

ACPE THEORY PAPER

The Art of Supervision: Canvas, Song, and Dance

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Art invites us into a process of relating, interpreting, and experiencing that evolves from moment to moment—much like the *dialogical* art of supervision. While there is a flow, spontaneity, and movement in the experience of art, achieving excellence requires discipline and commitment. As artist, I must be grounded in technical skills, yet informed by vision. Art's capacity to evoke multiple emotions, ideas, and experiences simultaneously allows for the expression and integration of *paradox and dichotomy*. To engage the expansive nuances in paradox and dichotomy is to appreciate the fullness of human experience. Art has a special way of articulating and responding to all the complexities of being a human. For this reason, I introduce each section of this theory paper with an art form; the *canvas* of theology, the *music* (or song) of personality, and the *dance* of education.

One of the central tenets of Jewish aspiration is *tikkun olam* or “repairing the world.” To me, the heart of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is the

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notion of making the world a better place. In small steps taken—within the peer group, in self-reflection, in mentor and supervisory relationships, in pastoral encounters—tolerance, compassion, and understanding are increased. CPE provides potent opportunities for enhancing healing; for increasing love and peace in the world. In my work as a rabbi and hospice chaplain, I have had opportunities to enhance my understanding of healing and wholeness, relationship, holiness, *middot* (virtues), ethics, the teachings of world religions, study, creativity, artistry, and more! CPE supervision touches on and reinforces my idealism and spiritual values as well as the idealism and spiritual values of those we supervise.

THEOLOGY

The Canvas of Human Experience

I always have been intrigued with Jackson Pollack's art: splatters of paint—random and intentional at the same time, on the same canvas. My fascination does not arise so much from the aesthetic appeal of his creations, but from the way in which his canvases boldly assert chaos and order simultaneously. At times, I experience the harmonious tension as beautiful; other times as unsettling.

Now, consider another kind of canvas. I met Shaun, a Roman Catholic seminarian in his 20's, originally from Ireland, when he participated in a summer unit of CPE. One of Shaun's goals was to identify and express his feelings better. In discussing a verbatim he presented, I encouraged Shaun to tease out various emotions underlying his interaction with a patient. Together we named them: calm, generous, comfortable, curious, affectionate, self-conscious, happy, and concerned—a veritable canvas of emotion. The reason I carried out this intervention was to lift up the possibility that upon one "canvas"—that is, within one person, somehow "self-conscious and comfortable," and "happy and concerned" can exist in overlapping, harmonious tension.

Whether the "canvas" conveys Shaun's emotions or Pollack's release of color, I highlight these examples to showcase spiritual authenticity. A coherent spiritual identity calls for integration of all we are. My theology calls upon me to be present in the face of the paradoxes and dichotomies which characterize human existence. At times I may embrace the paradoxes, other times painfully endure them. My spiritual aspiration is the integration of life's spectrum of experiences, along with the courage and willingness to stand humbly in the Mystery of the limits of human knowing.

The Supportive Easel

I have labeled the theological resources supporting my ideas: the “easel.” I draw primarily on Torah, in its broadest sense. Torah can refer either solely to the “Five Books of Moses” or to all of Jewish writings—from biblical texts and rabbinic insights through to the teachings of contemporary sages. Especially within the framework of contemporary resources, I draw not only from those who write, but also from those who express themselves through other mediums, such as music, art, and dance. Today, as it has been for centuries, Judaism embraces a lively interchange with the teachings of other communities, engaging the wisdom in other religious traditions. I consider study a sacred experience and obligation. Accordingly, I appreciate a comment suggesting that humans speak to God through prayer, and that God speaks to us through study.¹

A Jewish way of doing theology synthesizes commentary and ideas from the totality of Jewish sacred literature. As one scholar summarizes: “Systematic, even dogmatic practice, not systematic, dogmatic theology, lies at the heart of Judaism. Rather than the philosophical rigor of Anselm and Aquinas, the theology of the Jews is more the product of liturgy, commentary, sacred story, poetry, and aphorism.”² Critical purchase is embedded in Jewish learning and exegesis. That is, every encounter with a text challenges the learner to choose or not choose to highlight a certain interpretation, decide how to apply the interpretation, and how one commentary/idea may be linked to another.

Image and Soul-Breath: A Divine Paradox

I believe a fundamental dichotomy is at play in our human experience as creatures of God. That is, we are created in God’s image, and we are infused with Divine breath (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:7). Image and soul-breath, we are *tzelem Elohim* and *neshamah*. Maimonides, the medieval Jewish philosopher, associates *tzelem* with cognitive qualities; that is, “intellectual apprehension, not the shape and configuration” of physical form.³ *Neshamah*, our soul-breath relates to somatic experience, our affective qualities, and our aptitude for connectedness. Our spiritual challenge is to harmonize and integrate our God-given “image and breath” qualities within the canvas of our beings.

Judaism teaches that as “images of God,” humans are called by God to: “Walk in My ways...” (Genesis 17:1). The Talmud offers some specifics, such as clothing the naked, visiting the sick, comforting mourners, and burying the dead. Another Rabbinic source guides human beings to emulate God’s

mercy, graciousness, and patience. Other texts encourage emulating spiritual traits of holiness and purity. While qualitative nuances overlay these instructions, their essential thrust is on what to do. Such commitments and obligations arise from cognitive choices we make. As images of God, we claim our uniquely human capacity for framing morality and meaning.

I am indebted to the 'Torah' of Martin Buber regarding *neshamah*, soul-breath. Our breath is dynamic, life-affirming as it moves inside and outside of us, connecting our internal and external experiences. Buber's theology of 'I-Thou' relationships is all about connecting. That is, Buber illuminates ways of connecting—to nature, other human beings, and God (the Eternal Thou). We express our way of being, the quality and feel of who we are through relationships. While I link *tzelem* with *what* we do—the thinking that motivates our actions and decisions, I connect *neshamah* with *how* we are, how we relate, and the quality of our interactions. As breath suffuses us, so "the primary word 'I-Thou' can only be spoken with the whole being."⁴ When we invest the whole of who we are, human relationships offer an opportunity for transcendence:

In every sphere in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us we look out toward the fringe of the eternal *Thou*; in each we are aware of a breath from the eternal *Thou*; in each *Thou* we address the eternal *Thou*.⁵

'I-Thou' relationships frame a way of being wholly present and attuned to the other with an open heart, mind, and spirit. While I value the Buber's theology, I believe that the mystical notion of *d'vaykut* has a place on my canvas, as well. "*D'vaykut* is the most intense love, such that you are not separated from God for even a moment."⁶ Thus, my theological canvas must accommodate both spiritual relationship ('I-Thou') and mystical union ("*d'vaykut*"). While Buber stresses relationship, my spiritual yearning leads me both to want to *relate to* and to *be at one with* God. Accordingly, our most authentic glimpses of Truth integrate paradox. In being present to truths, we draw closer to Truth, in all its complex splashes and splatters of color, shape, and pattern. Willingness to live with the tensions, to embrace, and at times endure the paradoxes allows for the experience of God as *Oseh Shalom* ("Maker of Peace").

Thus far, I have named several spiritual paradoxes: order and chaos, image and breath, relationship and mystical union. Other paradoxes may challenge us at various times in our lives. For example, our circumstances may call us to integrate and make peace with such dichotomies as: God is Everything and God is One, brokenness and wholeness, exile and return, the

holy and the mundane, justice and mercy, transcendence and immanence, freedom and discipline, free will and ordained destiny, infinity and creation, light and shadow, suffering and hope. In the next section, I examine a specific challenge involving brokenness and wholeness, and suffering and hope.

Theological Paradox in Supervision

Ken and Lois, both seminarians, were enrolled in their required one unit of CPE. From the beginning, Ken made clear his goal of maintaining a healthy sense of his own brokenness as a way of developing more empathy. He insisted that not all instances of brokenness can be repaired. Rather, brokenness can still exist within us even though we may function efficiently enough day-to-day. Ken's assertion that paradoxically, to be whole we must honor our brokenness did not resonate well with Lois. Like Ken, Lois had been through especially dark times in recent years. However, while Ken sought to integrate brokenness within his wholeness, Lois shunned her dark and despairing feelings.

In the first weeks of the unit in CPE, she adamantly expressed her determination to be optimistic and hopeful. Such qualities didn't *erase* her pain, however. Lois's pain emerged in ways which confused and complicated her CPE relationships. As supervisor, I gently confronted Lois with her denial and encouraged her to surrender to the more complex, but authentic process of acknowledging, and even embracing her suffering. My guidance for Lois included helping her consider that the canvas of her being was capable of integrating both her hope and her suffering. In being true to herself, Lois could and would honor God's Truth. In fact, this authenticity would enhance her formation and competence as a compassionate minister.

More on Suffering

The example above touches upon the complexities of suffering and the value of providing support to students as they integrate their darker sides. The challenge Ken and Lois faced is consistent with the Israelites' experience in the desert thousands of years ago. In the biblical narrative, Moses shatters the tablets of God's Testimony when he discovers his community worshiping a golden calf (Exodus 32:19). Tradition maintains these broken pieces, remnants of a shattered trust and despair, traveled in the Ark of the Covenant, along with the second whole set of tablets. In order for the Israelites to move forward, they had to accept that brokenness would always be a part of their story. In my supervisory role, I support students as they learn to gather their "broken pieces" and bring them forward with any new covenants they may choose to compose for themselves. I support them through affirmation, gentle confrontation, and

compassionate presence. Doing so underscores objectives related to students' pastoral formation: Who were they; who are they now; who will they become?

Another insight relevant to suffering is an interpretation of the biblical Jacob's experience. Jacob wrestles with a mysterious figure in the night. Similarly, those who suffer often struggle with a dark and threatening force. Just as Jacob does not let the figure go until he wrests a blessing for himself, "sufferers have the opportunity to wrest from their situation a blessing, to find redemptive meaning and value in the experience. [Though] wounded in a body that does not fully heal, his inner transformation has been so profound that it engenders a new identity."⁷ I incorporate these ideas in my supervision in recognition of the need to support students as they struggle to wrest blessings from their past while honoring wounds their suffering may have left. To make meaningful strides in personal growth, many CPE students will face the challenge of integrating blessing and suffering.

Human beings still have choices, even within the confines of difficult circumstances. Deuteronomy urges its listeners to choose life and blessing over death and curse. We do have choices in our expressions of love, the values we adhere to, and how we come to know God. Similar themes of empowering ourselves in the face of suffering echo through the ages—from ancient Scriptures and liturgy to Viktor Frankl's logotherapy or the popular "Serenity Prayer."⁸ As pastoral educator, I work with students as they discern choices *they* have made and encourage them to live courageously amidst the paradoxical tension of Mystery and meaning.

While certain interpersonal and spiritual ideals may be experienced in I-Thou encounters, more mundane and conditional ways of relating in day-to-day life are inevitably what Buber calls I-It interactions. Relating on an I-It level is still a necessary part of living. Nevertheless, Buber cautions that objectifying people can disintegrate to such a degree that they are no longer seen as persons. He correlates our vulnerability to the harsher, dark sides of life with human unwillingness to relate to each other personally. This theological idea supports the spiritual care ideal of making oneself personally available.

In reflecting on evil, Buber uses the image that God sometimes hides God's face; or that at times of radical evil, God is eclipsed. These theological ideas provide insights on humility and limits. Many truths are not accessible to us, but we continue on, living our lives, connecting with each other as best we can. Such theological humility is significant in the growth of CPE students, and is integral in caring gracefully for patients and families. I elab-

orate on themes of being in relationship with self, others, and the Transcendent in my personality theory.

The Interplay between Cultural Context and Theological Formation

Torah presents two versions of the Ten Commandments. The first instructs, “Remember the Sabbath day...; whereas, the second states, “Observe the Sabbath day...” Jewish tradition reconciles the different words, purporting that they were expressed in a single utterance (*dibur echad*). In witnessing Revelation, some listeners *heard* “Remember;” others *heard* “Observe.” Thus, when we listen to each other’s response to the question, “What did you (do you) hear?” we gain a fuller sense of what was spoken. That is, when various voices reflect on truths, we are better able to discern a more expansive understanding of Truth.⁹

Being open to *hearing* more than one voice underlies the ideal I associate with Jewish listening. Attention to the paradoxes—to the “on the one hand’s” and “on the other hand’s”—permeates not only my theology, but worldview. Judaism teaches that many spiritual paths lead to Truth. The embrace of democratic access and respect for pluralism informs my supervisory ideal. This idea is important in that the CPE seminar table needs to make room for a wide spectrum of cultures and faith traditions. The canvas created through dialogue and relationship must integrate dichotomies, such as majority opinion and minority opinion, affirmation and confrontation, inclusion and exclusion, and so on.

Furthermore, the CPE experience may challenge students to appreciate and respect theological paradoxes in other traditions. I’ve named several in Judaism. A couple of examples from other traditions: Christians navigate the paradox of a God who is both human and divine. Within Buddhism, an essential paradox relates to the definition of self. That is, Buddhism may reject the notion of individual ego; yet, suggest our self-like entity may experience repeated reincarnations. I dialogue with students, attending to integration of individual, internal paradoxes, as well as those manifest in the group. To me, these reconciliation efforts are spiritual work, connecting group members to a more whole and authentic vision of God’s truth and God’s peace.

God as Creator/Artist

I conclude this section where I began—with art. I believe we are created in the image of God and that we are Divine breath. In calling God Creator, when we tap into *our own* creative resources, we nurture the gift God uniquely shares with humanity—the gift of creativity. God is *Artist Extraordinaire*. As we partic-

ipate in the artistic process, we deepen our notion of God, Artist. CPE supervisors are a variety of artist, welcoming and affirming the gifts—colors, shapes, and intricate patterns—of their students. They invite students to the open canvas of the CPE experience. As group members express their truths, the canvas “illuminates itself.” The group tends to experience both exhilaration and frustration in the creative process. A journey that must integrate paradox tends to encounter harmony, tension, and harmonious tension. Yet, the canvas the group creates is intricate and intriguing, and understandably so—as it reflects the complexity of God’s truth. The CPE ideal is that students, as they deepen their self-knowledge and engage in open relationships with others, grow and flourish as integrated chaplains. Moreover, the CPE experience supports and challenges participants in their hope of integrity as human beings.

PERSONALITY THEORY

The metaphor of music offers a way of understanding personality and its multiple themes. Superimposed on the steady beat of our personalities are the maneuvers of melody—bringing us high, pulling us down, taking us in expected and unexpected directions. I love music because it is about connecting: notes connect to notes; a listener connects with a performer; singers connect with each other; a musician may even connect with God. The experience of music moves me because it illuminates the vitality of feeling, inviting me to better know the depths of who I am.

Connecting—being in relationship—is the most significant dynamic of personality. This emphasis is congruent with my theology which highlights the threefold rhythms of dialoguing: with ourselves; with others; and with the Transcendent. I use these relational themes in my supervision to guide learners toward pursuing lives of meaning, authenticity, and integration. I understand integration to mean that separate personality elements and behaviors are harmonized into a coherent whole. Moreover, I affirm the aspiration of integrating the dichotomy of personality (beat) and the serendipity of living (melody).

Understanding Human Nature as Grounded in Dialogue

My personality theory draws upon dialogical theorists, particularly Richard Hycner, who in turn have been influenced by self-psychology. Following Buber, the dialogical theorist believes that the human person is fundamentally relational, a theme prominent in both my theology and education papers.

The developmental foundation of Hycner's work, and correspondingly my theory, builds on self-psychology. I choose dialogical theory because dialogical theorists reinforce my assumption that the *human person has the inherent capacity to be in meaningful relationship, and that humans by nature aspire to develop integrity and authenticity of self*. Furthermore, dialogical theory responds to an essential purpose of CPE, namely, the dynamic and ongoing process of *integrating our personality components, behaviors, and experiences as these emerge in our relational interactions*.

I embrace Hycner's focus on three relational dimensions: self (intrapyschic); other (interpersonal); and Other (transpersonal). Hycner is in sync with Buber and underscores the assumption that our relationships transcend the interhuman to include the Other. In each thou we address the Eternal Thou. *All three relational dimensions need to be brought into dialogue*. My theological understanding of persons underscores this *personality need: namely that self-actualization (self) and being in relationship (other/Other) are viewed within a transcendent context, where questions of (ultimate) meaning arise*.

Self-psychology provides the developmental foundation for dialogical theory. As the developing self 'dialogues' with the world, it organizes its subjective experience in relation to certain developmental 'self-object' needs that sustain the self. Developing a cohesive self-structure, according to Heinz Kohut, takes place on three axes: (1) the *grandiosity axis* which refers to a person's ability to maintain self-esteem, expressed as one's sense of self worth; (2) the *idealization axis* which refers to the ability to develop and maintain goals, ideals, and values; and (3) the *alter ego-connectedness axis* which refers to the development of a person's ability to communicate feelings, form intimate relationships, and become part of groups.¹⁰ Relational or 'self-object needs' correspond to the three axes: mirroring—the need to feel affirmed, accepted, and appreciated; idealizing—the need to experience oneself as being part of an admired and respected self-object; and twinship—the need to experience similarity to others and be included in relationships with them. These needs inform my dialogue with students. To illustrate twinship, I share samples that document my own mistakes when I began as a CPE intern.

In an Open Seminar during a unit of CPE, Cathy shared her struggle with overwhelming grief around patient losses. My supervisory goal was to help her accept her grieving self, as discordant as that might feel, to integrate that self-state into a fuller understanding of and appreciation for her complex self. I *mirrored* the 'worthiness' of Cathy's grief by inviting her to say goodbye to the patient now, with the group as witnesses. She readily agreed. With *twin-*

ship needs in mind, I asked group members to share how they ritualize grief/loss (e.g., writing, talking with friends, lighting candles, prayer). Later in the unit, I engaged *idealization* and *twinsip* needs in modeling my coping with grief (death of my brother-in-law during the unit) and shared my sadness.

My critique of self-psychology is that it does not emphasize sufficiently the mutual embeddedness of the interpersonal elements influencing human development. Further, instead of self-psychology's concept of a privileged, unitary self, I see the individual as made up of a multiplicity of self-states. Each self-state represents the experience of internalized relationships with a corresponding "self-representation, object representation, predominant affective tone, experience of somatic body-state, and level of cognitive organization."¹¹ Reinforced constellations of self become recognized as the experience of 'me'—the recognizable essence of who I am. In contrast, I may experience discordant self-object internalizations as intrusive and even despised.¹² Overall, varied experiences of 'self' constitute the beat, the underlying rhythm of our existence; our personality.

Assessments, Goals, and Interventions

A key objective in dialogue with students is to invite growing awareness of the harmonies and discordant notes of 'songs' they bring with them, those they compose as they participate in the CPE experience, and those they imagine and hope to hear in their futures. As I work with students in clarifying their learning objectives, I develop supervisory strategies that encourage integration. In supporting students along these lines, besides being available for self-object functions, I engage the following assessment categories: vulnerability, dichotomous nuances, empathy, and separation/connection. All have a significant relational dimension.

Vulnerability: an intimate part of interacting (see *alter ego-connectedness axis*, above), is at play in CPE supervisory relationships. Awareness and sensitivity are important in this regard because of the emotionally significant material accessible for processing when channels of vulnerability are open. Through observation, attentive listening, and dialogue, I assess what's going on within a student and between us in our supervisory relationship. I encourage self-reflection and may provide resources or suggest supplemental consultation when significant emotional issues arise.

Dichotomous Nuances: I believe seemingly dichotomous personality nuances can co-exist in a healthy and balanced way. That is, "an array of seemingly conflicting human characteristics" must be painstakingly integrated in one human being.¹³ Dialogical theory supports this area of supervisory

awareness, in that it purports that the mind can maintain a dialectic encompassing the paradox between “mutually exclusive elements which must continue to coexist, even while negating each other’s existence.”¹⁴ Either/or thinking does not capture the complexities of persons. For example, consider freedom versus determinism, that is—whether we have full control over our behavior and motives or our behavior is determined by outside forces beyond our control. To embrace freedom or determinism exclusively results in a more superficial understanding of personality than if we allow both to be operative in *dialogue* with each other.

Empathy: a third assessment category, is vital to the supervisory relationship and relevant to my personality theory. Hycner is influenced by self-psychology’s emphasis on empathy as nurturing human growth and development. I affirm the need to be empathetic as I journey with my students. My intention is to invite the kind of qualitative dialogue that allows for meaningful affirmation and challenge as a pastoral identity develops. My dialogic perspective implies that effective communication often *is* the intervention. Moreover, embodying openness, trust, and empathy models a way of being which I believe is most conducive for establishing quality pastoral care relationships (parallel process).

Both separation and connection are natural, even essential attitudes in being human, existing in paradoxical tension. Hycner reflects:

Healthy living requires a rhythmic alternation between the two. The tension of connectedness and separateness is present from the moments of conception. The fetus is profoundly flesh of the mother, yet also is bodying toward separateness. This physical development is paralleled throughout life in our psychological development. We are always seeking the balancing point *between* our separateness and connectedness to others. In fact, it is the creative tension and integration of the two that is the hallmark of healthy living.¹⁵

Similarly, the human condition is *both revealed and hidden*.¹⁶ In processing my choices for interacting with my students, I assess what kind of feedback may be most helpful, and respond accordingly.

At times, CPE students may resist growth-inducing dialogue. Mindy made veiled references to the profoundly felt recent death of someone very close to her. Her grief was brought to the surface as she ministered in the hospice setting; and yet she did not feel prepared to dialogue openly about the circumstances behind her feelings. I encouraged her to explore issues of concern while respecting her *vulnerability*; reflected back to her the possibility of integrating the *dichotomy* of experiencing one’s own grief while being

a comforter; *empathized* with what she was able to make accessible in our supervisory sessions in order to provide a safe space for further exploration of grief issues; and tried to be sensitive to her need to honor her own rhythm of alternating between remaining *hidden and revealing* her woundedness.

An Important Addendum to My Personality Theory

Equanimity involves being in touch with our emotions and longings, our traits and tendencies, our achievements and goals. Equanimity also involves an awareness—a grace and acceptance—of our limits. There are things we can change in ourselves, growing edges whose boundaries we should try to nudge. But there are aspects of ourselves that are the beat, the core, and the unique beauty of who we are. To “march to one’s own drummer” is a familiar cliché. The assumption—perhaps universal observation—is that each person has a ‘drummer’ he/she marches to. I strive to challenge my students to maximize the stretch in their growing edges, while cultivating inner peace. Such integration is the harmony that lovingly affirms them in learning to accept, appreciate, and value the essence of who they are. And so we sing...

EDUCATION

Picture a dancer in mid-leap. She is suspended in the air, one leg stretched before her, the other behind; opposite arms reaching forward and back. To gaze at her is to share in a moment of exhilaration. The dancer masterfully suffuses technical skills with a boldness of presence and spirit. She can risk flight because she understands the ground; she knows her center. She can apprehend a moment of velocity because she comprehends gravity and her relationship to it. Drawn into the action, the observers, too, are uplifted as we vicariously experience in that one fraction of a second—skill and spirit; risk and clarity, and the possibility of integration.

My years of experience as a dance student, performer, and teacher provide me with fertile ground for my theory of learning and educating. Though the education of dancer and chaplain are different in content, my experience in both roles has shown me how the heart of the learning endeavor is surprisingly similar. The journey toward integration builds dimensionally. It begins with *openness* to new experiences, ideas, and feelings, along with *trust* in the process. More challenging is the *integration* of dichotomies and paradoxes. In my theology paper, I presented a paradigm for integrating spiritual dimensions of dichotomy (e.g., brokenness into wholeness; Divine image and soul-breath) and paradox (e.g., order and chaos; relationship and union). My personality

theory paper explores integration of self. Here, I propose that the integration of dichotomy and paradox is invaluable to educational theory, as well.

My theory asserts that successful learners engage, and effective educators guide the learning experience through openness, trust, and integration. A key theorist for my learning theory is Malcolm Knowles, supplemented by Parker Palmer and Donald Schön. I draw on Knowles' views of self-direction and life experience in the adult learning process. I affirm Palmer's stress on the importance of nurturing certain emotional and social qualities such as courage, truth, humility, integrity, love, and authenticity in order to develop an open environment in which educational relationships thrive. Furthermore, I appreciate how Palmer frames educational paradoxes. I resonate with how Schön deciphers the educational process—his thoughts on knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, educator transparency, and the use of dialogue. My own synthesis envisions learning as a process grounded in openness and trust, while integrating dichotomy and paradox.

My educational culture informs my theory, as well. Jewish learning is oriented toward a cognitive, academic approach, wherein 'on the one hand/ on the other hand' debate flourishes. Jewish teaching does not rely on creed or set doctrine—the consequence being a plurality of approaches, opinions, and conclusions. Thus, consistent with my own learning culture and style, I engage a breadth of ideas. These ideas serve as the theoretical foundation for my supervision (similar to the dancer's technical skills). Rigorous scholarship inspires and liberates me, as it allows for a dynamic educational approach (a 'boldness of presence and spirit'). My theory includes a commitment to ongoing learning and integration of new ideas ('being grounded and centered') in order that I sustain the confidence to be spontaneous, tolerate ambiguity, and celebrate diversity ('velocity'). A dynamic approach fosters my ability to be most authentic and enhances my effectiveness as a pastoral educator.

Openness and Trust: Learning begins with openness to new experiences, ideas, and feelings, as well as to new relationships: to self, to others, the subject matter, and learning process. Such relationships thrive best in an environment of trust. Affirming students' strengths, collaborating with them in identifying growing edges and goals, and listening carefully to their stories, experiences, struggles, and hopes forms the basis for trust.

Relationship to self: In deciding to enter an educational program, CPE students, like other adult learners, typically consider questions touching upon their relationship to self. Knowles emphasizes self-direction in adult education. I draw upon Knowles' theory in interviewing potential students, look-

ing for their aspirations for realizing self-potential. Knowles points out the importance of students' questions, such as: "Will I be different; how will I be changed by the learning; how will I grow; who will I become?" The andragogical model includes these adult learner assumptions: The need to know, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation.¹⁷ As students learn and grow, I believe their relationship to self becomes new. *Renewal* portends change. As new aspects of self emerge (identity and competencies), these need to be integrated into the old self.

Relationship to supervisor: Knowles' theory focuses on individual goals and mastery of specific content. At the same time, I am looking for sources that complement Knowles' emphasis and support my commitment to relational growth. For this reason, I am drawn to Palmer's way of framing the learning experience. Palmer's view is that openness and trust between educator and learner is vital. I associate openness with a way of being with students characterized by: affirmation, encouragement, honesty, humility, sincerity, enthusiasm, loving-kindness, and trustworthiness. Authenticity and sincerity in my way of being can impart to learners ways they may be present with others. My intention is that the relational growth students develop in *our* relationship increasingly will inform *their* pastoral relationships (parallel process).

Relationship to peers (i.e., group theory): "We cannot learn deeply and well until a community of learning is created..." writes Palmer.¹⁸ Here again, Palmer's relational approach is useful. Openness and trust in the group supports learners in receiving affirmation that will nurture their courage to grow; yet ensures that group members feel safe enough to challenge and confront each other. Setting clear expectations and boundaries communicates that the group experience can be trusted. In addition, I strive to project genuine caring to help set a tone of openness.

Consistent with my relational orientation, for group theory I focus on supervisory *strategies* and *ways of being*. One strategy is illuminating the 'here and now' experience. For instance, I may remark on the energy level in the group, tensions I sense, a hunch that group members are holding back, or the tendency of group members to speak abstractly rather than concretely from personal experience. Attending to the here and now helps maintain openness in the group. Also relevant to group theory is raising awareness in how dichotomies play themselves out in the peer group. I invite students to expand options in integrating these: solitude and community; cohesion/consensus and conflict; speech and silence; and spontaneity and structure.

Integrating Dichotomy and Paradox

Palmer, along with Schön, appreciates dichotomy and paradox. Schön's 'paradox of learning a really new competence' states that students "cannot at first understand what [they need] to learn, can learn it only by educating [themselves], and can educate [themselves] only by beginning to do what [they do] not yet understand."¹⁹ Palmer also has a great appreciation for paradox.²⁰ My interest in dichotomy and paradox includes, but also extends the areas addressed by these theorists. In my experience, to engage a full range of experiences, feelings, and ideas gives greater access to truth—that is, the reality of the universe and who we are in it. The image I used to begin this section reinforces this notion. I describe a dancer, able to take risks because of her strength, skills, and confidence in knowing her center. Her centeredness allows for nuanced expressions of truth. Our dancer integrates skill *and* spirit/spontaneity; flight *and* groundedness; velocity *and* gravity; risk *and* clarity.

Art forms, such as dance, have a unique ability to illumine truth. The abstract framework, with its capacity to evoke multiple emotions, ideas, and experiences simultaneously, allows for the expression of paradox. Translating this idea to CPE, I ask questions and make observations encouraging students to explore the significance of dichotomy and paradox. My intention is to help them access a greater range of skills and use of self. Moreover, doing so will enhance their authenticity, their truth.

Relationship to Self: Schön's "reflection-in-action" is consistent with my embrace of the learning process in CPE. Ideally, learning inspires growth in self-potential through the dichotomous experiences of *transformation* and *affirmation*. The new action emerging from 'action/reflection/feedback' encourages movement toward one's higher self or transformation. Affirmation comes with learners' growing confidence and competence. Other significant dichotomies I address with students are apprehension and comprehension; and cognitive and affective learning, that is, thoughts and feelings. My awareness of these dichotomies allows me to target strategies for students' growth and development. For instance, I may challenge one student to tune into her emotional response to a given situation; and another cognitively, asking him to think about ethical implications.

Relationship to Supervisor: I strive to model willingness and courage to be present and attentive to tensions inherent in paradox and dichotomy. I concur with Palmer's attention to relational qualities. I am especially conscious of the sensitive balance between intimacy and vulnerability—qualities which ideally evolve in sync with each other. As intimacy deepens, my

intention is to honor, attend to, and be mindful of feelings of vulnerability that accompany the process. If vulnerability seems to be getting ahead, such that feelings of closeness are experienced as threatening, then intimacy needs to slow down. The relationship needs more time and/or more space to rebalance and re-harmonize so that it can grow in an integrated way. Grace; sensitivity; intuition; an ability to note, track, and feel the way energy moves—physical, emotional, and spiritual energy—support efforts to harmonize the dimensions of a relationship as it evolves.

Relationship to Peers: A paradox: In knowing others, we may become more known to ourselves and vice versa. Or, as Parker Palmer puts it, “My inward and invisible sense of identity becomes known, even to me, only as it manifests itself in encounters with external and visible ‘otherness.’”²¹

I ask learners to become keenly observant of others, themselves, and relational dynamics. I do so to encourage students to sharpen their assessment abilities and enhance self-understanding. I am mindful of raising awareness in how dichotomies play themselves out in the peer group. I invite the group to expand options in integrating especially these: solitude and community; cohesion/consensus and conflict; speech and silence; and spontaneity and structure.

Concluding Thoughts on Education

Just as the heart of the learning experience is surprisingly similar—for chaplain, dancer, and other learners—so is the reward: the attendant joy and freedom of mastery, understanding, and authenticity. While the dancer’s leap is a proclamation of joy and freedom, for the student chaplain, joy and freedom come with the mastery of skills congruent with pastoral competence; the deepening of understanding congruent with pastoral reflection; and the embodiment of authenticity congruent with pastoral formation and identity.

NOTES

1. Comment attributed to Rabbi Louis Finkelstein, head of the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1940–1972.
2. Jan Katzew, “From Other to Brother,” *CCAR Journal: The Reform Jewish Quarterly* (Spring 2005): 30.
3. Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, Vol. 1, Shlomo Pines, trans. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 22.
4. Martin Buber. *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 3.
5. *Ibid.*, 6.

6. Sefer Haredim quote from Chapter 9, #10 by Yitchak Buxbaum, "D'vekut," in *Jewish Spiritual Practices* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 1990), 3.
7. Myriam Klotz, "Wresting Blessings: A Pastoral Response to Suffering," in Dayle A. Friedman, ed., *Jewish Pastoral Care: A Practical Handbook*, 2nd ed. (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2005), 4.
8. By Reinold Niebuhr, 1943: "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."
9. Zohar Aviv presented comparable ideas at Congregation Beth El, La Jolla, CA, Spring 2006.
10. Erez Banai, Mario Mikulincer, and Phillip R. Shaver, "'Selfobject' Needs in Kohut's Self Psychology: Links with Attachment, Self-Cohesion, Affect Regulation, and Adjustment," *Psychoanalytic Psychology* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 224–260.
11. Mary Gail Frawley-O'Dea and Joan E. Sarnat, *The Supervisory Relationship: A Contemporary Psychodynamic Approach* (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2001), 52. This passage refers to the work of J. M. Davies.
12. Ibid.
13. Richard Hycner, *Between Person and Person: Toward a Dialogical Psychotherapy* (Highland, NY: The Gestalt Journal Press, Inc., 1991), 11.
14. Frawley-O'Dea, and Sarnat, *The Supervisory Relationship*, 52. This passage quotes S. Pizer, "The Distributed Self: Introduction to Symposium on 'The Multiplicity of Self and Analytical Technique,'" *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 32 (1996): 502.
15. Richard Hycner and Lynne Jacobs, *The Healing Relationship in Gestalt Therapy: A Dialogic/Self Psychology Approach* (Gouldsboro, ME: The Gestalt Journal Press, 1995), 8.
16. Hycner, *Between Person and Person*, 51.
17. Malcolm Knowles, Elwood F. Holton, III, and Richard A. Swanson, *The Adult Learner*, 6th ed. (Burlington, MA: Elsevier, Inc., 2005), 64–68.
18. Parker J. Palmer, *To Know as We Are Known: Education as a Spiritual Journey* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), xvi.
19. Donald A. Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987), 93.
20. Parker J. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 63. See also: Parker J. Palmer, *The Promise of Paradox: A Celebration of Contradictions in the Christian Life*, Reissue ed. (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2008).
21. Palmer, *The Courage to Teach*, 63.