Planting Seeds: Regenerative Leadership Curriculum for Communities of Practice

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Abstract

Across much of the Western world there is a growing movement working to plant the seeds of a holistic worldview that is based on a recognition of the interdependent relationship between self, Earth, and community. One way to nurture this emergence on a local level is through community-based workshops that offer theories and practices in support of such a perspective. The purpose of this study is to create a curriculum that could be used to shape this type of workshop. The design of the curriculum content is meant to offer interior and exterior tools and experiences that catalyze both individual and group development. The primary method utilized in the research was a curriculum advisory board to assist with content development. The ultimate goals of such a workshop are two-fold: (a) to deepen participants' relationships to self, Earth, and community; and (b) to create and inspire local community groups that can support social justice, environmental stewardship grounded in an ethic of care, and regenerative (sustainable) community development during this time of great planetary need. The findings of the research span the fields of adult development, relational education, community organizing and activism, regenerative leadership, nature connection, and sustainable community development. Tools and practices include but are not limited to meditation, dialogue, shadow work, worldview inquiries, journaling, group development, and community action plans.

Keywords: communities of practice, ecocentric relationship, regenerative leadership, relational education, sustainability leadership curriculum

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Orienting the Reader

Before I address the context, content, and purpose of this study, along with my own background, I would like to take a brief moment to welcome and help orient the reader in the presentation of this research. This will entail addressing my use of the term *we*, describing my grounding assumptions in the research, and providing a few definitions.

Use of the Term We

Throughout this paper I use the term we in reference to the predominant Western worldview that has shaped the social, political, and economic systems of Western culture. Of course not every individual in Western culture holds the predominant cultural worldview expressed through these systems and institutions. Additionally the use of we in this paper does not include the diverse indigenous perspectives still alive today in the west and across the planet. In further addressing this topic I would like to echo Scott's (2013) sentiments, that:

> The use of a generalized 'we' is fundamentally limiting and inaccurate, though in the case of writing that takes a broad view, it is useful and even necessary. I join Theodore Roszak (1995), one of the founders of contemporary ecopsychology, and many other attentive individuals in acknowledging that we must "...use the word 'we' with the utmost discrimination... recognizing that the 'we' that runs the industrial world is psychically estranged from the 'we' that holds out in the rainforests, outbacks, and reservations by a distance that has to be calculated in light years" (pp. 6-7). Additionally, it is important to recognize that even within the industrialized world there is a wide-range of behavior towards, and relationship with the natural world. I echo Catherine Keller (1986), who said it well at the outset of her book *From a Broken Wed*: "By naming such conditions I hope to post a few gargoyles at the threshold, warning not to mistake the ensuing generalizations for any all-inclusive truth" (*ix*)". (p. 21)

Grounding Assumptions

Additionally, as the primary author and researcher in this project I feel that it is important to state the assumptions that have grounded the theoretical foundations of this study. The following assumptions echo those of the ecophilosopher and systems theorist Macy (Brown &

Macy, 1998) as well as many other writers, philosophers, educators, and ecologists, many of whose work is explored in the following pages of this research:

1. We are expressions of an intricate living system that encompasses this planet. Just as we make up the larger body of our cells so too is this planet our larger body.

2. "Human nature is far more ancient and encompassing than the separate self defined by society" (Brown & Macy, p. 59). A healthy adult expression of this nature should include awareness and behavior that embodies the interdependent (ecocentric) nature of self, Earth, and community.

3. The deeper one's relationship is to the other, be it an environment or a person, the more likely one is to protect and nurture the other.

Definitions

Resonant with the above ecocentric assumptions and perspectives the following concept definitions are useful in the research account ahead; a more conclusive list that describes terms used in the curriculum can be viewed in Appendix A.

Communities of practice. Groups of people who share a common interest, passion, or set of problems and who meet on a regular basis to deepen and share their knowledge and skills around the topic (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

Critical thinking. Critical thinking is marked by one's ability to analyze and reflect on one's own thought process. Such skills "help students recognize assumptions and bias in personal thoughts, as well as in the words and actions of others" (Litz & Mitten, 2013, p. 6).

Ecological literacy. Ecological literacy is the understanding of natural systems and the knowledge needed to protect those systems through such fields as conservation and politics (Litz & Mitten, 2013).

Environmental stewardship. A felt sense of responsibility from people towards the environment grounded in an ethic of care and an understanding of our interconnected relationship with the natural world (Litz & Mitten, 2013).

Holistic worldview. Also referred to as the living universe worldview (Korten, 2014). This worldview is based on the interconnected view of natural systems and promotes values and actions that honor interdependence, indigenous wisdom, cooperation, social equality, and environmental stewardship. It sees humans as a part of nature rather than separate from it (Hawken, 2008; Judith, 2006).

Modern Western (mechanistic) worldview. Describes the predominant paradigm in Contemporary North America and Europe (and those places that have been colonized by nations existing within this paradigm) (Mander, 1991; Scott, 2013), which views humans as separate and dominant over nature and is characterized by individualism, consumerism, competition, and reductionistic thinking (Glendinning, 1994; Mander, 1991; Scott, 2013; Sheldrake, 1994).

Regenerative communities of practice. I define regenerative communities of practice as place-based experiential learning communities, which serve as local hubs for relational education, environmental stewardship, sustainable skills exchange, leadership development, and holistic individual and community growth.

Regenerative leadership. Regenerative leadership, as defined through this thesis, is a form of leadership that is an expression of the holistic worldview. It acknowledges the interconnected view of natural systems and promotes values and actions that honor kinship, indigenous wisdom, cooperation, social equality, and environmental stewardship. It sees humans as a part of nature rather than separate from it (Hawken, 2008; Judith, 2006).

Shadow. The term shadow, originally coined by Carl Jung (1979), refers to the repressed, underdeveloped and/or overlooked parts of ourselves such as unexamined beliefs and assumptions that operate subjectively and often unconsciously influence our behavior and worldviews (Levy, 2013; Wilber, 2000)

Transformational containers. A transformational container refers to a reflective learning environment that allows people to explore the leading edges of their awareness through a combination of experiences that both challenges them and supports them. Such containers hold the ability to catalyze growth in individuals through the exploration of one's worldviews, unexamined assumptions, and beliefs (Fitch, Ramirez, & O'Fallon, 2010).

Context: Evolving Western Worldviews

As ecologist and theologian Berry (2002) stated, "the universe is a communion of subjects not a collection of objects" (p. 39). I believe this statement captures the essence of the shift in Western worldviews that is beginning to take root today in an effort to create a more socially just, environmentally sustainable, and spiritually fulfilling world. Berry's (2002) words are an invitation for us to step into a bigger story and perspective, one that sees our direct relationship to the larger and smaller life systems of which we are a part. Such a worldview may hold the answers to many of the systemic problems our world faces today. As Buber (1970), Leopold (1970), Litz and Mitten (2013), Mayer and Frantz (2004), Roszak, Gomes, and Kanner (1995), Seed et al. (2007), and others have pointed out, we are more likely to take care of the other, be it a landscape or stranger, if we see ourselves as a part of the other. Using this rationale, our challenge then becomes how we as individuals and communities can create educational containers for holistic human development that help to heal and awaken our deeper

relationships to self, Earth, and community thus supporting the creation of healthy regenerative (restorative) cultural systems.

As a species we are collectively facing the increasing demands of a globalized society, which has been heavily influenced by the prevailing modern Western mechanistic worldview that values individualism, consumerism, materialism, competition, and rational analytical thought and perceives humans as being separate from the natural world (Eisenstein, 2013; Glendinning, 1994; Mander, 1991; Sheldrake, 1994). Many believe that such a worldview lies at the root of the obstacles we face such as climate change (Rockström et al., 2014), social inequality (Slater, 2015), and rapid environmental systems deterioration (Steffen et al., 2015). Additionally we are seeing rising rates of social isolation, depression, and alienation (Hillman, 1995; Levine, 2013; Parigi & Henson, 2014; Pratt, Brody, & Gu, 2011). For decades now many scholars, educators, scientists, ecopsychologists, and researchers have been calling for an evolution of perspective which moves us beyond relating to the world through a lens of separateness and competition into a more holistic view that honors the interdependent relationship between self, Earth, and community (Berry, 1988; Eisenstein, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Korten, 2014; LaChapelle, 1984; Seed, Macy, Flemming, & Naess, 1988).

The idea that the current Western worldview unknowingly promotes a type of disconnection that alienates us from each other and the planet is not a new argument. For decades researchers, scholars, and thought leaders from diverse fields, along with institutions such as the United Nations (Harmony and Nature, 2012) and Yale's School of Forestry & Environmental Studies (Fernandez & Leiserowitz, 2007) have argued that this worldview, the most dominant and influential on the planet, has created a split between humans and their natural environment (Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009; Roszak et al., 1995; Morrison, 2009; Oelschlaeger,

1991; Plotkin, 2008; Sheldrake, 1994; Shepard, 1982, 1995; Suzuki, 2007). It has also been argued that this split on a developmental level has resulted in a stunted view of self (Plotkin, 2008; Shepard, 1982). This is then expressed collectively through cultural, social, economic, and political institutions, which promote values and behavior, such as materialism and consumption that inadvertently encourage the destruction of the very life systems upon which they depend (Berry, 1988; Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014; LaChapelle, 1984; Seed, Macy, Flemming, & Naess, 1988).

Though many breakthroughs in medicine, science, technology, and other aspects of society have occurred in conjunction with this modern mechanistic view, the obstacles (and/or pathologies) created out of such a mindset have reached such proportions that they are now adversely affecting much of the planet. Yale's School of Forestry & Environmental Studies shared a similar view on the roots of the problems in their interdisciplinary report titled *Toward a New Consciousness: Values to Sustain Human and Natural Communities (2007)*:

> The failure of the developed world to fully comprehend or confront the size, severity, and urgency of the global environmental crisis requires a deep examination of the prevailing worldviews, structures and institutions, and norms and beliefs within modern society that maintain and reinforce a self-destructive relationship with the natural world. (Fernandez & Leiserowitz, p. 62)

In response to the increasing social and environmental ramifications believed to be brought about through this worldview, an alternative, seemingly more holistic Western view, is beginning to emerge that embodies a set of values that honor cooperation, interdependence, ancient (and current) indigenous wisdom, and stewardship (Berry, 1988; Eisenstein, 2013; Judith, 2006; Korten, 2014; LaChapelle, 1984; Scott, 2013; Seed, Macy, Flemming, & Naess, 1988). An example of this burgeoning Western worldview is captured in the United Nations (2012) initiative *Harmony with Nature*:

> Devising a new world will require a new relationship with the Earth and with humankind's own existence. Since 2009, the aim of the General Assembly, in adopting its five resolutions on 'Harmony with Nature', [*sic*] as been to define this newly found relationship based on a non-anthropocentric relationship with Nature. The resolutions contain different perspectives regarding the construction of a new, non-anthropocentric paradigm in which the fundamental basis for right and wrong action concerning the environment is grounded not solely in human concerns. (United Nations, 2012, para. 4)

On a grass roots level such movements are currently erupting across the globe; they are diverse in their actions, yet unified in their commitment to values that reflect social justice and environmental stewardship (Hawken, 2008). In the book *Blessed Unrest,* Hawken (2008) claims that this movement towards a more holistic planetary society is the most diverse movement that the planet has ever seen.

Hawken (2008) described this movement as classless, nonviolent, and global, transcending political ideologies and economic sectors. Many of its roots lie in environmental, social, and indigenous justice and understanding, and its values celebrate community, kinship, symbiosis, diversity, and interconnection. By Hawken's (2008) count, at a bare minimum there are around 150,000 (and possibly up to 500,000) organizations across the globe working in their own ways to give voice and form to this holistic evolutionary impulse.

Another expression of this movement and perspective is the rights of nature movement that seeks to create a legal framework that acknowledges the legal rights of the natural world. One such document that is beginning to gain traction on an international level is the Earth Charter (2012):

> The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action. (para. 1)

As represented in the Earth Charter quote, at a bare minimum this worldview seeks to strike a balance between the true needs of humans and the needs of the ecosystems of which we are a part.

Research question. In recognizing the resurgence of this holistic, ecocentric worldview in the west, and believing in the possibility it holds to help address many of the problems we face, the question that arose for me as a researcher was how the seeds of this worldview could be planted at a local level. One possibility that surfaced for me led to the research question this thesis explores: What would a community leadership curriculum look like that sought to: (a) deepen participants' relationships to self, Earth, and community; and (b) create and inspire local regenerative communities of practice that foster social justice, environmental stewardship, and holistic (sustainable) community development?

Why focus on relationship? At the heart of the alternative holistic worldview rising today in the west, and other parts of the world, lies the revitalization, and to a certain extent, the re-sanctification of relationship, hinted at through Berry's (2002) phrase "communion of subjects" (p. 39). In the book *A Sand County Almanac,* Aldo Leopold (1970) hypothesized that in order for an individual to act responsibly towards nature, the individual needs to feel a sense of membership and belonging to the natural world. Brown and Macy (1998), Seed et al. (2007), and others take Leopold's notion one-step further. They believe that an expanded sense of self is required, which views the other and nature as an extension of one's self, and that out of this self-expansion care for the other and the planet will naturally follow. In other words, as our sense of self begins to encompass the more-than-human world, "behavior leading to the destruction of this world will be experienced as self-destruction" (Roszak, 1995, p. 12).

Therefore, the cultivation of deeper relationships to our communities and the planet is vital for two reasons. First, through nurturing these relationships our sense of self expands to include others and the planet, an ecocentric view, which some suggest then allows for deeper insights and creative potential to be expressed (Chawla, 2006; Plotkin 2008; Scott, 2013; Seed et al., 2007; Sweatman & Warner, 2009; Wilber, 2000). Secondly, as recent research has suggested, which is explored further in Chapter Two, the deeper an individual's relationship is to another, the more likely he or she will be to demonstrate an ethic of care towards the other; be it a person, community, or an ecosystem (Blythe and Harre, 2012; Litz, 2010; Litz & Mitten, 2013; Mayer & Franz, 2004).

Why communities of practice? One of the main vehicles for the cultivation and dissemination of a worldview is through education (Robinson, 2011). Over the past few decades, Western education, much like the prevailing Western worldview, has come under question by a rising chorus of critics who view the system as being outdated and incomplete (Diamond, 2010; Gardner, 1999; Gatto, 1992; Holt, 1964; Montessori, 2014; Orr, 1994; Plotkin, 2008). Educator and theorist Robinson (2011) points out that as a society, we are operating from an educational model that [like the modern worldview] no longer serves our needs and our growing understating of the world and our role in it (p. 50).

Much of the basic structure of today's educational system can be traced back three hundred years ago to the industrial revolution (Eisenstein, 2013, p. 142; Robinson, 2011). Its driving principles were founded on standardization and conformity, and its structures celebrated rational, linear, and reductionist thought that mirrored the Cartesian, mechanistic understanding of the universe (Eisenstein, 2013; Robinson, 2011). Out of these understandings came a

hierarchy of subjects, which favored reading, writing, and arithmetic over the humanities with the lowest priority being the arts (music, art, theatre, and dance) (Robinson, 2011).

Today, this educational model is often labeled incomplete because it fails to nurture what many believe are essential aspects of human development, such as our authentic creativity, our relationship to nature, and our multiple forms of learning and intelligence (Diamond, 2010; Gardner, 1999; Gatto, 1992; Montessori, 2014). In order to support holistic development in the world that can address the systemic problems humanity is facing, I believe we need accessible holistic educational containers for all ages that incorporate the seemingly positive aspects of the modern Western worldview, such as rationality and self-reliance, while also incorporating our deeper understandings of the organic, unique, and emergent nature of the human experience and potential (Macy & Brown, 1998; Plotkin, 2008; Robinson, 2011).

Herein lies the opportunity for communities of practice. Just as the modern Western worldview roots its perspectives and values through education, so too can regenerative communities of practice offer holistic educational containers that root the emerging holistic worldview and values discussed above on a local level.

Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) defined communities of practice as "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (p. 4). Communities of practice are shaped and defined by three key elements: their domain or focus point, their community members, and their practices (Wenger et al., 2002). The size of the group can range anywhere from a few to many, depending on the domain or focus point, and they often invite different levels of individual participation (Wenger et al., 2002). Communities of practice could

take the form of support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, or youth programs like Girl Scouts of the USA, or spiritual practice groups like Buddhist Sanghas.

I believe communities of practice can be useful community educational tools for three reasons. One, they are financially and geographically accessible. Two, because they are local they can support place-based learning, which has the potential to foster in participants' personal, emotional, and even spiritual relationships to their specific ecosystems and communities (Sobel, 2005). Three, they are more conducive to personal growth through offering a supportive, understanding, and consistent peer network. Research in both outdoor education and addiction recovery has highlighted the importance of local, supportive peer networks to assist in personal growth and development (Bell, 2003; Boisvert, Martin, Grosek, & Clarie, 2008).

Additionally, communities of practice hold the possibility of offering a consistent holistic container that can engage the individual's whole self: her or his mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual creativity, multiple intelligences, and deeper relationships to self, nature, and others. Scott (2013) described this type of holistic approach as relational education, which "seeks to deepen and enhance individual's relationship to self, others, and the natural world through the utilization of activities, experiences and educational methods that elicit the innate human capacity for connection, interrelationship and complete development" (p. 23).

Many believe that it will take this type of holistic engagement to catalyze the human potential and creativity needed to find solutions to the problems we face today (Gardner, 1999; Robinson, 2011). I believe that regenerative communities of practice rooted in ecocentric understandings can offer spaces for new experiences and perspectives to emerge within in a community, which can then help to address the global issues of our time through engaged local action. These concepts are explored further in the following Literature Review Chapter.

Purpose of the Study

I believe one possible way to evolve and diversify education as a tool for healthy development, while also working to root and support the values of the emerging holistic worldview, is to create local regenerative communities of practice. I believe such community groups, grounded in place based experiential learning containers, could serve as local hubs for relational education, environmental stewardship, sustainable skills exchange, leadership development, and holistic individual and community growth. The purpose of this study is to explore the possible structure, theories, and tools that could be used in creating an adult regenerative community leadership curriculum that could serve as a template and catalyst for creating local regenerative communities of practice.

Primary Researcher's Background

Just as cultures evolve by shedding old collective stories and beliefs that no longer encapsulate the new cultural experiences and understandings of the time, so do individuals evolve by shedding their own personal stories that no longer fit their experience of the world (Cook-Greuter, 2007; Wilber, 2000). In my own life, this became true when I turned 27, and the perspectives I had held to make sense of the world and my role in it crumbled.

The process entailed a fundamental reordering and restructuring of how I saw and engaged with the world around me. Up until that point, my worldview had been shaped by my familial and cultural upbringing. It had been forming in me as a core part of my identity since childhood, yet when it became insufficient in its ability to account for the new ideas and experiences I was having, it quickly became obsolete.

Up until that point in my life I had pursued the dream of acting and had no interest in education. My own educational experience up through college, from a cultural standpoint, could

be considered respectable. From pre-school through second grade I attended a Montessori school. Then from third grade through my first year in high school I attended public school; my sophomore year through senior year was spent at a boarding school in Colorado, and for college I attended a small liberal arts school in Ohio.

I followed a privileged, Western educational path. Both boarding school and liberal arts college were expensive institutions that supposedly were worth the money. Thanks to the support of my grandparents, I was lucky enough to be able to afford them. Though I cherish the friendships I made along that path, I do not, in any way, look back with fondness upon the actual academic experiences themselves.

The fact is that I did not want to be in a classroom. More often than not, it felt as if something was being taken away from me rather than being given to me. The spark of life and inspiration I knew well from my experiences in nature seldom found me while seated at a desk. One thing I did learn, however, was a feeling of shame and inadequacy: shame for not being able to learn more quickly; shame for not being interested in the subject I was studying; and shame for not being able to pay attention. These feelings contributed to a sense of alienation when it came to the process of education.

There were two experiences of my long educational journey, however, in which shame and inadequacy did not exist. The first was during my time at the Montessori School when I was very young. Though I struggled with math and writing, I was never made to feel badly about it. I had other skills that were celebrated and of which I was proud.

I knew everything you could know about birds and dinosaurs, and my real forte was Native American history. I could talk about cultural details of almost every tribe in North America, such as their rituals, lifestyles, and their enemies and allies. This knowledge came

from the encouragement of my teachers to freely pursue my individual interests. Through nurturing those sparks of passion I was nurturing those parts of myself that were truly authentic. Out of that grew self-confidence, which was abruptly stripped from me upon my transition to third grade public school, in which merit was based on reading, writing, arithmetic, and how well a student could sit still, pay attention, and follow rules.

The other shame-free chapter of my formal education came at the end of college over the course of my first semester senior year. Spurred by my own depression and lack of inspiration, I arranged through my college to take a semester-long National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) program for college credit. Through three and a half months in nature, rock climbing, backpacking, kayaking, and skiing, I reconnected to inspiration and rediscovered the authentic parts of myself from which I had felt disconnected.

I learned more that semester than I did over my entire college experience. At the end of my NOLS trip I remember thinking, “Isn’t this supposed to be what education is all about, turning people on and helping them to discover what being fully alive feels like?”

After graduating college I pursued acting, which had been a lifelong dream. This brought me to Chicago for two years and then to Los Angeles. It was after about two years of living in Los Angeles that things began to shift for me. Spurred by a sense of meaninglessness in the entertainment industry, I began to search for meaning anywhere I could find it: conversations with friends, walks in nature, poetry; I craved authentic moments and ideas. This process of deep inquiry quickly took on a life of its own. It felt as if a deeper part of me, a part I hadn’t yet uncovered, was emerging and I couldn’t stop it even if I wanted to. I began questioning everything: my own values and beliefs, and culture’s values and beliefs. It was like peeling an

onion and taking away layer after layer in search of an authentic core, a clear and true space from which to rebuild.

My definition of success no longer matched the dominant cultural narrative's definition, which I felt equated it with materialism, riches, and power. I began to better understand the social and environmental consequences of capitalism on a global scale. My interior world opened up. I began paying attention to my dreams, journaling, and writing poetry, I dove deeply into meditation and self-reflection. The world looked and felt different.

To put it in terms of adult developmental theory, I had switched from an ethnocentric perspective into a worldcentric perspective (Wilber, 2000). I no longer solely identified with my own cultural values and beliefs; instead, I recognized not only my own individual uniqueness but also that which connected me to all other humans regardless of country, race, or religion (Wilber, 2000). The Harvard adult developmental theorist Kegan (1994) would classify this as a shift from the socialized mind into the self-authoring mind.

With this shift in worldviews came new ways of understanding myself in relationships to others and to the planet. Along with these insights also came the realization that I no longer had the desire to pursue acting, which I felt at the time was drowning me in the rat race of the Los Angeles entertainment industry. What once seemed like a concrete, irrefutable passion and aspiration quickly, over the course of a few weeks and months, evaporated.

I had no idea what I would do to replace my pursuit and passion for acting. I was left with a blank slate to rebuild as I saw fit. I continued to explore many different types of self-reflective practices around meditation, healing, creativity, pilgrimage, and rites of passage. I left Los Angeles, worked where I could and when I needed to, and traveled around Europe and South America. Through this multi-year experiential process, a broader sense of self and purpose

began to surface, and with it a realization of the power of these transformative contemplative practices.

My growing interest in rites of passage ultimately brought me to graduate studies at Prescott College. Over my time at Prescott, I have been able to look back at my own self-guided educational experience and, to a certain extent, make sense out of it on an academic and theoretical level. This process has turned my gaze outward and created questions in me around how we can use experiential education to create transformative containers for growth as it applies to regenerative leadership and holistic community development.

At the heart of this inquiry lies a personal belief that education is the greatest catalyst for holistic change that we have available to us. When facilitated properly, education has the ability to help cultivate fuller expressions of our humanity. Education shapes both individuals and collectives, and can address the interior and exterior of both. I believe that through such holistic growth we can tap into the fullness of our own capabilities, and by doing so create institutions and systems that honor and nurture the interconnected web of life of which we are a part.

Thesis Overview

Over the course of the following chapters, I present the literature, theories, and methods that I have used to create the basic structure of this adult regenerative community leadership curriculum. After exploring the theories and methods I used to create the curriculum, I then present the findings and discuss the strengths, weaknesses, and validity of the research. Finally, I conclude with how this work and its results could be applied and built upon through further research and fieldwork.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction: Theoretical Framework

This chapter explores the theoretical framework upon which I have structured this research and inquiry. I begin by unpacking the meaning behind the word *regeneration* and explain how it relates to leadership and individual and collective development. Next I address the grounding theories for this research, which were chosen based on their potential to support the goals of the curriculum. Those theories are: integral theory (Wilber, 2000), human development (Cook-Greuter and Soulen, 2007; Wilber, 2000) and the use of naturally therapeutic containers to catalyze adult development (Cook-Greuter, 2002; Fitch et al., 2010; Jaworski, 2011; O'Fallon, 2007), the arc of transformative experiences (Van Gennep, 1960; Scharmer, 2007; Schein, 1995) and ecocentric awareness and action (Blythe & Harre, 2012; Leopold, 1970; Litz & Mitten, 2013; Mayer & Frantz, 2004, Seed et al., 2007).

Regeneration

1. An act or the process of regenerating: the state of being regenerated
2. Spiritual renewal or revival
3. Renewal or restoration of a body, bodily parts, or biological systems (such as a forest) after injury or as a normal process (Merriam-Webster, 2014)

As explored in the introduction, it can be argued that a critical mass of adherents to the modern worldview and value set are increasingly realizing the limitations of the modern worldview at addressing the needs of the evolutionary unfolding of humans as a species. The destruction of global resources and the increasing rate of inner turmoil point to the necessity of a new story, worldview, and value set awakening a deeper understanding, meaning, and experience of the interconnected nature of life.

This need for reconnection, reformation, restoration, and realignment with larger perspectives is captured in the above definition of regeneration. I therefore chose to use the word "regenerative" as a systems attractor of sorts around which to base this curriculum. As chaos theory describes, an attractor acts as a point of organization, which pulls a system from disorder into order (Wilber, 1995).

Grounding Theories

Integral theory: the nature of evolution. In order to better understand the nature the development of human worldviews over the course of history, it is useful to look into the nature of evolution through the lens of integral theory (Wilber, 2000). Evolution can be seen as both an interior and exterior movement towards greater wholeness that expresses itself through individuals and collectives in more and more complex and inclusive ways. The impulse of evolution is to transcend and include that which has come before it. For example, atoms to molecules to cells to multi-cellular organism; or in cultural terms, nomadic tribes to agrarian villages to city-states to countries (Wilber, 1995). This simple yet profound understanding lies at the heart of integral theory (Wilber 1995, 2000).

Wilber (1995, 2000) presents this idea through integral theory's four quadrant model. The four quadrant model is a holistic approach that offers four separate yet connected perspectives on the evolving territory and nature of systems. This model can be applied to any system whether it is the universe or an individual. For the sake of simplicity I define the quadrants as they can be applied to human development, see Figure 2.1.

Inner I: The individual's beliefs, thoughts, and feelings.	Outer I: The individual's biology, physiology, and behavior.
Inner We: Cultural beliefs, philosophies, and worldviews.	Outer We: Societal systems and infrastructure.

Figure 2.1 The Four Quadrants of Human Development.

The two left quadrants (top and bottom) address interiors, while the two right quadrants address exteriors; the top two quadrants represent the individual, and the bottom two represent the collective.

The upper left quadrant represents the inner "I" of the individual (Wilber, 2000). This is the interior subjective experience as it manifests through such things as thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. The upper right represents the exterior "I" of the individual (Wilber, 2000). This refers to the physical operating system and includes actions such as behavior, biology, and physiology. The lower left quadrant represents the interior "We" or collective interior; this includes shared cultural beliefs, values, and philosophies (Wilber, 2000). The lower right is the exterior "We"; this includes the collective systems and structures of society (Esbjorn-Hargens & Zimmerman, 2009, p. 51; Wilber, 2000, pp. 68-72).

It is important to keep in mind that the four quadrants are simply a map of the territory and are not the territory itself; therefore, it is important to hold them lightly (Wilber, 2000). The four quadrants offer a useful holistic lens through which to approach any issue, system, idea, or for the purpose of this research, curriculum structure.

It is also important to address the possibility that what is presented through the four quadrants, as well as other adult developmental theories, could viewed as a form of hierarchy that values certain perspectives over others and is therefore oppressive or corrupt. Wilber (2000) defines the movement of evolution more as a circular unfolding (think concentric circles) rather than a linear progression, hence the terms transcend and include. Wilber (1995) uses Arthur Koestler's term "holarchy" to define this progression towards wholeness where each step is whole and complete in and of itself, yet it is also a part of something greater.

Human development. Cook-Greuter (2002) described human development as a "progression of different ways of making sense of reality or different stages" (p. 2). Again, it is important to note that these developmental maps simply show emerging patterns that offer us deeper understanding into the territory we are exploring. However, there are some certainties that help frame the territory. As Wilber (2000) stated, "Just as you must have words before you can have sentences, and you must have sentences before you can have paragraphs, so these basic holons (structures) build upon and incorporate their predecessors" (p. 129). By better understanding these waves of emergence within individuals and culture, we gain deeper understandings into the nature of growth and how to foster it holistically in individuals and society.

Over the past 50 years, developmental theorists have engaged in the work of mapping out this emerging interior landscape (O'Fallon, 2007). What has surfaced as a result is a progression of themes and stages, which often can apply to both individual and collectives. Each stage, like evolution, transcends and includes the one before it in increasing levels of complexity, as shown in Figure 2.2 (Cook-Greuter & Soulen 2007; Fowler, 1981; Gebser, 1985; Graves & Lee, 2002; Kegan, 1994; Loevinger & Blasi, 1976; Montessori, 2014; Piaget, 1959; Wilber, 2000).

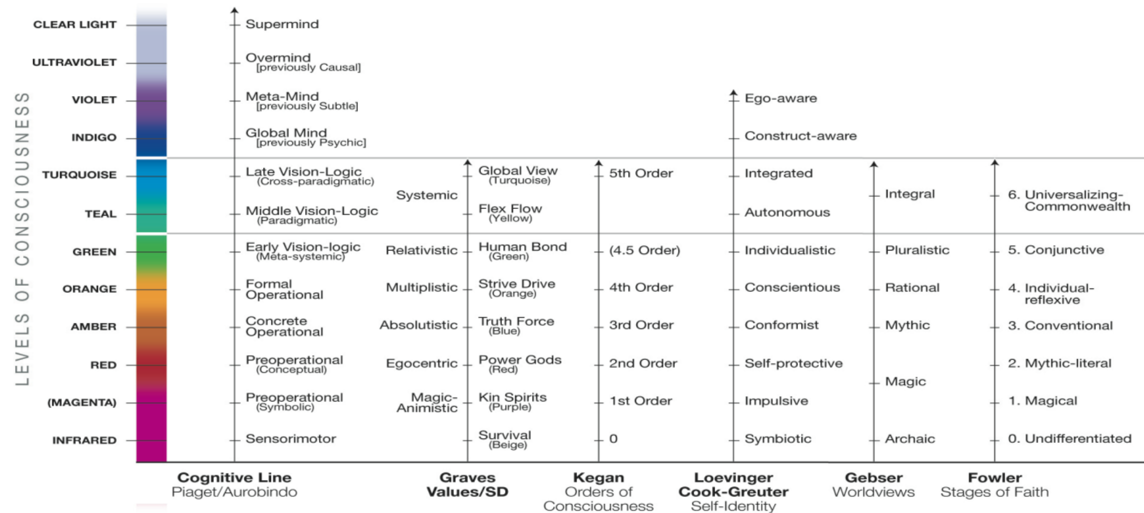

Figure 2.2 Various Models of Development. Reproduced with permission from "Is an Integral World Federation Possible" by Ken Wilber, 2009, March 25, Retrieved from the IntegralLife+ website: https://www.integrallife.com/video/integral-world-federation-possible. Copyright 2012 by Integral Life, Inc.

Cook-Greuter & Soulen (2007) describe reoccurring themes that have emerged and span the field of research in adult development including:

- Development theory describes the unfolding of human potential toward deeper understanding, wisdom, and effectiveness in the world.
- Growth occurs in a logical and predictable sequence of stages or expanding worldviews from birth to adulthood. The movement is often likened to an ever-widening spiral.
- Overall, worldviews evolve from simple to complex, from static to dynamic, and from egocentric to sociocentric to worldcentric.
- As development unfolds, autonomy, freedom, tolerance for difference and ambiguity as well as flexibility, reflection, and skill in interacting with the environment increase while defensiveness decreases.
- Development occurs through the interplay between person and environment, not just by one or the other. It is a potential and can be encouraged and facilitated by appropriate support and challenge. The depth, complexity, and scope of what people notice can expand throughout life. Yet, no matter how evolved we become, our knowledge and understanding is partial and incomplete. (pp. 183-184)

As individuals and collectives move through developmental stages, one theme that begins to surface is an ability to take on different or multiple perspectives (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007). With this comes an increase in empathy and understanding for others (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007; Wilber, 2000). As an individual's self-awareness develops from the egocentric perspective of young children into an ethnocentric and sociocentric perspective their ability to empathize and understand others also expands as shown in Figure 2.3 (Wilber 2000, pp. 166-171). In these stages, the individual can relate to and extend her empathy to include the people of her tribe, community, or religion, even extending it up to all of the citizens in her country, but no further (Wilber, 2000).

From this point on, it then becomes possible for the sphere of care and concern to embrace all humans regardless of beliefs, ethnicity, or nationality. This is referred to as a worldcentric perspective. A person in this sphere of development is not just concerned about what is fair and just for her country but what is fair and just for all peoples (Wilber, 2000). This perspective was captured wonderfully in a line by the Roman playwright Terence and was often quoted by Dr. Maya Angelou (2011): "I am a human being therefore nothing human can be alien to me" (para, 1).

Beyond this perspective lies what is called a planetcentric perspective, which embraces all beings and life systems on the planet, followed lastly by a kosmocentric perspective, which transcends and includes all (Esborjn-Hargens & Zimmerman, 2009, p. 403). Each step along the path is marked by a decrease in egocentrism and a de-centering and transcendence of perspective (Wilber, 2000).

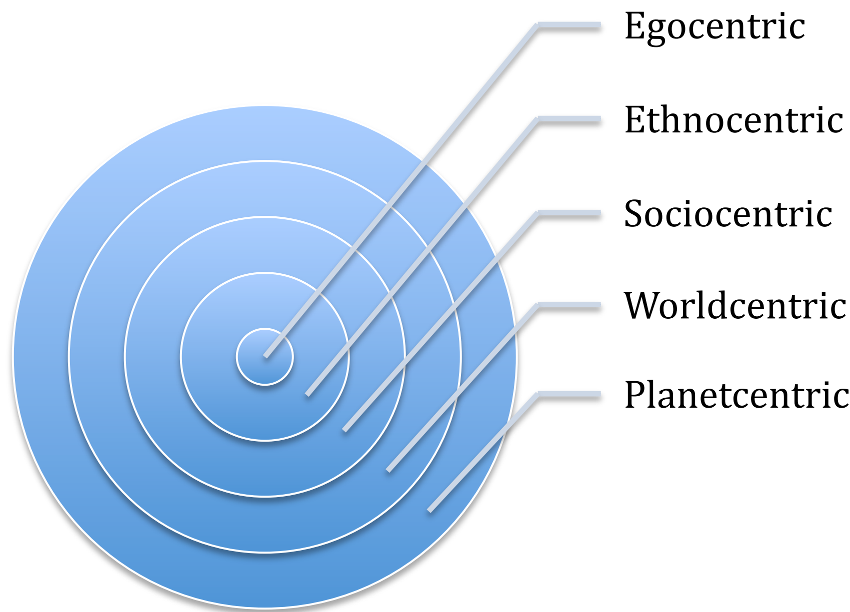

Figure 2.3 Moral Spheres of Development.

At each stage Wilber (2000) identifies a three-step process individuals go through, which catalyzes growth and pulls one forward into further stages. This three-step process could also be applied to the evolution of cultural worldviews as well:

> One, the self evolves or develops or steps up to the new level of awareness, and it identifies with that level, it is "one with" that level. Two, it then begins to move beyond that level, or differentiate from it, or dis-identify with it, or transcend it. And three, it identifies with the new and higher level and centers itself there. The new rung must be included and integrated in the overall expansion, and that integration or inclusion is the third and final sub phase of the particular fulcrum (stage). (p. 131)

Using the earlier example, when an individual steps up from a sociocentric view into a worldcentric view, the old lens through which she sees the world and defines herself by begins to break down. She no longer buys into cultural expectations of what a woman should be, she begins to make her own definitions, she no longer empathizes with just her race or country but all people. She then moves into and integrates this new lens and new way of being in the world.

This doesn't mean she leaves behind her ethnic roots or pride in her country; she still can relate to those aspects of herself, but she no longer defines herself solely by them (Wilber, 2000).

When an individual or a culture moves forward without integrating certain aspects or experiences from a prior stage, pathologies can begin to surface (Wilber, 2000, pp. 135-136). If something happens to individuals and they repress the experience, they can keep growing developmentally; however, the repressed issue will continue to rear its ugly head in various ways until it is faced and integrated (Wilber, 2000). This is often demonstrated in patients with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Once the patient has integrated the event that caused the trauma into her or his consciousness, the PTSD symptoms often subside (Mithoefer et al., 2013).

Pathologies also manifest on a collective level. We see this today in the modern worldview's approach to the natural world. Many view modernity's repression, alienation, and the denial of humanity's interdependent connection to the biosphere and all of life as a classic pathology that lies at the root of our destructive behavior towards ourselves, each other, and the planet (Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014; Plotkin, 2008; Wilber, 1995)

If an individual is able to navigate the stages of development without too much adversity (trauma) she will generally plateau at the cultural center of gravity or predominant worldview embraced by the culture she lives in. However, there are always fringe groups within cultures that will hold both narrower and more expansive perspectives.

Today, for example, it is estimated that the center of gravity in North America rests at a modern: sociocentric level of development with a small percentage of individuals still at the earlier ethnocentric stage (Cook-Greuter, 2002). The further one moves past the center of gravity, the lower the numbers become. For example, it is estimated that about 20-25% of the

population is at a worldcentric view with only about 1-2% at a planetcentric view (Cook-Greuter, 2002).

When an individual or a culture's center of gravity (worldview) evolves, it is because the old stories of who they are in relationship to others and the planet no longer make sense (Wilber, 2000). What then takes root is a new story that can support new understandings of the world. Within this unfolding, our worldviews can be seen as catalysts, which help us evolve into deeper and broader expressions of wholeness. As Wilber (2000) stated:

> Each worldview gives way to its successor because certain inherent limitations in the earlier worldview become apparent. This generates a great deal of disruption and chaos, so to speak, and the system, if it doesn't collapse, escapes this chaos by evolving to a more highly organized pattern. These new and higher patterns solve or defuse the earlier problems, but then introduce their own recalcitrant problems and inherent limitations that cannot be solved on their own level. (p. 58)

Today, we are at another point of breakdown in which the modern industrial worldview is unequipped to face the size, scale, and complexity of the problems we face as a species. What is now needed is a more holistic worldview that could be nurtured and experienced through new educational containers, which hold the seemingly positive aspects of the earlier stages (such as rationality, community values, and healthy individuality) with a more inclusive understanding of the interdependent relationship between humanity and the planet.

Grounding development through transformational containers. Adult developmental growth is often marked by an expanding ability to take on multiple perspectives, empathize with others, and understand more complex systems (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007; Wilber, 2000). When it comes to development, many in the adult developmental community agree with Liebert (1992) who claimed that trying to cause development does not work. Her point was that causing developmental gains would be like expecting a person to understand love who has never been in love. Ultimately the person has to experience love to truly understand it. However, Liebert

pointed out that what can be helpful is to provide people with "naturally therapeutic holding environments" or containers, which are safe spaces that allow people to explore where they are developmentally through a combination of experiences that both challenges them and supports them (pp. 61-62).

Examples of such containers could include spiritual communities of practice such as Buddhist sanghas or contemplative groups, wilderness therapy programs, certain summer camps, outdoor adventure courses, support groups, and other types of rehabilitation programs. Through experiential and reflective exploration, individuals create the awareness that can help them to grow into wider perspectives and fuller understandings of reality (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007; Fitch et al., 2010; Jaworski, 2011; O'Fallon, 2010, p. 10). Fitch et al. (2010) described transformational containers as extending

> beyond the curriculum in which the participants engage, to describe the environment created for transformative growth and the qualities and ways the participants are held and engaged in the learning process. The quality of intention, attention, strategies, and actions we take to hold, support, and guide the participants through these collectives form the transformative container. (p. 6)

Containers or liberating structures as referred to by Torbert (1991) can be actualized on individual, group, and community levels. These structures encourage growth through self-reflection, and they offer guidance but in such a way that the participants develop skills to guide themselves (Kimball, 2011, p. 8). Fitch et al. (2010) stated that healthy containers

> provide a balance of safety and stimulation for growth; work with the states and stages of the participants in a consistent way that stimulates new perspectives; support integration and ownership of new perspectives and identities; and account for the varying life contexts, paths and evolving gestalt of each individual. (p. 7)

In a way, containers act as attractors through which the intention, theories, and experiences offered create a space that allows for the emergence of new systems, ideas, and possibilities to

arise within both the individual and group (Fitch et al., 2010). This makes containers an important consideration in the development of any transformative workshop.

The arc of transformative experiences. In order to shape a transformative experience for participants I have found it useful to look at templates that have been used to structure the change process. In researching various theories and archetypical approaches to change, a common three-step process becomes recognizable. I use Scharmer's (2007) *Theory U* as the main template and explain how the same underlying arc is demonstrated in the French anthropologist Van Gennep's (1960) *rite of passage* template, and Edgar Schein's (1995) *theory of change.*

Theory U. Step one of Scharmer's (2007) u-process involves observing and connecting to the outside world through seeing and sensing. In this stage, participants are essentially taking stock of the situation they are in. They then move into step two, allowing and letting go, which is the bottom of the u (Scharmer, 2007). This space represents implicate order, the state of non-duality, the source field, the world of deep inner knowing and creativity. The final stage is the enacting stage where participants' insights crystallize and they turn them into action plans through prototyping, testing, and verifying (Jaworski, 2012, p. 179; Scharmer, 2007).

Rites of passage. Van Gennep (1960) uncovered a similar change model that he felt applied to rites of passage. Van Gennep's (1960) work was based on his studies of rites of passage ceremonies in indigenous cultures around the world. Though each culture had its own way of expressing the experience, the underlying themes followed the same three-stage structure, which he termed: severance, threshold, and reincorporation (Van Gennep, 1960).

The severance or letting go stage is the preparatory stage in which individuals reflect upon that which they wish to let go of in themselves in order to make room for that which they

wish to become (Foster & Little, 1992; Van Gennep, 1960). The threshold or liminal (in between) stage is the actual ceremony or experience itself. Last comes the most important stage, reincorporation. It is in this stage that the individual re-enters the community and applies the teachings and insights gained through the threshold into action in everyday life (Foster & Little, 1992; Van Gennep, 1960). Additionally, a similar arc is also found in Edgar Schein's (1995) theory of change incorporating unfreeze, change, and refreeze.

Synthesis of transformative processes. In looking back over these templates, certain common themes and characteristics begin to emerge that can be useful in shaping a transformative experience such as this curriculum hopes to foster. In each template, stage one often involves listening, assessing, sensing into, and committing to a process. Stage two often involves vulnerability, openness, exploration, learning, challenges and discovery. And finally, stage three involves re-incorporation and bringing to life the lessons learned through the process to share with others (Foster & Little, 1992; Van Gennep, 1960; Scharmer, 2007; Schein, 1995).

Nature connection. In the 1984 book *Biophilia,* Wilson presents his *biophilia hypothesis* through which he claims that humans have an evolutionary drive to connect with nature because we are nature. Therefore, the topic of nature connection is relevant to any type of community education model because of its potential to increase participants' connection to and understanding of the natural world (Young, Haas, & McGown, 2010; Louv, 2011). Through such connections and understanding research suggests that the likelihood of ecological action on behalf of the living systems of the planet increase (Blythe & Harre, 2012; Mayer & Frantz, 2004). Additionally, nature connection or the act of connecting with nature is often described as an antidote to help us restore our culturally severed ties with nature, a split that Louv (2008, 2011) referrers to as nature deficit disorder.

Nature Deficit Disorder is a broad term Louv (2008, 2011) uses to refer to our growing cultural disconnection from the natural world and the adverse effects that disconnection can have on our health, development, and levels of happiness. Louv's claim is well supported by growing research in the field that shows the positive impact nature has on human health (Bell et al., 2008; Cottrell & Raadik-Cottrell, 2010; Ewert, Mitten, & Overholt, 2014; Hartig et al., 1991, 2003; Kahn, 1997, 2001; Kaplan & Kaplan 1989; Priest, 2007; Sweatman & Warner, 2009; Ulrich 1981; Van den Berg et al., 2007). Along with Louv, Ewert, Mitten, and Overholt (2014) have pulled together a vast amount of primary literature outlining the topic of nature connection and its effects on human health and development in their work titled *Natural Environments and Human Health*. Additionally, since 2007 the Children and Nature Network has published over five volumes worth of study abstracts and associated bibliographies on the correlation between nature connection and human health (Children and Nature Network, 2014).

Louv and his contemporaries are certainly not the first writers to underline the importance of our interdependent connection to the natural world. I propose the first writings on this topic are not writings at all but rather ancient indigenous pictographs that can be found all over the world depicting the human nature relationship through symbolic images painted on cave and cliff walls. In a more modern context, at the end of the 19th century the connection between human health and the environment was addressed by one of the founders of ecofeminism, Ellen Swallow Richards, who also coined the term *ecology* (Clark, 1973). Seventy years later such authors as Carson (1962), d'Eaubonne (1978), LaChapelle (1972), and Leopold (1970), along with many of their contemporaries, issued warnings concerning our cultural disassociation from the natural world and the inevitable repercussions of such a mindset.

Ecocentric relationship. Leopold (1970), a champion of land ethics and conservation, coined the term *ecocentric* in reference to those who understand the interdependent relationship of self, Earth, and community. Naess (1986, 2007), one of the original writers in the deep ecology movement, referred to this same kind of thinking as *Self-realization*. Wilber's (2000) term *planetcentric* could also be defined as an awareness that embodies the interconnected nature of self, Earth, and community. The indigenous terms *mitakuye oyasin* (Maroukis, 2005, p. 160), from the North American Sioux, and *ubuntu* (Hailey, 2008, p. 4), a South African tribal expression, also capture the interconnected nature of these relationships.

Creating educational containers that foster these relationships is important for two reasons. First, it is suggested that through nurturing these relationships the sense of self expands beyond the self-centered (egocentric) modern worldview to include others and the planet, thus supporting an ecocentric perspective (Mayer & Franz, 2004; Seed, Macy, Fleming, & Naess, 2007; Plotkin 2008). Second, there is a growing body of research suggesting that an expanded ecological identity helps to cultivate an ethic of care, which promotes environmentally responsible behavior (Blythe and Harre, 2012; Chawla, 2007; Litz, 2010; Litz & Mitten, 2013; Mayer & Franz, 2004; Plotkin 2008; White, 2011).

Ecocentric relationship and action. A study by social psychologists Mayer and Frantz (2004) advanced the validation of these ideas. In order to execute the research, Mayer and Frantz created a scale called the Connectedness to Nature Scale (CNS). The purpose of the CNS was to quantitatively measure people's relationship to nature. Mayer and Frantz found that the higher the individual scored on the CNS, the more environmentally responsible an individual's behavior tended to be (p. 512).

Mayer and Frantz felt that the reason behind this finding is that when we create a relationship, we project part of our identity into that relationship. Thus, when that relationship, whether with a family member or a river, becomes threatened, our identity feels threatened, and we act to defend and protect that relationship through our self-preservation instinct. Therefore, if educational containers can empower participants with tools to help them cultivate deeper relationships to themselves, the Earth, and their communities, they can potentially help to foster individuals who have a higher likelihood of nurturing and acting on behalf of those relationships in the future (Leopold, 1970; Mayer & Franz, 2004; Plotkin 2008; Seed, Macy, Fleming, & Naess, 2007; Wilber, 2001).

Critical and ethical dimensions of ecocentric relationship. Additionally, Blythe and Harre (2012), Litz (2010) and Litz and Mitten (2013) remind educators that relationship is important and it is also not enough: "becoming more ecocentric in thinking needs to be accompanied by critical thinking and ecoliteracy skills in order to make appropriate stewardship decisions" (p. 6). Without the appropriate cognitive tools, well-meaning action can sometimes be unknowingly detrimental. Therefore participants in such workshops as this study seeks to create also need to be supported with critical thinking skills that can help them to uncover personal biases through healthy analysis and ecoliteracy skills that can help them to turn their passion and understanding of natural systems into healthy action in such arenas as conservation and policy making (Litz, 2010; Litz and Mitten, 2013).

Combining experiential approaches to critical ecoliteracy. Additional research such as Blythe and Harre (2012) further demonstrate the effectiveness and importance of combining experiential practices that cultivate ecocentric relationships with critical thinking skills and ecoliteracy. Blythe and Harre's research focused on the transformative effects of a three day

youth sustainability workshop. The workshop was based in the country and incorporated peer-to-peer teaching, hands on farming work, critical thinking skills and environmental movement building skills for individuals and groups.

In their findings Blythe and Harre discovered that the curriculum appeared to nurture a number of psychological characteristics in participants such as: “knowledge, inspiration, self-confidence, social connection, resources and skills, and connection to nature” (p. 339). On top of those findings Blythe and Harre also found that the bulk of the students returned home to engage in action on three different levels. First, many analyzed their own actions at home and worked to change certain systems within the household to create greener family habits. Second, many engaged in their group plans at school, and third, some even took on community action such as joining group causes like Green Peace or 350.org. Though Blythe and Harre’s study focused on a residential program for youth many of the same principles can translate into the design of this curriculum such as an emphasis on ecocentric relationships, ecoliteracy and critical thinking skills, community support, the sharing of inspiration, and peer to peer learning.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the grounding theories that could be used to inform a regenerative community leadership curriculum. These include: integral theory (Wilber, 2000), human development (Cook-Greuter and Soulen, 2007; Wilber, 2000) and the use of naturally therapeutic containers to catalyze adult development (Cook-Greuter, 2002; Fitch et al., 2010; Jaworski, 2011; O’Fallon, 2007), the arc of transformative experiences (Van Gennep, 1960; Scharmer, 2007; Schein, 1995) and the correlation between nature connection, ecocentric awareness and relationship and ecological action (Blythe & Harre, 2012; Leopold, 1970; Litz & Mitten, 2013; Mayer & Frantz, 2004, Seed et al., 2007). These theories have been highlighted through the

literature review because of their potential to create holistic reflective learning containers that: (1) engage broader and more interconnected worldviews and perspectives and; (2) cultivate ecocentric relationship and ecoliteracy to inform inspired, effective ecological action.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

The purpose of this exploratory research was to create curriculum for a regenerative community leadership workshop. I used progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981) along with O'Fallon's (2011) curriculum design model to structure the research, and for my main method I incorporated a curriculum advisory board (De la Santos, Dominguez, & Lafrance, 2011; National Science Foundation, 1997; O'Fallon, 2011) to assist with content development. The curriculum design is meant to offer interior and exterior tools and experiences that catalyze both individual and group development. The intention is twofold: (a) to deepen participants' relationships to self, Earth, and community; and (b) to inspire local regenerative communities of practice that foster environmental stewardship, social justice, and holistic (sustainable) community development.

This chapter explores the research rationale, lenses, methods, data collection and analysis, and issues of trustworthiness and transferability. First, I address the rationale behind my methodology, which was exploratory, situated in a constructivist paradigm in which I used progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981) and O'Fallon's (2011) curriculum design approach to shape and inform the research. I then explore the lenses that informed the research: This includes my own subjective interior lens and the additional exterior lenses I chose to adopt for the purpose of the study, such was Wilber's (2000) four quadrant model.

I then explain my use of an advisory board as my primary method of research. The curriculum advisory board method involves convening a group of key informants who can offer expertise and whose advice and feedback lends credibility (National Science Foundation, 1997).

De la Santos, Dominguez, and Lafrance (2011) stated, "capitalizing on the identified benefits of advisory boards and incorporating the lessons learned from the literature, programs have used this approach to strengthen and improve curricula" (p. 48).

Following this, data collection and analysis are addressed. This includes the use of progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981), analytic memos (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, pp. 95-98), and deductive and inductive coding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Saldana, 2013) to collect and triangulate (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, pp. 107-108) the data in an attempt to flush out emerging themes, topics, resources, and experiential exercises that could be used within the curriculum to support the living universe worldview and deepen ecocentric relationships.

I then explore the issues of trustworthiness as they pertain to the study's credibility, dependability, and transferability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 112). This includes the use of triangulation, audit trails, member checking, and researcher reflexivity, which are standard strategies in accounting for credibility and dependability when operating from a constructivist research paradigm (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 38; Creswell & Miller, 2000, pp. 124-127; Patton, 2002, p. 544).

Rationale for Research Design and Methodology: Social Constructivism, Exploratory Research, and Progressive Focusing

The nature of this research is inductive; that is, it seeks to generate, track, and organize emerging themes throughout the study that can then be structured into a cohesive format and presented as an adult community leadership curriculum. One of the core intentions behind the curriculum is to empower participants to become aware of the subjective nature of reality, meaning that one view of reality is that it is constructed through a combination of individual and

cultural histories, worldviews, and values (Brown & Macy, 2014; Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014; Wilber, 2000). This core assumption situates the study in a social constructivist philosophical paradigm: "[T]he basic tenet of constructivism is that reality is socially, culturally, and historically constructed" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p, 28; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 2000; Neuman, 2000; Schwandt, 2000).

In dealing with research based on a constructivist paradigm, the role of researchers then becomes to

> recognize and acknowledge that their own background shapes their interpretation, and they thus "position" themselves in the research to acknowledge their own cultural, social, and historical experiences. Rather than starting with a theory (as in postpositivsm), researchers pose research questions and generate or inductively develop meaning from the data collected in the field. (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 29)

This grounding frame fits naturally within the exploratory nature of my research.

Exploratory research as Kowalczyk (2015) defined it is

> the initial research into a hypothetical or theoretical idea. This is where a researcher has an idea or has observed something and seeks to understand more about it. An exploratory research project is an attempt to lay the groundwork that will lead to future studies, or to determine if what is being observed might be explained by a currently existing theory. Most often, exploratory research lays the initial groundwork for future research. (para. 6)

There are three primary ways that exploratory research is conducted: either through a search of the literature, interviewing experts in the subject, or by conducting focus group interviews (Lewis, Saunders, & Thornhill, 2009, p. 140). One advantage of exploratory research is that it is flexible and adaptable to change (Lewis, Saunders, & Thornhill, 2009), however as Adams and Schvaneveldt (1991) addressed this does not mean that its inquiry is without direction and focus.

Exploratory research emphasizes discovery and description in order to extract and interpret meaning and experience (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Additionally, my need to maintain design flexibility as new understandings were revealed,

coupled with the use my advisory board and our semi-structured interactions, further necessitated an exploratory-based approach to the study (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2009).

Within this framework, my next step was to adopt a structural process for the research design that honored the inductive and emergent nature of the study. I found the progressive focusing model (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981) best suited the constructivist and exploratory aspects of this research. I address progressive focusing throughout this paper as it informs each step of the research; however, it is important to briefly touch upon it here because of its influence on the research design.

Parlett and Hamilton (as cited in Sinkovics and Alfoldi, 2012) first introduced the concept behind progressive focusing, in which "researchers systematically reduce the breadth of their enquiry to give more concentrated attention to the emerging issues" (p. 823). Robert Stake (1981) expanded on this definition by adding the following:

> Progressive focusing requires that the researcher be well acquainted with the complexities of the problem before going to the field, but not too committed to a study plan. It is accomplished in multiple stages: First observation of the site, then further inquiry, beginning to focus on the relevant issues, and then seeking to explain. (p. 1)

Taking a wide initial view that gradually narrows throughout the research complimented the exploratory nature of the study.

The progressive focusing model allows for a nonlinear approach. This means the prior stages of research and theory are constantly being revisited and refined at any time as new data informs the research each step of the way, as shown in Figure 3.1 and 3.2.

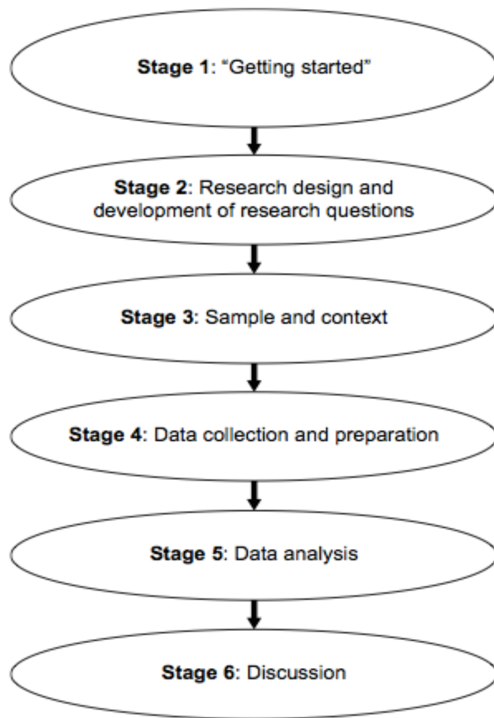

Figure 3.1. Linear Research Model. Reproduced with permission from "Progressive Focusing and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," by Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012, *Management International Review, 52*, p. 821. Copyright 2012 by Gabler-Verlag.

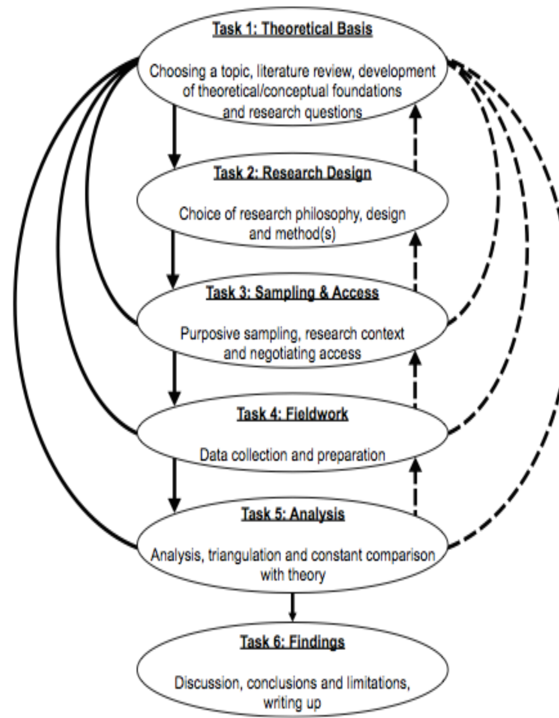

Figure 3.2. Progressive Focusing Research Model. Reproduced with permission from "Progressive Focusing and Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research," by Sinkovics & Alfoldi 2012, *Management International Review, 52,* p. 825. Copyright 2012 by Gabler-Verlag.

Rather than choosing a specifically inductive or deductive linear approach to research, progressive focusing includes both and suggests that findings often evolve continuously through the cyclical interaction between theory and data (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012, p. 823: Stake, 1981). The research starts with a chosen general focus point; however, the researcher is encouraged to remain open to potentially large modifications to either the focus or research design as new findings, questions, and answers arise from the field (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012, p. 823: Stake, 1981).

In summary, progressive focusing emphasizes a general to narrowing focus, as well as design flexibility and continuous feedback loops, which offered a structure that I felt best complemented the emergent exploratory nature of this research. Specifically it (a) incorporated a general focus centered around creating curriculum design; (b) required flexibility as new ideas and directions presented themselves; and (c) was dependent on multiple feedback loops that incorporated my own learning and insight, feedback from a curriculum advisory board, and an ongoing literature review process.

Research Lenses

Before moving further into the research design and methods, it is important to briefly address the two main lenses used to help inform the research. As mentioned by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), when it comes to research based in a constructivist paradigm that is dealing with qualitative data, it is important for researchers to recognize their own personal and cultural position in and to the research (p. 29). As Patton (2001) pointed out, in qualitative research the researcher is the main instrument; therefore, in the interest of credibility, it is important to briefly address the researcher's history, training, and experiences that inform her or his perspectives (p. 566). My own history was addressed in the introduction; however, I briefly reiterate here the notable aspects of that history as it pertains to this research.

For the past seven years, I have engaged in personal and professional experiences that have centered on the cultivation of deeper ecocentric relationships and worldviews. This has involved facilitating programs focused on rites of passage, leadership development, integral theory and adult development, nature connection, and social and environmental justice work through a five week outdoor program I run called Inner Wild. Over the past three years, I have

also been able to explore these fields in relationship to experiential education through a Master of Arts program at Prescott College.

With these experiences comes perspectives that can help inform this research; the key, then, becomes being aware enough as a researcher to know the difference between perspectives that inform and deepen the research and perspectives that may come from unexamined assumptions or biases. For these reasons, "reflexive subjectivity of the researcher–that is, constant reflective and self-critical processes–is an essential component of data collection and data analysis" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 35).

To address the exterior-objective aspects of the research, which entail the creation and shaping of a holistic curriculum design, I used Wilber's (2000) four quadrant model as a lens to help support the methods, as encouraged by O'Fallon (2011, p. 192). Also, in order to stay present with my subjective interior world throughout the research, I used mindful inquiry (Bentz & Shapiro 1998) as a reflexive tool. Both are addressed in the following section.

Mindful inquiry. Like constructivism, mindful inquiry is based on the idea that one's research should be intimately linked with one's awareness of oneself and the world (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998). Bentz and Shapiro defined mindful inquiry in the following way:

> Mindful inquiry is a synthesis of four intellectual traditions: phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical social science, and Buddhism. Hermeneutics is the analysis of texts in their contexts; critical social science is the analysis of domination and oppression with a view to changing it; and Buddhism is a spiritual practice that allows one to free oneself from suffering and illusion in several ways, one of which is becoming more aware. (p. 5)

Bentz and Shapiro (1998) further noted, "good research should contribute to your development as a mindful person, and your development as an aware and reflective individual should be embodied in your research" (p. 5).

The following is a list of key concepts that touch on the above traditions and help shape the backbone of mindful inquiry. Throughout the research, I constantly returned to certain principals, highlighted by Bentz and Shapiro, as a way of informing the process and staying aware of my own subjective lens:

5. All research involves both accepting bias—the bias of one's own situation and context—and trying to transcend it.

6. We are always immersed in and shaped by historical, social, economic, political, and cultural structures and constraints, and those structures and constraints usually have domination and oppression, and therefore suffering, built into them….

8. The elimination or diminution of suffering is an important goal of or value accompanying inquiry and often involves critical judgment about how much suffering is required by existing arrangements.

9. Inquiry often involves the critique of existing values, social and personal illusions, and harmful practices and institutions….

13. The development of awareness is not a purely intellectual or cognitive process but part of a person's total way of living her life. (pp. 6-7)

Mindful inquiry, like constructivism, asserts that the world is a compilation of values and perspectives; therefore, researchers must be very clear about what lenses and values they are trying to effect and or discover, and how that is helpful to others and the planet. Mindful inquiry calls on researchers to be aware of personal strengths and weaknesses as they relate to the research and also reminds us to hold them lightly as they can change and evolve over the course of the research.

For these reasons, throughout this research, I have used mindful inquiry to engage my interior through self-reflection, to be on the lookout for biases and unexamined assumptions and deciphering between my own strengths and weaknesses as a researcher and as a participant. Through making the subjective objective we can move beyond the subjective into a more aware

and less biased space (Kegan, 1982; Wilber, 2000). These constant mindful inquiries into society and ourselves can spur both individual and collective growth and can be a healthy form of social action (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998).

The four quadrant model. In addition to mindful inquiry in an effort to help shape the curriculum in a holistic fashion I incorporated Wilber's (2000) four quadrant model as an exterior lens to help guide the process. The template offered a reference point for me and my curriculum advisory board to make sure the curriculum design touched on the inner I, outer I, inner We, and outer We in a balanced fashion, therefore supporting the holistic design and nature of the curriculum.

Inner I: The individual's beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and values.	Outer I: The individual's biology, physiology, behavior, and individual action.
Inner We: Cultural beliefs, collective values, philosophies, and worldviews.	Outer We: Societal systems, infrastructure, and group action.

Figure 3.3. The Four Quadrants of Human Development.

The four quadrants, or as O'Fallon (2011) referred to it, the integral framework, has been used as a tool to address educational systems through a holistic lens (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2007, pp. 72-103) and to shape and inform curriculum design (O'Fallon, 2011, pp. 189-203).

O'Fallon (2011) described one approach to curriculum design through an integral framework as follows:

> A program usually begins with one or more people who have a vision or insight for a long-term program offering. In this case, it would be the responsibility for the program

> founders (of the course, degree program, an entire school or learning organization program), to crystallize the vision, and this can be assisted by Wilber's Integral frame (2006). This process requires viewing the original vision through the Integral framework, crafting the vision statement (which works best when it honors multiple perspectives) and selecting an integral team in order to design the program, based on the vision (p.192).

This design approach, which moves from the vision into framing through the quadrants, and then engages a team to help shape and express the mission helped inform and inspire the arc of my research. Additionally, my use of the four quadrants in shaping the curriculum allowed me to make sure that the design addressed the individual and group interiors and exteriors. Further helping to ensure a holistic structure.

Over all, my use of mindful inquiry and the four quadrant model as lenses in this study established a reflexivity that continually influenced my action and position in the research. This constant self-inquiry spurred and expanded my self-awareness, which further informed the study.

Method: Curriculum Advisory Board

The primary method for this research was the use of a curriculum advisory board. The curriculum advisory board method involves convening a group of key informants who can offer expertise and whose advice and feedback lends credibility (National Science Foundation, 1997). The National Science Foundation (1997) defined key informants as “a person (or group of persons) who has unique skills or professional background related to the issue/intervention being evaluated, is knowledgeable about the project participants, or has access to other information of interest to the evaluator” (Key Informant, para. 1).

De la Santos, Dominguez, and Lafrance (2011) noted, “capitalizing on the identified benefits of advisory boards and incorporating the lessons learned from the literature, programs have used this approach to strengthen and improve curricula” (p. 48). Additionally O’Fallon (2011) encouraged the use of a curriculum design team to help inform the process (p. 192).

Hammond and Moser (2009) also addressed the relevance of an advisory board for representing key stakeholder interests and informing curriculum development.

Additional uses of an advisory board include (National Science Foundation, 1997) the following:

- To represent the ideas and attitudes of a community, group, or organization;
- To promote legitimacy for project;
- To advise and recommend; or
- To carry out a specific task. (Key Informant, para. 3)

Benefits include but are not limited to (National Science Foundation, 1997):

- Information concerning causes, reasons, and/or best approaches from an "insider" point of view.
- Advice/feedback increases credibility of study.
- Pipeline to pivotal groups.
- May have side benefit to solidify relationships between evaluators, clients, participants, and other stakeholders. (Key Informant, Exhibit 9)

Such groups essentially act as a think tank for problem solving, and add credibility to the final outcome due of their professional experience with and knowledge of the ideas being addressed (National Science Foundation, 1997).

The specific role of the participants or key informants who made up the curriculum advisory board in this study was to offer feedback and suggestions on the curriculum through two rounds of phone interviews. Each interview ranged between thirty minutes to an hour, was conducted individually with the researcher, and covered the proposed structure, session themes, subtopics, experiential exercises and resources for the curriculum design. I elaborate further on the role of the advisory board in the data collection and analysis sections.

Due to the specific nature of my inquiry, my participant sample was *purposeful,* meaning I purposefully chose the advisors due to their expertise (Patton 2001). Often, in the creation of advisory boards, participants are invited, elected, volunteer or are nominated to participate based on their expertise in fields related to the study (National Science Foundation, 1997). In the case of this study, participants were invited onto the advisory board by the researcher through an emailed invitation and letter addressing the purpose and scope of the study.

Participants were selected based on their professional experience and understanding of the material that the workshop sought to address, including: integral theory and adult development, nature connection, leadership and group dynamics (including u theory and systems theory), environmental and social activism (community activism), ritual and rites of passage work, and regenerative (sustainable) community development.

A total of six men and six women, varying in age and ethnicity, were selected to make up the curriculum advisory board. See Figure 3.4 for the participants' demographic information and the appendix for the participants' professional biographies.

Table 3.1

Advisor Demographics

Advisor	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Professional focus includes but is not limited to:
1	31	Female	Caucasian	Sustainable education design, group dynamics, organizing.
2	42	Female	African American/ African/ Native American	Sustainable education, restorative justice, permaculture, community organizing, leadership, activism.
3	50	Female	Caucasian	Organizational leadership, group dynamics, ceremony and ritual, adult development, integral theory.
4	44	Female	Caucasian	Sustainable education, adult development, integral theory, u theory, systems theory, group dynamics, leadership, nature connection.
5	33	Female	Caucasian	Community organizing, sustainability, group dynamics, activism, leadership.
6	55	Female	Native American/ Caucasian	Integral theory, adult development, transformational leadership, group dynamics, activism.
7	35	Male	Asian	Integral theory, adult development, leadership, group dynamics, systems theory.
8	56	Male	Caucasian	Transformational leadership, u theory, integral theory, group dynamics, adult development.
9	39	Male	Caucasian	Group dynamics, conflict resolution, leadership, community organizing.
10	69	Male	Caucasian	Systems theory, u theory, leadership, adult development, integral theory, group dynamics.
11	35	Male	Caucasian	Nature connection, rites of passage, ceremony and ritual, regenerative design, permaculture, group dynamics.
12	34	Male	Caucasian	Leadership education, group dynamics, integral theory, rites of passage.

In an effort to lend credibility to the study, I felt it was important to be able to share the names of the advisors on the board and a little about their backgrounds and expertise, which I have done in Appendix D. When the advisors were first contacted, they were notified that their names and a short biography would be made available to readers. I did, however, make the choice in reporting the feedback to keep who shared what feedback confidential. Therefore, in

the appendix each piece of feedback is attributed to an advisor identification number, which I created to protect their privacy concerning the feedback offered.

Overview of Research Design

The research design for this study was informed by O'Fallon's (2011) curriculum design model, which, as mentioned above, starts with a vision of the curriculum or program, filters the vision through the four quadrants to inform it, and then forms a curriculum design team to flush out the details (p. 192). Additionally, the research design was informed by progressive focusing, which advocates for continuous feedback loops in data collection and analysis to inform the process as seen above in Figure 3.2. This section provides a brief overview of each phase of the research and offers a visual diagram at the end, Figure 3.4, to help clarify the process.

Phase 1 – Institutional review.

1. Submitted an Institutional Review Board (IRB) Research Proposal with appendices for approval outlining the efficacy of the study and the design through which the research would be carried out.

Phase 2 – General curriculum design.

2.1. Data Collection: Conducted pedagogical literature review spanning a broad array of fields connected to adult development education and sustainability for better practices, core concepts, and key experiential opportunities. Also began analytic memos.

2.2. Data Analysis: Triangulated data from memos and review against grounding questions, explored in the section on Triangulation later in this chapter. Drafted a loose general curriculum structure based on data, keeping a wide lens as encouraged through progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981), while also keeping in mind my lenses: mindful inquiry (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998), Wilber's (2000) four-quadrant model, and my grounding questions. This process produced the first iteration of the curriculum titled Iteration One.

Phase 3 – First round advisor interviews.

3.1. Data Collection: Conducted interviews, literature review, and analytic memos. Emailed participants Iteration One with the semi-structured questions to be addressed in

the phone interview. Allowed two weeks to review the curriculum before their scheduled half hour phone interview and feedback session.

3.2. Data Analysis: Revised curriculum based on advisory board feedback using inductive and deductive coding triangulated against ongoing literature review and analytic memos. This process produced Iteration Two of the curriculum.

Phase 4 – Second round advisor interviews.

4.1. Data Collection: I then sent Iteration Two of the curriculum, which included a summary of the findings, curriculum changes, and adaptations spurred by the first round feedback interviews, to the advisors to review before second round interviews. I also included the semi-structured questions to be addressed during the interview. I allowed for two weeks to review, and then convened and recorded the second round phone interviews and feedback session. Also continued literature review and memos.

4.2. Data Analysis: Revised curriculum based on advisory board feedback using inductive and deductive coding triangulated with the ongoing literature review process and analytic memos. This process produced Iteration Three of the curriculum.

Phase 5 - Finalized Iteration Three.

5.1. Data Collection: Sent out Iteration Three of the curriculum to the review board members after all the meetings with a synthesis of highlights so they could further reflect on others opinions and offer any final thoughts through email if needed.

5.2. Data Analysis: Finalized Iteration Three using inductive and deductive coding triangulated with the ongoing literature review process and analytic memos.

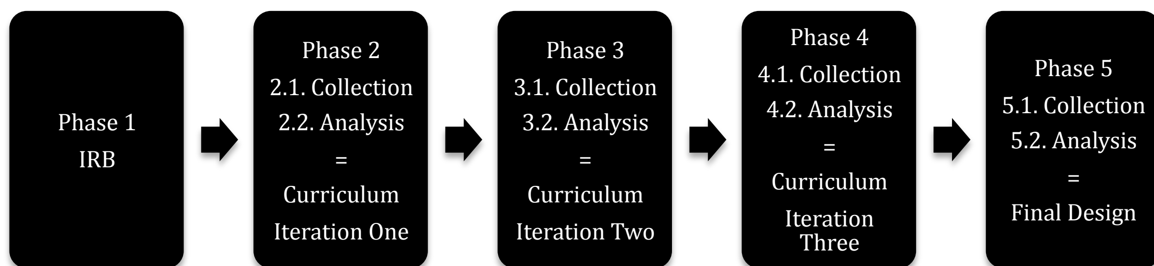

Figure 3.4. Diagram of the Research Design Process.

Figure 3.4 offers a visual summary of the research design. It is important to note that the third iteration of the curriculum remained the same because no changes where made between

Phase 4 and Phase 5. I now provide a more detailed description of each phase as it pertains to data collection and analysis.

Phase 1 - Institutional Review Board

Once I had defined my research question and design, I successfully submitted an IRB for approval through the Prescott College's Institutional Review Board. The process involved "outlining all procedures and processes needed to ensure adherence to standards put forth for the study of human subjects, including participants' confidentiality and informed consent" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 120). Not only does this process help to flush out any flaws or overlooked aspects of the research, but it also lends credibility to the research through the support and backing of an academic institution (p. 51).

Through the IRB process, participants consent forms were developed and approved. Additionally, the IRB process also allowed me the opportunity to explore and address any ethical considerations that needed to be taken into account for the study. This partially entailed an exploration of my own potential personal biases and possible unexamined assumptions, which I address later in the chapter. Due to the voluntary nature of the study, its emphasis on curriculum design, and the freedom participants had to leave the study at any time, no serious ethical concerns arose.

Data Collection

As demonstrated in the overview of my research design, Phases 2 through 5 each included a data collection and data analysis phase. The findings in each phase then informed the focus of the data collection for the following phase, which is emblematic of progressive focusing in which emerging data informs the focus and direction of the research (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012).

In an effort to heighten the credibility of the research as well as deepen my own understanding and perspectives of the phenomena, I choose to incorporate multiple methods in order to allow for triangulation (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.120; Patton, 2001, p. 556). Triangulation is the use of multiple methods, which allows the researcher to then compare data from diverse perspectives as a way to clarify meaning (Bloomberg & Volpe, p. 107; Patton, 2001, pp. 555-566). Citing Creswell (2007) and Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Bloomberg & Volpe also noted, “This strategy adds rigor, breadth, and depth to the study and provides corroborative evidence of the data obtained” (p. 120).

To triangulate the data, I utilized a number of different data methods including two rounds of semi-structured interviews with the advisory board whose feedback was then triangulated with the ongoing literature review and analytic memos (Saldaña, 2013, pp. 41-56). This represents the continual feedback loop advocated through progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981).

Ongoing literature review – Phase 2.1 and beyond. As encouraged in exploratory research and progressive focusing, an ongoing literature review was continuously informing the research, becoming more specific in scope as themes emerged (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981). The literature review was first utilized in Phase 2.1 in an effort to inform the general curriculum structure that was to be presented to the advisory board in Phase 3.1.

The process started with a wide lens covering multiple fields of interest with an emphasis on better practices, core concepts, and key experiential opportunities that I felt could support participants: (a) ecocentric relationships and perspectives, (b) ecological literacy and action, (c) critical thinking skills, (d) interior growth, (e) group development, and (f) holistic worldview.

The fields explored included: integral theory and adult development, nature connection, eco-centric leadership, environmental and social activism (community activism), theories on change, and sustainability. It then was further used throughout the study to triangulate, validate, clarify, and inform the data that was coming in through the coding of advisory interviews, and analytic memos.

Analytic memos – Phase 2.1 and beyond. Analytic memo writing can be used as a tool to reflect on "your coding processes and code choices; how the process of inquiry is taking shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in your data – all possibly leading toward theory" (Saldaña, 2013, p. 41). Analytic memos offer researchers the space to write freely about their hunches, intuitive insights, and any further thoughts about the phenomena being studied; in this sense, they are somewhat comparable to research journal entries or blogs (p. 41).

Analytic memos can be used as a tool to analyze data, but they can also serve as data to be coded (p. 42). For the purpose of this study, I used analytic memos as an ongoing tool for data collection and data analysis as well as reflexivity. In terms of data collection, in Phase 3 and 4 of the research, insights I had collected throughout the analytic memo process, which I started at the beginning of the study, were coded along with the advisor feedback and turned into data that informed the next round of curriculum revisions.

Advisory board semi-structured interviews – Phase 3.1. and 4.1.

> In semi-structured interviewing, a guide is used, with questions and topics that must be covered. The interviewer has some discretion about the order in which questions are asked, but the questions are standardized, and probes may be provided to ensure that the researcher covers the correct material. This kind of interview collects detailed information in a style that is somewhat conversational. Semi-structured interviews are often used when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided. (Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p. 35)

Each advisor interview was recorded and conducted individually over the phone in a semi-structured fashion. I choose the semi-structured interview model because it allowed me to address specific questions around the curriculum, yet it also allowed space for new ideas to emerge, which is congruent with the deductive and inductive nature of progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981).

In order to clarify feedback responses to make sure that I understood what was being suggested, I would often use probing phrases such as (Harrell & Bradley, 2009):

- Repeating the question, often in a slightly different way.
- Echoing their response.
- Pausing.
- Asking what they think about something they or I have mentioned.
- Asking: Could you tell me more about that?
- Asking: Anything else? (p. 45)

This technique allowed me to draw more information out of the interviewer and make sure the data collected was clear

The focus for the first round of interviews was on the validity and order of themes, topics, and questions for inquiry, and possible resources and experiential practices. The semi-structured questions were as follows:

1. Do you agree with the eight themes chosen?
2. If not what would you change and why?
3. Do you agree on the order of the themes addressed?
4. If not what would you change and why?
5. What additional topics and or questions of inquiry would you like to see addressed under each theme? (See examples below)

6. Do know of any experiential exercises that would fit in any of the below sessions or as homework for the intersession (i.e., group exercises, nature connection practices, good journaling practices, etc.)?

7. Do you know of any resources (articles, YouTube videos, documentaries) that would fit well into any of the below sessions or intersessions?

8. Is there anything else that came to your mind about how this curriculum could be improved?

During the actual interviews, I placed an emphasis on the validity and order of themes and possible topics and questions for inquiry and any extra time at the end was allotted to practices and resources. This emphasis on themes and topics was informed by progressive focusing's emphasis on a wide lens that then narrows through the research (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981). I wanted to make sure the advisory board agreed on the basic structure and that the design made sense before moving more deeply into the details of practices and resources.

After analyzing the data collected from the first round of interviews, I sharpened my focus around the areas in the curriculum that felt a little less developed. I therefore requested more feedback on sessions four and five, specifically requesting additional tools for group building; and for sessions six and seven I asked: What additional tools and exercises can be incorporated to further support these sessions' themes of turning group vision into local and global action? I also specifically asked for more visual models and how-to's around movement building, exercises, and tangible examples of real life communities in action.

Sharing data with the advisory board – Phase 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. Part of the data collection process in Phases 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1 included sharing the data collected and analyzed from the previous stage. In 3.1 advisors received the outline of the basic curriculum structure that was created out of Phase 2's data collection and analysis.

In 4.1 the advisors received via email all of the applicable feedback that came out of the first round of interviews. They also received the revised curriculum with the feedback incorporated in a way that allowed them to trace where and how the feedback was integrated. The same steps were repeated in Phase 5.1: the analyzed data and feedback from the second round of interviews was shared along with the revised curriculum. They then had the option after reviewing all the material in 5.1 to email me with any last insights, questions, and or feedback to be incorporated into the final iteration of the curriculum.

Data Analysis

As shown above in the research design, after each phase of data collection the data was analyzed as a means of refocusing the next phase of research around what was needed or missing. This entailed analyzing data that was collected in Phase 2 from the literature review, Phases 3 and 4 from the advisor interviews, and any last minute data picked up in Phase 5 during the finalization of the curriculum. Additionally, there was the ongoing analysis of the literature review that was being directed by the new data and themes emerging in each phase indicative of progressive focusing (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981).

The two main tools used in this study to analyze data were inductive and deductive coding (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Saldaña, 2013) and analytic memos (Saldaña, 2013). In an effort to maintain healthy subjectivity and objectivity, I used mindful inquiry (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998) and Wilber's (2000) four-quadrant model as a lens to organize the curriculum in a holistic fashion (O'Fallon, 2011). Last, I created three grounding questions to inform the analysis process that also helped support triangulation (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p.120; Patton, 2001, p. 556) in conjunction with the coded data and my analytic memos:

1. Does the data in some way support the emerging living universe or holistic worldview (highlighting the interconnected nature of systems)?

2. Can this topic, idea, theory, or practice be used to create deeper relationships to self, Earth and or community?

3. Does this feedback/data in anyway add cohesion and or clarity to the curriculum?

In the following section I explain in depth how the above tools and methods were used to analyze the data during each phase of the research.

Phase 2.2 and beyond - analytic memos, grounding questions, and four quadrants. The data analysis in Phase 2 of the research consisted of analyzing the data and theories uncovered through the literature review process and organizing them into a clear structure that covered eight session themes, possible topics, and/or practices to be addressed in each theme. This additionally entailed the use of analytic memos (Saldaña, 2013), the four quadrants (O'Fallon, 2011), and the grounding questions.

Analytic memos offered a practice throughout the research to further flush out theories and emergent themes that I was beginning to recognize through the literature review process, which then helped me to build a foundational structure for the curriculum or overarching theory (Saldaña 2013, p. 252). I then ran the themes, theories, and topics through my grounding questions, which served as a loose, informal coding process. If the answer was "yes" to any of the questions, I would then plug it into the four quadrants in an attempt to see what quadrant this theory or practice addressed. See Figure 3.5 as an example.

Practices/topics for the Inner I: Individuals beliefs, thoughts, feelings Practices/topics could include: meditation, contemplation, reflection, shadow work, journaling.	**Practices for the Outer I**: Individual actions and behaviors Nature connection Permaculture Healthy lifestyle
Practices/topics for the Inner We: Cultural beliefs, philosophies, worldviews Communal practices for regenerative development: -Rites of Passage -Mentoring -Group dialogues, appreciative inquiry, non-violent communication	**Practices/topics for the outer We**: systems and structures -Civic engagement and movement building which shapes public policy and regenerative development -Social justice -Environmental justice -Rights of nature

Figure 3.5. Utilizing the Four Quadrants for Curriculum Design.

Through this distillation process, used in Phase 2.2, I was able to discover the relevant theories, themes, topics and practices for the first curriculum iteration. Starting with a wide lens, I first focused on the main theories and fields that I had collected data on in Phase 2.1. Then, with the use of the above analysis techniques, I uncovered eight themes, one for each session of the curriculum. I then began to attach sub-topics to each of the eight session themes that I was working with. Once this was done, I moved my focus to possible experiential exercises and additional resources to help bring the topics and themes to life within each session.

Phase 3.2 and 4.2 – Inductive and deductive coding in conjunction with ongoing literature review, analytic memos, and informing questions. The primary method used in Phase 3.2 and 4.2 of data analysis was inductive and deductive coding. As defined by Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), “coding is essentially a system of classification-the process of noting what is of interest or significance, identifying different segments of the data, and labeling

them to organize the information contained in the data" (p. 142). Coding helps to both distill concepts and ideas and also spark insight around new ideas.

The coding structure I created for the curriculum was inspired by the informal coding model I had created in Phase 2 through which I ran each piece of data via the grounding questions to establish if the data were valid to the curriculum structure or not. The nature of the coding model I created assisted in both inductive and deductive analysis; that is, it helped to specify and focus themes and topics, and it also allowed for new themes and topics to emerge.

Below is a list of steps I took in the coding process.

1. Listened to each recorded interview. Wrote down the feedback and noted which advisor offered the feedback.

2. Once all feedback was written down from all the advisors for that specific round, each piece of feedback was given a number and run through the spreadsheet below. At this step in the coding process I also went through my analytic memos and found the ones that were relevant to the curriculum design, tagged them with numbers, and ran them through the coding process as well.

3. If the feedback either supported or possibly supported the three grounding questions, it was, in most cases, either adopted or partially adopted. I would then fill in the far left table, designating where I would include the feedback.

4. I then incorporated the feedback into the curriculum, citing next to it the corresponding feedback number from the uniquely numbered list of all advisor feedback. Citing the feedback number next to the incorporated data allowed for the feedback to be traced from the coding process into the curriculum. This created an audit trail (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012), which adds credibility and allows advisors and readers to track the coding and incorporation process (to view the coding spreadsheets see Appendix A for the website address).

Table 3.2

Spreadsheet Categories for Feedback

Feedback #	**Advisor #**	**session #**	**Suggestion/ feedback**	**Criteria: Triangulate feedback against research questions**			**Intent**	**Where did it land in the curriculm design?**
				Does this support the living universe worldview: yes, no, possibly, or not applicable (n/a)?	Does this deepen connection to self, earth, and community: yes, no, possibly, or not applicable (n/a)?	Does it add cohesion and or clarity to the Curricul-um: yes, no, possibly, or n/a.	Adopt, Parti-al, or post-pone.	

Some feedback, such as general affirmations or general concerns and questions, were placed on a second spreadsheet because they did not apply directly to the curriculum structure and therefore did not make sense to code. However, they were noted and addressed. If, while addressing the concern or question, something was sparked that could be coded and incorporated, I would then do that.

Ultimately, Phase 2 through Phase 5 of data collection, data analysis, and synthesis allowed for both an inductive and deductive process. As the research continued through each phase, the data analysis would refine the existing curriculum model, which would then refine data collection, which then created opportunities for new ideas to emerge. The multi-phase structure also created a container through which the researcher and the advisory board could clarify viewpoints and collectively learn and react to what was emerging from the data as encouraged by mindful inquiry (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998) and progressive focusing (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012, p. 826).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Issues of trustworthiness in exploratory research can be addressed through the following three components: credibility, dependability, and transferability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). These standards are inspired by quantitative research and its use of "validity (the degree to which something measures what it purports to measure) and reliability (the consistency with which it measures it over time)" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 125).

Credibility. Credibility deals with the degree to which a study's findings are credible in the eyes of the participants, the researcher, and the reader (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Patton, 2001). Triangulation as well as reflexivity can be used as tools to support the credibility of exploratory or qualitative research (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Chilisa, 2012; Patton, 2001). Therefore, my use of triangulation in data collection and analysis, as well as my focus on reflexivity through mindful inquiry and analytic memo writing were incorporated to help support the credibility of my research. Review by participants (Patton, 2012) or member check-ins (Chilisa, 2012) is an additional way to establish credibility. This was accomplished through my research by creating three iterations of the curriculum and sharing each with the advisory board. This allowed for multiple opportunities to clarify feedback and perspectives and refine the data and findings as needed. Lastly, as the National Science Foundation (1997) pointed out, the use of an advisory board's expertise also lends credibility to the research.

Dependability. Dependability refers to "whether one can track the processes and procedures used to collect and interpret the data" (Bloomberg & Volpe, p. 113). Creating a clear audit trail is a useful way to help establish dependability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Patton, 2001). The audit trail for this research has been created through my efforts to write clear descriptions of the methods and steps I took for the collection and analysis of the data. I have

attempted to further support it by being as transparent as possible with the data and the findings. Additionally, the inclusion of unique advisory board feedback line item enumeration in curricular evolution provides an explicit audit trail to demonstrate dependable capture and adoption of expert insight.

Transferability. Transferability addresses the applicability of the research and its findings to others. Therefore, it refers to "the fit or match between the research context and other contexts as judged by the reader" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 113). Presenting the research using thick and rich descriptions is one way to support transferability (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 113; Chilisa, 2012, p. 170). Therefore, I have attempted to use rich descriptions wherever possible as well as to include a biography of the participants in the appendix to widen the scope and context in further support of transferability.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

So far this paper has addressed the purpose, grounding theories, and methodologies incorporated in the creation of a regenerative community leadership workshop. This chapter addresses the findings of this research. It encapsulates four aspects of the curriculum design: themes, topics, practices and tools all of which evolved through three iterations of curriculum design. The first iteration of the curriculum proposed the thematic arc of the workshop, the second incorporated the advisory board feedback from the first round of calls and further flushed out themes and topics, and the third included the second round of advisory feedback that further sharpened the curriculum's topics, practices, and resources.

In this chapter I first present and discuss the evolution of the curriculum through its three iterations. I then explore the general tools and themes that emerged to constitute the main structure of the workshop. Next, I present examples of findings from the general advisor feedback and my own analytic memo process. This is followed by the specific themes, topics and practices that make up each session. I then close with a final summary of the findings. It is important to note that a full list of the terms and definitions that came out of this research can be found in Appendix A.

Findings 1. The Three Iterations of the Curriculum

In this section I address the three iterations the curriculum went through and the major additions or changes that occurred through the evolution of the curriculum.

Findings 1.1. Iteration One: core curriculum structure - session number, themes, and sequence.

The first iteration of the curriculum emerged out of Phase 2 of the research and demonstrated the number, sequence, and theme of each session. Phase 2 consisted of data

collection and analysis from a broad literature review in conjunction with the use of analytic memos (Saldaña, 2013), the four quadrants (O'Fallon, 2011), and the grounding questions. I ultimately decided on eight sessions for the curriculum based on insights in a synthesizing research memo. The eight-session structure would work well because the first four sessions could focus on the individual's relationship to each of the quadrants and the second four sessions could address the group's relationship to each of the four quadrants. The focus of the sessions ended up evolving a little in subsequent data synthesis, however the advisory board felt the session number and order presented in the first iteration of the curriculum was appropriate throughout the evolution of the curriculum.

The following are the eight session themes in sequential order:

1. The power of story
2. Individual development
3. Regenerative community development
4. Defining group vision, practices, and agreements
5. Further exploring group vision, practices, and agreements
6. Choosing a focus point
7. Community organizing and movement building
8. Going forth

The session order was arranged in a scaffolded manner with the intention that each session would build upon the previous sessions' themes and ideas. The thematic order of this curriculum was partially influenced by progressive focusing and its emphasis on starting with a wide perspective that slowly sharpens as more information is collected. An additional template I

reflected on to help shape the curriculum was a spiral, a shape that also builds on itself. I explore my use of the spiral further in the analytic memo findings section.

The general arc of the workshop moves from the *I* into the *We* perspective. The purpose of this is to help move the individual participants into a collective group awareness that can then be inspired to establish a community of practice around the ideas presented through the workshop.

The first three sessions focus on the individual and the individual's relationship to the current national and global narratives and how those narratives affect individual and community development. They explore where individuals are personally and where we are collectively as an earth-based community: where we want to go and how we can bring that change into our own lives and communities. In Sessions Four and Five, the focus then shifts towards creating the group container by establishing practices and methods for engagement within the group and larger community. The last three sessions move into action-planning and execution of the group vision, hopefully establishing a framework and enough inspiration that will then allow the group members to move forward in their own direction once the workshop is over.

The basic eight-session foundation and theme sequence was established through Phase 2 of the research and produced the first iteration of the curriculum, which was then built on through the duration of the research.

Findings 1.2. Iteration Two – evolution of curriculum from first round advisory board interviews. Once the first iteration of the curriculum was complete it was sent out to the advisory board for the first round of feedback. Feedback was collected and synthesized into the curriculum to create the second iteration of the curriculum. General feedback that went into creating the second iteration included:

- Examples, models, and case studies are key wherever possible. (noted)
- Add short summary of whole experience and define terms such as shadow, ecocentric relationship, containers, and story. (13, 14, 17, 100)
- In summary address need for structural change over symptoms change. (20 partial)
- Keep in mind simplicity throughout. (noted)
- In each session look where people could get off track and add warning signs. For example, in session three on community development watch out for cultural appropriation of rites of passages. (24 partial)
- Address interiors and exteriors in each session and try as much as possible to link personal development to exterior obstacles getting in the way. (30, 32)
- Wherever possible keep language simple. (noted)
- Try to hit emotional, intellectual, and physical levels in each session. (noted)
- Include why it is necessary to do it as the group. (noted)
- Too Eurocentric; diversify the storytellers. (96)
- Interweave themes and sessions: One-way to potentially do this is by using key words like: ecocentric relationship, container, story, values, and being and doing it in each session to tie themes together. (noted)
- Emphasize concentric circles between micro and macro throughout. (105)
- Self-organize; have them teach each other whenever possible. (109)

Finding 1.2.1. Develop terms and overviews. One common piece of feedback that came up multiple times in the first round of calls was to add an overview of the sessions along with a list of term definitions as a way to help clarify the curriculum for participants and prospective participants. The creation of the terms list helped me to further flush out some central ideas that I had been playing with but had yet to really articulate in a clear way through the curriculum.

Finding 1.2.2. Theme crystallizations. Two particular pairs of themes crystallized during this process that did not affect the curriculum much on a structural level, but their recognition created changes that greatly helped sharpen the focus. The paired themes were: globalization and de-growth, and regenerative practices and structural action.

Finding 1.2.2.1. Regenerative practices and structural actions as a paired constellating theme. At this point in the process, I realized that the curriculum was encouraging two types of action, both equally important. However, up to this point I had not named them or really separated them. These two types of action or practices are what I call regenerative practices and structural actions. Regenerative practices focus on the interior growth of individuals and collectives, whereas, exterior actions focus on structural change within the community (activism, politics, conservation, etc.). I define them both in the curriculum the following way:

> *Regenerative practices*: Regenerative practices nurture interior growth on individual and collective levels. Such practices include but are not limited to: ritual, rites of passage, transgenerational mentorships and gatherings, men's fires, women's fires, elder's fires, collective grieving practices, shared gardens, generative communication and listening, shared agreements on conflict, some sort of peace making process, restorative justice, etc. (Brown & Macy, 1998; Young et al., 2010; Plotkin, 2008).
>
> *Structural action*. In this curriculum, I define structural action as action that seeks to effect change on an exterior structural level (political or systems level). Examples of such actions include starting a local transition town movement in your community, building local alliances for the rights of nature movement, ecological conservation, creating local slow money and slow food movements, reclaiming abandoned property for community gardens and/or sustainable housing, reclaiming abandoned spaces for the commons, campaign finance reform, supporting (creating alliances and networks with) other organizations involved in localization and degrowth type of work, etc.

The second iteration of the curriculum separated and defined the differences between the two actions or practices and offered examples of both. Iteration Two also encouraged group members to make room for both, which I felt was an important clarification that was hinted at in Iteration One but not clearly defined.

Finding 1.2.2.2. De-growth and globalization as a paired constellating theme. Another important clarification had to do with relating structural action to the degrowth or localization movements, which are extensions of the sustainability movement. Sustainability is a fairly vague term that can have many different meanings. Conversations with advisors around the need for structural change led me to research the de-growth and localization movements, which incorporate both sustainability and structural change, and offers clear action points to support change on a local level such as slow food, campaign finance reform, and slow money.

These topics are specifically addressed in sessions six and seven when the focus of the workshop turns towards structural action. This shift from just talking about sustainability to introducing more specific movements again felt like a small yet important clarification in the focus on the curriculum.

Finding 1.2.3. Emergent structures, interlayering of curriculum, diversity, and other anchor points. Additionally, through the feedback offered in the first round of conversations with advisory board members, a few structural themes began to emerge that helped to further sharpen the framework of each session. It became clear through several overlapping pieces of feedback that shadow should be addressed in each session. Also, the topic of diversity and the question of how we create the space for honoring and encouraging diversity on an individual, communal, and global level was voiced in the feedback and incorporated into as many sessions as possible.

Finding 1.2.3.1. Anchor point processes: a session arc including group member check-in, theory introduction, creative meditation, journaling, and group dialogue. I refer to repeating themes or topics in each session as *anchor points*. Anchor points that emerged in Iteration Two included the incorporation of a nature connection practice as part of the homework

for each intersession (time in between sessions) and the emergence of a session arc. The arc refers to the concept that in each session an idea or theory is introduced that is then followed by a group U-process implemented as a means of sourcing creativity around the topic. Journaling is then used to capture any insights that arose, followed by a group dialogue in which participants share any insights and learning around the topic being explored. I incorporated this arc into as many sessions as I could. Lastly, an additional anchor point that was added to Iteration Two was opening up each session with a group member check in to share the learning and insights gained over the previous intersession.

Findings 1.3. Iteration Three. With the completion of Iteration Two, which incorporated all the feedback from round one of the advisor calls, the curriculum was, for the most part, fairly flushed out. Each session had a theme, topics, practices, and resources in the form of audio-visual clips and additional readings to support the topics introduced.

Finding 1.3.1. Tuning Session topics to include colonization awareness and cultural reclamation rituals. A small addition to Iteration Three that came through the second round of advisory interviews is the exploration of the story of colonization and its role in shaping the world we live in today. That exploration was added to Session One. Another small yet important addition was made to Session Three that explores how individuals, groups, and communities can reclaim their already established cultural rituals such as black Friday, Christmas, and birthdays to make them more meaningful.

Finding 1.3.2. Researching learning communities. Last, another small yet important piece of feedback that helped to clarify Iteration Three was a suggestion to research learning communities. This led me to the term *communities of practice*, which encapsulates part of the intention behind this workshop: to create and inspire local communities of practice that foster

environmental stewardship, social justice, and holistic (sustainable) community development. This small detail helped to sharpen the overall clarity of the curriculum.

Findings 2. General Tools and Practices

Once the session themes had been selected and sequenced through Iteration One I then explored and collected topics and practices through the literature review process that could possibly bring to life experientially the theories being addressed in each session. The following tools and practices were selected during the literature review process based on their potential to offer regenerative (restorative) experiences for the individuals and group. They were then triangulated against my analytic memos and grounding questions and further vetted and refined through my advisory calls.

Finding 2.1. Using story to explore worldviews in support of adult development. As Berry (1998) stated, “for peoples, generally, their story of the universe and the human role in the universe is their primary source of intelligibility and value” (p. xi). Human beings as far back as hunter-gatherers have used creation stories to organize, shape, and orient individual and collective behavior (Korten, 2014, pp. 5-7).

Today, though the narratives have evolved, the power of story still remains a prevalent force in shaping culture and society. It is through such stories that our views of the world take shape. Each story and corollary worldview carries a set of values, which uphold and reflect our understanding of who we are and how we relate to each other, the planet, and ultimately the cosmos (Eisenstein, 2013; Elgin, 2009; Johnson & Ord, 2013; Korten, 2014; Robinson, 2011; Wilber, 2000). As the developmental theorists Helsen, Drago-Severson, and Kegan (2004) put it, “worldviews can be seen as meaning making systems or ways through which we make meaning

of the world around us and our role in it" (p. 162). Often, these stories and subsequent worldviews are a culture's attempt to answer life's most basic questions (Eisenstein, 2013):

- Who am I?
- Why do things happen?
- What is the purpose of life?
- What is human nature?
- What is Sacred?
- Who are we as a people?
- Where did we come from and where are we going? (p. 4)

Our stories, worldviews, and associated values not only affect the way we see the world but also the way in which we experience the world (Helsen, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 2004, p. 163; Wilber, 2000, pp. 53-55). This understanding places great responsibility on our shoulders to be conscientious about how we present our stories and which stories we allow to define our culture and worldview. Are we choosing stories that promote connection or separation, love or hate, truth or power? Are we choosing stories that offer us meaning and create a world that we are proud to live in and pass onto our children and grandchildren?

These narratives often operate subjectively through our worldviews and surface in the form of unexamined assumptions and beliefs (Kegan, 1993; Wilber, 2000). It is therefore important for any curriculum that focuses on healthy human development to explore these narratives. Through the critical analysis of unexamined assumptions and beliefs these narratives can move from a subjective space into an objective one, which allows participants to let go of the stories that no longer serve them and step into more expansive ideas and perspectives (Fitch, Ramirez, & O'Fallon, 2010; Kegan, 1993; Wilber, 2000).

Finding 2.2. Additional reflective tools for adult development. Three reflective tools that surfaced through the literature review process and where further supported by the advisory board where journaling, dialogue, and meditation. Each of these practices deals with self-

reflection and therefore seemed like appropriate tools to include. As I show below I was able to find a fair amount of research to support their use in individual and group work.

Finding 2.2.1. Journaling. The benefits of journaling have been studied since the 1960s (Christensen, 1981; Hiemstra, 2001; Knowles, 1975; Progoff, 1975). Since then, a substantial amount of research has emerged that suggests that journaling is an effective tool to aid learners in "personal growth, synthesis, and reflection on new information" and to "potentially promote critical self-reflection where dilemmas, contradictions, and evolving worldviews are questioned or challenged" (Hiemstra, 2001, p. 20).

There are many journaling techniques utilized for many different purposes. One technique relevant to this workshop is dream journaling in which participants keep records of their dreams for the purpose of exploring and integrating the subconscious, and possibly gaining deeper insight and knowledge (Bethards, 1997). Another applicable journal technique for this workshop is learning journals (Hiemstra, 2001) where participants record their "thoughts, reflections, feelings, personal opinions, and even hopes or fears during an educational experience" that can often provide deeper clarity and insight into their own learning journeys (p. 20). Additional benefits from journaling can include enhanced physical health through stress reduction (Bruce, 1998) and enhanced psychological health (Adams, 1998).

Finding 2.2.2. Dialogue. The second important reflective tool for growth and development applicable to the curriculum of this workshop is dialogue (Bohm, 1996; Isacs, 1999; Jaworski, 2011; Scharmer, 2007; Senge, 2006). The practice of dialogue, which is thousands of years old, became a topic of research in the 1980's through the work of the physicist, philosopher, and author Bohm (1996). Bohm's ideas on dialogue were then explored

by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for Organizational Learning, which at the time was led by William Isacs (1999).

Dialogue, as defined by Isacs (1999), concerns a "shared inquiry, a way of thinking and reflecting together" (p. 9). The word dialogue comes from two Greek roots, *dia* and *logos*, which suggests "meaning flowing through" (Jaworski, 2011, p. 110). Dialogue in this sense is not about problem solving or analytical thinking; rather, it concerns generative listening and the act of dropping into the moment to see what is present and emergent within a group space (Bohm, 1996; Isacs, 1999). Through the relinquishment of expectations and attachments to beliefs and outcomes, a creative collective field can arise with new possibilities that can broaden, challenge, and expand participants' understandings and perspectives (Isacs, 1999, p. 19; Jaworski, 2011, p. 112).

A slight variation of this technique can be found in what is referred to as *council* (Zimmerman & Coyle, 2007). Council is a tool that allows groups to facilitate dialogue in a way that honors both the individual and the collective, encouraging heart-centered dialogue and listening, and respectful group dynamics (Zimmerman & Coyle, 2007). It is often used in outdoor programs and rites of passage programs as a way of checking in each day and keeping track of where people are mentally, emotionally, and physically (Zimmerman & Coyle, 2007). This practice often involves a talking stick or some sort of object that is held by the person speaking.

Finding 2.2.3. Meditation. A third reflective tool useful in adult development and applicable for this workshop is meditation. Meditation, as defined by Walsh and Shapiro (2006), refers to

> [a] family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general

> mental well-being and development and/or specific capacities such as calm, clarity, and concentration. (p. 228)

Meditation is an ancient contemplative practice found in one form or another in all major religions. Potential benefits include but are not limited to an increase in empathy, compassion, insight, patience, emotional flexibility, and a decrease in emotional reactivity, stress, and anxiety (Davis & Hayes, 2011).

For adult development workshops in which the aim is to spur growth, journaling, dialogue, and meditation are appropriate tools for the workshop toolbox. Each tool in its own way creates a reflective container for the individual and group to explore their own self-awareness, which in turn can help them to uncover hidden biases and reduce stress, while increasing their potential for creative individual and collective insight, critical thinking skills, perspective taking, and compassion (Adams, 1998; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Fitch et al., 2010)

Finding 2.3. Tools for nature connection. In addition to tools that cultivate self-awareness and reflection it was also important, for the purpose of this workshop, to incorporate tools that nurture deeper connections with nature. Louv (2011) and many others underscore the importance of nature connection practices to rekindle and maintain a healthy relationship to the natural world. In a curriculum that plans to foster deeper ecocentric relationships, practices that focus on nature connection are of course important (Blythe and Harre, 2012). In the book *Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature,* Young, McGown and Young (2010) offer a wide array of nature connection tools and skills, such as sit spots (a place in nature one visits consistently on one's own), wandering, identifying heritage species in parks and neighborhoods, paying attention to the cycles of nature, nature-based journaling, bird language, and survival skills such as tracking. Each of these activities could be useful for fostering nature connection in such a curriculum.

Finding 2.4. Tools for regenerative group and community development. Additionally, if one of the intentions of a community leadership curriculum is to contribute to the holistic and regenerative development of a group or community on both an interior and exterior level, then it is important to consider what kinds of regenerative group and community practices could be utilized to support this development. Such ongoing practices can offer consistent containers for growth and support, thus addressing Bell's (2003) concerns about the difficulties of reincorporation and the need for supported community based peer groups to help anchor transformation. Through committing to a group action plan (monthly meetings, gatherings, etc.) members can continue to nurture the collective container, which, in turn, continues to support participants while they bring to life the insights gained over the workshop (Blyethe and Harre, 2012).

Such regenerative group and community development practices include but are not limited to: conflict resolution and peacemaking skills (Scott, 2013), democratic decision making and generative communication (Gastil, 1993), women's fires, men's fires, elders' fires, gatherings that honor the turning of the seasons, and storytelling (Young et al., 2010). Not only do such tools and experiences hold the possibility to nurture positive group member dynamics and ecocentric relationships, but they also help to cultivate transgenerational relationships through which wisdom can be passed from one generation to the next, thus strengthening the operating system of the community (Young et al., 2010; Plotkin, 2008; Scott, 2013). Mentorship is also a powerful tool to help support such development and can often organically manifest out of consistent, transgenerational, community-oriented gatherings (Young et al., 2010; Scott, 2013).

Finding 2.4.1. Rituals and rites of passage as tools for healthy development. Another tool that can support healthy holistic community development and expression is ritual (LaChapelle, 1984; Plotkin, 2003; Some, 1993). Rituals are intentional actions that can engage individuals and groups physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, and through such engagement hold the potential to foster deeper ecocentric relationships (Plotkin, 2003). Self or group designed rituals or ceremonies can offer opportunities to engage Gardner's (1999) multiple intelligences some of which include: linguistic, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence. Environmental education advocates often cite ritual as a missing component and crucial element to healthy personal, group, and community development (Brown & Macy, 1998; Young et al., 2010; LaChapelle, 1984; Plotkin, 2003, 2008; Some, 1993).

Modern day rituals can be shaped off of Van Gennep's (1960) three-stage process addressed in the literature review. Young et al. (2010) described a similar version: separation, the letting go of the day-to-day world; learning and growth, the period of the actual ritual; and last, re-incorporation, in which the lessons are shared with the community and steps are made to anchor the new insights into day-to-day life (p. 214).

One common ritual found among many indigenous cultures that is now having a resurgence in the west, particularly in the United States and Europe, is the rite of passage experience. Typically thought of as only pertaining to youth who are crossing into adulthood a broader interpretation is that it can be any event that marks a transition in a person's life as he or she moves from one stage to the next (Foster & Little, 1992). This can include a youth moving into adulthood or an adult moving into parenthood or elderhood. It can also be a more subtle transition, such as an individual seeking closure as she moves out of a long relationship, career,

or other experience that has defined her and become a skin needing to be shed in order to move forward.

Marques (2010) believes that certain rites of passage models such as the one made popular by Foster and Little (1992), which involve four days of fasting in nature, can deepen ecocentric relationship and invite individuals to “consciously attend to issues of identity, belonging and purpose,” which are key issues that lie at the root of identity formation as well as the transition from one stage of life into another (p. 34). Additionally many believe that such practices help to deepen and affirm ones relationship with the natural world (Brown & Macy, 1998; Young et al., 2010; LaChapelle, 1984; Plotkin, 2003, 2008; Scott, 2013; Some, 1993).

In general such tools and practices can fill an important role in creating a sense of community that many feel is missing in our modern world. Whether through community-based rituals, seasonal celebratory gatherings, mentorship, or rites of passage, these practices hold the possibility to strengthen the bonds across generations and help to affirm and nurture ecocentric relationships and individual and group development.

Summary for general tools and practices. The above section explores the general tools and practices that emerged as findings throughout the various iterations of the curriculum design. These include: the power of story to shape worldviews, journaling, meditation, dialogue, council, nature connection, and regenerative community practices such as ritual and rites of passage. Each tool in its own way creates a container for reflection and contemplation, and through such a process can open up the door to deeper ecocentric realizations and understandings.

Findings 3. General Feedback

In addition to general tools and practices collected for the curriculum I also collected broader feedback that applied to the entire curriculum. I put this type of feedback under the

category of general questions, concerns, and affirmations. Often, these types of comments were too general to code to designate to a particular portion of the curriculum, so they did not receive a number. I would simply put noted next to them to show they had been acknowledged. The entirety of these comments can also be viewed online with the coded feedback. Some of these comments included support for the curricular scaffolding and concerns about facilitation and audience:

- Likes the macro, micro, spiral structure through the four quadrants.
- Really likes the structure and likes how it is based on story on the micro and macro levels.
- This program is not teaching but helping others to create community development, which is an important niche that potentially separates it from other programs.
- Sees pros and cons to self-facilitated program vs. facilitated program. Self-facilitated is more accessible, but you can't go as deep.
- For whom is this for and how will facilitation be handled?
- Concerned that groups can't self-facilitate such an experience and that self-facilitation might do more harm than good.
- Concerned how to create intimacy without a facilitator.

Finding 3.1. Facilitation Model. The most common questions and/or concerns arose in regards to the facilitation model of the workshop. Many advisors saw the benefit of the model being offered online because it increased accessibility; however, without a facilitator several advisors felt that the container and depth of the experience would be limited and shallow.

This led me to the conclusion that assigning an online facilitator for the program would be the best solution. This means that if a community group in Iowa were to sign up for the program online, they would then be assigned a mentor who would Skype into the sessions to help facilitate and answer any questions that arose for the group members. This online

facilitation would help guide the group experience and offer a deeper container while at the same time keeping the experience open to diverse geographical locations.

Finding 3.2. Curriculum Audience. An additional general feedback theme regarded the profile of participants for the curriculum. During the course of the research, the participant focus remained largely the same. We wanted to create a usable and accessible workshop template for diverse community groups across America who were interested in building engaged community networks with a focus on sustainability and social justice and needed help to get the ball rolling. We also felt that the first template should be a wide general version that could be shaped in future iterations for specific community based needs and interests.

Findings 4. Analytic Memo Findings

Additional finding also surfaced through my use of analytic memos. In an effort to distill the comprehensive literature review that began the research, I engaged in an analytic memo-writing process as discussed in my methods chapter. The memo writing worked as a sort of research journal where I could write freely and capture whatever insights and connections were emerging for me at the time. Some of the ideas captured in the memos pertained to the general structure of the curriculum or to specific aspects such as session themes, topic, and/or resources. Below are a few examples of memos that influenced the curriculum in one-way or another. The red numbers next to some indicate that they were coded and directly applied into the curriculum structure.

- General Thesis, 11/1/13: Exploring ideas on how I can use the AQAL model to frame the curriculum structure.
- General Thesis, 11/4/13: I think 8-sessions makes sense, four can focus on the individual and their relationship to each of the quadrants and four can focus on the group and its relationship to each of the quadrants. (111)

- General Thesis, 11/8/13: For the structure I am also thinking about a spiral template, concentric circles, and the interplay of micro and macro throughout the curriculum in relationship to story (see Figure 4.1 below).

- General Thesis, 11/15/13: Topics to explore: adult development, sustainability (regenerative community development), rites of passage, nature connection, and shadow work.

- Resource, 3/15/14: Watch Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream (Twist, 2013). Great set up for first session. Possibly just show clip on worldviews. (113)

- Resource, 3/18/14: The Economics of Happiness (Norberg-Hodge, 2011). Perfect film documenting the downside of progress. (114)

- General, 6/7/14: Model online curriculum after Cloud School (Mitra, 2013) in India where you have a facilitator online, steering and encouraging the process, depends a lot on the principles of self-organization.

- General, 10/15/14: Objectify Vs. Humanize. This came up in a call with an advisor in round one, and it reflects a lot of my own thinking at the moment. One shadow exercise could be to point out how culture and individuals objectify the other and or nature and therefore separate themselves from the other. (108)

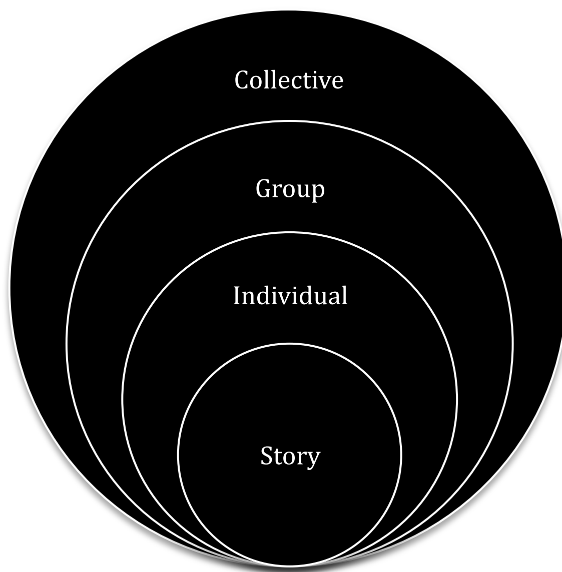

Figure 4.1. Stories influence on individual, group, and collective development. Inspired by the memo written on 11/8/13.

The memo writing helped me to balance the heavily analytical aspects of the research with free-form creativity. This was especially useful in the beginning when I was trying to pinpoint the themes and structure of the curriculum. As demonstrated in the first two memos, I was originally trying to match each session up with one of Wilber's four quadrants. Ultimately, this felt too constrictive, and after playing with it some more, I drew a spiral, placed "story" at the center, and then followed what felt like a natural progression from there through the rest of the session themes. After running the basic template by my advisors in round one and hearing their positive feedback about the basic structure, I then focused my memo writing on topics, themes, and resources.

It is also important to note that not all of my memo ideas were incorporated into the curriculum; some felt important in the moment, but upon further reflection no longer seemed important or applicable to the unfolding structure of the curriculum. For example, I wrote a few memos on the importance of emphasizing being (reflection) over doing (action) because we live in a culture that places such emphasis on doing. Later, after more advisor conversations and further thought, I came to the conclusion that both are equally important and need to be addressed as such in the curriculum in order to best support research quality and credibility.

Findings 5. Session-by-Session Curriculum Topics and Practices for the Final Design

The following section, Findings 5, presents the specific structure, topics, and themes found in the final iteration of the curriculum (Iteration Three). The topics and practices in Findings 5 emerged as the top selections for activities that would best support the thematic aims of each session. Each session theme below is followed by the subtopics and practices it explores. The short paragraph summation of each session is meant to offer the reader a glimpse of the curriculum; the full curriculum can be viewed in Appendix B.

Additionally, following each session summary I list some of the advisory feedback that was connected to that session. This gives the reader a sense of the type of feedback that was offered and incorporated into the curriculum. If you wish to see exactly how each piece of feedback was integrated see the full curriculum in Appendix B.

As explained in Chapter Three: Methods, the numbers next to the sentences in the curriculum refer to each piece of advisory feedback that was assigned a number during the coding process. The red numbers refer to feedback that was given during the first round of advisory calls and the green numbers are the feedback that was given during the second round of advisory calls. All the advisory feedback offered below was incorporated into the final curriculum. The website address to view the entire set of advisory feedback for this research can be found in Appendix A.

Finding 5.1. Session One – The power of story: creating worldviews, values, structures, and systems. Topics, inquiries, and questions for Session One included (1) exploring how stories shape our reality and worldviews; and, (2) what collective stories have created the worldviews, beliefs, and social structures that comprise our world today. Subtopics explored included:

- Religion and the use of the distant patriarch.
- Science, specifically the mechanistic reductionist worldview, in which all is chaos and separate.
- Modernity and the rise of industry and the individual.
- Capitalism and globalization and its promotion of progress and its ties to resource consumption and infinite growth on a finite planet. (7, 18, 22)
- Colonization and its ties to racism, violence and patriarchy are also explored (Wise, 2012). (154)

- Also included is an exploration of the values associated with these narratives and the role values play in shaping individual, local, and global systems and structures (Brown & Macy, 2014; Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014).

In-session practices include Scharmer's (2007) U-process on the new emerging story followed by journaling and a group dialogue. Post-session work includes more reflective journaling, shadow work, reading, and sit spot activity through which participants further explore the Session One topics.

Advisor feedback: Session One. Some of the advisory feedback from the first round of advisory calls included:

- Really emphasize the importance of understanding where we are and how we got here. (7, 22)
- Address shadow: What is shadow and how does it show up in unexamined assumptions and beliefs. How does shadow show up in each session? (8, 23)
- How do individual stories play into collective stories? How do these stories play out in your life, your family development, etc? (15)
- What is the story of capitalism? (18)
- How do our stories promote or not promote diversity? (19)

Some of the advisory feedback from round two included:

- Encourage the exploration of family history as homework. (156)
- Add storytelling as an aspect of the sit spot. (167)
- Create a safe container for exploration immediately. (170)
- Explore colonization and its lasting effects on society and culture. (154)

Finding 5.2. Session Two – Individual development. Topics included an exploration of healthy human and adult development (Kegan, 1993; Wilber, 2000). Also introduced are the

notions of transformational containers for holistic growth, shadow work, and ecocentric awareness.

Additional inquires included how do we develop in ways that deepen our ecocentric relationships to self, Earth, and community (Plotkin, 2008)? How do we create healthy containers for our own individual development? What are our individual gifts and how do we use them to connect and contribute to the group and our community? What exterior obstacles stand in the way of our own development? (30, 32)

In-session practices included a group dialogue on individual values versus collective values and a U-process group meditation sensing into individual's leading edges. Post-session practices included shadow work, creating a holistic life practice, and journaling on where one's leading edge of development lies.

Advisor feedback: Session Two. Some of the feedback from round one included:

- Add individual shadow work. (8) (23)
- How do I support diversity? (19)
- Remind people they are the authors of their own stories. (106)
- How do our stories objectify the other? (116)
- Explore integral life practice. (82)
- Old way/New way exercise. The idea is to label old patterns associated with old worldviews and values, and then label new patters that individuals and collectives can adopt that reflect the living universe worldview and associated values. (116, analytic memo)

Some of the feedback from round two included:

- Explore what is already working for participants and how they can nurture that into fuller expression. (135)
- Encourage small steps while reminding participants that small changes can have big ramifications. (134)

- Write a life charter with mission and vision statement. How does it align with the new story we see unfolding in the world today? (129)
- Look into mindfulness-based stress reduction. (131)

Finding 5.3. Session Three – regenerative community development. Topics, inquiries, and questions included exploring healthy, localized, regenerative community development practices. Nature connection, ritual, and rites of passage are explored, along with topics on diversity and transgenerational mentorship.

Additional inquiries included how do we create healthy community containers that deepen our collective relationship to the planet and each other (5)? How do we define community today? On an interior level, what types of regenerative practices can the group members establish in the community to support men, women, youth, and elders? On an exterior level, what kind of structural actions (political, social, environmental) can be undertaken to support regenerative community development? Some in-session practices include a U-process, free writing, and a group dialogue on reclaiming ritual and new community models. The post-session practice is a day spent fasting in nature (if possible).

Regenerative practices include rites of passage work (honoring life transitions), community gatherings, and mentorship, which nurture individual and community interiors and help support healthy human development (Plotkin, 2008). Structural actions centered on social and environmental justice and community empowerment promote exterior structural, political, systems level change in the community. Both are necessary for healthy change and each empowers the other. (11, 25)

Advisor feedback: Session Three. Some of the feedback from round one included:

- How do we create ecocentric containers on a communal level? (5)
- Explore the differences between community building and transformation. Yes, this is about support and bonding, but the bigger goal is transformation. (11, 25)
- How does the participant's community promote diversity? (19)
- Dawn to dusk fast and wander in nature. Participants carry a journal. Gather together to share a dinner at night and tell stories of the day. (112)
- Lookout for and define cultural appropriation. (24)

Some of the feedback from round two included:

- If suggested community practices are unfamiliar to the group, encourage participants to find experts in their own or surrounding communities to come and offer a workshop or presentation on the topic. (148)
- Encourage groups to reclaim their own existing cultural rituals and make them their own, i.e. black Friday, Christmas, birthdays, etc. (145)

Finding 5.4-5.5. Sessions Four and Five – defining group vision, practices, and agreements. Topics, inquiries, and questions included exploring the group vision through integral theory's four-quadrant model (Wilber, 2000). These sessions also introduced group tools such as peace making processes, non-violent communication, appreciative inquiry, generative listening, and other restorative practices.

Inquires included what are the guiding principles, beliefs, and values of the group (upper left)? What community/cultural philosophies, values, and beliefs do the group members wish to focus on evolving in order to create a more sustainable and just community space (lower left)? How do the group member's help to create sustainable and just systems (infrastructure, policy) change within the community (lower right)? What holistic actions and practices do the group members engage in to affect change on both an interior and exterior level within the community (upper right)? How do the group members foster diversity? Also how do the group members explore unexamined assumptions, blind spots, and shadows? What are the obstacles the group

faces? How does the group renew its vision? Both sessions four and five incorporate group dialogue, group meditation, shadow work, sit spots, and journaling to explore the above topics.

Advisor feedback: Sessions Four and Five. Some of the feedback from round one included:

- How do participants renew the vision and keep it evolving? (6)
- How does the group container actively support diversity? (19)
- Explore rotating leadership roles. Define role well and then rotate who runs meetings, etc. (34)
- In session four and five emphasize agreements on conflict and communication, and offer tools such as generative listening and non-violent communication. (44, 47, 50)
- Generative listening and understanding doesn't always mean agreement. What is important is that people are heard. Humanize the other; do not objectify. (50)
- What are the obstacles to creating healthy containers on a group and community level? (46)

Some of the feedback from round two included:

- What does the group see as negative side effects of globalization on a local level? (144)

Finding 5.6. Session Six - choosing a group action focus point. Topics, inquiries, and questions included choosing a focus point for local, sustainable, and regenerative group action. This session is partially shaped and facilitated by group members however some topics in the beginning explore globalization and localization. Additionally, community based examples of action are also explored.

Practices include a U-process, journaling, and group dialogue. Post-session practices entail research around networking and alliance building possibilities that are connected to the issues the group wishes to focus on.

Advisor feedback: Session Six. Some of the feedback from round one included:

- Highlight examples of community action. (41)
- Underscore the importance of networking and horizontal movement building to create positive, closed-loop feedback systems. (5)
- Through Sessions Six, Seven, and Eight, keep the phrase "think globally act locally" in mind. Use global movements to inform and inspire local movements. (9)
- How do we promote diversity within community (19)
- Add a note about creating simple and attainable goals. (31)
- Bring up reform-based versus rights-based change. We are conditioned to compromise. Many of the problems we face today demand structural change, not just reform. (33)

Some of the feedback from round two included:

- Make room for sub-groups within the group. Some will naturally resonate with regenerative practices, and some will resonate with action-based practices. How can the group work to support both? (138) (140)
- Engage appreciative inquiry: What is already working within the community, and how can this group work to support it? (135)

Finding 5.7. Session Seven - Community organizing and movement building. Topics, inquiries, and questions included an exploration of the practices and steps necessary for successful holistic community organizing and movement building (5). Examples of successful community and group movements are also addressed.

Further inquiries include: keeping in mind your focus point, what groups can you build alliances with on a local, national, and global level (9)? Think outside of the box: Who are the stakeholders involved, and how can you get them engaged with your work? How can you diversify the movement and align with other movements on the national and global level (19)?

In-session practices include group dialogue and brainstorming on the above topics. Out-of-session practices include: sit spot and reflective journaling on possible next steps for the group.

Advisor feedback: Session Seven. Some advisor feedback from round one:

- How do we diversify our movement and focus? (19)
- Degrowth could be a topic of exploration. Perhaps slow food, slow money, and slow living fit under this idea. (117)

There was no specific feedback for session seven during the second round of feedback calls.

Finding 5.8. Session Eight – Going forth, regenerative community next steps. Topics, inquiries, and questions in this session had to do with wrapping up the experience and looking at what lies ahead for both the individuals and the group. This entailed honoring the work accomplished over the past seven sessions and turning towards what is next. Where does the group go from here? How are participants going to take this seed and continue to nurture it for the positive the community and planet? (12)

Advisor feedback: Session Eight. Some of the feedback from round one included:

- How do we close this chapter and open another? What is next? What commitments (if any) is the group making to move forward? (12)
- How does the group diversify their movement and impact? (19)

There was no specific feedback for session eight during the second round of feedback calls.

Finding 5.9. The eight-session curriculum spiral. As addressed in the beginning of this chapter the original structure of the curriculum was informed by both the four quadrants and a spiral design. Figure 4.2 demonstrates the eight-session spiral of the Regenerative Leadership Curriculum and the quadrants that inform each session.

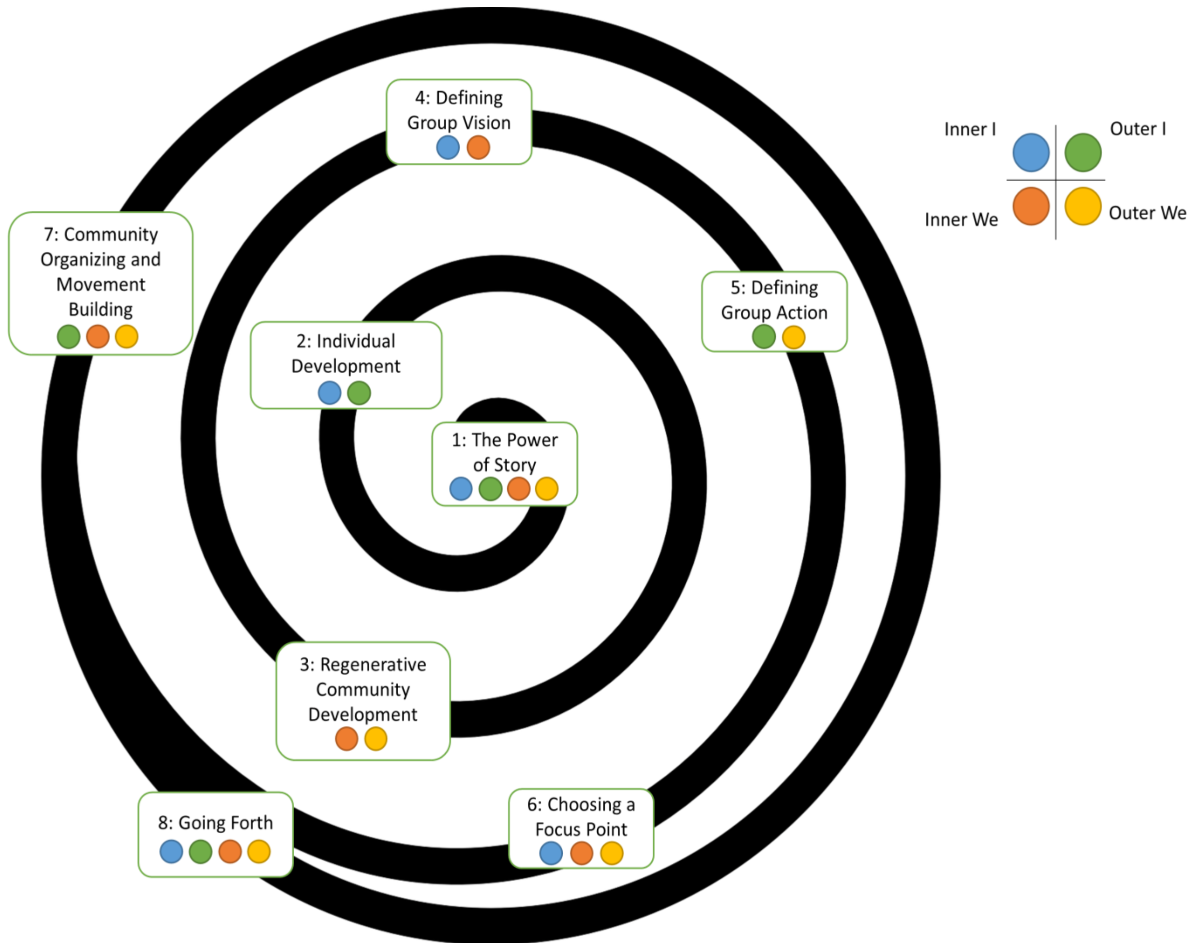

Figure 4.2. The Eight-Session Regenerative Leadership Curriculum Spiral as Informed by the Four Quadrants.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I explored five main groups of findings uncovered through my research. First, I addressed the evolving iterations of the curriculum from its basic structure (Iteration One) to its final form (Iteration 3). Then, I explored some general tools and practices that emerged to help shape the main structure of the workshop. For example: the use of story to explore worldviews, journaling, meditation, dialogue, nature connection, community practices and ritual and rites of passage. Next, I covered general advisor feedback through which I addressed certain anchor points such as shadow work, diversity, and session arc and defined terms such as globalization, localization, structural action and regenerative exercises. I finished by presenting an overview of the specific themes, topics and practices offered in each session.

Creating this workshop curriculum could be likened to building a house. The thorough literature review, in combination with the four quadrants, the analytic memo-writing process, and the grounding questions created the first iteration of the curriculum, which set a solid foundation for the remaining structure to be built. The first round of advisory calls shored up the foundation and built from it a framed structure (Iteration Two), which was then filled in with detail through the second round of calls, leading to the final iteration of the curriculum (Iteration Three). This curriculum development process, which incorporated progressive focusing and an advisory board, could potentially, in and of itself, be considered a methodological finding.

Just as an architect cannot know if the design he or she has created works in reality until the structure is built, we cannot know if this curriculum has the power to fulfill the original intentions of the curriculum until these findings have been tested in the field. Appropriately for this phase of the educational design the research has relied upon the expertise of the advisory board, the integrity of the methods used, and the transparent and clear work of the researcher to

validate the findings presented in this chapter. This issue of validity is explored further in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This thesis explored the context, grounding theories, and research methodologies utilized in creating a regenerative community leadership workshop. The motivation behind this research is a belief that the holistic worldview has the ability to help offer new and creative solutions to the global problems we face today as a species. Additionally, for such a view to have any sort of impact on a global level it needs to be planted and nurtured first on local levels, which is what this workshop seeks to support.

In this concluding chapter I review and summarize the purpose, methodologies, and findings of this research. Additionally, I address the limitations of this study, offer recommendations for further research, and close with a few final thoughts.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the possible structure, theories, topics, tools, and practices that could be used to create an adult regenerative community leadership workshop. The design of the workshop and curriculum content is meant to offer interior and exterior tools and experiences that catalyze both individual and group development. The intention behind the workshop is two-fold: (a) to deepen participants' relationships to self, Earth, and community; and (b) to create and inspire local regenerative communities of practice that foster social justice, environmental stewardship ground in an ethic of care, and holistic (sustainable) community development.

In shaping the curriculum, the advisory board and I tried to make it applicable to both urban and rural communities as well as people of various races, classes, and cultures. Though the model has attempted to be cross-cultural in that it is not anchored in a certain cultural frame, the principles in no way promote standardization or conformity. The program is designed to

meet each individual and group at their own level through the creation of a self-reflective learning container. In undertaking this program, participants share experiences that seek to broaden perspectives, creating more empathy and connection, while at the same time honoring individuality and diversity.

While creating the curriculum for this workshop, this study took into account certain limitations behind today's adult transformative workshops. Some of those limitations included that they often cost considerable amounts of money, people often have to travel outside of their communities to attend them, they can take up substantial amounts of time, many only focus on individual growth through singular approaches to development, and they seldom offer support for the reincorporation process.

In response to these limitations, the workshop was designed to be offered online to cut down on the cost of participation. Additionally, the multidisciplinary approach of the curriculum allowed for exposure to many different types of theories and practices, which cater to many different types of learning styles. Also, in response to concerns of reincorporation, this online model allowed people the ability to go through the experience at home with their own peer or community group in a time frame that works for them, hence aiding the reincorporation process through community support, and increasing the likelihood of the group continuing as a community of practice once the workshop is over.

Summary of the Study

An exploratory approach was taken to design this community workshop curriculum. The arc of the research was informed by O'Fallon's (2011) model for curriculum design, which further supported and informed the use of a curriculum advisory board (De la Santos, Dominguez, & Lafrance, 2011; National Science Foundation, 1997) as a primary method.

The multiple phases of data collection and analysis echoed progressive focusing's emphasis on continuous feedback loops and the importance of moving from a wide to a focused lens through various iterations of research (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Stake, 1981). The multiple methods employed for data collection (literature review, advisory board, analytic memos) and analysis (coding, memos, informing questions) offered me the ability to triangulate the data and the findings, which assisted in helping to support the rigor and credibility of the research.

The guiding principles and theories that helped shape the model included Wilber's (2001) four-quadrant model; adult development and the use of naturally therapeutic containers to catalyze growth (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007; Fitch et al., 2010; Helsing et al., 2004; Jaworski, 2011; O'Fallon, 2011); and ecocentric awareness and action (Leopold, 1970; Litz & Mitten, 2013; Mayer & Frantz, 2004, Seed et al., 2007).

Additionally, tools such as the use of story to explore worldviews and values (Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014), dialogue (Bohm, 1996), journaling (Hiemstra, 2001), meditation (Walsh and Shapiro, 2006) nature connection (Young et al., 2010; Louv, 2008, 2011), peer to peer learning and support (Blythe and Harre, 2012), and other group development practices were utilized as means of bringing the theories to life experientially within the curriculum.

Summary of Findings

The following is a list of some of the findings as they relate to the themes, topics, and practices covered in the workshop.

- Session One: The Power of Story. Topics included exploring the narratives and worldviews behind globalization, capitalism, colonization, progress, and growth. Where have we been, where are we, and where do we want to go? Practices included group dialogue, group U-process, reflective journaling, and sit-spots.

- Session Two: Individual Development. Topics included healthy adult development, creating healthy containers for development, introducing ecocentric awareness, and exploring shadow and other obstacles to individual development. Practices included group dialogue, group U-process, reflective journaling on the above topics, and utilizing sit-spots during the inter-session period.

- Session Three: Regenerative Community Development. Topics included how to create ecocentric community containers, and exploring the distinction between regenerative community-based practices and structural action. Some in-session practices included a U-process, reflective journaling, and a group dialogue on reclaiming ritual and new community models. The post-session practice is a day spent in nature (fasting if possible).

- Sessions Four and Five: Defining Group Vision, Practices, and Agreements. Topics included governance and possible rotating leadership models, various methods for generative communication and listening, and an exploration of how to engage the broader community in the group's vision, actions, and practices. Both sessions four and five incorporate group member dialogue, group member meditation, shadow work, sit-spots, and journaling to explore the above topics.

- Session Six: Choosing a Group Focus Point. Topics included how to choose a focus point for group action within the greater community, and how to make space for both regenerative practices and structural action. Practices may include a U-process, journaling, and group dialogue. Post-session practices entail research around networking and alliance building possibilities that are connected to the issues on which the group wishes to focus.

- Session Seven: Community Organizing and Movement Building. Topics included how to build movements and create alliances, as well as how to diversify and bridge movements between the local and global levels. In-session practices included group member dialogue and brainstorming on the above topics. Out-of-session practices included: sit-spots and reflective journaling on the possible next steps for the group.

- Session Eight: Going Forth. Topics included revisiting and honoring the work accomplished to this point and figuring out what is next for the group.

Interpreting the Findings

As the author, community advocate, and social change activist Parker Palmer (2004) addressed in his book *Hidden Wholeness,* one of the things our society is most deficient in is safe spaces for sharing our own and listening to others experiences of what it means to be human. The findings in this research are by no means definitive, instead they trace one possible outline for how such regenerative spaces could potentially form and express themselves locally.

On a personal level, I often find the simple realizations to be more powerful than the profound ones and I feel that is true for me in relationship to this research. What strikes me most in this research is not the findings themselves but what the findings point to as a foundational element of human growth and leadership, which is the art and transformative power of deep listening. Such listening is generative (open), it is not about fixing, saving, advising, or correcting. This type of listening lies at the heart of most of the practices and grounding theories explored in this curriculum.

As an educator and researcher striving to be more effective in the work that I do in the world this finding feels the most significant to me. To tie it back to Palmer's (2004) critique of Western culture, what is most important is that community spaces are cultivated that encourage such an art form; through which individuals and groups can nurture their own wholeness into fuller expressions of compassion and care for others and the natural world.

Limitations of the Study

The strengths and weaknesses of exploratory research based in a constructivist paradigm lie in the large role that the researcher plays in collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing the data (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In this study, I was both a researcher and a participant in the creation of the curriculum. I offered feedback through memos, which were coded for validity. I

added resources to the literature review, and it was ultimately up to me if a piece of feedback was to be incorporated or not. I did my best to stay aware of my own cultural biases and overlooked assumptions while at the same time recognizing that my own perspective also has much to offer to this topic. My role of researcher and participant could be seen as a limitation, of which I was aware, and for which I tried to account through all the techniques addressed in the credibility section of the Methods chapter.

Additionally, one of the main challenges of creating curricula for diverse communities lies in being able to address all the various worldviews and perspectives. Therefore, I tried to enlist curriculum advisors who represent diverse populations and who brought experience working with diverse worldviews. Though the advisory board had a desirable age range and gender balance, for which I selected, I would have liked to have had a broader and more equally distributed racial balance, as about 75% of the board identified as being Caucasian. I actively tried to select for a more diverse board in the beginning of the selection process, but many people I approached were simply too busy to participate.

The potential bias that could arise from a racially unbalanced advisory board was dealt with through an awareness on my part of the unbalance and the need to make sure that multiple views, voices, and perspectives were being represented through the curriculum. This was not just my goal but also a goal shared by all of the advisors. As a result, diversity and the nurturing of diversity in community development are addressed in different ways through each section of the curriculum.

An additional limitation of this study lies in the fact that it has not been tested on a focus group; therefore, it is hard to prove that it is meaningful and can serve to fulfill its main goals. I knew from the beginning that I would not have time to test this curriculum in the field.

Therefore, my approach was to create a credible curriculum model built from tools and theories that have been tested in the field in other contexts and have, in one way or another, proved their credibility. Most, if not all of the tools and theories addressed in this curriculum have been field-tested by members of the advisory board who use them regularly in their own work.

Lastly, the topics addressed in this paper and research, which are often connected to holistic education and individual and collective development, are not new topics. They have been around for decades, if not longer. Therefore, my own perspective on the subject is naturally limited. Certainly, there are important ideas and tools that I have unknowingly left out that could further shape and add to the content of this model.

Recommendations for Further Research

In general, further research needs to be done in the fields of human development, social psychology, and education, which explore the cultivation of ecocentric awareness or what Wilber (2000) refers to as planetcentric awareness. In particular, we need to research how to further support the development of worldviews and values that encapsulate the interdependent relationship of self, Earth, and community, and through that awareness inspire holistic action and stewardship on behalf of those relationships.

On a more specific level, educational templates, such as the one created through this study, need to be tested in the field for their effectiveness. Other experiential, community-based models such as the Girl Scouts of the USA and Alcoholics Anonymous prove that it is possible to create an experiential template that can be adapted and spread to diverse communities across the country and possibly the world. The question then becomes how to create such a replicable template in the fields of sustainability, social justice, and regenerative community development.

In such an inquiry it is important to look at the possible shape and structure of what that model might look like, which this study has attempted to explore. However, there are also further questions to consider that this study has not fully answered, such as can a program like this be facilitated successfully online? Is it inclusive and sensitive to diversity? What are the success rates of groups who attend the workshop? Are they actually sticking together and creating a consistent community of practice? What types of practices and actions do these groups lean towards? And how might more culturally diverse stakeholders evolve this curriculum?

Closing Summary

In reflecting back over this research and its connection to the larger context the world finds itself situated in today two distilled words rise to mind *story* and *relationship.* Today we seem to be standing at a nexus point where both new and ancient understandings of the world are at our fingertips. For the first time ever it is possible to conceptualize a global commons or village and whether we like it or not we are heading in that direction. The question is what will that look like and who will get to write the narrative that organizes that system? Will it be a narrative built on fear and separation written by a few, or one of interbeing, kinship, and cooperation written by all? Can we as a species embody a story and worldview big enough to tie us all together in a way that celebrates our incredible diversity while also awakening us to our interdependent relationship with each other, the planet?

I believe that the seeds of such a story are being planted all over the world through movements big and small that embody Hawken's (2008) *blessed unrest*. Now those seeds need the kind of nourishment that only rooted communities can offer. It is my hope that this research in some small way can help create and or support regenerative groups and communities that wish

to offer a verse to this life-giving story in an effort to co-create what Eisenstein (2013) refers to as “the more beautiful world our hearts know is possible.”

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Appendix A

For additional information regarding this research including previous iterations of the curriculum, the general list of resources I collected to assist and support the curriculum please contact me at westonpew@yahoo.com.

To view coded advisor feedback and memos visit this website (sheet two is general feedback): https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1xcJyqpVKKpm-IdryC47Zc4dej5aDBCaJ8zuPFD_D1Uk/pubhtml#

Definition of Terms

Key
Red numbers refer to first round feedback suggestion that were incorporated.
Green numbers refer to second round feedback suggestions that were incorporated.

Definition of Terms (13, 14, 17, 100)

Adult/Human development. Individual developmental growth is often marked by an expanding ability to take on multiple perspectives, empathize with others and understand more and more complex systems (Cook-Greuter & Soulen, 2007; Wilber, 2000).

Container. A container is a reflective environment that allows people to explore the leading edges of their interior development through a combination of experiences that both challenges them and supports them. Such containers hold the ability to catalyze growth in individuals through the exploration of one's worldviews and unexamined assumptions and beliefs (Fitch, Ramirez, & O'Fallon, 2010).

Critical Thinking. **"**Critical thinking is the ability to analyze and evaluate one's thinking in order to improve thought and decision-making. These skills help students recognize assumptions and bias in personal thoughts, as well as in the words and actions of others" (Litz & Mitten, 2013, p. 6).

Degrowth. As defined by the academic association Research and Degrowth's website (2014):

> Sustainable degrowth is a downscaling of production and consumption that increases human well-being and enhances ecological conditions and equity on the planet. It calls for a future where societies live within their ecological means, with open, localized economies and resources more equally distributed through new forms of democratic institutions. Such societies will no longer have to "grow or die." Material accumulation will no longer hold a prime position in the population's cultural imaginary. The primacy of efficiency will be substituted by a focus on sufficiency, and

innovation will no longer focus on technology for technology's sake but will concentrate on new social and technical arrangements that will enable us to live convivially and frugally. Degrowth does not only challenge the centrality of GDP as an overarching policy objective but proposes a framework for transformation to a lower and sustainable level of production and consumption, a shrinking of the economic system to leave more space for human cooperation and ecosystems.

Ecocentric relationship. The term ecocentric relationship refers to the interdependent connection between one's self, one's community, and the planet (Leopold, 1970). The indigenous terms *mitakuye oyasin* (Maroukis, 2005, p. 160), from the North American Sioux, and *ubuntu* (Hailey, 2008, p. 4), a South African tribal expression, also capture the interconnected nature of these relationships.

Ecological Literacy. Ecological literacy, or ecoliteracy, is the ability to understand and apply ecological principles and processes to everyday life and decision making (Center for Ecoliteracy, 2000). This implies the ability to understand natural systems and the know-how and skills needed to protect them in the arenas of conservations and politics.

Environmental Stewardship. A felt sense of responsibility from people towards the environment based on "intrinsic motivation to care for places they already love" (Litz & Mitten, 2013, p. 4).

Four quadrants of integral theory (Wilber, 2000).

Inner I: The individual's beliefs, thoughts, feelings, values.	Outer I: The individual's biology, physiology, behavior, and action.
Inner We: Cultural beliefs, collective values, philosophies, and worldviews.	Outer We: Societal systems and infrastructure.

Figure A-1. The Four Quadrants

Globalization. As defined by Local Futures: The International Society for Ecology and Culture (2014).

1. The deregulation of trade and finance in order to enable businesses and banks to operate globally.
2. The emergence of a single world market dominated by transnational companies. (Often confused with international collaboration, interdependence, global community.)

The Holistic Worldview. Also referred to as the living universe worldview (Korten, 2014). This worldview is based on the interconnected view of natural systems and promotes values and actions that honor interdependence, stewardship, indigenous wisdom, cooperation,

social equality, and environmental stewardship. It sees humans as a part of nature rather than separate from it (Hawken, 2008; Judith, 2006).

Localization. As defined by Local Futures: The International Society for Ecology and Culture (2014).

1. The removal of fiscal and other supports that currently favor giant transnational corporations and banks.
2. Reducing dependence on export markets in favor of production for local needs. (Often confused with isolationism, protectionism, and the elimination of trade).

Modern Western (Mechanistic) Worldview. Describes the predominant paradigm in Contemporary North America and Europe (and those places that have been colonized by nations existing within this paradigm) (Mander, 1991; Scott, 2013), which views humans as separate and dominant over nature and is characterized by individualism, consumerism, competition, rational thought and alienation (Glendinning, 1994; Mander, 1991; Scott, 2013; Sheldrake, 1994).

Polarities and Paradoxes. Resolving the tension between polarities and paradoxes is an important aspect of individual and group development (Sharma & Cook-Greuter, 2010). Some polarities this curriculum works with and explores include the intersection of interior (regenerative) practices and exterior (structural) practices, globalization and degrowth, the individual and the collective, and the nature and human relationship.

Throughout this curriculum pay attention to how these paradoxes surface in you and in the group. How can we hold these seemingly opposite ideas and concepts in ways that resolve the tension and allow us to grow through their resolution? (162) (175)

Regenerative Community Development.

***Regeneration*.**
1. An act or the process of regenerating: the state of being regenerated.
2. Spiritual renewal or revival.
3. Renewal or restoration of a body, bodily part, or biological system (as a forest) after injury or as a normal process
4. Utilization by special devices of heat or other products that would ordinarily be lost (Merriam-Webster, 2014)

The term regenerative means to renew or restore and can be applied to both an exterior structural level as well as an interior, spiritual level. Therefore the use of the term regenerative community development in this curriculum refers to the renewal of community on both an interior level (mental, emotional, and spiritual) and an exterior level (physical, structural, systemic).

Note. This curriculum is about regeneration and renewal but it is also about generation and opening to the possibility of creating new operating systems both within individuals and culture. (130)

Regenerative Communities of Practice. Regenerative communities of practice are place-based experiential learning communities, which serve as local hubs for relational education, environmental stewardship, sustainable skills exchange, leadership development, holistic individual and community growth and support, and regenerative community development.

Regenerative Practices. Regenerative practices nurture interior growth on individual and collective levels. Such practices include but are not limited to: ritual, rites of passage, transgenerational mentorships and gatherings, men's fires, women's fires, elders' fires, collective grieving practices, shared gardens, generative communication and listening, shared agreements on conflict, some sort of peace making process, restorative justice, etc. (Brown & Macy, 1998; Haas et al., 2010; Plotkin, 2008).

Relational Education. Relational education seeks to deepen and enhance individual's relationship to self, others and the natural world through the utilization of activities, experiences and educational methods that elicit the innate human capacity for connection, interrelationship and complete development (Scott, 2013).

Rites of Passage (RoP). Rites of passage are commonly referred to when addressing the transition from youth to adult. The term can also be used more generally to simply address any life transition. A RoP is marked by three Phases: severance, the preparation and letting go stage; threshold, the actual ceremony where the transformation and learning take place, and lastly reincorporation; adopting the lessons and sharing them with the community (Gennep, 1960; Haas, McGown, & Young, 2010).

Ritual. Rituals are intentional actions performed either in groups or individually that engage us physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually and through such engagement can help to foster deeper connections to self, Earth, and community (Plotkin, 2003, p. 226). One possible reason ritualistic practices can be so effective in creating deeper ecocentric insight and understandings is because they often incorporate some or all of Gardner's (1996) multiple intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Ritual is often cited as a missing component and crucial element to healthy personal, group, and community development (Brown & Macy, 1998; Haas et al., 2010; LaChapelle, 1984; Plotkin, 2003, 2008; Some, 1993).

Shadow. The term shadow, originally coined by Carl Jung (1979), refers to the repressed, underdeveloped and/or overlooked parts of ourselves such as unexamined beliefs and assumptions that operate subjectively and often unconsciously influence our behavior and worldviews (Levy, 2013; Wilber, 2000)

Story. Throughout this curriculum I refer to story as individual and cultural narratives that ultimately shape our worldviews, values, structures and systems and reflect and influence our understanding of who we are and how we relate to each other, the planet, and ultimately the cosmos (Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014; Robinson, 2011; Wilber, 2000).

Structural Action. In this curriculum I refer to structural actions as actions that seek to effect change on an exterior structural level. Examples of such actions include starting a local transition town movement in your community, building local alliances for the rights of nature movement, ecological conservation, creating local slow money and slow food movements, reclaiming abandoned property for community gardens and/or sustainable housing, reclaiming abandoned spaces for the commons, campaign finance reform, supporting (creating alliances and networks with) other organizations involved in localization and degrowth type of work, etc.

Theory U. Theory U is a three-step individual or group process/meditation that can be used as a tool to tap into deeper states of creativity, problem solving, and inspiration. Step one of the U-process involves observing and connecting to the world outside. This observation Phase is fueled through contemplative practice, the igniting of purpose, immersion, and finally letting go. Step two or the bottom of the U lies in implicate order, the state of non-duality, the source field, and world of deep inner knowing. The final stage is then enacting that which has to do with emergence, crystallizing and prototyping, and testing and verifying (Scharmer, 2007, p. 179). (175)

Appendix B

Community Leadership Curriculum

(Includes Definitions in Appendix A)

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to create curriculum for an 8-session free online regenerative community development workshop for individuals and groups interested in holistic community empowerment and transformation (159). The workshop is shaped from ideas found in integral theory, systems theory, adult development, nature connection, rites of passage work, and community organizing and activism. Each online chapter or session is be two to three hours long and is composed of both theory and experiential practices.

The intention behind the workshop is to offer interior and exterior tools and experiences that catalyze both individual and group development creating deeper relationships to self, Earth, and community while at the same time inspiring engaged activism that fosters environmental and social justice and regenerative (sustainable) community development.

For this curriculum to be truly effective it needs to be applicable to both urban and rural communities as well as people of various races, classes, and cultures. One way to think of this is as a generic template or operating system for individual, group, and community development that is adaptable to diverse worldviews and cultures.

Basic Structure

The ideal group size for this workshop is anywhere between four and twelve participants (168). When a community group signs up to take the program they are assigned a mentor who is skyped into either all or a portion of each session to answer any questions and help guide the process (173). Each session is two (or possibly three) hours long and each exercise and dialogue has a set time limit monitored by the facilitator (169). Around half of each session is devoted to exploring theory while the other half is focused on experiential exercises and dialogue. My initial recommendation is that groups engaging in the workshop view a session every other week. At the end of each session participants receive experiential homework to explore over the intersession such as journal topics, nature connection exercises, meditation practices, etc.

Arc of the Workshop

This workshop is centered on story and the power story has on an individual and collective level to shape our lives, worldviews, and experiences. An important part of this exploration entails bringing to light the shadow side of these narratives that when left unchecked have the power to stifle diversity, create feelings of alienation, and objectify and or commodify life, which in turn, helps to maintain the illusion that we are somehow separate from others and the planet (Brown & Macy, 1998). Once we come face to face with these stories and worldviews operating within in us we then have the power to change them. In doing so we adopt larger perspectives that empower us and open us up to new possibilities and ways of seeing and being in the world.

The arc of the workshop is in a sense a group rite of passage, which moves individuals from the inner I space (feelings and beliefs) into the outer we space (structures and systems). Participants are be exposed to regenerative (interior) and structural (exterior) tools and practices that can help them to nurture their own development as well as the group so that once the workshop is over a strong foundation of vision and action is in place with the skills and tools necessary to nurture regenerative growth and structural transformation within the greater community. (13, 14, 17, 100) (20 partial)

Session Overview (159)

Session One – story: creating worldviews, values, structures, and systems. Topics, inquiries, and questions for Session One included (1) exploring how stories shape our reality and worldviews; and, (2) what collective stories have created the worldviews, beliefs, and social structures that comprise our world today. Subtopics explored included:

- Religion and the use of the distant patriarch.
- Science, specifically the mechanistic reductionist worldview, in which all is chaos and separate.
- Modernity and the rise of industry and the individual.
- Capitalism and globalization and its promotion of progress and its ties to resource consumption and infinite growth on a finite planet. (7, 18, 22)
- Colonization and its ties to racism, violence and patriarchy are also explored (Wise, 2012). (154)
- Also included is an exploration of the values associated with these narratives and the role values play in shaping individual, local, and global systems and structures (Brown & Macy, 2014; Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014).

In-session practices include Scharmer's (2007) U-process on the new emerging story followed by journaling and a group dialogue. Post-session work includes more reflective journaling, shadow work, reading, and sit spot activity through which participants further explore the Session One topics.

Session Two – individual development. Topics and inquiries/questions include: Exploring healthy human and adult development (Kegan, 1993; Wilber, 2000). How do we develop in ways that deepen our ecocentric relationships to self, Earth, and community (Plotkin, 2008)? How do we create healthy containers for our own individual development? What are our individual gifts and how do we use them to connect and contribute to the group and our community? What exterior obstacles stand in the way of our own development? (30, 32)

Session Three – regenerative community development. Topics and inquiries/questions include: Exploring healthy localized, regenerative community development practices. How do we create healthy community containers that deepen our collective relationship to the planet and

each other (5)? On an interior level what types of regenerative practices can the group establish in the community to support men, women, youth, and elders? On an exterior level what types of degrowth/localization actions and organizing can be done to support community structural transformation.

Note. Regenerative practices such as rites of passage work (honoring life transitions) community gatherings, and mentorship nurture individual and community interiors, which help support healthy human development (Plotkin, 2008). Structural actions centered on localization and degrowth promote exterior structural, political, systems level change in the community. Both are necessary for healthy change and each empowers the other. (11, 25)

Sessions Four and Five – defining group vision, practices and agreements. Topics and inquiries/questions include: Exploring the group vision through integral theory's four-quadrant model (Wilber, 2000). What are the guiding principles, beliefs, and values of the group (upper left)? What community/cultural philosophies, values and beliefs do the group wish to focus on evolving in order to create a more sustainable and just community space (lower left)? How do the group help create sustainable and just systems (infrastructure, policy) change within the community (lower right)? What holistic actions and practices do the group engage in to affect change on both an interior and exterior level within the community (upper right)? How does the group foster diversity? How does the group explore unexamined assumptions, blind spots, and shadows? What are the obstacles the group faces? How does the group renew its vision?

Session Six - choosing a focus point. Topics and inquiries/questions include: Choosing focus points for local, sustainable, and regenerative group action.

A note on action. During inquiries such as these it is helpful to keep in mind three different levels of action important during this time of transition (Brown & Macy, 1998):

> (1) Holding actions: Any action that slows down direct damage to the planet and its ecosystems; this can include political, legislative, and legal work, and direct action such as protests, civil disobedience, boycotts, etc.
>
> (2) Community education and the building of new institutions: Analysis of and general education to expose the shortcomings of the industrial growth model and organizing around new models for education, healthcare, community, governance, etc.
>
> (3) Offering direct experiences of the living universe worldview: Actions that work to shift perceptions of reality, both cognitively and spiritually, which can be supported through regenerative practices such as shadow work, fasting in nature, nature connection, ceremony and ritual etc. This has to do with helping to bring about more holistic and worldviews, which understand the nature between self, Earth, and community. (p. 17-24).

Session Seven - community organizing and movement building. Topics and inquiries/questions include: This session explores the practices and steps for successful holistic community organizing and movement building. (5)

Keeping in mind your focus points what groups can you build alliances with on a local, national, and global level (9)? Think outside of the box, who are the stakeholders involved and how can you get them engaged with your work? How can you diversify the movement and align with other movements on the national and global level? (19)

Session Eight – going forth. Topics and inquiries/questions include: Honoring the work accomplished over the past 7 sessions and turning towards what's next.

Where do you all go from here? How are you going to take this seed created through these eight sessions and continue to nurture it for your own growth and the positive growth of the community and planet? (12)

Full Curriculum

Session One - story

Pre-session homework. Watch Awakening the Dreamer, Changing the Dream (113). This lays the groundwork for session one by introducing story, narratives, worldviews, and shadow (42) in the form of unexamined assumptions and beliefs from a diverse global perspective (96). The film also does a good job of tackling the issues of where we are, where we have been, and where we may be going. (7, 22)

Start by creating a safe, intimate and trusting group container (170)**.** Before any group work can occur a comment must be made about the importance of a safe and trusting group container in order for individual and group growth to occur. Note the paradox here. In order to be vulnerable we need to be able to trust the group space but in order to create trust we need to be vulnerable.

Exercise. Create the space for a 20-minute group dialogue (Bohm, 1996) around what we each participant needs to feel safe in a group space.

Topics and inquiries for session one include. Exploring how stories shape our reality and worldviews. What collective stories have created the worldviews, beliefs, and social structures that comprise our world today through: religion and the use of the distant patriarch; science, specifically the reductionist worldview, all is chaos and separate; modernism, the rise of industry and the individual; capitalism/globalization and its promotion of progress and its ties to resource consumption and infinite growth on a finite planet (Brown & Macy, 2014; Eisenstein, 2013; Korten, 2014) (7, 18, 22); and colonization and its ties to racism, violence and patriarchy (Wise, 2012) (154)? Also included is an exploration of the values associated with these narratives and the role values play in shaping individual, local, and global systems and structures.

Also addressed is the idea of this time period being a rite of passage for humanity: to paraphrase Thomas Berry (1980) we need to move from a worldview of objectification into one

of communion, or from the "I" perspective into the "We". The Jewish theologian Martin Buber (1958) describes a similar shift in perspective from "I and you" to, "I and thou".

Model/visual. Use the Iceberg image to explain both stories and shadow. For shadow that which is above water is our conscious world and actions and all that is below the water line is our unexamined beliefs and subconscious patterns. In terms of story the action in the world is the tip of the iceberg, then below the water line is the policy and structures, history, and finally the narrative stories influencing the above reality. (68)

Possible dialogue topics.

Values. What are the values embodied in these old worldviews and stories (21) (100): survival of the fittest, competition over cooperation, individual prosperity over collective well-being, the glorification of force and power, objectification (108), standardization, commodification, centralization of power, etc (Eisenstein, 2013, Korten, 2014).

Shadow. What do these stories repress or deny (8, 23, 42) such as: our interconnectedness to each other and the planet, diversity (19), equality, limited views of gender and sexual orientation , importance of cooperation, empathy, self in other view points, etc (Brown & Macy, 1998).

Exploring the new story. The new story seeks to embody the interdependent relationship between self, Earth and community and recognizes that humanity is an expression of the interconnected life systems that incorporate the planet and the Universe. The well-being of humanity is directly linked to the health and well-being of these larger life systems just like cells in a body (Brown & Macy, 1998; Eisenstein, 2011; Korten, 2014).

The indigenous terms *mitakuye oyasin* (Maroukis, 2005, p. 160), from the North American Sioux, and *ubuntu* (Hailey, 2008, p. 4), a South African tribal expression, also capture the interconnected nature of these relationships. (96)

How and where do you see the new story surfacing in our world today?

New values. What are some values you see the new story embodying? (21) (100)

For example: seeing the natural world as sacred, honoring and celebrating social diversity in all its many forms, whole systems thinking, mindfulness, strength as vulnerability, cooperation, beauty, compassion, regenerative justice, wholeness, etc (Brown & Macy, 1998).

Examples of the new story in action. In Paul Hawken's (2008) book *Blessed Unrest* he references between 150,000 - 500,000 plus grass roots organizations mobilizing for change around these new emerging values and worldviews. Below are a few examples…

Earth Charter (2012):

> The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the 21st century. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the

whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action (Earth Charter Initiative, 2012).

UN's initiative Harmony with Nature (2012):

Devising a new world will require a new relationship with the Earth and with humankind's own existence. Since 2009, the aim of the General Assembly, in adopting its five resolutions on 'Harmony with Nature', has been to define this newly found relationship based on a non-anthropocentric relationship with Nature. The resolutions contain different perspectives regarding the construction of a new, non-anthropocentric paradigm in which the fundamental basis for right and wrong action concerning the environment is grounded not solely in human concerns (United Nations, 2012).

The 13 Indigenous Grandmothers (96):

The 13 Indigenous Grandmothers are a collective of elder women each with a different indigenous cultural background. Formed in 2004, they travel to communities around the world in order to honor, revive and teach about indigenous wisdom in all its many forms. Through ceremony, ritual and prayer their teachings remind us of our interconnectedness with one another and with nature (Alliance-Statement, 2004).

Group exercise part one. Lead a Theory U (Scharmer, 2007) group meditation on sensing into the new story. Journal about what comes up for you then dialogue about it. (36)

Group exercise part two. As a group create a four quadrant model that reflects what is emerging within the new story. In other words what would the new story look like through the four quadrants?

Inner I: The individual's beliefs, thoughts, feelings: *Seeing self in other and planet, ecocentric awareness, I and Thou.*	Outer I: The individual's biology, physiology, and behavior: *Permaculture, nature connection, yoga, healthy eating, meditation, mentorship, rites of passage, community storytelling, transgenerational relationships.*
Inner We: Cultural beliefs, shared philosophies, shared worldviews, shared values, shared vision: *Living universe worldview, Gaia Theory, ecocentric relationships, planetcentric worldview, Ubuntu,*	Outer We: Societal systems and infrastructure. *Decentralized economies and power structures, diverse self-sufficient bio-regions, Sustainable urban building. Institutions that promote equality, justice and living in balance with the natural world.*

Figure A-2. Example of the four quadrants of the new story

Intersession explorations.

Reflective journaling. Explore the use of online journaling so people can see what others are writing about and participants can learn from each other. This is a great way to keep the dialogue going outside of class. Keeping a personal journal to document the learning journey is also encouraged as well (Hiemstra, 2001).

Topics. What are some of the structural obstacles that stand in the way of this new story (30, 32) and how do those obstacles affect you personally? How do individual stories play into collective stories and vice versa? How do these cultural stories play out in your life, family, and beliefs? (15, and partial 69)

Sit Spot (Haas, McGown, & Young, 2010). Find a spot out in nature where you can be alone. If you live in the city a tree at a park is fine. Try to visit the spot a couple of times over the next two weeks. Learn the names of the trees around your spot, use the spot as a place for relaxation, creativity, and meditation. Pay attentions to the details around you. What insects, plants, and flowers, share the space with you? Notice how your relationship to the space changes the more you get to know it. What does the space have to share with you, how do you listen, how do you communicate with it? (43) (36)

After returning from your sit spot make sure you take time to either journal about it or to tell someone the story of your experience there. This act of recounting is important, it brings to light insights and perspectives that may have otherwise remained unconscious. (167)

Reading. Read, reflect, and journal on the below articles theory of self-development and how a healthy connection to our environment shapes our perception of self. What obstacles did you and do you face in your own development? (108 Partial, 30, 32)

Wilson, R. (2014, August). Care of the commons. Care of the soul. *Commons Magazine*. Retrived from http://www.onthecommons.org/magazine/care-of-of-the-commons-care-of-the-soul

The following article is an important exploration of the latest research tracking the emerging framework of this global transformational movement. Where do you see these ideas already emerging in your community and how can you further root these expressions on a local level?

Horner, J., & Fabian, R. (2014, Fall/Winter). Connecting for change: Insights from an emerging global transformation movement. *Kosmos Journal for Global Transformation*. Retrieved from: http://www.kosmosjournal.org/article/connecting-for-change-insights-from-an-emerging-global-transformation-movement/

Additional resources. Buber, M. (1958). *I and thou*. New York, NY: Scribner.

Additional practice. Exploring family history. Choose a family member to interview about your own family history. Where are your ancestral roots, what was your own family's relationship to the land and communities they were a part of, what were their rituals and traditions? (156)

Session Two - individual development.

Individual developmental growth is often marked by an expanding ability to take on multiple perspectives, empathize with others, and understand more and more complex systems (Wilber, 2000). Topics, inquiries and questions include: Exploring healthy human and adult development (Kegan, 1993; Wilber, 2000). How do we develop in ways that deepen our ecocentric relationships to self, Earth, and community (Plotkin, 2008)? How do we create healthy containers for our own individual development? What are our individual gifts and how do we use them to connect and contribute to the group and our community? What exterior obstacles stand in the way of our own development? (30, 32)

Group dialogue (Bohm, 1996). Devote first 20 minutes to exploring the learning from the experiential exercise homework. Then move into above topics and inquiries.

Diagram. Figure three, below, shows the transcendent and inclusive nature of development, each view transcends and includes the one before it. A planetcentric person can relate to worldcentric, sociocentric, and ethnocentric worldviews. However, someone at an ethnocentric worldview cannot relate to a sociocentric, or worldcentric viewpoint. Just as on an exterior level I can conceive of my organs and cells but my cells and organs do not fully understand the "me" that encompasses them. Also it is important to remember that every view point has something to offer, this is where generative listening comes in to play allowing one to receive the others view in an open and productive fashion.

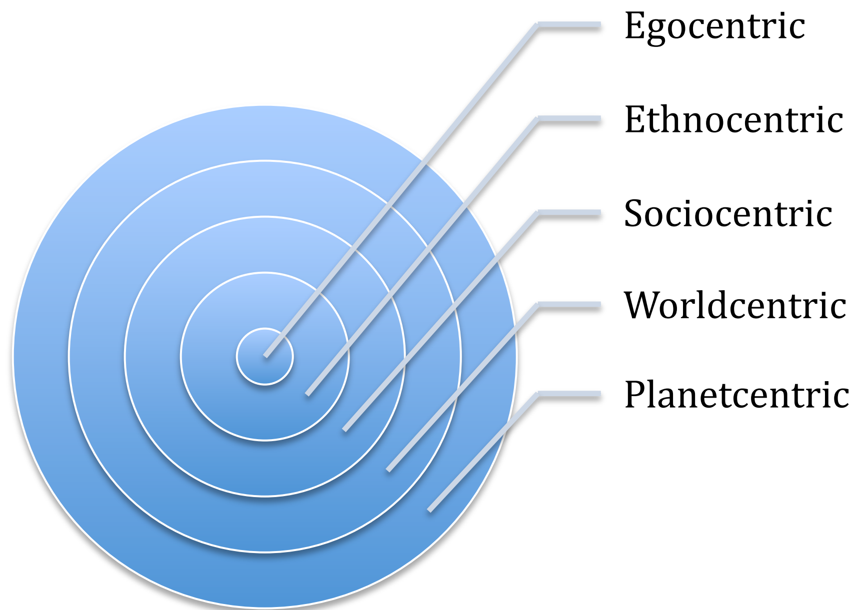

Figure A-3. Transcending and Including: The nature of development.

Group dialogue. What are our own personal values and how do they align with the new story values discussed in session one? How can you in your own life support these values through action in the world? Also, how does the importance of diversity fit into your value system? (19) (45) (105)

Group exercise. U-process meditation sensing into your own leading edge of development. What do you want to step into, what do you want to let go of, what are the obstacles you are facing on an exterior and interior level that keep you from growing? After the meditation take some time to journal.

Create a holistic practice. How do you nourish your body: stretching, healthy food, exercise? How do you nourish your emotions and your mind: reading, drawing, music, cooking, dancing? How do you nourish your spirit: contemplation, reflection, prayer, meditation? (36)

What practices, actions and aspects of yourself, are already working for you in ways you want them to and how can you nurture them into fuller expressions? (135)
How do your feelings, actions and behaviors align with the emerging new story? Where are you strong and where could you be more aligned? (105)

Inner I: The individual's beliefs, thoughts, feelings, attitude, commitment: *Shadow work, art, meditation, nature connection, journaling, ceremony and ritual.*	Outer I: The individual's biology, physiology, skill development, and behavior: *Healthy eating, yoga, exercise, skill building.*
Inner We: Cultural beliefs, philosophies, worldviews: *Regenerative practices such as: mentorship, rites of passage, group dialogue, community gatherings, rites of passage, group ritual.*	Outer We: Societal systems and infrastructure, goals, process, mission, measurement systems: *Structural practices that work towards: Decentralized economies and power structures, diverse self-sufficient bio-regions, Sustainable urban building. The creation of institutions that promote equality, justice and living in balance with the natural world.*

Figure A-4. Possible individual action that nurture each of the four quadrants.

Shadow work. What do you judge most in others? Can you think of examples where you have embodied those traits you judge most in others? Name a few… (8, 23)

Think of the last time you argued with someone. Can you find empathy for their perspective (108)? Write for 2 minutes about possible underlying reasons they felt the way they did. Think about the iceberg, perhaps they were triggered by the past, fear, old stories, old wounds, etc…

Another shadow practice. Next time someone triggers you and you feel angry can you catch yourself in time to act with compassion rather than anger? That simply might mean offering silence instead of words. What are other ways to act with compassion in the face of anger?

Shadows can also simply be unconscious behavior or reactions. See if you can catch when you react without thinking about it first. This behavior often surfaces with our family members the most. Someone somewhere once said, "If you think you are enlightened go spend some time with your parents" (anonyms, n.d.).

Practices for the intersession. Pay attention to the four quadrants over the session break. How do you nurture your own growth as it is connected to each of the above quadrants on a daily basis? How does your own growth and action support the new emerging story? What new practices do you want to adopt to support your own growth? Create your own 20-minute practice that nurtures your own development (82) (150). Remember, to not underestimate the value and power of small individual action. (134)

Life charter. Consider writing a 'life charter' that contains your mission, vision, and values (129). Turn your mission and vision into an image board that reflects the four quadrants. How do you want to be, how do you want the world to be? (145)

Meditation and journaling. These tools help to remind us that we are constantly in a state of renewal. What do we want to let go of today, what do we want to step into today. It's up to us, nobody else can do this work for us! (106) (131)

Try meditation for 5-10 minutes a day. If you are new to meditation explore this mindfulness based meditation demonstrated in the below three minute Oxford video (131). Also journal on any shadow realizations you have and remember to visit your sit spot!

Oxford Mindfulness Centre (n.d.). Guided meditation and mindfulness based cognitive therapy (Video file). Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVxX6krj-tw

Other possible intersession activities. Building ecocentric awareness: ecocentric awareness practices seek to deepen our relationship to self, Earth, and community (147). These practices can include survival skills, learning about local ecology, and other practices which explore the intersection of self and Earth and self and other. In this exercise simply go for a walk around your neighborhood or local park and consider how compassion, empathy, and appreciation help you to relate to others and nature? (108)

Old way/New way. This practice could be used throughout the curriculum. The idea is to label old patterns associated with old worldviews and values and then label new patterns that individuals and collectives can adopt that reflect the living universe worldview and associated values. (116)

Additional resource.

Wilber, K., Patten, T., Leonard, A., & Morelli, M. (2008). *Integral life practice: A 21st- century blueprint for physical health, emotional balance, mental clarity, and spiritual awakening.* Boston, MA: Integral Books.

Session Three - regenerative community development

Topics, inquiries, and questions include: Exploring healthy localized, regenerative community development practices. How do we create healthy community containers that deepen our collective relationship to the planet and each other (5)? On an interior level what types of regenerative practices can the group establish in the community to support men, women, youth, and elders? On an exterior level what types of degrowth/localization actions and organizing can be done to support community structural transformation?

Regenerative practices and structural action. Regenerative practices help to nurture our ecocentric relationships (self, Earth, community), which in turn help to support healthy human and community development and empowerment. Structural actions centered on localization and degrowth promote exterior structural, political, and systems level change, which

also supports community empowerment. Both are necessary for healthy transformation and each infuses the other. (11, 25)

Examples of interior regenerative community development practices. Ritual, rites of passage, nature connection, transgenerational mentorships and gatherings, men's fires, women's fires, elders fires, collective grieving practices, shared gardens, generative communication and listening, shared agreements on conflict, some sort of peace making process, restorative justice, etc (Brown & Macy, 1998; Haas et al., 2010; Plotkin, 2008).

If these practices are unfamiliar to you or your group consider researching who in your own region specializes in these practices and can come and offer your group/community a workshop on the desired topic. (148)

Examples of exterior structural action. As mentioned above localized action seeks to create exterior systems level (structural) change. Examples of such actions include starting a local transition town movement in your community, establishing worker owned cooperatives, exploring how you can create legal protection for green spaces around your town, reclaiming abandoned property for community gardens and/or sustainable housing, reclaiming abandoned spaces for the commons, supporting and creating alliances and networks with other organizations involved in localization/degrowth type of work, campaign finance reform, etc. (11, 25)

Group dialogue. Begin session three with a 20-minute dialogue in which participants share the insights and learning that came up through the past intersession's exercises.

Group exercise. U-process meditation sensing into what a new community model would look like: in a perfect world what type of community would you live in and how does it support the flourishing of social and natural diversity and well-being (19)? Follow it up with journaling and a group dialogue on the learning.

Group exercise. Explore new community possibilities through the four quadrant model. Notice where you share similarities in terms of your own four quadrant diagram, your communities four quadrant diagram, and the global new story diagram. Do you see over lapping values, beliefs, and worldviews? For optimum harmonic resonance is there a way you can align your communities vision with the vision of yourself and the new global vision? (105) (45)

Reclaiming ritual. What cultural rituals or traditions already exist that your community and or group can reclaim and add meaning to in an effort to refocus our actions and values? (146)

Example. How could your community promote other forms of gift giving during the holiday season rather than just buying products? Perhaps making donations to local non-profits in loved ones names, or offering experiences that deepen relationships, and or skills (145). Are there healthy traditions in your own family history that you could revive and share with others?

How could we turn Black Friday (the busiest shopping day of the year) into a day of nurturing our community relationships and connections?

Shadow reminder (42). As we do the work of envisioning better community models it is important to keep in mind diversity and also cultural appropriation. How are we working to shape local and global values and structures that foster greater diversity and tolerance? In efforts to reclaim lost cultural practices like rites of passage it is important to keep cultural appropriation in mind. Rites of passage, ceremonies and rituals are pan-cultural. Every culture has a right to their own expressions of these experiences. What we don't want to do is steal or take operating models from other cultures. This is an opportunity for the community to create their own healthy operating practices that nurture ecocentric growth and bonding on a collective level. (24)

Intersession practice. This activity is meant for the group to do together however if scheduling is too complicated then this can be done in smaller groups or individually if need be.

Spend one day, sunrise to sunset, in nature. It could be at your sit spot or at a park or in the woods. Treat it like a ceremony, with the severance stage (setting intentions), threshold (the actual day wondering) and the reincorporation (sharing your story). Fasting could be an additional aspect of the experience for those interested. Bring appropriate clothing and a journal. Reflect on the ideas of the workshop up to this point and reflect on what more you want to get out of the workshop before it ends. Also reflect on how your group could make positive change within your own community. What would that change look like, how would you go about it, what healthy group dynamics would be needed for success? When the practice ends at sunset, return and share your story with the group over a celebratory meal. (112)

Additional resources. For additional information regarding session three topics such as ritual, nature connection, and regenerative community practices see: Bill Plotkin (2008), 8 Shields, Weaving Earth, Starhawk, and the School of Lost Boarders in the general resource list.

Sessions Four and Five - defining group vision, practices and agreements

Topics, inquiries and questions include: Exploring the group vision through the four-quadrant model. What are the guiding principles, beliefs, and values of the group (upper left)? What community/cultural philosophies, values and beliefs does the group wish to focus on evolving in order to create a more sustainable and just community space (lower left)? How does the group help create sustainable and just systems within the community (lower right)? What holistic actions and practices does the group engage in to affect change on both an interior and exterior level within the community (upper right)? How does the group foster diversity? Also how does the group explore unexamined assumptions, blind spots, and shadows? What are the obstacles the group faces? How does the group renew its vision? (6) (19) (46)

A note on group building. Remember to create and commit to simple and realistic goals in the beginning (31). Victories and achievements are addicting so set attainable goals and get the larger community involved to share your victories with! Treat the group as a seedling; how is the group nurturing its own growth? One way to account for this is to place an emphasis on the 'beingness' of the group (118). This means the most important part of the beginning stages is to simply gather together consistently and nurture the group dynamic. This could be once a week or once a month; it could be for community dinners, or fires, or teach-ins, etc. Let the inspired action emerge from that state of being, of reflection, of contemplation. Be patient. We live in a culture of do, do, do. Action without well thought out intention and reflection can be counterproductive.

Session Four - defining the group vision, agreements, and practices.

Group check-in. Take 20 minutes for contemplative reflection and personal sharing around the learning over the intersession.

Begin with upper quadrant focus. When creating the group container focus on the upper quadrants, the inner I, and the outer I, of the group. What are your agreements to each other specifically around communication and conflict? What are your values and commitments to each other and the greater community? How do you bring these values, agreements, and commitments to life through practice? How is conflict handled, how does the group track it's own collective shadow, how is leadership handled? How do you renew your vision and nurture the creative spirit of the group? (6) (44, 47, 50 partial)

Is it possible to create a leadership model where the roles are clearly defined and can allow for the leadership to rotate in a way that allows for all voices and perspectives to be heard? (34)

Group exercise. Use the tools already explored in the workshop such as theory U, generative listening, and group dialogue to begin to answer these questions and in doing so fill in the upper right and left quadrants of the group. Notice how these quadrants resonate with the upper quadrants that have been created in previous sessions around self, community, and global regenerative development. (45) (105)

Note. Generative listening and non-violent communication don't always mean agreement is necessary, rather they are tools that reflect an effort to understand where the other person is coming from, through respect, which then creates compassion and connection and can help to reduce judgment. From this place of openness and connection new ideas and possibilities can arise. Challenge yourself to see different viewpoints as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles. (50)

Example.

Inner I of Group: The beliefs, thoughts, feelings, attitudes and commitments the group wishes to nurture: *Ecocentric relationships. Emphasis on compassion, tolerance, diversity. Realizations of interconnectedness. Holding multiple perspectives.*	Outer I of Group: Structural and regenerative group practices: *Establishment of healthy agreements around governance, communication and process (44,47,50). Nature connection work, meditation, mentorship, rites of passage (honoring transitions), storytelling, transgenerational relationships, shadow work, non-violent communication, regenerative justice, generative listening, contemplation, U-process and group problem solving.*

Figure A-5. Possible diagram for the upper two quadrants in relation to the inner and outer group "I".

Building the tool kit. We all bring different experiences, skills, and wisdom to the table. Create the space for participants to share what they have to offer. Each participant is a teacher in his or her own way. Don't let any skills or wisdom slip through the cracks. What tools and experiences can be sourced from the group to help create the group container? (109)

Note. See general resource list for more group tools and practices.

Intersession exercise. Reflect on session four, where are the obstacles arising in the group dynamic and vision? Spend time at your sit spot journaling on how the group can navigate these obstacles? (46)

Also, research and report back to the group on one tool or practice you think would be helpful to support and nurture the group dynamic. (109)

Intersession resource - an introduction to de-growth activism. Watch the *Economics of Happiness* (114) produced by the International Society for Ecology and Culture. This film explores the concept of happiness and the interior and exterior conditions that community and culture needs to support in order to create the possibility of individual and collective happiness. The film also addresses the topic of *Degrowth,* a term that references the need to curb unsustainable growth on a global scale in favor of local resilience, ecocentric relationships, and regenerative community development.

Questions to keep in mind. What is the link between colonization and globalization? Also, explore the paradox of globalization: what aspects of it are helpful and what aspects of it do you see as destructive, how do you see it surface in your own community? (144)

Session Five – defining the group role and practices in relationship to the larger community

Note. It is at this point in the workshop where the participants should start to take more responsibility for their own and the group experience. In some ways the teaching and theories are done. They now have the tools and conceptual framework needed to take over their own learning process**.**

Group check-in. Create the space for contemplative reflection and personal sharing over the learning of the past intersession.

Group exercise. Individuals present what tools they learned about through their intersession research. The tools and vision are further refined. Commitments are clarified around structure and consistency of meetings and governance. At the same time it should be remembered and recognized that this is an emergent and ongoing process. Not everything needs to be Figured out in order to move forward…

The second half. The second half of session five moves the group focus from the I (group) space to the We or community space. What group actions and practices can be brought out into the community to help assist in the creation of more just, diverse, and ecocentric values and structures? How can we engage the community socially and creatively around these topics? Keep the micro and macro in mind, how can these local movements become connected to global ones and vice versa? (9)

U-process: One option at this point would be to do a U-process around the idea of action, followed up with journaling, and a group dialogue. Then explore the group practices and actions through the lower two quadrants.

Example.

Inner We (community): Cultural beliefs, philosophies, worldviews: *How does the group support the Living universe worldview, Gaia Theory, ecocentric relationships, planetcentric, and Ubuntu values on a community level?* *Rites of passage, transgenerational mentorship, women's fires, men's fires, elders' fires, trans-generational community gatherings, nature connection, etc.*	Outer We (community): Societal systems and infrastructure, goals, process, mission, measurement systems. *How does the group help create diverse, just, and self-sufficient bio-regions and institutions that promote equality, justice, and living in balance with the natural world. Alliance building and networking (5). Slow food, slow money, slow living? De-growth actions? Holistic education? Campaign finance reform? Rights of nature?*

Figure A-6. Example of lower left and right "We" space quadrants.

Regenerative and structural action. Keep in mind whether your actions are regenerative (interior) or structural (exterior). Regenerative action nurtures and affects the interior space such as ritual, contemplative meetings, rites of passage, fire gatherings, transgenerational mentorship, etc. Structural action nurtures the exterior structures systems such as rights based change, land conservation, policy reform, sustainable development, permaculture, etc.

Note. Reform Vs. Rights based change: Reform is emblematic of a compromise and often does not create structural change. Rights based movements, such as the civil rights movement in the 1960's (resulting in the civil rights act), are what create structural change. Today movements such as marriage equality, move to amend (a constitutional amendment for campaign finance), and the rights of nature campaign are great examples of movements that are seeking structural change. (33)

Intersession exercise. What can we learn from nature about systems? Go to your sit spot and use your surroundings to inform your contemplation and journaling about structural change. What can ecosystems teach us about diversity, cooperation, flexibility, adaptability, etc.? What changes could we make to our structures and systems to make them more organic, creative, diverse, and adaptable? (19 partial)

Additional intersession activities.

Read article on degrowth: (117)

Alexander, S. (2014, October). Life in a degrowth economy and why you might actually like it. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from http://theconversation.com/life-in-a-degrowth-economy-and-why-you-might-actually-enjoy-it-32224

Article on big picture activism.

Norberg-Hodge, H. (2014). Big picture activism. Retrieved from http://theeconomicsofhappiness.wordpress.com/2014/10/26/big-picture-activism/

Also explore the following organizations reflecting aspects of the degrowth and regenerative movements.

Center for Planetary Culture: www.planetaryculture.com
Transition Towns: www.transitionnetwork.org
Slow Food: www.slowfoodusa.org
Slow Money: www.slowmoney.org
Local Futures: International Society for Culture and Ecology: www.localfutures.org
Happiness Alliance: www.happycounts.org
Resilience Communities: www.resilience.org
Move to Amend (campaign finance reform): https://movetoamend.org

On the rights of nature movement.
Rights of Nature: www.therightsofnature.org
Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund: www.celdf.org
Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature:
Website: http://therightsofnature.org/rights-of-nature-tribunal/

Article. Mendocino County and their movement in support of the rights of nature and a community Bill of rights:

Bigs, S. (2014, November 5th). Mendocino County's historic vote elevates residents' rights, bans fracking (Web log post). Retrieved from: http://www.globalexchange.org/blogs/peopletopeople/2014/11/05/mendocino-countys-historic-vote-elevates-residents-rights-bans-fracking/

Ted talk. The below talk explores the idea that our cities and towns in certain ways operate like organs, or at least organic structures that are created for the purpose of healthy exchange. The question then become how do we create symbiotic relationships and structures instead of parasitic ones? This talk explores one idea, harnessing the generosity of others to create more harmonious and interconnected systems.

Jerram, S. (2014, September 9th). Sophie Jerram: Creating generous cities (Video file). Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRRJt3n4I5k

Session Six - choosing a focus point

Topics, inquiries, and questions include: through this session the group engages in choosing a point of focus for local action.

Group check-in. Time for contemplative reflection and sharing on learning over the past week.

Watch.

The Economics of Happiness. (2014, May). Localization: for people and planet (Video file). Retrieved from: https://vimeo.com/97251505 (117)

The Story of Stuff Project. (2013, October 1st). The story of solutions (Video file). Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpkRvc-sOKk

A note on action. During inquiries such as this it is helpful to keep in mind three different levels of action important during this time of transition (Brown & Macy, 1998, p. 17):

(1) Holding actions: Any action that slows down direct damage to the planet and it's ecosystems; this can include political, legislative, and legal work, and direct action such as protests, civil disobedience, boycotts, etc.

(2) Community education and the building of new institutions: Analysis of structural causes and creation of alternative institutions. Such actions include workshops and general education to expose the shortcomings of the industrial growth model and organizing around new models for education, healthcare, community, governance, etc.

(3) Offering direct experiences of the living universe worldview: Actions that work to shift perceptions of reality, both cognitively and spiritually which can be supported through regenerative practices such as shadow work, fasting in nature, nature connection, ceremony, and ritual, etc. These actions have to do with helping to bring about more holistic worldviews, which understand the interconnected nature between self, Earth, and community (Brown & Macy, 1998, p. 17-24).

U-process, journal, dialogue. In keeping with the theme of organic and symbiotic structures and relationships what actions can the group take on a community-based level to foster both interior and exterior structural change that can create deeper expressions of symbiosis within the concentric systems of self, community, and planet? Where do you see a need or a niche and how can you fill it?

Note. Remember that both transformative interior and exterior practices are important. Creating space for deeper connections and understandings is as important as the mobilization of networks for political structural change; both are needed. Feel free to create subgroups that specifically address either regenerative action or structural action. How can these groups work together to empower each other? (138) (140)

Action points. Possible action points include but are not limited to: starting a local transition town movement in your community, exploring how you can create legal protection for green spaces around your town, reclaiming abandoned property for community gardens and/or sustainable housing, creating spaces and platforms for local rites of passage experiences for youth (and other age groups), creating workshops around restorative justice and nonviolent communication, starting consistent women, men, and elders fires (or gatherings), creating space for group and community contemplation and reflection, creating community gatherings for times of grieving, gatherings for celebrations and life transitions, and gatherings that foster diversity, alliance building, and networking between various stakeholders within the community that don't normally overlap, and engaging the community politically around degrowth/transition issues. (41)

Appreciative inquiry. Another possible question to explore as a group is what practices, actions and aspects of your community, are already working for you in ways you want them to and how could your group nurture them into fuller expressions? (135)

Group shadow check-in: What is being overlooked, repressed, or assumed? What group patterns (autopoietic patterns) are beginning to show up regularly in the group dialogue? Who's claiming more space than others and who is always silent? How can you change these patterns? How are you working to incorporate the voiceless, the over looked, and marginalized stakeholders into your groups work? (19)

A note on charity work: Be careful with charity work, sometimes (not all the time) it can come from a place of condescension, objectification, and or righteousness. Are you helping others because you see yourself in them or because you have pity on them? Yes, people need coats and more importantly they need jobs to buy coats. Charity is a short-term solution, give someone a coat but then work with them on the structure so that more jobs become available.

Intersession work: Once a focus point or a few focus points have been chosen use the intersession to research what organizations on local, national, and global levels are out there for you to partner with. Think about alliance building and organizing (5). Who are the stakeholders and how can you bring them together? How is diversity being fostered (19)? What are the obstacles your group faces and how can they be approached keeping all in mind that has been covered through this workshop?

Read. Eight Stages of Successful Social Movements (Moyer, n.d.).

Moyer, B. (n.d.). Eight stages of successful social movements. Retrieved from: http://www.turning-the-tide.org/files/Bill Moyer 8-stages Social Movements Hand-out.pdf (151)

Sit spot. Don't forget!

Session seven - community organizing and movement building

Topics and inquiries/questions include: this session explores the practices and steps for successful holistic community organizing and movement building. (5)

Group check-in. Create time for contemplative reflection and personal sharing around the learning from the intersession activities.

Group dialogue and brainstorm. Keeping in mind your focus points: what groups can you build alliances with on a local, national, and global level (9)? Think outside of the box, what other groups outside of your network have a shared interest in your focus point, these are the stakeholders, who are they and how can you get them involved with your work? How can you diversify the movement and align with other movements on the national and global level? (19)

Intersession work.

Sit spot: Spend a half an hour at your sit spot. Reflect back on the workshop: what have you learned, how have you grown, how has the group grown together? What's the next step? (12)

Session Eight – going forth.

Topics, inquiries, and questions include honoring the work accomplished over the past seven sessions and turning towards next steps.

Group check-in: Create time for contemplative reflection and personal sharing around the lessons learned from the experience. Take a moment to honor each person in the circle; what have you learned from them and how have they inspired you?

Where do you all go from here? How are you going to take this seed created through these eight sessions and continue to nurture it for your own growth and the positive growth of the community and planet? (12)

Appendix C

Consent Form

Project Title: Community Regenerative Leadership Curriculum
For: Weston Pew's masters thesis research
Project Organizer: Weston Pew - westonpew@yahoo.com

You are being asked to read the following material to ensure that you are informed of the nature of this curriculum advisory board and what is expected from your participation in this study. Signing this form will indicate that you have been so informed and that you give your consent.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this project is to create curriculum for an 8-session free online community regenerative leadership workshop. The workshop will be shaped off of ideas found in integral theory, systems theory, adult development, nature connection, social and environmental activism and rites of passage work. The intention behind the workshop is to offer interior and exterior tools and experiences through the workshop that catalyze both individual and group development creating deeper relationships to self, Earth and community while at the same time inspiring engaged activism which fosters environmental and social justice and regenerative (sustainable) community development.

ADVISOR SELECTION CRITERIA
There will be between six and twelve advisors who will make up the curriculum advisory board. They have been selected based on their professional experience and understanding of the content area related to the research.

PROCEDURE(S)
The following information describes the project organizer's expectations of the advisors. Each advisor will receive a detailed emailed outline of the curriculum structure for review in early April and again in early to mid-May. Phone or Skype meetings will then be arranged for mid-April and early June. The meetings will be held individually with the project organizer and will not last longer than a half an hour. Each meeting will be audio recorded. The purpose of the meetings will be to allow space for the advisor to offer suggestions on the structure of the curriculum presented in the workshop.

The project organizer will be under no obligation to accept the feedback offered by the advisors. Each advisors identity will be disclosed in the appendix along with a short professional bio. Any feedback that is offered and implemented will be considered a donation to the project meaning that the advisors cannot claim any of the accepted ideas as their own intellectual property. Though specific ideas and suggestions will not be referenced back to the advisors the advisors will get credit and acknowledgement for their participation in the appendix. If the project organizer is able to raise the funds needed to create the program online it will be offered back to

the public. Advisors and their related organizations will be cited at the end of each online session in the credits and acknowledgment section.

RISKS

The advisors are free to drop out of the project at any time therefore there is very little risk involved in participation.

BENEFITS

The benefits of participation in this project lie in the free advertising both the advisor and his or her respected organizations will receive through the credits and acknowledgements of this project.

SUBJECT COMPENSATION

There is no monetary compensation for the time you offer to this project.

CONTACTS

You can obtain further information about the research or voice concerns or complaints about the research by calling the project organizer (researcher), Weston Pew, at xxxxxxxxxx. If you have questions concerning your rights as a curriculum advisor (research participant), have general questions, concerns or complaints or would like to give input about the research and can't reach the researcher, or want to talk to someone other than the researcher, you may call the Chairperson of the Human Subjects Committee for this study at (928) 350-1004. (If out of state use the toll-free number 1-877-350-2100, extension 1004.) If you would like to contact the Chairperson of the Human Subjects Committee by email, Dr. Denise Mitten please use the following email address: xxxxxxxxxx

AUTHORIZATION

Before giving my consent by signing this form, the methods, inconveniences, risks, and benefits have been explained to me and my questions have been answered. I may ask questions at any time and I am free to withdraw my participation from the project at any time without causing bad feelings. My participation in this project may be ended by the investigator or by the sponsor for reasons that would be explained. This consent form will be filed in an area designated by the Human Subjects Committee with access restricted by the principal investigator, Weston Pew, M.D candidate or Chairperson of the Human Subjects Committee. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form. A copy of this signed consent form will be given to me.

____

Subject's Name (printed or signified by e-signature)

____

Date

Appendix D

Advisor Biographies

Maureen Metcalf is the founder and CEO of Metcalf & Associates, Inc. Maureen brings 30 years of business experience to support her clients' leadership and organizational transformations. She is recognized as an innovative, principled thought leader who demonstrates operational skills coupled with the ability to analyze, develop, and implement successful strategies for development, profitability, growth and sustainability. She combines intellectual rigor and discipline with an ability to translate theory into practice in her writing and client engagements. She has worked with organizations ranging from Fortune 50 to higher education to state and city governments.

Maureen is also a highly acclaimed speaker and author. She speaks regularly on Innovative Leadership, Resilience, and Organizational Transformation. She is the author of the Award Winning *Innovative Leadership Workbook* Series and the co-author of *The Innovative Leadership Fieldbook* – Winner 2012 International Book Award for Best Business Reference Book and also the primary author of the *Innovative Leadership Workbook* series.

Shawn Dunning, MA: Sean is an international conflict resolution, negotiation, and leadership expert, specializing in facilitation and training methodology. With undergraduate degrees in communication and psychology, and an M.S. in Conflict Analysis & Resolution from George Mason University, Shawn currently serves as the COO of Adventure Associates, Inc., a leading corporate training firm based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Before his current position, Dunning served as Global Director of Leadership & Training for the international conflict transformation organization Search for Common Ground.

A seasoned trainer, facilitator, mediator, leadership coach, and public speaker, Shawn has served thousands of women and men around the world to help them resolve conflict and develop their collaborative leadership skills. His clients include senior government officials and elected leaders, executives of fortune 500 companies, gifted youth, young international scholars, and nonprofit organizations. Recent and ongoing engagements include leadership development for members of parliaments in Indonesia, Pakistan, and Zanzibar; leadership training and coaching for Israeli and Palestinian political, business, and religious leaders; “common ground talk” skills for television journalists in Kenya; and racial reconciliation efforts with members of Congress in the United States. Shawn currently resides in Berkeley, CA with his wife, Lindsey, and daughter, Sophia. He can be contacted at shawn@adventureassoc.com.

Venita Ramirez, MA: A Pacific Integral partner, Venita has coached and led individuals and groups in their aliveness and well-being for thirty years. She

facilitates intensive individual and group processes using developmental and body-centered psychology, eastern philosophies and integral theory. More information of Venita's work with Pacific Integral can be found at www.pacificintegral.com/new/.

Will Scott, MA: Will is a teacher, naturalist, wilderness guide, designer, facilitator, and longtime student of the human-nature relationship. Will's interests and passions have always been at the edges and confluences of ecological resiliency, human development, social justice, and community competency. For more than a decade now, he has worked to foster resiliency and connection with individuals and communities through wilderness experiences, culture repair, and deep nature-connection mentoring.

Will completed his Master's work at Prescott College, exploring the essential components of a holistic, nature-based "education for our times." Today, Will works as a guide and trainer with the School of Lost Borders in Big Pine, California. He is also a co-founder and facilitator at Weaving Earth, an educational organization in the Bay Area, which foster reciprocal relationships and cultivates the healthy development of people, communities and ecosystems through nature-based programs & services.

Ashley Sanders Ashley Sanders is a long-time organizer and Utahn working to connect the dots between corporate power and the social justice issues of our day. She became an activist while at Brigham Young University, fighting for free speech and freedom of thought in a repressive religious environment. While there, she organized an alternative commencement to protest Dick Cheney as the official commencement speaker. She worked as a national spokesperson for Ralph Nader's 2008 campaign to push third parties into the national debate. She worked as the national volunteer coordinator for Rocky Anderson's High Road for Human Rights before moving to California to channel her passion for local democracy and alternative economies on the Steering Committee of Democracy Unlimited of Humboldt County. While there, she coordinated campaigns to stop development in the Redwoods, served on the Committee on Corporations and Democracy to advise the city how to pass people's laws, and participated in campaigns for alternative currencies, indigenous rights and food sovereignty. While at Democracy Unlimited, she helped to form the national Move to Amend coalition to amend the Constitution to say that corporations are not people and money is not speech. She has toured the country many times doing street theater and public speeches to rally and organize towns to participate in the movement. She served as Move to Amend's National Youth Spokesperson and assistant field organizer, and creates trainings that highlight the overlap between corporate power, class, and race. She helped to organizer Occupy DC-Freedom Plaza and presents at numerous conferences, rallies and public events. She also worked for Peaceful Uprising for climate justice in Utah, coordinating action camps and campaign against tar sands

mining in Utah. She is currently focusing on writing and art and working to fuse them with her politics.

Geoff Fitch, MA: A founding partner of Pacific Integral, Geoff is a coach, trainer, and facilitator of transformative growth in individuals and organizations. He has been studying and practicing diverse approaches to cultivating higher human potentials for twenty years, he also has twenty years of experience in leadership in business. More information on Geoff's work with Pacific Integral can be found at www.pacificintegral.com/new/.

Pandora Thomas: Pandora's life and work is rooted in creating a world where all people have access to empowering and hands on environmental education experiences. She is passionate about deepening her and others' connection to the natural rhythms of our earth in order to heal our communities. She is co-founder of Earthseed Consulting LLC, a holistic consulting firm whose work deepens the impacts of environmental advocacy in the lives of diverse communities. Most recently she directed the Environmental Service Learning Initiative as well as serving as the environmental educator for Grind for the Green. Both programs aim to reconnect youth of color to the earth using innovative strategies. Her education has sought to link issues such as global affairs, women's rights, the environment and sustainability, racial justice, and youth empowerment. She studied at Columbia University's School for International and Public Affairs, Teachers College, and Tufts University.

She is a credentialed multiple subjects teacher, a naturalist and outdoor education instructor, as well as a certified green building professional and permaculture teacher who has created and delivered curriculum to Pre-K through adult audiences throughout the US around multiple themes including human rights, environmental justice, and outdoor and environmental education. For more information on Pandora's work check out earthseedconsulting.com and pathways2resilience.org.

Vipin Thek: Vipin is currently working at the Global office of the Ashoka Foundation in Washington, DC. Before moving to DC, he led the Youth Venture program in India for the last 5 years. With their work in both urban and rural communities, Vipin and his team built an 'eco-system' of support for young entrepreneurs. Vipin has been instrumental in engaging with a variety of stakeholders ranging from schools and universities to business entrepreneurs to provide young people with the resources they need to become effective citizens. Before joining Ashoka, he co-founded Tulir – Center for the Prevention & Healing of Child Sexual Abuse in Chennai, an organization that

works on the prevention of child sexual abuse (CSA). To learn more about Vipin's work with Ashoka visit: http://empathy.ashoka.org/about-initiative.

Abigail Lynam, PhD. Abigail has 20 years of experience in sustainability education and leadership development. She has an MS in Environmental Studies and a doctorate in Sustainability Education and Leadership Development. She taught for several graduate and undergraduate programs including Lesley University's Ecological Teaching and Learning MS degree program, University of Massachusetts' Integral Sustainability in India program, and the Audubon Expedition Institute's environmental studies and leadership development program.

Joshua Gorman is the founder and Co-Coordinator of Generation Waking Up, a global campaign to ignite a generation of young people to bring forth a thriving, just, and sustainable world. He studied "Global Youth and Social Change" at George Mason University, serves on the Board of Directors for the Global Youth Action Network / TIG-USA, and supports youth-led projects internationally. In 2008, he co-founded Global Passageways, a network of individuals and organizations working in the fields of youth & community development, contemporary rites of passage, intergenerational collaboration, and cultural renewal. He is a lifelong student of human development and transformational education with a focus on providing young people the experiences, knowledge, and skills they need to thrive in the twenty-first century. As a writer, speaker, organizer, trainer, and educator, Joshua is one of the leading voices championing the paradigm-shifting role of the Millennial generation. He currently lives in the San Francisco area where he is completing a book titled *Generation Waking Up: How a New Generation of Young People is Coming of Age and Changing Our World*. To learn more, visit www.generationwakingup.org.

Lacy Cagle, MA: As the Director of Learning and Engagement at the North West Earth Institute, Lacy oversees the development of discussion course books and educational materials. She also promotes NWEI's work on sustainable education and provides services to audiences in higher education and faith communities throughout North America. One of Lacy's favorite parts of working at NWEI is inspiration—being inspired by people's stories of action and change, and being able to develop curricula that inspire some of those actions and changes.

Before joining NWEI in 2011, Lacy worked for seven years in higher education administration, teaching and research, at Greenville College and at Portland State University.

She holds a Master's degree in Educational Leadership and Policy with a focus on Leadership in Sustainability Education from Portland State University. She has been a director at the Zahniser Institute since 2010. You can learn more about Lacy and her work with NWEI at: http://www.nwei.org/.

David E. Ford: Principal - The Health Commons Group. Almost 40 years in Marketing, Provider Relations, Health Plan Operations and Leadership, including start-ups and turnarounds. 35 years as an Executive and 21 years as CEO and President. Known in the Pacific Northwest regionally, nationally and internationally as a 'Transformational Leader and Serial Innovator' with proven track record for Value Creation. Innovative Partnership work for Primary Care Renewal, a program to transform Primary Care from a heroic activity to a coordinated team-based PC System, monograph published by the Commonwealth Fund[i] and an Institute for Health Care Improvement (IHI) book about Seven National Triple Aim Innovators titled *Pursuing the Triple Aim*.[ii] The project is now envisioning transformation work with a new paradigm for *Community Wide Integration of Schools, Jobs, Health Care, Housing and Public Services/Public Health* to create *The Well Being Commons* for development of *Whole Community Well Being*.

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i ***CareOregon: Transforming the Role of a Medicaid Health Plan from Payer to Partner***: A Commonwealth Fund Publication: **http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications/Studies/2010/Jul/CareOregon.aspx**

ii ***Pursuing the Triple Aim: Seven Innovators Show the Way to Better Care, Better Health, and Lower Costs,*** by Maureen Bisognano and Charles Kenney (May 1, 2012): http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=pursuint+the+Triple+Aim