HOW TO LOVE, CARE, AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE:
NON-DUAL GLOBAL JUSTICE IN ACTION

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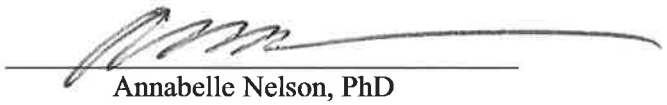

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Megumi Sugihara

Abstract

This dissertation is an inquiry into the worldviews and global justice actions of persons who have experienced non-dual consciousness. This research explores how people who have self-reported experiencing non-duality and are engaging in global justice actions describe economic globalization and global scale inequality as it relates to their actions. Eight open-ended in-depth interviews generated rich data around the themes of (a) non-dual experiences, (b) personal transformations, (c) understanding of global affairs, and (d) non-dual global justice in action. The primary findings are twofold. First, the participants hold conventional analysis of global affairs, such as the inherent exploitation of the capitalist economy, within the sense of an interconnected whole without any contradictions between the two. Second, the participants reported that their personal transformations had decisive influence in shaping their understanding of the world, as well as their choice of global justice actions. Because of the impact of their personal and often spiritual transformations on their global justice actions, participants consider fostering others' transformation to be their act for global justice. Their engagements for global justice are significantly different from conventional activism both in form and in nature. Instead of "analyzing, criticizing, and making a change," the non-dual global justice actors "love, care, and make a difference" through their way of being on this planet.

Key words: non-duality, globalization, inequality, global justice, engaged spirituality, transformative learning

This dissertation is dedicated

To

Jo Gilbert

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Chapter One: Introduction

"How do economic globalization and structural inequality look from a non-dual state of consciousness?" This question emerged and has been with me ever since I first participated in a *satsang*[1] by a non-dual spiritual teacher. As I slowly came to understand, at the core of non-dual spirituality lies a sense of non-separation as well as non-attachment to one's identity, ideology, or even thoughts. Various non-dual teachers, such as Adyashanti, Sharon Landirth, and Eckhart Tolle, suggest that when a non-dual state of consciousness is attained, one lives with an embodied sense of communion with all beings including social evil and nature. They claim that persons of non-dual consciousness may hold particular opinions and ideas about world events but are unattached to them.

Non-duality is an ancient wisdom tradition that has roots in "the direct experience of countless sages through millennia" (Prendergast, Fenner, & Krystal, 2003, p. 2). It is the core of Hindu Vedanta, most schools of Buddhism, and Taoism. Its origin is traced back to Hindu script of Vedanta (Loy, 1988), meaning "not two" or no separation. While many people might associate non-duality with Eastern spiritual thoughts, mystical Christianity, Judaism, and Islam also embrace non-dual elements (Scarborough, 2009). Although non-duality is a widely recognized wisdom tradition and has been gaining popularity in modern day spiritual communities, "nonduality is a rather curious and uncommon word that so far has been used by a relatively small number of scholars" (Prendergast, Fenner, & Krystal, 2003, p. 2).

Having been trained in a critical worldview and exposed to global justice movements that defined multinational corporations, global financial institutions, and international trade and

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[1] "A spiritual discourse or sacred gathering" according to *Dictionary* [computer application] v.2.2.3, Apple Inc. (2005-2011).

developmental organizations as "the enemies of people," non-duality was a hard concept to accept. It seemed to me that accepting all world events as they are without judging them good or bad would be "playing host to the oppressor" to borrow Paulo Freire's term (1970/1993). Therefore, it puzzled me even more when I heard non-dual teachers say that an embodied sense of oneness and non-identification with one's thoughts and ideas do not mean to do nothing in the face of social injustice (e.g., Adyashanti, 2005, 2011). How do people with non-dual consciousness make sense of global inequality in present day economic globalization and what actions do they take to promote more justice in the world? My curiosity about this state of consciousness is what led me to develop this dissertation research. I will start by presenting a picture of what I mean by "global inequality."

Background

Structural inequality on a worldwide scale under economic globalization seems obvious. According to the World Bank statistics, in 2011, 14.5% of world population, or some 1,011 million people, lived with less than $1.25 US per day of earnings (The World Bank Poverty and Equity Data, 2014). Where the average CEO pay in the United States in 2013 was over 25 million US dollars per year, or $72,224 US per day (Mishel & Davis, 2014). The World Bank claims that this is an impressive improvement compared to 43.1% poverty rate, and 1,909 million people in poverty in 1990. However, as Robin Broad and John Cavanagh (2012) point out, these World Bank statistics could be misleading. For example, the majority of people who came out below the $1.25-a-day poverty line were in China, where the nation has been experiencing extremely rapid economic growth. Outside China, most notably in South Asia and Sub-Sahara Africa, more people fell into poverty between 1990 and 2008 (Broad & Cavanagh, 2012); 36.9% in South Asia, and an unfathomable 47.5% in Sub-Saharan Africa (The World

Bank, 2011). Their conditions have not improved since faced with even more aggressive exploitation strategies, such as land grabbing (see, for example, Daniel, 2009). It is also important to note that the World Bank data are based on country averages and disregards disparity within a nation.

Turning attention to the domestic economic climate in the US, the wealth gap between the rich and the poor is widening, and people in middle class as well as lower economic classes are faced with the constant threats of prolonged unemployment, underpaid work, debt, foreclosure, denied access to health care, and a lack of access to adequate (healthy) food. In 2007, the richest 1% of the American population owned 34.6% of the country's total wealth, and the next 19% owned 50.5% (Wealth Inequality in the United States). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), in 2011, 15.0% or 46.2 million U.S. citizens live in poverty, defined as a family of four living under $23,050 a year.

Although income and/or wealth level is only one of many factors that influence people's ability to develop and fulfill their potential, having to struggle to live on a daily basis for prolonged periods is not a conducive environment for human development (The United Nations Development Programme, 2011). When such struggle is multigenerational and/or systemic and structural, its adverse and lasting effects are even more severe. Unfortunately, as the numbers above suggest, it seems that the lives of the majority of the people in the world are becoming more challenging and less hopeful under current globalized economic systems.

Of course, it is not possible to prove a direct causal relationship between economic globalization and global inequality. Furthermore, income level and wealth alone cannot draw the whole picture of the influence of economic globalization. For instance, Broad and Cavanagh (2012) observe that it is “the opening of their [rural poor families’] resources to global

agribusiness, factory fishing fleets, and corporate interests that leads to real poverty" (p. 1) more so than lack of cash income. Yet, it appears reasonable to agree with the World Commission of the International Labor Organization that states, "The current process of globalization is generating unbalanced outcome, both between and within countries. Wealth is being created, but too many countries and people are not sharing its benefits" (International Labor Organization World Commission, 2004, p. x). Even staying within the official statistics, it is interesting to note that between 1981 and 2005——"the heyday of corporate-friendly neoliberal policies in most of the countries" (Broad & Cavanagh, 2012, p.1)—poverty outside China increased in most regions, whereas after 2005, when relentless neoliberal Washington Consensus policies were questioned and debt cancellation for many countries were granted, poverty numbers and rates fell in all regions of the world (Broad & Cavanagh, 2012). The easements of the negative influence of economic globalization are at least partially credited to the efforts of global justice activists who spoke up, took action, and in some cases risked their lives to protest against corporate economic globalization (Buttel & Gould, 2006; Silver, 2005).

Indeed, in the last 15 years many citizens of the world have taken the issue of global injustice to the street. In December 1999, thousands of people —anti-corporate globalization groups; organized laborers; environmental activists; religious organizations; farm, sustainable agriculture, anti-GMO, and consumer groups; people concerned about world hunger and international development; human rights organizations; animal rights groups; and even some government officials—took over the streets of Seattle and disrupted the World Trade Organization negotiation process. As economist Joseph Stiglitz (2007/2006) puts it, this was the moment when "globalization had succeeded in unifying people from around the world—against

globalization" (p. 7).[2] Every year since 2001, about the same time when more than 2,600 top corporate leaders from nearly 100 countries, as well as nearly 40 heads of state and more than 80 government ministers (BBC, 2012) gather in Davos, Switzerland, for the World Economic Forum, tens of thousands of global justice activists gather for World Social Forum for the realization of "another world."[3] In 2011, citizens' movement against the global financial system erupted from its heart of operation, Wall Street, and spread all over the world. The Occupy Movement demanded that the world's 1% who own and control world finances share with and care for the other 99%. These are some concrete examples of influential global justice actions in recent years.

Personal Standpoint

I share the sentiment of anti-globalization and global justice activists. I support the arguments by well-known scholar-activists, such as Walden Bello, Vandana Shiva, and Samir Amin, among others, who argue that economic globalization led by transnational corporations, The World Bank (WB), World Trade Organization (WTO), and International Monetary Fund (IMF) has done much harm to the vulnerable populations in the global South as well as those in the North. Yet, what I read in anti- and alter-globalization literature as well as what I have directly observed do not quite convince me of the effectiveness of global justice activism that is based on the antagonism toward and demonization of certain organizations and individuals. The dualistic approach of "us against them" that is often the undercurrent of the activism, as well as one-sided accusation against dominant actors in the global arena, left me with the impression that

[2] As evident in the frequent and prolonged stand-offs in its negotiations (Miles, 2014), the World Trade Organization seems to have lost its effectiveness as the mechanism to enforce liberalization of global trade. Instead, regional trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, are providing legitimacy for economic globalization.

[3] The World Social Forum is also of course not free from the criticism of activists.

such adversarial attitude creates more enemies and reduces activists' effectiveness despite their best intentions.

This observation, in addition to witnessing a negative legacy of direct international aid in Ethiopia, has long paralyzed me as a global justice activist. I could not commit myself to any action for the fear that my well-intended actions may bring harmful consequences to the people who are in the structurally disadvantaged social locations in the global human community. I am convinced of the urgent need for global structural change, and that alternative strategies for change are required.

Purpose of the Study and Potential Contribution

The perspective of this study is that of a scholar-practitioner (Fielding Graduate University, 1998/2002). As a scholar I would like to find possible new ways to comprehend today's economic globalization and inequality. As a practitioner, I would like to identify global justice actions that are viable alternatives to dualistic activism. Obviously, not all activism is dualistic in nature. However, most of what I have witnessed and experienced thus far has exhibited dualistic characteristics, such as demonization, separation of "us" and "them," and strict adherence to certain ideologies.

In a bigger picture, this study is an attempt to integrate age-old wisdom of non-duality and scholarly knowledge of global studies. It is my hope that this exploration of the worldviews of those with non-dual consciousness will contribute to developing holistic ways to comprehend global integration and inequality. International relations scholars— including Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (2008/2010), James Mittelman (2002) and Donald Puchala (2000) — have argued in favor of more interdisciplinary approaches for comprehending globalized world affairs. Some sociologists, namely World-Systems scholars (for example, Wallerstein, 2004;

Arrighi, 2005; Chase-Dunn & Barones, 2006), and Transnational Capitalist Class theorists (for example, Sklair, 2001; Robinson, 2004) have theorized ways to analyze globalization from a non-state-centric perspective. Hayward Alker and his successors (Marlin-Bennett, 2012) have been introducing global studies through humanities. My study will further point in a direction whereby global studies can "borrow" from ancient wisdom tradition of non-dualism to shed additional light on the understanding of the globalization phenomenon.

This study is a work of activist-scholarship (Hale, 2008; Sudbury & Okazawa-Rey, 2009) in which I clarify my personal standpoint as writing from an explicit political position in search of an alternative to neoliberal economic globalization. Further, it is my intention to co-create knowledge with my research participants in such a way that the knowledge is practical and applicable for those who are working toward global structural justice to alleviate negative effects of globalization.

Research Question

In order to find the answers to my personal as well as academic curiosity, I dialogued (Jaworski, 2012) with those people who have experienced an embodied sense of non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions. The research question that guided me through my journey is as follows: *How do people who have experienced non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions describe today's economic globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions?*

In the following chapter, I will specify which academic conversation I intended to contribute to with my research findings by reviewing two relevant knowledge areas: economic globalization and engaged spirituality. The field of globalization studies is comprised of various explanations for economic globalization and inequality. The literature in engaged spirituality

illustrates how activists' states of consciousness shape their engagement in social justice activism. My literature review includes materials on transformative learning because I learned through the process of research that personal transformation was vitally important for the participants in developing their understanding of globalization. As the conclusion of the next chapter will indicate, the answers to my research question dwell in the intersection of these three academic fields.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The phenomenon studied in this research is (a) the understanding of economic globalization by individuals who have experienced non-dual consciousness and (b) their global justice actions. Globalization means different things to different people and includes "the international flow of ideas and knowledge, the sharing of cultures, global civil society, and the global environmental movement" (Stiglitz, 2007, 2006, p. 4). Some scholars, such as World Systems scholar Christopher Chase-Dunn and his colleagues, interpret globalization strictly to mean integration and interdependence between nation-states, while others see it as to mean any transnational integration that organically occurs as well as those that are intentionally generated (e.g., Lechner & Boli, 2012). Yet others scholars focus their analysis on the effect of specific political economy implemented by former U.S. president Ronald Reagan and former U.K. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, called neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005). Although it is recognized that the scope of globalization encompasses all aspects of human activities, in this project the focus is placed on the economic integration. However, the term *economic globalization*, rather than neoliberalism, is used in order to consider a broader range and time frame than political economy since the 1980s.

By global justice actions, I refer to any committed efforts to address global scale economic injustice. The word *actions* rather than *activism* is chosen because of a common connotation associated with the term activism as an organized movement against the establishment as in anti-globalization activism. While choices of actions for global justice certainly include activism, the term “action” covers a broader range of individuals’ initiatives. By way of illustration, when someone grows vegetables in her backyard, few people would consider her action as global justice activism. However, with a clear intention to reduce

dependency on and participation in the global agribusiness, it is an undisputable action for global justice.

The field of global studies recognizes citizens' movements as viable vehicles that could bring an alternative to corporate-led globalization. However, my search in global studies did not lead to literature specifically on the global justice actions based on a non-dual worldview. Instead, my topic resides at the crossroads between global studies and engaged spirituality. The knowledge inherent in the engaged spirituality literature is critical in bridging existing knowledge in global studies and my research findings because it presents examples of how one's consciousness shapes his social justice actions. Here "consciousness" does not merely mean cognitive knowledge as in *global consciousness*. On the contrary, it refers to one's spiritual state of development as understood in the context of consciousness studies (Combs, 2009).

With the rationale provided in the previous paragraphs, this chapter will start by reviewing various explanations of globalization with special attention to (a) driving forces behind economic globalization, (b) the relations between globalization and global economic inequality, and (c) the role of citizens' movements in addressing some ill effects of economic globalization. Then I will discuss how engaged spirituality can help understand consciousness-based social movements. Further, transformative learning literature will be reviews with special attention to the role of spirituality in changing fundamental worldviews. The chapter concludes by illustrating the gaps in the literature that the answers to my research question are intended to address.

Globalization: Driving Forces, the Relation with Global Inequality, and Citizens' Roles

Unprecedented integration on a global scale, referred to as globalization, as well as environmental crises are two generally agreed upon states of world today. Yet, there is no

agreement among scholars about the driving forces of globalization, the relationship between globalization and the crises, and possible remedies.

To start with, in regards to the driving forces of globalization, the first bifurcation point of thoughts among the scholars is whether economic globalization is a natural result of global capitalism or it is a product of political and intentional design. World-Systems theorists are some of the main proponents of the former argument. According to the leading scholar of world-systems, Immanuel Wallerstein (2004), "a capitalist system cannot exist within any framework except that of a world-economy" (p. 24) because capitalist economy functions only through endless pursuit of the accumulation of capital. Such pursuit requires a division of labor between core, periphery, and semi-periphery nations and a free flow of capital, resources, and labor across political boundaries. Fellow world-systems scholar Christopher Chase-Dunn (Chase-Dunn & Barones, 2006) further concludes that current economic integration is simply one of the 40- to 60-year cyclical phases of a "greater integration in the organization of production, distribution, and consumption of commodities in world economy"(p. 83) called the Kondratieff Wave. Chase-Dunn and Barry Gills (2005) support their argument by pointing out that the level of international trade and flow of capital immediately before the First World War was almost equal to the current level and proclaim that the current economic globalization in longer historical context is nothing new.

The transnational capitalist class (TCC) theorist and sociologist William Robinson (2004) refutes such a claim by alleging that such an understanding of the globalization misses the qualitative shift in global integration. While TCC theory shares the understanding with world-systems theory that global capitalism is the primary force behind the globalization, TCC looks at accelerated transnationalization rather than inter-national interdependence. Whereas world-

systems theorists claim that the capitalist relation of production and class division exist in each nation-state—whether it is core, semi-periphery, or periphery state, TCC theorists argue that under the current globalization, the class division between capitalists and laborers transcends national borders. On one side, the owners of the production, international bureaucrats, bankers, and media—who globally share interests as well as lifestyle and culture—form the transnational capitalist class. On the other side, laborers across the board share increased vulnerability under global capitalism. The definition of transnational capitalist class varies slightly among TCC theorists. William Robinson takes a strictly Marxist approach that only the owners of production around the world can be seen as TCC. In contrast, Leslie Sklair considers owners, media, international bureaucrats, as well as bankers, as TCC. Sklair's definition is more or less the same as what Robinson refers to as the transnational capitalist block (W. I. Robinson, personal communication, January 11, 2013). Despite this variation in definition, all TCC theorists agree that globalization since the 1980s is a historically new phenomenon with this transnational nature of current integration (Robinson, 2004).

Having personally witnessed the transnationalization process, I agree with TCC theorists that globalization brought through the historical development of capitalism has entered a historically new epoch. Automobile production is a case in point. In the 1970s, Japanese automobile makers imported materials from a few foreign countries to build cars in Japan, while now they produce various parts of a car in multiple countries all over the world and assemble them in yet another country all outside of Japan. In the late 1980s, I was excited to find some of my favorite American products in Tokyo, while now those same brand names can be easily found in most major cities in the US, EU, Asia, and Africa. This phenomenon is confirmed by

the sociologist Saskia Sassen's research (2005); major cities all over the world share common characteristics more so than cities and rural areas in the same country.

While world-systems theorists and transnational capitalist class theorists—heavily influenced by the Marxist theory of capitalism—see inherent expansion of global capitalism as the driving force behind the globalization, other scholars view current globalization as more of a political creation. For example, a report by the International Forum on Globalization (Cavanagh & Mander, 2004) proclaims that, "modern globalization is not an expression of evolution. It was designed and created by human beings with a specific goal: to give primacy to economic—that is, corporate—values above all other values and to aggressively install and codify those values globally. In fact, the modern globalization era has a birthplace and a birth date: Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, July 1944" (p. 33).

In their view, several hundred transnational corporations, global banks, and the Bretton Woods institutions —The World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and later World Trade Organization (WTO) all of which were created by the corporations and banks through political agreement— have been the driving forces behind the economic globalization. Opinions on who the most forceful actors are may vary. Former business professor and economist with USAID David Korten emphasizes Wall Street more than others, whereas Cavanagh and associates stress more the role of an "unholy trinity" (i.e., WB, IMF, and WTO). In general, however, anti-globalization scholars and activists share the belief that the neoliberal political agenda set forth by the multinational corporations and international institutions, coupled with advances of transportation and communication technology as well as the historical legacy of colonization (Sorrells, 2013), are the driving forces behind globalization.

Interestingly, the proponents of globalization also share this view of economic globalization as being a political creation. Jeffrey D. Sachs (2005), an economist who was the director of the United Nations Millennium Development project and who also appears on *Time* magazine's 2004 and 2005 lists of the world's 100 most influential, states that current globalization with neoliberal economic policy led by The World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and WTO, has been intentionally implemented by world leaders to foster economic growth and development. Firmly rooted in classical Keynesian economic theory, Sachs passionately argues that a fairer and more complete liberalization of the market would bring economic development for all.

As national governments provide basic healthcare, education, and infrastructure for their people, with some international aid and more open trade, any country can escape from the poverty trap. Sachs' theme assumes the feasibility of limitless and continuous economic growth through market liberalization and technological innovation. Although Sachs is critical of the way WB, IMF, and WTO have actually been managing globalization, Sachs' theme is the closest among the literatures I have reviewed to the policies these international institutions have been pursuing since their conception: liberalization, privatization, and deregulation.[4]

In a similar manner, Nobel Prize economist and former Senior Vice President and Chief Economist at The World Bank (1997-2000) as well as the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors to the Clinton administration, Joseph Stiglitz (2007, 2006), asserts that globalization is a political issue. In his own words, Stiglitz states that,

[4] One thing that separates the approaches of WB, IMF, and WTO from Sachs' recommendation is that Sachs does not agree on privatizing basic services for basic human needs, such as health, education, water, sanitation, as well as security.

> Economics has been driving globalization, especially through the lowering of communication and transportation costs. But politics has shaped it. The rules of the game have been largely set by the advanced industrial countries—and particularly by special interests within those countries. (p. 4)

Specifically on the influence of special interests, Stiglitz continues that in trade negotiations,"[t]he negotiators, in representing their immediate 'clients'—the corporations that lobby them heavily and constantly, partly directly, partly through lobbying Congress and the administration—often lose sight of the big picture, confusing the interests of these companies with America's national interests or, even worse, with what is good for the global trading system" (p. 79).

Thus, Stiglitz implies that the driving force behind globalization is Western, mostly USAmerican, corporations. This trend might not have been as strong at the time when Bretton Woods institutions were created, but it has been strengthened with the end of the Cold War and through Washington Consensus—"a consensus forged between the IMF (located on 19th street [in Washington, DC]), the World Bank (on 18th street), and the U.S. Treasury (on 15th street) on what constituted the set of policies that would best promote development" (Stiglitz, 2007, 2006, pp. 16-17). As these quotations illustrate, Stiglitz echoes the claim that economic globalization is a political creation.

The analysis of global inequality during the time of globalization has been surprisingly similar between both sides of the globalization debate: proponents and critics. Some even say that "anti-globalization" is a misleading term and use other terms such as alter-globalization and pro-global justice (Steger & Wilson, 2012). On this, Nobel Prize winner economist, Amartya Sen (2012) presents an insightful point that "the real issue is the distribution of globalization's

benefits…this is why many of the antiglobalization protesters…are not… really 'antiglobalization'" (p.19).[5] Environmentalist and journalist Paul Hawken (2007) concurs: "the people who were most articulate and vociferous in Seattle [anti-WTO movement in 1999] were not protesting against globalization per se but against what it actually (and they believe, inevitably) entails, which is the corporatization of the commons" (p. 121). What separates scholars critical of globalization from proponents of globalization is not necessarily whether or not globalization should be happening nor is it the analysis of the current state of global inequality. Rather it is how they see the relationship between inequality and economic globalization.

For some proponents, like Sachs (2005), inequality is a result of uneven economic development and growth, which is often caused by countries' poor economic policy. In other words, it is not the globalization that brings inequality, but it is the unwise decisions of the political leaders, such as protectionism and resistance to privatize key industries, that is to blame. In fact, as I briefly touched upon in an earlier section, Sachs claims that market liberalization, the core of neoliberal economic globalization, is one of the key ingredients that allows poor countries to develop, thus reduces global inequality.

In contrast, critics contend that inequality is intrinsic to economic globalization. Much like the world-wystems theorists, TCC theorists such as William Robinson and Leslie Sklair (a sociologist at the London School of Economics and Political Science) argue that the capitalists are perpetually searching for more effective ways to produce more with less. What this means is that capitalism as a system has a need for "constant access to new sources of cheap labor, land, raw materials (crops and minerals), and markets" (Robinson, 2004, p. 3). For that to happen

[5] A similar point was made by Amartya Sen in Globalization, Inequality and Global Protest (2002). In *Development, 45(*2), pp.11-16.

there must always be people whose labor and resources are taken for less than fair exchange.

From a less theoretical angle, economists Jerry Mander, Debi Baker, and David Korten (2001) write about the effect of globalization on poor people stating that,

> The ideologies and rules of economic globalization – including free trade, deregulation, privatization, and structural adjustment – have destroyed the livelihoods of millions of people, often leaving them homeless, landless, and hungry, while removing their access to even most basic public services such as health and medical care, education, sanitation, fresh water, public transport, job training and the like. The record shows that economic globalization makes things worse for the poor, not better. (p. 2)

What seems apparent is that critics question underlining assumptions of economic theory that support globalization— unlimited growth, trickledown of wealth, and competitive advantage — and conclude that "at the root, economic globalization is really an experiment, an economic model promoted by people who most benefit from it" (Cavanah & Mander, 2004, p. 49).

Yet, even when accepting the shortcomings of globalization, Stiglitz (2007, 2006) insists that "globalization does not have to be bad for the environment, increase inequality, weaken cultural diversity, and advance corporate interests at the expense of the well-being of ordinary citizens….globalization, properly managed, can do a great deal to benefit both the developing and the developed countries of the world" (p. xv). Partially, as economist Martin Ravallion (2003) suggests the debate on the relationship between globalization and poverty/inequality is a matter of measurements. Whereas proponents of globalization measure its benefit with such statistical figures as economic growth rate and poverty index, many critics view negative impact of globalization in more holistic terms including social and environmental cost as well as felt-sense of well-being by affected persons. Yet, in my view the core debate on the relationship

between globalization and inequality is that of globalization *in theory* versus globalization *in reality*. Considered from a slightly different angle, the opinions on globalization seem to depend upon which theory or ideology the scholars subscribe: classic and reformist economic theories on the proponents' side, Marxist as well as realist vernacular (McLaughlin, 1996) theories on the critics' side.

It is worth noting that many of the proponents of globalization are affiliated with mainstream academia, especially a handful of prestigious schools of economy, and have direct access to actual policymaking. This is in sharp contrast with most critics, who have either left academia and/or are associated with reputable, yet alternative research institutions. This of course raises the question of power and privilege around the politics of globalization, a topic of its own, which is outside of the scope of this research.

As might be expected, the remedies to address global inequality proposed by various scholars—and the role of citizen's initiative, in particular—also depend upon scholars' theoretical foundations. Coming from classic Keynesian and Smithean perspectives, Sachs (2005) argues for more complete liberation of market and criticizes protestors as actually undermining the opportunities that the poor countries desperately need for their economic development by not having faith in the power of free trade and market. Instead, Sachs suggests that the rich world citizens should protest the trade protectionism in their own countries because such policies deprive less developed countries fair opportunities to export their products. This argument is shared by Nobel economist Amartya Sen (1999) who argues that development is a freedom that underdeveloped countries deserve to enjoy. The similar arguments are commonly repeated in the mainstream media.

Rather than a greater push for a classical free market economy, which is the underlying economic theory of the Washington Consensus, Joseph Stiglitz (2007/2006) advocates for a managed market economy. Recognizing that a market with perfect information, perfect competition, and perfect risk is "an idealization of reality which is of little relevance" (p. 28) and that policies that focus on minimizing the role of government, emphasizing privatization, trade and capital market liberation, and deregulation put little emphasis on equality and sustainability, Stiglitz recommends a greater role for the government to create and maintain conducive environment for the private sectors to thrive. In other words, Stiglitz argues for a balance between the government and the market and proposes reform of the global governance structure so that national governments can assume more active roles than those they are allowed under the restrictions of the World Bank, IMF, and WTO.

While some significant differences exist between Sachs' and Stiglitz's reform proposals, what is common is their recognition of a need for a centralized global governance body that is legitimate, fair, and transparent—the qualities that both see lacking in WB, IMF, and WTO. Their recommendations are highly nation-state-centric; they advocate for a strengthened United Nations (UN) and do not consider citizens' initiatives as viable vehicles for change. Surprisingly, having come from former WB official and advisor respectively, Sachs' and Stiglitz' proposals contain some strong criticism of current globalization, which can be commonly found in the claims of the critics. For example, Sachs and Stiglitz, as well as the critics, call for democratization and transparency in decision-making processes at the World Bank and IMF. They also propose that the UN play a bigger role in the rule making, coordination, and enforcement of regulations in global economy. However, the commonality stops there, and sharp disagreements begin.

While reformists believe that the institutional reforms can re-shape globalization, critics strongly disagree. The report by the International Forum on Globalization (Cavanagh & Mander, 2004) states that,

> Institutional reform is a viable strategy when the institutions in question are fundamentally fair and aligned with a legitimate purpose but have simply been corrupted... It is not a viable strategy when a system is in its structure, mandate, purpose, principles, and processes so fundamentally at odds with the human interest as is the case with the Bretton Woods institutions. (p. 318)

Economist David Korten (2010) concurs, "unfortunately, Jeffrey Sachs demonstrates the intellectual myopia common to many professional economists whose ideological assumptions trump reality" (p. 63). Instead, most critics call for the dismantling of WTO, World Bank, and IMF (for example, Cavanagh & Mander, 2004; Korten, 2010; Hawken, 2007).

Unlike the media's common portrayal of anti-globalization movements as protectionists and isolationists, critics of globalization believe that healthy local communities would engage in active trade, and therefore the critics recognize a need for international institutions that regulate and monitor fair exchanges (Cavanagh & Mander, 2004). Instead of the isolation of local communities, critics encourage (a) a closer scrutiny identifying which activities might benefit from regulation at the global level, (b) giving priority to local decisions over global ones when possible, and (c) transparent and democratic decision-making process. They argue that such localization would be necessary to protect the rights of people, communities, and nations. Further it would help citizens to reclaim the commons, which include air, water, seed, basic education, adequate health care, and media (Hawken, 2007). The critics allege that a handful of

transnational corporations and global well-to-dos have, from a position of pure self-interest, deliberately deprived citizens of much jurisdiction over such commons.

The critics' argument for localization and confidence in the power of citizens' initiatives to bring global scale structural change often stem from their personal experiences. For David Korten (2010), who was an Air Force captain during the Vietnam War, having witnessed how an ill-equipped yet determined peasants' army defeated what was considered the world's most powerful military convinced him of the potential of an engaged self-organizing citizenry. For Paul Hawken (2007), over one million people's organizations globally committed to "express the needs of the majority of people on earth to sustain the environment, wage peace, democratize decision making and policy, reinvent public governance piece by piece from the bottom up" (p. 12) represents humanity's immune system. Similar to how the immune system of an organism protects itself with a network of diverse cells, Hawken believes people's organizations would protect humanity from the injustice experienced under corporate-led globalization. In the place of centralized top-down solutions for the multitude of issues humanity faces, hundreds of thousands of small groups in the world are tirelessly working towards local-based solutions. Hawken sees viable power in this living-organism-like movement of movements.

There are two notable characteristics about this global movement of movements. First, the local movements are globally networked allowing active collaboration, regular and real-time exchange of information, as well as sharing of resources and knowledge. In other words, the movements themselves are the products of globalization. Applying the term by the Italian sociologist and communist activist who was imprisoned under Mussolini, Antonio Gramsci, transnational capitalist class theorists consider this network a counter-hegemonic movement, or transnational class formation from below (Robinson, 2004; Sklair, 2001; Carroll, 2010). Much

like other critics of globalization, TCC theorists see this network as realistic actors who could loosen the grip of transnational capitalist class on global capitalism.

Hawken draws attention to the second characteristic of the global network of movements by saying that this surge of committed individuals cannot be defined as movement in a conventional sense. According to Hawken (2007), "movements have leaders and ideologies. People *join* movements, study their tracts, and identify themselves with a group" (p.2, emphasis in original). Instead, this movement of committed individuals "is dispersed, inchoate, and fiercely independent. It has no manifesto or doctrine, no overriding authority to check with... One of its distinctive features is that it is tentatively emerging as a global humanitarian movement arising from the bottom up" (p. 3). Hawken views this absence of a coherent single ideology as being the most significant strength of the movement because ideologies tend to divide people and deny diversity among actors. Instead, the movement "united by ideas, not ideology" allows for resilience, adaptability, and responsiveness; the same characteristics the immune systems thrive on.

Cavanagh and his colleagues (2004) share the observation. "Unified by a deep commitment to universal values of democracy, justice and respect for life, this alliance functions with growing effectiveness without a central organization, leadership, or defining ideology. It also takes different forms in different settings" (p. 29). Having personally worked in heavily ideology-based "you-are-either-with-us-or-against-us" social justice movements and witnessed their limitations firsthand, these observations are both refreshing and encouraging. Moreover, this "global justice movement without ideology" is a very pertinent point to current research because one of the core elements of non-dual consciousness is to be un-attached to any ideology.

Furthermore, it is intriguing that a notable number of authors reference to a "shift of consciousness" as a key to this movement of movements. For example, environmental lawyer James Gustave Speth is said to give significant attention to social movements grounded in an awakening spiritual consciousness (Korten, 2010). Such a movement, Speth (2008) argues, allows for the emergence of a truly participatory democratic social system from bottom-up. Slightly different than cognitive awareness raising, which was the core of consciousness raising in Paulo Freire (1970/1993) and others' mobilization of the oppressed, is what Speth (2008) is referring to as the rise of a new consciousness. According to Speth, "for some, it is a spiritual awakening—a transformation of the human heart. For others it is a more intellectual process of coming to see the world anew and deeply embracing the emerging ethic of the environment and the old ethic of what it means to love thy neighbors as thyself" (pp. 199-200). A scholar of adult education and transformative learning, Edmond O'Sullivan (1999, 2002) considers development of such new consciousness, which he calls planetary consciousness, as an urgent task of the educators if humanity is to save itself from economic and ecological crisis. Hawken (2007) echoes, "It has been said that we cannot save our planet unless humankind undergoes a wide spread spiritual and religious awakening. In other words, fixes won't fix unless we fix our souls as well" (p.184).

As much as it is refreshing and encouraging, for me it is hard to picture how social movement from spiritual awakening would bring *structural* changes when the awakened are not necessarily in decision-making positions. Furthermore, how do individuals' spirituality influence their social engagements? In search of some insights, in the next section, I will look at engaged spirituality literature.

Engaged Spirituality: Social Change and Spiritual Awakening

> You may think that the way to change the world is to elect a new President, but a government is only a reflection of society, which is a reflection of our own consciousness. To create fundamental change, we the members of society, have to transform ourselves. (Nhat Hanh, 1993, p. 67)

Although the discussion on "shift of consciousness" might appear new in global justice movement literature and rarely seen in academic writings on global studies, consciousness-based social change efforts and advocacy for individuals' internal transformation for external social change are acknowledged by many. For example, international law and international relations scholar Richard Falk (1993) names Mahatma Gandhi, Aung San Suu Kyi, Martin Luther King, Jr. among others as examples of those who practiced *politically engaged spirituality*, whose "transformative patterns of behavior result[ed] from 'spiritual' interventions in societal processes" (p. 137). In addition to those named by Falk, Janet Parachin, a theology professor and author of *Engaged Spirituality* (1999), writes about the lives of 10 social activists — including Marian Wright Edelman, Rigoberta Menchu, and Dorothy Day—"who find within their faith tradition the resources that nurture their being and enable them to engage in activities that move the world toward peace, justice, greater compassion and wholeness" (p. 1). Parachin credits Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese monk who led the nonviolent peace movement during the Vietnam War, for coining the term *Engaged Buddhism* to describe his spiritual practice deeply involved in activism for social justice. By adapting Nhat Hanh's term to Engaging *Spirituality*, Parachin broadens his concept to cover the socially engaged practices of any faith traditions.

On the relationship between spiritual development and social engagement, the past director of the Socially Engaged Spirituality program at Saybrook Graduate School, Donald Rothberg (2006) argues that "The *two paths deeply need each other*...Without spiritual

development, well-meaning attempts to change the world will probably unconsciously replicate the very problem that we believe we are solving" (emphasis original, p. 4). Rothberg passionately continues:

> Violent "solutions" all too frequently only beget further violence. Without transforming ourselves and coming to know ourselves deeply through sustained spiritual inquiry and practice, we may only make things worse…when we do attend to the world "in us," we join in the act of social transformation…inner transformation entails outer transformation. (p. 5)

One example of spirituality-based social activism that is considered to have had a significant impact was the anti-war movement that Thich Nhat Hanh led during the Vietnam War. In that movement, the activists never named North Vietnamese, South Vietnamese, or even Americans as enemies. Instead, Thich Nhat Hanh encouraged all who wanted to stop the war to assume their own responsibility by saying, "if we look deeply, we will observe that the roots of war are in the unmindful ways we have been living. We have not sown enough seeds of peace and understanding in ourselves and others, therefore we are co-responsible" (Nhat Hanh, 1993, p. 66). His approach was that of understanding and love rather than anger and hatred so that the activists could help their governments understand clearly that the war was unjust, destructive, and not worthy. He considered this approach far more effective because "anger always accelerates the damage" (p. 66). This approach to help misled policymakers realize their own wrongdoing through activists' compassion was much common to Gandhi's philosophy that underlined his movement for India's independence (Gandhi, 1910).

Nearly 20 years after the conclusion of the Vietnam War, Thich Nhat Hanh (1993) had the following to say on the accumulation of wealth under economic globalization:

> To accumulate wealth and own excessive portions of the world's natural resources is to deprive our fellow humans of the chance to live. To participate in oppressive and unjust social system is to widen the gap between rich and poor and thereby aggravate the situation of social injustice. Yet we tolerate excess, injustice, and war, while remaining unaware that the human race as a family is suffering. While some members of the human family are suffering and starving, for us to enjoy false security and wealth is a sign of insanity. (pp. 119-120)

Thich Nhat Hanh's approach to the Vietnam War and accumulation of wealth are both rooted in the fundamental Buddhist concept of *paticca sammuppada*—the "inter-being" of all things (Sivaraksa, Bhikkhu, & Rothberg, 1997). According to this concept, because all beings exist in deep interdependency, "if we harm another human being, we harm ourselves" (Nhat Hanh, 1993, p. 119). Correspondingly, it is believed that if the activists assume their shared responsibility for social ills and change the way they engage in it, the society would also change.

One of Thailand's most prominent social critics and activists, Sulak Sivaraksa, makes a similar point about globalization and inequality. Applying Buddhists' second precept of refraining from taking what is not one's own, he commented on the world affairs in the late 1980s and 1990s that "We may not literally steal in our face-to-face interactions, but do we allow the rich countries to exploit the poor countries through the workings of the international banking systems and the international economic order?" (p.122). He urged Buddhists to extend their ethical responsibility beyond their everyday life conduct to address global structural violence.

As these examples suggest, engaged Buddhism is "an effort to express the *ideals* of Buddhism—non-violence, loving-kindness, and the rest—in practical action" (King, 2009, p. 26. emphasis original). Parachin (1999) supports King's point and argues that spiritual life must

include social engagements, such as protest, writing about and speaking out against injustice, and offering compassionate and loving care to those in need in order to be authentic, life-changing, and world-transforming. In other words, both King and Parachin assert that the spiritual practitioners' active involvement in social justice is an expression of their faith.

Although this understanding of engaged spirituality is informative in comprehending how certain religious teachings can shape practitioners' worldview and social justice actions, social engagement from a shift of consciousness, which global justice movement literature is starting to address, exhibits slightly different characteristics. The shift of consciousness that Korten (2010), Hawken (2007), Speth (2008), and others talk about in terms of current global justice activism is not an expression of certain religious teaching and values. Instead, the shift is an evolution of *structure of consciousness* (Combs, 2009) that determines one's worldview, and therefore shapes her actions.

In his 2009 book, *Consciousness Explained Better*, consciousness scholar Allan Combs defines structure of consciousness as "the way in which the mind takes hold of an experience and makes it its own" (p. 58). In other words, it is "a complete way of understanding and relating to the world" (p. 62) representing one's mode of perceiving and understanding reality. Developmental psychologist Jean Piaget studied how children experience reality differently from infancy, childhood, and adolescence depending on their stage of cognitive development. Like Piaget's model that has a sequence of stages that are considered to ascend in its level, scholars of consciousness development laid out the stages of consciousness structures in hierarchical order of development.

Drawing on many psychological and wisdom traditions, philosopher Ken Wilber, together with Combs, developed one of the models of consciousness development. The Wilber–

Combs lattice integrates various aspects of human developments including cognitive, ego or sense of self, moral, and spirituality (Combs, 2009). Similarly developmental psychologist Jenny Wade formulated what she called a noetic theory of human development, resulting from her extensive review of developmental theories, empirical studies, and neurological research. Wade's theory is rooted in the holonomic understanding of consciousness where explicate (physically manifesting and ever changing) and implicate (primary and Absolute; mystic, post-Newtonian) orders of consciousness simultaneously co-exist without contradiction (Wade, 1996).

Three aspects common to both models are notable here. First, unlike developmental models that focus on one element of human awareness, such as moral, reasoning, motivation, ego, and interpersonal, many of which consider the development to complete when a person reaches mutuality, the Wilber-Combs as well as Wade models take a life span approach. Second, while most other conventional models assume linear progression from one stage to another, the Wilber-Combs as well as Wade models consider the stages hierarchical, yet non-sequential. One person can be at multiple stages simultaneously and a person whose primary consciousness is at a "lower" stage does occasionally experience a temporary shift of consciousness to one of the higher state, which Abraham Maslow referred to as "peak experiences" (Combs, p. 96). Thirdly, their models indicate that human consciousness takes a "right turn to spirit" (Combs, p. 80) when it develops beyond the highest cognitive level. Wilber and Comb refer to those stages beyond conventional cognitive as "higher mind," applying Sri Aurobindo's term, which is characterized by "more immediate and direct perception of reality, a more profound intuitive faculty, and emerging sense of subtle dimensions of reality, and a palpable selflessness and compassion for others" (p. 80).

How do people move from one structure of consciousness to another and even to reach the higher mind? How does shift into higher mind consciousness, which is spiritual in nature, relate to social engagement? Combs claims that accessing such high consciousness level, other than through temporary visits, can occur only through years of spiritual practice. Wade explains that shift in consciousness beyond the conventional cognitive level is motivated by a person's internal urge to be with the Absolute or know the Truth, though such shifts can be assisted by others such as a spiritual guide. However, neither Combs nor Wade discusses the relationship between shift of consciousness and social engagement.

Korten (2006), on the other hand, describes the process of a shift of consciousness specifically for global transformation. He calls the shift Great Turning and mentions that the process

> begins with a cultural and spiritual awakening—a turning in cultural values from money and material excess to life and spiritual fulfillment, from relationships of domination to relationships of partnership, from a belief in our limitations to a belief in our possibilities, and from fearing our differences to rejoicing in our diversity. (p. 22)

In the same line, a founder of the Awakening Coach Training, Arjuna Ardagh (2005), documents nearly one hundred individuals who have "undergone a spiritual awakening deeply enough that it has permanently transformed their relationship to themselves and to reality" (p. 51). Ardagh found that his interviewees, whom he calls translucents, take today's global predicament very seriously and do everything possible to make a difference. His findings indicate that the degree of an individual's spiritual development, not devotion to any particular religious teaching or practices though the latter may facilitate their spiritual development, was directly related to his or

her clarity about the needs of humanity and his or her commitment to fulfill those needs in every way possible. Yet, once again, how does a shift consciousness happen?

In order to deepen the understanding of the tri-fold relationship between a person's spiritual development, fundamental transformation of the way she understands the world, and her engagement in social justice actions, I turn now to the literature of transformative learning. Coming from the tradition of adult education, which considers "helping learners become more critically reflective of the assumptions they and others hold" (Brookfield, 2000, p. 25) and therefore become more able to challenge hegemony as its fundamental mission, transformative learning is an academic field that addresses how adults change their fundamental way of understanding themselves and the world. The following review will start with an overview and will pay special attention to the role of spirituality as well as the relationship with social engagement.

Transformative Learning: Shifting One's Consciousness

Transformative learning theory was originally developed in the1970s by Jack Mezirow, an adult education specialist and former chair of the Department of Higher and Adult Education at Teachers College Columbia University. Based on his research on adult women community college students (Mezirow, 1991, 2000), and drawing on the work of Thomas Kuhn's paradigms, Paulo Freire's conscientization and Jügen Habermas's domains of learning, Mezirow offered an explanation on how adults change their perspectives. Over the years, the theory has been refined, and expanded by Mezirow himself as well as by many other scholars, many of whom are in adult and the higher education field (see, for example, Mezirow & Associates, 2000; O'Sullivan, Morrell, & O'Connor, 2002; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2003; Cranton, 2006; Taylor, 2008). In 2013, Taylor and Cranton reported that the "publications that included transformative learning have

doubled every five years over the last fifteen years" (p. 33). Some even argue that by the mid-1990s "transformative learning had replaced andragogy as the primary theory of adult learning" (Hanson, 1996 cited in Schugurensky, 2002 as the latter's support for his argument).

In his 2008 article in *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, Taylor gives an overview of the schools of thought within the field of transformative learning. In this article, Taylor names eight schools: psychocritical, psychoanalytic, psychodevelopmental, social-emancipatory, neurobiological, cultural-spiritual, race-centric, and planetary.

The psychocritical view is the most direct descendant of Mezirow's original theory. According to this view, adults change the way they make meaning of their lived world through cognitive process triggered by a disorienting life event. Such experience followed by critical reflection on previously held assumptions leads to exploration and eventual adaptation of a more fully developed (more functional) frame of reference, one that is more "(a) inclusive, (b) differentiating, (c) permeable, (d) critically reflective, and (e) integrative of experience" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 7). This school of thought has been under much constructive criticism and many other views on transformative learning emerged in response to the psychocritical view.

The psychoanalytic view, which is rooted in Jungian psychology, sees transformative learning as a process of individuation, or a life journey of "becoming who we truly are," by learning "one is apart from yet intimately interconnected with the collective in which one's life is embedded" (Kovan & Dirkx, 2003, p. 103). It differentiates itself from the psychocritical view in that the undertaking of such a journey involves bringing out one's deep psychic structure into awareness that is beyond purely cognitive process.

In contrast to the psychocritical view, which sees transformative learning as a process either with a series of cumulative events or an acute personal or social crisis, the

psychodevelopmental school of transformative learning considers learning as a developmental process of epistemological change over a lifespan. Further, unlike the psychocritical approach, this approach, which Daloz and his colleagues' (e.g., Daloz, Keen, Keen, & Parks, 1996) and Kegan's (1994) works represent, considers the role of relationships, personal contextual influences, and holistic ways of knowing.

The above three approaches all focus on individual transformation with little attention to the role of context and social change. The fourth approach, the social-emancipatory view, is derived from Paulo Freire's earlier work and focuses on personal awareness-raising about social structure as well as about themselves as agents capable of bringing social transformation. "Its goal is social transformation by demythicizing reality where oppressed develop a critical consciousness" (Taylor, 2008, p. 8).

The fifth approach, a neurobiological perspective on transformative learning, is a "'brain-based' theory discovered by clinicians using medical imaging technology to study brain functions of patients who were recovering from psychological trauma" (Taylor, 2008, p. 8). The researchers (e.g., Janik in Taylor, 2008) found that during the learning process the actual brain structure changes. This approach added a physical dimension to the theory of transformative learning.

The sixth and a cultural-spiritual approach "focuses on how learners construct knowledge (narrative) as part of the transformative learning experience" (Taylor, 2008, p. 8). The distinct characteristic of this approach is its grounding in cultural and spiritual relevance. As exemplified by Tisdell and her colleagues' work (Tisdell & Tolliver, 2003), it also encompasses alternative ways of knowing such as learning through image, symbol, metaphor, and music.

Related to the cultural-spiritual approach, yet more specifically focused on the learning and transformation of people of color is a race-centric view of transformative learning. It sprang from the criticism of the mainstream transformative learning theories as being euro-centric and not acknowledging cultural and traditional learning and transformative practices of people of non-European descent. It is concerned about inclusion (giving voice to the historically silenced), empowerment (not self-actualization but belongingness and equity as a cultural member), and negotiating across cultures all in the political framework (Taylor, 2008).

Finally, a planetary view of transformative learning recognizes the interconnectedness of the whole that constitutes the universe, natural environment, human existence, and an individual's inner (spiritual) and outer worlds. It aims at transformation of not only individuals but of humans' relationship with their physical world (O'Sullivan, 1999).

All eight schools of transformative theories attempt to explain how adults learn and how their learning results in fundamental change of their worldviews and of the views about themselves. Within and among these schools of thought, some of the major disagreements exist around the following issues.

The first disagreement is on whether the learning that facilitates transformation has to be a cognitive-reflective process, or alternative ways of knowing are recognized. The alternatives include relational, contextual, and holistic ways of learning (Taylor, 2008). The role of spirituality in transformative learning falls under the latter group of thinking. The second disagreement is about social change. On one hand, Mezirow's original theory viewed the individual's transformation as the goal of learning and assumed people's action for social change to follow. On the other hand, others view social change as an explicit goal of transformative

learning. The third point is whether to consider culturally relevant and spiritually grounded story telling at the individual and societal level as a form of transformative learning.

According to Taylor and Cranton (2013), on the commonality among theories, most of the transformative learning theories assume (a) the U.S. American model can be applicable in any adult learning settings, (b) the research on students in higher education can be considered as foundation of the theories, and (c) the outcome of transformative learning is almost always positive.

Needless to say, there are many more topics that make one thread of transformative learning theory uniquely different from others. Also there are exceptions to the commonalities that I have summarized here. However, with some shared core elements and much diversity, the theories of transformative learning cover a fairly broad base concerning how people learn and change.

Role of spirituality.

Among eight schools of transformative learning theories, the role of spirituality is considered in psychoanalytic, psychodevelopmental, cultural-spiritual, race-centric, and planetary schools. One of the academicians who has been researching and writing on the topic of spirituality both within the framework of transformative learning and in the broader context of adult education in general is Elizabeth Tisdell, a professor in higher education at Penn State University (Tisdell, 2000, 2008; Tisdell & Tolliver, 2003; English & Tisdell, 2010). In their 2003 article, Tisdell and her co-author Derise E. Tolliver, drawing from the works of various other scholars such as English and Gillen, hooks, Lerner, Bella, Fowler, Palmer, and others, summarize seven central components of spirituality:

1. "Spirituality is related to a connection to what many refer to as the life force, God, Creator, a higher self or purpose, Great Mystery, or Buddha nature."
2. "It is different from but, for many people, related to religion."
3. "Spirituality is a sense of wholeness, healing, and the interconnectedness of all things."
4. "It is about meaning making."
5. "Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes."
6. "[Spiritual experiences] generally happen by surprise."
7. "[Spirituality] is about the ongoing development of identity, of moving toward… greater authenticity" (p. 374).

Tisdell further distinguishes between spirituality and religion in her 2008 article, saying that "spirituality is about an *individual*'s personal experience with the sacred…Religion, on the other hand, is about an *organized community of faith*, with an official creed, and codes of regulatory behavior" (p. 28, emphasis original). Spirituality is "more about personal belief and experience of a higher power or higher purpose" (Tisdell, 2000, p. 309). In relation to engagement in social change, in her study on women adult educators, Tisdell (2000) reports that "most participants also experienced it in the interconnectedness of all things" and that "many of the participants discussed the fact that the more one has a sense of spirituality as connection, the more one's behavior is affected" (p. 320).

Along these same lines, a professor in holistic and contemplative education, John P. Miller (2002), describes the characteristics of learning from a spiritual perspective as "compassionate knowing which arises from the recognition that we are part of an interconnected universe…we see that we are part of everything and that everything is part of us" (p. 99). He

argues that spiritual learning is "transformative in that it allows us to see the world anew. We begin to see the interconnectedness of life at every level of the cosmos. This leads to natural compassion" (p. 100). The vision of transformative learning that O'Sullivan et al. (2002) advocate addresses the same in the following four themes: the transformative education that facilitates learners to (a) expand their "horizon of consciousness to the universe itself" (p. 7), (b) raise consciousness "both within us and at the same time all around us in the world" (p. 8), (c) value quality of life, such as sense of community and diversity, over material fulfillment, and finally (d) respect the sense of the sacred. O'Sullivan asserts that such transformation of consciousness both within individuals and at the societal-cultural level are necessary to "challenge the hegemonic culture of the market vision" that is the driving force of globalization.

Summary of Literature Review and the Gap in the Literature

In this chapter, in search of an academic home for my research, I reviewed three scholarly fields: global studies, engaged spirituality, and transformative learning. Through the process, I found it peculiar that little has been researched and written in academia on the topic of the shift of consciousness and global justice actions. It is especially so when the shift of consciousness has been discussed in popular writings since the early 1990s, if not earlier; Joanna Macy's original writing on the shift (see Macy, 2007), as well as the special issues of *ReVision* on engaged spirituality (see Rothberg, 1993) were both published in 1993. Equally peculiar is that the way to understand globalization from the sense of a non-separate interconnected all—including nation-states, global governing organizations, transnational corporations, global citizens of the North and the South, and the natural environment— appear totally absent in the global studies literature. By answering my research question —*How do people who have experienced non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions describe today's economic*

globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions?— I intend to close these gaps in the academic literature. As much as the mainstream economic theories from rational and scientific consciousness structures have shaped policies of globalization, if humanity is to choose an alternative course, theories from higher consciousness structures are urgently needed not only in citizens' movements but also in academia.

Chapter Three: Methods

General Research Design and Methods

In order to find answers to my research question, I chose open-ended qualitative research for my methodology. By definition, qualitative research is interactive and humanistic, and allows active involvement of participants. Instead of testing pre-determined hypotheses by following strict procedures, qualitative research allows a general pattern of understanding of a phenomenon to emerge through the research process (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research is context specific; therefore, the findings may not be generalized. However, such a methodology enables a researcher to gain a rich and holistic understanding of the phenomena in context. These characteristics of qualitative research are quite suitable for my research that aims to comprehend individuals' understanding of economic globalization in relation to their actions toward global justice.

For my data collection method, I chose open-ended interviews (please see Appendix D: Interview Protocol). The data I collected reached beyond facts and stories, and provided rich descriptions of non-dual worldviews often considered ineffable. Although semi-structured interviews allow for follow-up probes to clarify and deepen the understanding of the participants' narratives, I needed more spontaneous and situation-specific exchanges—much like dialogue (Jaworski, 2012) — in order for me to achieve shared understanding with the participants. Also, because many of my expected participants were somewhat public figures and their publications and videos are widely available, I planned to incorporate relevant information from their books, public lectures, and websites into the questions to ask about specific events. In practice, such opportunities emerged only a few times. However, having that option was very helpful. This was another element of data collection possible only with open-ended interviews.

Participant Recruitment and Selection Criteria

I used a purposeful sampling and snowball technique to identify and secure qualified participants for my study. Initially, I foresaw four possible pools of people to whom I extended invitations: (a) Way of Nature past participants, (b) The Pachamama Alliance community, (c) personal referrals, and (d) subscribers to World Social Forum-discuss mailing list.

The Way of Nature (WoN) is a wilderness-based spiritual practice program developed and led by John P. Milton, an ecologist (Sacred Passage & The Way of Nature Fellowship). I believed past participants of this program to be suitable as potential participants for two reasons. First, Milton's teaching is fundamentally non-dual drawn from "the world's most profoundly enlightening, earth-connected traditions" (Milton, 2006) that include Buddhism, Taoism, Dzogchen, Tantra, Vedanta, and Native American teachings. Further, Milton's teachings suggest that engaging in social justice actions is a natural progression of one's spiritual and consciousness development (Milton, 2006). This led me to believe that I stood a good chance of finding individuals who had experienced non-duality and were engaged in social justice action in this group. Second, because many past participants of WoN programs are not typical activists, but occupy positions of influence at the global level, I expected that their actions might exemplify more effective, yet alternative, approaches toward global justice than those I have witnessed in the past. For instance, one of Milton's senior students is Darcy Winslow, who led Nike's policy change toward sustainable practice when ecological sustainability was not yet a recognized value even for a marketing purpose.

From my dualistic worldview of global justice, I would not have considered a Nike executive likely to genuinely act for global justice. However, it appeared my assumption might have been not only inaccurate, but also prejudiced; her actions seemed to have brought concrete

results, such as introducing the concept of environmental sustainability to the corporate culture though the impact may be limited, which would have been unlikely to be achieved by street protests (Debold, 2005). Among other past participants, whom John Milton considers as his "associates for global transformation" (J. P. Milton, personal communication, n.d., 2012), are internationally recognized management scholar Peter Senge, leadership expert Joseph Jaworski, and former dean of the Economics Department at Stanford University, Brian Arthur. While it may appear difficult to access this group of people, fortunately, as one of Milton's students myself, I had obtained Milton's support to be connected to this group. This eased the accessibility issue.

The second group, The Pachamama Alliance community, is a group of people who are associated with the global movement that aims to "bring forth a socially just, environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilled human presence on this planet" (The Pachamama Alliance, 2013). The Pachamama Alliance was co-founded by Lynn Twist, who was a fundraiser for prominent non-governmental organizations when a series of transformative experiences led her to start the Alliance. Lynn Twist is one of the *Translucents* whom Arjuna Ardagh interviewed for his book, which I reviewed in Chapter 2. Although the Pachamama materials do not explicitly name its underlying structure of consciousness, in my view, their non-adversary, unity-oriented approaches to global social change exhibit some distinct non-dual characteristics. The community consists of "ordinary" citizens and some local activists. I am a volunteer with Pachamama's educational program, Awakening the Dreamer, and have a good rapport with their international alliance program director, Jon Symes, whom I considered the gatekeeper to this community for the purpose of my research.

When I talked about my topic with my associates, certain names were repeatedly mentioned as being people I should contact as possible participants. A spiritual activist and former Washington office director of Amnesty International as well as CEO of the Seva Foundation, James O'Dea was one of them. David Loy, the author of *Nonduality: A Study in Comparative Philosophy* (1988), which I reviewed in Chapter 2, and *The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory* is another. From my description of my study, my associates believed those people would offer important insights on my question and have offered to make personal introductions. This is the third group of potential participants whom I called the personal reference group.

The fourth and last group was the subscribers of the World Social Forum-discuss mailing list, which is "an open and unmoderated forum for the exchange of information and views on the experience, practice, and theory of the World Social Forum at any level (local, national, regional, and global) and on related social and political movements and issues" (J. Sen, n.d., postscript, World Social Forum-discuss). It is hosted by a global justice activist and author of multiple books on the World Social Forum, Jai Sen, who is based in India. The strength of this forum was its inclusion of people of the Global South and a direct connection with conventional global justice activists. It was unknown how many, if any, of the subscribers would have experienced non-dual consciousness or might be willing to participate in my study. Unlike the first three groups to which I had access through personal connection, my only entry point to this group was being one of the readers of the forum.

At the dissertation proposal stage, I planned to identify 12 to 15 participants for my research from among these four pools of potential participants. The basic selection criteria included

Those individuals who self-report that they

- have experienced non-dual consciousness AND
- are actively involved in global justice actions as defined as "any committed efforts to address global scale economic injustice"
- at least 21 years of age

Originally I anticipated recruitment steps as follows:

1. Initial contact.

For WoN, Pachamama, and personal reference groups, the initial contact was through the gatekeepers— John P. Milton, Jon Symes, and personal associates respectively. For the Way of Nature and personal reference groups, I contacted potential participants directly with invitation letters using the contact information provided by the gatekeepers (see Appendix A: Sample Invitation Letter). For the Pachamama community, I first consulted with Jon Symes on how best to contact potential participants in his organization. I envisioned the ensuing process to be similar to the first two groups. As I mentioned earlier, the initial contact with potential World Social Forum-discuss subscribers was impersonal, that is, an invitation announcement posted on the mailing list (see Appendix B: Sample Announcement).

2. Self-screening by potential participants.

In the invitation letter and announcement, I explained the purpose of my study, provided a summary of the process, and clarified the selection criteria. Then I asked the potential participants to indicate if they met the criteria and were interested in collaborating. By asking them to respond to the invitation, I thought I was offering an opportunity for potential participants to self-screen their qualifications and confirm their interest in and willingness to participate in the research.

3. Pre-screening through a baseline survey via e-mail.

In this step, I planned to ask potential participants to briefly describe their (a) experience of non-dual consciousness, and (b) global justice actions (see Appendix C: Baseline Survey). Through this process I hoped to screen out those who understand non-dual consciousness and global justice actions in drastically different ways from my intention for this research. For instance, if global justice actions had nothing to do with constructing a just economic system, but were meant strictly to conserve endangered animals, or if it meant to minister a certain religious worldview, I would have declined their offers to participate. On the other hand, if their global justice action promoted Genetically Modified Organisms in order to feed the world—or any other strategies I did not personally agree with, as long as there was a reason to believe their activities were for global justice coming from non-dual consciousness, I would have included them as participants.

4. Notification of selection and setting up interview appointments.

5. Snowballing.

At the end of the interview, I asked the participants if they could recommend someone who might have insights on my topic.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the interview, in accordance with Fielding Graduate University research procedure, I had each participant sign informed consent forms or give verbal consent over the phone or Skype. When it was logistically feasible, I conducted interviews face-to-face in participants' natural environments, such as in their locations of global justice actions, offices, or homes. When it was not viable to meet face-to-face, I used voice-to-voice technology such as telephone and Skype. Each interview was audio recorded with multiple devices.

Data Analysis

This research was not conducted within a certain theoretical framework or within any constraint of particular epistemological tradition. In a way, this study had an element of grounded theory since it was exploring new ways to understand the phenomena of globalization and global justice actions. However, because it was not immediately directed toward theory development, it did not follow fully worked-up grounded theory analysis. Thematic analysis is a less complex "method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" than grounded theory, which allows researchers to "organize[s] and describe[s] [your] date set in (rich detail)" (parentheses original, Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). It is a data analysis method that is "poorly demarcated, rarely-acknowledged, yet widely-used qualitative analytic method within and beyond psychology" (p. 4). Psychologists Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006) list the following 10 advantages of this method:

- Flexible
- Relatively easy and quick method to learn and do
- Accessible to researchers with little or no experience of qualitative research
- Results are generally accessible to educated general public
- Useful method for working with participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators
- Can usefully summarize key features of a large body of data, and/or offer a "thick description" of the data set
- Can highlight similarities and differences across the data set
- Can generate unanticipated insights
- Allows for social as well as psychological interpretation of data

- Can be useful for producing qualitative analyses suited to informing policy development (taken from Table 3 on p. 37)

The authors warn that thematic analysis can be "anything goes" when conducted poorly. However, the guidelines suggested to avoid such pitfalls seem manageable to follow. Therefore I concluded that the advantages of applying this method to my research outweigh the risk. I conducted all data analysis without hiring a transcriber or using computer-based data-analysis tools.

Credibility Issues

In order to increase the validity of my data and the credibility of my results, I employed three commonly used strategies:

- Self-reflexivity
- Rich, thick descriptions
- Member check

I kept a research journal (field notes) during the data collection and analysis phases to reflect on my own bias and assumptions. It proved to be important, especially because I knew some participants through settings outside of this research and this proximity and familiarity could have colored my interpretation and analysis of the data. In presenting the data, I used rich, thick descriptions in order to convey the findings more in the manner of "sharing the experiences" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196) with the readers. Finally, I used the member check strategy —"taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants" (Creswell, 2003, p. 196) – – to verify the accuracy of the information and interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Marshall and Rossman (2011) state that, "ethical research practice is grounded in the moral principles of *respect for persons, beneficence,* and *justice*" (p. 47). The bottom line of respecting the participants entails "not use[ing] the people who participate in our studies as a means to and end (often our own)" (p. 47). For that, guaranteeing the anonymity of the participants is a standard practice in academic research.

Given the public nature of some of the potential participants in this study, I had given much thought on the appropriateness of anonymity as a way to respect the participants. Because some participants have written and spoken in public about their experiences, it initially appeared disrespectful to make them anonymous. In addition, for those readers who are familiar with the topic, it might be relatively easy to re-identify the participants even when pseudonyms are assigned. Furthermore, altering some identifiable facts, such as participants' affiliation and type of global justice work, for the purpose of protecting their identity, may misrepresent the impact of their work.

Initially, I considered giving participants the choice whether or not to be anonymous. It appeared to me that giving participants themselves a choice would give me a chance to publically acknowledge the participants' work if they choose to disclose their identities. It seemed that might be an appropriate way not to treat the participants as mere data providers. Additionally, I would be spared from the responsibility of who should be considered a public figure. After consulting with the core committee, however, I concluded to follow the standard practice of anonymity. It was because giving participants a choice might (a) compromise consistency in the way I would work with participants' lived experiences, (b) affect the degree of participants' disclosure—when a participant chooses to keep her identity, she is likely to share

only the stories she would like to spread, and (c) give unintentional privilege to the experiences of some participants over those of others.

In summary, I concluded the open-ended interviews with participants who self-reported (a) one or more experience of non-duality and (b) engagement in global justice actions. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed by myself. The data were analyzed using open-coded thematic analysis. In the next chapter, I will report the findings.

Pilot Study

By initial design, the pilot study consisted of the first three interviews. After some difficulties recruiting the participants (more on this later in the "modification to the research design" section) I interviewed three male participants aged from mid-30s to 60s. The interviews were recorded and the data were analyzed with the thematic analysis technique as planned. The analysis generated eight themes and nine subthemes, which fell under three topics: (a) non-dual consciousness experience, (b) global inequality, and (c) non-dual global justice actions. The pilot study generated rich findings confirming that my original design with some modification would allow me to answer the research question.

Modification to the Original Research Design

Based on my learning through the pilot study, I made modifications to the original research design in three areas: recruitment strategy, pre-screening, and the number of participants.

After conscientiously trying for 2 months, I was unable to secure a single participant with the initial recruitment strategy. It seemed that the official recruitment letter and announcement were too conceptual and uninviting. In order to clear this hurdle, I decided to forgo the official invitation letter (Appendix A) and started to have a brief phone conversation, or a casual e-mail exchange, to establish the contact (see an example in Appendix E). This also gave me an

opportunity to answer any questions the potential participants had and to establish a rapport from the first contact. With that change, in most cases I could set up the interview dates at the end of the initial contact.

During the first 2 months when I could not identify any participants, there were three cases where potential participants initially agreed to participate and then declined. In all three cases cancellation was followed by my request to fill out the base-line survey. Although the survey was designed to require 5 to 10 minutes, it was apparently too much of an inconvenience or possibly threatening. To avoid similar occurrence, I stopped using the baseline survey. In addition to gathering the demographic information, the baseline survey was to serve the pre-screening purpose. Because I had to discard the pre-screening process, I made the judgment on participants' qualification either in the initial conversation or, after the interview.

As indicated earlier, I initially intended to interview 12 to 15 participants. After the pilot study, it was clear that eight to ten interviews would provide me enough information. Therefore the number of participants was re-determined as eight to ten.

The Participants

Number, gender, age, current location, geographical origin, and global experience.

Using the revised recruitment strategy outlined above, I identified and interviewed ten participants. As I was transcribing the interviews, it became apparent that two out of the ten interviewees were disqualified based on the selection criteria I had set forth: self-reporting experience of non-duality and engagement in global justice actions. The description one of the two gave regarding her non-dual experience did not meet the required criteria. The other was unable to identify his global justice action. Consequently, my final number of participants for this research is eight: two females and six males. The age-range of the participants is 32 to

75: two in their 30s, two in their 50s, three in their 60s, and one in his/her 70s. All of the participants are currently based within the North American continent, though two are originally from Europe. At least five out of eight participants have extensive international living and working experiences.

Current profession and activist career.

Two of the participants currently work for non-governmental organizations, two are independent entrepreneurs, two are spiritual teachers, one is a consultant, and two are authors. The numbers do not add up to eight because some named more than one profession as summarized in Table 1 below. Five have published books, and seven either currently hold, or have in the past held, top leadership positions in organizations. Length in the current profession is between one year and over 50 years. Five consider themselves life-long activists, while the rest came to justice actions later in their lives.

Spiritual practices.

The participants identified their spiritual practices as follows: meditation; American Buddhist; eclectic with inspiration from Sufism, Hinduism, and other world spiritual traditions; Source awareness; Mahayana Buddhism; Zen Buddhism; Taoism; Dzogchen; Vedanta; non-dualism; nature-based spirituality; "don't know what to call it"; "yes, but no label"; and "all/none." Some mentioned single practice, while others mentioned a few.

Participants' demographic information summary.

The following table summarizes the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1

Summary of Key Demographic Information

Initial	Age	Gender	Current Profession	Lifetime Activist?	Spiritual Practices	Global Experience
S	50s	M	Int'l NGO	no	"Yes, but no label"	extensive living, working
K	30s	M	Int'l NGO	yes	Meditation, American Buddhism	unknown
B	60s	M	Entrepreneur	yes	Source Awareness	unknown
M	60s	M	Author, Teacher	yes	"eclectic with inspiration from Sufism, Meher Baba, Hinduism"	extensive living, working
J	60s	F	Leadership Consultant	no	"Don't know what to call it. Non-dual? Vedanta?"	extensive living, working
O	70s	M	Spiritual Teacher	yes	Nature, Taoism, Zen, Dzogchen	extensive working
P	50s	M	Entrepreneur	no	"All/None"	extensive on business and pleasure in the past
R	30s	F	Novelist, Writer, Organizer	unknown	Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism	unknown

Note. Lifetime activist identification and global experience are inferred from the content of the interviews.

Out of the above eight participants, two came from the Way of Nature community, three from Pachamama community, zero from World Social Forum, and four from personal contacts. These numbers do not add up to eight because one of them belongs to more than one category. The interviews, which lasted anywhere between approximately an hour to 3 hours, were extraordinarily moving experiences as if I was in private teaching sessions with wise sages. I was pleased that many commented that participating in the interview served them by providing an opportunity to reflect deeply on their global justice actions and to articulate their deeply held

assumption clearly in words. In the next chapter, I will present the findings from the stories that the participants generously shared.

Chapter Four: Findings

To find some answers to my research question, "How do people who have experienced non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions describe today's economic globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions?," I conducted open-ended interviews and analyzed the data using a thematic analysis method as described in the previous chapter. In this chapter, I will first present each participant in his or her context. Then, I will introduce the themes that emerged through the data analysis. The themes and subthemes are supported by verbatim quotes.

The Participants in Context

This section contains highlights of each interview in order to illustrate the richness of participants' experiences that gave rise to their worldviews as well as global justice actions. There is some repetition between these highlights and the quotes that support the themes in a later section. However, because presenting the participants in context allows a fuller understanding of the themes than otherwise, I am letting some overlap exist. Furthermore, these accounts include some relevant information that cannot be aggregated in a theme format. The interview questions were not designed to discover participants' trajectory of their spiritual and/or activist development. However, as evident in the following, many accounts included life journeys that have been taken by the participants.

In many dissertations, researchers use pseudonyms to protect participants' privacy. With all the respect to the research protocol and intention not to do harm to my participants, I still could not justify assigning pseudonyms. My discomfort might have arisen from my particular cultural sensitivity and may not be understandable for some readers. However, to me, each of their life experiences and stories were too valuable to be given fictitious names. In the same way

that few would consider giving a pseudonym like "Rajeev" to conceal the identity of Mahatma Gandhi, no pseudonym felt appropriate to any of my participants. After considering other options--such as assigning numbers (Participant #1), or calling them with characteristic descriptors ("Mr. Magic") —I chose to refer each participant by an "initial" that has some association with the respective participant. The initials are accompanied by the dates of the interviews.

December 24, 2013: S, a holder of magical space.

After a long period of non-response and a few cancellations by other potential participants, my first interview was with a global outreach director at an international non-governmental organization that strives to promote environmental and social justice. S is also a highly skilled facilitator who lovingly holds the space for others' transformation, which I experienced 10 months prior to the interview.

Previously, S ran a successful business consultancy firm. During that time, he gradually realized "all I was doing was actually all in the wheel of the corporate machine." With that realization he closed the firm, spent 2 years asking himself, "What am I supposed to do?," held discussion groups on current affairs at home (where he realized how separation penetrates among people even when they are discussing a common solution for all), wrote a book on what individuals can do to "create the world that we want," came to wish to contribute to the awakening process that was happening all around the world, and discerned that he could use his talent by accepting the position which he currently holds.

S shared with me a number of non-dual experiences from seeing a cornfield in very ordinary soup at a dinner table, to sensing what a driver in the car next to his on a highway was feeling, to receiving messages from a star-filled sky in the Amazon forest.

S saw the value of participating in my research in a way I had not anticipated. “This conversation helped me to the points of it and revealed to some of the places that I’m a little bit fluent in that and some others I am not so. So it’s been a gorgeous conversation, Megumi,” and wrote about his experience with my interview on his blog, which led me to another participant.

January 16, 2014: K, a revolutionary turned social healer.

“Having non-dual consciousness, or experiencing the interconnectedness of all things is something that I wish I [could] work based on all the time. So something I aspire to and occasionally I can be with, be in direct experience.” My second participant, who is a manager of an on-line global educational program at an international non-governmental organization, started answering my questions with the preceding words. K’s thoughtful and careful manner and effort to be absolutely authentic in every word was prevalent all through the interview. K associates state of non-duality with “being really, really present.”

Although K is the second youngest among my participants, he came with a long and rich history of social activism. As a son of an immigrant physician, whose father came from a poor upbringing and supported his extended family in his home country as well as the immediate family in the US, K developed a sense of his own privilege early in his life. “In terms of the kind of access to resources and privileges I have, I am globally a part of 1%...It’s kind of just amazing that I happen to be born into this particular seat.” He wished to contribute in creating a level playing field for all. Even as recently as 11 years ago, when K joined a domestic civil rights organization, he used to say, “the world is broken and I am looking for the revolution.” He was drawn to that particular organization because of the level of “political sophistication and understanding why the world is the way it is, why it’s broken the way it is broken, and how to

make change in the world." On his first day there, however, a senior staff person reminded him that it is not the time for a revolution.

K's shift as an activist started about 7 years ago. Triggered by his participation in a program which is closely related to the educational program he currently manages, with his spiritual search and personal work over the years, and having "enough answers to answer the question 'why does society seem broken?'," he has shifted from a revolution seeker to a "healer in the service of society." His experience of non-duality happened around the same time he was going through this shift, and his current work environment fosters his sense of deep connection to something bigger than himself on a daily basis.

March 22, 2014: B, a naturalist and social entrepreneur.

My third participant described his most memorable non-dual experience in vivid detail. B was on a solo retreat in the wilderness. Sitting on the side of a beautiful cliff in a contemplative state of mind, with his eyes open, the cliff started to grow taller. Eventually, he observed his mind resisting the experience of non-dual existence as if his personality structure (the ego) was resisting letting go of its individuated identity. He had to consciously reassure himself (his ego) that he was not "killing his separate self identity." It was at that moment he had the sensation of a profound letting go, directly into the non-dual state of being.

B's non-dual experiences were accompanied by his intellectual pursuit and understanding of the nature of all things. He stated that his cognitive understanding of interconnection of the whole preceded his "cellular level" experiences of "dissolving into vast spaciousness."

When asked how B engages in the more mundane everyday world with his Source awareness, he laughed and said, "I would say 'with great effort'" and added, "I engage samsaric, dualistic experience too often with the degree of effort that I recognize paradoxically is really not

necessary." He sees the current state of the world as "perfectly hopeless and hopelessly perfect simultaneously."

As a lifetime activist and social entrepreneur in his 60s, B has been involved in many start-up social and environmental justice initiatives as well as youth programs, many of which incorporate experiential time in nature. B has done so because he believes that "people who have the vision of what's possible come into the world with an obligation" to "show up and contribute to the best of our ability to solutions." His words of wisdom in addressing the issue of global justice is "the more relaxed we are, and the less serious we take ourselves, and the less attached to the way things are in this moment, I think we have a much better capacity to deal with this issue you are wanting to address because resistance to the status quo of society only produces more resistance. Transformation arises from bringing forth more attractive and compelling alternatives to the current norms."

March 27, 2014: O, an experienced conscious activist and mystic.

"Had I not been involved as an activist, I would have stayed more dualistic." A lifetime activist and former director/president of a few globally renowned non-governmental organizations looked back on his evolution as a conscious activist. "I experienced moving up that scale toward the greater sense of connection." As he used the voice and moral compass in a quest for justice, he moved through "various levels of 'we are connected: we are one.'"

O's social justice pursuits and focus began when he was a teenager in London. He deeply resonated with the plight of the senior citizens for whom the government neglected to provide proper care. O's compassion for individuals in vulnerable places in society deepened as he "lived through the war in Beirut and the massacre of civilians there." Then he came to a leadership position at an organization in Washington, DC that operated on the universal principle

of fundamental human rights. Over the 10 years he served as the director, O noticed that the better the organization became at changing the laws, the better the governments became at breaking the laws. That was when he realized the limitation of the legal approach to social change.

With that realization, he moved on to hosting social healing dialogues. O explained his view of dialogue in the following way: "*Dia* which means *though*, *logos* [means] *ground of meaning*. So [combined 'dialogue' means] *let us go together through the ground of meaning to a place where we can meet more deeply*." In dialogues—where people who have been divided bitterly, such as a holocaust survivor and a former Nazi, started to tell subjective truth of what happened to them authentically— he witnessed "something extraordinarily unifying begins to happen because people begin to experience the other as themselves… [where] we are really ascending in consciousness in the practice of experiencing greater oneness."

O's transformation from one stage of activist to another was accompanied, if not triggered, by his spiritual development that he credited to his encounters with masters of wisdom. "I don't know why it is in my life, but great spiritual beings emerged." He continued, "Along the way, my spiritual teachers helped me develop that inner state of noticing the ego and developing the capacities, human capacity development to be able to release addiction and to practice forgiveness."

All through the interview, O stressed repeatedly that non-duality has to be experienced to be truly understood. "Non-duality is the communion of resonances. You see, when I experience transmission from various spiritual masters, I say to people 'it has *nothing* to do with esoteric knowledge like he taught secret esoteric teachings… But the experience was communion, resonances…. Love."

May 14, 2014: J, a global jetsetter who "jumped the Grand Canyon."

As a leadership consultant, my fifth participant constantly travels around the world. J's clients include high-level managers in the United Nations and affiliated organizations as well as non-governmental and corporate entities. Previously, J also lived and taught for approximately 10 years at universities in Asia. With a background such as this, I was surprised to hear that caring about global justice came to her relatively recently only through a series of spiritual awakenings. Before that, J had been conscientious about her energy consumption level, recycling, and other daily practices at home, and financially supported individuals and organizations that carried out humanitarian projects that she believed in. However, the urge to engage in an act for global justice herself was still as huge a shift as jumping the Grand Canyon.

J described her transformation over time as a process of "opening the heart" that started with studying meditation under a teacher. Since then, she has gone into spiritual retreat regularly and studied written as well as audio teachings of various spiritual teachers. The drive to act for global justice, too, came through working with a spiritual teacher who combines awakening realization with sacred activism.

Because J believes opening her heart was what led her to the life for justice, she considers helping others to open their hearts as her act for justice "because if a heart can open, if paradigm can change, if somebody can have a different state of energy, I think they will act in a different way. And I think they will make different decisions." In the last couple of years, she feels that she found an opening to invite her clients to go through their transformation.

Having the experience of non-duality and "working from full authenticity and integrity" help J be more effective in her work. She can feel in her body when and what needs to be said and when to be quiet, and her clients seem to receive her message more easily. J says, "I think

one of the biggest things is… I'm sure I have a tendency to be like a zealot…like a missionary about things. But when I am in this other state, I'm not. I'm really quite convinced that people can receive it 'cause I'm fun, I'm light, and I'm playful." J is clearly seeing the effect of her work in some of her clients. However, she added, "The bottom line is me. With my heart open, there is no agenda."

May 16, 2014: M, an environmentalist and spiritual teacher.

On the day of the interview, my sixth participant brought a thick book that he had co-authored that was the basis for the international conference on environmental health study in 1972. With this and another book he authored in the 1960s, it is fair to say that M was one of the earliest environmentalists in the US.

M's activism and spiritual practice are integrated and started early. Before he turned 10 years old, he spent extended time alone in nature. By the time he was a teenager, he was helping his friends do the same, about which he jokingly said, "Vision quests in nature was the requirement for them to join my gang organization." Some of the advice he gave to his young friends formed the foundation of his teaching in later days. When the boys saw bulldozers clear their sacred land, they tried to protect it by secretly pulling out the sticks that indicated the next location of a clear cut. With a smirk on his face, M said, "that was the beginning of my activism."

Environmentalism in the early days of the movement was often considered an enemy of economic development. Earlier in his career, M was once sought after by the authorities for openly criticizing a development program in South East Asia from environmental concerns. When he returned to his office in Washington, DC, his position was terminated. He still managed to get the information to the decision makers by "relaxing into fear" and allowing the

events to play out by themselves. Eventually, the development program was stopped at the congressional level.

While M was working in various official capacities, he started to play host to burnt-out environmental activists allowing them to rejuvenate at his farm. In helping them and others to authentically connect with the Source, he incorporated his learning from various ancient spiritual traditions. Eventually M developed wilderness-based spiritual practice programs, which he now teaches worldwide. His students include many global leaders in business and academia as well as activists. In his students, he witnesses drastic transformation once they start to develop their sense of being a part of an interconnected whole. Rather than working on single issues, M considers his work is "a lot about helping the general field and human culture shift." For him, the global economic system is a subset of the greater ecosystem.

June 1, 2014: P, a listener of inner Truth.

"You know, non-dual does not seek justice." When I invited my seventh participant to share anything that came to his mind, P started to point out what could be considered an oxymoron in the way I phrased my inquiry. "Injustice identifies a dual existence; me and me, them and us, known and not-known…the sense of justice as well as the existence of injustice only know it dually… it exists in dual concepts. Non-duality doesn't know justice. It does not know right or wrong… just IS."

As I continued to ask if one should not do anything about what may be harmful to humanity, P proceeded, "There are things that aren't true to us that are in our existence. And that's all we have to work on… everybody has their own truth…we hear it every single moment of our existence. Listen to yourself. Don't participate in the things you hate… You know they

are always right here right now. It's not in New York City or Wall Street. All changes you want and can make [are] right here, right now."

That is exactly how P leads his current life as a handyman for the community though he admits that he still is not perfect (an example he offered was that he drives a truck for his work instead of choosing to ride a horse). From his appearance in dirt-covered boots and jeans, tanned skin from working under the sun, and beaten-up pick-up truck, I would not have imagined that he had been an extremely successful corporate lawyer only 10 years ago. Yet, P's warm but very articulate speech along with the dignified way in which he carries himself allowed me to detect a high level of formal education and groundedness in his own words. After a series of small awakening experiences and realizations that "what I was enjoying and pretending in was not real," he could no longer live a false life. In addition to taking 3 years to dispose of "every single worldly anchor," P had to "literally leap out of my world to find out what it meant to be a real human being." So he went on a 100-day solitude journey in a desert where he experienced the "presence;" where there was no separation between human journey and spiritual journey. This presence has never left ***P*** since.

September 18, 2014: R, a conventional activist in a most unconventional form.

My eighth participant is a young activist who participates in and organizes conventional social change actions such as marches and sit-ins. R's approach to such actions, however, is distinctively different from that of conventional activism (details under Theme 4-d). R shared with me three dramatic experiences of non-dual consciousness that absolutely transformed her lifestyle choices as well as her style of activism.

The first experience was an "enormous sense of interconnected self" with all her surroundings. It came to R about 6 years ago without any forewarning or trigger while she was

riding on a bicycle along the beach. At that point, "I don't know if I [even] knew the phrase non-dual." She simply thought "really cool!" and tried to recreate it with varying degrees of success.

The second experience took place in 2010 around the time R's then partner passed away very suddenly and unexpectedly. The passing of a significant person in her life, as well as "a lot of very strange, out-of-the-ordinary events happening in mystical or synchronistic or spiritual ways," prompted R to begin a quest for the meaning of reality. As R was reading Heart Sutra, "once again, it all fell apart, but this time, it just being connected to all sense of oneness, deep sense of impermanence, and change underneath that the emptiness of all the phenomenon."

With the third incident where R experienced constant dissolving of her identity, her embodied sense of "all is connected" was solidified. With that consciousness, R stopped eating any animal products because she could no longer harm any living beings, chose not to have pets because she could not enslave her equals for human pleasure, and decided to travel as little as possible, especially by air because it is "so consumptive and distractive."

As an activist, R started to feel a great responsibility to bring people together and "inspire myself and my cohorts to be more honest and humble" so that they are less intimidating and more interesting to those who may be called the opposition. To pursue and achieve these goals while avoiding having to travel, one of the platforms R uses for activism is social media. In this context, she says, she learned to show up authentically and truly connect with people she would not have otherwise.

R's embodied knowing that "on a deeper level, it is an interconnected, ever-changing, empty phenomenon" dictates in every way she operates, even when she works through a modality such as Facebook. This transformation began with her experiencing non-dual consciousness.

Thematic Analysis

The previous section captured the essence of each participant's experiences. In contrast, this section presents the themes that run through the group. In order to identify the themes, I conducted an open coding, or naked categorical content analysis, by hand. "Naked categorical content analysis" is a data analysis methodology that starts with no pre-determined codes. By tuning into the frequently used phases, emphasis, and the topics that carry significant meanings, the researcher identifies the themes and subthemes. To me, this process was much like "listening to what's emerging in the middle of the table" (Brown, 2005, p. 124) in the World Cafe conversation where all present "listen for connections and patterns of meaning as well as listen for new insights or deeper questions that emerge *in the space between* different perspectives" (p.128, emphasis original). Although my participants did not engage in a face-to-face conversation with each other, by bracketing the assumptions I had about the participants and their stories, through listening and re-listening to the recorded interviews, and in the process of transcribing and reading the transcription repeatedly; I "listened" to their stories not as individual stories but as a conversation among a group of wise elders. Slowly but clearly, the following themes and subthemes emerged:

Theme 1: Experiencing non-duality

a. Non-duality is an ineffable, embodied, and visceral experience
b. Conceptual understanding alone is not enough
c. Effect of non-dual state

Theme 2: Personal Transformation

a. From non-activist to activist
b. From dualistic to non-dual activist

Theme 3: Understanding economic globalization and inequality

a. Embracing conventional analysis within greater whole of humanity

b. Diseased human body

c. The world is in crisis, and it is "perfect"

Theme 4: Non-dual global justice in action

a. Fostering others' transformation

b. Being an example of what is possible

c. Connecting individual transformation and global change

d. Different type of activism

The above themes, which I will elaborate on with support of verbatim quotes in the following section, do not exist independent from each other. Rather, they are connected with subtle currents of influences. For instance, the experience of non-duality influenced the way they understood the world. Their sense of non-duality had direct and strong influence on their actions. In many cases their experiences of personal transformation were responsible for their choice of global justice actions. As such, the themes and subthemes here are connected with an "undercurrents of influence" as illustrated below.

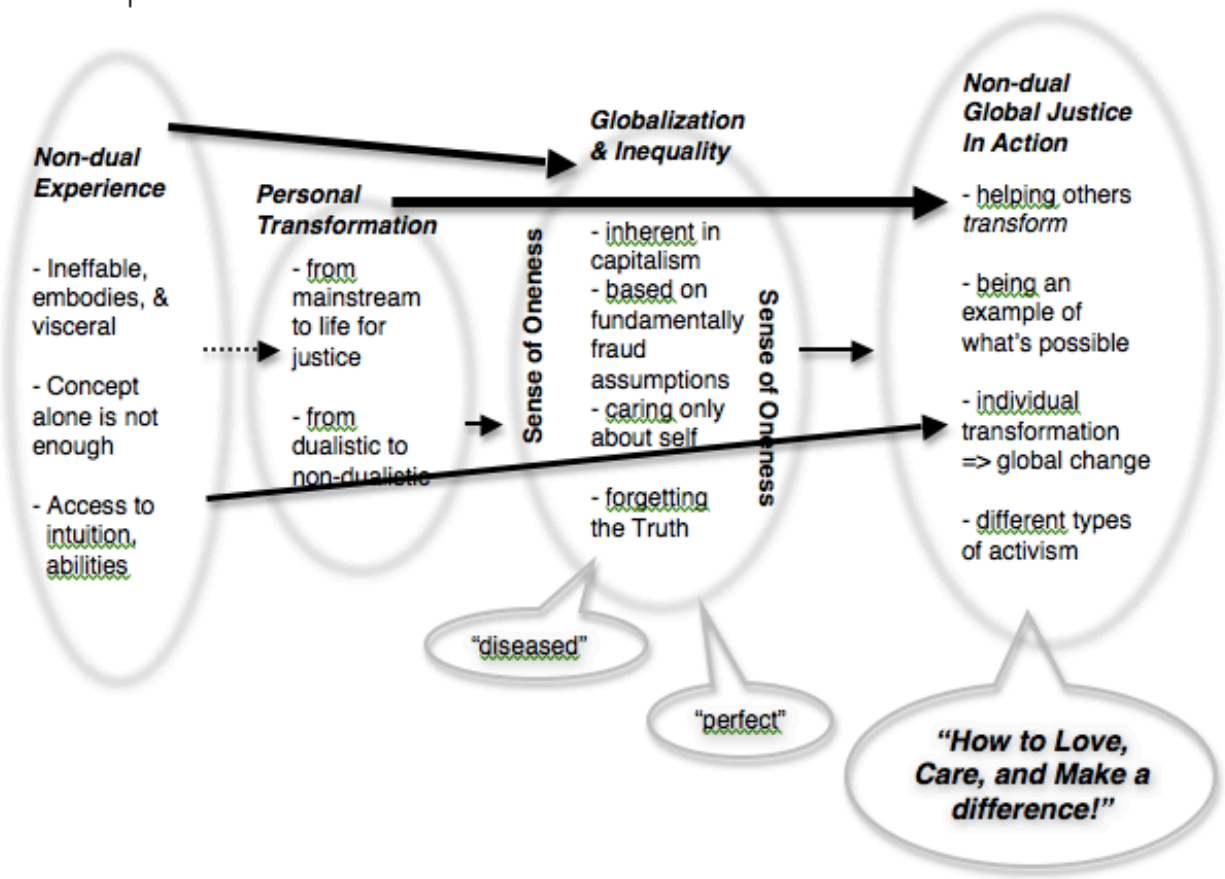

Figure 1. Undercurrent of influence: How themes and subthemes interact.

Bearing this in mind, I now will elaborate on each theme in the following.

Theme 1: Experiencing non-duality.

Using various terms --"connecting with the Source," "opening of heart," "accessing infinite intelligence," "is-ness," "present-ness," " dissolving, " "love," and "no separation"--- each participant vividly talked about his or her experiences of non-duality at length. Some had just one story to share, while others had multiple accounts. Stories were somewhat supernatural and mystical, but moving and awe-inspiring. Some had experienced non-duality while they were in out-of-the-ordinary circumstances such as being at an indigenous ceremony or sitting in the wilderness alone in contemplation. Others were in relatively ordinary settings such as sitting

with a group of people in a workshop, riding on a bus on the way home from work, or resting in their living room after an acquaintance's visit.

a) Non-duality is an ineffable, embodied, visceral experience.

Although the terms participants used to describe their experiences and the settings varied greatly, there were common characteristics in their stories. One was that the sense of non-duality came to them rather abruptly; another was the difficulty in putting their experiences into words. Instead of words, participants often recalled their experiences as physical sensations and visceral knowing. To that, the participants said,

> I don't know how to describe it very well except it was my own awareness…all over a sudden something happened. And I was aware only of "is-ness." It just felt like something just went "qua!" and just collapsed. And there was no separation. There was just "is-ness."…But I *know* the truth of it because I felt that. (J)

> [In addition to the initial non-dual experience] I had several other episodes some of which had the same characteristics, sense of actual bodily feelings.…[that was] infinite intelligence. (S)

> I went there, where Jesus and Buddha went. That was awesome. It's hard to explain in words.…it's everywhere. It's everything, everywhere. There is no person or deity there. There is a presence, permeating everything. (P)

> And I had the sensation in and across all of my own sensory and all my perceptual field of awareness – from sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, balance, energy, thought – all of those perceptual fields of awareness completely … it's difficult to put words to this, although one would say, in my experience, the word I could use would be "dissolved" into vast spaciousness which are in English language called "nothing-ness" or "emptiness," or "vacuum" or "void." (B)

> [The question the group leader posed] somewhat got me feeling *really present*...For some reason I don't remember any details, just experience. And the experience was one of feeling tremendous amount of *love*, love for and *connection* with every individual in the room. (K)

> All of that was a part of me. And I was a part of all of that. There was no separation between the two, it was one big organism really experiencing and breathing together. All together. And there was no conception of… what we might call ego self, my ego self…any more. I was kind of subsumed in this larger…. Just enormous sense of interconnected self. (R)

b) Conceptual understanding alone is not enough.

Some had conceptual understanding of non-duality before they had experiences. Some had deepened the understanding as they had multiple experiences of non-duality. Sometimes, some participants observed in others how their comprehension of non-duality enriched as their conceptual understanding was accompanied by experiential and visceral knowing. Overall, the participants were in agreement that conceptual understanding of non-duality without embodied experience is insufficient:

> When you talk about non-duality, you can hear it talked about at various levels of knowledge. But synchronization between the state of being and the state of knowledge has not occurred. So there is ignorance. (O)

> I have more of the experience in my body than before because of that. And it was *very* strong. And from that place, I really could understand in an embodied way everything that Adya [Adyashanti, a non-dual teacher] was talking about. (J)

> Experience of non-duality to me is a taster rather than conceptualizer. Not that they are separate. Tasting the concepts. It is LOVE. It is not the sentimental love. Non-duality is the communion of resonances. (O)

In relation to action for justice, one participant further stated,

> The ideas and theories are good. Intellectual concepts around whole systems are helpful. But until you have the experience of that, people don't generally take much action or behave as a part of the whole system. To behave as a part of the whole system, you have to have an experience to be a part of the whole system. (M)

c) Effect of non-dual state.

After experiencing the state of non-duality, some started to notice the effect of that state in the ways in which they interact with their surroundings. Not having a sense of separation between self and the environment, some developed a deep sense of non-harming, much like that advocated through Buddhist teaching. Others developed a much deeper sense of connection with

other people. Yet, some others seem to access intelligence or ability that is not available when they are not in that state of consciousness.

> When you are aware that you are connected to all of these things in such a deep way that you cannot be separated from them, a real ethos of non-harming emerges. And non-over consumption and… desire to act with compassion that manifest in becoming a life-supporting organism, part of the organism. Enhancing part of the organism. (R)

> When you really listen, we open our hearts and we suspend the judgment, and we hear the other person talking about their experience, we *participate*, we live their experience with them. So we are connecting "as-as" rather than "yourself and other." And this is... now we are really ascending in consciousness in the practice of experiencing greater oneness. (O)

> When I feel really present, I have access to a kind of intuition that isn't otherwise available to me. And access to a kind of creativity and insight that usually isn't available to me. (K)

> When [those who have gained access to the Source] are dealing with problems or issues, suddenly they begin to see the issue in light of the whole… And they begin to come up with creative ideas about how to resolve conflicts and crises in a way that supports the entire system, not just parts. (M)

> I learned a while ago … *I* cannot do that [holding the space for transformation], I can only do that with the help of the infinite intelligence of the universe.…And that level of transformation is only, for me, only available when I hand over any sense that it's up to me to, that I hand over the whole process to sacred process, that I know the spirit will flow in that process. That's the most beautiful thing. (S)

As is evident in the above quotes, the state of non-duality is deeply rooted in embodied experience and can bring a profound effect to the way participants interact with their surroundings. As I listened more to how my participants came to be the persons they now are – persons who take non-dual global justice actions – unexpectedly, a theme of personal transformation emerged.

Theme 2: Personal transformation.

Although stories about personal transformation were not explicitly sought in my research, because of the frequency with which it was mentioned in the interviews, and because of its

implication for the practice and future research (which I will discuss in Chapter 5), I identified personal transformation as the second theme. For clarification, I use the term *transformation* here to mean a shift in fundamental frame of reference, or worldview, as in transformative learning theories. The Founding Director of the Transformative Learning Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Edmund O'Sullivan, and his colleagues define integrative transformative learning as follows:

> Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feeling, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and permanently alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationship with other humans and with the natural world; our body-awareness; our vision of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of the possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy. (O'Sullivan, Morrell & O'Connor, 2002, pp. xvii, 11)

One by one, participants reported having experienced a deep structural shift of consciousness as it related to their worldview and the way they operate in the world; for some that was the beginning of involvement in global justice, for others it benchmarked evolution as activists.

a) From non-activist to activist.

In the previous chapter, I stated that three participants did not start engaging in global justice actions until later in their lives. For them, there were moments that initiated a transformation from a non-activist to an activist. They were quite dramatic, so much so that one of the participants called it "jumping over the Grand Canyon" and a "Scrooge moment." In her own words,

> Sometimes I feel like Scrooge… you know [in] Christmas Carol, how Scrooge woke up because he was visited by those three ghosts. "If you don't change, you're going to be

> this nasty old man!" and next morning Scrooge goes, "Oh my god! Where is a turkey I can buy??" That's what it feels like… In the story, it was the three ghosts. And for me, I just think it was the heart. When it opens, amazing things happen. (J)

For others, the moment of transformation came gradually, but as forcefully as the first one:

> So I started having these awakenings about that [the gap between a life as a successful corporate lawyer and his human Truth]. And it really came down to "did I want to spend my human journey in all eternity being false?" And I said "NO!" …when you start becoming true to yourselves, we cannot deny what's true to us. It's undeniable. Undeniable means that you cannot truthfully lie to yourself….And so [instead of] justifying or excusing my behavior and denying my inner truth, I decided to listen to my truth and stop justifying and rationalizing. (P)

The discomfort with being a part of a system in which he did not believe was echoed by another participant:

> I wasn't politicized, or sensitized to any of this [social injustice] in the first 40 years of my life. But I just developed increasingly stronger discomfort about the way things were; inequality in the world and unsustainable nature of the world we are creating. And I got really, really uncomfortable …[and] I realized that all I was doing [as a consultant] was actually all in the wheel of the corporate machine. And I couldn't, in any conscience, continue to do that. So I decided that I had to stop doing that. (S)

For the last two participants above, after their realization, it took a few years to determine how they could re-create their lives in alignment with their inner knowing. Their transformation required not only a change of career but also included extensive soul searching, giving up worldly possessions and moving places of residence, among other things.

b) From dualistic to non-dualistic activist.

While life-long activists did not have to go through as dramatic transformation as the participants above, the rest of the participants also described evolution of their frame of references over time. This time, the shift was from dualistic consciousness to non-dual consciousness:

> I have gone from…being ignorant and naïve…about how to understand why things are the way they are and how to make change… I'd say eleven years ago, I had this sense that "the world is broken and I am looking for the revolution." ….. And from there, I think it shifted to … towards non-dual consciousness. … the question that I ask has

> changed from "why does the society seem broken and how do I help fix it?" to being the question of "how can I best serve as a healer?" (K)

The next participant admitted that it was still a challenge to operate from a non-dual state at all times. However, what he strives for has changed over time:

> My short speech back then was "There are lots of troubles. Do something!" That was my analysis, so again I was coming from very dualistic view of the world.… [Now I see] it is an ability to stand for something. (S)

A life-long activist recalled how he has evolved over time:

> [As a teenager] I organized other young people to survey the conditions of senior citizens….very heart-opening cases of people neglected, some very traumatic cases… heart-opening draws you into acting on their behalf. That's a little fragment of non-duality as it says "I feel one with you." …[but] I am still caught in "who is the source of the problem?" and "who can correct it?" ,"who has the power to correct it?" (O)

When a high-ranking government official invited O to have a conversation on the issue, O refused to see him saying, "You know what you have to do. And when you do it, we can meet!" He called his then state of mind, "adolescent consciousness," which he sees in today's international politics. In his mid career, he was serving as a director of an internationally recognized human rights organization:

> The work of [the human rights organization] is so brilliant in supporting universality. It's very high non-dualistic principles. But its response is to work at small level of causality that I would call like a fire brigade or ambulance service. "Stop this!" "Start this!" "Go here!" "Rescue this!" and not deal with the root consciousness of causality in consciousness itself. It's still caught in another level of dualism, much higher up in the chain but as an activism it's still saying, "we have to, of course, protect people and help the refugees and those in prisons. And we must find out violators and prosecute them." If you'd like, it's a *legal* model. (O)

O pointed out that many activists do not go beyond the legal model of consciousness. He credits his own further development to one of the advisers to the organization who pointed out their work "doesn't shift the consciousness to a new possibility." After he left the human rights organization, he started social healing dialogues between parties who were deeply and

historically in conflict where he "had many epiphanies at the activist level of potential of the great oneness to go to another level of consciousness" (O).

What I have observed repeatedly in my participants' stories is the significant role personal transformation played in their worldviews and choices of actions for global justice. More detailed discussion of this transformation is found under Theme 4 "non-global justice in action." Before I go to that theme, however, I will report on another factor that seems to affect my participants' actions. That is the participants' understanding of economic globalization and global inequality.

Theme 3: Understanding economic globalization and inequality.

An unstated assumption that I had behind my research question was that people with non-dual consciousness would present strikingly different analyses of the current state of global affairs than that of conventional academia. The finding disproved my assumption and showed that my participants did not necessarily dismiss conventional understandings of economic globalization and inequality, but embraced it in their understanding of the whole of humanity.

a) Embracing conventional analysis within the greater whole of humanity.

"Koch Brothers" (M). "It's the division between haves and have-nots" (B). "I have some quasi Marxist perspectives on capitalism. Which is to say that I think the exploitation of labor and natural capital, or natural resources, the destruction and exploitation of that. Those two extractions are not built into economy. So that's externalized from economy in the way that the rich get richer, while the poor get poorer"(K). "It's based on assumptions [that] are faulty. First of all, it's based on the market value principle. And it's also based on things like cost-benefit analysis. The cost-benefit analysis almost never includes the value of the broader system… And placing value on everything objectifies the world living system" (R). These are some of the

words I heard from my participants. To my surprise, these analyses of the current state of the world are not so different from the conventional anti-globalization activists' analysis. What seemed different is that these analyses are included in a bigger framework of the whole living system of humanity.

For instance, S expressed his way of holding a conventional view alongside an alternative one:

> It's easy to say what's happening is wrong and even to say there are protagonists. People who make the situation the way it is.… an orthodox way of thinking is "what's causing that?" and "who is to blame?" I can do all that thinking and I've done that... Then there is another thinking available ..which is the way that people view what's happening as an extended community [of humanity] … that shows it is possible for us to live together in ways which are balanced and harmonious and just in spirit of sense of justice …. we are all caught in this expression of separation, individuation. I can actually understand that view as well. (S)

In a similar light, K showed his acceptance of neoliberal arguments for capitalism:

> [The] neoliberal perspective on economy says that capitalism has become just extraordinarily efficient at moving resources in order to meet people's needs. And the economy is basically meeting the needs that people express. So it's impersonal and it's sort of inevitable in the way, right? And I think that there is some truth to that. (K)

He continued:

> but I also think it's a huge cop-out.…there is a complacency to that I think is fundamentally unjust. …there are corrupt interests at play. I think that our systems and structures in place keeps things in the way they are. (K)

His overall view is summarized as follows:

> I think that much of the inequality that exists is not the result of impersonal, natural, inevitable forces. I think that what we have are a lot of systems that have design features that reflect choices made by human beings. (K)

Other participants offered more perspectives:

> [The cause of globalization and inequality is] Ignorance of the truth of being part of the whole living system… often deliberate[ly] ignoring the truth. (M)

> It's happening because human beings are deceiving themselves.… As awesomeness as we are, we choose a very deceptive path. Until we learn that we have the power not to do that, we humans keep doing it. It's not wrong. It's just shortsighted. (P)

> Human beings forgot their nature. They forgot they are connected to everything and everyone else. Perhaps there was some anger that started it. There was jealousy, I don't know. But they started to feel they needed to control their wealth, land, and people of power. Or perhaps there was fear of scarcity. Perhaps there was drought or famine. People were hungry so they wanted someone to lead them rather than everyone to lead them. I don't know. It goes back beyond our written record, beyond oral history of that region. (R)

> I think what's happening, the globalization mess we are in is because everybody is blaming everybody else without taking their own [responsibility]. (J)

> The source of it is fear, and the source of it is being completely cut off from the sense of the sacred, and what that leads to then is people thinking that 'I only have to take care of me' at expense of other people…. And I think the source of it is what happens in the heart. (J)

b) Diseased human body.

This worldview is reflected in the ways three of my participants used diseased human body as a metaphor of the current state of the world. Like cancer cells in a human body, certain elements of the global community are acting only for their interests despite the fact that the whole body is being weakened.

> You might say they [Koch brothers] are like cancer cells.… Cancer is an interesting illness because it's based on longevity. And cancer cells figured out how not to die and replicate itself. So in case of the pathogenic of immortality… because cells behaving only in the interest of themselves, and those like themselves, it replicates self, more cells begin to only interested in themselves. So by so doing they destroy world system and they die too. They don't see that in the process. (M)

> Metaphorically, an individual may experience a raging fever in a part of his/her own physical form. Our immune system "kicks in" and brings us back to health. In the context of humanity, we can begin to think of ourselves as the immune system for humanity. We become the antioxidants, like white blood. Also it may be that moment by moment the homeostasis is always present. It is fluctuating back and forth. (B)

> As if your own biological human body, you have cancer that's growing inside you. And you are the white blood cells that are trying to get rid of cancer and the cancer itself. And you say "I am so sorry that some of my cells have decided to be cancerous trying to kill

> the rest of the being." We are parts of the whole rest of the being. I am hopeful that I can cultivate the rest of the white blood cells to go and attract and communicate with cancer cells to try to change the situation. That's how I feel about Wall Street bankers. (R)

Although "sometimes a little surgery is helpful" (M) and various other treatments could be effective, often times they also weaken patients' bodies. On the other hand, many people manage to live quality lives even when they have cancer. My participants' use of the illness analogy strongly suggests that they see even ill elements of the society as an intimate part of a single organism called human existence.

c) The world is in crisis, and it is "perfect."

The last subtheme on the state of global affairs was offered in response to my question around the statement I hear in non-dual teaching; "Everything is perfect as it is." Puzzled by such an expression, I asked my participants how they saw the world, "in crisis, perfect, both, or neither?" Most agreed that the world is indeed in crisis. However, some added that being in crisis itself is perfect because it exposes what people would not otherwise face; crisis helps humans realize interconnection more clearly than when we are not, and allows creative solutions to emerge. The following quotes were particularly insightful in their worldview:

> We are very fortunate in a very strange way which is that our climate is saying, "NO MORE! You cannot keep behave like this anymore and stay on Earth. If you keep behaving like this, you are going to go extinct." And that's what's terrifying for a lot of people. But it's also that moment where we as in these biological bodies, it's a parallel moment where we are laying on our death beds, dying from a disease, that is caused by our own greed and anger and fear-based issues. And if we love life, *if we love life*, we must say, "this fear, this anger, this greed, that is going to be put down and put away. And in its place, we are going to pick up compassion, wisdom, and interconnection with all beings." Because nothing teaches us more about interconnection on this planet than turmoil. (R)

> With Adya and Sharon's [two non-dual teachers] "perfect," and … to really accept the horribleness and everything of it, and out of that I know comes ideas. Comes ways we haven't seen before…deeper intelligence. (J)

What I see in the findings around the topic of globalization and global inequality is that my participants embrace conventional analysis of global injustice within the worldview of interconnected wholeness of the human existence on Earth. The finding under the next theme, non-dual global justice in action, will show how their worldview accompanied by their non-dual experiences, manifests in their actions for global justice.

Theme 4: Non-dual global justice in action.

During one of the interviews, as I inquired about my participant's global justice action, she asked me if she was the only participant who worked with individuals rather than social structure. To her surprise, all my participants focused their efforts on individuals one way or another. In particular, having experienced profound personal transformation themselves and understood the relationship between their transformation and actions for justice, their efforts for justice tend to be focused on, or at least include, assisting others' deep internal transformation. The focus on persons' inner transformation is a sharp contrast to some of the common social change strategy: information dissemination and education on issues. Instead, my participants' efforts invite others to "wake up." Fostering others' transformation as a form of global justice action was the strongest theme that came out in my research.

a) Fostering others' transformation.

One of the participants contrasted development with transformation by saying development is "about acquiring more information or skills which we did not have before," while "transformation would allow a shift in perspective that was not entirely predictable from the starting point" (S). Putting in the context of global social change, actions such as educating others on the plight of landless farmers who could not sow their traditional seeds due to global patenting of seeds by big agribusiness might be considered an example of developing others'

capacity to be socially active. While my participants do participate in such activities from time to time, they are keenly aware of the need to transform others' consciousness so that others themselves come up with their acts for justice. Just as soliciting more campaign funds to support one's favorite political candidate in order for her to win against the incumbent who spends massive amounts of money for his election campaign does not take money out of politics, according to my participants, operating on the same consciousness would not bring lasting structural change. With that awareness, my participants devote their justice efforts on fostering others' transformation.

> [my role as an activist is being an] activator of transformation. In other words, what I discovered at [name of human rights organization] was we were getting better at laws and the governments were getting better at breaking the laws. So the consciousness needs to be transformed (O).

> I trust that each individual has latent creative power. So I do things to help each person get in touch with that, correlate with the power that comes from, so that the power to authentically connect[ing] with pure Source. (M)

> To me that leads to the work of how do we see, how do we help people really see people, and not get cut off…. [that is] Why I do what I do and how I do it because it's about waking up the heart. (J)

One of the participants, S, considers the moments when "people find deepest truth for themselves to activate for justice" as the most powerful moment he could remember. As a facilitator of group learning process, he recalled the times when he felt his work was making a difference.

> The times that I think my actions are making difference would typically be …where I am leading a workshop and holding the space for people to step into different awareness of the world and desire to be in actions to produce change. …. holding the space for the people to step into a larger expression of themselves…. And when I can hold the space successfully and feeling deep profound changes in people, people are waking up more and more to their own capabilities of service in the world for everybody. (S)

On the other hand, R is engaged in others' transformation in more indirect ways.

> A form of social political power transformation happens when non-violent strategy is used in a society. But I think on a deeper level, there is a potential for a very deep internal

> transformation that happens too. So the practice of considering why one might be using non-violent means, and what the effect is, it does change people. (R)
>
> And you talk with people, and you connect with the people, and you support those who are awakening, and you bring truth and compassion to those who are very much lost in illusion, maybe very rude and belligerent and attacking and accusing. And just like Buddha, you let them cut off your limbs, you let them win, and you touch their hearts with compassion. And *they have to become human beings again.* (R)

As evident in the above quotations, many of my participants were notably passionate about fostering others' transformation.

b) Being an example of what is possible.

One indirect approach that some participants chose to help others transform was to be an authentic example of what is possible. The following is a comment by P who had chosen not to participate in the financial system that he did not believe in. After leaving his corporate job, he gave up on his fancy car, penthouse, and stylish suites as well as big bank accounts. Presently, he runs a two-person handyman business that is built on the principles of "community first, do things beautifully, and sustain ourselves" in that order of importance. He recognizes that his choice comes with price. However, he says without any hesitation, "I gave up everything and gained even more!" (P). On global justice actions, below are his words:

> Global justice only happens in one way; self-realization…So once I have created global justice in *myself*, then I can spread it throughout the world…we show them us to be true and invite them to be true. (P, June 1, 2014)

O also sees one's role to be an authentic example of what is possible for the future we envision.

> Are you playing your part fully in the transformation of the story? It isn't simply about getting into the state of being that's not non-judgmental. It's being a latent activation of the possibility of non-judgmental human beings in the world. In the commerce of the world. In the business of the world. To be the authentic example of what this looks like. We are called to be the work to do, to embody. (O).

He continued:

> I think imagination is one of those conjunctions between spiritual and activist. The activist is trying to imagine a better world and live into that. Be that authentically. (O)

Having learnt that my participants' emphasis is on personal transformation, my natural question to follow was how they saw the connection between personal transformation and global and systemic change.

c) Connecting individual transformation and global change.

There was consensus among all of my participants that individual transformation is in some ways connected with global social change. However, my participants' response to my question on how they saw the connection ranged from "an act of faith" to "with absolute certainty." On the side of "an act of faith," S commented,

> There is a very definite element of faith. It's impossible for me to see how some of these pieces connect in the huge world; huge, complicated world we live in. So I have to confess that I don't always see the connection. (S)

J had a little more confidence in connecting individual transformation to systemic change as long as she could access those people with decision-making power:

> Because if a heart can open, if paradigm can change, if somebody can have a different state of energy, I think they will act in a different way. And I think they will make different decisions. (J)

At the time of interview, she felt she had some access, but not to her full satisfaction. However, she believes that when her service is needed, she "would be put in the most appropriate place" without coercion.

M felt he was already in the circle of influential people, and therefore working with individuals certainly had global impact:

> Most of these people [I work with] are in the position of top leadership. This would have a building effect in overall field of leadership. (M)

A few believed that building critical mass is the decisive factor that connects individual transformation and systemic change:

> It begins to set up a resonation pattern that systems [is] different than dissonance created by the cancer cells. So we need to build up a strong resonation and build to a critical mass…With critical mass, culture can shift. (M)

> It's ultimately crazy-making to think one individual human being can have direct impact on bringing peace, harmony, love, and justice to the world. And yet that's the only way it's ever going to happen…One individual, collectively with others, gathering together, in a like-minded way, agreeing on certain core principles and values and proceeding to take action in the world. (B)

> Imagine if we are true to ourselves, and we did not participate in things that we knew were wrong, instead of pointing our fingers at somebody else, point at yourself first, changes everything… the banking system robs people all over the world, and all over the country. Don't participate in it. Because every little participation supports it. (P)

Finally, based on her absolute conviction that "we are in interaction with certain subsets of an enormous system," R takes the other end of the spectrum, absolute certainty:

> On a very, very deep level, it's that we are all connected to one another, no change can happen without affecting every one of us making at least a small shift. Because if we don't make a small shift, a big shift doesn't happen. Right? (R)

From an opposite angle, O talked about ineffective change when internal transformation of consciousness is absent.

> So this is where we learnt the hard lesson as an activist; inner affects the outer. We can change the outer and in certain things we need to do. But it's inner, more subtle, is more causally responsible for the next level. So now we understand, in order to have economic systems and legal systems that reflect it, we have to be at higher consciousness. (O)

These accounts of participants' global justice actions have been significantly different than the global justice activism I personally have been familiar with both in form and in character. The differences are singled out under the next subtheme, "a different type of activism."

d) A different type of activism.

"The primary goal is not to utterly destroy your opponent" (R). "Basically [I] want to be of service….But not from anger or hatred or helplessness, but really from the feeling of just love" (J). These are the words I heard from my participants that I would rarely hear from orthodox activists. Some of my participants are keenly aware of the differences, are intentional about acting from non-dual consciousness and find it more effective than a dualistic one. The following relatively long quotes are quintessential to the non-dual global justice actions:

> … typical kind of activism is "I'm right, you are wrong." There is good and evil and I am on the good side of that boundary. And only if other people can change what they are doing, *If only other people* could change what *they* are doing, everything would be better. … And what we are up to is different kind of activism... we are inviting people to be game changers and inviting them to see everything is connected, that we are participating in the problem as much as anyone else, and we are all in this together. (K)

> If you experience *I*—the definition of I as I am all of this — I feel deep sorrow that I have made these choices in the form of bankers on Wall Street, in the forms of war mongers in presidents, in a form of abusive spouses and partners, that that is me as well. And I feel deep sorrow, and remorse, and regret that I have taken these actions. And I hope to find a way to heal myself to change my behavior in these parts of my body. (R)

> Those criminal jerks [those who are aware of the harm their actions are causing and continue with their actions for self-interest] need to be held accountable. And the challenge for those of us who identify them as criminal jerks is to hold them in compassion and degree of acceptance, rather than condemnation. (B)

> It's the difference between being self-righteous or being an advocate of righteousness. In other words, if I am coming from an arrogant place of "I am a good person and you are a bad person," it's going to continue to perpetuate the separation. Almost like magnets repel. If I am coming from a unified field of non-dual consciousness, with compassion, it is highly likely that I will be much more effective. (B)

In conclusion, the following quote captures the essence of non-dual global justice actions:

> [It is about] finding ourselves the capacity to love, care, and make difference…. Not "how do we see, analyze, criticize, and change?," but "How do we love and care and make a difference?" (S)

Summary of Findings

The findings of the research revealed four themes and 12 subthemes as indicated above. The interrelated themes and subthemes draw a summative picture of the findings as follows. All participants had visceral memory of experiencing non-duality, which many of them said had to be experienced to be fully comprehended. Their non-dual experiences had decisive impact on both the way they understood globalization and inequality, as well as on their actions for global justice. The participants' understanding of the state of the world embraced conventional understanding within the sense of the wholeness of humanity. On one level, the participants shared conventional explanation of globalization as inequality, though none advocated neoliberalism as a solution to the global crisis. Simultaneously, they deeply understood the connection to all the elements including what are considered evil. As such, their actions for global justice are not aimed at eliminating social ill or forcing a change at a structural level. That would be harming themselves. Instead, they see societal change to come as they transform themselves because no part of the whole can change without the whole being affected.

Because the participants have gone through fundamental transformations personally and experienced the value of it in relation to their global justice actions, every participant considers, to varied forms and degrees, assisting others transform to be their acts of global justice. It is a sharp contrast to the conventional activist approach of analyzing, criticizing, and changing the world. Instead, the essence of non-dual global justice in action is to love, care, and make a difference.

These findings are rich in insights with great possible implications both in academia and in the social change practices that I will discuss in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

> The whole world, almost, would agree with us that certain things shouldn't be happening. … And so we feel very justified in our arguments …. We might even feel fear as if "if I did not argue with what's happening now, maybe it would never change."… But the more we say something shouldn't be happening, the more it continues to be happening. …. As soon as we say something shouldn't be happening, we lock ourselves in very very narrow mindset with very few options. But when we really see that what is IS, neither good nor bad, it just IS, then all options are available to us. …When we see what is is what is, it actually opens up creative responses. Ways of engaging with what is that aren't based on separation; that aren't based on denial. But instead based on human heart, in love, in compassion, and wisdom. (Adyashanti, 2011, session 2, section 8, 3:30-5:57)

Above is the quintessential quotation from one of the teachings by Adyashanti, a non-dual teacher. The message of his teaching here is that human beings suffer because they argue with "what is" instead of accepting it completely. "Not arguing," however, Adyashanti claims, does not mean doing nothing about what is problematic. Rather, when one stops arguing, creative solutions, which do not perpetuate more problems, become available. I am quoting this rather long segment because this teaching was one of the geneses of my inquiry. Unless the people with a non-dual consciousness were seeing a different picture of the world than myself, it was simply inconceivable to accept global inequality as it is. If they were seeing a different picture, what did that look like? If indeed someone was engaged in creative solutions from non-dual consciousness, what were those solutions like? As shown in the previous chapter, the stories the participants shared offered remarkable insights. In this chapter, the implications of

their wisdom will be discussed both in academic and practical arenas. First, I will start by highlighting the primary learning followed by discussions of the findings by theme.

Primary Learning

The primary learning from this study is twofold: (a) the ways people who have experienced non-dual consciousness understand economic globalization and inequality, and (b) the roles personal transformation had in shaping worldviews as well as their global justice actions.

In presenting the noetic theory of human development, Jenny Wade draws on David Bohm's theory of implicate and explicate orders of reality. Wade (1996) discusses that in a non-dualistic paradigm, there is an explicate reality that manifests in dualistic forms of the "ordinary world of three-dimensional space and linear time perceived through our senses"(p. 8), while underneath it is the implicate reality that is constant and undivided. I see this "co-existence of multiple realities without contradiction" in the way my participants most likely understood world affairs. The conventional analysis of globalization and inequality is held at the explicate order of consciousness, while it is embraced in the implicate order of visceral knowing of the oneness of all. To paraphrase one of the participants, nothing is wrong with a dualistic worldview. What is needed are (a) to know when the dualistic analysis is useful and when it is not, and (b) to remember the inseparable nature of all things that is beneath all separable matters. Contrary to my original expectation that a non-dual way of understanding the world would dismiss the dualistic analysis, it is a new way to look at globalization and inequality, a perspective certainly not found in a conventional academic understanding of the world. I will elaborate more on the implication of this finding under Theme 3.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this research does not focus on the participants' trajectories of their spiritual development or their evolution as activists. However, it was striking to find how significant the role personal transformations played in participants' lived experiences. For some, a fundamental understanding of who they were in the world shifted so drastically that they took up a life for global justice for the first time. For others, their understanding of how society works evolved so radically that they transformed from being conventional activists, who critically identified the social evils and tried to eliminate them, to "different types" of activists who worked on helping others see the oneness of the world.

Because this research was designed to inquire about the current states of participants' consciousness, the stories gathered did not capture the process of the transformations in a consistent manner. Some talked about it in detail, while others simply implied it. In addition, whether or not all of the transformations I have heard from the participants qualify as "transformative learning" experiences is debatable. Nonetheless, my findings suggest that their personal transformations, and more specifically shifts of consciousness structure based on spiritual development, were closely related to their engagement in global justice action. I will examine this further in my discussion of findings under theme 2.

Henceforth, I will start discussing the findings starting from the one that is fundamental to this research: experiencing non-duality.

Discussion on Findings by Themes

Theme 1: Experiencing non-duality.

In this research, it was left for the participants to define non-dual consciousness in ways that suited their lived experiences. When they were unsure whether their experiences were indeed non-dual, I encouraged them to nevertheless tell me their stories. After each interview,

the narratives were examined to determine whether their accounts could be considered as experiences of non-dual consciousness for the purpose of this study. As indicated in Chapter 3, only one case was disqualified; what this particular person shared as a possible non-dual experience was that she grew up in the countryside always surrounded by and feeling close to nature. All other accounts of non-dual experiences were extremely rich and in agreement with how literature on non-duality had described them.

The first subtheme, "non-duality is an ineffable, embodied, and visceral experience," explains why academic authors express challenges in writing about and helping western readers comprehend non-duality (e.g., Loy, 1988; Prendergast, Fenner, & Krystal, 2003; Nelson, 1993). The concept of non-duality underlies a wide variety of ancient wisdom and there is considerable variety in the way it is put in various teachings (Loy, 1988; Katz, 2007; Scarborough, 2009). As the participants indicated through the second subtheme, a conceptual understanding without experiencing it does not give a complete understanding. The March 27th interviewee (O) explained that learning and understanding non-duality is often "the transmission from one who knew to one who could [know]" which he once experienced through the eyes of his spiritual teacher. Others echoed that non-duality can be comprehended in full only through experiencing it with or without such transmission.

For academics, this brings forth an epistemological issue. The power of learning through experience has been long acknowledged in education (e.g., Dewey, 1938). In particular, in transformative learning theories, experience is considered as the foundation on which new learning can take place (Mezirow, 1991). Yet, as Taylor and Cranton (2013) suggest, there still seems to be no clear consensus on what constitutes experience. When "nonduality is the

experience of our true nature" (Katz, 2007), and what is considered true can be known only through experience, it presents a Zen Koan-like task for academics to write about.

Nevertheless, the participants reported noticeable and mostly positive effects of non-dual consciousness in the ways they interact with the world as presented in the third subtheme (1-c). My participants enjoyed more ease, joy, compassion, and serendipitous events, as well as sharpened intuition, increased creativity, and problem-solving ability. Such experiences of increased capacity are confirmed by a number of literatures (e.g., Combs, 2009; Nelson, 2014; Prendergast, Fenner, & Krystal, 2003).

One observation is that the participants' stories are diverse in terms of range and depth of their non-dual experiences. Not only did the number of experiences they shared vary, but also the differences in the quality of the experience seemed obvious. This diversity suggests that my participants were at various locations in the hierarchy of minds (Combs, 2009). As reviewed in Chapter 2, philosophers Allen Combs and Ken Wilber created a consciousness lattice that places individuals' consciousness in hierarchical stages of development. According to this Wilber-Combs lattice, the non-dual awareness is the most developed and integrated stage that is considered "ultimate, super mind," to apply Sri Aurobindo's term, where "a complete shift in the ground of experience away from brain and the material world to a foundation in the divine" (Combs, 2009, p. 84) takes roots.

While no means to assess participants' level of consciousness development was available, no participant is likely to be in the ultimate super mind stage at all times. However, it is apparent that they are sometimes in, or have visited, the consciousness structure that is beyond ordinary brain and material world; one of the lower stages of the higher mind where "it is at a vantage point whole systems of thought are seen in relation to each other" (Combs, 2009, p. 79) and

where "individuals experience more profound intuitive faculty, an emerging sense of the subtle dimensions of reality, and a palpable selflessness and compassion for others" (p. 80). It seems that it is a structure of consciousness into which some individuals all over the world are shifting as suggested by James Gustave Speth (2008), David Korten (2006), Arjuna Ardagh (2005), Joanna Macy (2007), and others, in their use of phrases such as "rise of new consciousness," "the Great Turning," and "greening of self." More discussion on this point will be found under Themes 3 and 4.

Theme 2: Personal transformation.

To claim that my dissertation work is research in the framework of transformative learning would risk making a grave mistake about which Taylor and Cranton (2013) are warning academics. They state, "Much of the research is redundant, with a strong deterministic emphasis of capturing transformative learning experiences and replicating transformative learning in various settings" (p. 12). Besides the fact that this research was not designed to study the process of transformation, it is not even about adult education in either a formal or non-formal setting. However, the findings do offer insights in at least two areas of transformative learning theory discussions: the role of spirituality and the relationship between transformative experience and social engagement.

Spirituality, transformative learning, and social engagement.

In Chapter 2, I discussed Tisdell's and Miller's views on spirituality as a "personal belief and experience of a higher power" (Tisdell, 2000, p. 309) and "compassionate knowing which arises from the recognition that we are part of an inter connected universe" (Miller, 2002, p. 99). Similarly, O'Sullivan (1999) defines spirituality as "the deeper resources of the human spirit and involves the non-physical, immaterial dimensions of our being: the energies, essences and part of

us that existed before and will exist after the disintegration of the body" (pp. 259-260). My findings are in line with those transformative learning scholars' views discussed above on spirituality. They are also in contrast with the way the word "spirituality" is used and how the role of spirituality is described in the spirituality literature. As mentioned in Chapter 2, in engaged spirituality literature, practitioners' social actions are considered as expression of certain religious principles (e.g., King, 2009; Parachin, 1999; Sivaraksa, Bhikkhu, & Rothberg, 1997). Strikingly, none of the participants mentioned the teachings or principles of their spiritual tradition as the foundation of their worldview or global justice actions. Rather, it was their sense of oneness or compassion for the whole that was influential in shaping their worldviews and actions. In a way, it is ironic that by strictly adhering to a religious framework, the engaged spirituality literature I reviewed fails to capture the role of spirituality in personal transformation that sometimes moves individuals to social engagement, whereas some transformative learning theories do recognize it.

Because of the focus on psychological factors on transformation, early years of transformative learning theories were often criticized for not sufficiently connecting personal and social transformations. It was often assumed that persons whose awareness is raised would naturally act for social transformation. Reviewing various studies and ongoing academic debate on transformative learning and social engagement, a professor of social transformation, Daniel Schugurensky (2002) reports that " involvement in social transformation is not something that arises automatically or naturally from a 'new critical consciousness'"(p. 63) and "individual transformation by itself does not ensure social action" (p. 63) especially when such consciousness raising is limited in the cognitive and rational arena. As Brookfield (2000) rightfully points out, "critical reflection's focus on illuminating power relationships and

hegemonic assumptions can be the death of the transformative impulse, inducing an energy sapping, radical pessimism concerning the possibility of structural change" (p. 145). I have personally experienced and observed such "death of transformative impulse" when people are faced with overwhelming structural injustice.

Although the participants acknowledged their knowledge of global structural injustice, and some admitted feeling occasional despair, all of them talked about their commitment to global justice in direct or indirect relation with their transformative experiences. If the cognitive and rational knowledge alone is indeed not enough to move people to social engagement, and if transformative learning experiences do not automatically lead to social engagement, what might my findings suggest?

Based on their research on the role of transformative learning in the lives of environmental activists, artist and adult educator Jessica T. Kovan and a transformative learning scholar John M. Dirkx (2003) conclude that it is the *individuation* fostered through transformative learning process that leads individuals to activism and further sustains their commitment. Individuation is a Jungian term that refers to "a process by which individual beings are being formed and differentiated ... having as its goal the development of the individual personality" (Jung quoted in Kovan & Dirkx, 2003, p. 102). In Kovan and Dirkx's words, it is a process of "becoming who we truly are… through recognition and integration of conscious and unconscious elements of oneself. Jung referred to this shift of consciousness as 'being called awake' or learning how one is apart from yet intimately interconnected with the collective in which one's life is embedded" (p. 102). Kovan and Dirkx argue that because the individuation process helps clarify a unique identity for individuals, it helped environmental activists find their vocation that is "something I can't not do, for reasons I'm unable to explain to anyone else and

don't fully understand myself but that are nonetheless compelling" (Palmer, 2000, p. 25). Therefore, Kovan and Dirkx argue the individuation process is what moved the environmentalist to activism.

Kovan and Dirkx's findings have many elements in common with my findings. For example, one's "sense interconnected whole" and acts for justice as something one "cannot not do" are familiar sentiments that my participants often expressed. However, there is a critical difference that distinguishes the transformative experiences of my participants from the process of individuation. While Kovan and Dirkx's participants "learned to be in the world but not of it," my participants learned to be the world itself, feeling no separation from it at all. While Kovan and Dirkx's participants established their identities by differentiating their unique ego, my participants became a more authentic self through dissolving their individual egos into a greater whole.

At this point, it is inconclusive whether Kovan-Dirkx and I are interpreting the same phenomenon through different lenses—Kovan and Dirkx through Jungian depth psychology, and I through non-duality— or whether we are talking about similar but different phenomena. Yet, this difference in the senses of individual identity is important to make a distinction because for my participants, this sense of oneness – not the sense of finding a unique individual self or a vocation through the individuation process -- was the decisive factor that moved them to global justice actions.

Author and speaker on engaged spirituality Michael Dalliare is reported in John P. Miller's (2002) article to have said,

> Concurrent with the growing awareness of the need to free the inner person of internalized dualism, there is also a growing awareness that our world is more

> interdependent than we ever imagined. As this consciousness grows, we are coming to see that the particular "I" cannot have justice unless the other "I" has justice. (p. 101)

Following this logic, it might not be any transformative learning that leads one to social engagement, but it is the transformation that fosters a sense of oneness that is the key to connecting individuals' transformation with the transformation of the outer society. This hypothesis is in congruence with O'Sullivan's integral transformative learning vision where the development of planetary consciousness, a sense of whole, and sense of sacred are considered key ingredients for the consciousness structure that could shift humanity out from that of market and consumerism and move on to sustainability. Yet, a doubt remains of its validity because not all persons with non-dual consciousness take up a life for global justice.

As was the case in the findings of Tisdell (2000), Tisdell and Tolliver (2003), as well as Kovan and Dirkx (2003), the transformative experiences had decisive influences in the way the participants experience the world today. However, whereas transformative learning theories presume causality between the experience, learning, and the shift in perspectives, my participants' accounts were not always so linear. In addition, unlike the classical transformative learning theory that tends to stress dramatic epiphanic shifts with a clear beginning and end, the process of transformation for the participants took place over an extended period. The experience of transformative learning as a lifelong process is in agreement with what Laurent Daloz (2000) writes as "change or shift was long in coming and its possibility prepared for in myriad ways, generally across years" (p. 106). Even some of the participants who went through a dramatic shift from being professionals in the corporate sector to a life of global justice activism talked about a gradual sense of discomfort that at a certain point they could no longer bear. For long-term activists, their worldviews and approach to social justice work have evolved over many

years with small transformative experiences. Daniel Schugurensky's observations align with my findings, as he offers a possibility that what we are finding may be better labeled as "assimilative" or "expansive" learning rather than "transformative learning" (Schugurensky, 2002, p. 71). Shugurensky still assures us that "important personal and social transformations can occur through learning process that are more assimilative and expansive than 'transformative' and that emotional learning experiences are as important as rational ones, especially in relation to collective social action" (p. 71).

Theme 3: Understanding economic globalization and inequality.

In Chapter 2, I reviewed literature by scholars of international relations and global studies indicating that conventional theories are inadequate in explaining current global affairs (e.g., Mittelman, 2002; Lake, 2008, 2010; Reus-Smit & Snidal, 2008/2010). Some international relations academics have moved away from the nation-state-centered approach to a global approach taking the world as a whole as the unit of analysis (e.g., Appelbaum & Robinson, 2005). Even so, more alternative approaches to understanding and solving global issues such as unprecedented inequality are urgently sought (e.g., Lechner & Boli, 2012).

From the consciousness studies perspective, Combs agrees with the international relations and global studies scholars and suggests reasons why existing theories may fall short. "In Western civilization the mental structure of consciousness came into its own when people began to answer basic questions about the nature of the world through logic and reason" (Combs, 2009, p. 69), which Combs calls *perspectival consciousness*, borrowing Gebser's term. However, Combs continues, "the plain fact is that the cultural, moral, and political realities of the twenty-first century are complex beyond the ability of the mental perspectival mind to cope with. Indeed it exhibits a tendency to reduce whatever it sees to the smallest common denominator and then to

wrangle with it" (p. 74). In other words, Combs implies that the perspectival consciousness that has been the base of scientific positivistic epistemology —and which is still the foundation of mainstream academic theories— is the reason why existing knowledge is insufficient. Sustainability scholar David Selby (2002) makes a similar point:

> A number of commentators have argued that mainstream western thinking has inherited a worldview from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scientists and philosophers that is underpinned by notions of separation, otherness, and domination… we try to understand how something works by dividing it into what are held to be its discrete component parts. (p. 78)

Selby continues:

> The dualism spawned by Cartesian thought (e.g. human-animal, mind-body, masculine-feminine, us-them, inner-outer, reason-emotion, spirit-matter, culture-nature, teacher-learner) and the hegemonic thinking they inspired also have become ingrained in the western mind-set. (p. 79)

As a result, Selby argues, "many of us… [have] an uneasy sense that our window on the world—our world view— is somehow distorted, deeply destructive in its impact, and quite insufficient either to understand what is happening to the planet or to do anything fundamentally about it" (p. 78).

In different voices, both Combs and Selby—neither of whom are global studies scholars– are suggesting that to understand the relationships among economics, ecology, and global inequality requires an alternative consciousness, which Combs (2009) calls "Sri Aurobindo's Illumined mind" (p. 142). Selby describes such mind as to conceive "unbroken wholeness" of "holomovement" and urges "we need to consider things as expression of the dynamic unfolding,

the being and becoming, of whole. We need to see entities—ourselves, nonhuman animals, rocks, nation-states, political groupings—not first and foremost as objects but primarily as process." (p. 83).

The way my participants described today's economic globalization and inequality seems to be just the perspective Selby is urging we adopt. While the participants recognize the ill-intended global actors and policies that negatively impact the well-being of the universe and believe those actors should be held accountable, they are simultaneously keenly and viscerally aware that beneath the interconnection and interaction of all "the good" and "the evil," there lays the unified whole from which the dynamic unfolding of all beings manifest. This way of understanding current global affairs appears to be synonymous to what Edmund O'Sullivan refers to as *planetary consciousness* (O'Sullivan, 1999; O'Sullivan et al., 2002). This understanding is what Korten, Hawken, Macy, and others observe as shift of consciousness that is urgently needed if humanity is to remain on this planet.

Current research findings do not provide enough information to build on an alternative theory on global affairs. However, they do present a glimpse of the source of wisdom on which future studies can draw. Conducting focus group research or even action research with scholars and non-dual spiritual practitioners where they together explore alternative ways of understanding and resolving pressing global issues, would generate beneficial knowledge base for such alternative theory creation.

Theme 4: Non-dual global justice in action.

During the interviews and data analysis, on multiple occasions, the similarities between Mahatma Gandhi's trajectory and that of the participants entered my mind not only because some of my participants referred to Gandhi as their main influence or as an example of the kind

of activism they strive to enact, but also because of the way both Gandhi and my participants are committed to live a life of justice.[6] In addition, Gandhi's own personal transformation and the transformation he facilitated in others resembles the participants' experiences.

Gandhi is not necessarily known for his personal transformation or the transformation he helped others to achieve. Yet, if anyone compares the pictures of Gandhi while he was a law student in London with those after his permanent return to India, no one can escape seeing the striking differences (e.g., Lelyveld, 2011). In London, he was dressed in stylish European clothing, while his signature attire during India's struggle for independence was simple hand-woven cotton cloth. When one reads Gandhi's autobiography, which is entitled *An Autobiography: The Story of my Experiments with Truth* (Gandhi, 1940), the readers would be struck by his internal transformations that in some sense are as drastic as or even more drastic than his external change.

In my review of Gandhi's life and his social change engagement, his activism was the expression of his transformations brought by his fierce experiments of the Truth – which he equated with God or Love (Richards, 2005). As much as his experiments were, in some aspects and on some occasions, overly extreme, contained contradiction, and failed miserably[7], and although I am not suggesting here that Gandhi was the example of non-dual social activism, along the way of his transformation, he invited his country's people to change their fundamental view about themselves and the world they lived in -- from powerless objects that deserved

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[6] Social justice as a way of life was also the primary finding of Tisdell's 2000 study on women adult educators. Tisdell writes, "A primary finding of this study is that these participants saw their spirituality and their social justice efforts as an integrated way of life and as a way of thinking and being in the world" (p. 328).

[7] For instance, Gandhi is known for his abusive relationship with his first son. Lelyreld (2011) reports that Gandhi felt extremely ashamed for having children because it is undeniable evidence that he could not keep celibacy where celibacy was one of the most stressed behavioral codes that Gandhi advocated in his experiments.

British rule to descendants of one of the most wisdom-filled civilizations fully capable of governing their own country.

In their own ways, my participants have gone through many personal transformations as discussed in earlier sections. Knowing the positive impact of such transformations, combined with their skill-sets, they came to see fostering others' transformations as their global justice efforts. They know "the most powerful instruments to transform the world that we have are our own minds" (Hall, 2002, p. 43) and view themselves "as vessels attempting to assist others in awakening" (Miller, 2002, p. 101); that was the first subtheme to emerge strongly under non-dual global justice in action (4-a).

This theme has a possible practical implication. At the end of one of the interviews, a participant shared how he saw the value of my research and he expressed interest in designing a training program for "someone to get to this beautiful place where they can combine their awareness and passion for justice with the non-dualistic consciousness" (S). Another participant, on the other hand, indicated that he specializes in helping others experience a sense of oneness in wilderness settings (M). Yet another has recently started to experience "a new opening, completely new opening where more of that heart focused work. And 'who you really are as a person and what's possible' can be in the program [that she offers as a leadership and creativity consultant]" (J). Based on these comments, I see the possibility of developing learning programs where an environment for experiencing non-duality and support for personal transformation can be held in collaboration with my participants.

The second subtheme under non-dual global justice in action (4-b) is being an example of what is possible. An adult educator and a specialist in participatory action research Budd L. Hall quotes a Canadian journalist Linda McQuaig for reporting that, "We have become convinced that

we are collectively powerless in the face of international financial markets" (McQuaig in Hall, 2002, p. 43). Similarly, an English art critic, novelist, painter and poet John Berger said, "Part of the fanaticism of the economic system that we now call globalization, part of its bigotry, is that it pretends that no alternative is possible" (Berger, 2001, p. 19). In the face of this overwhelming weight of corporate globalization, being an example of what alternative is possible seems as significant as Gandhi giving a sense of agency by being a living example of non-cooperation with the British. In fact, even when one knows the power of collective non-cooperation, it is still a huge challenge, for example, to give up all her credit cards. Showing how one lives without a bank account, let alone a credit card, and leads a fulfilling, happy life is an extremely powerful and encouraging example that shakes others' fundamental assumptions about their lives.

The same can be said about the participants' convictions about the power of an individual to change the global system. Although for many people it is hard to imagine that individuals' actions can bring systemic change, as shown in my participants' words in Chapter 4, my participants consider the role of individuals—not necessarily organized citizens groups but that included—vital in bringing systemic change, not because people can change the systems, but because change in one person as a part of the interconnected whole will have an effect in every other part including the social and economic systems. The participants clearly share the sense of what David Selby (2002) calls "the signature of the whole":

> Everything is dynamically connected and related to everything else, nothing can be completely understood save in relationship to everything else…what happens somewhere will impact to a greater or lesser extent elsewhere, even everywhere…; what happens locally is also a global phenomenon (a part of the whole, itself acting to inform the whole) and the signature of global events will be manifest locally. (pp. 79-80)

Hearing the sense of wholeness from those who embody it is much more convincing than cognitive understanding of interconnection of all the elements.

This way of considering individuals' agency for social change exhibits a significant difference from the thinking of conventional movement where organized people's movement is a strategic choice. An authority on nonviolent strategy and international relations scholar, Peter Ackerman, and a TV program director, Jack Duvall (2000), wrote in their book on social change by non-violent people's movements that historically, organized citizens' "disruptive actions were used as *sanctions*, as aggressive measures to constrain or punish opponents and to win concessions" (p. 2, emphasis original) and "those who used nonviolent action in our stories did not come to make peace. They came to fight" (p. 5). Although this approach and my participants' approach both believe in individuals' agency for change, there is a huge difference. One participant, R, articulated this difference clearly: For her, the experience of "being connected to all" is what lies behind her commitment to non-violence. Many activists choose non-violent means as a political tool for its effectiveness particularly when they are faced with opponents with much greater military power. However, R claims her perspective to choose non-violent means for social change comes from "a very different place." With her sense of connection with all, she continued,

> Even my oppressor, even my opponent, they are intimately connected to this being [myself]. Perhaps more intimately connected to this being than total strangers, who are neutral on issues. And so I have a deep requirement to treat then with respect even if I disagree with their behaviors, to offer them always choice that most fulfilling for us both, to offer them always the opportunity to examine the options I am presenting, and to if they are in position of causing great harm and suffering to other people or beings life

> forms on this planet, then to stop them from doing that or make it impossible for them to do that, in such a way that leaves them to consider another option. So I cannot decapitate them or kill them. You know, scar them emotionally, potentially. I have to try to leave them a pathway out of their actions with dignity. (R, September 18, 2014)

R's words exhibits the essence of non-dual global justice in action.

Limitations

As the first theme clearly indicated, the state of non-duality is considered ineffable, experience-based, and embodied. From that perspective, the first and foremost limitation of current study is the lack of personal experience of non-duality. While the participants helped me deepen felt-sense of understanding about the experience of non-duality and the way they experience the world, my comprehension is limited to that of conceptual. Further, as one of the participants gently yet firmly reminded me, there is an inherent contradiction to "write about" non-dual consciousness using very dualistic means, namely words and logic. On that, here are some words of caution from one of the participants:

> [an ancient Vedic sage] also says in his book when the intellectuals get certain ideas like this, when intellectual gets non-duality, he is still basically in the dense consciousness of the beginning of the journey of involution. He thinks he is so superior because he's gotten the idea and he sells it sometimes and sells it to other people. But there is no such thing. You have to experience the idea. You have to experience the state of not being above or not being below. (O)

This comment was not meant to deter me from writing about non-duality, but to advise me to be always humble, which I take seriously and pass on to my readers.

On a more basic research point, another area of limitation of this study is that of the participant numbers and range. Because each interview elicited rich data and moving stories, there was more than sufficient information for the purpose of this study. Also, from the design stage, this study was not intended to generate generalizable knowledge. However, I acknowledge that the value of the findings could be strengthened by a greater number of participants from a wider range. For example, more accounts by non-dual activists who organize conventional movements such as sit-ins and demonstrations would have enriched the study. Someone who experienced non-duality and work for global justice while choosing to stay in mainstream business and academic institutions would have offered yet another perspective. Furthermore, my study is lacking of voices of people in different geographical locations as well as in differing social and economic backgrounds.

Finally, it is my retrospective realization that the scope of the current research could have been more focused than presently designed. The purpose of this research was to explore the relationship between the experience of non-duality, the worldview on globalization and global scale inequality, and global justice actions. The wealth of wisdom my participants shared with me in 1-3 hours of interviews fulfilled and surpassed my needs. However, even the rich stories did not seem sufficient to be a solid knowledge base for, for example, academic theory building. I recognize my study was not a theoretical dissertation. However, if theory building was the primary goal, the study did not have to and should not have addressed all three related aspects of my interest. Consequently, interview questions would have needed to be more focused.

Future Study Possibilities

In addition to some research possibilities already indicated in the discussion of themes, I suggest the following three possible areas for future study:

1. A follow-up study with a wider participant pool

In response to the second point of the limitation, the first possible future study would be a follow-up of current dissertation research with more and a wider range of participants. Toward the end of the data collection, a few of the participants offered promising leads that included people in activist circles, business, and academia. Interestingly, some leads directed me back to the persons whom I had previously contacted to no avail. I did not pursue these leads mainly because of the time constraint. However, because cases of repeated referral were not anticipated at the research design stage, I was not prepared to approach the same persons more than once, either. Another pool of potential participants to include in the follow-up study is the activists in the global South. With the negative effect of globalization and global inequality often more acutely manifested in the global South, this diversity of participants would be a valuable addition to current study. For those reasons, for the first possible future study, I suggest a follow-up study with a wider participant pool to enrich the findings.

2. A focused study on globalization and inequality separate from activism

Based on what has been experienced, a more focused and in-depth research project than this on globalization and inequality from a sense of non-duality would likely produce a knowledge base for possible new ways to understand the current state of the world. This can be designed as an action research project incorporating a dialogue forum among scholars and non-dual practitioners. For that purpose, it is not necessary for the participants to be engaged in global justice actions themselves in order to contribute to the theory-making on globalization. From that perspective, my second suggestion for future study is a focused study on non-dual worldview on globalization and inequality.

3. A study on the process of personal transformation leading to action

This dissertation research was intended to look at participants' current worldview and global justice actions. Therefore, participants' trajectory of personal development was not explicitly sought after. Yet, experiences of non-duality and other personal transformation were such pivotal moments that many participants included the stories of "how I got here." This is presenting a doorway to yet another future research possibility, a study on the process of personal transformation that move them to be non-dual global justice actions.

One possible research design is to inquire about the trajectories of those who have experienced non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions (i.e., the same selection criteria as current study). Another possibility is to study the transformation as it takes place.

During the interview, one of the participants shared her experience of developing a way to invite her clients to open their hearts. Because she sometimes has ongoing relationships with the same group of clients, occasionally she has a chance to discover how her clients are experiencing their shift after her programs. However, no systematical mechanism is in place to study the process or effect of the shifts. There might be an opportunity for a phenomenological study of experiencing a transformation. According to Taylor and Cranton (2013), such longitudinal or real-time studies are needed to enrich knowledge production efforts in the transformative learning field.

There is a need for research that determines the decisive factors that move people to social justice actions through their transformative experiences. As mentioned earlier, transformative experience alone does not guarantee actions for social justice. The transformation from dualistic to non-dualistic consciousness might hold the key, but further empirical study is needed before this can be confirmed or denied. The above mentioned research ideas present

excellent topics for any scholar-practitioner interested in transformative learning for social justice.

Discussion Summary

This project was designed to answer the research question, "*How do people who have experienced non-duality and are engaged in global justice actions describe today's economic globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions?*" The assumption that underlies this question was that the participants would hold a drastically different picture of globalization and global inequality than that of conventional explanations of such phenomenon due to their non-dual sense of the world. My intention was to engage in academic conversation with international relations and global studies scholars using the findings. Unexpectedly from my perspective, none of the participants disagreed with conventional explanations of globalization and global inequality, rather they embraced them within their sense of the planet as a whole. Obviously the participants were describing the phenomenon from a different realm, perhaps that of non-dual consciousness.

Instead of alternative explanations for the current state of the world, my unpredicted primary finding was that the transformative experiences the participants lived through helped shape their worldview and the global justice actions in which they are currently engaged. Thus, the findings offer insights into transformative learning theories in the areas of the role of spirituality and the connection between individuals' inner transformation and their involvement in social transformations. Although relatively few scholars value spirituality in transformative learning, the participants' current states of consciousness could not be what they are without a fundamental shift associated with their spiritual developments in the way they experience the world. In spite of the fact that not all transformative experiences lead to social engagement,

many of my participants expressed that their transformative experiences were the critical reasons why they are leading the life of global justice. Because this research was not designed to inquire about the process of such transformative experiences, the findings are too inconclusive to be firmly placed in the conversation of transformative learning theories. However, they suggest possibilities for future research.

My findings do not present an alternative understanding of current global affairs. However, they clearly present how individuals with non-dual consciousness view the world. That is, beneath individual actors and elements—such as nation states, international organizations, global capitalists, Wall Street bankers, and consumers— there is a body of "wholeness" from which everything emerges and to which it returns. Unlike my assumption that the participants' analysis of the world determines their choice of activism, it is this sense of unified whole as well as their own experiences of transformation that had the strongest impact on their actions; namely helping others transform, and being an example of what is possible. With the sense of wholeness, in varied degree, my participants are convinced of the connection between individual transformation and global transformation. Their non-dual global justice in action is indeed a different type of activism both in form and nature. As John Miller (2002) affirms, it comes from the heart rather than the ego (which may be concerned with who is right and who is wrong) or pure rational logic. It is "how to love, care, and make a difference."

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Appendices

Appendix A [Sample Invitation Letter]

Dear [Way of Nature Fellow],

My name is Megumi (Meg) Sugihara, a resident of Crestone, Colorado and a student of John P. Milton. John suggested that I contact you because he believes you are likely to have some valuable insights to contribute to my dissertation research.

I am a PhD student in Human Development at Fielding Graduate University (base in Santa Barbara, CA, USA). My dissertation topic is global justice actions from non-dual consciousness. Through this research, I am trying to find out how persons of non-dual consciousness, who are engaged in global justice actions, would describe the current state of economic globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions.

My first questions to you are:
1) Through Way of Nature programs or in any other setting, have you experienced a sense of non-duality?
2) Do you consider yourself as engaged in global justice actions?
I understand that a "sense of non-duality" may feel like a sense of communion with all natural and other beings. The experience can be temporary or permanent, and some report identification with an egoic self, ideology and opinion also falling away. By "global justice actions," I refer to any committed efforts to make structural change for global economic justice. The actual action could be small and local—such as running a local food co-op— as long as you consider it to have effect on global structural transformation.

If you find yourself answering "yes" to both questions and are willing to participate in the interview with me, please contact me back either via e-mail: msugihara@email.fielding.edu or phone 970-485-4861 by [Date].

Should you be so generous as to join me in this inquiry, our first step together is for you to complete a short baseline survey, which should take less than 10 minutes. Once I confirm your meeting my selection criteria, we will set up a time and location for the interview. The interview is expected to take up to 2 hours and will be audio-recorded. I hope to conduct the interview face-to-face in a private setting of your convenience. However, Skype or a phone interview is also an option. Later in the year, when all interviews have been completed, you will have an opportunity to review and approve the information related to you before I include it in my dissertation.

Your participation is voluntary and your contribution will be anonymous in my reports. While I will not be able to offer any immediate compensation, together we can present examples of actions toward globally just human presence, not from the sense of separation, but from the sense

of co-creation. At the end of my study, I will share a summary of the findings, and a copy of dissertation will be made available once it is published.

Thank you for your attention to my invitation. I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,
Megumi (Meg) Sugihara

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Fielding Graduate University Institutional Review Board. Should you require any additional information, please contact Megumi Sugihara either via e-mail <msugihara@email.fielding.edu> or phone 970-485-4861.

Appendix B [Sample Announcement]

Subject: A Call for Participation—A research project on global justice actions from the point of view of non-dual consciousness

Text:

Dear Colleagues on World Social Forum-Discuss,
My name is Megumi Sugihara and am a doctoral student in Human Development at Fielding Graduate University (based in Santa Barbara, CA, USA). With this post, I would like to invite you to consider participating in my dissertation research that investigates global justice actions that is based on a non-dual consciousness. Through this research, I am trying to find out how persons of non-dual consciousness, who are engaged in global justice actions, would describe the current state of economic globalization and inequality as it relates to their actions.

My first questions to you are:
1) Have you ever experienced a sense of non-duality?
2) Do you consider yourself as engaged in global justice actions?
I understand that a "sense of non-duality" may feel like a sense of communion with all natural and other beings. The experience can be temporary or permanent, and some report identification with an egoic self, ideology and opinion also falling away. By "global justice actions," I refer to any committed efforts to make structural change for global economic justice. The actual action could be small and local or large and transnational --as long as you consider it to have effect on global structural transformation.

If you find yourself answering "yes" to both questions and are willing to participate in the interview with me, please contact me via e-mail: msugihara@email.fielding.edu by [date].

Should you be so generous as to join me in this inquiry, our first step together is for you to complete a short baseline survey, which should take less than 10 minutes. Once I confirm your meeting my selection criteria, we will set up a time and location for the interview. The interview is expected to take up to 2 hours and will be audio-recorded. I hope to conduct the interview face-to-face in a private setting of your convenience. However, Skype or a phone interview is also an option. Later in the year, when all interviews have been completed, you will have an opportunity to verify and approve the information related to you before I include it in my dissertation.

Your participation is voluntary and your contribution will be anonymous in my reports. While I will not be able to offer any compensation, together we can present examples of actions toward globally just human presence, not from the sense of separation, but from the sense of co-creation. At the end of my study, I will share a summary of the findings, and a copy of dissertation will be made available once it is published.

Thank you for your attention to my invitation and look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours faithfully,
Megumi Sugihara

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the Fielding Graduate University Institutional Review Board. Should you require any additional information, please contact Megumi Sugihara either via e-mail: msugihara@email.fielding.edu

Appendix C [Baseline Survey]

Thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation research: Global Justice Actions from Non-dual Consciousness. This survey is designed for two purposes: 1) to gather basic information about you – as a prospective participant, and 2) to determine whether your background meets the criteria as a participant in this study. Your response will be kept confidential and only the researcher, Megumi Sugihara, will have an access to the information you share. Please feel free to answer only to the extent you feel comfortable. Should you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact me via e-mail: msugihara@email.fielding.edu.

Your Full Name:

How may the researcher address you?

Organizational Affiliation:

Contact Information:

Email:

Phone Number:

Alternative Phone Number (if any):

Skype Name:

Time Zone (example: US East Cost):

Physical Mailing Address:

Demographic Information (the following information will be use only in an aggregate form):

Age:

Gender:

Current profession(s)/avocation(s):

Number of years in current profession:

Spiritual practice, if any:

Qualification Confirmation Questions:

1. Briefly, please describe your experience that you consider non-dual. (When? What happened? What was your inner experience like?)

2. Please tell me about your global justice work? How do you see your action(s) addressing global economic inequality?

If you have any other thoughts you would like to share with me on this topic, please feel free to jot it down in the space below.

Thank you very much!
Upon receipt of your response, I will contact you within a few days to discuss our next step.

Appendix D [Interview Protocol]

Introduction:

- Introduction of myself
- Informed consent, reminder of the right of the participants, "plan of the day"
- Permission for audio-recording
- Setting a stage: Non-duality and social engagement [listen to audio recording of Adayshanti Falling into Grace Session 2, section 8, 3:30-5:57… see transcript below. I am using audio recording in place of written definition to tap into participants' multiple senses, especially non-rational one that is considered significant in non-dual consciousness.]

"Today, I would like to hear your stories of global justice actions from your non-dual experiences."

Non-Dual Consciousness:
"Let's start with some questions about your experience of non-duality. You have written in the baseline survey about your experience."

- Can you tell me more about the time when you experienced non-duality? Where were you? What happened? Who else was involved? What was it like internally? How did you make sense of your experience? Any insights you received?
- How abiding/stable/pervasive has the sense of non-duality [oneness, unity, sense of identity falling away, loosened grasp on mind, etc. use the word the participants use to describe their experience] been? Have you had more than one experience? How has it been evolving over time?
- How has the experience of non-duality influenced the way you see and interact with the world around you? Your everyday life? Your work? The world? Your actions for global justice?

Globalization and Global Inequality:

"Let us focus for a moment on the state of the world."

- Could you share with me how the current state of the world looks to you? Is it in crisis, in perfect order, neither, both, or how else might you describe it?
- Tell me your thoughts about globalization. And what about economic globalization? Tell me your thoughts about globalization and economic inequality? In your view, who are the main actors and what are our (people's) roles in it?

Global Justice Actions:

"Given the backdrop that we have just described as the current state of the world, you've mentioned in the baseline survey that you take actions toward global justice."

- Tell me about your global justice work. What exactly do you do? How long have you been involved?
- How did you come to be engaged in this particular work?
- How has your approach to global justice changed over the years? Can you give us early and current examples? How has this progressed?
- Tell me about a specific time when you felt you are really making a difference, very effective, or simply just felt really good about what you do? What happened? How do you see your work contributing to making a systemic change?
- Can you think of a time when your experience of non-duality interacted with your global justice work? What happened? Did your non-dual experience lead you to your action, action led to non-duality, or have they developed side-by-side? How do they inform each other?

Wrapping up:

- Has anything new, a thought, or an insight come to you during this interview about non-dual global justice actions?
- Any final thoughts or questions you'd like to share?
- Do you know anyone else you might recommend that I talk with on this topic?

[Transcript of the opening quote]

> The whole world, almost, would agree with us that certain things shouldn't be happening. … And so we feel very justified in our arguments …. We might even feel fear as if "if I did not argue with what's happening now, maybe it would never change."… But the more we say something shouldn't be happening, that more it continues to be happening. …. As soon as we say something shouldn't be happening, we lock ourselves in very very narrow mindset with very few options. But when we really see that what is IS, neither good nor bad, it just IS, then all options are available to us. …When we see what is is what is, it actually opens up creative responses. Ways of engaging with what is that aren't based on separation; that aren't based on denial. But instead based on human heart, in love, in compassion, and wisdom.
>
> —— Adyashanti. (2012). Falling into Grace. Session 2, section 8, 3:30-5:57

[I will have the following additional quotes at hand to elicit participants' reactions as needed.]

> "When you don't see any suffering anywhere, for the first time you can really alleviate suffering. When you see all things as perfect, you can begin to help them get better."
> — Arjuna Ardagh. The translucent revolution: How people just like you are waking up and changing the world. P. 413.

> "…. confronting the situation and having compassion in our hearts, ways of acting came by themselves. You cannot prefabricate techniques of nonviolent action and put them into a book for people to use. … If you are alert and creative, you will know what to do and what not to do."
> — Thich Nhat Hanh. Love in action. P. 47

> "How do we tell the truth without demonizing the opponent in judgmental, polarizing, and self-righteous speech?"
> Donald Rothberg, D. The engaged spiritual live: A Buddhist approach to transforming ourselves and the world. P.29

[Also, I will have quotes and examples from participants' own published works —books, articles, lectures, etc.— to ask about specific events related to the interviewee.]

Appendix E [Sample initial contact e-mail after modification]

Dear Mary,

With enthusiastic and recurrent encouragement by our common friend William Smith, I am writing to you with a hope that I will be able to have a conversation with you on my dissertation topic: Love, Care, and Make a Difference: Non-Dual Global Justice in Action.

My name is Megumi (Meg) Sugihara, a Crestone resident of about 4.5 years. Our other common friend, Kathy Jones believes we both were at a small gathering on local water management a couple of weeks ago. I am a doctoral student at Fielding Graduate University (school is base in Santa Barbara, California) in Human and Organizational Development. Through my dissertation research, I am interested in finding out how people who have experienced a sense of non-duality describe current state of global inequality (my interest is focused on economic structural inequality, but not limited to) and what actions they might take to work toward creating more just global community. As one of my research participants helped me put it in more plain words, I am gathering stories of non-dual global justice in action. At this time, I am looking for someone who is involved in global justice actions and have experienced sense of connection with all beings (which some call "non-dual consciousness"), and is willing to share their experience with me in a short interview. The participants' stories will be aggregated in themes and reported anonymously in my dissertation.

Do you think you might be able to spare about one hour of your time to talk with me on this topic? If so, I would be hugely grateful. William cautioned me that you might be very busy until mid April. If that is indeed the case, I would be happy to wait until your schedule has more space.

Thank you for giving my request a consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you. Just in case phone is a better mode of communication, my cell number is 970-485-4861.

Wishing you a happy spring day!

Sincerely,

Megumi Sugihara
phone 970-485-4861
msugihara@email.fielding.edu