling; they are encouraged to help the person “underneath the behaviors” (p. 30). The author explains how trauma experiences forces the brain into survival mode, or what she terms the “downstairs brain”. Much of trauma-sensitive work involves helping students to become aware of when this is happening. In times of stress, emotions are heightened, and behaviors are more reactive because the downstairs brain is engaged. In those moments, it is important for teachers to identify what might be motivating the student to react. Souers describes this as specific *triggers* and recognizing them can give valuable insight into how teachers can then be proactive in future situations. The eventual goal, the author explains, is to get students into the higher-functioning part of the brains, the prefrontal cortex or “upstairs brain”. To get out of survival mode, however, it is helpful for students to be able to identify their feelings. It is up to educators to offer a variety of appropriate, alternative means for them to regulate their emotions and manage their behaviors. In trauma-sensitive classrooms, students have a safe space to explore those strategies, practice them and find out which ones work best for them. The author emphasizes that educators’ reactions to student behaviors affect their relationships with those students. In combination with being responsible for providing stable and supportive environments, the vital importance of educators developing their own self-awareness is highlighted. The author insists that teachers make concerted efforts to stay connected to themselves, offers suggestions such as breathing exercises and strongly promotes self care. The more self-aware we are, she contends, the easier it is to manage the needs of those around us, and increased self-awareness helps teachers to stay grounded amid the chaos of a situation. Rather than personalizing it, the author reminds educators that a student’s extreme behavior is their way of managing the intensity of their situation or emotions. In providing students with tools to manage situations that cause them stress, a key component is the development of a caring and

compassionate relationship. This involves taking the time to really get to know all of the unique individuals in the classroom. Souers chapter on grace resonates deeply with the notion of altruism or generosity of spirit. She discusses moments when individuals go a step beyond typical or expected human reactions and act out of compassion. To develop this capacity, it may involve something as simple as finding one positive quality in a student who is behaving negatively and focusing on that. When we don't understand why someone is acting the way they are, remembering that we don't know their whole story may open space for showing them grace. Grace can look like giving someone a second or third chance, engaging in dialogue to determine what their needs are, or even just truly listening to them. "With practice," the author advises, "our perspective can shift from one that asks, 'What's wrong with you?' to one that asks, 'What has happened to you?'" (p. 178). The difference in these two questions demonstrates compassion.

After meeting with our principal to come up with a plan of action for one of our students, she gave my partner teacher and me a copy of this book which she was in the middle of reading. As I was struggling with my own personal health at the time, the chapter discussing self care resonated with me. Often the situations that cause the most frustration for us as educators can blossom into the most rewarding experiences if we remember to nurture ourselves first so that we can nurture others. A reminder to see beyond the behaviors and foster relationships with each student also came at a good time. While the discussion pertains to developing resilience in those affected by trauma, educators may not be aware of who those students are. The strategies provided point to a more general (find a better word) 'way of being' for the educator, a way that nurtures the spirits of all people within the walls of the school, including the educators themselves. The suggestions are designed to be widely applied in the classroom to honour and respect all students.

April of 2019 marks twenty-five years since Kurt Cobain, frontman of the 90s grunge band Nirvana, took his own life and it sparks many important and necessary discussions around suicide and mental health. As awareness grows around mental health concerns in schools, it must become a part of what education addresses. For Katz (2018), author of “Ensouling our Schools” (see Appendix B), the current state of youth is concerning. She cites recent data about growing rates of anxiety and sadness in students occurring at younger and younger ages. According to Statistics Canada, approximately 20 percent of children and adolescents in the country experience mental health issues severe enough to warrant services, while 75 percent of them receive no care. The emphasis in the revised curriculum on personal and social competencies demonstrates an effort to consider the well being of students, but this is just a start. By acknowledging and nourishing the spirit of our students, our circle of concern widens to view them as whole beings whose happiness, in a way, rests in our hands. This recognition of spirit needs to happen not only for the sake of our students, but for educators themselves. We play the role of care-givers in our chosen field, regardless of the age of our students and the potential for ‘compassion burn-out’ is high. Katz reports rates of teacher burnout that are ‘staggering’, citing that 47 percent of Canadian teachers leave the profession before retirement age. Self-care for teachers has surfaced in recent discussions (see Souers, 2016), but is perhaps not highlighted enough. If we are to provide safe learning environments that honour the spirit of the whole child, educators must remember to regard themselves as whole individuals with the very same needs as their students.

The title of this annotated bibliography is in tribute to Nirvana and borrows from the song “Smells Like Teen Spirit”, a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the mass mentality of conformity. The music video displays the band playing in a school gymnasium complete with cheerleaders in

anarchist uniforms (see Appendix C). Listening to Nirvana helped me through a lot of dark times as a young adult who struggled (and still does) with my mental health. Music, to me, has always served as an escape from living in a sometimes-unbearable world. Music has been my saviour. The key for educators is to feed their own soul so that they encourage the nourishment of the souls of their students.

Today, amazed and bewildered
I have shut the door on thought
and turned to music
There are a hundred ways to kneel and pray
at the altar of the Beloved.

~ Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī

As educators, we pour our hearts into our work so that we can guide young minds and souls along paths to discovering themselves and their place in the world. I believe most of us do this because we believe in the possibility of a better world. Through our work, we are also developing parts of ourselves as we are all on our soul's journey back to itself. I return once more to the words of Ted Aoki and his thoughts on what it is to be an educated citizen. "To be educated," he proclaims, "is to be ever open to the call of what it is to be deeply human, and heeding the call to walk with others in life's ventures" (2005, p. 365).

References

- Abram, D. (2010). Mind. In *Becoming animal: An earthly cosmology* (pp. 103-130). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Anuik, J., Battiste, M., & George, P. (2010). Learning from promising programs and applications in nourishing the learning spirit. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 33(1), 63-82.
Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/864885237?>
- Aoki, T., (2005). Inspiring the curriculum. In W. Pinar & R. Irwin (Eds.), *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki* (pp. 357-365). Mahwah, N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Battiste, M. (1998). Enabling the autumn seed: Toward a decolonized approach to Aboriginal knowledge, language, and education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 22(1), 16-27.
- Battiste, M. (2000). Maintaining Aboriginal identity, language, and culture in modern society. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 192-208). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Battiste, M. (2011). Curriculum reform through constitutional reconciliation of Indigenous knowledge. In D. Stanley & K. Young (Eds.), *Contemporary studies in Canadian curriculum: Principles, portraits, & practices* (pp. 287-312). Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.
- Bell, N. (2011). Creating shared understandings: Meeting Indigenous education needs. In D. Stanley & K. Young (Eds.), *Contemporary studies in Canadian curriculum: Principles, portraits, & practices* (pp. 375-398). Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.

- Bopp, J., Bopp, M., Brown, L., & Lane, P. (1984). *The sacred tree* (2nd ed.). Lethbridge, AB: Four Worlds Development Press.
- Brendtro, L., & Brokenleg, M. (2001). The circle of courage: Children as sacred beings. In L. Lantieri (Ed.), *Schools with Spirit: Nurturing the Inner Lives of Children and Teachers* (pp. 39-52). Boston: Beacon Press. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=3117946>
- Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (2014). Environments where children thrive: The circle of courage model. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 23(3), 10.
- Brokenleg, M. (2016, January 15). First Nations principles of learning [Video file]. Retrieved from <http://nationtalk.ca/story/first-nations-principles-of-learning>
- Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of Indigenous education*. Skyland, NC: Kivaki Press.
- Cajete, G. A. (2017). Children, myth and storytelling: An indigenous perspective. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 7(2), 113-130. doi:10.1177/2043610617703832
- Capra, F. (2002). Mind and consciousness. In *The hidden connections: Integrating the biological, cognitive, and social dimensions of life into a science of sustainability* (1st ed., pp. 33-69). New York: Doubleday.
- Coe, H. (2016). Towards a curriculum of heart: Thinking, growing, feeling, and connecting in contemporary education. *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry*, 13(2), 47-59.
- Core competencies [Web page]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/competencies>

- Curwen Doige, L. (2003). A missing link: Between traditional Aboriginal education and the western system of education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27(2), 144-160.
Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/230304290?>
- DeGaynor, E., & Day, B. (2011). Annotated bibliography of materials for spirituality in the classroom: Fostering social and emotional learning and developing moral schools. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 77(2), 21.
- Dei, G. (2002). Spiritual knowing and transformative learning. In O'Sullivan, E., Morrell, A., & O'Connor, M. A., (Eds.), *Expanding the boundaries of transformative learning: Essays on theory and praxis* (1st ed., pp. 121-133). New York, N.Y: Palgrave.
- de Souza, M. (2016). The spiritual dimension of education – addressing issues of identity and belonging. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, 7(1), 125-138.
doi:10.1515/dcse-2016-0009
- Duthely, L., Nunn, S., & Avella, J. (2017). A novel heart-centered, gratitude-meditation intervention to increase well-being among adolescents. *Education Research International* 2017, 1-12. doi:10.1155/2017/4891892
- Eisner, E. (2008). Art and knowledge. In J. G. Knowles & A. L. Cole *Handbook of the arts in qualitative research: Perspectives, methodologies, examples, and issues* (pp. 3-13). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781452226545.n1
- Fox, J. (1995). Return to the most human: The need for poem-making in our lives. In, *Finding what you didn't lose: Expressing your truth and creativity through poem-making* (pp. 1-29). New York: NY: Penguin Putnam Inc.

- Francis, L. J., & Fisher, J. W. (2014). Prayer and personal happiness: A study among secondary school students in Australia. *Journal of Religious Education*, 62(2), 79-86.
doi:10.1007/s40839-014-0010-5
- Graveline, F. (1998). *Circle works: Transforming Eurocentric consciousness*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- Hampton, E. (1995). Towards a redefinition of Indian Education. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 101-112). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Hanohano, P. (1999). The spiritual imperative of native epistemology: Restoring harmony and balance to education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 23(2), 206-219. Retrieved from, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/docview/230305330?>
- Harris, D. [Talks at Google]. (2014, October 21). 10% happier [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt5Qv9tUObI>
- Huber, M. (1993). Mediation around the medicine wheel. *Mediation Quarterly*, 10(4), 355-365.
doi:10.1002/crq.3900100405
- Huebner, D. (1999). In V. Hillis (Ed.), *The lure of the transcendent: Collected essays of Dwayne E. Huebner*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Kaiser Greenland, S. (2002, May 2). TEDx Talks: Teaching the ABC's of attention, balance, and compassion. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.susankaisergreenland.com/inner-kids-index>
- Kanu, Y. (2011). A way forward: Lessons in implementation. In Y. Kanu (Ed.), *Integrating Aboriginal perspectives into the school curriculum* (pp. 201-214). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

- Katz, J. (2018). *Ensouling our schools: A universally designed framework for mental health, well-being, and reconciliation*. Winnipeg, MB: Portage & Main Press.
- Kessler, R. (1998). Nourishing students in secular schools. *Educational Leadership*, 56(4), 49.
Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=1383468&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Kessler, R. (2000). Silence and stillness. In *The soul of education: Helping students find connection, compassion, and character at school* (pp. 36-57). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Kessler, R. (2006). Welcoming the Inner Life at School. *Educational Horizons*, 84(4), 247-250.
Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/stable/42923666>
- Little Bear, L. (2000). Jagged worldviews colliding. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 77-86). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Mafi, M. & Kolin, A. (Eds.). (2009). *Rumi's little book of love: 150 poems that speak to the heart*. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing.
- Maged, S., Rosales-Anderson, N., & Manuel, W. (2017). The spiritual footsteps of teaching and learning. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 52(2), 271-284.
doi:10.1007/s40841-017-0086-z
- McGreevy, A., & Copley, S. (1998/1999, December-January). Nurturing connections in schools and classrooms. [Web log post]. Retrieved from
<http://www.ascd.org/publications/classroom-leadership/dec1998/Spirituality-and-Education.aspx>
- Michell, H. (2017). *Reconciliation from an Indigenous perspective: Weaving the web of life in the aftermath of residential schools*. Vernon, BC: JCharlton Publishing Ltd.

- Miller, J. (2001). Learning from a spiritual perspective. In O'Sullivan, E., Morrell, A., & O'Connor, M. A., (Eds.), *Expanding the boundaries of transformative learning: Essays on theory and praxis* (1st ed., pp. 95-102). New York, N.Y: Palgrave.
- Miller, J. (2007). *The holistic curriculum* (2nd ed.). London;Toronto;Buffalo;: OISE Press.
- Miller, R. (1999). Holistic education for an emerging culture. In, S. Glazer (Ed.), *The heart of learning: Spirituality in education* (pp. 189-201). New York, NY: Penguin Group Inc.
- Moore, K., Talwar, V., & Bosacki, S. (2012). Canadian children's perceptions of spirituality: Diverse voices. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 17(3), 217-234.
Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/10.1080/1364436X.2012.742040>
- Moran, M. (2014). Becoming Better Listeners. *ASCD Express*, 9(18).
<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol9/918-moran.aspx>
- Morcom, L. (2017). Indigenous holistic education in philosophy and practice, with wampum as a case study. *Foro De Educación*, 15(23), 121-138. doi:10.14516/fde.572
- Nhất Hạnh, T., & Weare, K. (2017). The breath. In *Happy teachers change the world: A guide for cultivating mindfulness in education* (pp. 2-19). Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.
- O'Connor, J. (2008, Spring). Acknowledge me. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://www.goodlifeconnoisseur.com/>
- Palmer, P. (1997). The heart of a teacher: Identity and integrity in teaching. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 29(6), 14-21. doi:10.1080/00091389709602343
- Palmer, P. (2003). Teaching with heart and soul: Reflections on spirituality in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 54(5), 376-385.
- Pandya, S. (2017). Spirituality and values education in elementary school: Understanding views of teachers. *Children & Schools*, 39(1), 33-42. doi:10.1093/cs/cdw042

- Roth, L., & Thomas, T. (2013). Spirit books: Promoting conversation with picture books. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 18(4), 351-368.
doi:10.1080/1364436X.2013.858664
- Shahjahan, R., Wagner, A., & Wane, N. (2009). Rekindling the sacred: Toward a decolonizing pedagogy in higher education. *Journal of Thought*, 44 (1-2), 59-75.
- Sisk, D. (2016). Spiritual intelligence: Developing higher consciousness revisited. *Gifted Education International*, 32(3), 194-208. doi:10.1177/0261429415602567
- Souers, K. (2016). *Fostering Resilient Learners: Strategies for creating a trauma-sensitive classroom*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Stavrianos, A. (2016). Green inclusion: Biophilia as a necessity. *British Journal of Special Education*, 43(4), 416-429. doi:10.1111/1467-8578.12155
- Stonechild, B. (2016). *The knowledge seeker: Embracing indigenous spirituality*. Regina, SK: University of Regina Press.
- Tan, C., & Wong, Y. (2012). Promoting spiritual ideals through design thinking in public schools. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 17(1), 25-37.
doi:10.1080/1364436X.2011.651714
- Truth and Reconciliation Canada, (2015). *Calls to action* [PDF]. Winnipeg, MN: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Retrieved from
http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
- Van Brummelen, H., Koole, R., & Franklin, K. (2004). Transcending the commonplace: Spirituality in the curriculum. *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET) / Revue De La Pensée Éducative*, 38(3), 237-254.

Vokey, D. (2001). Longing to connect: Spirituality in public schools. *Paideusis*, 13(2), 23-41.

Retrieved from <http://edst-educ.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2013/06/Longing-to-Connect.pdf>

Wagamese, R. (2011). *Runaway dreams*. Vancouver, BC: Ronsdale Press.

Walker, P. (2001). Journeys around the medicine wheel: A story of Indigenous research in a Western university. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education* 29(2), 18-21.

Zhou, J., & Fischer, K. (2013). Culturally appropriate education: Insights from educational neuroscience. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 7(4), 225-231. doi:10.1111/mbe.12030

Appendix A

Connoisseur's choice 5
CULTURE

Picture this: we are all walking around with invisible signs on our backs that say "acknowledge me." It's the truth. It's all we really want, although of course, we think we want other things.

When we think we want love, money, success, health, family, friends, etc., what we really want is to be acknowledged, and we believe those things will help us feel acknowledged. Those things are our ego boosters, our simple human ways of attempting to feel good. We hold a belief that if we just had one more thing, then we would finally and completely be happy. But really, all we want is to be acknowledged. Let me explain further.

We are complete, just the way we are. (I know you've heard this over and over, but bear with me.) Our spirit knows this even if our human side is not yet willing to believe and embrace this. It says, "If I am complete, then why don't I feel complete? Let me feel whole." It assumes that to feel complete, we have to have things, and want for nothing. So it imagines that if it really had those things — the great partner, the new car, the like-minded friends, and the discretionary income — then it would feel complete. So it longs for them. It wants something it believes it does not have. It longs for some future time when it will have those things and then begin to finally feel content. Okay, what happens when it gets some of those things on its list, or even when it gets all of those things? Then it wants more. It has new items to add to its list of 'if only I had...' There's never enough.

This is important. The cycle will never end, because it's looking for something through something else. It believes those things will make it happy. It does not yet understand what it is really looking for. So let's simplify it.

Back to the concept of acknowledgement. When we are acknowledged, we feel it. Whether it's by our first-grade teacher, our next-door neighbour, our mother, or the clerk at the grocery store — we feel it. How do we do that? The key is two-fold: first, acknowledge them.



Acknowledge Me

By Jonni O'Connor

That's the most important part. Let it begin with you. Notice the invisible sign the grocery clerk is wearing. Look them in the eye. Hold that moment. Let them know you really see them, not just part of them, not just their role as a clerk, a woman, a brunette, or some other part of them. Let them know you really honour their soul, their entire self, their softest, strongest, most vulnerable whole. No matter what their exterior, their manner, their personality, acknowledge the sweet loving energy within them.

because it's exactly the same energy that's within you.

Once you have done that, you have done everything. You have completed a connection within you. Like an electrical outlet — you have plugged a cord into the socket and allowed energy to surge. That's the high, that's the love, that's the hit you get. That's what you and everyone else is looking for. And you got it because you acknowledged someone — anyone — and the buzz feels so great you can't wait to do it again.

The second part of the key is to stay open. Whether you are acknowledging them or they are acknowledging you, the benefits are the same — win/win — but you need to stay receptive to allow this connection. If someone is being still, if their energy is in a gentle place it is much easier to make this connection. Again, think of the electrical outlet. If the socket is moving all over, there is difficulty in syncing up a connection. But if the outlet is still, and the cord is still, they can find each other.

Most people complain that their partner doesn't really acknowledge them, that their children take them for granted, that they're lonely and need something. Is it retail therapy? Is it a new relationship? Is it a vacation? Start with acknowledgement instead. Acknowledge the spirit in your partner, your children and your co-workers. It doesn't take words. It actually works better without them. It certainly doesn't take money or gifts. And it will give you and them a true feeling of lasting deep fulfillment. Soul food. ☺

Appendix B

The book *Ensouling Our Schools* (2018) by Jennifer Katz came into my possession after all the entries for this annotated bibliography had been completed. It offers practical strategies, including lesson plans, that speak to contemporary issues of the day. It uses the framework of Universal Design to discuss how the infusion of spirituality in schools can be an authentic response to concerns of mental health, well-being, and reconciliation.

Viktor Frankl's (1959) *Man's Search for Meaning* is another title worthy of honourable mention as it has been an inspiration throughout my years of teaching and has taught me that I, alone, am responsible for finding meaning and purpose in my life.

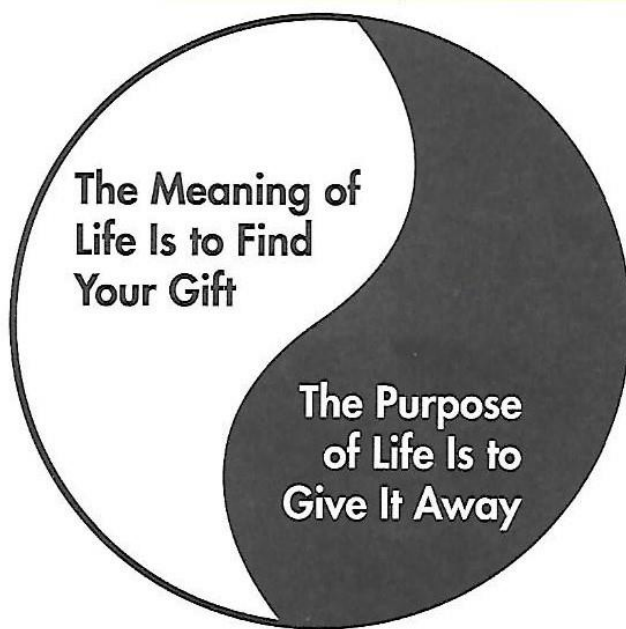


Figure I.3 Balancing Meaning and Purpose

Reproduced from J. Katz (2018) *Ensouling Our Schools*, p. 9

Appendix C

On September 29, 1991, Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" music video premiered on MTV.

