

Revising Starrat's Multiple Ethical Paradigm:
A Frank Conversation on the State of Ethics in Education

Abstract

In 2004 Robert Starratt introduced The Multiple Ethical Paradigm to address concepts relating to ethics in education. The basic premise of his paradigm was that ethical decision-making was a complex interaction that required more than one concept to be considered. Using a Delphi Study to examine current ethical issues in education, three new tenets are suggested including the ethic of the self, ethic of discomfort, and ethic of spirituality. Ethics in education may not seem like a pressing issue, but it is, considering our current state of the education system. Without a comprehensive updated Multiple Ethical Paradigm, educators run the risk of not fully understanding the impact of their ethical decisions on the profession, and on themselves.

Keywords: ethics, ethical-decision-making, teacher identity, self-care in education, ethic of the self, ethic of discomfort, ethic of spirituality

Introduction

In 2004 Robert Starratt introduced The Multiple Ethical Paradigm, the first of its kind, to address concepts relating to ethics in education. Throughout the past decade the paradigm has been revised by Furman (2003), Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005), Starratt (2012), and Wood and Hilton (2012). The original paradigm included ethic of justice, ethic of critique, and ethic of care. Furman (2003) added the ethic of the community and Wood and Hilton (2012) added ethic of the profession.

Eyal, Berkovich, and Schwarz (2011) found that it was impossible for educators to make ethical decisions based on one form or notion. A Multiple Ethical Paradigm is necessary because of the complex nature of ethical decision-making. One ethical belief system alone cannot address the multi-faceted decision-making process that educators experience each day. The Multiple Ethical Paradigm presents several lenses to view situations so that teachers can consciously make decisions that are fair for all students.

During my career as a clinical psychotherapist, educator, adjudicator for the Ontario College of Teachers, administrator, and faculty of education instructor, I often wondered why conversations on ethics or ethical decision-making seemed so strained and often absent amongst my peers. At several junctions in my career, ethics dominated my thinking, and it became the basis for this Delphi Study. I referenced the Multiple Ethical Paradigm as the conceptual framework for the study and found it lacked three key concepts related to education; the ethics of self, the ethic of discomfort, and the ethic of spirituality. These tenets focus on an educator's concept of their self, the discomfort educators experience in working in a highly politicized field, and the absence of spirituality in the profession.

Literature Review

Ethic of Justice

The ethic of justice refers to “the rule of the law” and concepts related to fairness and equity (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005, 13). It would seem that the ethic of justice is quite simple since all an administrator in a school has to do is follow “the law,” but this is not necessarily true. Although the ethic of justice is based on laws, rules, policies, and procedures, they are often not prescriptive but rather open for interpretation. French and Weis (2000) believed administrators are faced with much more complicated dilemmas related to the ethic of justice. They align these issues with three philosophical concepts, *deontology*, *teleology*, and *consequentialism*.

Deontology refers to *the duty of obligation* and was a prominent theory developed by philosopher Immanuel Kant (Kay, 1997). Teleology refers to *the purpose behind an act* (French & Weiss, 2000). Lastly, consequentialism is seen as the opposite of deontology since it is most concerned with *the outcome of an act* of justice (French & Weiss, 2000).

Eyal, Berkovich and Schwartz (2011) defined the ethic of justice slightly different and divided it into two categories. The first category relates to Rawls' (1999) tenets of social justice, which view equity as being “grounded in a social contract and focuses on individual rights and *equal treatment*” (398). The second category refers to Mills and utilitarianism, which views

ethics as being for the good of many - not the good of the individual. This creates a tension for both teachers and administrators who must straddle these diametrically opposed views.

The ethic of justice challenges educators to examine their behavior and ask questions such as: *Is what I did fair and just to students? What laws or policies guide me to know and understand that my conduct was acceptable or not acceptable?*

One of the most prominent examples of an ethical dilemma relating to the ethic of justice occurred as a result of Jordan Manners' murder in a Toronto high school. Jordan Manners, a fourteen-year-old student at C.W. Jefferys Secondary School, was found dead from gunshot wounds in a school stairwell (Falconer, 2008). The Ministry of Education hired human rights lawyer Julian Falconer to conduct a full-scale inquiry. During the investigation, a female student disclosed to Falconer that prior to Manners being killed, she had been sexually assaulted by three male students in a washroom and had reported it to the administration. The administration did not follow legislation and report the incident to the police or Children's Aid Society (Falconer, 2008). As a lawyer and citizen, Falconer was legally bound to report the incident to the police and the Children's Aid Society, who in turn reported the incident to the Toronto District School Board and the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT).

During a discipline hearing at the OCT, Vice Principal Silvio Tallevi stated he reported the incident to his principal but to no one else since he feared for the female student's safety. He knew the student came from a very religious family that might assume she had invited the sexual assault and punish her for it (*Ontario College of Teachers v. Tallevi*, 2011). Tallevi's actions are an example of an ethical dilemma. He struggled with his duty to report, which is a legal obligation, with his fear of the outcome of his actions. In the end, Tallevi chose not to follow the law, considering the girl's safety at home a priority. Tallevi's decision to defy the law ultimately cost him his career; in the end, not only did the female student's parents find out, but so did the rest of society in a very public hearing and report, *The Falconer Report* (2008).

Ethic of Care

Quick & Normore (2004) stated there needs to be a balance between an ethic of justice and ethic of care. An educator cannot simply focus on the "rules" but needs to have a sense of compassion and empathy when working with students.

Foucault (1997) believed that care must begin with self-care; in other words, “Care for others should not be put before the care of oneself” (287). In contrast, Nel Noddings (2012) believed that educators, parents, students, administrators, and trustees must engage in a relationship of mutual responsibility. Part of that responsibility is every one taking care of one another. Noddings stated that educators must care for their students’ intellectual, emotional, psychological, and physical health. She would call an educator unethical if he or she did not demonstrate this level of care for every student.

In another aspect of the ethic of care model, Valenzuela (1999) accused white Anglo-Saxon teachers of not truly caring for Latino students, but rather *pretending to care*. She stated this was incredibly damaging to Latino students in the United States since it was a form of invisible abuse.

O’Neill and Burke (2010) added that authentic care has been replaced by legislated care, which is not the same. Valenzuela’s study and O’Neill and Burke’s comments raise important questions: How do we prove when an educator is faking care? What is the damage of fake or legislated care? In an ideal world, Nodding’s ethic of care is well-intentioned. However, if there are already studies to prove that faking care is damaging students, what are we doing about it?

Ethic of the Profession

According to Shapiro and Hassinger (2007), the ethic of the profession examined what it meant to be a professional and what behaviors are considered acceptable by the profession. In Ontario, the teacher federations first created a professional ethic for educators that eventually became the responsibility of the Ontario College of Teachers in 1997 (OCT, 2014). The current ethic of the profession draws upon the *Ethical Standards of the Teaching Profession* created by the Ontario College of Teachers: “At the heart of a strong and effective teaching profession is a commitment to students and their learning” (OCT, 2014). The College defines the ethics of the profession as care, respect, trust, and integrity. The Alberta Teacher’s Association Professional Code of Conduct (2004), Nova Scotia Teachers’ Union Code of Ethics (2002), and the National Education Association Code of Ethics (1975) in the United States are all very similar to the Ontario College of Teachers’ Ethical Standards.

Ethic of the Community

The ethic of community demonstrates that public schools are not private institutions, but considered a public service. Citizens pay taxes towards the operation of schools and have a say in how they are managed. Schools and teachers are part of a large community that includes parents, students, trustees, and public organizations.

The community assumed the responsibility of setting the moral tone and standards of teachers and schools as far back as the 1850s in Ontario (ETFO, 2006). Although some of the standards have changed, the role of the community has not. Educators who work in isolation run the risk of not having their finger on the pulse of the community, while those who dismiss the community fail to see the power of community standards in relation to educator conduct – such is the case of Abi Mansour.

Mansour was found guilty of professional misconduct citing that he often began his class with “Bonjour fags and fagettes,” called a student with special needs “stupid,” and mistreated a student with Autism (OCT, 2012, 2013; OHRT, 2011). Mansour minimized his behavior and filed a human rights complaint against his school board and the OCT, citing discrimination. The Ontario Human Rights Tribunal dismissed his allegations of racism. What Mansour failed to realize was that the community standard did not accept verbally or emotionally abusing students based on their sexual orientation or ability. The community decided the students’ need for protection under the Ontario Human Rights Code trumped Mansour’s allegations of racism and discrimination. Mansour took his case to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice where he was ordered by the court to pay the OCT \$10,000.00. Ultimately, Mansour could not accept that the community, not the teacher, sets the ethical standards of the profession.

Ethic of Critique

Starratt (2004) stated, “If the ethic of justice looks towards fairness, the ethic of critique looks toward barriers to fairness” (47). The ethic of critique makes educators examine issues of privilege and power. It looks at justice through a critical lens and draws upon the writings of Freire (1970), Foucault (1983, 1993, 1997), and Shapiro and Stefkovich (2005) to examine issues of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and ability.

1 The ethic of critique is especially important because of the impact it has on students. Are
 2 they being treated fairly or is this lack of regard for ethics in our profession contributing to
 3 systemic discrimination?

4 Eyal, Berkovich, and Schwarz (2011) stated that the ethic of critique is perhaps the most
 5 important of all of the paradigms in our current education system. They believed that teachers
 6 and administrators must have more than a superficial understanding of how the education system
 7 can oppress minoritized students and their families. They argued, “The need to deconstruct
 8 current social structures is strongly represented in the ethic of critique” (406).

11 **Methodology**

12 This study used a Delphi Method to gather and interpret data. Its original purpose was to
 13 use a group of experts in a particular field to predict trends in the military and in science
 14 (Somerville, 2008). As a methodological approach it was so successful that it was applied to
 15 other disciplines, not only as a means of predicting future trends but also to solve problems in a
 16 particular field such as in the sciences and social sciences. A Delphi study creates dialogue
 17 among a group of experts in a structured environment either through emails, letters, or an online
 18 forum. The experts do not come face-to-face with the researcher, or the other experts; instead
 19 they communicate with each other through writing. The researcher asks the experts questions and
 20 consolidates their answers to create the next question. After five or six questions, the researcher
 21 brings together all of the responses and codes them to identify common themes and issues.

22 Instruments used in this study were a series of questions posed through an online forum
 23 that were continually refined as the study progressed. The forum I chose to deliver these
 24 questions and gather data was Google Groups.

25 A list of potential experts was generated by cross-referencing university library databases
 26 using terms such as *ethics in education*, *ethics and education*, and *ethical issues in education*.
 27 This list provided a substantial number of scholars from Canada and the United States. A second
 28 list was generated using computer searches for potential experts who work at the following
 29 institutions: Ontario school boards; Ontario faculties of education; Ontario Ministry of
 30 Education; Ontario College of Teachers (OCT); Ontario Principals’ Council (OPC); Council of
 31 Ontario Directors of Education (CODE); Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO);

1 Canadian Teachers Federation (CTF); Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF);
 2 Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO); L'Association des enseignantes et des
 3 enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO); and First Nations Education.

4 Potential experts were chosen not only for their knowledge, but also because of the
 5 breadth of their professional experiences in education. Many began as classroom teachers and
 6 then moved into academia or managerial positions. At several junctures in their careers, ethics
 7 should have been discussed. In total, 24 potential experts were sent an invitation and 13 agreed to
 8 participate in the study.

9 Over the course of nine months, the experts were asked a total of 5 questions, and their
 10 collective responses were summarized and sent back to the group to reflect upon. Several themes
 11 emerged from the data revealing unexpected issues relating to: teacher identity, a lack of self-
 12 care in the profession, teachers' discomfort with continual public scrutiny and criticism, and a
 13 soulless profession that appears to leave many teachers without a strong sense of ethics or self.

14 In the following section, the names of the experts have been replaced with pseudonyms in
 15 order to protect their professional identity.

17 **Findings/Results**

19 *The Concept of the Self in Educators: Who Are You?*

20 Baumeister (1999) believed that the concept of the self is ultimately about ownership. If
 21 a person could answer the simple question "*Who am I?*" then he or she owned their own identity
 22 and sense of purpose in life. For example, if a person answered the question with "I am a
 23 teacher" then their sense of purpose could be "My purpose in life is to teach." However, if the
 24 person had difficulty defining who they were (and in this example who they are as a teacher),
 25 then Baumeister concluded they would develop a poor sense of ownership. Their life, and in this
 26 case their profession, would end up being guided by what others told them to do.

27 Several of the experts who teach in faculties of education stated that they use the "blue
 28 pages" (the section of the OCT magazine *Professionally Speaking* that focuses on professional
 29 misconduct) to teach ethics. Most of the experts did not have a problem with this except for
 30 Robert and Sarah. They felt teaching ethics by highlighting professional misconduct simply
 31 induced fear and did not help teachers develop a sense of self, identity, or ethics. If there is little

1 to hold a teacher to be ethical other than fear of repercussions right from the beginning of their
2 career, then they will never develop a sense of ownership or responsibility. Robert stated that the
3 de-skilling of the teaching profession has stripped teachers of their identity and taken away their
4 sense of ownership. He further added that imposing ethics on teachers rather than having them
5 develop their own has created a love hate relationship with rules and legislation.

6 Several of the experts believed that the relationship between the community and the
7 profession is strained and unhealthy and prevents teachers from developing their own sense of
8 self. The tension that exists between educators and the community relates to the historical
9 tradition of the community having the authority to regulate a teacher's private and professional
10 life. They expressed strong emotions regarding the role of the community and were against the
11 community having the power to set the ethical standards for the professional and the private lives
12 of teachers.

13 Wren discussed how the community can vilify and destroy a teacher's career, even when
14 proven innocent of any wrongdoings. She wrote of a particularly disturbing incident where a
15 teacher was falsely accused of professional misconduct. "The emotional toll of right-wing radio
16 and newspaper comments calling for his "castration" throughout the various court appearances
17 and finally the trial was so great that he could not face returning to the classroom."

18 Fiona, who works outside of the field of public education, discussed how the power of
19 community judgment stifles an educator's ability to discuss ethics in any sort of safe capacity
20 and that "It forces educators to be defensive to protect themselves."

21 In *Images of Schoolteachers in America*, Joseph and Burnaford (2001) consolidated
22 teacher education textbooks from the early twentieth century in United States and noted "In the
23 textbooks on teacher education, one image of the school teacher paragon had a continuous and
24 dramatic presence; teacher as selfless altruist, dedicated soldier, patriot, saint or redeemer" (137).
25 A teacher's sense of self-care, self-worth, and safety were to be put aside. The concept of self-
26 care was replaced with caring for others first and teachers who did put themselves first were
27 looked down upon (Mehinan, 2012).

28 This Westernized Christian persona of the teacher as selfless saint and martyr continues
29 to influence our current image of the teacher in North America (Carter, 2009). This imposed
30 image is oppressive and contradictory and hard to reconcile given the rigid and powerful
31 standards set by the community in education.

1 Foucault (1993, p. 222–3) concluded that:

2
3 Maybe the problem of the self is not to discover what it is in its positivity; maybe the
4 problem is not to discover a positive self or the positive foundation of the self. Maybe our
5 problem is now to discover that the self is nothing else than the historical correlation of
6 the technology built in our history. Maybe the problem is to change those technologies.
7 And in this case, one of the main political problems would be nowadays, in the strict
8 sense of the word, the politics of our selves.
9

10 John, Robert, and Sarah were the only experts who identified a teacher's sense of
11 powerlessness. Their comments resonated with both Buchanan (2015) and Hargreaves (2000)
12 whose research in this area noted that teachers' lack of power has affected both their sense of self
13 and any real attempt to construct a strong teacher identity. Robert stated, "It becomes difficult to
14 construct a professional self that coincides with one's personal self when ethics is presented as a
15 list of 'new' commandments." John agreed with Robert and responded, "Discussion is needed to
16 help navigate the space between these extremes by developing one's own personal professional
17 identities and decision-making processes." Jill added to their comments by stating, "I would
18 agree that in general there is a disconnect within the profession. As to the self, I see an even
19 greater disconnect."

20 Identity formation, or more specifically, teacher identity formation, has been discussed by
21 Akkerman and Meijer (2011), Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), Carter (2009), and more recently
22 by Clandinin, Long, Schaefer, Downey, Steeves, Pinnegar, Robblee and Wnuk (2015). In theory,
23 teacher identity formation should be addressed in teacher education programs where candidates
24 can discuss who they are as people, and who they want to be as teachers. But as Wang, Hall, and
25 Rahimi (2015) and Clandinin et al. (2015) thought, this is not necessarily the case in many
26 faculties of education across Canada, United States, or Europe. Finland is the only country that
27 spends considerable time discussing teacher identity, teacher values and morals, and teacher self-
28 care. (Wang et al., 2015).

29 In the discussions on teacher training and ethics, experts did not make the connection
30 between teacher identity and ethics. Instead, ethics became part of a long list of things to learn
31 before a teacher enters a classroom for the first time. The stage has been set for the creation of a

selfless, disconnected, educator from the very beginning of one's career, starting with teacher education.

If teachers do not have a voice and do not own their professional identity, how do they develop a sense of ethics? By Foucault's standards, they cannot. By not being able to form their own identity, their own sense of self, and take care of that self, educators are left with little choice but to accept a professional identity manufactured for them by the community and the government.

My second question to the experts "When do you [sic] engage in conversations on ethics" did not result in a fulsome conversation. Instead, many of the experts gave very short and elusive answers. Fiona, John, and Valerie stated, "I do it [engage in ethics] all the time," "All my life," "I have always taken my calling seriously." In contrast, Laurie, Wren, Robert, and Jill admitted having sporadic conversations on ethics. None of the experts discussed struggling with their sense of self or internal conflict over their personal ethics and professional ethics.

Even experts in the education field who participated in this study, failed to address their self until prompted. The only expert who did address his self was Robert who does not work in the field of education. None of the experts raised the issue of the selfless teacher, even when directed to address the issue of the self. If leaders in the education field grappled this much with their own sense of self and ownership, then it should be no surprise that teachers would experience even a greater struggle. What became evident in the data was the selfless educator in the experts themselves.

The Concept of Care and Self-Care: From Selfish to Selfless

Even though all of the experts agreed that the concept of care is extremely important since the field of education is responsible for the daily care of children, their comments did not go into any depth in exploring the impact of the lack of self-care in the profession or the impact of inauthentic care.

Conversations on care in the study focused on caring for students and there was a notable absence of comments on self-care. The closest conversations came to self-care were the numerous comments made about reflection. My understanding of the benefits of reflective thinking was drastically different from the experts and I struggled with their focus on the students rather on themselves.

1 John, Laurie, Wren, Robert, Sarah, and Jill stated that teaching reflection to teacher
 2 candidates was an essential part of their training. John stated “I urge teacher candidates to reflect
 3 on events in which choices were made or dilemmas of practice. I encourage them to tell the story
 4 then analyze the incident from the perspectives of different places, and then based on their
 5 understanding of professional guidelines.” Jill stated “I draw on reflection to break barriers and
 6 address ethics. Reflection is an active, complex and intentional process that weaves theory and
 7 practice together.”

8 Many of the experts, like John Dewey (1910) saw reflection as a means to enlighten
 9 teachers on the role of ethics, legislation, and professionalism. The second purpose of reflection
 10 is to create caring teachers, not address self-care. I have struggled with comments such as these
 11 ever since I entered the faculty of education thirteen years ago. Only when this study was
 12 complete and I was able to reflect upon my own experience of being trained in two very different
 13 professions, did I see the problem. Many, if not all schools of psychotherapy teach the
 14 importance of self-reflection as a means to improve your self as a person, not a practitioner
 15 (American Psychoanalytic Association 2017). Psychotherapists spend a great deal of time
 16 reflecting on their past and current belief systems, and self-care is considered one of the
 17 fundamental tenets of the profession. In education, beginning in faculties of education, it clearly
 18 does not. From the very first day an educator enters a faculty of education they are to put their
 19 self and their care aside; it is now all about the other.

20 *The Politics of Our Selves*

21 As a result of the Westernized Christian influence on our North American education
 22 system, educators have not been encouraged to take care of their selves. Instead, they have been
 23 told they need to be selfless, put the care of others before themselves (Mehinan, 2012), and
 24 accept a manufactured identity. Educators have to follow a set of rules and orders that has little
 25 to do with their personal beliefs. The compartmentalizing of personal and professional values is
 26 one reason why educators seem to have such difficulty taking ownership of the profession. This
 27 compartmentalizing, Rozuel and Kakabadse (2010) noted, was damaging to both the employee
 28 (teachers) and to the organization (the education system). Employees develop a false sense of
 29 self as a means of survival, and Rozuel and Kakabadse (2010) warned that this is even more
 30 dangerous because the employee’s actions become inauthentic.

The hierarchal nature of the education system, the role of the government in creating and implementing legislation, the stakeholder model, and the power of media and social media (the community), create an incredibly tight web of systemic barriers that prevent educators from having their own voice or identity. It is extremely telling that several of the experts stated that they would never talk this openly about ethics or the profession with their colleagues for fear of judgment and retribution. The politics of education is so powerful that even experts in the field have difficulty navigating their sense of self and owning their sense of power and privilege.

Discussion: A Revised Multiple Ethical Paradigm

Ethic of the Self

The original Multiple Ethical Paradigm did not fully address the complex human interactions found in this Delphi Study. The self, according to Freud, is the core of a person's being whereas identity is a social construct that influences a person's sense of who he or she is. The self is fixed and does not change, whereas identities shift and change as the person experiences life (Corradetti 2016, Pepper 1996).

We all have multiple identities. All of these identities come together in a teacher to develop his or her own belief system and sense of self. However, if a teacher does not have a well-developed belief system or sense of self, that connection becomes weak or unstable (Napier, 2002). A teacher's identity is further compromised if he or she is not allowed to develop and assimilate his or her own belief system, but rather have one imposed.

The ethic of the self addresses the politics of the profession since the private has become public for educators. Legislation and the public nature of teaching took control of teachers' personal lives as far back as the 1850s when teachers lost their right to be able to conduct themselves in public as they saw fit and areas as private as marriage and pregnancy became justified grounds for dismissal (Richter, 2006). This certainly did not occur in the fields of medicine, law, or engineering. The repercussions of these actions by government and community have in essence created a very difficult identity for teachers to navigate.

L.A. Napier's *Indigenous Leadership Model* or *Naturalistic Model* focused on the importance of the connection between people and nature as part of survival (Ahnee-Benham & Napier, 2002). In order to survive, we must acknowledge the connection between our mind, heart

and self. The Naturalistic Model asks that educators connect their professional and their personal sense of ethics. This may be good in theory, but in reality, there is nothing natural about the development of a teacher's identity. It has not had the opportunity to form on its own natural accord but rather has been manufactured by the profession. No wonder it is so difficult for teachers to come to terms with their sense of self and identity and it should be no surprise that a teacher's sense of ethics is so hard to define given the circumstances described above.

The Ethic of Discomfort

The aim of social justice education is to disrupt normative thinking and create enough discomfort that everyone involved begin to question their beliefs and assumptions. Foucault defined this space as the ethic of discomfort (1994) and it is in this space that proactive and transformative education occurs (Zembylas, 2015). The original Multiple Ethical Paradigm included the Ethic of Critique which addressed social justice education. However, it did not examine the discomfort that can occur when social justice issues are raised in an educational setting. It also did not address the discomfort educators feel when finger pointing has become a common way for people to react when they do not like something. Considering the power of community judgment that continually hangs over an educator's head, it is no wonder that avoiding discomfort has become instinctual. This has come with a cost to the profession since that transformative space that Zembylas talks about has become lost in a profession that struggles with boundaries.

Eyal et al. (2011) identified the increase in social activism in schools amongst educators as a sign of the times, that education was changing, and that social justice education is changing the face of our schools. Many of these changes involved a new language that talks about creating safe spaces for students, disrupting normative thinking, and making schools equitable and inclusive. However, several academics (Hyttén, 2015; Zembylas, 2015) have raised concerns about the way social justice education is being taught. Both Zembylas and Hyttén believed that some educators have a poor understanding of how to teach social justice in an ethical manner. I would go further and state that facilities of education are no exception. Hyttén (2015, p. 2) stated:

I suspect that one of the reasons students struggle with social justice teaching is because of how they were exposed to them, especially from teachers who made them feel stupid,

1 intimidated, guilty, angry or silenced....It is surprising that educators who teach for social
2 justice do not pay more attention to teacher ethics.

3
4 Zembylas (2015) addressed the concepts of ambiguity and vulnerability and stated that
5 both educators and students must come to this common place of discomfort when working
6 through social justice issues. Pinto et al. (2012) pointed out that if administrators are
7 uncomfortable addressing social justice issues with both new and experienced staff, then when
8 and how are teachers being trained? According to Pinto et al.'s (2012) study , they are not.
9 Teachers are not being mentored on how to address social justice education and the downward
10 spiral of avoiding discomfort at the cost of marginalized students just gets deeper and deeper.

11 *The Ethics of Spirituality*

12 Since the development of a public, secular education system in Ontario in 1807,
13 references to spirituality have been scant in our schools. Rozuel and Kakabadse (2010)
14 suggested that embracing a strong sense of self and spirituality go hand-in-hand with a strong
15 sense of ethics that can permeate into a person's workplace. They placed great value on
16 employees taking time to getting to know their self, create an employee identity, and foster a
17 strong work ethic. The value of nurturing an ethic of spirituality in a workplace then extends
18 itself to the ethic of the community. When spirituality is placed at the forefront, all stakeholders
19 join together through the common commitment to a higher order. This is completely unheard of
20 in our current education system.

21 The ethic of spirituality refers to a person's personal belief system, which refers to a
22 higher self, divine being, order, truth, or reality (Sheep, 2006). Whereas the self relates to one's
23 sense of identity and thoughts, the soul refers to one's sense of faith. It is an acknowledgment of
24 a higher order or being (Nash, 2001) and involves a person having a deep sense of self and
25 others. The ethics of spirituality is not about organized religions such as Christianity, Judaism,
26 and Islam (Nash, 2001), it is much more personal.

27 Rozuel and Kakabadse's (2010) work centered on business ethics and workplace values,
28 and they concluded that spirituality in the workplace brings people together whereas expressing
29 religious views often divides. They noted (2010, p. 428):

Workplaces where people are allowed to be ‘whole’, that is, to express emotions, feelings, aspirations alongside rational thinking, tend to foster greater intuition and creativity, while reinforcing trust, honesty, and organizational commitment.

Sheep (2006) added that employees who saw themselves as whole people (meaning acknowledging and respecting their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual self), had a much stronger sense of ethics. They placed much more value and meaning on their work, and they treated their workplace as a community, not just a job. When organizations did not treat their employees as whole people, their workplace became fragmented and silent spaces, which affected everyone’s morale.

Nash (2001, p. 9), like Ahnee-Benham and Napier (2002) and their ethic of the self, also believed that “the best pedagogy aims first at the heart and soul before it can find its way to the mind”. Kung (2007, p. 1) argued, “If education is about making choices, it needs to address the ethical responsibility of recognizing wholeness in education and the recognition of the person as spiritual”. She stated this has been resisted both in teacher education programs and in school boards.

Our education system sounds like the organizations described by Sheep (2006) and Rozuel and Kakabadse (2010) that does not treat employees as whole people, but instead has created fragmented workers. Sheep (2006, p. 363) referred to the fragmented worker as living in “quiet desperation”, meaning they do not state how they really feel, they have a poor sense of self and worker identity, and remain silent on ethics. As such, our education system’s way of dealing with ethics is backwards. By dictating ethics and ignoring the self, self-care, and spirituality, our education system has failed to create any meaningful change in the profession. Perhaps this is why the conversations on ethics are silent rather than robust and deep.

Conclusion

The ethic of self, discomfort, and spirituality bring to the surface important issues in education that need to be addressed. Currently, both educators and students lie in perilous positions that can impact their entire lives. Whether it be the personal and professional cost of

not being allowed a sense of self, or the reality of marginalized students being subject to inauthentic or legislated care, none of it is acceptable. The roots of these issues begin with faculties of education that need to reframe their attitudes on teacher identity (the self) and reflection (self-care). The government needs to create professional boundaries for educators that are in keeping with other professions such as doctors, social workers, lawyers, and nurses. If this happens, then the instinctual discomfort educators feel should lessen to the point that other issues, such as transformative and just education can occur. If not, then this cycle of dysfunction in our education system will continue for educators, and they will continue to feel lost, uncomfortable, and spiritually empty.

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