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DEVELOPING WISDOM AND COURAGE IN ORGANIZING AND SCIENCING

William R. Torbert

THIS CHAPTER, focusing on the health care industry, explores how the development of personal and organizational wisdom and courage can intersect. In health care, as in other industries, this transformation occurs not through objective research that leads to findings, then policies, and then actions undertaken to implement those policies. Rather, it can occur only through a process that is altogether unknown to most scholars and practitioners, though it has been known, partially and distortedly, by some ever since ancient times. This transformational process integrates personal, interpersonal, and wider organizational and social change through what I call first-, second-, and third-person research and practice.

What these involve is described more fully later. First, an illustration from health care offers an initial sense of what these terms mean. Later sections explore what kind of organizing structures and what type of social science encourage the integration of first-, second-, and third-person research and practice. But, for starters, these are the kinds of research that we adults can conduct in the midst of our daily activities of working, loving, and wondering.

THE U.S. HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY TODAY

As participants in it, we all know and feel that the U.S. health care industry—the nation's largest industry—is experiencing a tumultuous process of transformation (Fisher and Torbert, 1995). I myself have been engaged in second-person research and practice in relation to the industry for twenty years, initially simply as a member of a health management organization (HMO), later consulting to another HMO for five years, and still later serving on the board of the new, merged organization that combined these two organizations.

We all are relearning—though slowly, ambivalently, and inarticulately—the ancient wisdom that true health is preeminently an ongoing first-person research project or activity (though often more enthusiastically undertaken in association with others, as in the case of my father's daily water exercise class at age eighty-six). A general definition of health-enhancing first-person research and practice might include something like proactive, self-initiated exercise—whether mental (for example, meditation), emotional, or physical—engaged in with an ongoing sensitivity to the pace that best suits oneself (physically, such exercise usually reaches fruition in working up a sweat). By contrast, health is neither well conceived nor well maintained when treated as a taken-for-granted condition to be rectified by an occasional, technological fix based on third-person research.

Furthermore, we are beginning to learn that the daily character of our second-person research and practice—our associational activities at work, within our family, and at leisure—are critical to making our health and our life as a whole better or worse (Karasek and Theorell, 1991). Or as Sheila McNamee puts it in Chapter Five, "We must consider how to attend to the movement of conversations in and around our organizations. This is what gives life to an organization. The pulsing of realities in the making is the heart of organizational life."

Thus one can say that the primary issue in future health care research and practice—both medical and organizational—will be how to integrate third-person scientific research and institutional practice with first- and second-person research and practice. An example at the micro, or interpersonal, level is the relationship between a general practitioner and an ongoing patient. At its best this is an example of second-person research that encourages heightened first-person research and practice on the part of the patient (such as my father's water exercise) and simultaneously integrates a third-person research

background into the patient's and physician's understanding of the case. Note, however, that at present medical schools strongly emphasize third-person research. They encourage the best students to become specialists who will focus on third-person research rather than generalists who will integrate first-, second-, and third-person research and practice (Howe, 1996). Note too, as will be discussed at greater length later, that modern science has tended to privilege third-person ("objective") research over first-person ("subjective") and second-person ("intersubjective") research. One wonders what kind of science can integrate first-, second-, and third-person research and practice, a question we will explore further.

But first back to health care. What is happening in health care today at the macro, industrywide, institutional scale? On the one hand, Columbia/HCA and other large, for-profit hospital chains are redefining the industry. Also, Kaiser Permanente and other multistate not-for-profit HMOs are rapidly merging. Such huge managed care organizations can threaten the traditional first-person independence of medical practitioners with third-person institutional controls—a frequent occurrence according to media reports. On the other hand, the new health management organizations can invent new standards of mutuality, interdisciplinarity, and peer review (Reason, 1994, 1995). By emphasizing the quality improvements to be gained through effective second-person research and practice among doctors and within individual practices, these new standards encourage an integration of first-person independence with second-person interdependence and third-person institutional challenge. This is more or less the story one hears from the executives of merging HMOs.

For example, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, the largest New England HMO, is currently crafting a fifty-fifty "true not-for-profit partnership" with its Health Centers Division, which will make its current doctor-employees both more independent and more interdependent, rather than merely dependent on a third-person institution. It will offer them greater rewards for successful practice while at the same time requiring them to assume a greater share of the overall organizational risk and confronting them with hard questions about what constitutes excellent health care. Instead of vesting controlling power either in the parent organization or in the health centers themselves, the fifty-fifty partnership reminds both entities that maintaining a healthy (second-person research and practice) relationship is a key to the success of each. The intent is to structurally empower each partner equally, yet not vest either with enough power to act in an irresponsible way with

respect to the other. How well this new (counterintuitive) ownership structure will work remains to be seen. Its skeletal outline, however, is an example of the kind of third-person organizational structure one would create with the aim of integrating first-person, second-person, and third-person research and practice.

FIRST-PERSON, SECOND-PERSON, AND THIRD-PERSON RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Working from this initial, brief illustration of health care, let us explore what more generally constitutes each of the three types of research and practice and then what type of organizing and sciencing interweave first-person, second-person, and third-person research and practice. It should already be clear that this conceptualization of research and practice is about integrating courage and wisdom—experiments and tests of validity—in real-time interactions and that movement in this direction will transform our organizing, our sciencing, and our personal awareness.

Let us begin with first-person research and practice. In general this includes all of those forms of research and practice that one can do by oneself. This includes a variety of forms of writing—for example, journals or diaries, episodic or comprehensive memoirs or autobiographies, records of dreams or of daydreams of future scenarios (these can all become sources for second-person and third-person research and practice as well; see Torbert and Fisher, 1992; Fisher and Torbert, 1995). First-person research and practice also includes the varieties (and there are many) of meditation and prayer, either as distinct activities in a distinctive setting or in the midst of one's everyday activities. Furthermore, first-person research and practice can include chanting, asking questions of the *I Ching* (the ancient Chinese "book of changes") or tarot cards, dancing (for example, dervish whirling or Gurdjieffian movements), or otherwise physically exercising in an awareness-widening fashion. It can include craft or artistic work engaged in not primarily for the sake of the end product but for the experience of awareness and discovery felt during the activity itself.

To expand on just one of these first-person events, there is an immense, virtually unexplored challenge in trying to write autobiographically—first for oneself, second for feedback from trusted others ("second persons"), and third for feedback from strangers ("third persons"). Such autobiographical writing will not look much like the vast majority of published autobiographies. For in writing autobiographically as

research and practice one seeks not to tell a predigested story or to construct a harmonious symphony that others will like but rather to record the less coherent quality of one's evolving life, in search of transforming ways of making meaning in one's ongoing relationships and projects. Insofar as such an autobiography is shared, it will first be shared with trusted others for the educational value of the subsequent conversation (and will thus become second-person research and practice). If shared publicly, the motive will be to initiate a wider conversation with the reader's life explorations.

Rousseau's *Confessions* come closer to this aim than St. Augustine's, since the latter offered the stock "reformed sinner" story. Closer still, it seems to me, are three contemporary books written in the middle of evolving lives: one by a Chinese woman in the Red Guard (Ang Min's *Red Azalea*, 1993), one by the poet Martha Ramsey (*Where I Stopped: Remembering Rape at Thirteen*, 1995), and one by our social scientist–consultant colleague Roger Harrison (1995). Ramsey's book, particularly, gives the reader a feel for how her much-later second-person research with other participants into the original events and trial described in the narrative reverberated back on her ongoing first-person search.

There has been a recent explosion of autobiographical sharing in our profession (Alderfer, 1988, 1989; Bateson, 1984; Bedeain, 1993; *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 1989), but only rarely does a sense of suffering and learning from exploring previously undigested experiences and patterns show through (I would count as such Alderfer, 1989; Bateson, 1984; Harrison, 1995; the Starbuck and Weick chapters in Bedeain, 1993; and the autobiographical portion of Torbert, 1991). One requirement for doctoral dissertations in management from the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice at the University of Bath is that they include a self-exploratory autobiographical essay. Even though we do not yet have clear standards of rigor in this domain, the very effort of self-criticism, self-theorizing, self-inquiry seems an ethical responsibility in a profession where each practitioner can wield significant power through his or her ideas, pedagogy, publications, or consultancies.

First-Person Research and Practice

Writing autobiographically is a highly imaginative, emotional, and reflective form of first-person research and practice. It should not be our only example of first-person research and practice, however,

because it occurs too much within the current scholarly mode of reflecting and writing. Thus it may obscure the universes beyond contemporary social science that are implied by the notion of integrating research and practice, action and inquiry, courage and wisdom. To correct any such misdirection, let us explore briefly what kind of exercise—literal, physical, or dramatic—counts as first-person research and practice that can develop personal wisdom and courage.

Most forms of repetitive exercise that can be done absentmindedly do *not* count. If, however, without knowing just how I am going to move, I find myself taking and keeping, and breathing into and out from, the position of a Squatting Monkey,[1] I begin to feel more like a monkey. I hear birds outside as my monkey does. And my images—my hypotheses—multiply. I envision myself as having been a monkey in a former life. Yet when I try to taste the validity of that idea, I find that it is merely a distraction—a cowardly way out—from experiencing this strange feeling of my monkeyness now. Consequently I find the hypothesis that this is our one and only life more plausible than the many-lives hypothesis.

Put differently, even if it is not ultimately true that this is our one and only life, we ought to *act* as though it is. That means we should enter into our physical being as much as possible in order to feel the sensation of our presence here. So the exercise I need to try each morning is to begin to do that. Merely going out and running around the mile-and-a-half trail in the park near here doesn't necessarily accomplish that for me. It can be a tremendously inefficient way to accomplish this waking to my physical being. (I don't mean inefficient in the sense of wasting my time. My time out there is never wasted; the more time I spend running the better off I am. Instead I am referring to how quickly I can wake up to my physical presence, my sensations.)

You might try a physical exercise right now, as you are reading this, simply for the sake of experiencing and reexperiencing your bodily presence and thus becoming more present. If you are in a reclining chair, or whatever your posture, simply turn one of your wrists slightly and begin very slowly to exercise your fingers. Especially if you are slightly arthritic, as I am, this exercise can provide a tremendous thrill of reencountering a part of yourself that you deserve to know continually.

The kind of physical exercise I recommend as an aid in the search for wisdom and courage, for being present at all times and aware of the shape of one's current research and practice, is a kind of continual invention—for example, walking forward, then turning and walking

backward for a time; skipping; twirling slowly first one way, then the other; raising your hands high above your head, then letting them hang at your sides. When I have great energy it can all be in the pantomime of a jester; ordinarily, however, I am so cowardly that neighbors passing me notice nothing extraordinary about my pace, since I adjust it to match their version of normality when I espy them, as I usually do well before they espy me. But again, my early-morning physical exercise is at best an analogue for the kind of physical exercise I can perform right now, as I compose on my word processor, and now, as I . . .

Such are two of the many flavors of first-person research. May this chapter invite you to explore this world of first-, second-, and third-person research and practice further for yourself, to seek out and participate in creating cooperative inquiries with colleagues and friends and to practice liberating disciplines (defined later in the chapter) within your family and other long-term communities of practice. May your sense of valid research and effective practice transform more than once during your remaining lifetime. And may you meet death itself inquiringly.

Second-Person Research and Practice

Second-person research and practice includes all the times we engage in supportive, self-disclosing, or confrontational acts with others in shared first-person research and practice. Another way of putting this is that second-person research and practice includes all conversations where those present share an intent to learn about themselves, about the others present, about a shared activity, or about the relationships that are forming, transforming, or dissolving. This can happen, but in empirical terms only rarely does happen in a therapeutic or consulting relationship; between friends or lovers; among team members at work, at school, or at play; in a theatrical production or improvisation; between a doctor, lawyer, or other professional and his or her client; and, of course, between a master-teacher and one or more apprentice-pupils. If such conversations are audiotaped or videotaped, then the resulting tapes can be used in further first-person research and practice, second-person research and practice, or third-person research and practice.

Second-person research and practice is characterized by alternations between rehearsal and performance, by periodic feedback among the participants about their perceptions of themselves and others present, and by periodic "feedforward" about what vision and strategies ought to guide continued action. At its best, second-person research and prac-

tice gradually transform hierarchical relationships into more peerlike arrangements (or else simply conclude them, if they are purely professional). This transformation toward an "I and Thou" partnership is the normative direction of second-person research and practice, because peers are those most empowered to challenge, support, balance, and understand one another—that is, to conduct valid research together (Buber, 1958; Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987; Heron, 1996; Grudin, 1996; Jourard, 1968; Kramer, 1995; Rank, 1978; Reason, 1994, 1995; Rogers, 1961; Torbert, 1991). One of the characteristics of many interpersonal situations that keeps them from becoming more courageous and wise integrations of action and inquiry is that one or some or all of the parties act in ways that reinforce differences in unilateral power or hierarchical status, thus obstructing the development of mutuality.

As with first-person research and practice, the quality standards for second-person research and practice are little developed (outside of third-person research on psychotherapy; for example, see Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). Heron's *Cooperative Inquiry* (1996) is the most recent contribution to developing such standards, and one way of reading the subfield of "action science" (Argyris, Putnam, and Smith, 1985; Schön, 1983; Torbert, 1976, 1981) is as an early attempt to chart the territory of effective and valid second-person research and practice. But there is a long road to be traveled here. Determining which genre best communicates second-person research and practice in third-person publication venues is a little-discussed artistic and scientific dilemma. For example, although the *Journal of Management Inquiry* has developed a section on dialogue, it has in fact published no dialogues that exemplify second-person research and practice. Without a doubt the foremost and most sophisticated exemplars of second-person research and practice in a third-person publication venue remain, after nearly 2,500 years, Plato's dialogues. What is striking about the most sophisticated readings of Plato (for example, Bloom, 1967; Kaplan, 1997; Schmid, 1993) is that they re-present the dialogues as an exercise of second-person research and practice, not only in terms of the educational drama (the second-person research and practice) among the characters in the text but also in terms of the educational drama between the text and each reader, who accepts the invitation to engage in the inquiry (which is why the dialogues do not end with obvious "right answers"). A very different example of how a text can not only re-present dramatic first- and second-person research and practice that occurred in the past but also invite second-person research and practice between the reader and the text is Gurdjieff's *Life Is Real Only Then When 'I Am'* (1981).

Third-Person Research and Practice

Third-person research and practice can be of two very different sorts. The first sort, which is by far the most common, does not really qualify as research and practice at all, because it conceptually and operationally segregates research from practice. Whether as research or as practice, this third-person mode develops impersonal structures to which subordinate participants (whether research subjects or employees) are expected to conform. Furthermore, this third-person mode (whether in sciencing or in organizing) does not encourage ongoing first-person or second-person research and practice among participants, does not encourage challenges or transformation of the predetermined structures, and does not encourage transformation of the hierarchical power relationships at the outset into more peerlike relationships. Such is the nature of behaviorist research; of empirical-positivist research, more generally (see Table 10.1 and, in more detail, Exhibit 10.2 later in the chapter); of bureaucratic organizing (see "Systematic Productivity" in Stage V on Table 10.1); and of much of the actual practice of Total Quality Management and reengineering programs (practices that frequently correspond to systematic productivity, even though the rhetoric of collaborative inquiry is used).

The second, much more rare kind of third-person research and practice also begins by developing impersonal structures for persons initially unknown to the initiators of the organizing process. In all other respects, however, the aims of "true" third-person research and practice differ from those of bureaucratic organizing and positivist research. First and foremost, the actual tasks defined by true third-person research and practice structures *require* that participants engage in first- and second-person research and practice (expanding their awareness and exercising increasing creativity and choice) in order to accomplish the goals. Moreover, even though subordinate participants are initially expected to conform to the predefined structures, they are simultaneously encouraged and educated to confront them if they appear to be incongruous with the organizational mission. Put differently, true third-person research and practice structures create dilemmas and choices, not just constraints, for the participants. The resolution of these dilemmas demand leadership by the participants, along with increasing ability to translate the organization's or practice tradition's mission into strategies, actions, and outcomes that are increasingly congruent. Such organizational structures—and only such organizational structures—create the increasing mutuality that both

Table 10.1.   Analogies Among Personal, Organizational, and Social-Scientific Developmental Paths.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
I.	Birth-Impulsive (0–6 years)	Conception	Anarchism (Feyerabend, 1975)

Multiple, distinctive impulses gradually resolve into a characteristic approach (for example, many fantasies resolve into a particular dream for a new organization).

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
II.	Opportunist (7–12 years?)	Investment	Behaviorism

Dominant task: gain power (for example, by learning to ride a bike) to have desired effect on outside world.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
III.	Diplomatic (12 years–?)	Incorporation	Gestalt Sociologism

Looking glass self: understanding others' culture and expectations and molding one's own actions to succeed by their (for example, market) terms.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
IV.	Technician (16 years–?)	Experiments	Empirical Positivism

Intellectual mastery of outside systems such that actions equal experiments that confirm or disconfirm hypotheses and lead toward valid certainty.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
V.	Achiever (20? years–?)	Systematic Productivity	Multimethod Eclecticism

Pragmatic triangulation among plan and theory, operation and implementation, and outcome and evaluation in an incompletely predefined environment.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
VI.	Strategist (30? years–?)	Collaborative Inquiry	Postmodern Interpretivism

Self-conscious mission and philosophy, sense of timing and historicity, invitation to conversation among multiple voices and to reframe boundaries.

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
VII.	Magician/Witch/Clown (40? years–?)	Foundational Community of Inquiry	Cooperative Inquiry

Life/science equals a mind/matter, love/death/transformation praxis among others, cultivating interplay and reattunement among inquiry, friendship, work, and material goods.

Table 10.1. *(continued)*

Stage	Personal Development	Organizational Development	Social-Scientific Development
VIII.	Ironist (50? years–?)	Liberating Disciplines	Developmental Action Inquiry

Full acceptance of multiparadigmatic nature of human consciousness and reality, including distances and alienation among paradigms, such that (1) few recognize paradigm differences as cause of wars, (2) few seek paradigm disconfirmation and transformation, and (3) few face the dilemma or paradox of "empowering leadership": that it must work indirectly through ironic words, gestures, and event-structures that create a moment-to-moment field of choice.

IX.

Behaviorism	Control of the other (through "operant conditioning")	
Gestalt Sociologism	Understanding of the other (better than that other's self-understanding)	
Empirical Positivism	Predictive certainty (*valid* certainty)	
Multimethod Eclecticism	Useful approximation (through triangulation)	
Postmodern Interpretivism	Re-presentation of perspectival pluralism (without privileging the writer's own perspective—"Ha ha!")	
Cooperative Inquiry	Creating transformational communities of inquiry (among mutually committed members with multiple perspectives)	
Developmental Action Inquiry	Enacting inquiry and liberating disciplines (across initially estranged cultures without shared purposes)	

supports and results from personal, group, organizational, and episte-mological transformations (along the developmental paths shown in Table 10.1). Through this process, and through the initiating leaders' demonstrated willingness to clarify the mission and restructure where incongruities appear, the organizational structure becomes increasingly peer-centered. The leadership alertness and appropriate vulnerability required to be willing and able to generate such third-person research and practice is, of course, rare and can be generated only through long and continuing first- and second- person research and practice.

Such organizational structures, which I sketch in the next two sec-tions, deserve the name "liberating disciplines" (see Stage VIII in Table 10.1; Torbert, 1974, 1978, 1991; Fisher and Torbert, 1995, for more detailed contextualization and illustration). As defined below, such organizational structures—and only such structures—will reliably develop increasing personal and organizational wisdom and courage among the participants.

SHORT ILLUSTRATIONS OF LIBERATING DISCIPLINES

The following heuristics and mini case studies of "ordinary" business situations in which the members gradually fashioned liberating disci-plines (without ever calling them such or knowing the theory offered here) can introduce us to the "field" of liberating disciplines.

The simplest heuristic for creating a liberating discipline is first to list all the limiting conditions (such as lack of money, employees with-out the right skills, and so on) that prevent one from accomplishing some desired goal and then to set about inventing a structure that rec-ognizes and even uses these limits to reach the goal. In principle this amounts to no more than the old saw, "turn problems into opportuni-ties." But this cliche is as rarely enacted as it is regularly espoused, especially in the domain of creating social structures for doing tasks. For example, a strategic change team I was once part of, composed of faculty from different departments at a management school, decided that one of its limiting conditions was each member's propensity, as an academic, to argue and to need to be right. Faculty groups can easily argue themselves into terminal depression and withdrawal rather than agreeing to anything. Rather than attempting any number of compli-cated and covert means of overcoming this limiting condition, we sim-ply recognized it and made a game of making fast decisions. Once several decisions had been made the limiting condition no longer

existed, so the elaborate structure temporarily set in place to make fast decisions was no longer necessary. The group determined this through its own second-person research and practice.

A second simple heuristic for creating a liberating discipline, which the foregoing illustration also exemplifies, is to create a structure that, if it works, will become unnecessary. The most fundamental reason why liberating disciplines are necessary in the first place is that few human beings today exercise vulnerable, mutuality-enhancing, transforming power (Torbert, 1991). Few take full executive responsibility for the effects of their actions or treat others as true peers. The most fundamental aim of liberating disciplines, therefore, is to cultivate the development of subordinates and leaders toward the later stages through the transforming power of engaging them in first-, second-, and third-person research and practice. Hence, if liberating disciplines succeed, organizational members will increasingly take executive responsibility, increasingly treat one another as peers, render the original liberating discipline unnecessary, and increasingly create their own liberating disciplines.

A third simple heuristic for creating liberating disciplines is to ask oneself how to maximize both of two apparently opposite values, such as power and justice or inquiry and productivity. Usually we think we have to sacrifice one of these for the other or else compromise between the two. Totally new solutions to such dilemmas begin to suggest themselves, however, if we disdain our competitive assumptions and seek counterintuitive solutions. Thus the following, longer example shows how in one organization both the managers and the workers increased their ability to control discipline in the workplace, rather than empowering one party at the expense of the other.

The disciplinary procedure they instituted gradually developed at a company that had created autonomous production groups (Novelli and others, 1989). One value was the desire to be true to the vision of the autonomous groups and to have them be responsible for their own discipline problems. The opposing value was to centralize disciplinary decisions for efficiency, effectiveness, objectivity, and fairness (both within and across groups) in the decisions that were actually made. Although it was initially assumed that these work groups would manage their own disciplinary issues, no definite logistics were put in place for them to do so. Two difficulties arose.

First, the work teams often had difficulty disciplining themselves because to do so required confrontation and differentiation among group members (an example of moderately sophisticated second-

person research and practice, which is not typically learned at school or in the workplace). Not only was this an uncustomary practice, it also seemed likely, to many team members, to hurt team spirit and working relations. Indeed, some teams began to ask senior management to handle their disciplinary problems for them.

Meanwhile, a whole class of unanticipated disciplinary problems arose (for example, stealing by workers in contexts unrelated to team activities). These seemed to require senior management action, but such centralized discipline seemed to many workers to violate the principle of work group–centered discipline.

Eventually, when faced with the need to reduce labor costs by a certain percentage during an economic downturn, the company (in response to workers' concerns) offered the work teams forty-eight hours to propose their own solutions to the problem. The teams offered a fully satisfactory set of proposals, which were implemented. But more important, the company realized it had invented a generalizable structure for resolving future disciplinary issues—what I would call a liberating discipline, since it both constrained and empowered participants and maximized two apparently opposing values, centralized direction and local options. Thereafter the work teams could choose either to deal with a given disciplinary issue within forty-eight hours or else let senior management deal with it. Senior management, in turn, could either accept the work team solution, if one were proposed, or impose its own solution. If a given work team were never to exercise self-discipline, or if senior management were never to accept a given team's recommendations, then such patterns would raise further questions and invite creative second-person and third-person research and practice. This way both parties possessed well-focused power and responsibility for action, and a breakdown in mutuality would be relatively easy to recognize.

A THEORY OF LIBERATING DISCIPLINES

The theory of liberating disciplines departs radically from all of our received notions of organizing—both top-down, constraining, bureaucratic, authoritarian, "Theory X" structures and bottom-up, participative, organic, democratic, "Theory Y" structures. Indeed, the theory of liberating discipline reverses the very definition of organization.

Listen to Katz and Kahn's definition (1978) in *The Social Psychology of Organizations:* "The organizational context is by definition a set of restrictions for focusing attention upon certain content

areas and for narrowing the cognitive style to certain types of procedures. This is the inherent constraint. To call a social structure organized means that the degrees of freedom in the situation have been limited. Hence organizations often suffer from the failure to recognize the dilemma character of a situation and from blind persistence in sticking to terms of reference on the basis of which the problem is insoluble" (p. 277).

Let us attempt to create the mirror image opposite this definition of organizational structure, to define an organizing process that truly cultivates transforming research and practices through liberating disciplines. For the notion of a "constraining organizational structure," with its suggestion of an objective, external, social boundary superimposed on undisciplined, subjective persons, we can substitute the phrase "liberating social-psychological discipline." The word *liberating* mirrors the word *constraining*. And the term *social-psychological discipline* mirrors the term *organizational structure,* though less obviously so. In this mirror organization persons voluntarily take on new disciplines, based on internal commitment, rather than submitting and externally conforming to an external structure. The words *social-psychological* indicate that the social and the psychological penetrate each other, whereas the word *organization* suggests discontinuity between the personal (the psychological) and the social (the organizational).

But the phrase "liberating social-psychological discipline" is really too awkward to use. Let us shorten it, therefore, to "liberating disciplines"—a felicitous paradox that may open us to the mystery of effective organizing, stated in the plural to highlight the multiplicity of forms that the abstract definition will embrace. Now we have some of the reasoning that leads to the choice of the name "liberating disciplines" for this as yet rarely rediscovered form of organizing.

Continuing in this fashion to create a mirror image of the Katz and Kahn definition, with some poetic license we can produce the following initial definition of a liberating discipline on the left side of the page, with the Katz and Kahn conception on the right:

A liberating discipline	An organizational context
is by experience	is by definition
a set of challenges	a set of restrictions
for questioning (the quality of one's) attention	for focusing one's attention
and widening it	and narrowing it

and one's cognitive-emotional tracking to include the enacted task, process, and mission.	*and one's cognitive style onto certain types of procedures.*
This is the enacted dynamism.	*This is the inherent constraint.*
To call a social-psychological process liberating means that the degrees of freedom and discipline in the situation are expanding.	*To call a social structure organized means that the degrees of freedom in the situation have been limited.*
Hence organizations that cultivate transforming inquiry rarely suffer from the failure to recognize the dilemma character of a situation and from blind persistence in sticking to terms of reference on the basis of which the problem is insoluble.	*Hence organizations often suffer from the failure*

This definition means that a leadership intent on generating liberating disciplines will regard every organizational dilemma, directive, task, and encounter as an opportunity to challenge the attention of itself and others. The aim of each action, then, is never merely to accomplish a predetermined end but to widen the attention of participants, to get them to question and see whether the mission, strategy, present action, and outcome are congruous. At its most challenging such leadership action generates tasks that are incomprehensible and undoable without developing an ongoing awareness of the accompanying social-psychological processes and purposes (that is, without developing ongoing interplay among first-, second-, and third-person research and practice).

Liberating disciplines are inherently dynamic. Whatever structure is created at a given time is meant to evolve over time as the membership's overall awareness and initiative increases. Indeed, the leadership may initiate radical structural changes as much to heighten inquiry as to accomplish some predetermined end. Through liberating disciplines, both leaders and members can properly challenge the passive tendency to treat a given organizational structure as immutable and encourage instead a continuing search for a thread of meaning from

the organization's mission or purpose, through cognitive structuring and restructuring, and through both passionate and dispassionate embodied action, resulting in visible events and products.

Two more corollaries about liberating disciplines follow directly from the foregoing comments. First, the appropriateness, legitimacy, or efficacy of a given organizational structure is in principle open to challenge by any organizational member at any time. Such challenges can function both to heighten members' vigilance and to better align organizational purposes, processes, practices, and profits. Incongruities among the organizational mission, strategies, operations, and outcomes are inevitable. But the leadership gains legitimacy and the organization as a whole gains confidence and efficacy by seeking out such incongruities and correcting them.

The second corollary points to the obverse condition: the leadership becomes vulnerable, in practice, to public discrediting if it acts inauthentically. That is, the leadership rapidly loses legitimacy if its tasks, processes, and purposes become incongruent with one another and it refuses to acknowledge and correct such incongruities. Thus in a very real sense the leadership of an organization that cultivates transforming inquiry puts itself in a highly vulnerable position. From the outset the leadership engages in a major calculated risk intended to generate increasing mutuality throughout the organization. It is no doubt their dim intuition that such is the case that keeps most organizational leaders from adopting this whole approach to organizing (and, of course, the fact that it cannot be adopted all at once in any event). However, we may predict that organizational leaders who have participated in liberating disciplines for a generation or more of their adulthood will actively seek out such conditions in order to keep themselves vigilant— in order to support their own first-person efforts to interweave moment-to-moment action and inquiry and to develop mutuality in their second-person research and practice. Moreover, they will understand that their social authenticity and mutuality with persons at all levels of conventional hierarchies, as well as their organizational transforming power, derive from their vulnerability.

At the same time, however, there is another side to this leadership vulnerability. When organizational members are young in their commitment to liberating disciplines, their attention is still predominantly restricted to what William Blake called single-visioned sleep (seeing the outside world as the only objective territory of experience, and not witnessing their own acting, thinking, and attending as equally real). As a result, their charges of leaderly or organizational incongruities may
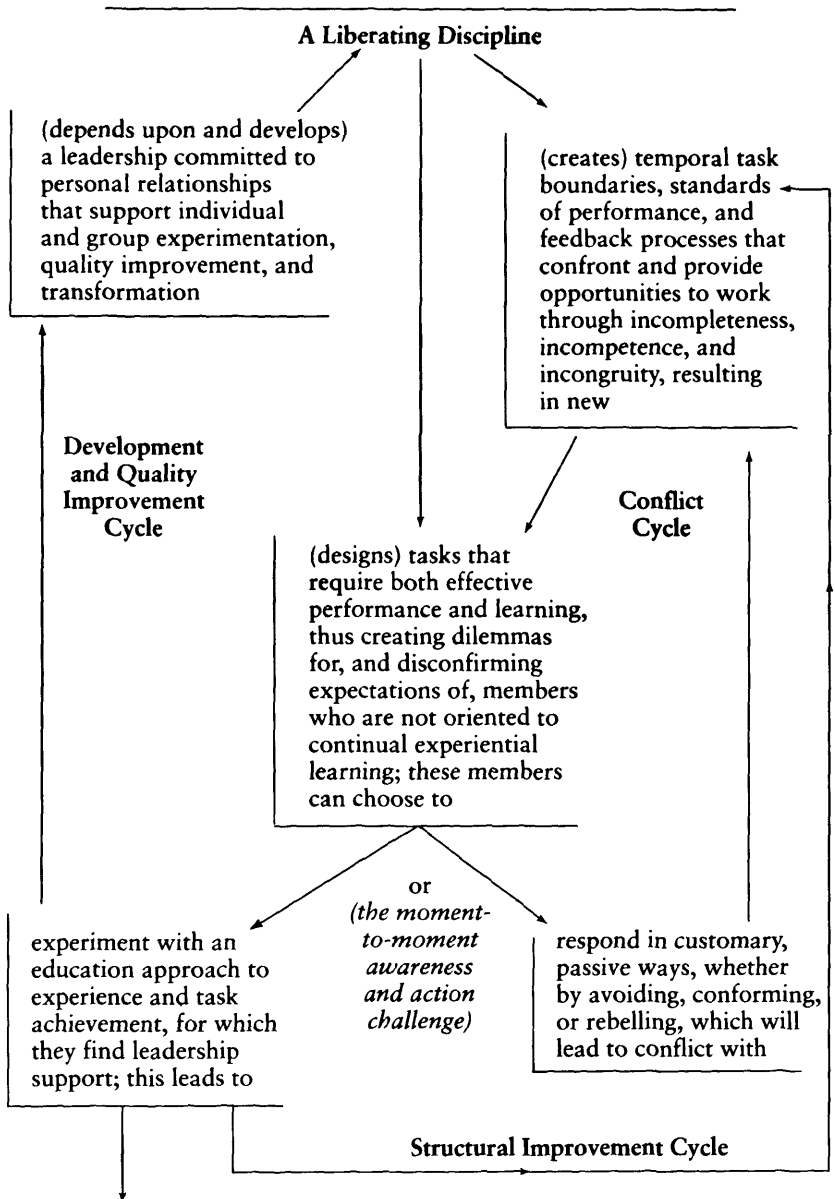
well be invalid and untrustworthy. Such charges may reflect their inability to apply Blake's "fourfold vision" (simultaneous awareness of purpose, process, action, and outcome) to themselves and their organization. An attentive leadership with such vision will turn conflicts into educational opportunities by challenging the charging members to retreat and taste and digest unexpected feedback. Indeed, the more adept the leadership is at interweaving action and inquiry, the more it will risk using all available forms of power to create a rich context for transforming inquiry, recognizing as it does so that no genuine personal or organizational transformation can be forced (Torbert, 1991).

All of the foregoing characteristics of liberating disciplines highlight the courage and wisdom required of a leadership to commit to such an organizing process in the first place, as well as the continual operation of this mode of organizing in developing courage and wisdom among all participants. Figure 10.1 offers a pictorial view of the dynamics of liberating disciplines and of the central role of free choice for all organizational participants at all times.

INTEGRATING FIRST-, SECOND-, AND THIRD-PERSON RESEARCH AND PRACTICE IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL SCIENCES

It is difficult to offer examples of scholars in our field who work at integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice. To do so requires working through a paradigmatic lens that is enormously different from empirical positivism, multimethod eclecticism, or even postmodern interpretivism—the three paradigmatic approaches that currently enjoy the greatest voice in the management academy and in management journals (see Exhibits 10.1 and 10.2). The paradigmatic approach that goes furthest at present in integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice (and that therefore corresponds to the just-described organizational approach of liberating disciplines) is what Table 10.1 and Exhibits 10.1 and 10.2 call developmental action inquiry. To my knowledge only two, little-known books are based on such an approach (Fisher and Torbert, 1995; Torbert, 1991). But let us examine briefly, by studying the table and exhibits in conjunction with the following paragraphs, how postmodern interpretivism points toward first-person research and practice, and the paradigmatic approach of cooperative inquiry toward second-person research and practice, in a process of paradigm transformation that moves toward integrating all three modes of research and practice.

**Figure 10.1. Dynamic Model of the Operation
of a Liberating Discipline.**

A Liberating Discipline

(depends upon and develops)
a leadership committed to
personal relationships
that support individual
and group experimentation,
quality improvement, and
transformation

(creates) temporal task
boundaries, standards
of performance, and
feedback processes that
confront and provide
opportunities to work
through incompleteness,
incompetence, and
incongruity, resulting
in new

**Development
and Quality
Improvement
Cycle**

**Conflict
Cycle**

(designs) tasks that
require both effective
performance and learning,
thus creating dilemmas
for, and disconfirming
expectations of, members
who are not oriented to
continual experiential
learning; these members
can choose to

or
*(the moment-
to-moment
awareness
and action
challenge)*

experiment with an
education approach to
experience and task
achievement, for which
they find leadership
support; this leads to

respond in customary,
passive ways, whether
by avoiding, conforming,
or rebelling, which will
lead to conflict with

Structural Improvement Cycle

1. More effective task achievement, because system is increasingly
    self-correcting.
2. More learning and development by members, because experi-
    ments are supported and differences are confronted.
3. Increasing awareness of and responsibility for the relationship
    among organizational purposes, processes, and tasks, because the
    structure is increasingly perceived as empowering and just rather
    than repressive.

Exhibit 10.1. The Distinctive Aims of Seven
Social-Scientific Paradigms.

Behaviorism	Control of the other (through "operant conditioning")
Gestalt Sociologism	Understanding of the other (better than that other's self-understanding)
Empirical Positivism	Predictive certainty (valid certainty)
Multimethod Eclecticism	Useful approximation (through triangulation)
Postmodern Interpretivism	Re-presentation of perspectival pluralism (without privileging the writer's own perspective—"Ha ha!")
Cooperative Inquiry	Creating transformational communities of inquiry (among mutually committed members with multiple perspectives)
Developmental Action Inquiry	Enacting inquiry and liberating disciplines (across initially estranged cultures without shared purposes)

Note: Each later paradigm dethrones the primacy of the previous aim, reinterprets its meaning, and addresses some of its incompleteness, by treating it as one strategic variable among others in the service of the new, qualitatively different aim. Each paradigm after Empirical Positivism becomes more inclusive of uncertain realities (rather than counting as reality only what one can be certain of) and also more inclusive of realities that are transformed by the very act of inquiring into them (for example, the researchers' own awareness and actions during the study).

David Boje seems to classify himself (and would likely be classified by others) as participating in the postmodern interpretivist paradigm (again, following Table 10.1 and Exhibits 10.1 and 10.2). Participants in this paradigmatic perspective generally espouse first-person research and practice in theory (that is, that one should write with a self-critical view of the fragmentary perspective one actually re-presents and with a deconstruction of one's own and others' hubristic and un-self-critical "grand narratives"). As often, however, these scholars stutter and duck first-person research in their practice (for example, in conversations in which the "postmodern" voice takes on a simultaneously defensive and dominating, totalizing tone). Moreover, the subjectivist, postmodern voice tends to overlook the possibility of second-person research and

practice and to exercise rhetorical mystification in third-person writing (see, for example, Grudin's critique [1996] of Foucault). I apologize if I am currently throwing the very same jargon around in a similarly mystifying way; I mean to illuminate the stuttering start that this paradigmatic approach makes to integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice.

Although at a third-person distance one might be excused for taking instances of David Boje's rhetorical power, courage, and commitment as exemplars of the caricature of the postmodern interpretivist I have just briefly painted, my own second-person observations of and participation with David in practice persuade me that he wishes to integrate first-, second-, and third-person research and practice. He certainly means to move through his perspective to an ongoing existential search in the midst of his play/action/work, as witnessed by his proposal of marriage to his (now) wife in the midst of a session at an academic conference as well as by his current engagement in first-person, spiritual inquiry along with his third-person, administrative responsibilities.

A number of colleagues in our field, like Meryl Louis (1994) and Judi Marshall (1995), are experimenting with how to share their experiences with first- and second-person research and practices in a predominantly third-person mode. Peter Reason (1994) exemplifies the integration of first- and second-person research and practice in his own life, his professional and scholarly work, and in his writing; and in so doing he has probably ventured furthest toward enacting the cooperative inquiry paradigmatic mode (see also Heron, 1996).

Fisher and Torbert (1995) describe one experiment at integrating first-person, second-person, and third-person research and practice. We offer first-person accounts by managers of our efforts to exercise all three types of research and practice in our own companies. At the same time, we offer cases based on our own first-person, second-person, and third-person research and consulting with companies (this is not obvious, however, because the writing style ironically masks these cases as neutral, third-person accounts). Also, we do not explicitly discuss research methodology issues at all, since the book is aimed at encouraging the existential practice of action and inquiry. This ironic approach to conveying the possibility of integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice was adopted as a dialectical movement away from my earlier effort (Torbert, 1991) to write in an impersonal, third-person voice about third-person research and data. The 1995 book also speaks in an autobiographical voice, and as a reporter of real second-person research and practice dialogues in ongoing prac-

Exhibit 10.2.   Brief Descriptions of Seven Social-Scientific Paradigms.

Behaviorism

Emanates from an *assertive, physical* quest for *reliable, unilateral control* through "operant conditioning" of an unapologetically *objectified and atomized external world.* Hence its preferred method of laboratory experiments (maximizing the scientist's unilateral control over variation); its nominalist presumption of iso-latable "stimuli" and "responses"; and its concentration on experimental sub-jects (such as rats and pigeons) that are unlikely to interpretively reframe the experiment and thus frustrate the scientist's goal. Behaviorism is particularly applicable to and successful with populations that share its assumptions about the world or inhabit total institutions (such as prisons, asylums, orphanages). Skinner (1953, 1971) was the archetypal behaviorist (see also Argyris, 1971). The special brilliance of the greatest behavioral lab experiments—such as the Asch experiments on conformity and the Milgram experiments on obedience to authority—is that they reveal the underlying lateral and hierarchical social pressures, structures, and presumptions through which this paradigm works in the human world, thereby raising the questions of whether, how, and when the human world works otherwise.

Gestalt Sociologism

Emanates from an *appreciative, emotional* quest to understand the *overall pattern* of subjective beliefs, values, and rituals of given "other" cultures. Hence its preferred method of *noninterventionist, ethnographic field observation;* its essentialist presump-tion of integrative ideas, norms, and selves (Cooley, 1956; Mead, 1934); and its concentration on ideographic case studies of human groups. The special brilliance of the greatest such studies (which have now become as controversial as they deserve to be), such as Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1960) and Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1981), is that, by contrast to the alien culture they depict, they reveal the underlying mechanisms, categories, and presumptions through which our own encultured understanding works; and thereby, implicitly if not explicitly, they raise the question of whether our own assumptions are valid.

Empirical Positivism

Emanates from a *critical* (but not hermeneutically self-critical), *intellectual* quest for *valid certainty* about *deductively logical, universally generalizable, empirical propositions* (Cook and Campbell, 1979; Hunt, 1994). Not necessarily identified with a particular method, this paradigm privileges randomized samples; experi-mental, hypothesis-testing studies; and computer modeling of intelligence (because of the crisp and clear quantitative, binary certainty about distinctions between confirmation and disconfirmation). The special brilliance of the great-est studies in empirical positivism—such as Simon's theoretical and empirical demonstrations of the concept of bounded rationality (Simon, 1947, 1957, 1969, 1989, 1991; March and Simon, 1958; Turkle, 1991)—is that they show the limits of deductive rationality itself. The special danger of such work is that it

Exhibit 10.2.   *(continued)*

obscures the very possibility of a rationality that reaches beyond the inductive, the deductive, and the instrumental.

For example, the content of Simon's propositions about rationality may obscure the very type of constitutive rationality that Simon's work itself represents, as well as alternative constitutive rationalities (for example, those of each of the other developmental stages). The special "cleverness" of work like Simon's is that it uses the empirical positivist paradigm, its language and precision, to point to the triangulating, "satisficing" logic of multimethod eclecticism while simultaneously capturing, in the concept of "bounded rationality," the paradigmatic plight of all the developmentally early paradigms—which empirically include the psychology and methodology of well over 90 percent of all adults (Torbert, 1991).

Multimethod Eclecticism

Emanates from a *practical* quest *to increase* validity, understanding, applicability, and *percentage of the variance explained,* along with an aborning suspicion that different methods and measures may yield *incommensurable* results. Recommends *triangulation* among quantitative and qualitative methods, and is currently fashionable and in flower in the managerial disciplines (for example, see Eisenhardt, 1989; Dyer and Wilkins, 1991; Bartunek, Bobko, and Venkatraman, 1993). A brilliant example is Weick's early work in collaboration with Campbell, Dunnette, and Lawler (Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, and Weick, 1970), *Managerial Behavior, Performance, and Effectiveness,* which is based on a "multitrait-multimethod matrix." "Disagreement between different observers," they say, "should not necessarily be viewed as a mark of unreliability . . . but should instead be viewed as a possibly valid indication that differing aspects of the manager's behavior are being accurately perceived and reported" (p. 115). Still another possibility is that disagreement among observers may result from their differing interpretive schemes, a possibility that opens us to the next paradigm, postmodern interpretivism.

Postmodern Interpretivism

Emanates from a *self-consciousness* in encountering the dilemmas of accounting for the *radical subjectivity and fragmentariness of perspective* that embraces every languaged perception and conception. No matter how validly and elegantly the strange, objecting reality at issue is clothed in the statistical, methodological, and theoretical constructions of the earlier, preparticipative social sciences, the postmodern interpretivist (for example, Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Miller, 1994) wishes to deconstruct the implicit, presumedly neutral background of the objects foregrounded in the study, as well as that of the researcher and of the writing that makes up the critique (Fine, 1994, is an excellent brief exemplar). New types of validity are constructed, such as these:

1. Reflexive validity—a text's attempts to challenge its own validity claims (note the abstract, unillustrated voice of this "description," which is typical of postmodern interpretive writing).

2. Interpretation by the reader (such as your interpretation of this table of seven paradigms).

3. Rhizomatic validity—the text presents multiple voices that define situations differently. For example, prior to my inclusion of the italics in this description, Dal Fisher, a colleague, commented on this paragraph: "Can't help on this one, since I don't understand even a fragment of it. I guess I can suggest fewer terms (many fewer) and more illustration of actual works."

4. Situated validity—includes not just a disembodied voice but also an embodied, emotional, reflective voice (Lather, 1993) (for example, "I love Dal's and my differences").

Postmodern interpretivism strongly implies the need for a first-person research and practice (for example, Weick's *sense making*), but to date this requirement is more often stated in third-person, abstract terminology than practiced in first-person accounts interwoven with second- and third-person research.

Cooperative Inquiry

Emanates from a *commitment to creating communities that bridge subjectivities and differences of perspective and support transformation;* that is, *real-time communities of inquiry* (Spretnak, 1991; Torbert, 1976). (For example, the "family of inquiry," which includes Gregory Bateson (1972), Margaret Mead (1960), and their anthro-philosophico-autobiographical daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson, 1984, 1990.) Cooperative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987; Heron, 1996; Reason, 1994) occurs in real time, with partners also committed to integrating action and inquiry (that is, to integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice). It recognizes that one does not first learn the truth and then act on it but rather that research itself and our lives as wholes are actions; thus we act before we deeply care about truth, we act as we seek truth (and as our sense of the truth that we seek transforms), and we seek truths that will inform not just a reflective concept of the world and future plans but our present awareness and action (MacMurray, 1953; Reason, 1995; Torbert, 1981).

The difficult and important questions come to be seen as how, in the midst of participating intersubjectively in specific situations, one can listen, experiment, and seek disconfirmation (Argyris, Putnam, and Smith, 1985) in a timely fashion (Torbert, 1991). Likewise, the primary question becomes not how to create an off-line community of inquiry among scientific writers and journal editors but how to create a real-time community of inquiry within one's family, at work, or within voluntary organizations to which one belongs. Fine (1994) points in this direction when she writes, "In the early 1990s, the whispers of a collective of activist researchers can be heard . . . seeking to work with, but not

Exhibit 10.2. (*continued*)

romanticize, subjugated voices, searching for moments of social justice" (p. 81). Social constructivism is an epistemological interpretation consistent with this paradigmatic approach (Gergen, 1994).

Developmental Action Inquiry

Emanates from a growing appreciation that different persons, organizations, and cultures are complex, chaotic interweavings of the six prior paradigms (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979). No single one of these paradigms will win the paradigm war once and for all. Indeed, this very definition of the situation is illusory: it is not martial arts and paradigm wars but the arts of healing and interparadigmatic conversation and work that become a beckoning, shareable (but not *easily* shareable) purpose. An interweaving of first-, second-, and third-person research and practice makes such interparadigmatic conversation and work sustainable.

From the integrative developmental action inquiry perspective, each paradigmatic perspective is a positively powerful and beneficial analogue of the preeminent features of a situation at different moments and in recognized complementarity to the other approaches. By contrast, each paradigmatic perspective becomes demonic if it is asserted as the only legitimate kind of truth in all moments. "An active consciousness holds all ideas lightly" (Marshall, 1995).

Whereas each of the prior paradigms tends to emphasize its revolutionary dissimilarity from the paradigms before it, developmental action inquiry highlights the contrapuntal rhythms, interruptions, and interventions in developmental movement from one paradigm to another, whether in single conversations or in whole lives (Torbert, 1989). Fisher and Torbert (1995) provide an illustration of research in multiple modes, ranging from quantitative lab experiments using psychometric measures (empirical positivism) to multi-voiced, qualitative culture studies (postmodern interpretivism) and cases of "observant participants" exercising real-time first-, second-, and third-person research and practice in their work.

All types of validity testing described in earlier paradigms are accepted as conditionally appropriate, depending on the degree to which one's current aims correspond with the purpose of truth seeking in that paradigm. Finally, however, in developmental action inquiry generalization is recognized as occurring one person at a time, and slowly within that person (over a lifetime) as she or he practices awareness-expanding action inquiry at more and more moments.

tice settings where we attempted to integrate first, second-, and third-person research and practice. Readers of Donald Schön's foreword to *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983) will recall that this early attempt at explicit ("naked") action inquiry led to strong charges of scientific impropriety ("blithe disregard for questions of validity and rigor" [p. xiii]): hence the dialectical choice to practice ironic masking in the 1995 book.

How to write in a coherent yet multi-genred manner that conveys to others the challenge, opportunity, and invitation to join the play in this type of research and practice is an ongoing question for me. This chapter is one more response. For my next, and last, major project I now imagine weaving together art, poetry, music, and video in a work of "social-science fiction" under a pseudonym (Mark O. Teufel in English, Signatûre deVil in French, and so on). But this choice is not taken with the belief that social-science fiction is the normative genre for developmental action inquiry. Rather it is taken as a next step in this scholar-practitioner's ongoing exploration of writing genres, research methods, and daily professional practice (that is, it is hopefully a liberating discipline for my work). What is clear in general is that all forms that aspire to integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice can generalize themselves only one person at a time, as you, or you, or you make an increasing commitment to integrating your research with your practice.

SEEKING, ALONE AND WITH OTHERS, TO INTEGRATE COURAGE AND WISDOM

I envisage the wisdom we seek through integrating first-, second-, and third-person research and practice as something embracing and hard to pin down—as having something to do with an awareness that integrates being, thinking, doing, and effectuating in our real-time relationships with others, as we create conditions for them to do so as well. How might you amend this characterization?

It seems to me that it takes courage to face and to suffer through our ongoing existential incongruities (for example, between what we meant, what we said, what we did, and the result we had) as we inquire toward wise integrity. Or is finding, properly conceptualizing, accepting, and transforming incongruities easy for you? or unimportant? or a disheartening way to guide practice?

It also seems to me that in a true moment-to-moment search (if we can even imagine such a commitment) there must surely be millions of

such incongruous times—some minor, some major, some significant, some less so. Can you envision a true first-person search amid life that does not highlight the digestion of incongruities?

The closest I can come to envisioning the ultimate courage and the ultimate wisdom is as a taste for continually listening into the strum and scrape, the harmony and ache, of synesthetic, many-meaninged, dialogic experiencing (Grudin, 1996)—and as a taste for continually facing the creative dilemma of fashioning responsive, awakening thought and action in the present.

This listening and feeling with wonder; this vulnerability and suffering, without self-pity; this active attending can occur whether I am alone, with friends, or at work. Wise, courageous action does not so much alternate as dialogue with such continual listening. Are you at all familiar with such listening? Are you practicing it now as you read, listening simultaneously into yourself and into this writing? Does anything in you want to find someone or some tradition of practice that will challenge you to listen so more often, more deeply?

Those of us who are, or aspire to be, knowledgeable—such as those who participated in the conference at Case University that led to these chapters and this book—too easily substitute prefabricated rationalization and verbalization for the wonderful listening toward which wise courage continually resteers us. We who aspire to be "intellectuals" tend to equate knowledge and wisdom. But, in fact, my growing understanding is that wisdom is in essential, eternal tension with knowledge (as we ordinarily conceive knowledge). Hence Vaill's phrase, "the unspeakable texture of process wisdom" (Chapter Two).

Modern scientific knowledge is almost entirely the product of third-person, impersonal research conducted "off-line" (of course, the researcher is engaged in ongoing "on-line" experience throughout the research, but this quality of his or her experience is not attended to as part of the research). By contrast, the developmental action inquiry paradigm treats wisdom as the ongoing "on-line" integration of first-person research, second-person research, and third-person research conducted in the midst of action with others and in which the researcher recognizes himself or herself as an "observant participant" (Torbert, 1991, 1995).

Put differently again, wisdom has to do with integrating being, knowing, doing, and effecting *in a timely fashion;* by contrast, knowledge of local facts and generalizable theories almost never has anything to do with timing (and even when it does, as with developmental theory, thinking about the theory can substitute itself for attending to all the other layers of self and others in the present).

Modern science privileges as knowledge what we can be certain about at a distance. Because an embracing research and practice are a more significant proportion of reality, they guide our attention more to our present participation in the uncertain action of transformation that is occurring within each of us, as well as between ourselves and our family, friends, and colleagues and in the larger world. As we become increasingly wise, our attention parses itself out increasingly properly among what we know, where we are ignorant, and the overall interaction between what we can be more and less certain about. The wise woman's hammer does not bounce shy of the nail even as she wonders whether she will finish the shingling before the storm.

Again: knowledge "means" within paradigmatic limits; wisdom tests assumptions as well as theories, methods, and data, thus coming to "mean" across paradigms. And yet again: knowledge accumulates; wisdom empties (or dis-illusions, or reveals a deeper listening and a deeper rhythm). Educating the mind—as in modern science—generates mental dexterity and knowledge; educating the attention—as in an interweaving of first-person, second-person, and third-person research and practice amid our everyday living, loving, and working—generates conscious relatedness among mind, feeling, body, and nature and between motive and reach.

Educating the attention in the direction of ongoing inquiry amid acting (about the relationships among having, doing, knowing, and being), at an organizational level (about the relationships among outcomes, operations, strategies, and mission) and in science (about the relationships among data, methods, theories, and paradigmatic approaches)—such a repeatedly transformational research and practice generates wisdom. At least, that is the perspective elucidated here.

NOTE

1. I capitalize this term because, now that I have discovered it, the position seems a kind of ideal type to me—an eternal position that deserves to be experienced repeatedly so as to learn from attentively resting in it. This means it is not, for example, just an exercise to perform on a long flight because one has little room to do others.

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