

ACPE Theory Papers of the Year

Attunement, Attention, and Authenticity

Beth Naditch

THEOLOGY



Since I was a shy child, books were one of the first things I learned to trust. I taught myself how to read at the age of four by watching episodes of *Electric Company* and *Sesame Street* and was soon such an avid reader that the children's librarian at my local library branch put up a sign on a shelf that read "for 2nd graders and Beth Naditch." From that librarian, I learned that someone outside my family could notice me and value me for a part of myself that I treasured. Books assuaged my loneliness both within their pages and through the connections that reading helped me form with other people. Books opened up worlds for me in which I could recognize my own experiences and hear my own voice in the voices of others—before I could articulate my experiences on my own. Books helped me understand that other people had different perspectives from mine and taught me how to be curious about them. Through her neatly hand-lettered sign in the children's section of the Saxonville library, my librarian gave me a way (though admittedly a bit boastful) to share my passion for reading with a community. It is no surprise to me that when I first began to explore the rabbinate as a vocation that I was totally drawn in to the powerful experience of belonging-through-learning offered to me by my tradition. I claim my own link in the tradition of the "People of the Book," a nickname for the Jewish people that reflects the paramount importance of Torah study for Jews across all denominational lines.

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Traditional Jewish study is done in relationship, with a *hevruta*¹ (study partner). In engagement with a text, my voice blends not only with my study partners in the room with me but also with voices from many generations, stretching back over 2,000 years. This is an intensely powerful experience of community. It is a natural step from *hevruta* study partnership to CPE, where the group environment provides a similar space of growth, engagement, and connection around the “texts” of patient care, professional formation, and learning. Just like my childhood books, my experience as both a CPE student and supervisor has opened up worlds for me. Community is created in CPE as each person recognizes commonalities of experience and hears their own voice in the voices of others. Like books, CPE has helped me understand people with different perspectives from mine and has connected me with them.

In my tradition, the laws regarding a Torah scroll or holy book underscore the reverence we should show to a person’s story. Physically, we kiss books with God’s name in them if they should happen to fall. We rise from our seats in synagogue when the Torah is removed from its resting place. One rabbinic commentary on honoring elders implores people to treat elders in the community with the same respect that they would show a Torah scroll.² From these beliefs, I understand that the “text” of a human life is as holy as the Torah itself and deserves the same attention and respect. CPE offers many venues in which I can express that respect—numerous ways to connect deeply with students, patients, and colleagues. Respect for story guides me in CPE’s multifaith environment.

My method of reading rabbinic text is heavily influenced by my teacher, Rabbi Judith Hauptman, who approaches the largely male canon of rabbinic literature through a feminist lens. I resonate with the method of text-learning that Hauptman originated, which highlights the cultures and personal backgrounds that shaped our ancestral lawmakers, reading their words in their own contexts. I bring this method into CPE supervision by building experiences into the curriculum that invite students to engage deeply with their own “texts” through spiritual autobiographical snapshots, identifying spiritual themes in narratives, and genograms. Because reverence for the texts and narratives of a human life is so basic to my engagement with the world, I connect Jewish and non-Jewish students with their own foundational cultural, religious, social, and learning narratives.

Because the body of Torah (in its broadest sense)³ is so vast and often contradictory, *the process of learning obliges the learner to live in a state of creative*

tension, holding multiple truths at the same time. When we explore the depths of a text /narrative/ student's story/patient's story as a CPE community, different interpretations of the same words or event continually emerge. I model a both/and approach that is able to hold these multiple truths.⁴ Contradictory beliefs can be held side by side in my tradition, neither invalidating the other.⁵ The engaged Jew is asked in *every* encounter with text to choose for herself the interpretations that she finds nourishing or draining. Which texts are meaningful, and which are not—for *me* at *this* time in *this* context? Those texts that do not nurture me are *not* excised—they might nurture another, or me at a different point in my life or process. In other words, the rabbinic system has critical purchase within its very process. Engagement is mandatory, but interpretation is in my hands, as it is in the hands of each individual, family, society, and generation.

Invariably, with multiple truths lived out by members of a group, tension and conflict will arise. Early on with groups, I frame the idea that conflict (in a safe environment) is a natural and healthy spiritual growth opportunity. My theological understanding of healthy conflict, or in Hebrew *machloket l'shem shamayim* (argument for the sake of heaven), is grounded in Judaism as a multi-vocal tradition. In psychological terms borrowed from Relational-Cultural Theory, an "argument for the sake of heaven" is conflict as a relational growth opportunity in which relationships can deepen. This, too, I borrow from the rabbinic *process* of study, which trusts the text to be able to hold "the simultaneous existence of variations, anomalies, disparities, contradictions, or multiple alternate views. . . . Story does not feel its truthfulness compromised but enhanced by the possibility of alternate worlds in tension."⁶ My trust of text, whether it be Torah or the Torah of someone's story, allows me to trust the process of CPE to hold the varieties of religious and multicultural truths and spiritualities that are brought together in a CPE group.

My theological understanding of suffering is grounded in my Jewish historical, communal narrative. The Talmud, as well as much of rabbinic literature, is a response to suffering. After a series of national catastrophes (most notably, the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE), the rabbis were left to recreate Judaism from the ground up. The Talmud's sixty-three tractates are a record of a community reeling in grief, and both the content and process of the text show the painstaking march through grieving, then resilience, and ultimately thriving. Suffering, for me as a holder of that legacy, has always been a backdrop of life. Like the rabbis of the Talmud, my

focus is not on the reasons for suffering or on its existence. In my belief system, God does not cause suffering, either natural or human, nor does God have power to relieve the actual event.

In addition, there is nothing inherently redemptive in suffering.⁷ One example comes from a memorable supervisory session with HG, a traditionally observant Jewish woman suffering mightily in the conflict between her identity as a lesbian and her theology and community. Joining her in her pain so she would be less alone, I compassionately held the space open for her to grieve. She knew, and I knew, that it wouldn't be fulfilling or authentic for her to take the "easy" road. I knew, and she knew, that much of her suffering was bound up in being separated from community. I was grateful to have built the kind of sustaining relationship with her where she could pose her question.

Jewish narrative theology comes in two main forms: the idea of a master story and of story as a *way* of knowing. Narrative theologian Rabbi Michael Goldberg defines "master story" as a core foundational story that gives those who claim it their "model for understanding the world and a guide for acting in it."⁸ Master stories give people a paradigm for understanding their existence and provide a basis for responding to what life brings. Goldberg articulates in academic form a central rabbinic belief that the Exodus from Egypt is the Jewish master story. The *Haggadah*, the central text of the holiday of Passover, enjoins: "In every generation it is a person's duty to regard themselves as if they personally had come out of Egypt, as it is written: 'You shall tell your child on that day.'⁹ The word *Haggadah* itself means "telling." The text of the Haggadah recounts the Exodus in five different ways to ensure that each person can find a way into the story that shapes them.¹⁰ The tellings of the Haggadah are a model for me in my practice of supervision, in which I respond to each student with the modalities and tools that best suit their learning style and formation.

Goldberg points out that in the Exodus narrative God always works in cooperation with human partners. It is not until the enslaved Israelites cry out that God "remembers" them. Moses must notice and respond to the wonder of the burning bush for God to be able to proceed. Only when God and people are in committed, covenantal partnership can redemption happen. Because of the importance of partnership in my theology, I bring covenant into the CPE process as well. I am prepared to challenge students to grow as much as they deem possible during this CPE process. As the supervisor, I help to create an atmosphere of support and challenge where each

person is responsible for their own learning as well as for contributing to the learning of others in the group. To formalize this, I facilitate the creation of a group covenant at the beginning of the unit, which is referred to throughout our time together.

Jesuit Kevin Bradt writes of “storying” as an interactive relationship in which both the teller and listener are changed through participation in a shared experience. A new story of shared relationship is then co-created.¹¹ In the space between teller and listener, storying holds the intimate “between” in which I-Thou relationships occur.¹² I see Bradt’s description as my aspiration for the relationship of patient and chaplain, student and supervisor, and group as a whole. This came alive last summer as I engaged with RF, an African American student. The students had just completed their genograms, which I had assigned as a way of inviting them into deeper self-understanding through sharing their own stories. It became clear that there were many points of connection between the ways that Jewish and African American families use story as a way of knowing. RF and I felt this connection and engaged in a *hevruta* over the course of several supervisions. We looked at the connections and divergences of how our respective communities found their way into history and its legacies. Engaging in story also gave us a way to acknowledge the tensions that have arisen at times between our respective communities, sometimes out of the varying ways oppression has been experienced and claimed. Open dialogue through “storying” led to the blossoming of a relationship of true interracial dialogue and trust.

I understand the foundation of Jewish theology to be that people are created *b'tzelem Elokim*, in God’s image. We are exhorted to honor this image and try to “walk in God’s ways.” This means using God’s actions as a model and imitating those patterns of God’s that we can in our own lives (imitating, not impersonating God). One classic midrash¹³ asserts, “Rabbi Hama bar Hanina expounded ‘Just as God clothes the naked, you shall clothe the naked. Just as God visits the sick, so you shall visit the sick. Just as God comforts the bereaved, so you shall also comfort the bereaved.’”¹⁴ The way in which I live in God’s *tzelem* (image) might be quite different than the way an individual student lives in God’s image. Working together, we find ways to honor the difference facets of God’s *tzelem* in each person.

In conclusion, as a person who is serious about walking in God’s ways, I believe I should closely study God’s actions. One model is described in a resonant prayer from the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. As a community, we pray: “May the words of our lips be pleasing to You, exalted God, who discerns,

listens, considers, and attends to the sounds of our shofar calls."¹⁵ God is described as having four levels of listening, which I use as a framework for pastoral education. Each supervisory encounter includes an assessment of the student's concern and learning style (discern). Next in the process is listening carefully to the verbal and non-verbal narrative being communicated (listen). I then choose which tools from my theories I might bring to this encounter (consider), and finally, I offer a supervisory response with compassionate and attentive presence (attend).

PERSONALITY THEORY

The theory of personality that I draw on the most in my work as a CPE supervisor is Internal Family Systems Theory (IFS). This is a contemporary theory of personality that is itself a synthesis of several older theories. IFS blends systems thinking with the idea that we are each made up of many sub-personalities that function together as a unit. I supplement my personality theory with Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT), an evolving relational theory that has developed out of the writings of the Stone Center. Each theory allows me to express my core value of community; IFS recognizes an internal community, and RCT is deeply rooted in belonging to external community. Both theories are also at heart narrative-based theories. Holding narrative-based theories is important to me because I understand that the recognition of and telling of one's stories engenders wholeness and healing. IFS is an intrapersonal strengths-based theory that helps me to guide students toward their inner resources and understand their functioning. RCT rounds out my understanding of personality by providing an interpersonal approach, an understanding of human development, and recognition of how a person's ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, and social location shape them. For me, neither theory works completely on its own—I use them in conjunction with one another to guide me in my practice.

According to IFS, our parts (subelves) form a complex system of interactions, relating to each other in styles that form *internal* systems (or families). These mirror the external systems in which we each live. In other words, we are as relational on the inside as we are on the outside. Just as a healthy community requires people who take on many different roles in order for it to function well, a healthy inner system *requires* all our subelves to thrive. Each of our "parts" has its own distinct story, perspective, role,

ideas, resources, and coping strategies¹⁶ that contribute to our functioning as a whole. Judith Jordan, a leader in the RCT community, could almost be describing IFS work when she writes: “Disconnection from oneself, from the natural flow of one’s responses, needs, and yearnings[,] creates distress, inauthenticity, and ultimately a sense of isolation in the world.”¹⁷ Conversely, getting to know your internal system, made up of parts and a core Self, leads to a sense of wholeness through connection. Through my work with my own therapist, who is an IFS practitioner, I have experienced firsthand the healing power of the model. Having had the experience of identifying and dialoging with my own parts, noticing when they get triggered, “hearing them into speech,”¹⁸ and feeling them transform has helped me tremendously in my supervisory work as I guide students to recognize and access their own internal systems.

One crucial piece that distinguishes IFS from other theories of subpersonalities is the recognition of a core inner Self. *IFS maintains that a person’s system is best served when led by the Self, the core in each of us who embodies the qualities of curiosity, calm, confidence, compassion, creativity, courage, connectedness, and clarity*¹⁹ (the “8 C’s”). The Self is what I would define as the spark of divinity in each of us. In the language of my theology, the Self is the piece of us that can be seen as *b’tzelem Elokim*, in the image of God.²⁰ The Self (soul, perhaps) is influenced by relationships with the multiple systems and worlds in which its bearer exists and is constantly coming into being. As a supervisor, I know that I am being Self-led when I feel present, attuned, and in a state of connectedness.²¹

In each of our internal systems, the Self can become blended with parts, making it harder to access those resources of calm, compassion, curiosity, etc. One of the central goals of IFS is to differentiate and elevate the Self so that it can be an effective leader of the internal system. As an a cappella singer, I love Schwartz’s description of his own Self functioning when “clients respond as if the resonance of my Self were a tuning fork that awakens their own.”²² A sense of resonance with another person brings one into a sense of belonging and connection, and out of the loneliness of isolation. In a relational model of psychological development, disconnection from others is viewed as one of the primary sources of human suffering. In the CPE world, I hold a similar stance. My approach is framed by the assumption that each student brings the raw material of good intention and potential—the Self surrounded by parts. I respect healthy strivings, risk taking, and attempts to deepen connection. I find that supervising from this positive frame mini-

mizes the fear that people often feel about performance—fear that gets in the way of being genuinely present, fear that can make people unavailable for learning. I believe that IFS partners well with the adult education professional development model of CPE.

One example of how I have used this narrative aspect of IFS in my supervisory process comes from a student named BB. BB, like many of his peers, presented a verbatim in which he continually found himself jumping in to help with issues that were beyond his role and his context. Triggered by a “part,” BB lost sight of his pastoral goals. His interventions with a recent widow spiraled in their intensity until he was offering to research the possibility of disinterring her deceased husband so that he could be buried in a family plot in another state. During the verbatim seminar, I used IFS to help BB identify whether there might be any parts of him who were particularly triggered by the visit and who might have caused his extreme attempts at intervention. A part who BB named “Mr. Fix-It” joined us at the table. When given an opportunity to connect with his Mr. Fix-It part, BB realized that the story of this part included trying to protect BB from the pain of unresolved grief around his father, who had died when BB was a young man. Mr. Fix-It went into overdrive when triggered by an encounter with a situation similar to his father’s death, and it was apparent to BB that Mr. Fix-It was prominent in many visits. When BB understood that his Mr. Fix-It was trying to protect him, he found a well of compassion in himself for his actions during the visit with the widow and was able to focus more on ways to center himself in future visits than on beating himself up for “failing” in a visit.

I value IFS’s focus on authenticity, a theme that also runs through RCT and my educational theory. For me as an educator, this means owning my own wholeness and brokenness. Because of my own trauma history, it is important to me to work out of a theory that recognizes that both wholeness and brokenness are sacred. Theologically, I am reminded of the text that tells us that the original, broken set of stone tablets of the covenant was carried side by side in the holy ark with the whole ones. My goal is to remain in Self as much as possible when supervising, but like all people, my “parts” are sometimes triggered. One frequent visiting part is my “Mama Bear” part, who can be very protective when I sense that someone is threatened in some way. Acknowledging my Mama Bear part when she shows up in group or in individual supervision fosters authenticity and relationship, owns my own triggers, is respectful of the part, and models for students how to do the same.

As a supervisor, I draw on my parenting experience, personal experience, and teaching experience and apply what Richard Schwartz has labeled the “5 P’s for Practitioners”—presence, perspective, persistence, patience, and playfulness²³—in order to work with whatever my students’ parts may bring. I would add another P, that of “parallel process,” to reflect that similar patterns replicate themselves in all layers of human systems. Like my son, my students in CPE can also sometimes exhibit challenging behaviors in response to situations. Using the frame of IFS has been invaluable to me when I feel I am approaching an impasse with a student who seems “resistant,” “argumentative,” or challenging in other ways. When this happens, my first step is to try to interpret the challenging behaviors as attempts at protection from a perceived threat, and this helps me to go down a curious road of wondering and compassion rather than a reactive one. I am also guided by RCT, which uses the language that we each have strategies of connection and strategies of disconnection in relationship. Just as our parts are trying to protect us—sometimes adaptively, sometimes maladaptively—RCT recognizes that we are constantly engaged in a central relational paradox: We each carry competing needs for connection and disconnection and will develop protective strategies to try to realize both at the same time.

CK, whom I mentioned above, often attempted to ingratiate herself flirtatiously with her peers. Although I initially had a negative response to her when she did this, my goal was to keep my perspective open in order to better work with CK. I noticed that CK was most coquettish when she was feeling insecure about her work. I was able to use IFS to understand that she had a part who was protecting her from these feelings of insecurity. Piggybacking on the observation of one of CK’s peers, who noted her flirtatiousness during covenant group, I was able to help her work backwards from her part’s behavior. I invited her to begin to notice when she was feeling triggered by being attentive to when she began to flirt. CK’s dignity was maintained as she began to understand that her flirtatious part was trying to protect her in certain ways. She ended up making a great deal of progress around noticing her triggers during the course of the unit. I took her as far as she could go using IFS educationally and referred her to a therapist to work with some of the deeper issues that were beyond my role as an educator.

One piece of critical purchase that I have of the IFS model for CPE, in fact, is that it is primarily a therapeutic model. In IFS *therapy*, a goal is to try and heal the exiles. This work is best left to a trained IFS therapist. In my *supervisory* role, I keep my educational frame. As a supervisor, I can help a

student to discern/identify what parts might be present for them in visits or in group and help them notice the messages the parts are sending. Mapping is different than diagnosing, as I am not the one to name the parts. I am merely the guide who can create an environment where parts might consider coming forward to share their stories. While I am often awestruck at the healing that can accompany new self-understandings for students in CPE, self-awareness is but one piece that informs students' growth as pastoral caregivers. It is not the ultimate goal but should be used hand in hand with skill building, didactic learning, and other elements.

To address interpersonal skill building and an understanding of human development, I turn to Relational-Cultural Theory. RCT was born in the theoretical work of Jean Baker Miller, who in 1976 noticed the centrality of relationships in the lives of her clients. Most traditional theories of development at the time emphasized autonomy and self-sufficiency as markers of emotional maturity. As a feminist theorist, Baker Miller recognized that women and men on the margins were pathologized for valuing and moving towards relationship. RCT was born as an alternative way to attend to and legitimize the relational experiences of women and men. It is built around the premise that throughout the lifespan, human beings grow through and toward connection.²⁴ This is the foundation of RCT's understanding of development. People mature in their functioning as they learn to navigate "increasingly complex and diversified relational networks,"²⁵ and a central goal of human development is increased relational competence. Maureen Walker, a leading faculty member of the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, writes that "increasing levels of complexity, fluidity, choice, and articulation within human relationship are markers of maturity."²⁶ Development happens in growthful relationship, defined as a relationship with "zest." Zest refers to that increase in vitality, energy, and aliveness that comes from authentic connection. It is through relationship that people achieve relational awareness—a better understanding of themselves and others. It is through relationship that people find the capacity to act productively in the world, and through relationship that people achieve a sense of "zest."²⁷

Central to the theory of RCT is the understanding that *as much as we are shaped by childhood experiences, we are all shaped by the various communities to which we belong, whether they be communities of culture, religion, race, class, economics, gender, sexuality, or others.* Just as in IFS it is essential to map one's internal system and to recognize the relationships between the parts and Self, it is crucial in RCT to map the external systems in which one lives in order

to recognize the influences and assumptions that one carries. Mapping is the first step in getting in touch with one's foundational narratives. The more aware a CPE student is about his or her internal and external shaping narratives, the more able she will be to bring herself to this work of fostering healing relationship. Examining my own ethnic identity as an American Jew has made me aware that I am drawn to others whose ethnic or cultural identities place them on the margins of "mainstream" American culture. With MF, the African-American student I mentioned in my theology paper, for example, one central piece of work in our supervisory relationship was examining commonalities and divergences in our ethnic-cultural patterns as people who came from cultures with very different experiences of oppression.

As a supervisor, I continually work to develop my own capacity to lead students into recognizing the stories of their parts, their Self, and the systems of which they are a part. Through relationship, I "hear them into speech,"²⁸ growing through connection with them as they grow in relationship with me, their peers, their patients, and God.

EDUCATION OR LEARNING THEORY

A CPE group is a community of learners. Like the wilderness in which the Israelites wandered, CPE takes place in uncharted territory for most students. Students often find themselves in dramatic encounters with others and with their deepest selves. As a supervisor, one of my goals is to be a responsible guide through this uncharted territory—through the disorienting dilemmas²⁹ that arise from being outside of the known. My experience of teaching education at the graduate level has led me to an educational theory that is quite broad and eclectic. Just like my vegetarian Shabbat meals, in which I serve many complementary and savory dishes without a centerpiece course, in my actual teaching practice, I draw from many educational theorists and schools. For the purposes of this paper, I will look at two "dishes" that inform my educational theory as it relates to CPE supervision: the theory of multiple intelligences and, second, the adult learning theory of constructivist educator Laurent Daloz, who values mentorship as central for growthful education.

As a mother helping my children to feel confident in their emergent learning styles, and as a person whose learning style wasn't always met in my own early education, I am drawn to Howard Gardner's theory of

multiple intelligences.³⁰ This theory is built on the idea that all people have modes of learning that enhance their ability to process new knowledge. In order to honor learning differences in my students and open ports of entry for learners of all types, I use varied modes in the course of CPE supervision. Covenant group speaks to the interpersonal learner, process notes to the intrapersonal. The sharing of learning goals out loud and reading verbatims as a play speaks to the auditory learner. A particular kind of “parts verbatim” I have developed around IFS speaks to the kinesthetic learner, the learner who processes best through moving his or her body.³¹ As a visual learner myself, I often jump up to illustrate a concept on the board (or describe it in pictures). I ask visually oriented students to add an illustration to their verbatim write-ups about their understanding of the dynamics of a visit. I reflect with students on the use of many different modalities. This helps students to appreciate both connecting to and differentiating themselves within a diverse community of people. Intentionally using a multiple intelligences approach gives each student a place to shine and demonstrate their strengths. It provides a gentle way to stretch and challenge students to work slightly outside of their comfort zones to improve their practice.

Having experienced dramatic growth in my own mentoring relationships,³² I find guidance in educator Laurent Daloz’s work where he shows that adults learn best through involvement in mentoring relationships. Using Daloz’s language, the relationship between a CPE supervisor and student is a kind of “holding environment,” a safe context in and out of which a person grows.³³ Trust is a necessary prerequisite for growth, and the supervisory holding environment is a locus of that trust. Only when trust is present will people come forward in their vulnerability, truly available for learning. As a supervisor, I offer trust from my side by careful attunement to students, their learning styles, their narratives, and their ways of making meaning, creating a safe context for growth. More concretely, I also model trustworthiness by having an organized curriculum, schedule, and rituals so that students can preview the scope of their learning and find solid footing in it. I build curriculum around Level I and II outcomes, taking the context of our Jewish geriatric setting into account as well as using tools from my theory base. I never know what it will be that provides that first stepping stone of trust for each student, so I cast a broad net.

Safety and trust are words that also occur repeatedly throughout the literature on RCT. As a person who arrived in my own early CPE units with a history of complicated relational spaces (isolation, marginalization, and

trauma), I recognize that many of my students come from similar experiences. Blending this knowledge with an understanding of how intense CPE can be, I appreciate that there can be an increased need for relational safety. Support of students is key. As Daloz writes, "If learning is about growth and growth requires trust, then teaching is about engendering trust, about nurturance—caring for growth. Teaching is thus preeminently an act of care."³⁴ With trust and support, there is an opportunity for healing in CPE. (Though healing is not my primary goal as an educator, it is powerful when it occurs.) With only support, however, there is little impetus for growth in a learning environment. For this reason, I seek that sweet spot of balance between support and challenge of students. Too much support with too little challenge, and students might remain contented but static. Too much challenge with too little support, and anxiety is too high, creating an environment where a student is unavailable for learning. The right balance of support and challenge creates a holding environment that allows students to take risks, one of the outcomes we look for in Level I and Level II CPE. The process of helping students clarify learning goals is one of the first forays into the support/challenge continuum, as I guide students to identify, articulate, and focus their goals on specific elements of pastoral skill and formation.

Paradox and attunement are major relational concepts that shape group process. Niki Fedele, of the Stone Center, names many paradoxes present in group work that are applicable to a CPE group. Three key examples: Talking about disconnection leads to connection. Conflict between people can best be tolerated when they are connected to one another. Vulnerability can lead to growth.³⁵ There is also a constant tension in a group between the relational images that students hold (expectations of the responses of others and of the patterns relationships might take) and the real, present, and unfolding relationships of the here and now. As a supervisor, I am responsible for attending to these paradoxes that are alive in students' lives as well as my own.

Attunement also shapes group process and is one of my primary tools as a supervisor. One role I have as a group supervisor is to be attuned to what I know of each individual's story and experience and help hold these in a group space so that they can be woven into the story of the group as a whole. This is best illustrated through a group vignette. MF, an African American student, presented a verbatim on a Caucasian patient with dementia. After reading the verbatim out loud as a group, I asked MF's peers to identify something they liked about the visit as a first step in processing.

One peer, CO, complimented MF on introducing herself even though she had met the patient twice before. MF thanked her and then paused, as if considering her next response. I noticed the pause and noticed another student whose body language indicated that he was about to speak. I asked him to hold off a moment. MF threw me a nervous glance and plunged forward. "CO, thank you for the feedback. It's doubly important for me to introduce myself fully as the chaplain because otherwise, many of the residents think that I'm a CNA." AY, a peer with a narrative of oppression in his own background, immediately nodded in recognition of the socio-cultural scene unfolding before us. Another peer, BB, who was male, Caucasian, older, and upper middle class, looked mystified. "Why would they think you were a CNA?" asked BB, innocently. "Your badge says chaplain." The air was suddenly charged, tension emanating from the students who "got it" towards those who did not. I made eye contact with each student, holding the space, and offered MF a choice of unpacking her statement or taking a different (less vulnerable) path. At this point, BB noticed the change in atmosphere and looked concerned. MF stayed matter-of-fact. "Because I'm Black, BB. Most of the Black people here are CNAs or housekeepers. I wanted her to know I was the chaplain."

This snapshot of a group process highlights how much focus and presence are required for attunement. I've learned to use the hypervigilance that is a legacy of my own trauma history and morph it into a leadership tool in which I am very sensitive to the energy in the room. Attunement can mean being aware that one narrative always being expressed is a somatic (bodily) narrative. Tuning in to our own somatic messages and those of others gives valuable feedback that can be vital in all aspects of CPE. Just as I build opportunities for somatic awareness into individual supervision, verbatim processing, and IPR, here I used attunement to understand that MF was aware of her cultural narrative of being an African American in a different role than other African Americans in our health care institution. I felt her hesitation and then her courage around addressing it. I was using the central relational paradox of RCT in inviting MF to continue her explanation to BB. Attunement, however, is not only in the hands of the supervisor. One of my roles is to guide students into their own attunement with each other. I knew that AY found resonance with MF's story out of his own narrative of suffering as a gay man. AY was attuned to MF on an empathic level. Ensnared in his own narrative, BB wasn't even aware of the "base notes" in the discussion, which at the time infuriated AY. Once BB was able to tune in to the en-

ergy in the room, a more genuine discussion could happen. Through attunement to all of these threads of emotion and narrative, I was able to hold the strands of each person's experience together, creating a safer space in which to explore this experience of disconnection and conflict. As Relational-Cultural Theory predicts, this occasion of exploring disconnection did indeed ultimately lead the group to new and stronger connections.

Finally, this vignette is one illustration of how culture impacts education. According to RCT, understanding strategies of connection and strategies of disconnection in a socio-cultural context can be deeply healing. Spiritual director Carolyn Gratton explains that culture is like a "second body"³⁶ through which we experience the world. Experiences of gender roles, power differentials, and a variety of "isms" often encourage people to hide significant parts of their experience. I collaborate with students to create a community of trust in which these foundational cultural narratives can be recognized and explored.

One of my goals for both individual supervision and group work is to help students develop an awareness of their patterns of connection and disconnection. The process of increasingly learning to notice these strategies and tolerate deeper connection is a central part of relational resilience. The better students become at their own relational resilience, the better their patient care. Because noticing strategies for connection and disconnection requires practice and guidance, I build in opportunities throughout the curriculum to do this. When working on learning goals with students, for example, I help students begin to notice their go-to strategies of disconnection by asking how they might get in their own way of accomplishing their goal. Because we share learning goals in the group, this builds group responsibility by asking students to notice and help their peers in the learning process. Emerging research delineates phases of group work in a relational group.³⁷ Working on a group covenant and supporting students in creating learning goals is consonant with the first phase of *supported vulnerability*. The above vignette was an example of a group emerging into the next phase of *empowerment and conflict*. The final phase in this model is *relational confidence and awareness*. This relational group model is a good match for CPE. It recognizes that many people have capacities that will make them successful in CPE: an appropriate level of self-awareness; an ability to be moved and influenced by others; a willingness to attempt vulnerability and authenticity; and a commitment to working in community, not only on themselves. To me, the critical aspect of the model is that it works best with self-aware,

process-oriented students. There will inevitably be one or two students who struggle with self-awareness. Such students require patience on my part and the part of the group, as they require acculturation into sharing and awareness by peer example and supervisor encouragement. If they don't come along, there can be a negative impact on the group.

For about a decade, I sang in an a cappella group. Singing in this group, I found my voice—both literally and figuratively. It formed my understanding of what it means to be a part of a group that depends on dedication, participation, and deep listening on the part of all of its members and its conductor. In this type of singing, you must be attuned to the voices of everyone around you in order to blend, stay on pitch, and create harmonies. You must enter into paradox by holding your own part, but adjusting yourself to follow the flow and the rhythm of the individuals around you and of the group as the whole. This is my guiding metaphor for CPE.

NOTES

1. The Aramaic term *hevruta* traditionally refers to two people studying Talmud together. For my purposes, I use the term more generally to refer to a partnership between student and student, student and supervisor, or chaplain and patient, in which the "text" of study is the experience at hand.
2. Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 33a, Tosafot.
3. In Jewish tradition, "Torah" includes not only the Five Books of Moses and the scriptures in the Hebrew Bible but liturgy, mystical and legal traditions, and 2,000 years of rabbinic commentary that reach up to our day.
4. I explore paradox more fully in my education theory paper.
5. One example of a commitment to both/and multivocality: I must hold myself in a state of "second naïveté" about certain rabbinic attitudes towards women. The rabbis of the Talmud and beyond, some of whom notably restricted access of knowledge and learning to women, would likely not recognize the entire enterprise of my vocation, which I find painful. At the same time, however, I feel a sense of commandedness in my observance of Jewish law.
6. Kevin M. Bradt, *Story as a Way of Knowing* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1997), 106.
7. A famous passage from tractate Brachot (5a-b) exemplifies the primary rabbinic attitude towards suffering. One rabbi is gravely ill and in much pain, and another comes to him to ask, "Are your sufferings dear to you?" The ill man replies, "No, neither my sufferings nor their reward."
8. Michael Goldberg, *Jews and Christians: Getting Our Stories Straight* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 13.
9. Traditional text of the Haggadah, Maggid section. Translation by author.

10. There are echoes of Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory built in the Haggadah, which is structured to address many different kinds of learners. A few examples: A clear order is built into the seder, addressing logical/mathematical learners, as well as a lengthy mathematical discussion of the plagues. The seder table is a place for song, addressing musical intelligence. Naturalists can relate to the vegetables, which are a symbol of spring, and bodily/kinesthetic learners engage around the actions of dipping, pouring out wine in sadness for the Egyptians who died, and breaking and hiding the matzah.
11. Bradt, *Story as a Way of Knowing*, 107.
12. Reduced to its plainest definition, Martin Buber's I-Thou relationship is a soul-to-soul relationship.
13. The term "midrash" refers both to a body of rabbinic interpretation and to the process of exploration of Torah. Literally, the word means "to seek out" or "to inquire." There are bodies of texts called Midrash dating from the second until around the twelfth century. An individual piece of text from one of these collections is also called a midrash.
14. Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sotah 14a. Rabbinic texts preserve the chain of tradition by quoting specific rabbis, often noting their origins and schools of thought. In doing so, the rabbis highlight that each interpreter, like each of us, is a product of many overlapping systems—culture, family, and education.
15. The Rabbinical Assembly, *Machzor Lev Shalem* (New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 2010), 158.
16. Ibid.
17. Judith Jordan, "Relational Awareness: Transforming Disconnection," *Work in Progress* #76 (Wellesley, MA: Stone Center Working Paper Series, 1995), 1.
18. Nelle Morton, *The Journey Is Home* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 84.
19. Richard C. Schwartz, *Introduction to the Internal Family Systems Model* (Oak Park, IL: Trailheads Publications, 2001), 34.
20. Please see my theology paper for a further discussion of this concept in Jewish tradition.
21. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi would call this flow.
22. Richard Schwartz, "The Larger Self," The Center for Self-Leadership, 2004. <http://www.selfleadership.org/the-larger-self.html>: 2
23. Jean Baker Miller, "IFS and Working with Trauma," Lecture given March 25, 2013, Therapy Training Associates Seminar, Watertown, MA.
24. Judith V. Jordan, *Relational-Cultural Therapy* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010), 1.
25. Dana L. Comstock et al., "Relational-Cultural Theory: A Framework for Bridging Relational, Multicultural, and Social Justice Competencies," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 86 (Summer 2008): 280.

26. Maureen Walker, "How Relationships Heal," in Maureen Walker and Wendy B. Rosen, eds., *How Connections Heal: Stories from Relational-Cultural Therapy* (New York: Guilford Press, 2004), 6.
27. Comstock, "Relational-Cultural Theory," 282.
28. Morton, *The Journey Is Home*, 84.
29. I borrow this phrase from the literature on transformational learning, such as works by Jack Mezirow and Patricia Cranton.
30. Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: A Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 10th anniversary ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1993).
31. In this type of verbatim seminar, I ask students to identify which "parts" came up for them during the visit. Each part is assigned to a peer, and the presenting student physically creates a tableau of his or her parts. The processing of the verbatim includes moving people-as-parts around to see what might have led to a more productive visit, asking the peers-as-parts to share their experiences, etc.
32. My deepest gratitude goes to my own early and current mentors: Jack O'Brien, Al Axelrad, Carol Ingall, Judy Hauptman, Barry Chazan, Israel Kestenbaum, Mychal Springer, Beth Glover, Roz Weiner, and Mary Martha Thiel. I hope to have as much impact on my students as they have had on me.
33. Laurent Daloz, *Effective Teaching and Mentoring: Realizing the Transformational Power of Adult Learning Experiences* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986), 215.
34. Daloz, *Effective Teaching and Mentoring*, 237.
35. Nicolina M. Fedele, "Relationships in Groups: Connections, Resonance, and Paradox," *Work In Progress* #69 (Wellesley, MA Stone Center Working Paper Series, 1994), 8.
36. Carolyn Gratton, *The Art of Spiritual Guidance* (New York: Cross Roads, 1993), 56.
37. Dana Comstock, Thelma Duffey, and Holly St. George, "The Relational-Cultural Model: A Framework for Group Process," *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work* 27, no. 3 (2002): 254–72.