Interacting Narratives: Acknowledging the Self in the Construction of Professional Knowledge

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In this article, I present a theoretical extension of Interacting Narratives, a narrative approach to teacher education, development, and research in which identity is understood to be constructed and reconstructed through social influences and through conscious intention. The idea of Interacting Narratives provides a description of the interaction of Life Narratives (contextual influences) and Chosen Narratives (selected practices) in the construction and reconstruction of the participants' entwined personal and professional identities. Here, I now describe a third fundamental influence: Self Narratives. The concept of Self Narratives acknowledges and values the crucial function of the extra-rational unconscious mind in the development of teachers' professional knowledge and identity, an approach that challenges current theory and practice in the field. The concept of Self Narratives integrates the theories and practices of depth psychology, particularly Jungian analytical psychology, into narrative approaches to teachers' professional knowledge. Doing so allows teachers and teacher educators to acknowledge and work with the inevitable and powerful unconscious dynamics that influence teaching. Recognizing the unconscious mind as profoundly influential is a position ignored by more familiar schools of educational psychology, and a Jungian perspective considers the unconscious mind as ultimately helpful and holistic, a position that varies from other schools of depth psychology.

Teacher Education

The principal emphasis in teacher education and development remains the attainment of skills and knowledge. Though such practices are essential, they are overstressed and emphasize the skills-related aspects of teachers' professional knowledge. In doing so, they fail to recognize that, for teachers, issues of professional knowledge and practice are acutely intertwined with questions of individual teachers' identities, with their history, and with their future objectives (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Researchers in the field of education have been investigating the role of narrative in the development of teachers' personal and professional identities for over twenty years (see, for instance, Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1986). According to these researchers, human beings lead essentially

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storied lives; we not only convey stories but also we "lead storied lives on storied landscapes" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 8).   Their argument is epistemological; they argue that narrative and story are means of knowing, potent and fundamental ways to understand one's experience (Beattie, 2001; C. Carter, 1993; K. Carter & Doyle, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1988).   Human beings experience the world as narrative and through narrative, and education is understood to be the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). Teachers' professional knowledge is deeply entwined with their identities (Clandinin, 1985; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Personal experience shapes teaching interests and practice, and teacher identity, teacher knowledge, and teaching context interact and constitute teachers' "stories to live by" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

The use of narrative as a means of constructing and reconstructing professional identity has become widespread in colleges of education, and Narrative and Research has become the largest Special Interest Group in the American Educational Research Association, the principal international body of educational researchers.

Beattie's original use of Interacting Narratives considers the storied nature of individual lives and the effect of such individual storied lives on each other when they interact. She calls the interaction of narratives the "ground where lives meet lives" (Beattie, 1995a, p. 83). Beattie considers the effect of these entwined, storied lives, these interacting narratives, on the construction of professional knowledge and shows that, "within interacting narratives where lives come together, influence each other, and become increasingly more responsive to each other, professional development and change can take place, and individuals can re-form themselves and their communities" (Beattie, 1995b, 133).   Her emphasis is relational, the focus on the effect of relationships on the reconstruction of professional knowledge as individual's stories meet and interact. Richardson (2006) demonstrates the ongoing vitality of this approach to interacting narratives and professional knowledge in her inquiry into the role of music in the lives of seven pre-service teachers.   Beattie later expands her use of Interacting Narratives when she develops the concepts of Life Narratives and Chosen Narratives (Beattie, Dobson, Thornton, & Hegge, 2007; Beattie, Thornton, Dobson, & Hegge, 2005).   Here, she conceptualizes the interacting narratives as the experiences and contexts that influence a single person's professional knowledge, which may or may not be relational.

Life Narratives

Life Narratives are formative influences on a teacher's professional knowledge over which the teacher has little or no control. These narratives may be experienced as positive or negative. This category of narratives may include past or present personal life events and circumstances. It may also include culture, gender, race, and family. Life Narratives include institutional narratives and what Connelly and Clandinin (1998) describe as the professional knowledge landscape. Not all of these elements need to be present in a discussion of Life Narratives. The emphasis is on the aspects the participant considers to be influential on the development of her professional knowledge. Some participants will consider the Life Narrative to

be more or less influential than will others. The category of Life Narratives acknowledges that numerous elements, many of them non-chosen, influence the construction and reconstruction of professional knowledge. It provides an opportunity to inquire into such contextual elements as participants understand to be influential in their professional knowledge. It includes elements that are personal as well as professional in nature and recognizes that teachers' professional knowledge is constructed through the interaction of teachers' Life and Chosen Narratives.

Here is an illustrative example of a Life Narrative from my own experience. In it, I consider some early contextual influences that later affected the development of my professional knowledge as an English and drama teacher. The predominant contextual influences in my life were growing up in a dysfunctional family dominated by an alcoholic father–but also in a family that encouraged me to read. My father was drunk almost every night, and there were always books. We went to the library every week, and my earliest memories of experiencing the arts are recollections of an intimacy with books.

Scene 1

Eight years old, I descend the worn stairs of the Public Library, a large, solid stone building in the centre of the park. The four of us make the trip each Saturday morning: Mom, my twelve-year-old brother, and my younger sister, age four. Dad never comes. Now that I am eight, I am old enough for my own library card, and today is the day I get it. I fill out the application, in pen, while sitting at the low round table in the middle of the shorter shelves of books for the youngest children, books I don't read anymore. I spell my middle name Scout instead of Scott, but Mom helps me correct it. While the librarian processes my application, I scan the shelves with extra care. These will be the first books lent to me, not to my Mom, and I choose my dozen books like a Captain choosing his crew for a long sea voyage. I take my new mates over to the counter, and the librarian signs them out under the new number on my card. Twelve times she stamps first the ink pad and then one of my books, drumming out the arrival of each sailor onto my ship, the rhythm accompanying my transformation from shore-bound child to independent adventurer. In the back seat of the station wagon on the way home, I hold my books in my lap, my uncreased

library card in my hand like a treasure map. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 42)

Scene 2

I am lying on the floor in the living room, my books spread out around me. I am waiting for Dad to get home from work. When he finally arrives, it is after six, and the dog, a black cocker-spaniel and poodle mix named Foxy, runs barking to the door to greet him. I follow her and stand at the top of the stairs as Dad takes off his shoes and hat. Mom is working in the kitchen behind me. Dad climbs the three stairs to the kitchen, opens the fridge and pours himself a Five Star Whisky and Coke. He and Mom do not say anything to each other. He lights a cigarette and takes his drink into the living room. I follow and take my place amongst my books. Dad turns on the television. I return to my stories. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 43)

This story demonstrates two main elements of the context of my early life: the dysfunctional family and the primary place of reading. At the time, I experienced the books themselves as friends. This image is contrasted with the realization that at least one of the real-life companions who ought to be most trustworthy, the father, is not. As a researcher into English and arts education who is recollecting the importance of my early encounters with reading, I now understand that here is a main narrative theme that still permeates my understanding of the role of literature in my life and in my teaching. Books have consistently been a means of sanctuary. Since the home life was an emotionally dangerous place, the world of literature became a sanctuary. By sanctuary, I do not mean merely a diversion from life as might be characterized by escapist entertainment.   Sanctuary is defined in *The Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (1985, p. 926) as a spiritual home, the innermost recess, an area of immunity, a place of refuge, a site or time for preservation and protection of birds and wild animals. I love the image of sanctuary as sacred nature preserve. I now know that the arts are my spiritual home, the holy refuge for the wild birds within, the innermost recess, which becomes an untouchable area of immunity for my wild animals.   In literary experience, that which seems haphazard, muddled or hollow in my experiences can become integrated, purposeful, and significant.   My life seems less piecemeal, disconnected, or confused. This fleeting experience is potent; it is transforming and weighty—the spiritual dimension of this life I live. I now know that throughout my life my interaction with literature has been my salve, my spirit, and my soul. Whitman writes, "Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems," (1992 [1855], p. 22). Through literature, I do acquire that source: it is the divinity that originates and resides within and which animates and transforms the unfolding of my life. It has been through literature and my experiences as an English teacher that I have felt the embodied experience of external and internal

dissonance altering into harmony. In these encounters, the theatre has been my cathedral, music my prayer, and the novel my spirit quest.

When I was younger, I did not have an intellectual understanding of why I read. I experienced reading as a strong need, a desire. At the time, I found relief, excitement, joy, and safety in reading. An interesting quality of reading fiction is that while one might initially do so as a move away from reality, there is something intrinsic to the process that moves one closer to oneself. It was (and is) a secure, tranquil means by which to ascertain more of who I was and who I was becoming. In a treacherous home, literature provided a safe haven. I believe that all my subsequent encounters with literature have been affected by this association, including my professional knowledge and practice as an English teacher (Dobson, 2008).

Chosen Narratives

"Chosen Narratives" are practices that individuals actively engage in for their effect and impact. Such practices might be psychological, literary, artistic, musical, or spiritual in nature. These are activities that people seek out for their impact: for enrichment, for revelation, for meaning, for sustenance, for transformation. Here is an illustrative example of a Chosen Narrative. The participant is Ann Yeoman a practicing Jungian analyst who also taught undergraduate classes in Jungian Studies and literature at the University of Toronto. She holds a Ph.D. in literature and a Diploma in Analytical Psychology from Zurich.[1]

Ann's Chosen Narratives have been in analytical psychology, literature and the arts. For instance, Ann keeps a regular practice of making pottery because she values a regular artistic practice as crucial to her own ongoing personal growth. Despite her demanding schedule, she makes sure she attends her weekly pottery class. She is aware that, for her, making pottery is a literal act of metamorphosis (clay to cup or bowl) that is an image or metaphor for the inner work of personality construction and reconstruction.

> In making pottery and using the pottery wheel, first of all,
> I'm working with my hands. Your hands often know much
> more than your head. Often, if I am not getting things centred
> on the wheel, I close my eyes and just let my hands, my
> body, do it; it'll work. It's all about centring. It's all about
> patience and humility. In making pottery, you are working
> with all the elements: earth, water, air, fire. It's the oldest
> form of art that has a utilitarian component as well. It's
> alchemical. You're really working with all these elemental
> properties. It is quite magical because you take something
> out of the kiln, and it's so different from when you put it in.
> You take a lump of cold gray clay, and you work with it and
> give it a shape. It's like the whole metaphor of consciously
> shaping nature, and that's what we need to be doing with

ourselves all the time. Constantly working with, bringing to consciousness, and shaping our natures. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 81)

This narrative excerpt provides an example of a chosen practice, in this case, making pottery. Ann has chosen pottery as a regular practice because it influences her entwined personal and professional knowledge. It reminds Ann that, for her, the primary task of teaching is to provide experiences that encourage students to bring their inherent natures to consciousness. She understands that engaging with literature provides school- and age-appropriate ways for students to work consciously with and shape the nascent elements of their personalities. Each of us is, or could be, working with and shaping the material that emerges from the unconscious mind in the same way that a potter works with clay. Making pottery reminds Ann that this kind of personal development and this kind of teaching require being centred, patient, and humble.

The Self

The contextual Life Narratives and the selected Chosen Narratives provide a means of articulating and analyzing significant elements of teachers' professional knowledge and identity. However, to stop there is to ignore the significant role that the unconscious mind plays whether we recognize its influence or not. Since the unconscious mind, with the Self as its primary feature, affects human action and the construction and reconstruction of identity, it has a substantial influence on teachers' professional knowledge and identities.

Many contemporary researchers consider the role of the Self in educational contexts (Bogdan, 2003; Clarkson, 2002, 2005a, 2005b; Clarkson & Worts, 2005; Jones, Clarkson, Congram & Statton, 2008; Craig, 1994; Cranton, 1996, 2003; Dirkx, 2000, 2001; Dirkx, Mezirow & Cranton, 2006; Forbes, 2003; Mayes, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005a, 2005b; Miller, 1994, 2001 [1988]; Neville, 2005; Paterson, 1997; Reinsmith, 1992; Shaker, 1982; Uhrmacher, 1997). Jungian depth psychology provides a helpful description of the Self in which the Self is distinguished from the conscious ego. From this perspective, the ego is the centre of the conscious identity, that part of the psyche that is aware of itself as an individual, while the Self dwells in the unconscious and is the centre and circumference of the total psyche. It is the entire personality, both conscious and unconscious. The Self is the essential generative energy of the whole psyche, the ultimate psychic authority, and the ego is secondary to it even though the ego experiences itself as sovereign. The Self has a more inclusive and integrated view than the ego. Consciousness is a secondary function arising out of, and remaining influenced by and rooted in, the primary functioning of the unconscious Self.

We can only make contact with the Self through symbols. The language of the Self, its vocabulary and grammar, is symbolic and so is necessarily unlike rational, conscious thought. As a result, we can only relate with it through symbols, for example in dreams, fantasies, and creative activities like making art, or through the perception of objects or experiences in the outer world in a symbolic manner. This process of unintentionally imbuing elements of the 'outer' world as symbolic is

known as projection or transference and can be seen in one's responses to works of literature or art, or in one's reactions to encounters with others.

The symbol is the expression of something as yet unknown to consciousness; it manifests what ego consciousness would do well to realize and integrate through an ongoing reconstruction of identity. The process is both advantageous and essential for the individual and for the collective. The unconscious sends potentially vivifying symbols that try to get the attention of consciousness in order to compensate for the unavoidably asymmetrical character of ego consciousness. A symbol brings together the standpoints of the conscious ego, which is lopsided, and the unconscious Self, which is holistic, in order to promote a more integrated, comprehensive, and differentiated conscious attitude.

Jung describes the symbol as the best representation for something that as yet remains unknown. He writes,

> A symbol is an indefinite expression with many meanings, pointing to something not easily defined and therefore not fully known. But the sign always has a fixed meaning, because it is a conventional abbreviation for, or commonly accepted indication of, something known. (1956, p. 124)

According to Jung, a symbol cannot be consciously or deliberately formed:

> It is, therefore, quite impossible to create a living symbol, i.e. one that is pregnant with meaning, from known associations. For what is thus produced never contains more than what was put into it. (1971 [1921], p. 475)

From this perspective, the role of the symbol is a foundational activity of the human mind that can never be superseded. Symbols are not only visual images. They can take almost any form, and emotions, intuitions, and sensations can all be understood as symbolic and therefore considered as valuable ways of knowing, as sources of insight and revelation.

A symbolic attitude facilitates individuation, a process of psychological maturation. According to Jung, "as 'individuality' embraces our innermost, incomparable uniqueness, it also implies becoming one's own self. We could therefore translate individuation as 'coming into self-hood' or 'self-realization'"(1953, p. 173).

> [Individuation] is the process by which individual beings are formed and differentiated: in particular, it is the development of the psychological individual as a being distinct from the general, collective psychology. Individuation, therefore, is a process of differentiation, having for its goal the development of the individual personality. (1971 [1921], p. 448)

Individuation promotes meaningful and ethical social action: "As the individual is not just a single, separate being, but by his very existence presupposes a collective relationship, it follows that the process of individuation must lead to more intense and broader collective relationships and not to isolation" (p. 488). Individuation is an increasing consciousness of the nature of the inner life and the courage to enact that insight with integrity in the daily realities of the outer life. It is an ongoing practice, a lifelong and ceaseless process.

Individuation, then, involves the development of a symbolic attitude, one that promotes the perspective that each individual has an authentic, particular and individual nature and that this nature has an agenda of its own, separate from conscious intention. A symbolic attitude is a conscious perspective that understands all actions, beliefs, language, relationships, choices, and activities as symbolic manifestations of the innermost Self, notably imbued with collective influences. Developing a symbolic attitude means understanding the innermost Self, one's inherent and authentic identity, as a wise teacher who reveals her/his insight through symbols. This inner teacher possesses a holistic perspective, one we can only come into contact with through symbols. It is extremely difficult to develop and preserve a symbolic attitude because the conscious ego-identity must be both robust and flexible.

Self Narratives

In narrative approaches to teachers' professional knowledge, identity (one's story to live by) is generally understood to be constructed and reconstructed through conscious intention (Chosen Narratives) and through contextual influences (Life Narratives). It is possible and necessary to go further, to describe a third influence that is fundamental for the participants. Using the concept of Self Narratives allows teachers and teacher educators to acknowledge and work with the inevitable and powerful unconscious dynamics that influence their teaching practice and the ongoing construction and reconstruction of their professional knowledge.

The Self plays a more significant role than merely being a part of the psychological dimensions of the professional knowledge of teachers with a highly specialized familiarity with depth psychology. One might ask if Self Narratives are not just a kind of Chosen Narrative. From a perspective informed by depth psychology, they are not.[2] Knowingly or unknowingly one is always in the grips of personal complexes and archetypal patterns. One cannot choose to avoid them nor can one choose to create them. They function even if one is unaware of them or seeks to ignore them. From this perspective, the appropriate choice is to seek to be increasingly conscious of their presence, their effects, and their meanings and to alter one's behaviour, one's story, accordingly. The unconscious mind, with the Self at its centre, exerts a personal and social influence, whether or not consciousness chooses to attend to it. Like conscious intention and social context, the unconscious mind plays a significant role in the construction and reconstruction of teachers' professional knowledge.

Self Narratives are not chosen. They are encountered; they are experienced; they are endured. The conscious ego experiences them as happening to it as if the

innermost Self were an objective force. "Objective" here means outside of conscious control. It does not mean immune to or unaffected by social context. From this perspective, conscious identity seeks to align with an authentic, inhering, always- emerging personality, which is revealed by the symbolic communications of the unconscious mind, the Self. The symbols of the Self are enacted in ways conscious or unconscious and are always embedded and embodied in a social and familial context.

The narrative of one's identity is developed and altered not merely in response to the collective values and stories. For instance, it is not adequate merely to develop a narrative of identity that aligns one with the collective or familial standards--or that merely rebels against those standards; in fact, individuation requires becoming conscious of the unique ways in which one's identity diverges from and aligns with social and familial traditions and expectations while continuing to relate meaningfully to others and to one's society.

Neither can one merely choose one's own stories intentionally, though conscious intent is vital to the process of identity formation. The story of identity is not just a deliberate invention any more than it can be merely a manifestation of social expectations. One cannot use just one's critical faculties, one's intellect, one's ideologies, and one's willpower as guides or means for recreating identity, though these forces are vital in the process. Rather, individuation requires an ongoing rewriting of the story of identity in response to experiences of an objective phenomenon that is not primarily social or personal, though it is encountered in social and personal contexts and takes on, or comments on, those contexts.

The Self Narrative involves an ongoing focus on the emerging symbols of the unconscious mind and ultimately on the integration of the symbolic revelations of the innermost Self into the conscious personality. The primary emphasis is the development of a wider, more inclusive, and more discerning state of consciousness through regular encounters with the symbolic communications of the archetypal Self. The Self Narrative is a means of acknowledging and valuing the extra-rational, which is beyond rational but which is not here degraded as being of less value than the rational.

The Self Narrative has two aspects: there is a symbolic story unfolding both unconsciously in the order of the symbols as they emerge in series and consciously in the revelations that surface from reflecting on the symbols. On a conscious level, the Self Narrative results from the intentional stringing together of the individual symbols that arise from the unconscious mind, though such connections may not be linear; they may instead be spiral or web-like, for instance. This consciously held narrative is meant to alter perpetually in response to emergent symbols. The task is increasingly and consistently to align the consciously held narrative with the always-emerging series of narrative symbols. The Self is authoring an identity narrative that is beyond conscious or social control, though it manifests in and is affected by personal and social contexts.

It is the Self Narrative that provides narrative unity, even when the conscious ego is unaware of it. The Self contains a sense of unity that does not contradict multiplicity or resist contradictions and contrariness. The Self is teleological in

nature, and identity includes inborn traits and possibilities, of which one may or may not be aware. A sense of agency or integrity is created and maintained when one's thoughts and actions align with the Self Narrative. It is the Self Narrative that is responsible for the participants' sense of meaning, authenticity, and spirituality.

Here are some examples of Self Narratives. The participant is Austin Clarkson[3] who has a Ph.D. in musicology from Columbia University and who was a professor in the Music Department at York University in Toronto for twenty-three years before his retirement. At York, Austin launched a course called *Foundations of Creative Imagination*. He is the founder of *Exploring Creativity in Depth,* a program that offers a day-long workshop for public school children held in a community art centre. Between 2002 and 2006 some 1,700 students took part in this program. Austin contributed to the *Explore a Painting in Depth* program at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), in which visitors sat in a booth across from *The Beaver Dam,* a painting by J. E. H. MacDonald, a Canadian artist and Group of Seven member. Patrons listened to an audio program in which they were invited to interact imaginatively with the painting. Between 75,000 and 100,000 museum visitors participated in the program during its ten-year existence between 1993 and 2003 (Clarkson & Worts, 2005). Austin provides an example of a Self Narrative from his own experience:

> I first developed trust in the images around the mid-seventies
> when I was doing a tissue paper collage workshop with the
> Jungian analyst Edith Wallace. I made these collages and
> then realized they were all on the same topic, even though I
> had no conscious desire to make them so. They were all
> meant to be totally spontaneous. Yet the same images were
> coming through, which all had to do, as far as I could see,
> with the Trickster. I was having to engage with the Trickster.
> The only explanation was that there was something going on
> that I was not conscious of and that it was time that I became
> aware of it. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 114)

In this excerpt Austin provides an example of a Self Narrative as he acknowledges and values the crucial function of the extra-rational unconscious mind in the development of personal identity. These experiences affected the ongoing reconstruction of his professional knowledge as a teacher in many ways, including the creation and teaching of courses and workshops that would provide opportunities for others to engage with their own Self Narratives.

In Austin's creativity classes for adults and children, he uses many methods to promote meaningful encounters with the Self. Active imagination is one of Austin's main methods. In what follows, he first describes some examples and then provides some analysis of the process.

> Active Imagination is a basic tool for this work. . . It always
> involves some kind of a relaxation followed by the
> description of some kind of journey. The journey needs to be
> as simple as possible so that you are not over-directing what

is going to be imagined. Now the relaxation can be very brief
or it can be quite extended. It can be a matter of attending to
the breath. It all depends on the group. . . One active
imagination exercise asks the participants to have
conversations with the mask they have made in the class.
Ask, "What is it needing to tell you? What are you seeking to
find out from the mask?" When we do another activity, an
active fantasy journey with the mask, you just imagine that
you are going on a journey with the mask, and it is going to
take you to someplace that it wants to show you. You may
have a question. That's basically it. Then after that journey,
we'll have crayons and paper, and they'll create something or
journal right there. It is absolutely essential to have some sort
of expressive medium in which to record these kinds of
experiences. It needs to be done with images as well as
words. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 143)

Here, Austin relates the purpose, methods, and results of active imagination:

Active imagination is a means of activating the ego-Self axis.
Once you are working with an image, you are in this
intermediate realm between focused ego, between directed
consciousness and the unconscious. . . Once participants
begin to relax a bit and understand the flow of the process,
they can let the task lead itself. They give over trying to
direct it, and they discover that it just happens. It takes some
adults quite a few weeks, sometimes months before they
really feel comfortable in that space. It's much more difficult
for university students to do this than for elementary or high
school students because their survival depends on being
high-functioning conceptualists. Otherwise, they don't make
the grade. This is very, very important learning that goes on.
. .You have to learn it by experience, by work and play. Play
has to be part of it. There has to be a certain freedom of
directedness, which is really play. (Dobson, 2008b, p.145)

Austin uses this next active imagination exercise in the *Exploring Creativity
in Depth* workshops for elementary school children, and it was the basis of the
Explore a Painting in Depth program at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Clarkson &
Worts, 2005). The school children explore a gallery space full of art and then pick
a piece that interests them.

You ask them to choose a place in that art work and then to
imagine going to it and being there and actually looking

around from that place. Imagine that you can touch it; what are the textures like? What is the temperature like? Can you move around it? Go for a walk, explore. All of which seems quite peculiar to do in ordinary consciousness, but we never have any trouble with people doing it. They just go into the picture. The affects [emotions] that come up can be extremely powerful. You then ask them to choose a shape, focus on that shape on being that shape and moving around as that shape. Then choose a colour. Imagine being bathed in that colour, what are the feelings that colour brings? Then for one, two or three minutes, depending on how long you have, you just let them be there with the presence of the image and let their imaginations go. Then have crayons and paper, and they draw and write about that experience. (Dobson, 2008b, p. 144)

Active imagination is not merely a passive reception of the images that arise from the unconscious. It involves, in fact requires, a dialogue between the conscious ego and the images.

That dialogue is the crucial task of the exercise because the ego discovers things that it didn't know and didn't want to know. The mask is there as the teacher, and very often the exchange with the mask produces a poem or some kind of a dialogue which is incredibly revelatory of things that the ego had not permitted itself to know. (Dobson, 2008b, p.145)

Through active imagination, in this case imagining a conversation between the mask and the conscious ego, the image of the mask can become a teacher, providing insight to consciousness. The ego needs to take an active part in the process of active imagination in order to prevent the unconscious images from taking too much control of the personality. The goal is never to replace too much consciousness with too much unconsciousness but rather to keep an open and regular communication between the ego and the Self with the goal of increasing consciousness. Active imagination is one way to facilitate individuation and results in the ego becoming more flexible and permeable, less defended against what is shadow or Other.[4]

There are many other methods for engaging with the Self Narrative. Of course, dreams and fantasies also are rich entries into the Self Narrative. Other practices include becoming aware of aesthetic responses as projections, as an extraverted process of creating symbols. Here, the participants become aware of projections while watching a film, or reading a book or poem, and then reflect on the symbolic import of their projections and their implications for their professional knowledge and practice as a teacher. The key is to understand one's reaction itself as symbolic and then to begin to consider the symbolic import of the stimulus, of the object or event that inspired the reaction. Elsewhere, I have discussed at length such an

experience when I realized that my reading and viewing habits were changing and how that change inspired an inquiry into the nature of masculinity, which in turn had a substantive influence on my teaching practice and professional knowledge (for more, see Dobson, 2009b).

Archetypal reflectivity (Dobson, 2008a, 2008b, 2009a; Mayes, 2005a, 2005b) provides another method of integrating Self Narratives into teacher education and development. Archetypal reflectivity is a process of considering the patterns of behaviour that unconsciously and consciously inform a teacher's practice. This practice is a means of promoting teacher reflectivity that addresses a full range of teachers' concerns, from the practical or pedagogical, to the biographical, to the political, and to issues of meaning, purpose, and authenticity. There are several ways to engage in archetypal reflectivity. In the first, a teacher or author presents examples of archetypal dynamics in her own teaching and reveals how recognition of these patterns of behaviour led to meaningful development in her professional knowledge and practice. Here, the teacher or author reports to the group, class, or reader about the apparent and subtle ways in which interacting with certain archetypal dynamics or figures exemplifies the *author's* reflective practice. Such a report is intended to clarify, illuminate or challenge elements of the audience members' professional knowledge and practice. The author describes what she has learned about the archetypal dimensions of teaching to pre-service or in-service teachers in hopes that they will recognize and then alter aspects of their own teaching knowledge and practice. Clifford Mayes demonstrates this process with the archetypes of the shaman and the hero (2005a, 2005b), Bernie Neville does so with the Greek gods (2005). One could also do so by extending the work of Robert Moore (1990) and analyzing the four archetypal images of the Royal, Warrior, Magician, and Lover, and their bipolar shadows, to inquire into the ways they might facilitate ongoing teacher reflection and development (Dobson, 2008b).

Another way to engage in archetypal reflectivity is to ask teachers to consider times that archetypal energies arise in their work. For instance, teachers could be asked to reflect on how their schools and own practices embody the archetypal natures of the Greek gods, how the archetype of the hero and the hero's journey illustrates their experience as learners and teachers, or where and when the bipolar shadows of the Royal, Warrior, Magician, and Lover manifest in their teaching practices. This is an active, reflective process with a focus on promoting change, not merely a labelling game. Through this reflective process, a teacher might discover that under stress (or even without any stress!) he demonstrates the behaviours associated with, for example, the Absent or Addicted Lover. The teacher as Absent Lover might be burned out or indifferent. The teacher as Addicted Lover might rely too strongly on adoration of his students. He can then consider how it is that in his specific teaching circumstance, he can choose to respond with a mature *Eros* energy instead.

Another kind of archetypal reflectivity would involve methods that more directly access the unconscious mind. Experiences would be created so that the teacher or teacher candidate can create, encounter, and interact with her or his own spontaneously generated images. There would be opportunities that allow the

archetype that chooses the individual to be encountered and engaged. This can be achieved through methods such as drawing, painting, writing, drama, and mask making as well as active imagination or guided visualization. Each of these methods can result in the creation of a symbol arising from the Self. Working with and analyzing such symbols can result in alterations to the professional knowledge that the teacher regards as meaningful.

Regardless of the method, engaging with the Self Narrative involves a four-step process. The first step is Creation, which involves the formation of, apprehension of, or interaction with symbols felt to be personally relevant to the student. The second stage is Reflection, a process of intellectual rumination upon the personal and archetypal meanings of the symbols and conscious analysis of previously incorporated attitudes. The third stage is Integration, which involves the emergence of a more expansive, integrated, and differentiated conscious attitude, and the fourth stage is Action, the taking of action in the midst of daily life that enacts this renewed perspective.[5]

Conclusion

The concept of Life Narratives acknowledges and values the vital role of social context and conditioning in the development of personal and professional identity. The concept of Chosen Narratives acknowledges and values the crucial responsibility of individual choice, will power, and intention in the development of personal and professional identity. The concept of Self Narratives acknowledges and values the fundamental function of the extra-rational unconscious mind in the development of personal and professional identity.

Recognizing Self Narratives as a third form of Interacting Narrative integrates the influential role of the unconscious mind in the construction of teachers' professional knowledge. Attending to the Self Narrative can result in the development of conscious perspectives that are more comprehensive, integrated, and differentiated. Such emerging attitudes are more comprehensive in that they allow one to see more and more clearly; more integrated in that aspects of the personality that have been left out or left behind are brought in; and more differentiated so that what was murky becomes clearer, that which was unformed is further shaped. This process is a change in one's narrative construction of identity that is an expression of the intellect, emotions, intuition, body, ethics, aesthetics, and spirit. Such an ongoing development of conscious perspectives enables teachers to discover and enact more authentic identity stories in the midst of their professional, social, and personal contexts.

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Notes

1. Ann declined the option of anonymity. A Diploma in Analytical Psychology is the equivalent of a Ph.D. and is the required training to become a Jungian analyst, as recognized by the International Association of Analytical Psychology. The training program in Zurich was the only one created with the input of C. G. Jung and remains the standard.

2. For classic works on this subject one could turn to Jung's *Man and His Symbols* (1964) and *Memories, Dreams and Reflections* (1961) For more contemporary criticism, one could peruse Susan Rowland's *Jung: A Feminist Revision* (2002), Hauke's *Jung and the Postmodern: the interpretation of realities* (2000) or *The Handbook of Jungian Psychology: theory, practice and applications* (Papadopoulos, 2006). For works that focus directly on education, I suggest Mayes's *Jung and Education* (2005), Neville's *Educating Psyche* (2005) and my own *Transformative Teaching* (2008).

3. Austin declined the option of anonymity.

4. For more on active imagination, see Chodorow (2006) and for more on active imagination and visualization in education see J. Miller (2000; 2005) and Neville (2005). For more on Austin's practice and methods see Dobson (2008).

5.   For more on this process, see Dobson (2008a) and Dobson (2008b).