

2008

"How Do We Make that Change?" Analysis of Transformative Dialogue in a Community Initiative

Tanya A. Brown

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Brown, T. (2008). "How Do We Make that Change?" Analysis of Transformative Dialogue in a Community Initiative (Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University). Retrieved from <https://dsc.duq.edu/etd/354>

This Immediate Access is brought to you for free and open access by Duquesne Scholarship Collection. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Duquesne Scholarship Collection. For more information, please contact phillips@duq.edu.

“HOW DO WE MAKE THAT CHANGE?”

ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIVE DIALOGUE IN A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College
and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology

By

Tanya A. Brown

September 2008

“HOW DO WE MAKE THAT CHANGE?”

ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIVE DIALOGUE IN A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

By

Tanya A. Brown

Approved: September 29, 2008

Martin J. Packer, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology (Dissertation Director)

Rodney K. Hopson, Ph.D.
Professor of Education (Committee Member)

Leswin Laubscher, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology (Committee Member)

Daniel Burston, Ph.D.,
Chair, Department of Psychology

Albert C. Labriola, Ph.D.
Dean, McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

ABSTRACT

“HOW DO WE MAKE THAT CHANGE?”

ANALYSIS OF TRANSFORMATIVE DIALOGUE IN A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

By

Tanya A. Brown

September 2008

Dissertation Supervised by Martin J. Packer

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the processes through which people are transformed in their encounters with one another and consequently moved to engage in civic action. Proponents within critical pedagogy have underscored the significance of dialogue for motivating hope, agency, and civic engagement. The importance of conceptualizing dialogue as transformative has been underscored in light of research and theories within community psychology, which have both argued for the significance of civic engagement for social change, and documented its decline in recent years. Despite this, review of literature addressing transformative learning and civic engagement point to the absence of detailed accountings of how communities are transformed through their interactions with one another.

In order to articulate transformative processes toward civic engagement within a community setting, this author conducted a detailed analysis of group interactions from a selection of participants from the community initiative, Meetings for Civic Change (MCC). Using an interpretive research methodology informed by Hegel's (1977) theory

of human transformation and De Rivera's (1977) theory of the intersubjectivity of emotions, the author showed that MCC participants were transformed in their relationship to the interminable difference of other people. Facing this difference, participants explored what they did not know about themselves. This process moved participants to consider different ways of relating to other people in their community. Based on her analysis, she argues that dialogue may be studied as an intersubjective phenomenon. The research methodology allows for articulation of how people are transformed in their relationships with one each other. She encourages a more nuanced approach to community practices aimed at transformative action, and offers suggestions for a more engaged praxis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My parents Balfour and Evelyn Brown have inspired this dissertation project. They were the first to show me the power of community to engage and transform a citizenry. Thank you for teaching me how community may be a site not only for political action, but also a place where people meet to critically reflect on the meaning of their everyday hardships and find solace in the company of neighbors.

Many thanks to Morten Haugaard and Trudy Gardner for their unyielding love, support, and editorial advisement even in my most stressful hours. Special thanks to my communities of friends in Pittsburgh, Boston, and Toronto; they have served as continued inspiration and motivation throughout this project. They too have taught me how to grow in the company of others.

Last, I am greatly indebted to my dissertation committee: Martin Packer, PhD; Rodney Hopson, PhD; and Leswin Laubscher, Ph.D. Their mentorship has transcended the dissertation process. Thank you for teaching me how to better articulate my concerns and connect my academic interests to social justice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	VI
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	6
TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING & GROUP INTERACTION: THEORY AND RESEARCH.....	10
COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY: PUTTING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE FOREFRONT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH.....	23
CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY	31
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: FRAMING MY ANALYSIS OF MCC	33
Guiding Theories	37
Hegel: The desire for recognition as motivating action.....	37
De Rivera: The Intersubjectivity of emotions.....	44
CHAPTER 3: MEETINGS FOR CIVIC CHANGE PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURES.....	50
PROGRAM BACKGROUND.....	52
Program Structure and Setting	52
Meeting Structure and “Cultivation of a New Civic Language”	53
Audiences.....	54
Evaluation Activities.....	54
Findings.....	57
PROCEDURES FOR CURRENT STUDY.....	62
Data collection	63
Data transcription and summary	64
Data Analysis	66
Narrative summary.....	67
Identifying key movements.....	68
Assessing the quality and rigor of the research	70
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS	72
PARTICIPANT SELECTION:	73
Group G-1: Participants and meeting details	74
Group D-2: Participants and meeting details	75

NARRATIVE SUMMARIES: SIGNIFICANCE OF RECOGNITION	75
Group G-1	76
Group D-2	87
Comparative summary	100
KEY MOVEMENTS OF THE TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS.....	103
1. Exploration of the Other’s position.....	104
2. Exploration of one’s own position in relation to the Other.....	109
3. Discussion of barriers to action.....	110
4. Identifying motivators for action	112
WHAT ARE THE TRANSFORMATIVE MOVEMENTS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS’ INTERACTIONS?.....	116
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	124
DIALOGUE AND TRANSFORMATION	128
RE-THINKING COMMUNITY PRACTICE	139
CONCLUSION	147
REFERENCES	151
APPENDIX A: MEETINGS FOR CIVIC CHANGE GROUP INVENTORY	165
APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS	166
APPENDIX C: PILOT ANALYSIS.....	167
APPENDIX D: GROUP G-1 MEETING TRANSCRIPTS	182
APPENDIX E: GROUP D-2 MEETING SUMMARIES.....	280

INTRODUCTION

“Human beings are discourse. That flowing moves through you whether you say anything or not. Everything that happens is filled with pleasure and warmth because of the delight of the discourse that is always going on.”

~ Rumi, Discourse 53

Transformation occurs in one’s relationship to another person. It is powerful as it reinforces the significance of human relationship in shaping human subjectivity. Central to my dissertation topic is the power of dialogue to change people. Dialogue, as an encounter between people, is one way people are transformed. The kind of change I wish to articulate is located in community settings, where people meet across differences, learn from one another, and engage civically.

If one considers the debate over the character of learning over recent decades, it has become clear that learning cannot be adequately understood simply as the acquisition of knowledge, nor as the construction of knowledge, or even as the social construction of knowledge. Learning is transformation in a person’s relationship to knowledge and subsequently herself. Learning involves a process of becoming; a person is changed in her educative encounters with others as she meets new ways of perceiving and relating to the world (Hall, 1997).

We may situate theories on this understanding of learning in the disciplinary area of critical pedagogy, where a transformative learning process is considered crucial for addressing issues such as power inequalities and civic engagement. In fact, it has been argued that without this form of education both inside and outside the classroom, hope for a more engaged citizenry diminishes, and people are left victims of social ills without being empowered to address them (Freire, 1970; Glass 2001; hooks, 1990, 2003). Freire

reminds us that learning is dialogue. He claims that dialogue is an existential necessity, as it is the only mode by which human life can only hold meaning. He writes, “Dialogue is the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world” (p.77). Dialogue, then, is not any conversation; it is a humanizing encounter that includes both action and reflection, and results in the transformation of those involved.

The importance of conceptualizing learning as a transformative process is even clearer when we consider the research and theories within community psychology, which have both argued for the significance of civic engagement for social change, and documented its decline in recent years. Putnam’s (2000) indication that since the 1960s Americans “join less, trust less, give less, vote less, and schmooze less” verifies the gravity of this issue. It has been argued that the disintegration of a sense of connection between individual citizens and social organizations results from the loss of public spaces where people can learn, can challenge assumptions and explore meanings with one another (Putnam, 2000; Schwartz, 1997; Selvin, 2000; McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

In response to the decline in civic engagement, proponents within in community psychology have recently begun to encourage responsive and empowering practices in studies of social and community issues. In particular, research and evaluations of community initiatives are beginning to focus less narrowly on the efficacy of the implementation of a given program’s interventions, and are identifying indicators of community engagement, collaboration, and/or development. Although existing studies in the field have aimed to have an ameliorative impact in communities, community psychologists, such as Prilleltensky & Nelson (1997) and Weinstein (2006) show that these studies do not offer enough critical analysis of the relationships between a

community program and its participants. Such an analysis would question important aspects of a community program's implementation: the theoretical and pedagogical assumptions embedded in its mission and goals; how the targeted community receives its praxis; whether its interventions address community concerns, and if so, how?

My dissertation research focuses on a community initiative, which was targeted toward fostering heightened civic engagement in local issues. The initiative, Meetings for Civic Change (MCC)¹, is located in a mid-sized city in the mid-Atlantic United States, where years of political fragmentation have perpetuated social inequality and segregated communities, and failed to confront economic decline, environmental problems, and poor health. These problems, endemic to this city, are representative of the oppression and marginalization that continue to plague North America, eroding efforts at community development and renewal.

I participated in the community project and was personally affected by the movements of the group process. Indeed, I came to this project troubled by questions about the movements of transformative change – how can this happen in a community space? As a woman of color and first-generation citizen, I learned early on that acknowledging difference and struggling with the power inequalities rampant in our society is necessary for my own health and any study of human transformation. As a student of clinical psychology and psychotherapist, I discovered that people learn about themselves through meeting with another. The therapy room has been a space for people to explore different feelings, find hope and agency. Signing up for MCC I hoped to find evidence of these smaller scale verities in communities, where people may mutually learn

¹ All identifies, including the program name and its geographical location, have been changed to protect participant confidentiality.

and be emotionally impacted by one another. I later became a member of the evaluation team contracted to investigate the impact of the program on its participants. Precisely because I pay attention to human interaction in this study – how I was concurrently impacted by and impacting others over the course of my involvement in the program ripples reflexively throughout this paper. My multiple positions as researcher, program participant, evaluator, and idealist will flow through as I interweave my story of change through the chapters.

Therefore, the objective of my dissertation is to articulate the transformative processes that moved MCC participants to increased civic engagement. My exploration of the participants' interactions is intended to open up the dynamics involved in a transformative learning process. My analysis focused on how participants worked together and the emotional transformations of their process in order to articulate how accountability, hope, and agency are fostered in a community. One over-arching question guided the study: what are the transformative movements of Meetings for Civic Change (MCC) program participants' interactions? I asked the following sub-questions: (1) What did the transformative process look like? and, (2) What were the key movements of this process? I selected these research questions following my review of literature addressing transformative learning and civic engagement, and my review of the findings from the program evaluation of MCC. Both reviews pointed to the absence of detailed accountings of how communities in general, and the MCC program participants, in particular, were changed through their interactions with one another. I selected a research methodology that informed how I may define and articulate transformations over the course of the MCC program processes.

I provide an outline of the dissertation and literature review in chapter 1. In chapter 2, I elucidate my research methodology. I discuss how theories of human transformation and the intersubjectivity of emotions inform my research procedures and address my research questions. In chapter 3, I review the findings from the program evaluation of MCC to show that an analysis of the participants' transformative process would illustrate how participants were moved toward increased civic engagement. Then, I summarize the procedures for the current study. The analysis was organized according to the research sub-questions, moving from narrative summaries of what the transformative process looked like for MCC participants, to identifying key movements of the program processes. In chapter 4, I discuss my analysis of MCC participant interactions. I show that participants were transformed in their encounters with other participants and explorations of social issues. In chapter 5, I underscore the significance of studying dialogue and articulating transformative processes in community psychology research and practice.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Civic change requires interaction. People relate with others, learn, are affected emotionally, and respond because of the interaction. Civic change is a public process; people make issues in their broader community a preoccupation and in so doing, witness and take part in their public membership. The kind of interaction that I take particular interest is dialogue. It is a critical dimension of civic encounters as it is a propelling force for the movements leading up to engagement with other people and civic change. But, what do we know about the movements about this kind of interaction? How does it galvanize us to engage civically?

There is an exhaustive range of work spanning personal, educational, economic, political, social, and cultural levels of analysis on the impact of civic engagement (Bennett, 1999; Brydon-Miller & Tolman, 1997; Costa & Kahn, 2003; Slocum, Wichart, Rochleau, & Thomas-Slayter, 1995; Tolbert, Lyson, & Irwin, 1998). Contributions from critical pedagogy and domains within psychology speak to various aspects of this process: what it means to be transformed through interactions with others; how individuals behave in groups where issues of difference and social justice are prominent; how these kinds of interaction affect us emotionally; and the kinds of change that we can expect to see as a result. (Brown 2000; Cronick, 2002; Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003; Giroux 2003; Hosking & Morley, 2004; Nagda, 2006; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005; Schweder, 1991). Although there is acknowledgment within these domains that this kind of interaction takes place at both an individual and global level (Erikson, 2004), there is a paucity of work addressing the processes of civic change in psychology. These

contributions, though illuminating, only provide a topography of the varied movements that take place within transformative encounters.

My dissertation aims to address recent trends in community psychology research and practice that seek to more effectively articulate transformative praxis in community settings. Contributions from theorists studying critical pedagogy underscore the significance of using dialogue to engage people in the praxis of challenging the existing social situation that is rife with disparities. Essential in critical pedagogical praxis is an accounting of the social situation, particularly the ways in which people are marginalized and unrecognized. Through identifying characteristics of transformative encounters, intergroup relations researchers identified important features of group processes working through cultural, racial, and social differences toward increased civic engagement and social action. The nuances of the transformative processes remains to be articulated, however. In attempting to situate the study of transformative group processes in psychology, I turned to community psychology, a field with the mission of understanding people in context, in an effort to challenge social issues unique to community settings. Despite the aims of the field, research and praxis exploring transformative movements in civic spaces is only in its nascent stages.

In response to fissures within the literature, I had one over-arching research question guiding this dissertation study: What are the transformative movements of Meetings for Civic Change (MCC) program participants' interactions? I asked the following sub-questions: (1) What did the transformative process look like? (2) What were the key movements of this process?

In chapter 2, *Methodology*, I outline a methodology that more intimately captures the complexity of interactions within a community-based setting. I used an interpretive research method that is informed by theories of human transformation and the intersubjectivity of emotions. These theories revealed the intersubjectivity inherent in dialogue, and as a result, guided my analysis of how participants were changed through their interactions in the program. The methodology was guided by two theories: Hegel's (1977) master/slave dialectic and De Rivera's (1977) theory of emotional experience as intersubjective.

According to Hegel (1977), transformation involves change in a person's subjectivity, which emerges through relationship with the Other. The Other refers to that which we distinguish as different than us. This includes other people, the environment, and parts of ourselves. De Rivera's (1977) argument that emotions are intersubjective provided a method for identifying the movements of the MCC groups' transformative process. Transformative movements referred to distinct processes of transformation over the course of a person's relationship to the Other.

In chapter 3, *MCC Background and Procedures*, I summarize key findings from the program evaluation of MCC, which evidence the transformative impact the program made in moving the participants to greater civic engagement. In doing so, I also show how further analysis of the program processes may illustrate *how* the participants were moved to increased civic engagement. Then, I outline the procedures for this study. I reviewed the program evaluation findings to identify two groups with a significant proportion of the participants who reported that the program significantly impacted their resolve to engage civically. The analysis of program interactions was informed by the

guiding theories. I analyzed participant interaction by first creating narrative summaries of two MCC group processes to illustrate what the transformative process looked like. Next, I identified key transformative movements of the participants' process. Last, I used these analyses to provide a general summary of the transformative movements of the MCC program process.

Next, in chapter 4, *Analysis*, I show that transformation is an intersubjective process. Transformation toward increased civic engagement required facing the Other. Facing the Other meant moving toward the difference of another person, and subsequently, the difference within the self. Through relationship to the Other, participants moved toward increased hope about the meaningfulness of civic action and became increasingly motivated to engage civically.

In chapter 5, *Discussion*, I argue that my analysis illustrates how we may study dialogue as an intersubjective phenomenon, and how study of interaction illuminates the transformative movements of a community process. Although not explicitly addressed by my research questions, embedded within this study includes discussion of the following: how a diverse group of people engage in a critical praxis – where people have to grapple with their privileges, and/or positions of marginality with others; the challenges of working in solidarity in diverse groups; and the emotional movements people experience in facing the Other. I explore these issues as well as possible contributions to the field of community psychology in the final chapter.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of research and theory of transformative learning and models of group interaction that lead to transformations in the way people think about social issues and participate civically. In particular, I review contributions

from critical pedagogy, which are most notable for articulating a transformative praxis. I argue that expanding notions of dialogue may more appropriately capture the intersubjectivity of group processes as well as illustrate the transformative movements that a critical praxis may take. I question how these contributions may best inform study of diverse groups processes, like MCC, where participants represent varied social positions. Building on questions of diverse group processes, I review intergroup relations research to examine models of diverse group interaction. While there is an abundance of literature pointing to the successes of intergroup dialogue and indicators of critical factors that lead to transformative change, intergroup relations researchers argue that the transformative processes within group interaction beg to be articulated. Last, I turn to community psychology, a field focused on studying the individual in relationship to the community context, to further explore the study of transformative processes. I show that the field is only the nascent stages of articulating how people are transformed toward increased civic action in their communities.

Transformative learning & group interaction: theory and research

Critical pedagogy is often equated with any kind of educational process that aims to transform the social situation. It emanates from a long history of critical discourses around social action (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003). Theorists from disciplines spanning the human sciences and education have cited oppressive practices as major undercurrents for poor education and continued marginalization in both developing and industrialized nations (Apple, 2003; Freire, 1993; Giroux 1993, 2003; hooks, 1990, 1994, 1995, 2003; Pilger, 2002; Potter, 2000; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 1997; Prilleltensky, 2003;

Weiner, 2003). It has been argued that so long as the subjectivity of one group is subjugated and denied, everyone lives in a dehumanized situation (Freire, 1993). Critical pedagogy, then, serves as a means for people to articulate and eventually challenge oppression, working toward greater humanization for all.

Cultural studies has emerged as an interdisciplinary space within the academy, which concurrently displaces ethnocentric epistemologies and rallies divergent social, cultural and theoretical perspectives (Giroux, 1993, 2003). Key thinkers within cultural studies regard it as a space distinctly for critical pedagogy, and encourage engaged, critical discourse as the means toward transformative social change (hooks, 1990, 2003; Giroux, 1993). Critical theorists, like Giroux (1993), have argued for a critical pedagogy, which challenges the means to knowledge, displacing archaic disciplinary lines for a more politically sensitive and engaged educational system.

Critical discourses are sensitive to how ongoing oppressive and colonizing practices delimit citizens' access to structures of knowledge and power (Fanon, 1967; Giroux 1993, 2003; Hall, 1996). Central to this work is addressing the dehumanization rampant in contemporary society. Theorists work dialectically to expose such practices and consider new modes of learning and means of challenging systemic ills. Without this kind of work, proponents within cultural studies warn that we risk losing our sense of civic agency, and ultimately, our hope for alternative modes of interaction (hooks, 2003; McLaren, & Leonard, 1993). hooks (2003) reminds, "When we only name the problem, when we state complaint without a constructive focus on resolution, we take away hope. In this way critique can become merely an expression of profound cynicism, which then works to sustain dominator culture" (p. xiv).

Freire's (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* highlights the dehumanizing social contexts in which we exist and offers a humanizing praxis to challenge it. Freire argues that it is the vocation of the oppressed to struggle toward humanization for everyone. Humanizing action acknowledges human subjectivity, and in doing so opens up a more creative relationship with the world. Freire advocates a humanizing pedagogy to revolutionize the dehumanized state in which the oppressed are positioned. His pedagogy includes a praxis founded on dialogue and solidarity.

According to Freire (1993), the oppressed learn to critically reflect on their position in relationship to the world and their oppressors. Praxis presupposes an understanding of reflection and action as interdependent moments. He explains that reflection involves the explaining of one's own action with careful attention to its implications for both oneself and others. Over the course of revolutionary involvement, praxis becomes the "new *raison d'être* of the oppressed" (p. 66). For praxis, dialogue is necessary to build trust and make apparent the oppressive conditions in which the oppressed find themselves. Through dialogue they develop solidarity with their comrades, and reflect upon their present actions in society. Freire defines dialogue as an act of creation and the means by which one achieves significance as a human being. It is an encounter between people, mediated by the world in order to name the world (p. 88). Additionally, dialogue is love as it is demonstrated in an active acknowledgement and respect for a person's relationship with the world and others. Dialogue is the transformative medium through which the oppressed may reflect on the limits of their situation, act by naming the world in which they live, and choose to respond in new and different ways. It includes recognition of the Other – more pointedly the oppressed,

understanding the Other's position in dominant culture, and addressing the implications and consequences of representing this position. Thus, Freire's theory refers to a dialectical understanding of otherness, and he regards dialogue as a locus for change and growth.

Historically, critical pedagogy meant serving first and foremost the voices of those who have gone unheard in dominant culture. It created a space to challenge the social situation, to liberate and empower people, and ultimately aim to promote greater humanization for all (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003). To underscore, Freire's praxis is for the oppressed. His aim involves revolutionary change that is manifested in the material reality of the social situation, and a liberatory education for the people involved. Freire observes that for the oppressor to engage in this praxis, he must contend with the dual challenge of facing his positions of power and privilege, and entering into solidarity with the oppressed. He warns, "Pedagogy which begins with the egoistic interests of the oppressors (an egoism cloaked in the false generosity of paternalism) and makes of the oppressed the objects of humanitarianism, itself maintains and embodies oppression. It is the instrument of dehumanization" (Freire, 1970, p.54).

Influenced by Freire, hooks (1990) illustrates how Black-Americans challenge systemic racism and sexism by taking hold of their marginalized positions and work through language to reclaim and re-write their histories and horizon of possibilities.

Often when the radical voice speaks about domination we are speaking to those who dominate. Their presence changes the nature and direction of our words... We are wedded in language, have our being in words... The oppressed

struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to reunite, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance (p.146).

hooks' (1990) continues that via a politicization of memory, Black-Americans engage in an act of remembering that serves to illuminate and transform the present. They resist existing representations of black identity, recover and re-narrate repressed narratives, and in effect, "confront and accept dispersal and fragmentation as part of the construction of a new world order that reveals more fully where we are, who we can become, and an order that does not demand forgetting" (p.148).

Indeed this process requires more than solidarity among those engaged, but also personal engagement with the ways a person has been marginalized and a willingness to endure and share in the emotional storms that come along with it. hooks' (1990) notes,

...The effort to speak about issues of 'space and location' evoked pain. The questions raised compelled difficult explorations of silences – unaddressed places within my personal and political evolution. Before I could consider answers, I had to face ways these issues were intimately connected to intense personal upheaval regarding place, identity, desire (p.146).

Dialogue is more than the medium through which a transformative praxis takes place; it is integral to the process. Dialogue moves people toward one another, opens up critical reflection and works through emotions layered by sediments of social injustice. Choosing to engage in a transformative praxis means accentuating the difference and the lack to which one has been attributed. In so doing, the marginalized begin to dismantle existing oppressive representations.

Embarking on a critical pedagogical praxis requires consideration of a given social-political-cultural situation. In fact, Deans (1998) observed that many have misappropriated Freire's praxis without framing his theories within a postcolonial discourse that acknowledges his historical context (1960's third-world Brazil) and radical ambitions. Framing a critical pedagogical praxis for current times, many have observed how Freire's theories resonate in the American context, with its class divisions and disparities, racial and ethnic repression and enmity, gender and heterosexist supremacy, inequity of schooling, and eurocentrism (hooks, 1990, 2003; Giroux, 1993; Glass, 2001). What is more, rapid growth in ethnic diversity and the persistence of xenophobia has been argued to have a deleterious impact on social solidarity and civic engagement (Putnam, 2007).

Considering the American context, how different people grapple with these problems together becomes ever more prescient. Nonetheless, collecting a group of different kinds of voices to explore, challenge, and move toward greater civic engagement is not as straightforward as we would like to presume. According to Freire (1993), at stake for the person who endeavors to move toward the Other in solidarity involves contending with her relative positions of power and privilege, and working to move alongside the Other towards greater humanizing action. There is also much at stake for those who occupy marginal positions too, where a history of oppressive practices has worn at their willingness to move toward another person in trust and faith in challenging the social situation.

In contrast to Freire's claims, the divisions between oppressor/oppressed, privileged/marginalized are not as clearly demarcated as we would like to believe.

Human subjects occupy multiple socio-cultural positions. Engaging in critical praxis inevitably includes more than just the voices of one oppressed group for any given issue. To illustrate, I provide an excerpt from an ethnographic field note of an interaction I had with a fellow MCC group participant, Rose. She and I were the only black participants in this particular round of the program; all the other members were white.

As I entered the room, almost everyone was already seated. At the food table, I bumped into Rose, with whom I had not yet had the chance to speak to one-on-one. I reintroduced myself to her right after I served myself, and she responded jubilantly. I asked her about where she lived. After mentioning her current residence, she added that she was raised in the neighborhood that the program meetings are situated – a predominantly lower SES and black community. She recalled the neighborhood where I currently lived, but asked about my hometown. Upon my response that I was from Toronto, she happily replied, “that’s right, the mixed kid.” I must say that I was somewhat disturbed by this remark. (ethnographic field note, group E-1, October 2004).

At the commencement of the group process, I related very strongly to Rose’s comments and identified with the experiences she shared of being a black woman. Evidently, she did not think similarly. She underscored the fact that she was from a predominantly lower SES and black neighborhood in the city. When she learned that I was from Toronto, Canada, she equated this background as “mixed heritage,” despite not knowing about my cultural background or the kind of neighborhood in which I grew up. I was not the kind of black that she knew and thus our different histories held different meanings for her. Being “mixed” also connoted that I had some sort of privilege of which I was not privy until that moment.

We find another example with the 2008 democratic party presidential candidate, Barack Obama. In relating his personal history of occupying multiple marginal and privileged positions to the history of racism rampant in American society, he conveys his confidence in different people working together against social injustices.

I believe deeply that we cannot solve the challenges of our time unless we solve them together – unless we perfect our union by understanding that we may have different stories, but we hold common hopes; that we may not look the same and we may not have come from the same place, but we all want to move in the same direction – towards a better future for our children and our grandchildren (speech, Philadelphia, PA, March 2008).

Critical pedagogy pertains to what's at stake in participating in transformative learning and what is required of the people engaged in this process. What would the movements of a critical pedagogy look like in an informal learning situation, such as MCC, where the goal is increased civic engagement for a diverse group of participants – where some hold greater power and privilege, and others may be wary of discussing experiences of marginalization and/or oppression?

Transformative learning requires more than a focus on how people grapple with the material constraints of the social positions that they occupy. It involves careful attention to how people struggle emotionally with the valences of their socio-cultural positions (hooks, 2003; Moisió, 2007), and the ways people interact with and challenge others. hooks (2003) states that progressive education is a democratic process; it allows people to work through feelings of loss and detachment rampant in our culture and enables them to move to greater intimacy and sense of connectedness. Moisió (2007) encourages a *gentle shattering of identities* in which the starting point of a critical adult education is “the destruction of the walls of belief that people build around themselves in the course of their lives.” Thus, an important step in moving toward solidarity in a

diverse group is facing the otherness in oneself as a movement toward understanding how others go unrecognized.

Expanding on Freire's (1993) argument regarding transformative praxis for the oppressed and the dual challenge for those who occupy positions of power and privilege in working toward humanization, I argue that transformative praxis with a diverse group requires that people *face the Other* and work toward solidarity through their interactions. Facing the Other involves not only moving toward the unrecognized subaltern within the socio-cultural context, but facing the otherness within our selves who may identify with the kinds of dehumanization we observe rampant in American society. This process is laden with the very emotions that usually keep people from engaging in this work: anguish and guilt about our relative power and privileges (Freire, 1993); rage for being reduced to an object and having one's subjecthood rejected (Fanon, 1967; hooks, 1995); and misery and fear that challenging the status quo may lead to verifiable change (Fanon, 1967; hooks, 1990, 1994, 1995, 2003). Engaging in critical dialogue with a diverse group nonetheless offers an opportunity to move toward solidarity, connectedness, and engagement in the civic sphere. In constructing the project of critical pedagogy in this manner, the challenge remains recognizing, exploring and attempting to move in solidarity with the position of Otherness. Transformative learning would also include taking an honest assessment of the impact a person's circumstances has had on her until present, exploring her options, eventually realizing her agency in her present situation, making choices, and realizing her responsibility for living in a humanizing manner for herself and others.

Researchers studying intergroup relations have documented the transformative impact of engaging in dialogue about social injustice in diverse groups. (McCoy & Scully, 2002; Miller & Donner, 2000; Nagda & Zuniga, 2003; Schoem & Hurtado, 2006) Intergroup dialogue is a facilitated process in community-based and educational settings organized to provide a safe space to express anger and indignation about injustice, learn about social injustices, and motivate participants to engage in further collaboration and advocacy about targeted issues (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlinton, 2006).

In their review of intergroup dialogue research, Schoem & Hurtado (2001) summarized several studies that documented positive changes in program participants outcomes based on dialogue participation. Participant change includes: increased personal awareness with regard to identity and difference; increased knowledge about other groups and social inequalities; greater commitment to social responsibility and action; reduced stereotyping; more complex thinking; improved communication skills; and a greater ability to manage conflict (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001).

Further research outlines the impact of intergroup process on civic engagement and critical processes that mediate the impact of intergroup encounters. Echoing transformative learning literature, McCoy and Scully (2002) identified deliberation and dialogue coupled to community organizing as critical factors in moving a group to increased civic engagement. Based on more than ten years of observing both the ways people talk in civic contexts and how particular types of talk produce different results at the Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC), the authors outlined 10 principles of dialogue, and deliberation that are most successful in public engagement processes. These include: creating a democratic process; encouraging multiple forms of speech and

communication so that participants have a “real voice;” promoting effective listening skills; connecting personal experience with public issues; creating a foundation for working relationships through trust building; exploring multiple perspectives on a given issue; encouraging critical analysis; developing public judgment and common ground for taking action; providing ways for participants to envision and become civic actors; connecting the issues to broader government and policymaking; and last, creating an ongoing process to steward public engagement. Other studies of community-based efforts working toward increased civic engagement have noted similar principles and characteristics of the process (Baille et. al, 2004; Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Earnest, 1996; Tolbert, Lyson, & Irwin, 1998).

Upon observing how intergroup dialogue can both engage participants, (which follows in line with the principles outlined above) and estrange people through ways of interacting that perpetuate dominant group norms, Nagda (2006) aimed to illuminate the complexity of intergroup dialogues. Referring to social psychology literature, he sought to expand the existing paradigm of critical processes in intergroup relations beyond simply pedagogical interventions that lead to a psychological shift toward bridging differences, to integrating communication processes as integral in mediating pedagogical processes toward psychological impact. Communication processes were defined as including: alliance building; participants actively becoming involved in interactions with others (“engaging self”); participants engaging in critical self-reflection; and participants appreciating difference, which was demonstrated by interest in learning about others, hearing other’s narratives, and demonstrating an openness to different perspectives. The study showed that the communication processes were interrelated in their collective

impact on bridging differences. Furthermore, while ‘alliance building’ and ‘engaging self’ had a direct effect on bridging difference, ‘critical self-reflection’ and ‘alliance building’ were shown to be a necessity, “especially in situations where socio-political differences are real and salient outside the encounter situation (Nagda, 2006, p. 567). These results, of course, echo Freire’s description of the critical pedagogical praxis requiring dialogue and solidarity.

Key methodological limitations were noted in Nagda’s (2006) study, however. Namely, the data collected was self-report questionnaires completed by students following the completion of a required course titled, “Cultural Diversity and Justice.” Despite Nagda’s desire to further articulate the complexity of the intergroup process, his methods did not assess how the students’ communication behaviors unfolded over time. He tested only for those processes he presumed significant in intergroup dialogical encounter, preventing him from learning about other conversational movements integral to the process. Consequently, despite positive findings that indicated the significance of various communication processes, this study did not illustrate the participants’ emotional movements – whether the entire process involved moments of engagement, a mixture of both engagement and estrangement, or even more nuanced interpersonal dynamics. Nagda encouraged future research of intergroup processes occurring outside of academic settings; research that collects evidence of how these communication behaviors unfold; and longitudinal assessment of the long-term impact of intergroup process.

Indeed a good deal of intergroup relations research was conducted in academic settings where quantitative methodological measures informed solely the outcomes of the process (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Miller & Donner, 2000; Nagda, 2006;

Nagda, Kim, & Truelove, 2004). These studies, though excellent in demonstrating the significance of the intergroup process, do not illustrate what transpires in encounters across racial and cultural difference, and ultimately do not show how group processes transform participants. A similar argument may be said of studies of intergroup processes toward civic engagement. While the literature identified the characteristics of successful group processes (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Earnest, 1996; Houle & Roberts, 2000; McCoy & Scully, 2002; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005), questions remain regarding how participants in small group processes work together through dialogue about civic issues. Ultimately, we are left with a Pollyanna image of the promise of group processes working toward civic change and lose sight of how challenging these processes indeed may be.

Community-based evaluations of settings using intergroup learning processes to move toward greater social justice and civic engagement require further study. Many have identified, among other questions, a wish to learn the characteristics of public dialogue processes and a more nuanced analysis of what occurs over the course of these processes (Schoem & Hurtado, 2001; Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006; Nagda, 2006). Considering that a preponderance of intergroup relations study occurs in academic settings where researchers conduct their projects in class settings, research on the efficacy of intergroup dialogue in community-based settings as a means of achieving social justice and change has been encouraged (Dessel, Rogge, & Garlington, 2006).

In-depth study of intergroup learning processes may speak to how different people relate to one another; the impact of cultural, racial, and various social differences on the group process; how participants learn from one another; and ultimately how a

transformative process unfolds. I turn to community psychology to see how transformative learning and study of group processes are applied to research and praxis in community settings.

Community Psychology: Putting civic engagement at the forefront of psychological research.

Since my study of civic engagement is most concerned with interactions between people in a community setting, community psychology is a fitting area to locate my study. Since its inception 40 years ago, the major assumption held in community psychology has been that the structure and practices of a social system in which a person is positioned play a crucial role in how she participates in the system (Murrell, 1973). Murrell (1973) writes, “The relationship between the social system and the individual is interactional; the individual can have a powerful impact on the social system as well as being powerfully influenced by the social system” (p. 8). Hence, the mission of community psychology is to study people in community context and intervene in a preventative and/or transformative manner (Prilleltensky, 2004).

Accordingly, proponents within the subfield encouraged research and practices resonant with its mission. The community psychologist was positioned as a “participant-conceptualizer;” one who based actions on knowledge from psychology and other social sciences and in this process, was committed to the developing knowledge of relationships between individuals and social systems (Murrell, 1973). It was believed that by directing research focus toward people in community contexts rather than studying individual human behavior, community psychologists might expose systems of oppression rampant

in American culture and address them in a responsive manner. Indeed it should be a clearing for critical discourse and pedagogy within the field of psychology. Prilleltensky (1997) outlined five main values (health, caring and compassion, self-determination and participation, human diversity, and social justice), which he contends must be espoused within community psychology for addressing issues of oppression and inequity within community contexts. An example of research building upon the mission of the subfield, with particular pertinence to the study of civic engagement, is the concept *psychological sense of community* (PSC) (Sarason, 1974; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). This concept is presently the most referenced within the subfield. PSC refers to factors indicating that a person feels like a viable member of her community. McMillan and Chavis (1986) state, “Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p. 9). They outline four elements to PSC: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection.

‘Membership’ highlights the boundedness of a community – people perceived as either belonging to the community or not. For those who belong, there is a sense of emotional safety, belonging and identification, and personal investment. Group boundaries are upheld by a common symbol system that is recognizable to the individual members. McMillan and Chavis (1986) acknowledge that group boundaries are at times created at the expense of others who are either scapegoated or marginalized so that the group may distinguish themselves. Nevertheless, they argue that community boundaries create a sense of security and belonging, which protect group intimacy (p. 10).

‘Influence’ is a bidirectional notion. In one direction, a person is most attracted to the community in which she feels she will have discernable influence. On the other hand, group cohesiveness is contingent upon the group’s ability to influence its members (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p.11). Community norms are maintained by members’ conformity with community values and practices. McMillan and Chavis (1986) claim that these two forces can work simultaneously toward strengthening a community’s bond and promoting a sense of control and meaningful influence for its members. In fact, they cite research indicating that as influence is drawn away from a locality, the integration and cohesion of a community are threatened (p. 12).

‘Integration and fulfillment of needs’ refers to reinforcements within communities, which function to promote cohesiveness and attend to the needs of the members. Common effective reinforcements include status of membership, success of the community, and the competence of the members.

Last, ‘shared emotional connection’ relates to the kind of interaction that individual community members have with one another (McMillan & Chavis 1986; Fyson 1999; McMillan, 1998; Rappaport 1987). It is created by way of a shared history with which community members identify. McMillan and Chavis (1986) note that the quality, frequency, and investment of interactions between community members at shared events may facilitate or inhibit the strength of the community.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) argue that the PSC concept illustrates the power of group involvement to motivate individual agency and connection between people toward both transformative and destructive ends. They acknowledge that building a community is not necessarily a positive end in itself. The dynamics within a given community may

constrain and or dissuade individual difference, or, the shared values of a community may be directed toward furthering systems of oppression. This argument has been echoed elsewhere, and some theorists question the discursive force of the term “community” to flatten out diverse voices and exclude others who are not representative of the norm (Fendler, 2006; Weisenfeld, 1998). McMillan and Chavis (1986) have rallied community psychologists to direct their study and practice toward reinforcing behaviors leading to the development of a sense of community particularly for socially transformative efforts (p. 19).

PSC has been pivotal in motivating community psychologists to focus on a person’s relationship to her community and to conceive of methods to improve upon a person’s sense of well-being and relationship with others within a community setting (Chavis 1983; Rappaport 1987). There is a multitude of research pertaining to PSC. To date, much of the research revisits and refines the concept by adding components such as “conscious identification” (Obst, Smith, and Zinkiewicz, 2001; McMillan 1998). Also, the concept has been applied to the notion of spiritual connectedness in communities, the study of political ideologies, and increased engagement in community settings (Fyson, 1999; Fox, 1985; Zeldin, 2004).

For the most part, however, research pertaining to PSC or community interaction has not addressed the transformative potential of communities as the authors of PSC encouraged. To date, research and practice in community psychology focuses primarily on indicators of community wellness, and a community’s responsiveness to interventions made by community psychologists. Community psychologists have only recently begun to intervene at the community or setting-level to explore context specific and broader

socio-political factors affecting community members (Wolff, 2000; Weinstein, 2006; Prilleltensky, 2003). Echoing back to the values of community psychology stated above, Prilleltensky (2003) notes, “community psychology has focused much of its energy on the personal and relational levels of analysis” (p.12). In fact, the latter three values (self-determination and participation, human diversity, and social justice) have only recently begun to influence the process of community research and action toward systemic social change.

Prilleltensky and Nelson (1997) claim that the values of self-determination and participation, human diversity, and social justice are in the nascent stages of the discipline. Although it is important to build and develop communities, it is also important to challenge existing structures that marginalize and/or exclude others from becoming members in communities. Prilleltensky and Nelson (1997) state, “By focusing primarily on ameliorative work, community psychologists have not paid sufficient attention to transformative efforts to help oppressed communities” (p. 183). So, even though the mission of community psychology is grounded in exploring individuals in context, with the aim of liberating and challenging oppressive social practices, we are witnessing the first waves of work that endeavors to transform civic engagement at the community level.

Additionally, many community psychologists argue that crucial developments in theory and research methodology have only recently taken place in the subfield. For instance, Van Uchelen (2000) contends that individualistic assumptions of the nature of the individual and social reality in community psychology have resulted in misrepresentation of collective efforts and insensitive research (p.67-68). Such assumptions are based on constructing distinctions between the individual and the context

in which she is situated, holding individual dominance and agency as essential components in definitions of power and control, and viewing the agentic and self-contained individual as an ideal of mental health (p. 74). This perception is in direct contrast to the “interactional” approach to viewing human action that early proponents of community psychology encouraged.

Moreover, with regards to methodology, until recently research in community psychology has been dominated by quantitative methods. Intuitively, one would assume that a qualitative methodology would much more readily capture interpersonal dynamics between community constituents. This form of inquiry both engages people at the level of their experiences of feeling connected to communities, and attends to multiple meanings within a context (Schweder, 1991; Stein & Mankowski, 2004; Stewart, 2000).

Community and critical psychologist, Eric Stewart (2000) states, “Qualitative methods and theories, until quite recently have been marginalized within community psychology; it is surprising because qualitative methods seem ideal to a discipline that seeks to work with rather than on people and communities” (p.726). Stewart advocates research that crosses boundaries, indicating that “the ‘Other’ for community psychology is most often the poor, the disenfranchised, the marginalized of our own society... ‘the civic Other’” (p.729). Thus, where theories of transformative learning from critical pedagogy and intergroup relations research appear to be very fitting for the aims of research and praxis in community psychology, we find key absences in extant literature.

In summary, the goal of this dissertation is to articulate transformative movements toward increased civic engagement in a community initiative. I reviewed theories of transformative dialogue, intergroup relations research, and community psychology

research and practice, to explore existing theory and research of transformative processes in community settings. I situated theory of transformative dialogue in the disciplinary area of critical pedagogy, where a transformative learning process is considered to be crucial for addressing issues such as power inequalities and civic engagement. Paulo Freire, in particular, is most notable for articulating a transformative praxis. His critical pedagogy involves challenging the dehumanizing conditions of social life. He argues that through dialogue, the marginalized in society may work toward liberation by action and reflection of their social situation. Expanding on Friere's arguments, I question how his praxis may be more appropriately applied to the current American context. I argue that transformative praxis with a diverse citizenry requires that people *face the Other* and work toward solidarity through their interactions. Facing the Other involves not only moving toward the unrecognized in the socio-cultural context, but facing the otherness within ourselves, which may identify with dehumanization we observe in American society. In chapter three, I explain the notion of *facing the Other* through discussion of my guiding theories.

Through identifying characteristics of transformative encounters, intergroup relations researchers identified features of group processes working through cultural, racial, and social differences toward increased civic engagement and social action. Results from these studies provided models for diverse group interaction and indicators of critical factors that lead to transformative change. The nuances of the transformative process remained to be articulated however.

In attempting to situate the study of transformative group processes in psychology, I turned to community psychology precisely because it is a field committed

to study and practice of challenging social issues in community contexts. Despite the aims of the field, research and praxis exploring transformative movements in civic spaces is only in its nascent stages. To date, research and evaluations of community initiatives have focused, for the most part, on the efficacy of a given program's interventions and have identified indicators of community engagement and/or development. Although ameliorative, such methods do not offer critical analysis of the relationships between a community program and its participants. Many community psychologists argue that crucial developments in theory and research methodology have only recently taken place, particularly with respect to research and practice articulating transformative processes.

Thus, in response to the lack of a nuanced articulation of how people are transformed to increased civic engagement, I endeavored to show that studying people's interactions could illustrate how they are transformed in relationship to each other. In order to do this, I used an interpretive research methodology framed by theories that allow for an analysis of dialogue as an intersubjective phenomenon. I elucidate these theories and how they inform my research practices in chapter three.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

My research methodology was selected in response to the paucity of research that adequately captures the complexity and dynamics of community interaction. Even though community psychology research and practice has recently been directed toward understanding the interactions between individuals and their community systems, the field continues to struggle theoretically and methodologically to address this phenomenon (Prilletesnky & Nelson, 1997, Stewart 2000, Weinstein 2006). In fact, Packer (2007) argues that despite the recent shift to using qualitative methods in the field of psychology, research continues to lack sensitivity to the multifaceted nature of human experience, remaining tied to the positivist epistemologies of the discipline's history.

I used an interpretive research method informed by theories of human transformation and the intersubjectivity of emotions. These theories revealed the intersubjectivity inherent in dialogue, and as a result, guided my analysis of how participants were changed through their interactions in the program. The methodology was guided by two theories: (1) Hegel's (1977) master/slave dialectic – a theory of human action as motivated by the desire for recognition, and explication of human transformation as impelled by relationship with the Other; and (2) DeRivera's (1977) theory of emotional experience as intersubjective. De Rivera argues that emotions occur in movements between a self and an Other. Thus, the changes in a person's feelings about the Other may be articulated by study of their interaction. Using these theories together, I distinguished transformative movements over the course of participant interaction. Each transformative movement in the group process involved a change in the participants' relationship to each other or in reaction to the program structure.

In this chapter, I discuss interpretive methodology to provide a general framework for orienting the study, and then I discuss the theories guiding the methodology. I used

an interpretive research method for this analysis precisely because it emphasizes a nuanced approach to studying human action. Packer's (1985) study of moral conduct is an exemplar of the interpretive method. Using this approach, he explored how people interact with one another during moral conflict, particularly those aspects of moral conduct that we all find familiar, but allow them to go unnoticed and un-reflected. The aim of his inquiry was to provide appropriate and informed interpretations of the interactions under study. Further, methods of data analysis focused on the narrative form of personal accounts and the oral performances that take place in everyday talk provide a means for capturing the dynamics of communication (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Indeed, Zinberg, Boris, and Boris (1976) provide a model for articulating group processes grappling with social change using a narrative structure. Their analytic method further informs this model of study.

My discussion of interpretive research methods and guiding theories framed my analysis of MCC participant interactions. Analysis began with an articulation of how individual participants, through dialogue with group members, were transformed in the way that they thought and felt about the Other in their community and consequently how they were changed individually by this process. Next, I articulated how the program processes moved participants to critically reflect on civic issues and how they eventually moved to increased civic engagement. In this chapter, I discuss how I designed my research method and provide preliminary discussion of my research procedures. In chapter 3, I provide a background of the MCC program with review of a program evaluation of the program to further set the context for the current study. I outline the procedures of the current analysis as informed by the guiding theories discussed in this chapter.

Methodological Framework: Framing my analysis of MCC

Theories of human action, which verify the complex nature of human action, served as the key departure for the study. I have been guided in large part by Martin Packer's (1985a) approach to understanding human action.

In numerous studies, Packer (1985; 1985a; 1989a) strove to capture various dimensions of human action and relationships by remaining as close as possible to the action as it unfolds. Furthermore, he has advocated for interpretive methodological approaches as a response to the paucity of nuanced psychological study. In particular, he has documented the strength of the hermeneutic paradigm for attending to the richness and ambiguities of human action.

Hermeneutics is the ancient discipline of interpreting texts. Although numerous philosophers have cited its relevance, Martin Heidegger made notable contributions to the human sciences. Heidegger (1962) utilized the hermeneutic method in his seminal work, *Being and Time*. According to Heidegger, to be human is to be in action, which is organized in time, space, and in relation to other things and humans.

Knowledge is located in the everyday, practical activity and relationships of people (Packer, 1985, p. 1083). According to the hermeneutic approach, human action is best understood interpretatively, with close and detailed attention to how people make meaning through their everyday activity (Packer, 1985, p. 1081). We learn about human activity, then, by examining "what people actually do in practical circumstances" (p. 1086). Packer (1985a) notes, "When we adopt a hermeneutic approach to human action, we essentially treat the action as though it has a semantic and "textual" structure" (p. 1082).

To illustrate, Packer (1989) used an interpretive method for his study of moral conduct so that he may explore how people interact with one another during moral

conflict in a nuanced manner. He aimed to uncover the aspects of moral conduct that we all find familiar, but allow them to go unnoticed and un-reflected. His method was an ever-unfolding articulation of the interactions between his research participants who were involved in moral conflicts. The aim of his inquiry was to provide an appropriate and informed interpretation of the interactions under study. Unlike the positivist methodologies, which he has critiqued elsewhere (1985, 1985a, 1989, 2007), he does not provide causal or logical explications for the behavior he studied. Instead, he illuminated his participants' action in order to get at a deeper understanding of their interactions. His work remained true to the complexities of human action in that he further elaborated on and opened up some intricacies of conflicts about morality.

Packer states that, "interpretation always starts in, and is an articulation of, the interpreter's everyday, common-sense understanding of what is going on" (1989a, p. 97). My interpretation of MCC participant interactions was guided, then, by an in-depth articulation of the action I observed occurring between them.

I also referred to Zinberg, Boris, and Boris (1976) to provide a model for articulating group processes moving toward civic engagement. In their project to evaluate a number of process groups addressing desegregation and sexuality in schools, the authors provided a detailed narrative account of an amalgam of group processes, punctuating their interpretation with "abridged versions of group sessions to illustrate how individuals processed the group experience internally" (p.41). While this project does not focus on the internal experience of MCC program participants per se, employing elements of Zinberg, Boris, and Boris' analytic method, I illustrated broader movements of the group process while remaining near to the interactions between group participants.

Packer (1985) states that the movement between understanding and interpretation requires shifts in one's modes of engaging in the world. Shifts in engagement involve

moving from being immersed in action, to a more distant, reflective stance to the action in which one was once immersed (Heidegger, 1962). An important consideration, then, is that the researcher always enters into a study with preliminary understandings and biases of the topic. However, my positions, as past participant, co-evaluator, and researcher, not to mention a person who occupies various marginal social positions, not only made these shifts more tangible, but I could never fully shift to a distant, reflective stance. My memories of being immersed in the action of the program and my personal reactions to the data coated all of my interpretations of the findings. I did not only enter the study with preliminary understandings and biases, they reverberated throughout. Certainly, Ellis & Bochner (2003) describe reflexive practice, particularly in ethnographic study, "...authors use their own experiences in the culture reflexively to bend back on self and look more deeply at self-other interactions. The researcher's personal experience becomes important primarily in how it illuminates the culture under study" (p.211). So, simply accounting for my various biases and preliminary understandings of the research findings would not suffice to arrive at more meaningful results; these multiple positions amplified how I approached the data. For this reason, I dialogued my ethnographic field notes from the evaluation study and personal experiences from participating in MCC with the data in my efforts to interpret the action.

Packer (1989a) argues that what is vital for interpretive inquiry is not getting at the right interpretation, but entering into the field of study in the most appropriate manner and working to remain there. This involves four considerations: (a.) Selecting the appropriate entity to interpret (b.) Preparing action for interpretation (c.) Reflexivity over the course of the research process and; (d.) Articulation of various elements of the discourse.

I have chosen to interpret the transcribed interactions of the MCC program participants. Since over 100 people participated in the program and the evaluation findings suggest that some participants found the program more successful than others, I studied those group interactions involving at least three participants who reported that the program motivated them to engage in civic action. I find this population most appropriate for my study because I am concerned with those interactions that led to increased action. “Preparing the action for interpretation” for this project involved transcription of MCC program meetings. The articulation of my interpretations was informed by theories guiding my research, which I discuss below. I provide further detail of my transcription process and data analysis in the procedures section of chapter 4.

Reading human activity according to a hermeneutic approach acknowledges that our action is always understood in relation to the contexts within which we find ourselves and the multiple perspectives present in our relationships with others and social structures. Packer (2007) has gone further to argue that an interpretive approach does not stop with a hermeneutic understanding of human activity, but it is also informed by theories that are even more sensitive to how human understanding and action are informed by cultural systems to which our lives are contingent and the social forces of power and privilege, which constrain and delimit one’s action.

Human action may be understood by interpreting practical activity. Study of human action involves a careful articulation of what is happening before us. All meaning is latent in human action, which is bounded by our situation and our relationships. Understanding involves an uncovering process of making evident taken-for-granted meanings latent in human experience. We arrive at this knowledge by interpreting it in a textual manner. Since I, the researcher, like any other human agent is also bounded by my

situation, I must begin my work by positioning myself in relation to it, making clear what perspectives will guide my research.

Guiding Theories

Informed by a general method of studying human interaction, I endeavored to interpret the transformative process moving MCC participants to increased civic engagement. My research was guided by two theories regarding human action, which helps me study MCC participant dialogue as an intersubjective process and account for the transformative processes of interaction between participants. I review contributions from Hegel and De Rivera, which inform how I articulated the sub-questions: (1) What did the transformations of group interaction look like? And (2) What were the key movements of the group's transformative process? With respect to the first sub-question, Hegel's notion that human action is motivated by the desire for recognition offers explication of human transformation. Transformation involves change in a person's subjectivity that emerges through relationship with the Other. Next, 'key movements' refers to identifying shifts in the transformation in the self and Other. De Rivera's argument that emotions are intersubjective provides a method for identifying the movements of the MCC groups' transformative processes. Using these theories, I analyzed how participants were changed in their interactions and how they were moved toward increased civic engagement. The methodology, then, was organized to articulate the movements of transformation that happen in dialogue.

Hegel: The desire for recognition as motivating action

Contributions from Hegel persuade critical reflection of how one becomes motivated to act and for what sake. Hegel's (1977) theory of human action is depicted in the master/slave dialectic. He posits that humans act for the sake of recognition. Hegel

distinguishes human action from that of animals in his discussion of self-consciousness in *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. For him, human action begins in the meeting with the Other and it is motivated by the desire to be recognized by the Other as a distinct human being. The Other is that which we distinguish as different than us. Difference manifests in our worldly encounters with people, the environment, and in relationship to other dimensions of ourselves. It is what we do not know and thus it is not incorporated into our conception of self. We respond in relationship to the Other by seeking understanding, comprehension, and acknowledgement; in an effort to negate it as “not us” and thus a lesser entity; or we flee fearing annihilation or subjection. Hegel’s theory of human action pertains to the transformation of the self in relationship to the Other. Transformation involves change in the way we relate to the Other. This relationship, in turn, changes our understanding of ourselves. Transformation is the intrapsychic and intersubjective experience of facing the Other. In meeting the Other, we are faced with our subjectivity: our understanding of ourselves changes through relating to the difference of the Other. For Hegel, subjectivity involves being recognized by an-Other and distinguishing oneself as a human being. It requires being in relationship to people and things in the world in a reflective and creative manner. Human action is predicated on our desire to be subjects and it emerges in our relationship to the Other.

The master/slave dialectic is the compromised resolution of the conflict of self-consciousness meeting itself. It evidences the actuality that in order to be, one must be recognized by another. It is the process by which the world is created. Peters (1999) notes, “For Hegel the self has no “inside” – its self-discovery goes on in the daylight of common life in the company of others” (p. 113). Hence, transformation of the self occurs in relationship to the Other. Analysis of MCC participant transformation may be articulated through participants’ interactions with each other. The master/slave dialectic

involves the following transformations: (1) Meeting the Other in which self-consciousness meets itself - that is, a meeting between two human beings; (2) A “life and death struggle” in which self-consciousness attempts to annihilate the Other, but in attempting to do this, self-consciousness realizes that the ability to annihilate the Other signifies the possibility of the annihilation of the self; (3) The master/slave dialectic, in which the Other is subjected as a slave to the victor of the “life and death struggle”; and last, (4) The slave’s relationship to the otherness of the world, which she² meets in her work for the master. In the last movement, through work, the slave’s understanding of self is transformed. Articulating these movements provide a framework for analyzing MCC participant interactions. Hegel’s discussion of the master/slave dialectic illustrates how I may describe how participants were transformed in their relationship to each other and the program.

According to Hegel (1977), human action emerges in the dialectic of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the process in which the “I,” an entity distinct from other sentient beings, is created and revealed. It involves one’s meeting the Other and soliciting its recognition of oneself *as* a conscious subject. The master/slave dialectic is the resolution of the initial meeting in which the master wins recognition from the slave. The slave, however, continues to struggle to become a subject in her work towards recognition. To explain the transformations within the master/slave dialectic, I will briefly distinguish human and animal action, further describe the movement of self-consciousness, and then conclude with a summary of the master/slave dialectic.

Unlike animals, human desire transcends an immediate relation to the phenomenal world. In his summary of Hegel’s master/slave dialectic, Kojève (O’Neill, 1996) notes that the animal’s desire, unlike the human’s, remains contingent on its immediacy in the

² I will use the feminine pronoun in this discussion for ease of clarity.

natural world. The animal instinctively satiates any desires it experiences, never distancing itself long enough to contemplate its relationship to the world. Through the revelation of speech, however, the human may distinguish herself from other entities by naming them through language. The human is distanced from the world in her act of distinguishing herself from other objects. By naming things, she appropriates what is different and makes it her own. She does not desire to remain in an indistinguishable relationship to the world, but seeks unity with herself, the "I," who desires to negate her phenomenal immersion in the world. Here, we observe transformation in her moving away from her relationship to the world by distinguishing herself from the otherness of the world. In her desire to distinguish herself, she desires to be recognized as a being who desires to distinguish herself.

The movement of self-consciousness begins when two conscious beings meet one another. Hegel describes the movement of self-consciousness as its splitting of itself into two parts such that self-consciousness recognizes itself in the Other and the Other in itself. Hence, the movement of self-consciousness involves the mutual recognition of difference. Within this movement, the desire for recognition from both sides of self-consciousness prompts actions for the sake of being recognized by the Other as a desiring being and negating the Other as a lesser entity.

The desire to be recognized by the Other person results in a life and death struggle between the two beings. This transformation involves movement against the Other in an aim to annihilate, guarantee recognition, and maintain a distinct understanding of self. To win the battle would certify one's acknowledgement from the vanquished and distinction. What is more, it would certify that one is not a mere thing, but pure being-for-self. However, by killing the Other, one's distinction as a desiring being would be held of no account as the Other would no longer be present to recognize one. Death signifies the

collapse of the middle term, self-consciousness, into two lifeless unopposed extremes and the two would not relate dynamically as conscious, desiring beings but rather merely inert, as things. The significance of life then is posited in this encounter and the struggle is resolved by the master/slave dialectic.

Action for the sake of recognition is the dynamic between master and slave. The master and slave relate in an unequal, opposed relationship. The master, having won the struggle, gains recognition from the slave and negates him as a lesser entity. The slave, having lost the struggle, on pain of death submits herself to the master's will, relinquishes her desire to be a being-in-itself and – again immersed in the phenomenal world – toils *for* the master.

Following the struggle, the master no longer engages in the world in a formative manner. The master exists mediately between the slave and objects in the world, remaining certain only of herself and the enjoyment she derives from her distinction and the objects she possesses. The object is the thing that chains the slave to the master, as the slave must continue to work on the world as material for labor for the master's enjoyment. The master, then, only engages with the dependent aspects of things, whereas, the slave must continue to work with objects, engaging them as independent entities. Also, since the slave has been relegated to the status of a lesser entity, the master's desire to be recognized by an equal is no longer fully satisfied. The master, divorced from her relationship with nature, becomes increasingly dependent on the slave for recognition. Thus, transformation occurs in the compromised relationship between master and slave. The master maintains distinction from the Other, the slave, through subjection. While the master forecloses further engagement with the world through this relationship, the slave remains in relationship with the world, which allows for continued relationship with the otherness of the world.

In her work with objects, the slave creates and transforms them. All the while, she strives for recognition from her master. Over the course of her struggles, she is transformed as she engages with the otherness of the world and the otherness within herself. Hyppolite (O'Neill, 1996) notes that the slave finds herself in the product of her work. Work is *Bildung*, it both transforms the world and the person doing it. The process is a technique that leads to further (self-) transformation, as the slave contends with her fear of death in order to rise above her position. Through working for the master, she faces the otherness within herself: her fear of being annihilated. In the process of meeting her fears, she realizes that her life is contingent upon her fears, motivating her actions. The slave struggles to surmount her fear of death in order to end her slavery.

The dynamic of the dialectic propels the slave's later sustained efforts toward subjectivity. Her fear of death is the otherness within her, with which she struggles intrapsychically. The process toward subjectivity and independence from the master takes place in her relationship to the world in the form of work. The slave's desire is "held in check" (O'Neill, p. 35) as she works toward recognition by the master. The slave's confrontation with her fear of death is the instantiation of the process of thinking. Hegel outlines three ideologies in which the slave works through various forms of reason: stoicism, skepticism/nihilism, and Christianity to achieve greater recognition of herself as a human being.

Human action, according to Hegel, is prompted by the desire for recognition from another person. Transformation is the change in the self's relationship to the Other, which creates a change in the understanding of the self. The process of becoming a subject is evidenced in the master/slave dialectic. The master conquers her fear of death to achieve recognition from the slave; however, it results in a deficient and dependent relationship. The slave, working for the master, struggles to achieve recognition in her labor with the

world and her efforts to conquer her fear of death. Analysis of MCC participants' transformative processes then, involves articulation of how participants relate to the Other. For MCC participants, the Other includes other group participants, other people in their community, and the program goal to move them to increased civic engagement. As Hegel narrated the master/slave dialectic, I created an account of the participants' action in dialogue, that is, how their desire for recognition moved them toward or away from the Other. Articulating transformation involved studying how the participants' relationship to the Other shifted their understanding of themselves and broader community issues.

Hegel's project, the *Phenomenology of the Spirit* is a telling of the processes of human action. Peters (1999) notes, "the aim of his entire system is communication: not in the sense of shared information, but in the richer sense as the process whereby a free human world is built collectively" (p. 110).

Communication is action. It is a key site where action unfolds and transforms. Indeed, communications theorist, John D. Peters (1999), argues that communication is multivalent – it breathes into all that which we are entangled – spatially, temporally, and interpersonally. Peters reminds us that the flows of communication make up the entire expanse of human action – from dialogue as a mode of revolutionizing perspectives, to indoctrinating and oppressive forms of mass communication (and vice versa). What is more, through communication, whole worlds are revealed and reinterpreted. Erikson (2004) states, "Talk is both a local and global process" (p. 107). Much more is being enacted than simply two subject positions. MCC group dialogue is the location of the program's transformative process. Individual participant change occurred in the interactions between participants. Studying dialogue as an intersubjective process that invokes the action between self and other allows for an articulation of individual transformation.

Hegel's arguments regarding the significance of recognition to motivate action make evident how communication is dynamic – it creates, brings depth to, and changes human experience. By attuning to the interchanges in the program participants' discourse, I will observe and experience how they acted upon each other through their speech.

De Rivera: The Intersubjectivity of emotions

According to DeRivera (1977), emotions always occur in relation to another person. Emotions are intersubjective; occurring in the interaction between the self and an Other. In his work, *The Structural Theory of the Emotions*, he seeks to understand, among other things, “the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of a particular emotion” (p. 6), and the interpersonal function of particular emotions. According to his theory, emotions are a fundamental way of relating a person to her environment; they organize and transform a person's relationship to the world. Emotions, then, are dynamic; they “reflect the transformations of our relation to the world. The transformations are the movements of emotion and each type of emotion (anger, fear, love, etc) reflects a different kind of transformation” (p. 35). DeRivera provides a structural theory of emotions that allows for articulating their movements between self and Other. Employing this theory, I identified the movements of the group's transformations.

DeRivera (1977) argues that emotions are always related between a self and an Other³ (another person or an internalized Other). He also suggests two basic types of emotional movement: decreases and increases in the distance between the self and the Other (1977, p.42). So, movements are emotional transformations that involve an Other moving toward or away from the self, or the self moving toward or away from the Other.

³ De Rivera refers to 'other' as another person or an internalized Other. Considering the consistency of this definition with the discussion of Other as difference outlined earlier, I capitalize Other here too to convey similar meaning.

The movements of emotions are explicated via a 24-emotion matrix, which is organized according to three dimensions termed fundamental human relations (belonging, recognition, and being). Each dimension refers to a cluster of emotional movements characterized by a particular kind of relationship between self and Other. The *belonging* dimension refers those emotional movements involving a sense of connection with another or establishing a boundary because another does not belong. DeRivera states, “When we speak of the person as belonging to an other we imply that he has made the other’s concerns his own to the extent that he will feel gladdened by the other’s gains and saddened by the other’s pain” (p.52). DeRivera described this dimension as horizontal movement between the subject and Other. That is, a person has a personal investment in belonging to another person. The *recognition* dimension refers to those emotional movements concerned with how one appears in the face of Others. This dimension deals most strictly with social relations and involves one’s sense of honor, reputation, and morality (1977, p.53). This dimension is described as moving vertically between a subject and Other; one looks up to and recognizes another, or down upon and dismisses another. The *being* dimension refers to those emotions, which grant or deny another person’s existence – not simply another person’s physical existence, but those factors a person deems necessary to perceive another person as meaningful to her (i.e. terms such as the essence and soul of another person). The movement here is an “in and out” dynamic; a person opens up to or closes another person out.

Each dimension is comprised of 8 emotional transformations, which include the following features: the subject of the movement (‘me’ or ‘Other’), the direction of the movement (toward or away from the person or Other), and the impact of the movement (whether it alters the position of the person or Other). DeRivera (1977) claims that the three dimensions may be regarded as different aspects of a person’s identity, “In another

sense, the three different relations may be regarded as three different dimensions of the psychological space in which the movements of emotions occur” (p. 65).

For the purposes of my study, I am most interested in exploring the *recognition* and *being* dimensions of emotional movements. The *being* dimension directly informs my earlier discussions of the desire for recognition as motivating action. The emotional transformations included in these dimensions may be observed in the conversations between the program participants, particularly those who found the program successful and went on to engage in civic action. Articulating the emotional transformations between participants further provides a way to identify those transformative movements moving them to increased motivation toward civic engagement.

The emotions along the being dimension include: moving toward a person in *acceptance* and *wonder*, and moving away in *rejection* and *dread*. Acceptance acknowledges the being of the Other, “[It] transforms the situation so that we stop insisting that the other meet our own ideal and allow the other a separate being...the moment the other is accepted for himself, he begins to change, usually becoming more like the ideal that was initially demanded” (DeRivera, 1977, p.63). Wonder involves moving the Other, whom we do not understand, toward the self. The movement of wonder acknowledges the being of an-Other and involves an attempt to understand the meaningfulness of the Other, “thus bring[ing] it fully into being” (DeRivera, 1977, p. 63). Rejection involves denying the being of the Other, negating his meaningfulness. In turn, the Other responds in sorrow, experiencing a loss of meaning of part of the self. In dread, we move the Other away in fear that the other’s being will foretell our own annihilation (DeRivera, 1977, p. 64). The self responds in panic fearing that its being is on the verge of disintegration. This movement involves a desperate attempt to hold the self together and maintain its being.

The *recognition* dimension informs analysis of how the MCC participants grapple with their self-image and perception of their ideal self. Emotions along this dimension of pertinence to my analysis of group interaction include: admiration, horror, and guilt. Admiration involves recognition of one's ideal self in the Other. "The movement of admiration identifies us with the other so that we recognize our own ideal self in the other" (DeRivera, 1977, p. 53) In horror, we remove ourselves from the Other whom we no longer recognize as a member of the group. When a person experiences the emotion of guilt there is an implicit Other who is withdrawing in horror from the person. Guilt, however, preserves a person's identity as a member of a group since he disidentifies with his action (DeRivera, 1977, p.59).

According to his notion of the matrix of emotions, DeRivera (1977) argues that any particular emotion is the outcome of a pattern of 'choices' that organize our relationships with the Other. He grounds his argument on the transactional school, which "holds that any *perception* is really an interpretation of a situation, and hence, involves an implicit choice" (p. 71). A person's emotional responses directly follow from her perception of an event or interaction. Agency, for Rivera, lies in how a person perceives an event. Since any emotion that one experiences is the product of a number of unconscious choices, there are many more degrees of freedom in one's life than are usually recognized. However, once these choices are made, there are inevitable consequences; the emotional organization requires definite perceptions and inter- and intrapersonal relationships" (p.74).

An emotion is a gestalt, which may be characterized by four interrelated parts of its structure: (1.) Emotions are informed by a particular way of perceiving the situation in which one finds oneself. It is a transaction, which involves a number of choices that give meaning to what occurs. (2.) Emotions are a response to the perception, which involves a

movement or transformation of the person's relationship with the other. The emotion persists until the situation has been transformed. (3.) The emotion is expressed by the way it transforms the body and/or her relation to her environment in a specific way. The transformations are in service to the emotions instruction. (4.) An emotion is a functional adjustment to the exigencies of a person's total situation (DeRivera, 1977, p.95).

I analyzed emotional movements to identify transformative movements in the group process. Transformative movements included shifts in the relationship between the participants to the Other. I identified these shifts by articulating emotional movements evident in the participants' dialogue. Thus, different emotional movements marked shifts in participant interaction. I identified recurring clusters of emotional movements, which suggested that a particular emotional movement referred to a pivotal transformation in the group process. I named these movements as "key" and articulated how it marked a transformative shift in the program process. So, movements involve emotional transformations that also mark the transformation between self and Other as I discussed with respect to Hegel's master/slave dialectic. To illustrate how this notion of movement incorporates Hegel's and DeRivera's theory and guided my analysis, I return to the slave's transformation through work. In the slave's working for the master by engaging with the world, the slave moves toward the otherness of the world through wonder. In her wonder, she acknowledges the being of this otherness and in so doing she transforms it by bringing it fully into being. The slave derives joy in her act of creation with the world and is transformed in meeting otherness within herself – the ability to create. She develops an independent relationship to the world that is distinct from her subjection to the master. Meeting this otherness within herself propels another intrapsychic movement to face the otherness of her fear and surmount her fear of death in order to end her slavery.

My methodology, then, informs how I may study dialogue as an intersubjective process to articulate MCC participants transformative process toward increased civic engagement. Using interpretive research methods based on a theoretical framework about the intersubjectivity of human action, I followed the nuances of MCC participants' interactions. I framed the study using Hegel's theory of the motivation to act as dialectically driven by the desire for recognition, and DeRivera's (1977) theory of the intersubjectivity of emotions. Guided by this framework, I studied what the transformative process looked like by summarizing how individual MCC participants were changed in relationship to other group members, the otherness of the program goal, and the otherness within themselves. Articulating this process involved detailed accounting of how participants related to one another. To identify these movements I identified the emotional movements between them. Next, I identified key transformative movements in the group process by identifying recurring shifts in the transformations in the participants to the Other.

The research procedures included transcription and analysis of multiple meetings for two groups of MCC participants. I selected the groups with the most participants who reported that the program was influential in moving them to increased civic engagement. Analysis moved from broader narrative to detailed accounting of conversation movements. Creating narratives of the transformative process mirrored my discussion of Hegel's (1977) master/slave dialectic as an articulation of human transformation. DeRivera's (1977) theory of emotions informed how I could identify transformative movements in the program process. This methodological approach provided a way to articulate how participants were transformed over the course of the program process. I further explain my research procedures after providing a background of MCC and summary of the program evaluation in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: MEETINGS FOR CIVIC CHANGE PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURES

The facilitator then read the poem, "More Light! More Light!" This piece, by Anthony Hecht juxtaposed the light inspired by Goethe's last words of a person acting courageously and evading death to the atrocious holocaust killings where no light remained. Bob began the discussion by highlighting Rose's comment from last week, "we all need to become Martin Luther Kings." He elaborated that we all must take a stand. Sunny quipped (and Rose supported his claim) that a critical mass is necessary in order to take a stand and do something. When I asked, though, how a critical mass may be gathered, he responded that he did not believe that it was possible, and that he, in fact, no longer believed that evoking change was possible. The group slumped in response and it seemed that most of us felt hopeless.

-Ethnographic field note, Fall 2004, Group E-1, Meeting #4: "Reality check"

The excerpt above documents my experiences in a group where everyone who participated described feeling transformed by their participation in MCC. They developed relationships with one another and remained in contact months following completion of the program. As a result of their involvement in the program, they all made sweeping changes to further engage civically and act locally. The passage here doesn't show this however. Here, we see a morass of despair and frustration about the possibility for social change. How then, were we moved to action over the course of the process?

I first participated in MCC in the fall of 2003. I was encouraged to attend by the prompting of a professor who was familiar with my love of good conversations and equally strong investment in studying social change. My participation in the program illuminated my fascination of this new kind of space, an opportunity to connect with others, and multiple concerns and quandaries about how we, the participants, addressed social issues. I was struck by how readily I connected with certain dimensions of the program process and not others. Of course, this kind of experience is the norm for anyone entering into a new space, particularly if you occupy as many different socio-cultural positions as I do. Nonetheless, the program purported not only to address numerous social issues, but also to engage people across a diversity of backgrounds and

perspectives through dialogue. The persistence of my divided experience over the course of the program tormented me. I wanted to understand what was remained unspoken in the process and what pulled me to further explore my social concerns with the participants. I also wondered about their experiences: what movements in the dialogue led to interconnectedness and shared responsibility amongst them?

Following my participation in the program I became a member of an evaluation team, co-led by Rodney Hopson, PhD and the Dewey & Kaye consulting firm, conducting a three-year ethnoevaluation of MCC (completed June 2006). An ethnoevaluation utilizes an ethnographic methodology to investigate how the program impacted the participants and to gain insight into interactions between the community program and its participants (Hopson, Peterson, & Lucas, 2001). As a member of the evaluation team, I worked under key figures in the field to learn how to conduct an evaluation and consider multiple dimensions of the evaluation process; particularly how an evaluation may be culturally responsive to the participant population and how it may assess the use of findings for the program and its recipients.

The evaluation of the initiative offered a different lens to understand the program processes. Evaluation, unlike research, is targeted toward understanding the impact and implications of various funded research projects and social programs. It offers a reflexive look at the processes of the program under study, assessing the outcomes and associated effects of its proposed efforts. Within the program evaluative endeavor lies a fecundity of possibilities for lifting up the realities of social efforts and calling attention to innovative ways for addressing complex issues (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998; Greene, 2003; Kaufman, et. al, 2006). Over the course of this evaluation, I was primarily concerned with the how I may most effectively account for the qualitative dimensions of the program, specifically the extent to which meanings that emerged during the program

conversations connected the participants to one another and the resulting implications of their shared, bridged, or divergent perspectives. Herein, I will provide a more detailed description of the program and a brief synopsis of evaluation activities and findings.

Program Background

The program director (personal communication, 2002) argued “we lack a civic space to talk about things that really matter to us, to make meaningful human connectedness across difference, and to reflect on our own contributions to the common good.” The program aimed to tackle multiple goals: to create a new civic space to cultivate social change, to bridge diverging perspectives, and to cultivate a new language of civic discourse. Indeed the program goals are expressed in the program name: Meetings for Civic Change. The features of the program then, emphasize its structure, setting, diversity of participant population, and style of group facilitation.

Program Structure and Setting

MCC solicited participants from the local community by distributing flyers in the neighborhoods, local stakeholders and shareholders in the community, city churches and other community organizations. In an attempt to attract a diverse group of people, the program director set the conversations in a distinctly “community-oriented environment.” Hence, MCC was set in one of the city’s largest neighborhoods at an endowed liberal church whose mission is to serve the surrounding community. On two occasions, groups were located at an academic setting in a collaboration effort with a local university leadership program.

MCC meetings were divided into rounds of groups made up of an average of 8 - 10 individuals from differing race, gender, ethnic, religious, occupational, and educational backgrounds. Two rounds were held concurrently, each round meeting for seven weekly meetings. The course of the program was structured thematically and each

meeting was facilitated by the program director. The conversations were structured to focus on the personal and social implications of some issues with which our culture struggles: race/diversity, economic disparities, environmental degradation, and materialism/media.

Meeting Structure and “Cultivation of a New Civic Language”

The meetings were intended to move thematically from “shared hopes” in the first meeting to “shared commitments” for common wealth. Each meeting followed a similar structure: dinner was provided; introductory reflections on the previous meeting or on the evening topic were discussed; the group observed art work pertinent to the evening’s theme followed by discussion of oppressive practices and transformative “change-makers;” and then the groups shared closing reflections and completed session evaluations.

The program director (personal communication, 2003) stipulated that through facilitated discussion, personal reflection and resource materials, participants learn from each other, create meaningful relationships, and move to action. The conversations were structured around a process termed “shared looking:” the analysis of media such as music, poetry, photographs, literature and other forms of art. The program director posited that in the act of shared looking “imaginative empathy” emerges. Via “imaginative empathy” participants connected their personal beliefs, concerns, and experiences to the images presented and discussed, the participants would approach social issues by an alternative vantage point and further engage in social action. During the last session of the program, participants were invited to make a renewed commitment to commonwealth by investing in a project of their choosing and maintain relationships with the other participants as fellow agents of support and critique (“continued conversations”).

Audiences

The program director consulted with an advisory board, which helped him in the construction and management of MCC. Three funders provided grants to the program, which are all known for supporting social programs with similar aims as MCC. The municipal funders were interested in cultivating greater civic engagement in the city, with particular attention to advancing education and knowledge about proactive civic practices. The FM foundation was concerned with issues surrounding civic justice and diversity, particularly engaging people across economic boundaries. The Z endowment was interested in how MCC affects people's interest in the arts and engaging in various arts programs throughout the city. Last, national funder, the APP foundation was interested in how MCC may motivate change beyond individuals and affect institutions as well.

Evaluation Activities

Three evaluation questions were identified: (a.) How may we evaluate the program as a complex, embedded learning system? (b.) How is the program influencing the participants? (c.) How do the core program practices contribute to the program's impact on participants? The first question referred to our framework for studying the impact of the program on multiple stakeholders (i.e. the participants and surrounding community). It was also an effort to create a nuanced approach to analyzing the dynamics between the participants and the program director, and the program with local organizations. The latter two questions referred to an in-depth assessment of the value of the program to the participants and the surrounding community.

Evaluating "complex learning experiences" meant attention to both process and outcome-related issues in the evaluation. Early on in the evaluative process, we learned that a simple survey of the program's "effectiveness" would not suffice if we wanted to

understand *how* the program was impacting the participants and the larger community. Our evaluative approach was informed by contributions from democratic and culturally responsive evaluation theories, which specify how evaluations are politically located within a socio-cultural context, thus influenced by power dynamics and value systems, (Greene, Hopson, & Millet, 2004; Hopson, 1999, 2001; SenGupta, Hopson, Thompson-Robinson, 2004) and Prilleltensky & Prilleltensky's study of community systems (2006). We analyzed the impact of the program by exploring how the program impacted the participants individually (did participation lead to increased civic engagement?), relationally (how did the participants relate to one another? how did the participants react to the program "core practices"), and collectively (how were local organizations affected by the program's efforts?).

Our data collection included surveys, telephone interviews, in situ interviews with two participants, focus groups, interviews with three local organizations who collaborated with MCC, and participant observation of two rounds of program meetings (Groups E-1 and G-1). Data was transcribed using quantitative and qualitative software (Survey Monkey and Atlas TI) and interpreted according to the evaluation questions.

To ensure a representative sample of all the participants, that is, a range from those who actively participated to those who dropped out early, the evaluation team identified four kinds of participants: completed completers, continued completers, non-continued completers, and non-completers. The first category, "Completed Completers," refers to participants who attended greater than four of the seven MCC meetings, completed the pre-participation survey and the 1-year post participation survey. The second, "Continued Completers," refers to participants who attended greater than four MCC meetings and at least one optional follow-up MCC meeting. The third, "Non-continued completers," refers to participants who attended greater than four meetings but

did not attend any of the optional follow-up meetings. The last, “Non Completers,” refers to participants who attended less than four meetings. Following completion of the participant-observation, in situ interviews, and focus groups, we observed that respondents represented mostly the “completed completers” and “continued completers” categories. We conducted telephone interviews from the pool of non-continued completers and non-completers to learn about their experiences from the program.

The specific procedures and instrumentation employed included the following:

- ❖ **Participant observations:** Evaluation team members, as part of the ethnographic evaluation process assumed the role as participant observer in conversation and continued conversation rounds from October, 2004 – June, 2005⁴. Reflecting on conversations, participation and the process of how social change was being realized, the ethnoevaluators “enrolled” in conversation rounds and attended continued conversations. Participant observations served to observe and document MCC group activities and develop relationships with current participants for purposes of ethnographic interviews.
- ❖ **Ethnographic interviews:** Ethnographic interviews were conducted with two participants who had completed the MCC rounds to more thoroughly depict participant backgrounds, motivations for attending MCC, and the role of MCC in their lives. More specifically, these interviews and discussions helped to develop ethnographic portraits about a selected number of participants. Ethnographic interviews were audio-recorded for purposes of highlighting major ideas around the MCC experience and informed consent forms were completed by participants. Ethnographic interviews, began in December 2004.
- ❖ **Focus groups.** Three focus groups took place in the months of May and June to further ascertain participant understanding of the MCC experience. Aligned to the two central evaluation questions, focus group questions focused on the impact of MCC and how MCC was distinct from other group experiences. The Duquesne University team conducted the first two focus groups, the third in collaboration with the Dewey & Kaye team. Focus groups were administered at the setting of MCC and ranged from 75 – 90 minutes in duration.
- ❖ **Telephone interviews:** Recorded telephone interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format, lasting on average 10-20 minutes in length. All interviews occurred between business hours from end of June to the beginning of July 2005 at participants’ homes or offices. Out of a total of 39 participants, three participants provided no contact information during their participation with MCC, and thus were not contacted for interviews. Of the remaining thirty-six participants, nineteen (53%) participants were unable to be contacted during

⁴ Specifically, ethnoevaluators took part in rounds E-1 and G-1 and attended continued conversation rounds from October, 2004 – January, 2005.

several attempts, nine (25%) individuals agreed to participate in the recorded telephone interview at the receipt of the phone call from the interviewer, four (11%) participants were willing to be interviewed at a later, more convenient time, and another four (11%) individuals were unwilling to participate in the interviewing sessions entirely. Follow-up attempts to call participants who agreed to being contacted at a later and more convenient time for interview sessions were unsuccessful as none of these individuals were available by phone during the prearranged and agreed upon times set by the participants and the evaluator.

❖ **Survey Participation:**

Pre-Test: 67/94 respondents; response rate = 71%

Programmatic Test: 16/40 respondents; response rate = 40%

One-Year Test: 25/89 respondents; response rate = 28%

Table 1: Pre-Test Participant Demographics

1. Gender	MALE	FEMALE				
	44.3%	55.7%				
2. Work Status	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	LAI D OFF	UNEMPLOYED	RETIRED	STUDENT
	60.7%	11.5%	0%	3.3%	4.9%	16.4%
3. Age	18-25	25-35	35-45	45-55	55-65	65+
	13.3%	13.3%	15%	38.3%	16.7%	3.3%
4. Education	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR G.E.D.	SOME COLLEGE	ASSOCIATE DEGREE (2 YEAR) OR TRAINING CERTIFICATE	BACHELOR DEGREE	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE
	0%	0%	15%	5%	20%	60%
5. Ethnicity/ Race	HISPANIC/LATINO	WHITE/CAUCASIAN	AFRICAN-AMERICAN	ASIAN	NATIVE AMERICAN	OTHER
	0%	71.2%	25.4%	0%	0%	3.4%
6. Yearly Household Income	LESS THAN \$15,000	\$15,000-\$25,000	\$25,000-\$40,000	\$40,000-\$75,000	\$75,000 OR MORE	DON'T KNOW
	5.1%	8.5%	15.3%	30.5%	35.6%	5.1%

Findings

We learned that for the most part, participants' reported having a unique and inspirational experience in the program in which they developed relationships, increasingly shared personal narratives that connected to the program content, developed new perspectives about social issues, and recognized one another's strengths. Upon completing the program, many noted changes in the way they think about social issues,

engage in social action, and an increased openness to new ways of thinking and relating to different people. Results from pre- and one-year post surveys showed that 92% of respondents reported that MCC affected their decisions to take action by focusing engagement. After one year, 84.6% of respondents were able to name a commitment they had made or name a cause they were involved in that was contributing to the common good. 45.5% of respondents stayed in contact with others from the conversations, whom participants had not known before. 47.4% of respondents after one year said MCC was most helpful in energizing and focusing their commitment. 26.3% reported *making their commitment* as a result of MCC, and 42.1% renewed their commitment as a result of their experience in MCC.

- ❖ *I think for me I am becoming aware that I have a voice, whereas before if I didn't like something I would just walk away, but now I am really bothered by walking away. I just can't do that. I have to voice how I feel about something and it doesn't matter what class of people I am voicing about my values."*
- ❖ *... I somehow changed what I was doing. I wouldn't have said it had much effect except that, when I look back over the two years since, I'm doing stuff I hadn't been doing for 15 years. This past year I've committed extra time to do community oriented projects. I could beat myself up but there are a number of things that I've done that I hadn't done in the past and you know I said when's the time going to be right... It's taking a risk that you realize is not really a risk at all once you do it. You get what you give.*

Some noted difficulty in translating their program experiences into civic action following the program and instead emphasized the way the program impacted them in a subtle way.

- ❖ *Mostly in a subtle, systemic way; I lean more toward the common good than I used to and that shows up in a variety of forms, from volunteering to voting, from attending meetings to speaking out.*
- ❖ *Generally, participating in life more directly. The metaphor that describes it best is, coming out from behind the glass. I feel much more ready to make decisions and take action. Part of me was behind the glass and part of me just thought I was. I feel much more in the open today.*

MCC offers a space for people to explore their concerns about social issues and concurrently mobilize one another toward engaging in civic action. Participants, for the most part, developed relationships, shared stories, supported and challenged each other's concerns and actions. Notably, most focus group participants noted gravitation to differing perspectives and groups following their participation. Almost all respondents underscored that MCC provided a rare opportunity to interact with people from different walks of life to talk about issues usually confined to discussing in private spaces.

- ❖ *Now I would much rather, if there were a group of people at a party and there is a really diverse group and there is a WASP group over here, I would rather go to the diverse group. I want to be with people that are different from myself. Like Sue said, I would feel more comfortable now doing that.*

MCC retained participants who, for the most part, were already involved in similar social initiatives or activities, felt downtrodden by existing work in the civic arena, were familiar with the setting or the facilitator, or curious about the use of art for motivating civic engagement. Some participants noted difficulty in specifying identifiable change as a result of the conversations, but noted subtle differences in the manner in which they presently engage the issues discussed in MCC. Mobilization toward further civic action was evidenced in participants' discussion and recognition of their own existing resources and by being in the company of others who they considered to share similar investments with respect to social action.

Participants reported that MCC's supportive, structured setting facilitated discussion of diverse viewpoints and stimulated lively conversations. Interestingly, almost all participants, including those who dropped out early, indicated that they would recommend this kind of experience to others because of the unique conversational space that the program offered. The core practices: group composition, group process and

facilitation, and diversity, were the most contentious. A majority of respondents reported that the group process was a pivotal aspect of the program and that the diversity of the program participants was crucial to deepening the impact of the meetings. Indeed, we observed that over the course of group participation, some participants began to model some of the program practices in their personal and work relationships.

To illustrate, the following excerpt, a field note after the sixth meeting in group E-1, a participant, Rose's (the only person of color in the group, besides me) shared a selection of prose with the group and later with me during a meeting break in a manner that echoes the group practice of using an image to engage in "imaginative empathy."

During the break, Rose approached me. She told me that she had brought a selection of prose and a perceptual illusion to group the prior week, which I had missed. She encouraged me to read it, as she believed that it would affect me deeply as a fellow person of color. The piece, "And the Message is Still True," by William Lynch was an edict outlining an effective strategy for oppressing black slaves and the entire race for centuries. Rose described the perceptual illusion, "The Power of Perception," as a reminder that everything can be seen in multiple ways. The combination of these two pieces was her lesson to group, her effort to engage everyone in "imaginative empathy" about the racial divide in the United States (ethnographic field note, group E-1, October 2004).

Rose employed a similar reflective strategy to encourage group members to think critically about race in the United States. During a later interview session, she noted that the program helped her voice her concerns. "I always cared about this stuff, I just didn't have the words for it."

Participants attributed learning new perspectives and personal growth to the diversity of the group composition. Interestingly, the group composition was predominantly advanced degree, middle-class, White-Americans. Despite this, participant perceptions of what characterized a group as "diverse" ranged considerably –beyond differences in race and class, but ethnicity (among white participants, particularly), sexual

orientation, religious affiliation, and the geographic settings in which participants reside (i.e. urban, suburban, rural).

Furthermore, despite wide-sweeping reports of the impact of the group process, there was a split between those preferring a discussion format informed by the program structure and facilitator prompts, and a number of participants, who stated that at times, the program structure and facilitation interfered with the program process. These participants claimed that open-ended discussion was more effective than a strictly facilitator-led discussion format.

Thus, creating a civic space for critical conversations about civic action is more complex than we often presume. While MCC offers something that is deemed necessary in our culture, many of the dynamics occurring in the program that I have discussed thus far point to some of the tensions we continue to contend with socially – deep concern for social welfare but stunted or ineffective organized efforts to address them (Weinstein, 2006).

The evaluation was structured to study the program's impact on individuals and its relationship to the larger community. The evaluation isolated some program features that motivated some participants to engage in civic action more than others, such as group process and open-ended discussion. Our evaluative approach assumed that the program itself was the site of transformational change; the implementation of the core practices steered any change that occurred for the participants and community. However, the statement that the program is a “complex, learning system,” and our findings indicating that participants experienced the program impact “subtly,” particularly in the group process and open-ended discussions, suggested that motivation toward further civic engagement was not solely located in the program's efforts, but also in the interactions among participants.

What is more, following the program evaluation, I was still unclear about what took place in the participants' interaction during program meetings, which led some to further engage in civic action more than others. These findings did not open up the movements from utter despair to renewed hope and civic investment that I outlined at the beginning of the chapter. How did these participants interact with each other, and how did they respond to the program prompts? What is it about the appreciation for group process that moved participants toward civic engagement? How was the manner in which they were impacted communicated in the group meetings? That is, what is the nature of this movement? Did it involve the empathic journey and courses through reflective expanses as the program director had envisioned? Obviously not, but the complexity of the participant dialogue remained to be articulated. All of these questions refer to my research aim: to articulate the transformative movements of participants' interactions.

An exploration of the participants' interactions may open up the dynamics involved in motivating civic action. This study would further the evaluation's objective of studying how various interactions within the program changed the participants in the community and, continue the project within community psychology of exploring dynamics within community systems that lead to transformative change.

Procedures for current study

My dissertation study builds on the evaluation study of MCC. The research question guiding my study is: What are the transformative movements of MCC program participants' interactions? In order to answer this question, I asked the following sub-questions: 1) What did the transformative process look like? and; 2) What were the key movements of this process and how did they unfold over the course of the program meetings?

The MCC initiative was three years in duration and attracted 106 participants. It was based in a church in an urban neighborhood and at a local university setting. Three evaluation questions were identified: (a.) How may we evaluate the program as a complex embedded learning system? (b.) How is the program influencing the participants? (c.) How do the core program practices contribute to the program's impact on participants? Data collection included quantitative survey data, in situ interviews, focus groups, and participant observation of program meetings. Informed consent was sought for interviews, focus groups, and participant observations. Also, the program director informed all program participants of the ongoing evaluation and research of the program, and requested consent for recording MCC meetings. Program meetings were recorded only after all participants in the group consented. Data was transcribed using qualitative software (Atlas TI) and interpreted according to the evaluation questions. Findings indicated that a large percentage of the participants reported having a unique and inspirational experience in the program.

For this study, I analyzed archival data: a selection of transcribed interactions of program meetings. I reviewed the evaluation findings to inform the selection of data. I employed interpretive methods of analysis, as described in the methodological framework, to articulate the transformative movements of the participant interactions.

Data collection

I analyzed a selection of recordings of MCC program meetings. These meetings were recorded by the program director, who informed the group that the recordings would be for review to improve the program structure and later evaluation and research study. The program director requested taping group meetings at the commencement of each group round and informed the participants that he would not do so without full group consent. In the event that only one participant objected, the program director did

not record the meetings. Some groups opted to proceed without recording for a few meetings and then decided to permit taping as they became familiar with the process.

I made an inventory of all MCC program related recordings (see appendix A). There are 52 disks categorized according to the meeting rounds. There are 3 different kinds of recordings: testimonials (interviews between the program director and individual participants), regular meetings (titled according to the meeting letter/number, date, or meeting title), and “continued conversations” (titled according to the meeting round). Since I am interested in studying how interactions between participants and the facilitator incited further investment in civic interests, my selections included recordings of regular meetings from group rounds that had 3 or more participants who reported that the MCC motivated them to engage civically (Groups D-2, & G-1). With these parameters, I could notice shifts in the meeting dynamic over time.

The Duquesne University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the data collected for study, November 16, 2004. The research, Protocol #04/104 was approved on an expedited status. In order to continue analyzing the data collected from the evaluation study, I sought expedited status from the IRB for my dissertation study. It was approved June 9, 2008 (Protocol #08-65).

Data transcription and summary

MCC program meetings were recorded onto MiniDisc. I backed up the recordings to CD using GarageBand software. I transcribed and summarized all. The transcription conventions are detailed in Appendix B.

As mentioned earlier, reflexivity over the course of the research process is an important element to an interpretive methodology. How I interpreted the movements of dialogue was critical for this research. “Reflexive knowledge...contains not only

messages, but also information as to how it came into being, the process by which it was obtained” (Meyerhoff and Ruby 1982, p. 2). “Preparing the data for interpretation” (Packer, 1989), then, is not a process distinct from data analysis. Every choice I made in selecting data to transcribe and summarize reflects my role as researcher. “Preparing the data for interpretation,” too, is an expression of my interpretive practices. My practices of transcription and data summary are elaborated below.

The transcription of meetings was loosely influenced by conversation analysis (CA). CA is an empirical method of transcription and analysis that focuses on the structure and organization of turn-by-turn talk (Boden, 1986). It allows for nuanced analysis of the action that occurs in dialogue. Researchers may examine how speakers take on certain roles through their talk and how particular outcomes take place through interactions (Silverman, 2003). By attending to the turns and changes that happen in and between utterances, the researcher may find the transformations that take place in talk. Each turn exposes another analysis of the first, and they are intersubjective in the sense that every person treats the adjacent utterances in similar ways (Packer 2007).

Using the CA method of transcription, I captured the context and events that took place within the temporal field of the group rounds. Considering the large body of data, I did not transcribe all the selected data. After listening to the meetings, I transcribed all the selected recordings for group G-1. Following this, I completed detailed summaries of D-2 meetings. Creating detailed summaries involved the following steps: 1) uninterrupted listening of meetings; 2) second listening accompanied by a rough summary of the meeting process; 3) third listening with turn-by-turn summaries of each participant’s utterances; 4) fourth listening including transcriptions of those moments in the group process that suggested a distinct shift in conversation, a poignant utterance, or particular evocative movements. For D-2, I summarized the facilitators’ pedagogical statements that

followed the program structure as these can also be found in G-1 group transcriptions (e.g. explanation of meeting focus and introduction of program materials). In one meeting, D-2 participants' conversation almost entirely diverted from the program prompts. Struck by this drastic group shift, I transcribed nearly the entire meeting. Complete transcriptions and summaries of the group meetings are included in appendices D and E.

Data Analysis

“Analysis is about the representation or reconstruction of social phenomena. We do not simply “collect” data; we fashion them out of our transactions with other men and women. Likewise, we do not merely report what we find; we create accounts of social life, and in doing so we construct versions of the social worlds and the social actors that we observe. It is, therefore, inescapable that analysis representation.” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 108).

The analysis responded to the research sub-questions and it was informed by the guiding theories of the research methodology. My interpretation of MCC transcriptions and summaries attempted to move from what Spradley (1970) refers, “specific incident statements” to “general statements about the cultural scenes” of MCC. That is, I worked from articulating particular behaviors and events within MCC meetings that demonstrated the cultural knowledge in action, to making general statements about the program process that captured some of the transformative movements of the MCC social scene (Spradley, 1970, p. 116).

In an effort to illustrate the reflexive process through which I “create[d] accounts of social life” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 108), my inquiry moved from turn-by-turn analysis of program meetings to generating key movements of the program process. In doing so, my findings included creating a narrative summary of each group process and then identifying the transformative movements of the program processes. Organizing my findings in this manner also followed in response to and in coincidence with my research

sub-questions. So, the analysis involved three stages: (1) I created narrative summaries of each group process; (2) I identified key transformative movements in the program process; and (3) I created a general summary of the transformative movements of participant interactions. The first two stages corresponded with the research sub-questions. The last stage was informed by my analysis of the latter two stages and responded to my overarching research question. A summary of the process is provided in Table 2 in chapter 4, Analysis.

Narrative summary

As discussed in the research methodology, analysis of MCC participants' transformative processes involves articulation of how participants relate to the Other. For MCC participants, the Other includes other group participants, other people in their community, and the program goal to move them to increased civic engagement. Creating narrative summaries of two group processes showed what the participants' transformative process looked like over the course of their participation in the program. Returning to group G-1 and D-2 transcripts and summaries, I performed a turn-by-turn analysis of the program meetings. I summarized the action of the talk by reading each turn in relation to the broader conversation. This included identifying De Rivera's (1977) emotional transformations, and the outcomes of particular conversation segments. Next, keeping the principles of the turn-by-turn analysis, I created general summaries of the action for specific conversation segments that suggested distinct movements in the meetings. Last, I created a narrative summary for each group, which included discussion of group processes over the course of the final four meetings. I included excerpts of conversation segments to illustrate my interpretations of action of the participants' talk. In creating narrative summaries, I endeavored to remain as close as possible to the group interaction.

In this way, I could illustrate the uniqueness of each group process in a manner that did not flatten the movements by generalities. I could also conduct a comparative analysis of the groups: how do the narratives collectively speak to the transformative process for program participants, and how can these movements unfold in different ways? After completing the narrative summaries, I returned to the post-MCC participation survey data to learn which participants reported that the program impacted them and to see how this further informed the analysis. I included these findings at the close of each narrative.

My other aim in creating narrative summaries was to illustrate what Denzin (2003) refers to as “civic transformations.” Civic transformations is a form of accounting that “invites readers to become participants, not mere spectators, in the public dramas that define meaningful, engaged life in society today...it gives a public voice to the biographically meaningful, epiphanic experiences that occur within the confines of the local moral community” (Denzin, 2003, p.464). The narratives are heavily spliced with extended excerpts from the group meetings. In my organization and presentation of particular movements within group processes, I hoped not only to illustrate my interpretive findings, but also to provide enough of the conversational movements that participants’ voices became louder, the partiality of my interpretations more present, and the text act on the reader. In reading the summary, the reader may react to and respond to the text with questions: how would I respond to this participant? How I am transformed by the text? To illustrate my analytical and summary practices, my pilot analysis is provided in appendix C.

Identifying key movements

I returned to the transcripts and summaries after creating the narrative accounts to identify key movements in the program process. By this point in the analysis, I had

listened to the recordings and analyzed the data several times. Returning to each turn in the transcript or summary, I summarized how the participants related to the Other, and who or what the Other was.

I observed clusters of dialogue where participants related to the Other in similar ways. Each cluster referred to a “transformation” because it described the relationship between the participants and the Other. Next, I re-read the interactions involved in each cluster to describe the emotional movements occurring in the transformation. I termed the pairing of a particular transformation with emotional movements a “transformative movement.” For example, when a participant talked about relating to the experience of a person described in the program materials, I described the transformation as “moving toward Other.” The Other, in this case, was the subject in the program materials. The emotional movement was termed “wonder.”

To identify a movement, I noted shifts in the transformations between participants. A shift occurred when participants related to the Other in a different way or when one participant challenged the groups understanding of the Other. In both cases, the Other became something else. For example, the participants, after speaking in wonder about the challenges faced by the working class, began to explore their own challenges of being mistreated in similar ways. The participants’ discussion about the working class would be identified as one movement (exploring the Other’s experience), the shift to exploration of their own challenges marked another movement (exploring the otherness within themselves).

After naming transformations throughout the transcripts or summaries, I read through all of the transformative movements and highlighted those that recurred with most frequency. I named these movements “key” and explained how it marked a transformative shift in the program process.

After identifying and naming four key movements, I selected examples of each movement from the narrative summaries, transcripts, and data summaries, and proceeded to write an extended explanation of each example to illustrate the movement. To learn how these movements unfolded over the course of the meeting process, I returned to the transcripts and summaries, this time, naming each turn or micro-conversational segment according to a movement. I conducted a distribution analysis of when the movements occurred over the course of each meeting process. I also compared the movements to the program structure and the influence of the facilitator’s interventions by reviewing program materials, facilitator guidelines, and my own ethnographic field notes from other groups.

Using these practices I identified transformative movements in the group processes that suggested that the participants were shifting in the manner they related to one another or talked about civic engagement.

Assessing the quality and rigor of the research

It is widely believed within qualitative inquiry that reflexive practice also bolsters the credibility of research findings (Ellis & Bochner, 1996, 2003; Finlay & Gough, 2003). Anfara, Brown, & Mangione (2002) argue, though, that despite all the varieties of verifying qualitative data, they fail to “sufficiently call attention to the issue of publicly disclosing decisions made during the research process” (2002, p. 30). It does not suffice to merely discuss my own reactions and reflections of the data. Thus, far I have outlined

the decisions made in my data collection, transcription, and analysis procedures; these practices refer to how I arrived at my findings and subsequent conclusions. In an effort to make the inquiry more public, I have included a table outlining a summary of my procedures and how they map onto the results at the beginning of the Analysis chapter (Table 2).

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS

A summary of the research question, sub-questions, procedures and findings are provided in Table 2. In what follows, I provide detailed analysis according to the research sub-questions: what did the transformative process look like? What were the key movements in the program process, and how did they unfold over the course of the program? I use these analyses to create a summary of the transformative movements of MCC program participants' interactions in response the overarching research question.

Table 2: Summary of procedures and findings

Research question: What are the transformative movements of MCC program participants' interactions?		
<i>Research sub-questions:</i>	<i>Procedures</i>	<i>Findings</i>
What did the transformative process look like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selected two groups (G-1 and D-2) with most respondents reporting that the program influenced their decision to engage civically - Analysis of transformations over the course of group process for groups G-1 and D-2 - Aggregated narrative summary illustrating each group process over 4 final group meetings. - Cross-referenced findings with evaluation study 1-year post MCC survey data to identify participants most influenced by program participation - Comparative analysis of groups G-1 and D-2 to explore differences and similarities in transformative processes 	<p>The significance of recognition: Participants' explore, react to, and share experiences of what it means to be unrecognized within the broader community and the group itself. Working to understand and challenge this position propels participants desire and commitment to further engage in action.</p>
What were the key movements of the program process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn-by-turn interpretation of participant utterances - Detailed analysis of data selections indicating shift in group process. (See appendix C for example from pilot analysis) - Distribution analysis of key movements - Comparative analysis of program structure and facilitation style using ethnographic field notes of group E-1 (from evaluation study) and review of program materials and facilitation outlines. 	<p>Key movements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploration of the Other's position 2. Exploration of self in relation to the Other 3. Discussion of barriers to action 4. Identifying motivators for action <p>Key movements followed the general structure of the program, moving from in depth analysis and discussion of various social issues, self-reflection of participants' own positions in relation to these concerns, and challenging existing ways of perceiving social issues in meetings #4-6, to identifying motivators for action and resources to sustain action in the final meeting.</p>

Participant selection:

I have interpreted transcriptions of the program participants' group interactions. Since over 100 people participated in the program, and the evaluation findings suggested that some participants found the program more successful than others, I studied those group interactions involving at least three participants who reported that the program motivated them to engage in civic action. I found this population most appropriate for my study because I am concerned with those interactions that led to increased civic engagement and action.

The participants were identified by responses to a post-MCC participation survey. The respondents had completed their involvement with MCC a minimum of three months prior to completing the survey. 25 people completed the survey. 16 respondents selected options A, B and/or C out of five possible options to the question, "How did MCC influence your commitment(s): (A) I made this commitment as a result of my experience in MCC; (B) I renewed this commitment as a result of my experience in MCC; (C) MCC helped focus or energize me with respect to this commitment; (D) MCC didn't affect my involvement with this commitment; and (E) I don't know." Of the 16 respondents, eight participated in round D-2 and G-1 (four respectively). There are 14 recordings for the two rounds (5 for round D-2 and 9 for round G-1). I analyzed recordings of the final 4 meetings (out of 7) of each group process. The first 3 recordings of G-1 consisted only of facilitator prompts, as the group had not yet agreed to being taped. I kept any data with identifiers in a locked, secure place. Any data that is made public has all identifiers removed. I have coded participants by gender accompanied by a number for each group. I designated the number according to the order of utterances from my first listening of the

recordings. For example, participant F8 is a female who was the 8th female to speak in the first meeting that I transcribed. This referent was kept for this participant throughout all other transcriptions.

Group G-1: Participants and meeting details

The participants in this round of the program were also participants in a leadership program affiliated with a local university. Nearly half of the participants were students, the rest were professionals from the community and from the university. One participant was a staff member of the leadership program; another participant was the co-evaluator for the MCC study. Although I explored their roles in the group process, neither completed the survey, nor considered one of the critical respondents indicating that the program had impacted them.

G-1 Participant demographics:
Participants: 12 Female: 8 Male: 4 Race/ethnicity: White (8)/ Black (3)/ Hispanic (1) Religious affiliation: Not specified

Transcribed recordings:	
G-1 Meeting #:	Media discussed:
#4 Economic fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poem: Jim Daniels, "Night Janitor, McMahon Oil" Article from Spare Change News: Robert Soderstrom, "A single lucid moment" Poem: R. Lundy, "La Moussa"
#5 True wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection from feature film, <i>Powaqqatsi</i>, chapter titled, "Dream imagery" Poem: Miller Williams, "The Curator" Book selection about Oseola McCarty: Bill Shore, <i>The light of conscience</i>
#6 Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segment from PBS show, "Visionaries," produced by Bill Mosher Song: Sweet honey and the rock, "I remember, I believe," from the album <i>Sacred Ground</i>
#7 Response and commitments	No art media presented or discussed

Group D-2: Participants and meeting details

Participants were solicited by flyers distributed throughout the community and word-of-mouth. Four of the participants (3 men; 1 woman) had moved to the U.S. from Turkey for post-doctoral study at various local universities. These participants all identified as Muslim. The remaining 3 participants were Caucasian women from the local area.

D-2 Participant demographics
Participants: 7 Female: 4 Male: 3 Race/ethnicity: White-American (3)/ Turkish (4) Religious affiliation: Muslim (4)/ Christian (2)/ Non-religious (1)

Transcribed recordings:	
D-2 Meeting #	Media discussed:
#4 Environmental degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem: Mary Oliver, "Some questions you might ask" • Poem: W. S. Merwin, "The Shadow" • Book chapter on Wangari Maathai and Kenya's green belt movement from <i>Hope's Edge</i>, by Frances Moore Lappe and Anne Lappe
#5 Materialism and the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poem: Philip Levine, "What work is" • Poem: Robert Coles, "Recession 1992"
#6 Communities of challenge and support	Participants did not refer to program materials at any point in transcribed recording
#7 Commitments	No media presented

Narrative Summaries: significance of recognition

The dynamics of recognition were prominent in both group processes, though they unfolded in a dissimilar ways for groups G-1 and D-2. In G-1, participants moved toward one another in greater acceptance and wonder, and it was this style of interaction that propelled their desire to reassess their situation, explore options, and commit to increased engagement. In D-2, participants toiled with feelings of fear, guilt, and dread about their social circumstances and their positions in it. Through identifying and arguing for particular personal ideals, participants focused on examining how other participants

made sense of social action; they also moved away from one another when participants rejected various participants' views. In this way, these participants also attempted to eschew their social responsibility. Struggling with these positions transformed the participants of D-2. For both groups, participants thought differently about how they viewed others in their community, and they changed in the manner that they related to other community members.

The meeting processes for each group were organized in narrative form and spliced with transcribed excerpts from program meetings. Both narratives spanned all transcribed meetings for each group. Transcription conventions may be found in Appendix B.

Group G-1

The participants discussed how some people go unrecognized in our society, wondered why these people go unseen, identified with being in this position, and questioned how to act in response and challenge the current situation. These actions referred to the work toward recognition (i.e. being recognized by others in a way that motivates further action & engagement).

Throughout the program process, participants discussed the importance of recognition in order to feel like a viable citizen. In reaction to three program prompts in meeting #4 (topic: economic fairness), participants first identified how one is denied recognition in the economic arena. The selection below documents participants' reactions to the program prompts. The first prompt was a selection of an article about the experiences of Robert Soderstrom, a Peace Corps worker in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

The author narrates an instance where the indigenous people, with whom he is residing, offer hospitality to two homeless American men after viewing an image of them in an American newspaper. The author highlights the contrasting cultural perspectives between Americans and the indigenous people of the village in PNG. He wonders why Americans are more reluctant to assist those of lower economic means, when the village residents unquestionably offered their time and space to an unknown person. The second prompt, a poem by Jim Daniels, reflects the experience of working a minimum wage job. The last prompt, a poem by R. Lundy, illustrates life in poverty for a young child outside of a large urban center.

F3	<i>Struck by article in that the New Guineans were able to come to a solution. "Why don't I have an answer like that? Why can't it be that simple at the same time?"</i>
F4	I'm amazed about how in their world they are all responsible for each other to the point that, you know, someone's homelessness is just a foreign concept to them because they all feel that care of each other is everyone's responsibility. So, I just think it's such a, quite a phenomenon {LF in seeming disbelief}
F8	I guess that rings true to the (.) I guess differences in both of these societies. The difference is that we live in such an individualistic society and so it's you know (.) survival of the fittest. And if you can't, if you don't have your own home, then, sorry. But, you know in this culture it's very different. And it, a lot of these poems rang true, as to how much we ignore the help - in quotations. I mean, just people who are in just service. Even what M2 was talking about, he was talking about McDonalds. Now how many times do you ignore the people that work in those types of professions or you ignore the person who comes and gets your trash everyday. It just seems like they've become this other person, they're meant to be, you know, there, but not spoken to or listened to.
F2	In relation to that there's sort of a dichotomy in that these, you know, jobs (.) like janitor and McDonalds – they're all necessary jobs, but we think we'd never want those. And so, like, if they're so necessary, but if that's the only job you can get, then something's wrong with you. But at the same time, we need someone to clean up our trash, we need someone to service our hamburgers. We don't have any respect for the things we can't live without.

The conversation progressed to the ways in which participants have experienced themselves going unrecognized when working in low paying jobs. As participants considered these positions in society, they articulated how much people in these positions do contribute, and they considered the challenges these people face. The group moved toward the imagined Other (i.e low wage employee), wondered about the position the Other inhabits and in identifying with the Other, they developed a greater appreciation for what it means to be in this position.

M3	<p>I definitely agree with that. I worked in a fast food and grocery before that's like, they look at you like you're the one who's dumb, but you listen to some of the customers, man it seems like you're the like– they're driving the nice car or whatever, they got money, feel like you ought to switch role with them, but they're dumber than you are [FAC: Do you feel invisible?] Um, I don't know, I mean, I don't know from that stand point, you know what I'm saying, 'cause I mean if you're in a server's job, they kind of have to deal with you so they can't just ignore you, except when I was at McDonalds, but when I was working in a grocery store, like you know, it was kind of like a customer service type thing, so you know, they would talk or whatever, but, um, that could be a good thing or a bad thing because some of them (.) like the more they talk, the more, the less sense it seemed like they had, you know what I mean, does that make sense to you? {mumbles of agreement from other participants}</p>
F8	<p><i>Comments on skills required for lower wage jobs – they are not as “elementary” as generally perceived. People deserve to be paid more. Discusses her personal experience working as a waitress, how difficult it was, how shocked she was that she couldn't manage the job.</i> “Nobody gets paid what they're worth. We really don't understand the hard work and the skill it takes to be in these professions.”</p>

The conversation transitioned to what it would be like to recognize people with fewer resources. As one participant argued about how people continue to go unrecognized by “hidden agendas” within supposed efforts to assist the disenfranchised, two participants challenged his claim with two arguments: 1) organized efforts are not always the best way to recognize and assist the disenfranchised, and; 2) although some people may position themselves as needing assistance, they are in fact taking advantage

of others. Participants M2 and F3 questioned the value in engaging civically, particularly in response to assisting another person. Their resistance spoke to the fear inherent in beginning to challenge existing social circumstances in which some benefit from their positions in the community and others do not. As participants continued to articulate the kind of change that is possible for them, they moved to greater appreciation of their respective agency in their particular circumstances. As meetings progressed, participants articulated their options for action with respect to the program goals.

M4	Yeah, (.) don't have any kind of stupid, hidden agenda, we just want to help them out (.) doesn't really care about them anymore, they lost their jobs, who cares, they had their chance, they lost it.
F3	There's always a program. It's not let's a couple people get together and feed the homeless. Let's create a program first and then we do it.
M4	Let's first get us jobs, and then we can help others.
F3	Yeah [LF].
F5	Very much so, and then you have the element of, when the programs are established, then you have to meet 8,000 criteria in order to benefit from that program. It's interesting.
M2	I was reading um, reading something, it was talking about how um, yeah – you talk about programs, we have all these programs, all this bureaucracy, you know, to help people who are in low-income housing (.) and you know, and all this other stuff, and that um, in reality, if you were to get rid of all those programs and take all the money that went for paying for those benefits, and then just issue stipends, you know, (.) to people who are at, below a certain income level and graduate it. Um, 'cause one of the big problems is like, lot of programs like that, is you hit a point a just <u>drop off</u> . There's no incentive to even go beyond a certain point to help yourself out because if you go beyond, you know, \$10,000 or whatever, you lose \$3000 of benefits, so basically that \$1 more drops you down \$3000. But, besides from that, It was just saying how um, (.) how a lot of programs we think are trying to help people in the end, almost, (.) exacerbate the problem. One the things I was talking about is the housing projects and stuff like that. Public housing started in 1950's and '60's. When they constructed those houses, the-the low-income housing buildings, they actually destroyed more housing areas than they created. So it actually caused um. Well, the people actually lucky enough to get into those housing developments (.) were better off. People who you were then, didn't have housing were <u>much</u> worse off because they were having to fit fewer people, more people, into

	fewer spaces. So, a lot of times, you know, we tend to be short sighted and look for a <u>quickie</u> -solution and don't look at the long-term consequences of our actions.
F3	//I think that uh, go ahead (2) There are like a lot of problems, with like, (.) the things set up to help, you know, disadvantaged people. I don't want to sound like I'm against the homeless or the po--oor, or that I don't care about them. It's just that you have to look at like their backgrounds. It's not like they were just magically dropped on the street homeless without anything. They had to have made choices or things had to have had happened <u>to</u> them <u>to</u> get there. And it's like, I don't know, things in place to like help them, like assistance and everything, it is flawed. 'Cause I used to work at a grocery store for three years. I started out as a bagger and went up to assistant manager. And you would see like the same customers all the time. And there was this one woman, I could not stand her. She had like five children and she was on food stamps, okay. But everything she would buy was the most expensive things, things that I couldn't eat, 'cause you know, I paid with my own money. She would always be standing there on like her cell phone, on that Razr phone, the real thin, the real expensive one. And then, I would after work, you know 'cause someone would you know, give me a five dollar tip or something, I'd go to Barnes & Nobles with my friend and we'd be at Starbucks and we'd be behind her in line, (.) you know, and she'd be, you know, cash, she could use her cash for her cell phone, and, you know, for \$3 cup of coffee. Now why can't she, she needs government aid to feed her kids the most expensive food? It's like they (.) can work the system, and that's kinda like, I don't know. It's one of those things, you know, you can't just look at these people and lump them all together. It's like, there are the ones who really <u>do</u> need help, but then there are the ones who <u>take</u> the help when they <u>don't</u> really need it. I think with like, when you look at the disadvantaged, the lower class, the poor people. You can kinda group it up. 'Cause people in the city, who are like homeless and poor are different than the ones who are in like the more suburban areas, more rural areas, kinda like where I was from. Who are different from the people who are in the out there, middle of no where, like West Virginia areas. They're not all, like one, the same group. They can be like, they each have different needs. And you try and create like, programs to help just one overall.

Implicit in these two challenges appeared to be questions and fears about who should be recognized as a needing support and how we should best respond.

Prior to M2's extended comment, he and other participants reflected on their desires to intervene directly with economic issues. They claimed that Americans turn to convoluted systems of social programs to assist others so that they may personally benefit from the

intervention. M2, however, argued two points (1) that it is not necessarily economically beneficial for Americans to assist the disadvantaged, and (2) that people should not intervene immediately, but take a convoluted approach to prevent them from exacerbating the problems of the disadvantaged. In effect, he supported the very argument that the group contested. He related to program participants, however, in a manner that recognized and followed along in a similar flow to the conversation. He affirmed their comments through reiteration, and “yeah’s.” While his opening statements acknowledged their positions, he offered other perspectives by way of outside material. The reading that he cited, provided substantiation for his argument, “It was just saying how um, how a lot of programs we think are trying to help people in the end, almost, exacerbate the problem.” He closed his argument with a new consideration to be heeded by the group, “we tend to be short-sighted...and don’t look at the long-term consequences.”

M2’s statements shifted the flow of conversation, opened up diverging perspectives, and challenged earlier movements. Interestingly, his comments were offered as contributing reflections upon effective and sensitive ways to assist others. His comment was not followed by disagreement or challenges by others. Rather, F3 followed M2 with further quandaries about *how* they may effectively assist people. Through F3’s manner of inquiry, she aligns herself with M2’s wariness of civic efforts aimed at assisting the economically disadvantaged. Following her suggestion that the group considers the “backgrounds” of the disadvantaged prior to assisting them, she provided a narrative of her encounters with a disadvantaged woman representative of a group who “take the help when they don’t really need it.”

F3 narrated the contrast between she and the woman with images of hierarchal positions, and in doing so, illustrated movements along the “recognition” and “being” axes of DeRivera’s (1977) emotional transformations. F3 “went *up*” from bagger to assistant manager, F3 found herself *behind* the woman “who can work the system.” F3’s questions following her narrative also referred to the woman’s failure to recognize F3, despite F3’s stated efforts to move up the social ladder via a culturally-recognized behavior: a hard work ethic. F3 began her narrative stating, “And there was this one woman, I could not stand her” F3’s comment was a refusal to acknowledge the *being* of the woman. F3’s question, “Now why can’t she?” referred to questions beyond *why can’t she work?* or *why is she exploiting the system?*, it also includes *why must I recognize this disadvantaged other?*

The comments made by M2 and F3 not only shifted the flow of conversation from wondering about the Other and moving toward this position, they demonstrate conservative perspectives about social services in America – a marginal perspective within most MCC groups. Ever so gently, they challenged the liberal ponderings gently trickling through the group conversation. Both speakers spoke affirmatively, professing a desire to address the difficulties of poverty. Both speakers used metaphors of “dropping,” and ascending or descending along a socio-economic hierarchy. M2 cautioned that efforts of various social programs have dropped off with respect to incentives, “Um, ‘cause one of the big problems is like, lot of programs like that, is you hit a point and just drop off.” He encouraged an alternative route to assisting others by issuing stipends to those “below a certain income level and graduat[ing] it.” F3 claims that the fates of the disadvantaged are not necessarily held in her hands, “It’s not like they were just magically dropped on

the street homeless without anything.” She notes that the disadvantaged make choices that have led them to their present difficulties. In fact, while she has worked diligently to ascend the economic ladder, some disadvantaged have cheated their way up the hierarchy, positioning themselves before her. Consequently, based on her observations of different disadvantaged groups, she stated that the disadvantaged may be categorized – according to those more deserving of assistance, and those suspect of abusing the system.

M2 and F3 moved away from the Other through their challenging remarks. In response, the facilitator entered the conversation in an attempt to reconnect these participants’ arguments with the previous movements of the conversation. The discourse shifted from an everyday two-turn discourse to a three-turn pedagogical discourse as he encouraged all of the group members to elaborate on the supposed categories of “disadvantaged” people suggested by F3. In effect, the facilitator attempted to critique these categories and challenge F3’s rejection of the disadvantaged Other’s being. Following a number of comments by group participants, he summarized M2’s argument - acknowledging M2’s concerns, and then encouraged the group to suggest other methods to intervene in economic issues.

FAC	<i>Referring to the comments of M4, M2, F3, and F1:</i> “I was hearing a couple of threads in what you (M2) were saying. Programs aren’t always the ideal places of solving problems. Although they can be a helpful way of doing it, um. But also, the other stream I heard you saying was that that well we often say well, we’ve got what we need, let’s you know, if I was hearing you right, we’ve got what we need, so let’s not worry about those other people (3).”
	{ text cut out }
FAC	How do people feel about the two things M2 is raising here? One is how much do you need? After you get 2 million do you need the next x million. The other, this is a little bit of a generalization, people in government don’t care.

The participants contextualized who may be disenfranchised in American communities. The facilitator summarized the earlier challenges and encouraged the group to respond directly. In response, F8 underscored an earlier point that the disenfranchised do go unrecognized in the community. The facilitator observed that her comment is “the other side” of the earlier challenges. F8 provided another example but this time, incorporated a comment from M2 and referred to the participants’ shared community (the university setting). Participants began to wonder aloud about how they may bring broader awareness to the challenges they see within their community. Participants began to brainstorm ways of “having a voice.”

F8	How much is enough to somebody who can get it? The power to get that. It’s never a question, like, do I have enough? It’s like, can I get more, you know? I agree with M2 with them being out of touch. And this is personally coming home for me, in this past year, watching a movie on how they recruit minorities to this university. And slowly but surely they have eliminated every program that deals with getting minority students here at this university. They eliminated all of them...They cut it, because they’re afraid, they’re out of touch”
FAC	Let’s go to that, that’s a fairness issue, not necessarily, it doesn’t need to be broken down by race, it could be broken down by economic [F8: yah, race, gender, age, you can break it down on everything] Okay, so, what could people here in this room as students, as employees of X university or whatever, do you have any voice in that?
M5	Yeah, we can ask questions.
F3	Definitely.
F5	Sometimes politicians are out of touch ‘cause we don’t write to them. We don’t tell them what’s going on. I wrote to Reagan once, when I was in elementary school because he was going to talk with the Russian president, my last name is Russian. I thought that that was great, and he wrote me back (.) but I’ve never written to a politician saying I think you need to support this policy, I think you’re forgetting about this aspect or anything like that. You know, people barely vote. If they all took the opportunities they had, they wouldn’t be complaining that nothing’s being changed. They weren’t actually making efforts to change things themselves.
M3	I think something we could do to help is just spending time and energy to helping other people out. <i>Compares this to simply spending money on others. “spending time” is more helpful.</i>

When F8 (African-American, student) referred to M2's (Caucasian-American, student) argument, she moved toward him, accepting his position. She echoed that programs are "out of touch," but applied this issue to her personal experience as a minority student in the university. She critiqued programs for being "out of touch" for a different reason than M2's; she has witnessed a program that she found valuable lose funding despite its impact on the university.

As the participants pondered how to respond to issues raised, older participants observed a decrease in civic action within the community and questioned how to become more active in efforts to call attention to the lack of or absence of recognition about these concerns, and to support disenfranchised groups and issues affecting the groups' shared community.

F2	<i>Shares a story about her proactive behavior as a student. {Did not transcribe due to F2's stated request for privacy}</i> "I just use this as an example, you know, we talk about change and change can happen, it's just a matter of inspiring people and motivating them and showing them, look this is not right, this is not fair. How do we make that change?"
----	--

This question continued to be raised in Meeting #6 (Topic: resources). Following the group's listening of the song "I remember, I believe," a song about struggling for justice, group members described feeling inspired by the lyrics and impelled to action.

Participants began to articulate their positions with respect to the program goals:

F8	I think it's such a powerful statement, I mean, only you know seven words, she said, "I do remember that's why I believe." I mean, I think people give themselves, you know such hassle trying to figure out why certain things happen either to their families or to themselves. But, she says, 'I do remember and that's why I believe.' I think that's such a, that's powerful to me. I can't explain how, but it's means-it means a lot. There's a lot of significance in it.
F5	I think following up on that, I know I read a couple articles lately, I think that it's been in the Post-Gazette, of women who have lost sons to violence and um, even other lives have just got wiped out by that sorrow. Just what

	it does to them. They have started groups to prevent the violence or that kind of thing, and I think again, it's what you do with experiences like you remember and then you move forward in that memory to try to do- try to make something better, you know, rather than just having it totally be debilitating or something, you know, I don't know.
FAC	I'm thinking they're remembering struggle of course, but also some positive things I think are part of that memory. You know, remembering our father stood our ground, and those sort of emblematic moments.
F3	I think what's interesting in the last line of the poem, it says, "though no one forced us, we did build the barricade under the fire" and I think with all the things we're doing here, I think no one forced us to sign up - to come sign up to learn about this or, no one's forcing us to review our commitments {group laughter} you're looking at F4 like she insist that you come! {More laughter}, [M2: I'm under attack] But we're not being forced to continue on to do things to help the commonwealth or not. It's our choice to decide to be active and choose to make a difference. So, we can just let nothing happen, we could be active and do it.
FAC	(5) Anybody else want to jump in?
F2	I like the line, uh, the last line, 'gave me a song to sing and set me on my way. I raise my voice just as I believe.' I think it illustrates, I guess, sort of what you were talking about, um, finding something you enjoy, um, what is it, finding your passion and finding where the world needs it. Yeah. It's good, I mean, I don't know, trying to think of what your passion is or what you want to do is, finding your song or something, you know? A song is something that's harmonious, that you like, probably would like to do [FAC: mmmm], you know, and people would want to listen to it, you know? Here's your song, now go sing it. [group LF]. Like this is your talent, you know, here's your talent, here's your interests, now use that, use that somehow.

As participants F8, F5, F3 and F2 mused on the program materials, they observed how the singers remained resolute in their action to combat injustice. The four women moved toward the imagined Other in this prompt in admiration and used the narratives as inspiration to reflect on their own action. F3 observed how the Other took up the choice to take action and applied this example to her participation in MCC, "We're not being forced to continue on to do things to help the commonwealth or not. It's our choice to decide to be active and choose to make a difference."

All participants reported "commitments" to social change in the final group meeting. Many of these resolutions were tied to issues and ideas raised earlier on in the

group process. Following the analysis of the group process, I cross-referenced this group with the evaluation study data. 4 out of the 10 participants (i.e. excluding the leadership staff and co-evaluator) completed the 1-year post MCC survey. All respondents reported naming and remaining engaged in a particular “commitment” to civic action and engagement. 3 of the 4 respondents reported that they made a commitment as a result of MCC. Interestingly, of the participants who made challenging comments on more than one occasion, M2 reported that MCC did not affect his involvement with his commitment, nor did it affect the way he made decisions or took action related to social issues. Reviewing his utterances over the course of the meeting, he did not move toward participants, but instead, spoke in a declarative manner, stating his positions and observing how they contrasted with the meeting materials. At these times, he often referred to another source to support his claims. Although his comments were frequently in line with those of some other participants, he did not respond in support of their statements, nor did he respond to other participants’ encouragement of his views. Rather, he built upon his arguments. In all, there appeared to be some emotional distance between him and the other participants, as if he did not open up emotionally in a similar way to them.

Group D-2

In comparison to group G-1, where participants explored the art media to inform their discussions, participants in group D-2 focused on exploring each other’s perspectives as they discussed the meeting topics. Despite the facilitator’s repeated efforts to shift the discussion to analysis of art media and self-reflection of ongoing

efforts to address social issues, group members dwelled on the glaring differences between one another, particularly, ethnicity, class, and religious affiliation. Secondary to and in relation to these positions, the participants considered how each person thought about the task of their work in MCC.

Most palpable in this group process was the participants' fears and anxieties about moving toward and committing to increased civic engagement. These anxieties were made evident by the participants' style of discourse, which rarely moved to the personal (i.e. their experiences, wishes, plans, and feelings about group topics) without the cajoling of the facilitator. For the most part, participants theorized about the significance of issues raised by meeting topics, and argued about key concepts that influenced how they understood and responded to social issues. As the meetings progressed, these tensions became increasingly entrenched, such that on many occasions participants moved away from one another in expressions of anger and rejection. In these discussions the participants' feelings of guilt about their existing positions in society, desires to respond to the social situation, and their relative fears and apprehensions in doing so seemed latent. Nonetheless, participants remained engaged in this process and toiled with the challenges of the program. What were initially discussions about the limits of their positions, power, and privilege, moved to their exploration of their resistance to engage civically, opened up spaces to wonder about how they may act from their position. The participants' continued efforts to find ways to accept divergent views or find broader meanings functioned to salve some of the cleavages among them.

In meeting #4, (topic: environmental degradation), participants discussed how listening to exemplar stories of social action did inspire their hope for greater social

change. After listening to the story of Nobel prize winner Wangari Maathai, and watching a movie on doctors working to address the AIDS epidemic in Africa, participants observed how listening to inspiring stories functioned to offset feelings of dread that emerge when thinking about their social situation.

F4	I think that it's a good thing that you find these things {referring to FAC}. And that you end our sessions with them. Otherwise I would go home and have nights and nights of sleeplessness. I mean, I feel like the last time you end- and I was being sincere, the last time you ended it with stories of, where people's personal efforts have made a difference and I mean, I'm only speaking as one cynical person who often feels like it doesn't, so it's a good anecdote for me. A little wake up call to say, oh yeah I can.
FAC	At the risk of going negative (.) this last sentence, that this person has been beaten and gone to jail for this stuff.
F4	=Not because of the trees. It was because she challenged the power structure. I mean that was my take on it." <i>She continues a back and forth with F2 in an effort to argue that Maathai got in trouble because she became more political.</i> "If she just stuck with the trees (.)"
F2	Wait a minute, I didn't go that far, all she did was build - was build the trees."
FAC	<i>Clarifies the events of W. Maathai's circumstances, and then encourages the group to complete the chapter reading for more information.</i>
F4	Well if she just stuck to trees=
F2	She'd be alright.
F3	Well, I think there's some social problems as well. I mean, she instigated - here's a woman who has inspired many other and now they're changing some structures. To question, um, you know, everything from their husbands' control, to president Daniel Loy's rule. So that touches to the heart of households in villages. You know, so we're not just trees here. It's the structure.
F4	That might not be good in the United States, it would be one more reason why the environmental movement would get a bad press.
F2	We, you know, we can look to US whether you like him or not. You know, look back to the 70's with Ralph Nader. I mean, we have seatbelts because of Ralph Nader. And whether what you think of him today or not, it was his being a pain in the butt that had got it done. This makes me uncomfortable for two reasons: it's the frustration of what's the one thing I can do? And #2, I don't have the guts to get shot at and beaten. It scares the heck out of me."
F4	Well, you might not have to.
F2	Well, I mean, if you go to Africa – and I was Malawi, I mean, people were telling me how the students closed the university and how they got beaten because they published um, letters, you know, anti-government, ah poisoned, you know? I thought I don't have that kind of courage.
F4	But the thing I like about that story is, as well as this other thing that is included in the packet of information is that (.) is more that I see it as a call to action

	where you could, you could have an impact without necessarily having to take on – ‘cause I don’t know, it’s not about being beaten, sometimes for me it’s about not to expend, to beat my head against the wall, expend energy in a pointless fashion. Like I don’t feel like I would be able to necessarily change atomic energy policy in this country, but I could plant trees.
F2	Isn’t because the issue, this is – being too old? <i>Refers to efforts in the 60’s and how everyone became involved.</i> “Is there anything that sparks the imagination and will power of any of us today or are we all worn out?”
F4	I don’t think, to me, I don’t think it’s not that at all. People are called to action in ways that’s directly proportional to the threat they perceive...I think it wasn’t just civil rights and the war, but in the sense, it’s a lot easier to galvanize people around a single issue when um, threat is fairly close to home, and I think in certain situations that’s been true in environmental issues. The more um, popular an area is, the more people perceive the issue is direct- relating to them and affecting to their life. The more they’re willing to get involved. Whether it’s effective or not is still questionable, but um, I – I know every time I go there, just on a personal basis I get discouraged, so for me I appreciate the fact there are stories of how one person can – effort can make a difference. And I particularly felt that way at the end of the video. Because for me the AIDS epidemic in Africa is overwhelming and so to see that doctor who said, ‘irrespective of what people tell me I’m going to forge ahead’ and was able to say he was able to make a difference in spite of that, is reassuring. And stories like that are reassuring to me.

Both participants F4 and F2 struggled with conflicting feelings about engaging civically. F4 discussed her feelings of dread about their social situation, “Otherwise I would go home and have nights and nights of sleeplessness,” and F2 shared fears about the possible deleterious consequences of becoming more outspoken in the social arena. Their movements through these feelings follow different paths, however. F4 continually returned to the art media as exemplars that served to “reassure” her and show her how she may be called to action without feeling overwhelmed by what she may have to take on. She used these exemplars to re-inspire wonder and hope about how to engage civically and in so doing, this countered feelings of dread, which previously lead her to withdraw in the face of anticipated discouragement about participating in civic action.

Using personal and historical examples, F2 reiterated her fears that her civic efforts may expose her to harm by another more powerful group. Speaking of her fears,

she moved away from what it means to engage civically. Following this however, she returned, in response to F4's comments, and thought nostalgically of a time when many people were socially active. She wondered, "Is there anything that sparks the imagination and will power of any of us today or are we all worn out?" Her questions moved her to hold in tension: her fears about how she will be regarded by others who observe her actions, and her simultaneous desire to engage and be re-invigorated.

Grappling with these conflicting feelings proved to be difficult for all participants, and their anxieties were visible in their arguments about civic action. Participants rejected other participants' views in an effort to cover over their guilt about their relative social privileges.

In each of the following meetings, participants returned to questions of what motivates civic action by exploring: the limits of power and choice for people of different classes and its relative effects on how they approached civic engagement (meeting #5, materialism and the media); and the origins, meaningfulness, and value of one's civic efforts (meeting #6, communities of challenge and support). In meeting #6, as the facilitator pressed the participants to think more deeply about their positions on the issue of civic engagement, and anticipated commitments to subsequent civic engagement, participants initially resisted by continuing their argument about theories of civic action.

In the following excerpt from meeting #6, participant F4 (middle aged woman, non-religious, economist, served in the military) was asked to discuss how she sometimes feels discouraged about engaging civically. F2 responded to F4's comments by first distinguishing herself with her religious affiliation and then use this position to argue that her understanding of civic action was more ethical than F4's.

FAC	So let me ask you F4, what are the things that motivate or support you when you are trying to be, um, you know, your best self toward other people? What are the things that really sustain you? I know you experienced some discouragement, so this talking about being sustained is a little bit difficult, but the points when you felt sustained, what's done it?
F4	Well, my discouragement has not been about helping people. [FAC: mhmm] Mostly it's been about not accomplishing, not having the satisfaction that comes with accomplishing what you set out to accomplish. But, um, and the occasions when I have helped people, to me, there's also different types of help, there's helping people directly, when you're actually working one on one with somebody and there's a certain- for me, satisfaction comes from feeling useful, being of service, being of, um, and to me, there are differences in that too, I mean, when I help somebody build a barricade, to me, if I – if I envision myself in the Polish story, that's not about, that's like duty, that's like desperation, that's ah, we're afraid, we do what we have to do in spite of the circumstances. That's not really the same thing to me as being of service, foregoing a pleasant skating to do something to help somebody else. It could be, um, [FAC: They could of sat it out, they could have sat in their house] That's a totally different situation. To me doing, feeling like um, you must take this act or dire consequences are going to befall you is less of a choice than um foregoing pleasure in order to be of service. You know, volunteering to me is you give up your free time, you give up the opportunity for pleasure in order to be of service to somebody else, which is very different than um, when I was in basic training, you'll dig the ditch, you'll build the sand bag, but not because you're being of service, not because you're building the barricade because you want to, you know, you're being ordered to, it is where you go to work. I mean, I don't necessarily go to work because I want to, I'm not of service, it's an exchange. It's not as a much a free transaction. Whereas you give up your free time and are of service and helping somebody, the reward is so much less tangible. So for me when I do that it is more a feeling I get or a satisfaction I get being of assistance, mostly when it's one-on-one it has to do with um, having been in a situation like that myself and understanding how meaningful that kindness would mean to somebody else. Sometimes I think of it as paying a debt, paying it forward.
F2	I guess, I hear so many ideas floating around here, one is the difference between doing something that is <u>meaningful</u> , doing something that is a quid pro quo, you give it because you got this debt going forward, or something that, um, it is a fundam-, for me a religious belief is something above and beyond the subjectivity that I am capable of as an individual person. And I guess what I'm struggling with is someplace that I read the difference between one religion and another is whether service is an ethical optional behavior from belief and whether it's the essence of – in my case, the essence of the meaning of the gospel, it's not a choice. And I'm hearing, for me, I'm hearing three different ideas, meaningfulness, the religious essence, and I would use the word 'essence' as opposed to option, um, making me feel good or utilitarian idea, or quid pro quo idea, going forward. And I – I don't know where I am, when I hear all these different perspectives, I'll say, where am I in all the four issues.”

F5	“mixture of everything.”
F2	“Well, I come out of a religious tradition though that really does separate them, and prioritize them. [F5: yes] Alright it leaves me, F3, you may remember this, we were taught what we were doing was not natural, it was supernatural. Okay, [F3 agrees] so the idea of pleasure was really made quite subordinate and not significant. That we ought, the duty [F3: and the spirit and the body were -] the spirit and the body, yeah, and therefore, um, it never got the separation of spirit and body but the body was driven by the spirit. [F3: mmmm, and it was our lower nature] yah, so, you know you didn't do something, I'm trying to fall back, obviously meaning, maybe I should ask this for everybody here, is meaning different than feeling good about something? [F3: yeah; F5: definitely]

Before describing why she sometimes feels discouraged about civic engagement, F4 first makes a distinction between “helping people” and the results of said action. She outlines different kinds of “help:” being of service and working out of duty. She noted that being of service includes having the choice to assist another and benefiting from the action. In contrast, working out of “duty” does not involve a choice. She referred to the “Polish story” (a narrative about Jews in world war II Poland attempting to build a barricade to prevent deportation to prison camps) to illustrate that participating in building the barricade was not an option: “that’s like duty, that’s like desperation, that’s ah, we’re afraid, we do what we have to do in spite of the circumstances.” F4 described her form of helping, “being of service” as a privilege that she has, “you know, volunteering to me is you give up your free time, you give up the opportunity for pleasure in order to be of service to somebody else.” For her, the “reward” for this kind of action involves something “less tangible:” relating to an Other in a way that acknowledges the Other’s position and communicates an understanding of the Other’s challenges. “When it’s one-on-one it has to do with um, having been in a situation like that myself and understanding how meaningful that kindness would be to somebody else.”

Referring to her experiences of discouragement, F4 underscored that she was discouraged about the results of past actions in which she did not receive the

“satisfaction” that she hoped for. This satisfaction included gaining a kind of recognition in which she could see herself giving to another person in kindness. She referred to this as “more intangible” than giving to others in the form of service or exchange, and she ranked it as more meaningful. F2 challenged the language F4 used and the distinctions she made. F2 emphasized that her Catholicism does not make any distinctions between being of “service,” “exchange,” or “helping,” as all human relationship is meaningful. What was important about civic engagement to F2 was not the kind of recognition one would receive in exchange, but the moral imperative guiding action that speaks to the meaningfulness of the human spirit. F2 aligned with F3 (also catholic) and F5 (devout Muslim) in noting that human service is fundamental to human behavior, and reduced F4’s comments about desiring satisfaction and seeking pleasure as “not significant.” In effect, F2 rejected F4’s understanding of what motivates her.

This argument continued throughout the remainder of the meeting. F4 eventually discussed feeling excluded in the group process since her understanding of what motivated her to action was not religious.

F4	But, um, it depends, see what’s difficult about this conversation is I feel like I’m the only non-religious person, I mean, not that you’re, I mean, non-religiously affiliated person participating in the conversation and I feel like um, [FAC: feel a little beleaguered] not, not beleaguered, but in the way that sometimes the conversation, for people that are that religious there’s always that higher order, we answer a higher calling, and I think, well crap I do things, help out, be of service, blah /x/x/, without having the higher calling so I don’t know, I think it’s, you don’t need to be part of a religious affiliation in order to answer a higher calling or a concern for your – the well-being of your fellow man. And there’s always this justification built around it in religious terms, that, I don’t feel beleaguered, it’s more that I feel – or resented, as much as I feel like it undermines the value of it. That somehow people are only good because they have to be because of their religion, and I think that there’s lots of examples where I think that people are kind to their fellow man or help out or whatever, that have nothing to do with religion, but do have to do with duty. And oftentimes the argument that says, even if you don’t feel good, you’re not happy,
----	--

	<p>you're doing it out of a sense of duty because you live- to live in accordance with the beliefs that you've been brought up with is um, easier, more peaceful, uh, brings you a level of happiness that comes with not having to question. You know, so even though, when I talk about people do it to make themselves feel good it's not like, 'let's get happy,' it's living in accordance with your beliefs makes you happier than to [FAC: having a kind of integrity, you would say] exactly. That even if it's that, you don't want to help your friend move, but you believe it's the right thing to do, so even though, um, maybe you're motivated by anger or you're not happy, in the jubilant sense, doing it because you live – because you now are able to feel righteous and able to live in accordance with your belief makes you happy.</p>
F2	<p>And I have knee jerk reaction to three points. 1 – makes you feel righteous. And I think um- [F4: there is a philosophical school of thought that says that's why people participate in religion, so they can feel better about-] sure, sure, sure. But there's also a philosophical and human experience that says that is an opinion, not human reality.</p>
F4	<p>Well everything's opinion {Turkish participants having side conversation in background (inaudible)}</p>
F2	<p>Fair enough. So when I- when I hear you [F4: thank you M1] ascribe to religion, when I hear you make religion equal righteousness, I have a knee jerk reaction. [F4: okay] Like, where, like not only knee jerk, but um, from whence come such a declaration? By what authority? Secondly I think um, if I could quote something I read, maybe this helps [people preparing food in background] It is true, that in some of the literature that I would read based in my own faith, it would make a distinction between something out of quote purely eleemosynary motivation. [F4: purely?] Eleemosynary. [FAC: you're going to have to help us with that definition, it's a pretty hard word] Philanthropic or purely, um, public benefit, charitable, um, philanthropic motives. As opposed to a deeper motive of the reality of God and the reality of a people, that are the people of god. That there's something, bigger reality out there than just my being good to you because of my own subjective personal view of life. I mean that's - that's where I would be coming from.</p>
FAC	<p>Right, I think F4 is saying that she doesn't [F4: I don't have that so I can't relate]</p>
F2	<p>So, which is alright, alright, but to ascribe to either perception, right or wrong to righteousness is a little bit unfair.”</p>
M2	<p>I would like to say something [F4: I didn't hear you, go ahead M1] No, no, I did not, I could not hear some of your conversation, but you were talking, I want to say something that talking to you. But you go and talk, [FAC: um, well I was going to take us in a slightly new direction still building one what I think has already been said, but shift focus. Did you want to say something M2 before I shift?] I just want to say, I mean, we should agree that helping people makes people happy. I mean no matter what you are doing this is a fact. The second thing, when we do some action and we want to legitimate that action some people say this is due to my religion, and that gives the meaning to their action. In their case, you said, I feel useful than give you the meaning, so that main thing here is the meaning. So this life has a meaning. Okay, this way or other</p>

	way. If you don't help the people, then you go to the level of the animals. Even the animals help each other.
--	---

By noting her difference from the majority of the group members, F4 described that what she found meaningful went unrecognized, and consequently the value of her actions were “undermined.” She wondered what her actions meant in the absence of the “higher calling” to which other participants referred. In reaction, she countered the motivation to assist the “fellow man” via religion, with the call of “duty.” In referring to duty, she invoked her own “higher” order from which she had been recognized through military service, and used it to move away from F2’s argument. F2 retorted, noting a similar experience to F4: most significant to F2’s understanding, her religion, was rejected as “righteous” by F4. She continued in a similar fashion to argue against and consequently move away from F4 by using religious theory to deny F4’s position. Feeling nullified, F4 responded, “I don’t have that so I can’t relate.” M2, (young adult, graduate student, Turkish, Muslim) entered the argument in order to move toward both participants and recognize their claims. He spoke generally about the effects of helping others and underscored that the “meaning” of action for people is what propels them. Thus, M2 attempted to accept both positions and move forward with the group.

Nonetheless, this argument morphed into further discussion about assessing the intentions of the person who proffers help or service. As the arguments continued, participants resisted following the facilitator’s urges to explore their own positions and the ways that they have felt supported and/or challenged in engaging in social issues.

F4	I have a question for you before you go on. Is helping people different than being of service? Because what you’re talking about is being – I thought being involved, I thought participating, which is not- to me synonymous with helping. When you’re saying, when you’re talking about=
FAC	I’m trying to get us, not into some abstract, ethereal thing. I’m trying to get us on our own lives, right here, where shortly the question’s going to be, what sort of

	<p>new or renewed commitment do you want to take, stepping out to help, to be of service, to help other people that can take political shape, that can take volunteer shapes. So okay, having said that for a moment, now I'm trying to focus us on, not so much on what do you plan to do, although that is certainly a significant question, but, when you're stepping out in that direction and to me, I think there is an important element of when you step in that direction, you step toward, I feel I'm stepping toward some center of integrity, some center of meaning, some center of significance. The question I'd like us to spend a little bit of time on is, what sustains you, you know, when you move in that direction? What keeps you, you know, stepping in that direction toward an integrity, toward this, you know. You know, it could be this, when I feel better when I'm more integrated, but I'm kind of more interested in the things in your life that help you achieve that. And I pointing now for a moment to these things that we listened to. I mean the one of them was talking about my tradition, my history, the sort of things that I listen to, the voices that I carry. Um, are meaningful to me and help that person in the song, I think, step out in a kind of integrity even at some cost to themselves. The Rumi poem, is saying okay, I'm moving toward this kind of integrity and the move there is saying, okay, I'm in a listening posture. I'm in a kind of not falling asleep, kind of posture. I'm kind of interested in what tools, what things sustain you, help you move both in this outward direction toward others, which is also a move kind of, toward integrity. So I'd like to ask everybody to talk a little personally, not so much intellectually about what sustains you.</p>
F4	<p>I guess what- I guess the only reason that I said that was only because I think it's possible to move towards internal integrity without necessarily helping people. You know, what I heard M2 and F5 say is that in their role as students they don't see much of an opportunity for them to volunteer, to get involved, and what I remember is when you were showing the tape about AIDS in Africa, it was sort of like saying there are ways in which you can be involved without being involved. You know, showing this um, movie to your friends, or, it's not necessarily about just volunteering or um, and – and- that was the only thing that I was thinking about was that our focus was on that's the only way, and what I like about [FAC: which is the only way?] To volunteer- [FAC: oh no!] to get involved in an organization rather than, um educating yourself or, even the poem about which washer do you pick, to me, um, I find that most of my struggles about trying to live in accordance with my ethical beliefs is some, have to do with stupid and civic decisions like that [FAC: mhmm] you know, driving a SUV, well, you know, how in accordance with my environmental standards is that?"</p>

The facilitator attempted to redirect the participants to discuss what supported them when addressing social issues. He used terms that encompassed earlier positions made by the participants. He moved away from discussing social issues solely in terms of helping or serving the other and used the art media (i.e. a Rumi poem and “I remember I

believe song”) to illustrate how participants may move toward greater “integrity” and change their posture. His understanding of “integrity” referred to being able to live in a manner consistent with how a person wishes to see himself and thus serves to respond to the feelings of guilt about the group’s struggle to articulate their ideal ethical position.

The participants’ resistance to exploring the issue at hand was made evident by the facilitator and he again attempted to re-engage them. Considering previous remarks where group members discussed feeling discouraged and fearful about engaging in change, the focus on helping the needy referred to their guilt about not effecting the kind of change that was commiserate with their ideals, and holding positions of privilege in society. Participants wished to identify themselves with the ideals about which they argued, but they did not want to discuss their conflicted feelings and resistance to engaging civically.

FAC	I think we’re very conveniently always wanting to talk about these sort of general other people. {loud group LF}; [F5 okay, I will talk about myself] I would like think about us talking about ourselves in the difficult business – [F4: F5’s stepping up to the plate]
F5	<i>Discusses the “very poor people” who tend to the harvest at her family’s home. Observes that these people travel to the village just for work, and this work pays just enough for their “food need for the day.”</i> <i>“So you see those people and help them.” Discusses how family members provide charity.</i> <i>“I used to live there, and I used to see those images too, so that was motivating me to give away – not only money...my time, everything that I have.”</i>

In this discussion, the ‘Other’ for the group members was someone who is helpless. Feelings of guilt about their relative positions of privilege in relation to the “needy” were implicit in the participants’ arguments over their personal ideals regarding ethical response to others. The participants perseverated on the meaning of service and helping others in lieu of discussing what it would mean for them to act more often, question their own positions, and take account of their benefits in society. If effect, they

attempted to atone what they did not want to recognize: a self that benefits from the Other and does not see this Other. When the facilitator made the participants avoidance apparent, they laughed raucously, but nervously. F5 offered to speak in a sacrificial manner, sharing a story of how her community in Turkey addressed differences in class in an ethical manner.

Following the analysis of the group process, I cross-referenced this group with the evaluation data. 4 out of the 7 who participated completed the 1-year post MCC survey. All respondents reported naming and remaining engaged in a particular “commitment” to civic action and engagement. 3 respondents reported that they renewed a previous commitment as a result of MCC, 1 respondent reported that MCC did not affect his involvement with his commitment.

Participants F2 & F4, who were most at odds with one another and other participants, reported that they renewed their commitment to civic engagement as a result of their participation in MCC. F2 reported that she had in fact increased her efforts for over a year after participating in the group. She also reported that MCC affected the way she made decisions and took action by being “more circumspect about conversation on sensitive religious and cultural issues.” F4 reported that the group had challenged her to think of new ways of using her expertise in organizations in which she was interested. She reported that MCC was “encouraging” and that it pulled her out of a “rut of believing volunteering or having change oriented conversations didn’t have much of an impact.”

Comparative summary

In conclusion, significant in both groups was that they undergo a process akin to Hegel's (1977) discussion of the slave's work. Participants in G-1 identified with the unrecognized Other via discussion and relating to art media; D-2 group members also did this, but some found themselves in the position of being unrecognized by fellow participants and struggled to be seen and heard. The group processes moved these participants to greater civic engagement through the participants' exploring and acknowledging the Other's being. Through this process, they moved toward the Other in their own communities.⁵

Analyzing the transcripts of G-1, it was apparent how emotionally involved the participants were. Unlike the classroom, where diligent students work to prove themselves, everyone considered the facilitator's directions by how it resonated with their own values, goals, and aspirations. G-1 participants moved toward one another in wonder and acceptance – even in disagreement, thus recognizing and affirming each other's subjectivity. They continually built on each other's comments, even when they openly disagreed with one another. When a person disagreed or challenged, participants encouraged him or her to move toward the group members by sharing their curiosity about the other person's position. With increasing acceptance, participants openly evaluated their personal situation, their feelings of frustration and discouragement about social issues, and explored options within their given situation as a means to act.

⁵ Although it is known that at least two participants were not transformed (according to 1-year post MCC participation survey data) through the program process (M2 from G-1, and M1 from D-2), I refer to all the participants since I'm referring to how the group interactions moved those who were influenced by the program - this inevitably includes even those who were not impacted by the group.

Following analysis of D-2, I was bewildered that so many of the participants reported they were indeed motivated and committed to further civic engagement a year following group participation. In G-1, acceptance and recognition of others' positions moved participants toward one another and prompted wonder, admiration, and inspiration to act. In contrast, for D-2, it was the struggling with their resistance to exploring and exposing their situation, eventual expression of this, and dedicated return to these topics, that kept these participants focused on the issues at hand. Although the facilitator criticized them for speaking abstractly, they were candid and direct with one another, more so than most of the groups that I observed over the course of MCC. Furthermore, as they wondered about each other's difference, particularly with respect to ethnicity, class, and religious affiliation, they communicated their desire to be recognized by each other, and relative efforts to reject others' views - and distinguish themselves against them.

Struggling with issues raised by the program materials and/or other participants was not foreign to me. I recalled, on several occasions, participants expressing despair, frustration, and indifference about our social situation, our positions within it, and possible spaces to change and engage in different ways. I also observed how some participants worked through it as the participants in D-2 and G-1 did, and others who eventually recoiled from their presence in the group, becoming increasingly contrary and cynical in the discussions, and some who disappeared from the group entirely. Returning to my ethnographic field notes of groups that occurred between D-2 and G-1, I found several examples of group processes where the participants worked through feelings of frustration with each other and with the goal of program. Most interestingly, I found a

selection illustrating my own frustration of feeling unrecognized during my participation in group E-1.

During meeting #4, “Reality check,” many group members including myself became increasingly frustrated by the prompts that the facilitator presented. We felt that he added many more miles to what already felt like an unending journey through a desert of abysmal realities. In reaction to a testimonial from a child amongst many in Uganda who were abducted, and then forced to kill and eat another abducted child, we responded in a rote manner to questions about how to address the issue, playing the roles of good students, “Education...Publicize stories like this more broadly...” We seemed detached, and began to bubble with irritation at the task set before us. This group plowed through, however, we expressed our frustrations, began to explore new ways of thinking, shared personal stories, and many members went off to develop relationships outside of the group, working together on some of their “commitments” to civic engagement. In what follows I present my reactions to the facilitator and the burgeoning movements out our desert.

I, at some point during the conversation, voiced the struggle that I was experiencing. I began by empathizing with Frank’s frustration of feeling that despite his efforts, nothing was being recognized. I briefly described my ongoing frustration as a black woman having to give an account of myself and culture to others. I followed up by saying that if it were not for my support systems, which empathize and share in my struggles, I would quickly give up on my beliefs about the power of civic action. The program director highlighted my comment, saying that it was similar Mike’s hope for some sort of organization, but that a support system further encourages individuals to continue their invested actions.

Rose also commented, “do we need a gun to our head before we help others?” We wondered together how much pressure was necessary before we act. A few talked about how many Americans would rather remain in their “comfort zones” before acting. The group seemed contemplative at this time, some agreeing, others I could not read.

In all, distinctive of the group processes was their grappling with recognition: participants explored the experience of being rejected, the impact of the denial of

another's being, and how a person may work toward greater recognition of important social issues. Participants were moved to explore their own social positions, work through feelings of fear about challenging the social situation, guilt about their relative privileges, dread about existing social realities, and identification with being rejected by others. Through these interactions, participants were transformed in the way they thought about others, propelling them to wonder, acknowledge, and move toward the Other in their communities. What are the pivotal processes that moved both groups to increased civic engagement? I addressed this question by identifying the key movements of the transformative process.

Key movements of the transformative process

The sharp differences in the styles of interaction between groups nonetheless point to how they worked to understand their social circumstances and challenge each other to envision new ways of relating to others and acting in the civic realm. Both group processes included several key movements that further engaged participants, moved them to explore their situation in a different way, and envision new ways of engaging civically. These movements included: 1) Exploration of the other's position; 2) Exploration of the one's own position in relation to the other; 3) Discussion of barriers to action; and 4) Identifying motivators for action. These movements followed the general structure of the program: moving from in depth analysis and discussion of various social issues, self-reflection of participants' own positions in relation to these concerns, and challenging existing ways of perceiving social issues in meetings #4-6, to identifying motivators for action and resources to sustain action in the final meeting. I will focus, herein, on

outlining each movement and the various dynamics within each. Table 3 provides a chart depiction of the four movements with a brief description of each process.

Table 3: Key movements of the transformative process

Transformative Movement	Transformations within each movement
Exploration of Other's position	Observation of denial of Other's being - Wonder about the experience of this position
	Observation of other acting with agency to challenge situation -Admiration for action, inspired reflection
Exploration of self's position in relation to Other	Observation re: lack of recognition of social issues within shared community -Personal reflection on how other viewed them
Discussion of barriers to action	Identification of barriers/impasses to action. How one is "stuck." -Feelings of frustration, discouragement
	Pedagogical role: facilitates analysis of participants' circumstances and position within situation -Acceptance of frustration and perceived limitations
	Exploration of means to action from this location -Wonder about existing options
Identifying motivators for action	Observation of exemplars of action by others from participants' given situation as model for each subject's action (i.e. in art media, or by examples from other participants) -Wonder about existing options
	Based on understanding exemplars of action, participants assess areas within their own life where they can engage civically -Identify plans to action

1. Exploration of the Other's position

Participants' exploration of the Other refers to those moments in discussions when participants considered the experience of someone else's situation. This movement involved wonder, admiration, and identification with the Other's position. In particular, through discussions of the program materials, participants wondered about what it is like to go unrecognized by others. These discussions prompted identification with and exploration of the realm of possibilities for the person/group in question. In group D-2, some participants reported feeling rejected by other group members. In response,

discussion was directed to understanding these participants' experiences and its impact on them. Participants also referred to the Other in program materials to explore how some people have overcome their situation, maintained hope, and dedication to social change. In these instances participants spoke with admiration about the other and considered how they transcended their situation in light of their circumstances.

A.) Observation of the denial of Other's being

Participants in both groups wondered about the experience of someone who goes unrecognized by others. When considering this position by discussing the art media presented in group, participants moved toward one another, identifying with the position, and further described the dynamics of this position – how one is rejected by others, the experience of this position, and similar instances of this occurrence within their community setting. In group D-2, some participants reported feeling unrecognized by other group members. In these instances, they described their experience of the occurrence and their difficulties expressing their positions as a result of the group's behavior toward them. Excerpts from transcriptions below illustrate these processes:

In group G-1, meeting #4 (economic fairness), participants referred to the poems "Night Janitor," and "La Moussa" to discuss how people go unrecognized in society.

F8	And it, a lot of these poems rang true, as to how much we ignore the help – in quotations. I mean, just people who are in just service. Even what M2 was talking about, he was talking about McDonalds. Now how many times do you ignore the people that work in those types of professions or you ignore the person who comes and gets your trash everyday. It just seems like they’ve become this other person, they’re meant to be, you know, there, but not spoken to or listened to.
----	---

F8 identified the Other as “help” and “just service,” whose being is rejected when occupying these positions. She explored how people stop relating to them as a person deserving to be seen, and noted the implicit imperative that they are “not meant to be.”

Following her comment, F2 responded,

F2	In relation to that there’s sort of a dichotomy in that these, you know, jobs like janitor and McDonalds – they’re all necessary jobs, but we’ think we’d never want those. And so, like, if they’re so necessary, but if that’s the only job you can get, then something’s wrong with you. But at the same time, we need someone to clean up our trash, we need someone to service our hamburgers. We don’t have any respect for the things we can’t live without.
----	---

F2 observed the significance and necessity of the position of the Other. The Other occupied a position that provides necessary services, but yet occupying this position means that the Other is less than the rest and undeserving of acknowledgement.

Similarly, in group D-2, meeting #5 (economic disparities) participant F4 referred to poems “What work is” and “Recession 1992” to discuss the limits of one’s power within the modern economic system. In referring to both characters in the poems (a working class man on the assembly line, and a successful business man during the 1992 recession) she argued that both of them are subject to the “man,” the “economy,” which dictates the limits of their power and action.

F4	The sort of – the message that I see is similar in both of them is that, you as a person is powerless against these forces. You can stand in line, but you are at the mercy of the man about whether you will have work or not. And, you know,
----	--

	even if you are this writer, and you're in this shop and you buy the Italian – and you conform, you are still at the mercy of the recession. I mean, um, for me that's what the economy is.
--	---

The participants in both groups use discussion of the art media to explore these positions. In group D-2, though, some group members readily identified themselves as being unacknowledged by other group members and related this to the particular social positions that they occupy. In meeting #6 (Communities of support and challenge), participant F4 described feeling as though the value of her civic efforts were undermined in comparison to the majority of the participants who referred to their religious affiliation as informing their civic action. She continued that these statements implicitly claimed that acting from their position was more valuable and venerable than her own.

F4	But, um, it depends, see what's difficult about this conversation is I feel like I'm the only non-religious person, I mean, not that you're, I mean, non-religiously affiliated person participating in the conversation and I feel like um, [FAC: feel a little beleaguered] not, not beleaguered, but in the way that sometimes the conversation, for people that are that religious there's always that higher order, we answer a higher calling, and I think, well crap I do things, help out, be of service, blah/x/x/, without having the higher calling so I don't know, I think it's, you don't need to be part of a religious affiliation in order to answer a higher calling or a concern for your – the well-being of your fellow man. And there's always this justification built around it in religious terms, that, I don't feel beleaguered, it's more that I feel – or resented, as much as I feel like it undermines the value of it.
----	--

F4 mentioned that the religious participants also had the privilege of being recognized by a “higher order,” which substantiates their actions and beliefs. She wondered how and why her own similar efforts for concern of the “fellow man” go unacknowledged.

B.) Observation of the Other acting with agency to challenge situation:

In both groups, when discussing the Other (as referred to by program materials or comments made by other group members), participants reflected on how these narratives

incite inspiration for further civic action. They spoke in admiration of the Other's actions and explored in depth the efforts made by the person in question.

In group G-1, meeting #6 (Resources), F8 states the following in reaction to listening to a song called "I remember, I believe" by Sweet honey and the rock about overcoming violence in southern Africa:

F8	I thinks it is such a powerful statement, I mean, only you know seven words, she said "I do remember that's why I believe. I mean, I think people give themselves, you know such hassle trying to figure out why certain things happen either to their families or to themselves. But, she says, 'I do remember and that's why I believe.' I think that's such a, that's powerful to me. I can't explain how, but it's means-it means a lot. There's a lot of significance in it.
----	---

F8 reflected that the song has impacted her. In her admiration of how the songwriter overcame her situation, F8 noted feeling moved by these actions so much so that she begins to challenge how other people contend with and perceive social injustice. Though still incomprehensible, "I can't explain how, but it means – it means a lot," her admiration of the song moved her toward re-envisioning how to respond to injustice.

In group D-2, meeting #4 (theme: environmental degradation), participants spoke in admiration of Wangari Maathai's environmental impact in Kenya. F3 encouraged the participants to appreciate the scope of her impact - that Maathai transcended her initial project of addressing drought and deforested trees. F3 observed the resonances of Maathai's work and thus outlined how her efforts permeated the broader political structure within Kenya.

F3	Well, I think there's some social problems as well. I mean, she instigated - here's a woman who has inspired many other and now they're changing some structures. To question, um, you know, everything from their husbands' control, to president Daniel Loy's rule. So that touches to the heart of households in villages. You know, so we're not just trees here. It's the structure.
----	---

2. Exploration of one's own position in relation to the Other

In response to exploring another person or group's position, how they maneuvered within it, and the possible feelings and experiences they may have endured and/or overcome, participants reflexively explored their own positions. In particular, participants identified with the position of the Other and observed the relative lack of recognition of a particular social issue and/or group within their community setting. Examples of these kinds of responses are provided below:

Group G-1, Meeting #4 (theme: economic fairness), following extended discussion of how people working in "service" positions go unrecognized in society, participants reflected on occupying similar positions.

M3	I definitely agree with that. I worked in a fast food and grocery (.)they look at you like you're the one who's dumb, but you listen to some of the customers – they're dumber than you are [FAC: do you feel invisible?] Um, I don't know, I mean, I don't know from that standpoint. 'Cause if you're in a servers job they kind of have to deal with you, they can't just ignore you except, like when I was at X fast food restaurant, but I know in a grocery store, like you know it was kind of a customer service type thing so, I mean, they would talk or whatever, but, um, that could be a good thing and a bad thing – with some of them, the more they talked, like the more, the less sense they seemed like they had.
F8	Wasn't there something interesting out about – and I forget where I got this from – the skills that it takes to work in these professions that people tend to ignore is not – you need to be getting paid more than \$5.15. You see what I'm saying? (.) Nobody gets paid what they're worth. We really don't understand the hard work and skill it takes to be in these professions.

Group G-1, Meeting #5 (theme: true wealth):

After listening to a story about Oseola McCarty (a working class African-American woman who raised over \$150,000 for university scholarships), participant F2 first observed her efforts, explored her actions in light of her circumstances, and then

applied McCarty's example to challenge her own aspirations and feelings of discouragement about being a teacher.

F2	It's interesting that she could have easily have been just very helpless. Just you know, she wasn't rich, she wasn't making very much money. But she decided that wasn't going to be helpless, she was going to you know, be proactive, she was going to make something happen. And you know, it took her years to save up this money, but she was willing to be patient and allow things to work out and sometimes we want to change things – I think about becoming a teacher. I think I'll go into the classroom and I'll change all the students [F8: right, FAC: mumbles in agreement]. That's kind of an absurd thought. Just because you're only with them, well for a little bit of time. You can definitely have a big impact on people, but um, I shouldn't expect world peace after I teach a science class. But, ah, she- when you're willing to take the time and not just let yourself be a victim or helpless, you can wallow in self-pity of not getting anything done. You can get a lot more done.
----	--

3. Discussion of barriers to action

After contemplating the realities of their social situation, particularly in response to an Other as presented through program materials or by participants' experiences over the course of the group process, participants discussed what they viewed as barriers to further engaging in civic action. They spoke in detail about how they felt "stuck" within their circumstances and noted feelings of frustration and diminished motivation about envisioning future action. Feeling "stuck" also referred to feeling powerless and hopeless that proactive change may make a difference in their community. The facilitator and participants responded pedagogically by encouraging deeper analysis of a participant's feeling "stuck," accepting their feelings of frustration and perceived limitations. This served a pivotal role in moving participants to exploring alternative means of action within their particular location. Rather than relating through expressions of frustration and despair, participants moved toward one another as they commiserated about these feelings, and wondered about existing options and possible alternatives, thus re-vitalizing

their esteem about action. Three transformations occurred within this broader movement:

a) Identification of barriers to action; b) Facilitated analysis of participants'

circumstances and perceived limitations; and c) Exploration of means to action from this location.

In what follows I provide an illustration of these three movements in sequence. In both examples, the facilitator summarizes and acknowledges the participants comments, and then he shifts the discussion to questioning their options.

Group G-1, meeting #4 (Economic disparities):

FAC	<i>Referring to the comments of M4, M2, F3, and F1: "I was hearing a couple of threads in what you (M2) were saying. Programs aren't always the ideal places of solving problems. Although they can be a helpful way of doing it, um. But also, the other stream I heard you saying was that that well we often say well, we've got what we need, let's you know, if I was hearing you right, we've got what we need, so let's not worry about those other people (3)"</i>
	{text cut out for brevity }
FAC	How do people feel about the two things M2 is raising here? One, Is how much do you need? After you get 2 million do you need the next x million. That's one stream, the other, sounded like little bit of a generalization, people in government don't care.
	{Text cut out for brevity }
FAC	Let's go to that, that's a fairness issue, not necessarily, it doesn't need to be broken down by race, it could be broken down by economic [F8: yah, race, gender, age, you can break it down on everything] Okay, so, what could people here in this room as students, as employees of X university or whatever, do you have any voice in that?
M5	Yeah, we can ask questions.
F8	Definitely.
F2	Sometimes politicians are out of touch 'cause we don't write to them. We don't tell them what's going on. I wrote to Reagan once, when I was in elementary school because he was going to talk with the Russian president, my last name is Russian. I thought that that was great, and he wrote me back...but I've never written to a politician saying I think you need to support this policy, I think you're forgetting about this aspect or anything like that. You know, people barely vote (.) If they all took the opportunities they had, they wouldn't be complaining that nothing's being changed. They weren't actually making efforts to change things themselves.
M3	I think something we could do to help is just spending time and energy to helping other people out (.) spending time is more helpful" <i>Compares this to simply spending money on others.</i>

Group D-2, meeting #6 (communities of challenge and support):

FAC	And the way I would like to frame this conversation for all of us, I think in the broadest way so that we can all think about all the sorts of choices we have, and we're all trying to sort this out in different ways at different points in our life curve, is that we've talked about some pretty big problems in the world, I mean we haven't touched all of them even, you know, we've certainly listed a whole lot of other ones. Um, and there are a lot of ways one could move out in response to that. {text cut out for brevity} We're all in the middle of this, and we're going to be talking sort of more about what we hope to do, but tonight I want us to talk more a little about some of the things that support and challenge us, sustain us in making those kind of moves (.) I'm interested in people talking out of their own lives for the moment about what sustains you as you step, step in this direction.
	{text cut out for brevity}
FAC	I'd like to ask M2 just a little bit, you talked about urgency as one thing, and we talked about both support and challenge, and urgency is often a kind of challenge. Um, how do you kind of, find ways to keep, you know a lot of these problems are in f-, in the real world they are urgent, people are dying. Um, but we don't experience them as urgent because we're sitting in a living room. I mean do you have ways that you, - that help you that gives you a sense of urgency, F5 talked a little bit about, she keeps her eyes open for pictures of things that she sees and those give her a sense of urgency. Do you-
M2	I mean it's all around us... Even if you try to ignore them you will be exposed to lots of information. And that information will tell you that there's some urgent problems that you may contribute in some way. I mean, I didn't do anything special to get this AIDS problem or poor people in Africa. I mean, even in our neighbors, maybe there are people - if I encounter in some way, I will come in conclusion that there are some people, and I will search for some solutions
M3	Compassion is something that motivates us to go out...when you act with compassion, you don't act with the expectation that something will be given to you in return.

4. Identifying motivators for action

Referring to examples from program materials and shared experiences by group members, participants used the examples as models to inform their desire to move to action. They returned to these examples again, not only in wonder and admiration, but in an effort to better articulate, understand, and map out how they will proceed. In response to these exemplars of action, participants reflected on and assessed ways that they could engage in civic action. This movement differs from the first in that participants directly

related exemplars of action to how they were working toward their understandings of social issues and plans to further participate in action.

Group G1:

In meeting #5 (true wealth), participants discussed media representations in reference to a movie clip from *Powaqqatsi* (a film that addresses the negative impacts of mass media on modern global culture), and the ways that people may serve “curatorial” roles in society in reaction to the poem by Robert Coles, titled “The Curator,” (a narrative about a museum curator who holds up representations of beauty in the Russian community during World War II). Participants initially marveled at the way the curator in the poem was able to move people from several different positions in society, including the blind, to see art in a new way. Referring to the “dream imagery” clip from *Powaqqatsi*, participants also complained of how the preponderance of images from mass media have functioned to distort cultural perspectives on beauty. Shifting the discussion, the facilitator reflected that mass media presents images of how people ought to perceive the social situation. In contrast, he wondered if the curator might serve metaphorically to present alternative representations of the social situation. He stated, “How do you hold up alternative images?” F8, referring to an earlier comment when she complained about misrepresentations of black people, discussed how she has worked to challenge them. The facilitator marked her comments as a “curatorial role,” and then several participants shared similar instances of taking on a curatorial role and related it to their current civic concerns.

F8	I think for me, what’s really coming to my eyes, is how, um, black people are portrayed in television and media... And I actually used one of the videos as a lesson when I was teaching my high school students because I think that’s a good way of doing it, because I said – one of these videos, it’s called – Nelly,
----	--

	<p>ah ‘tip drill’ video. And a tip drill is a girl that you will have sex with, but you don’t like the way she looks in her face. She’s pretty, not, she has a nice body, but an ugly face. And in the video, at the end of the video, he takes a credit card, swipes it down the girls ass, and all of a sudden she starts moving, because she’s been purchased. And, ugh! I used that as a lesson. Because all the kids have seen the video and I said, what do you think really [group mumbles, nervous laughter] It’s really – It’s bad. It’s beyond anything that I’ve ever seen, but you have to use those moments as teaching lessons to observe what does that really mean? He probably thought it was cute, he thought, oh yeah, I could just swipe it, witty, right, but what does it mean when you can take something you use to purchase things with and you do it a female? What have you essentially done? You have bought her. She’s a prostitute.</p>
FAC	<p>So right there, there is a curatorial function. You’re putting a frame, okay, there’s something there. You’re putting a frame and a context around that [F8: echoes – ‘context around that’ uh huh]. It helps people who may be seeing it one way, to look at that same thing and see it another way. And you’ve chosen to do that by speaking up, talking, using your own voice, and setting a context in an area where you work, where you teaching. [F8: right] So, other examples, not necessarily on this set of issues, but other ways you guys think that we can all play curatorial roles in terms of holding up some alternative to these media images that we’re uh,</p>

Group D-2:

In meeting #6 (communities of challenge and support), which used similar art media as group G-1, F5 mentioned early in the discussion that she used images that she sees in her daily life and in media to remain informed and committed to social issues. In response to the facilitator’s encouragement what supports her renewed commitment to civic engagement, F5 described thinking of images of her community in Turkey, where people are sensitive to class differences and poverty. She mentioned, though, in her effort to carry this image to the US, she observed differences in how class is represented and addressed by the broader community.

F5	<p><i>Discusses the “very poor people” who tend to the harvest at her family’s home. Observes that these people travel to the village just for work, and this work pays just enough for their “food need for the day.” “So you see those people and help them.” Discusses how family members provide charity.</i></p> <p>“I used to live there, and I used to see those images too, so that was motivating me to give away – not only money...my time, everything that I have... My</p>
----	---

<p>mom, even now, you know, when I talk with her, she tells me, you know, don't forget to do this...don't forget them. But here, we don't see them around, that is the problem. In Turkey, we are in the middle of them, we are among them. So we see them and instantly, you know, without anyone in between, we used give it away, to help others."</p>

In conclusion, MCC group interactions moved from meeting to facing the Other. The Other was invoked by the basic structure of the program: diverse group composition, the use of program material to frame discussions, and the importance of engaging participants affectively through "empathic imagery."

Transformative movements involved moving toward the Other in wonder about the experience of being denied as a subject and admiration for the Other's efforts to challenge dehumanizing action. Participants, in an effort to understand the Other's position, related to similar experiences of feeling rejected by others. Acknowledging dehumanizing action in the participants' community and moving toward the Other's position also incited anger and discouragement about the possibility of engaging in civic action. Participants described feeling "stuck" about the circumstances in their social action and expressed despair and dread about the possibility of change. A key pedagogical moment involved accepting the participants' feelings and encouraging them to explore options for action from the very position they felt "stuck." There, participants explored different ways of perceiving their circumstances and returned to the Other to explore exemplars of action. This last movement further propelled participants out of feeling "stuck," and they began to articulate future action, using these exemplars as models.

What are the transformative movements of program participants' interactions?

So far, I have addressed both research sub-questions: (1) What did the transformative process look like? and, (2) What were the key movements of the program process? First, I analyzed the transformative movements of individual participant interaction by way of constructing narrative summaries of the G-1 and D-2 group processes. This analysis underscored the significance of recognition in motivating participants to explore the Other's experience. Meeting the Other moved participants to wonder, admiration, and identification; however, for group D-2 participants meeting the Other also lead to the rejection of the Other and dread about the possibility for change. These processes challenged participants to explore the otherness within them, relate to being unrecognized, and eventually desire to work toward increased recognition of important issues within their communities. Next, I identified four key transformative movements of the program's process, referring again to participant interaction to illustrate how participants were moved to increased civic engagement. The movements were: (1) Exploration of the Other's position; (2) Exploration of the self in relation to the Other; (3) Discussion of barriers to action; and (4) Identifying motivators for action.

Using these detailed analyses, I created a general summary of the transformative movements of the MCC program processes. I refer to the group processes to illustrate how MCC program participants were transformed, through dialogue, toward increased civic engagement. MCC program processes were akin to the work of the slave in Hegel's (1977) master/slave dialectic. In the last movement of the master/slave dialectic, the slave moves toward the otherness of the world through her work. Engaging with the otherness of the world, she learns of her ability to create and she develops increased

independence from the master. This transformation challenges her understanding of her relationship to the master as being subjugated and denied recognition. She begins to face the otherness within herself; the fear of annihilation by the master. A similar process occurs when program participants move toward the Other, who they meet through their participation in MCC. The groups follow four key transformative movements, with each individual movement contributing to a shift in the group's relationship to the Other. In addition, the shift in the group's relationship to the Other further reinforced individual participants exploration of the otherness within themselves. Elaborated discussion of the participants' movements shows how participants faced their anxieties about the challenges of civic engagement and engendered a feeling of hope about the significance of their future civic engagement.

The first movement of the program process involves an *exploration of the Other's position*. In this movement, participants experienced their first meeting with the Other. The Other was manifested in the solicitation to participate in the program by the facilitator, the people who populated each MCC group, and the people represented through the program materials. The call to participate in the program from the program facilitator beckoned people in the community to move toward the program. The call offered participants a different kind of group experience: through facilitated dialogue of social problems, participants might find new ways of engaging civically. Here we observe the participants moving toward the Other in response and acknowledging the call to participate as resonating on some level with their civic concerns.

Upon entering the program, the Other also referred to the different people populating the program groups and the people described in the program materials. The

Other's narrative included stories of being denied recognition with respect to a given social issue, and stories of resiliency where the Other challenged the situation and advocated on behalf of their position. Participants met the Other through listening to the stories of denied recognition of the Other and the Other's efforts to surmount social challenges. The narratives moved participants toward the Other in wonder. In their wonder about the Other, they acknowledged that they did not understand the face that they were meeting. In their wonder, they brought the Other closer to them, so that they could further grasp its meaning. This movement not only acknowledged the difference between them, but recognized the Other in a way that was in stark contrast to the narrative of the Other's denied recognition. When the participants admired the Other's actions to challenge a given social issue, they recognized these actions as symbolic of the primary goal of the program: civic engagement. Through their admiration, participants concurrently recognized the Other's ability to change and glimpsed their own possibility of challenging social issues. For example, in group G-1, participants reacted to the Sanderstrom article by observing the differences between American and Papau New Guinean perspectives about poverty, and then questioned why they cannot approach the issue in a similar way. F3 questioned, "Why don't we have an answer like that?" F4 followed that she was "amazed how in their world they are all responsible for each other to the point that, you know, someone's homelessness is just a foreign concept to them because they all feel care for each other is everyone's responsibility." F8 observed the differences between the two cultures and then considered how Americans "ignore the help...people who are in just service." In these three responses we observe: F3 wondering about the difference of the Other, the Papua New Guineans, presented in the Sanderstrom

article; F4 expressing her admiration for the Other's ability to respond to social issues out of "care" and "responsibility;" and last, F8 exploring how Americans do not recognize the impoverished. Thus, in meeting the Other, participants acknowledged the differences between them and the Other and moved toward further understanding of these differences. Participants' were moved to explore the possibility of their own civic action in their wonder about the Other's denied recognition and admiration of the Other's agency to surmount social problems.

In the second movement, *exploration of self in relation to the Other*, participants inhabited the position of the Other. In their acknowledgement to the Other's experience of denied recognition, the participants recognized the being of the Other. Motivated by wonder, participants inhabited the position of the Other by relating to the otherness within themselves. Specifically, participants moved toward the Other of the self that too has been denied recognition. From this position, participants further explored and articulated their own understanding of being denied recognition with respect to particular social concerns in their community. In this movement, the Other referred to those people who rejected the significance of the issues that participants were concerned about. To illustrate, consider G-1 participants M3 & F8's conversation about the denied recognition of those in lower paying jobs. After discussing their own experiences of working in lower paying jobs, F8 quipped, "Nobody gets paid what they're worth. We really don't understand the hard work and skill it takes to be in these professions." She spoke from the position of identifying with "not being paid what [she is] worth," and then challenged her community (herself included) for not recognizing the contributions made by working class citizens. Participants became angry about social inequalities, moving away from the

Other and criticized past failures to address social problems. The participants responded to the Other by feeling dread about their civic realities; they discussed feeling as though nobody cared about these social issues and that any effort to challenge the situation would prove to be ineffective. Feeling dread, participants recoiled from the otherness in themselves that they had initially approached in the first movement when they moved toward the possibility for civic engagement. Their dread reflected their fear that becoming civically engaged would not be recognized and therefore would not be meaningful in the community setting. The meaningfulness of their civic engagement, then, would be annihilated.

In the third movement, *barriers to action*, participants faced their fears about moving toward civic engagement. First, the participants' feeling of dread, discouragement, and frustration were discussed with regards to their resistance to civic engagement. The participants' movement toward the Other, that is the program goal of civic engagement, was halted. Participants instead pushed away, criticizing the meaningfulness of civic action. In response, the facilitator moved toward the participants, acknowledging and accepting their feelings of dread, discouragement, and frustration. The facilitator's acceptance, therefore not only acknowledged the participants' feelings, but also affirmed and recognized the participants' experience. By further articulating the participants' feelings, the facilitator acknowledged the difference between feeling dread about social issues and the feeling of hope engendered by the program premise that engaging social issues in community settings is meaningful. By accepting the participants' feelings for what they were, the participants felt recognized. Most powerful in the facilitator's acceptance was that he moved toward the participants when they

feared that the significance of civic engagement would go unrecognized. The participants experienced being recognized in a way that they had feared was not possible. The experience of being accepted conferred hope for the participants. The participants, no longer constricted by fear, were willing to move toward the otherness within themselves and in doing so believe in the prospect of civic engagement. They talked about the problems within their communities, not with despair, but with wonder and acceptance of the current realities. For example, consider the facilitator's efforts to encourage group D-2 participants to explore what "sustains" their investment in civic action. Prior to asking this question, he acknowledged that the group participants were trying to "sort out" how the "big problems in the world" impact their personal lives. He observed, "we're in the middle of this, and we're going to be talking sort of more about what we hope to do, but tonight I want us to talk more a little about some the things that support and challenge us." In response, M2 and M3 discussed how feeling a sense of urgency about pressing social problems and compassion "motivates [them] to go out." Thus, participants were transformed by the facilitator's acceptance of their positions and were more willing to explore possibilities for community action.

In the final movement, *identifying motivators for action*, participants returned to the Other, who they met in discussions of program materials, as a model to inform their plans for action. The Other's action became an exemplar for action, and participants explored how they might act in similar ways. In effect, participants moved toward the Other to further inspire their own understanding of their possibilities for action. Consider G-1 participants discussion of the song, "I remember, I believe" in meeting #6. Quoting the song lyrics, "though no one forced us, we did build the barricade under the fire," F3

stated, “we’re not being forced to continue on to do things to help the commonwealth or not. It’s our choice to decide to be active and choose to make a difference.” Moving toward the Other as an exemplar for action signals growth. The participants incorporated what they had learned over the course of their relationship to the Other into their understanding of and relationship to social issues.

Thus, MCC participants’ transformative movements toward increased civic engagement involved facing the Other. The Other appeared in the faces of other participants and in the people described in program material. In this encounter, participants acknowledged the Other’s difference and in further wonder, began to move toward the otherness within themselves. Participants reflected on social problems, their own experiences of being denied recognition, and subsequently their fears that civic action too would go unrecognized; this evoked fear and dread about the possibility for change. However, acceptance and recognition of the participants’ experiences inspired hope. Participants became more resolved to face the otherness within themselves and explore ways to become civically engaged.

More concretely, participants were transformed in their encounters with other participants and explorations of social issues. As they discussed how some people and important social issues go unrecognized in their community, they wondered about their own personal experiences of going unrecognized. Participants felt frustrated and discouraged by the persistence of social problems and civic disengagement; they feared that becoming civically active would not be meaningful in their communities. Their fears became barriers to potential civic engagement. The facilitator’s recognition of their frustration and accompanying encouragement to consider alternative perspectives to

address their concerns shifted participants' feelings of dread to feelings of hope about civic engagement. Participants returned to discussion of program materials to contemplate how they may commit to civic engagement.

In sum, I analyzed MCC participants' interactions by selecting two groups, which had the most 1-year post-MCC survey respondents indicating that MCC influenced their decisions to engage civically. I created narrative summaries of what the transformative process looked like for each group, and then identified four key transformative movements of the program process. I used these analyses to inform the construction of a general summary to respond to the over-arching research question: what are the transformative movements of MCC program participants' interactions. I showed that the participants were transformed in their relationship to the Other and that this relationship changed the way that they thought about the significance of civic engagement. Key movements of the participants' transformative process included wondering about difference, relating to the experience of going unrecognized and working through feelings of dread, finding hope through the acceptance from another person, and resolving to consider different ways of engaging with others. In chapter 5, *Discussion*, I review the goal of the dissertation, the methodology, and the analysis of MCC participant discussion. Next, I underscore the significance of studying dialogue and articulating transformative process in my discussion of the literature reviewed in chapter 1.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This dissertation endeavored to articulate the movements of transformative encounters within a community initiative. My analysis showed that transformation is an intersubjective process. Transformation toward increased civic engagement requires facing the Other. Facing the Other meant moving toward the differences of another person and the differences within the self. Through creating a relationship to the Other, participants moved toward increased hope about the meaningfulness of civic action and became increasingly motivated to engage civically. This analysis illustrated how participants were transformed through interaction, and demonstrated how we may study how people are transformed through dialogue. It contributes to recent efforts in community psychology aiming to study how people are transformed in local interactions and community interventions.

To analyze how Meetings for Civic Change (MCC) participants were transformed to increased civic engagement, I used an interpretive research method informed by theories of human transformation and the intersubjectivity of emotions. These theories revealed the intersubjectivity inherent in dialogue, and as a result, guided my analysis of how participants were changed through their interactions in the program. The methodology was guided by two theories: Hegel's (1977) master/slave dialectic and De Rivera's (1977) theory of emotional experience as intersubjective.

Hegel's master/slave dialectic illustrates how human transformation is impelled by relationship with the Other, where the Other is that which we distinguish as different than us. Hegel's theory also stipulates that human action is motivated by the desire for recognition. Difference manifests in our worldly encounters with

people, the environment, and in relationship to other dimensions of ourselves. It is what we do not know and thus not incorporated into our conception of self.

Therefore, transformation involves a change in our relationship to the Other, which creates a change in our understanding of ourselves. Transformation is the intrapsychic and intersubjective experience of facing the Other. In meeting the other, we are faced with our subjectivity: our understanding of ourselves changes through our relationship to and acknowledgement of the difference of the Other.

According to DeRivera (1977), emotions always occur in relation to an Other. DeRivera provides a structural theory of emotions that allows for articulating the movements between self and Other. Emotions are intersubjective; occurring in the interaction between the self and an Other. Employing this theory, I identified the movements of the group's transformations. Movements referred to emotional transformations that involved an Other moving toward or away from the self of the participants, or the self moving toward or away from the Other.

Hegel (1977) and De Rivera's (1977) theories set the foundation for how I answered the research sub-questions: (1) What did the transformations of group interaction look like? and, (2) What were the key movements of the group's transformative process? Analysis of MCC program processes involved detailed articulation of how the participants related to the Other and their emotional movements over the course of the program process. I reviewed 1-year post-MCC participation survey data to identify two groups (G-1 and D-2) with the most respondents who reported that the program made a significant impact toward increasing their civic engagement.

For my analysis, I created narrative summaries to illustrate what the transformative process looked like for MCC participants. This effort helped me to articulate the uniqueness of the transformative process for each group. By creating narratives I also expected to create civic transformations (Denzin, 2003). That is, I expected that the narrative would speak to the readers; they would wonder about their understanding of civic engagement, consider different interpretations of the participants' utterances, and think about their own civic involvement.

My interpretation of each group process showed that while their encounters did unfold in dissimilar ways; the significance of recognition was apparent for both groups. For group G-1, participants moved toward the Other in wonder, identification, and admiration. These movements inspired participants to explore the consequences of denied recognition and possibilities for action. For group D-2, participants moved away from Others in the group through rejection and subsequently these participants explored how it felt to be rejected. D-2 also discussed their fears about engaging civically and hinted at guilt about their positions of privilege within the community. In both groups, facing the Other incited transformative movements for both group processes.

I returned to the data to articulate how transformative movements unfolded over the course of the program process and identified four movements: 1) Exploration of the Other's position; 2) Exploration of the self's position in relation to the Other; 3) Discussion of barriers to action; and 4) Identifying motivators for action. This process may be summarized as the participants moving from meeting to facing the Other.

The transformative movements of the MCC participants' interactions culminated in the participants developing hope about the significance of civic engagement and agency toward future civic action. In response to the research question: what are the transformative movements of MCC participants' interactions? I outlined a general narrative of the program's transformative movements.

Transformation toward increased engagement referred to change in the way people related to the Other such that participants were changed in how they understood themselves and the significance of moving toward people in their community in order to address social issues. The transformative process for MCC participants required investment in facing the Other. Participants met the Other in the faces of other participants, the program materials that illustrated how social problems continue to go unrecognized, and the otherness within themselves questioning the significance of civic engagement. In facing the Other, participants moved toward what they did not know in wonder; they moved toward the possibility of a new way of relating. Exploring the experience of being unrecognized, however, prompted fear and dread that participating in civic action could not change their existing social circumstances. Participants found hope, though, when they experienced the possibility of a different way of relating to the Other. The Other accepted their fears and resistance to civic engagement, thus recognizing the meaningfulness of the interminable difference between them. Feeling recognized, the participants allayed their fears about the significance of future civic action and resolved to explore new forms of civic engagement.

In all, my analysis of MCC participant dialogue showed how participant interactions were multivalent and thick with feeling. Their talk was more than an exchange of ideas or a critique of oppressive practices in which the group aligns itself against some sort of dominant majority. The participants moved toward and away from the task of increased civic action as they faced social issues by reflecting on their experiences of people in their community and their relationship to them. Critical in this study of transformative process was the articulation of the complexities of dialogue. This analysis may contribute to trends in community psychology that aim for a more critical praxis and research of transformative action. Herein, I review the research findings in light of questions raised from the literature review: (1) What would a critical pedagogy look like in an informal learning situation, like MCC, where the goal is increased civic engagement for a diverse group of participants – where some hold great power and privilege, and others may be wary of discussing experiences of marginalization and/or oppression? and, (2) How would a nuanced analysis of intergroup relations reveal more complexities of transformative dialogue? Last, I use my analysis to contribute to current trends in community psychology by discussing how community psychologists may more effectively intervene in community settings.

Dialogue and Transformation

Influences from critical pedagogy were evident in the MCC program structure. Participants were asked to take part in an extended process where the instrumental mode of action was dialogue. Their conversations frequently invoked the

goal of the program: increased civic engagement. Discussion was facilitated by critical reflection of existing social conditions, exploration of participants' relationships to others in their broader community, and evaluation of how they understood themselves in relation to others who are most afflicted by social inequalities. The art media used in group processes offered the participants first entry into critical reflection. They observed the recurrent rejection of the Other's being and moved toward the Other in wonder, empathy, and identification. They contemplated the impact of being denied recognition and related this experience to social problems in their own communities. This movement toward the Other often provoked anger and despair about social inequalities and disparities. Participants also observed how some people have responded to and challenged these issues. Participant F4 from group D-2 commented that learning about Wangari Maathai's political leadership showed her how to become civically involved without feeling daunted, "I know every time I go there, just on a personal basis I get discouraged, so for me I appreciate the fact there are stories of how one person can - effort can make a difference." Learning about Maathai's story also provoked new ways of thinking about civic action for F4, "you could have an impact without necessarily having to take on ... Like I don't feel like I would be able to necessarily change atomic energy policy in this country, but I could plant trees."

A key pedagogical role in the MCC process was accepting participants' reactions, encouraging them to remain with their feelings, and having them explore options for action from this space. In response to group G-1 M2's questioning whether social programs are indeed effective in addressing community problems, the

facilitator summarized his comments, encouraged other participants to reflect on the issues he raised, and then contextualized the issue so that participants may think concretely about how they have responded to this issue in the past or how they could respond at present. Freire (1993) refers to this process as *conscientization*. He argues for providing a space for the oppressed to work toward acknowledging the dehumanizing situation in which they exist and working toward liberatory change. This movement includes taking honest assessment of the impact a person's circumstances has had on her until present, exploring her options, eventually realizing her agency in her present situation, making choices, and ultimately realizing her responsibility for living in a humanizing manner for herself and others.

Nonetheless, my analysis of MCC group processes indicated dimensions of transformative dialogue not adequately captured in Freire's praxis. Namely, the social situation on which the MCC participants reflected may not be demarcated solely by oppressor/oppressed distinctions. Freire's critical pedagogy involves a concretizing of Hegel's master/slave dialectic in political terms. For him, the master is the oppressor who relates to the world in a dehumanizing manner, negating the oppressed as subjects in the social world. Through dialogue, the slave works toward liberation by action and reflection upon her situation. She develops solidarity with others, thus further realizing her and others' human potential.

MCC groups, however, were organized to have a diversity of voices, occupying a multiplicity of social positions. MCC participants worked with the task of understanding how people and critical social concerns go unrecognized in their broader community. As a result, they were impelled to act out of the desire to call

attention to these issues. Participants became acquainted with the Other's position and engaged in learning and psychological processes akin to the work of Hegel's slave. To be clear, I am not equivocating group members with the position of the oppressed as Freire interpreted Hegel's master-slave dialectic; instead I am using this theory to illustrate the dialectical processes that the participants follow – tallying alongside the marginalized position and grappling with the constraints of this location. It is a process that I argue everyone, as subjects representing various permutations of positions of privilege and marginalization, must participate in to surmount systemic injustice. Some participants reacted in fear, dread, and denial about the actualities of those who go unrecognized and were challenged to face this otherness. Participants moved toward this otherness and then explored options and possibilities for change. A diverse group took up the problem of denied recognition and those who were transformed over the course of the process moved toward others for the sake of greater recognition and humanization for all.

Developing solidarity amongst group members proved to be more challenging than Freire (1993) illustrates. Participants represented multiple marginalized and privileged social positions. They did not presume that they could identify with each other or that they shared similar social positions. Thus, they were met with questions about how they saw and were seen by other group members. For example, consider the following interaction in group G-1 between F8, an African American female, and M2 a Caucasian male. F8 responded to M2's questioning the efficacy of social programs by discussing the disappointing consequences of the termination of a program that was key in increasing the percentage of African-Americans attending

her university. In her response to M2, she moved toward him by showing him an alternative way of thinking about the issue he critiqued, and more importantly, she showed him the potential impact of his position on her community. Facing someone in this manner is another layer to the kind of dialogue that Freire offers. Although Freire discusses the challenges of the oppressor and oppressed working together in solidarity, his views may not be directly applied to our current American context, where the persistence of a long history of oppressive practices and dread about the possibility for change in diverse contexts remain.

Furthermore, in my analysis of MCC participants' interactions, I identified instances of participants struggling with their positions of privilege and making efforts to eschew the harsh implications that come along with it. D-2 participants laughed nervously when the facilitator observed their recurrent efforts to avoid discussion about how they may commit to civic engagement, and instead pontificated on ethical modes of civic action. Theorists within cultural studies have discussed how holding positions of privilege effectively shields a sense of social accountability and have explored the deleterious impact this behavior has on challenging social injustice (Fine, 1997; McIntosh, 1998). In fact, Fine (1997) has critiqued social scientists for taking a myopic gaze at the disenfranchised, fetishizing a desire to attempt to understand and correct their situation without considering how marginalized positions have been constructed and sedimented through practices of mystifying privilege. In her discussion of white privilege, she reminds that "whiteness was produced through the exclusion and denial of opportunity of people of color...institutional leadership and seemingly race-neutral policies/practices work to insure white privilege" (1997,

p. 60). The Other, then, is constructed as deficient in contrast to an invisible ideal. Humanizing practice in diverse group processes must also involve exploring the otherness of privilege – identifying it, making it visible, and articulating its impact on others.

A classic illustration of challenging white privilege is the documentary *The Color of Fear* (Wah, 1994). The film follows a diverse group of a men meeting for a weekend to talk about racism. Their conversation quickly becomes explosive and antagonistic when a white participant casually remarks that race is not a big issue and that he does not understand why racial differences cannot be collapsed so that everyone may view solely the sameness of humanity. The other men take pains to show to him how such indifference essentially rejects their subjecthood – the meaningfulness of their racial differences, and the pains of their past that color their present. This kind of dehumanizing action is seen in our ability to talk about the Other in the manner that group G-1 F8 describes, “like they’ve become this other person, they’re meant to be...there, but not spoken to or listened to.”

Taken into context then Group D-2 participants efforts to eschew discussing potential civic engagement and instead arguing about the right kind of ethical action are indicative of two dimensions of their responses to the facilitators call to face these social issues: (1) Desire to move toward the Other and make sensitive efforts to understand his position; and (2) Guilt that the participants did not have to endure the challenges that they observed the Other contending - becoming civically engaged was an option for the participants. To illustrate, F4 described her desire to move toward

the Other as motivated by communicating her understanding of his experience and acting to acknowledge it:

So for me when I do that it is more a feeling I get or a satisfaction I get of being of assistance, mostly when it's one-on-one it has to do with um, having been in a situation like that myself and understanding how meaningful that kindness would mean to somebody else. Sometimes I think of it as paying a debt, paying it forward.

She also described having the option whether she will be “of service” to the Other or not: “To me doing, feeling like um, you must take this act or dire consequences are going to befall you is less of a choice than um foregoing pleasure in order to be of service.” An argument between F4 and other participants (namely F2) ensued, which further insinuated the participants’ anxieties about having the option to either engage or not engage with the Other.

Indeed, feelings of guilt, dread, and fear regarding what is at stake in facing the Other from positions of privilege were laced throughout MCC group interactions. I interpreted traces of this when G-1 participants wondered about the decline in critical action and movements on university campuses and when D-2 group members spoke explicitly about their fears of challenging the status quo. Nevertheless, the participants’ guilt about their positions of privilege were never openly acknowledged, only suggested by the way they postured, evaded discussion, and moved away from one another in rejection. DeRivera (1977) comments that guilt and anxiety happen at the point of commitment, and in the case of MCC participants, I argue that this occurs when they acknowledged having the privilege to move away from civic engagement.

Feeling guilt allowed the participants to preserve their ideal identity – people who care about civic change, rather than recoil from themselves in horror. In reaction to F4's comment that she has the privilege to engage in civic action or not, F2 recoiled from F4, rejecting her position. My interpretation of this behavior suggests that feelings of guilt fueled their ensuing argument and prompted them to reject each other rather than face the anxieties they felt about their own positions of privilege.

What is more, aside from participant F4 from D-2, I did not observe participants openly acknowledge and challenge their own positions of privilege. The participants' movements away from each other and reservations about moving toward others in their community revealed feelings of horror toward the self that were quickly covered over by guilt, dread and fear about the possibility of change. Indeed, moving toward solidarity is much more complicated with a diverse group. At the same time, however, facing the impact of marginalization and privilege is a critical part of the process toward increased civic engagement. These feelings did not preclude the participants from becoming civically active, but in fact, were part of their transformative process. Of course while only one participant explicitly challenged her positions of privilege this in itself, was an act that that moved the group toward facing the Other.

Multiple emotional movements unfolded over the course of the participants' involvement, and it was by following them that I articulated the participants' transformations. The participants did not necessarily move toward solidarity, nor did they necessarily confront and work through positions of privilege and its impact on the social situation. In fact, I observed moments when participants excluded others by

their comments and read reports that some were not even moved by the program processes. The participants' movements toward civic engagement were varied and partial. I did not observe a complete "bridging of differences" as encouraged by literature of intergroup relations. Contrary to representations of transformative dialogue in intergroup relations research, these movements are also a part of the groups' transformative processes. Returning to McMillan & Chavis' (1986) definition of community membership and critiques of the concept of community, we are reminded that community processes may also function to flatten diverse voices (Fendler, 2006; Wiesenfeld, 1998). Certainly, acknowledging and exploring how groups may exclude members or avoid exploration of difficult issues is also critical in any analysis of transformative processes.

Moreover, intergroup relations literature, though contributing to the promise of meeting across difference toward increased civic action, fails to capture how difficult these processes are. Many contributions have specified critical principles and characteristics of transformative dialogue, many of which may be observed in MCC group processes. The methods of these studies, though, only provide the ingredients and the end result of transformative group interactions. Dialogue is consequently addressed in terms of prescriptions: for intergroup dialogue to be transformative for the participants involved, it should include specified variables. As a result, the complexity of group processes are reduced to something unidirectional and oversimplified. Transformative encounters are equated with meetings in which everyone listens in a genuine manner, builds an alliance in a rather short period of time, moves toward each other in engagement, and manages to avoid estrangement.

How, then, considering what's at stake for individuals in these processes, could anyone believe that this could be such an achievable feat?

The MCC participants' tensions with one another and fears about committing to the very action that they signed up for shows us other dimensions of intergroup interactions. Both groups questioned the possibility of change and resisted, to varying degrees, envisioning themselves involved in it. This movement should not be regarded as antithetical to the transformative process, but critical to it. In acknowledging their apprehensions, doubt, and even indifference, MCC participants reflected on what civic engagement meant to them and its relative impact on their lives. Returning to findings from the program evaluation of MCC, we are reminded that even those who dropped out of the program appreciated that it provided a space to talk about what it meant to be a member of a community. This space alone provided participants with the opportunity to face how they understood their social positions and their possibilities within it.

Overlooking the difficult aspects of group interaction may have unfortunate consequences. When we only talk about the promises of dialogue, we implicitly communicate belief that civic discourse brings people to shared understandings, resolves differences, moves people toward each other in unity, and brings about concrete solutions to big issues. These goals, though, may inadvertently suppress divergent perspectives. Group dialogue is inherently thick with different voices and layered with feeling. Transformative processes do not require the flattening of voices, but a space that will provide enough time for people to return to what was said, face it and explore how it impacts their understanding of themselves and their community.

In my reading of the movements of MCC participants' transformation to increased civic engagement, I followed the emotional transformations in their interactions and how this ultimately led some of them to move toward greater civic action. Participants' emotional transformations were neither unidirectional nor continuous, they moved toward and away from the others before them, the imagined Other invoked by the program materials, and the Other within. Each meeting with the Other provoked reactions of accepting or rejecting what they saw before them. It was grappling with these movements that brought participants to re-envision their possibilities and their desire to act.

The goal of this dissertation was to show how people are transformed through their interactions with one another. Dialogue as a mode of action, however, needed to be opened up. Many have argued that it takes a particular kind of dialogue to move people. Too often, though this dialogue has been oversimplified to the products of transformative encounters and categorized elements of these processes. Expanding on contributions from critical pedagogy and intergroup dialogue research in order to interpret transformative processes revealed a much more nuanced movement of talk. This analysis shows that we may study people's interactions to learn how they are transformed emotionally, face divergences in their perspectives, and grapple with their differences.

Dialogue is not simply an exchange. It is a meeting, a way of acting that is propelled by the desire to be seen. It evidences the intersubjectivity of human action – it is more than word exchange, the acquisition of knowledge, or the creating of worlds as Freire professes. It is layered with emotional transformations that move people.

Transformative dialogue is about how people move each other and are molded differently in this process.

When we take the time to sit with a group of people to talk about problems in a community setting, we are moved - we learn and we are emotionally affected. Staying in this space is challenging. It requires us to be willing to face ourselves, our histories, and the contexts we come from. Trusting that increased civic engagement leads to increased action, the goal of civic dialogue is to learn how to participate in processes where we may focus on challenging social issues while holding onto our collective yearning for recognition.

Re-thinking community practice

For community psychology to continue toward transformative praxis, we must study more than what people say about their communities; we must articulate how people act in their community settings and how they are changed in their interactions with others. This kind of praxis requires engaged and critical research and practice.

In keeping with the mission of community psychology, practices that position the community psychologist as an engaged participant in community action may be most effective in getting their interventions to open up spaces for extended dialogue and analysis of transformative processes. These practices are informed by key transformative movements from my analysis of MCC groups: facilitating dialogue that respects the polyvalent perspectives expressed by participants, and finding ways to create space for group participants to meet and face the Other. I term this kind of posture *participant-reflector*, as it emphasizes two critical modes for facilitating

community praxis: engagement and critical reflection. To illustrate how this posture may function in community practice, I elucidate two effective approaches for facilitating group encounters that acknowledge and explore the emotional movements of dialogue as well as encourage critical reflection of the Other: the reflection model and the community-based participatory research method Photovoice.

The reflection model is a group discussion format first used in training settings by David Tremble, PhD at Boston Medical Center (BMC), practiced there and at Cambridge Hospital, teaching affiliates of Harvard Medical School. It has been used in forums in which a diverse group of participants discussed the landscape of multicultural relations in a shared context or organization (Leary, Khan, Brown, Perez-Gauldron & Price, 2008). The reflection model draws on the Milan family therapy technique to follow unspoken currents within a group process, name some of the unarticulated feelings that may be hovering at the edges of group members' sentences, and consider different perspectives for further discussion. One participant in a group is designated as the reflector: she observes the discussion, refraining from speaking until three-quarters into the process. At this point, she shares with the group what she observed, reflects on her interpretations of their personal reactions – what they may have felt and what they may have experienced others feeling. She wonders aloud about what was not said in the discussion: what issues the group overlooked or addressed superficially – possibly to avoid or reject. Following the reflector's comments the floor is reopened for the group to continue the discussion in light of what was said.

The reflector speaks what she views was unsaid and what troubled the flows of conversation. In these ways, they are doing in action what I attempted to do with my analysis: articulate the movements of transformative dialogue. The reflector observes how participants are impacted by what is being said, shares her own reactions to participants' comments, wonders about the impact of what issues may be going unseen – or who's perspectives are going unseen in the group process. Incorporating this moment in a discussion offers a group another layer to reflect on their process. It also brings the emotional movements between them to the fore.

The reflector is different than a group leader or facilitator as it may be anyone in the group. While a facilitator or leader may be present to keep the group on task, the reflector is a participant whose specific role includes sensitive listening and reflecting on the group process at a pre-defined time. The person who holds this position may shift with every discussion, providing everyone an opportunity. To date, in my experience of taking part in discussions using the reflection model all the participants were professionals or students of social work or psychology, thus lending a particular proclivity for the art of listening and reflection. I suggest that while the community psychologist need not be the only person to function as a reflector in group discussions, she may offer ways for the community to structure conversations so that participants are listening for these dimensions of conversation. In this way she may advocate the benefits of reflective processes. The work of the community psychologist would become much more about engaging with community members to

learn about what issues they would like to address and finding adaptive ways to lead them to carving out spaces for dialogue.⁶

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) has quickly emerged as a method of research and evaluation that returns to the ‘interactional’ understandings of the community psychology mission and espouses the goal of transformative community praxis. Participatory research calls us to consider political implications in social research. It is defined as a process of research, education and action that endeavors to further social and political transformation through community engagement (Brydon-Miller, 2001). It draws on Freire’s contributions of transformative praxis, underscoring the significance of promoting community agency by diminishing the distinction between the researcher and the researched, and by encouraging participants to take an active role in addressing issues affecting their community (Gaventa, 1988; Higgins & Metzler, 2001; MacDonald, Stodel, Casimiro, & Weaver, 2006). In effect, the community psychologist is both “educating and being educated by the people” (Freire, 1993). CBPR, then, involves collaboration with community members as its *modus operandi*. Participants take part in all levels of research and evaluation, thus encouraging multiple perspectives in exploring community issues (Brydon-Miller, 2001; Higgins & Metzler, 2001). It is a process that takes time and commitment to working toward change that will not only be experienced by a community, but meaningful to it.

There is a wide scope of participatory research methods, including traditional methods of social scientific inquiry (i.e. community questionnaires and interviews) to

⁶ See Heifetz, 1994 and Daloz Parks, 2005 for further discussion of adaptive leaderships and how one may effectively work toward creative problem-solving in community and organizational settings.

innovative approaches of documenting and articulating community processes such as popular theatre, video productions, and storytelling (Brydon-Miller, 2001). Indeed as discussed earlier, we run the risk of collapsing the richness of civic discourse when we reduce it to outcomes and identifiers. Finding creative ways to narrate or illustrate transformative community process captures more movements of these encounters and serves to further inscribe the civic transformations in which the community psychologist took part (Gaventa, 2001; Stein & Mankowski, 2004).

An exemplary CBPR method of capturing and documenting the processes of community change is Photovoice. Photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1994, 1997; Reason & Bradbury, 2001) uses photography as the medium through which community participants work to illustrate their understandings of their lives in the community and the issues that pervade it. Foster-Fishman, et. al., state, “By sharing their stories about these images, reflecting with others about the broader meanings of the photos they have taken, and displaying these photos and stories for the broader public and policy makers to view, Photovoice participants are provided with a unique opportunity to document and communicate important aspects of their lives” (Foster-Fishman, et. al, 2005, p. 277). Photos become the Other upon which Photovoice participants reflect in order to move toward greater understanding about their community problems. Discussing what participants observe in the photos and the narratives surrounding them provides glimpses into participants’ social realities and insights into related broader community and cultural narratives (Foster-Fishman, et. al 2005).

In an evaluation study seeking to increase resident empowerment and mobilization toward greater civic action in Battle Creek, Michigan, Foster-Fishman

et. al. (2005) implemented Photovoice by asking community leaders already involved in the broader evaluation project to engage other community members to take part in the Photovoice project. The project lasted 5 weeks. Participants were asked to take pictures reflective of their everyday life in the community, what was good about it, and what they would like to see change. After developing the photos, participants met in groups and used to the photos to discuss how it illustrated their lives in the community. Groups then participated in facilitated dialogue about the photos, examining their meaning and implications for neighborhood life and change. The researchers observed that the Photovoice method incited deeper individual reflection and group discourse. Participants did not move toward consensus about community problems, but rather augmented the “multiplicity of realities present in community life” (Foster-Fishman, 2005, p.288). Participants reported developing critical awareness of their community and increased their commitment to community action.

The reflection model and CBPR methods like Photovoice show us how to participate in sustained deep reflection of community problems and how to articulate the processes of these encounters in nuanced ways. Community psychologists may follow the participants’ intergroup movements as they work to understand the Other through analysis of their own photos and by reflecting on the processes of their dialogue. As a participant-reflector, the community psychologist first intervenes by way of asking community members how she can be of service to them. In this way community members have more ownership of the community action on which they eventually embark. The community psychologist facilitates the process of critical reflection by working to create spaces for sustained dialogue, and keeps participants

on the task of facing issues challenging their community. Through dialogue, community psychologists work to assist community participants in challenging the problems in their surroundings and in exploring options for change. Community psychologists acknowledge and accept the profundity of feelings expressed in dialogue as a way to facilitate participants' assessment of their situation and exploration of options within their location.

Community psychologists may intervene in community settings in ways that do not mute the voices of community members, but instead lift them up. The community psychologist, then, becomes one voice among many, attempting to articulate the activity that unfolds before them. As a participant-reflector, community psychologists intervene for the sake of assisting a group reflect on their process, better articulate the interpersonal movements as they unfold, consider alternatives, and help them remain committed to the challenge of facing social injustices and disparities when the going-gets-rough between participants.

The results of community research and evaluation may also articulate the "civic transformations" (Denzin, 2003) of the community process. In this way, the research or evaluation document serves multiple functions: broadening the research audience to include community participants, contributing to the literature of transformative processes, and engaging the broader community to take part in conversations about the possibilities for civic change.

When we remain engaged in community action, the audience of the research becomes more than just the academic community, but the community in which the research was located. Results may be presented in multiple formats (i.e. community

newsletter, theatre presentation, art exhibitions, etc) to communicate an interpretation of transformative community processes and to open up even further dialogue about what the findings mean for community participants and how their work might be continued. Formative evaluation projects in which evaluators continually share their findings with stakeholders and explore with them adaptive ways of shifting their practices is an example of this.

Articulating transformative processes contributes to the literature of how community change unfolds. It validates the agency of community participants and challenges the notion that fragmented communities are helpless victims of social disparities. We acknowledge that community participants do not necessarily move to a unified understanding about civic issues, but grapple with their positions in relation to the issues at hand, their feelings about what it would mean to become more engaged, and their desire to have their understandings about their role in the community and that of others recognized.

Last, when we present a depiction of a group process that acknowledges its partiality and illustrates multiple dimensions of group behavior, we provide openings for the reader to question the process, explore other interpretations of a group's behavior, and wonder about how he would behave in a similar setting. In effect, writing in this manner engages the reader. The goal of research and evaluation then, is not to achieve some sort of generalist knowledge of what transformative dialogue is, but to capture meanings that may be brought into dialogue with other groups and further engage them in similar conversation.

Conclusion

Just as the currents of a stream gently flow in a bounded, general direction, so do the currents of dialogue. It is characterized by momentary slips, shifts, undercurrents, and eddies, none strong enough to deter the continuous, outward movements. When we seize a portion of it we cannot concretely distinguish who directly impacted whom. If we separate out some of these currents – some isolated turns of conversation, we lose its aggregative force. But, if we immerse ourselves within the stream, we may be taken with the currents, lose ourselves by the immensity of its flux, and flow further and further into greater bodies of action and civic engagement. Sadly, the risk of drought, or other external factors lessening the volume of the waterways may lead us to despair, disconnection, or a jaded perspective.

Furthermore, we may follow the currents of civic action from the streambed, running along side the currents or above them protected by a vessel to carry us along. From these perspectives we have a more privileged vision of the many shifts, creations and forms that occur over the course of the journey. We find that there is no necessary or explicit beginning to these movements – people entering into the currents of these conversations arrive carrying their individual histories and perspectives about social issues and civic action; like the merging of other streams and rivers into a stronger, more forceful current. We may approach these streams from innumerable moments along its process. What is of significance, though, is an appreciation for this entry of ours – what are the conditions of this place? From where do many of these currents come? What is the general direction of its flows? What are the characteristics of this stream of conversation? Whose voices make up this flow?

And from our beginnings, our proximity with this current, we may follow its movement; appreciate the swells and waning of the depths and expanses of these currents. Most importantly, with fine articulation of this journey, we witness how the water changes in color and refinement – we witness how this ongoing current changes the participants. People are changed in these streams.

I use this metaphor as a closing image of my study of transformative dialogue in an attempt to further capture the complexities of this process. To date, meeting across difference toward civic engagement has been sugar coated with claims that no matter what, so long as you engage in any sort of group process, people will walk out “transformed” and “engaged.” Maybe the literature in support of this has been an attempt to cover over the difficulties mired in what is for so many already a challenging undertaking. Nonetheless, we know that people have engaged in processes in which they were transformed, where communities have found unique movements out of the bog of social swamps. So what are we afraid of? Talking about social issues and committing to civic change means talking about our own positions in the social situation, how we feel about where we are located, how we have acted (in response or not) to date, how we have been seen and ignored by the people around us. Meeting across difference, in fact, is far from idealized dialogue.

Developments in community psychology show greater emphasis on how community psychologists are engaging local citizens and acknowledging the challenges embedded in this process (Bond & Harrell, 2006; Foster-Fisherman, et al, 2006; Kaufman et. al, 2006). My dissertation study moved a step beyond evaluating the efficacy of a community program’s efforts to motivate civic engagement, to

analyzing how participant interactions led to inciting some participants to further engage in civic action. Crucial to the study was an analysis of how program participants and the facilitator interacted with one another. The theoretical framework emphasized that communication is action and what is more, it is through interaction that individuals become motivated to act for the sake of others.

Participants from groups D-2 & G-1 of MCC worked to understand the experience of the Other in their communities. Those who were changed by the group process were changed in the way they understood themselves in relationship to others. The transformative process followed a unique course for each group as participants struggled with the task of exploring what it means to act for the sake of increased civic engagement. As they discussed social issues, they were challenged to face their own positions of privilege. The transformative process, then, involves learning about what we are doing in our relationships with others, exploring how we are affected by what we learn, and facing how we typically contend with the realities of our social situation. Change happens when we face the Other, take accountability, and change in the way we engage social issues.

My project did not aim to outline a new prescription for transformative processes, but to illustrate the complexities of these processes and how we may articulate them. By paying attention to emotional transformations of how people move toward and away from one another: we may better articulate the action of a group process, call attention to the unsaid dimensions of group dialogue, and creatively work with others. This removes the expectation that a group move toward “unity” for change. Instead, we focus on learning about how we are changed in our

relationships with others, and hopefully, move toward others in greater civic participation.

Articulating transformative processes may inform how we approach the civic endeavor, how we position ourselves in community settings, and how we find ways to engage people in sustained dialogue about the social situation. Rather than recoiling from divisive encounters, we may listen for how people yearn to be recognized, how they move away from others in rejection or fear, and how we may respond in ways that accentuate the issues, name the challenge, move toward one another, and further articulate the challenges of facing each other.

This study may contribute to existing efforts aimed at fostering civic engagement in community settings. If the goal of community psychology remains engaging individuals within community settings, we must engage in the very projects we plan to study. Community psychologists may work as participant-reflectors to articulate transformative processes, participate in civic action, and communicate these understandings for the purpose of continuing the work toward further civic engagement and action.

REFERENCES

- Anfara, V. A., Brown, K. M., & Magione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher, 31*, 28-38.
- Apple, M. W. (2003). Freire and the politics of race education. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 6* (2), 107-118.
- Baillie, L., & Broughton, S., et. al. (2004). Community health, community involvement, and community empowerment: too much to expect? *Journal of Community Psychology, 32* (2), 217-228.
- Bennett, S. E. (1999). The past need not be prologue: Why pessimism about civic education is premature. *Political Science and Politics, 32* (4), 755-757.
- Boden, D. (1986). Talking with doctors: conversation analysis in action. *Contemporary Sociology, 15*, 715-718.
- Bond, M. A., & Harrell, S. P. (2006). Diversity challenges in community research and action: the story of a special issue of AJCP. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 37* (3/4), 157-166.
- Brown, R. (2000). Social identity theory: past achievements, current problems, and future challenges. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30* (6), 745-778.
- Brydon-Miller, M., Tolman, D. L. (1997). Engaging the process of transformation. *Journal of Social Issues, 53* (4), 803-810.
- Brydon-Miller, M. (2001) Education, research, and action: Theory and methods of participatory action research. In D.L Tolman, & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *From subjects to subjectivities: A handbook of interpretive and participatory methods* (pp. 76-89). New York: NYU Press.

- Chavis, D. M., Stucky, P. E., & Wandersman, A. (1983). Returning basic research to the community: A relationship between scientist and citizen. *American Psychologist*, 38, 424-434.
- Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996) *Making sense of qualitative data: qualitative research strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Costa, D. L., & Kahn, M. E. (2003). Civic engagement and community heterogeneity: An economist's perspective. *Perspectives on Politics*, 1, 103-111.
- Cousins, J. B., & Whitmore, E. (1998). Framing participatory evaluation. *Understanding and practicing participatory evaluation. New Directions in Evaluation*, 80, 3-23. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cronick, K. (2002). Community, subjectivity, and intersubjectivity. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30 (4), 529-547.
- Daloz Parks, S. (2005). *Leadership can be taught: A bold approach for a complex world*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Darder, A., Baltodano, M., and Torres, R.D. (Eds.). (2003). *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Deans, T. A. (1998). *Community-based and service-learning college writing initiatives to composition studies and critical theory*. Unpublished dissertation manuscript. University of Massachusetts Amherst. Amherst, MA.
- Denzin, N. (2003). The practices and politics of interpretation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, (2nd ed., pp. 458-498). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- DeRivera, J. (1977). *A structural theory of the emotions*. International Universities Press:
New York, NY.
- Dessel, A., Rogge, M. E., & Garlington, S. B., (2006). Using intergroup dialogue to
promote social justice and change. *Social Work, 51* (4), 303-315.
- Earnest, G. W. (1996). Evaluating community leadership programs. *Journal of
Extension, 34* (1), 1-7.
- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. P., (Eds.). (1996). *Composing ethnography: Alternative forms of
qualitative writing*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Ellis, C., & Bochner, A.P. (2003). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity:
researcher as subject. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and
interpreting qualitative materials* (2nd ed., pp. 458-498). Thousand Oaks, CA:
Sage.
- Erikson, F. (2004). *Talk and social theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fendler, L. (2006). Others and the problem of community. *Curriculum Inquiry, 36* (3),
303-326.
- Fine, M. (1997). Witnessing whiteness. In M. Fine, L. Weis, L. Powell, L. Mun Wong
(Eds.), *Off White: Readings on race, power, and society* (pp. 245-256). New
York: Routledge.
- Finley, L., & Gough, B. (2003). *Reflexivity: A practical guide for researchers in health
and social sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.

- Foster-Fishman, P., Nowell, B., Deacon, Z., Nievar, M. A., & McCann, P. (2005). Using methods that matter: The impact of reflection, dialogue, and voice. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 36* (3/4), 275-291.
- Fox, D. R. (1985). *Personal autonomy, psychological sense of community, and political ideology*. Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles.
- Freire, P. (1993) *The pedagogy of the oppressed*. (2nd ed.). New York: Continuum.
- Fyson, S. J., (1999). Developing and applying concepts about community: Reflections from the field. *Journal of Community Psychology, 27*, 347-365.
- Gaventa, J. (1988). Participatory research in North America. *Convergence, 21* (2/3), 19-29.
- Gaventa, J., & Cornwall, A. (2001). Power and knowledge. In P. Reason & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry & practice* (pp. 70-80). London, England: Sage.
- Giroux, H. A. (1993). Resisting difference: Cultural studies and the discourse of critical pedagogy. In L. Grossberg, C. Nelson, & P. Treichler (Eds.), *Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. A. (2003). Critical theory and educational practice. In A. Darder, M. Baltodano, & R. R. Torres (Eds.), *The Critical Pedagogy Reader* (pp.27-56). New York: Routledge.
- Glass, R. D. (2001). On Paulo Freire's philosophy of praxis and the foundations of liberation education. *Educational Researcher, 30* (2). 15-25.

- Goodwin, C., & Heritage, J. (1990). Conversation Analysis. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 19, 283-307.
- Greene, J. (2003). Understanding social programs through evaluation. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, (2nd ed., (pp. 590-618). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Greene, J., Hopson, R., & Millet, R. (2004). Evaluation as democratizing practice. In M. Braverman, N. Constantine, & J.K. Slater, (Eds.), *Putting Evaluation to Work For Foundations and Grantees*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hall, S. (1996). New Ethnicities. In D. Morley & K-H Chen (Eds.), *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge.
- Hall, S. (Ed.). (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1983). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Hegel, G. W. F. (1977). *Phenomenology of spirit*. Trans. A.V. Miller. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time*. Trans. J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Heifetz, R. A. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Heritage, J., & Atkinson, J. M. (1984). Introduction. In J. Heritage, & J.M. Atkinson (Eds.), *Structures of Social Actions: Studies in Conversation Analysis*. CUP.

- Higgins, D. L., & Metzler, M. (2001). Implementing community-based participatory research centers in diverse settings. *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, 78 (3), 488-494.
- hooks, b., (1990). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics*. New York: South End Press.
- hooks, b., (1994). *Outlaw culture: Resisting representations*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b., (1995). *Killing rage*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- hooks, b., (2003). *Teaching community*. New York: Routledge.
- Hopson, R. (1999). Minority issues in evaluation revisited: Re-conceptualizing and creating opportunities for institutional change. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 20 (3), 445-451.
- Hopson, R. (2001). Global and local conversations on culture, diversity and social justice in evaluation: Issues to consider in a 9/11 era. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 22 (3), 375-380.
- Hopson R. K., Peterson, J. A. & Lucas, K. J. (2001). Tales from the hood': Informing our understanding of health, disease and public policy through ethnographic interventions in the inner city. *Addiction Research and Theory*, 9, 339-363.
- Hosking, D-M., & Morley, I. E. (2004). Social constructionism in community and applied social psychology. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*. 14, 318-331.
- Houle, K., & Roberts, R. (2000). *Toward competent communities: Best practices for producing community-wide study circles*. Lexington, KY: Topsfield Foundation, Inc./Study Circles Resource Center.

- Kaufman, J. S., Crusto, C. A., Quan, M. Ross, E., Friedman, S. R., O'Rielly, K., Call, S. (2006). Utilizing program evaluation as a strategy to promote community change: Evaluation of a comprehensive, community-based, family violence initiative. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 38* (3/4), 191-200.
- Leary, K., Brown, T., Gualdrón, L., Khan, S., Price, C. (2008). *Combing through the unknown: Engaging the unsaid regarding racial and cultural difference in professional and clinical encounters*. Paper presented at the APA Division 39 conference, New York, NY.
- MacDonald, C.J., Stodel, E.J., Casimiro, L., Weaver, L. (2006). Using community-based participatory research for an online dementia care program. *The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation, 21* (2), 81-104.
- McCoy, M. L., & Scully, P. L. (2002). Deliberative dialogue to expand civic engagement: What kind of talk does democracy need? *National Civic Review, 91* (2), 117-135.
- McIntosh, P. (1998). White Privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack. In M. Goldrick (Ed.), *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture, and gender in clinical practice* (pp. 147-152). New York: Guilford Press.
- McLaren, P., & Leonard, P. (1993). *Paulo Freire: A critical encounter*. London: Routledge.
- McMillan, D. W., & Chavis, D.M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology, 14*, 6-22.
- McMillan, D.W., (1998) Sense of Community. *Journal of Community Psychology, 24*, 315-325.

- Meyerhoff, B. & Ruby, J. (1982). Introduction. In Ruby, J. (Ed.) *A crack in the mirror: Reflexive perspectives in Anthropology* (pp. 1-35). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Miller, J. & Donner, S. (2000) More than just talk: The use of racial dialogues to combat racism. *Social Work with Groups*, 23 (1), 31-53.
- Moisio, O-P. (2007) What it means to be a stranger to oneself. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 10, 1-17.
- Murrell, S. A. (1973). *Community psychology and social systems: A conceptual framework and intervention guide*. New York: Behavioral Publications.
- Nagda, B. A. (2006). Breaking barriers, crossing borders, building bridges: Communication process in intergroup dialogues. *Journal of Social Issues*, 62 (3), 553-576.
- Nagda, B. A., Kim, C., & Truelove, Y. (2004). Learning about difference, learning with others, learning to transgress. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60 (1) 195-214.
- Nagda, B. A., & Zuniga, X. (2003). Fostering meaningful racial engagement through intergroup dialogues. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 6 (1), 111-128.
- Nelson, G., & Prilleltensky, I. (Eds). (2005). *Community psychology: In pursuit of liberation and well-being*. London: Palgrave/MacMillan.
- Obama, B. (2008, March 18). *A more perfect union*. Speech presented at Constitution hall Philadelphia, PA. Retrieved March 21, 2008, from <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/hisownwords>.

- Obst, P., Smith, S.G., & Zinkiewicz, L. (2001). An exploration of sense of community, part 3: Dimensions and predictors of psychology sense of community. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30*, 119-133.
- O'Neill, J. (Ed.). (1996). *Hegel's dialectic of desire and recognition: Texts and commentary*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Packer, M. J. (1985). Hermeneutic inquiry in the study of human conduct. *American Psychologist, 40* (10) 1081-1093.
- Packer, M. J. (1985a). The structure of moral action: A hermeneutic study of moral conflicts. In D. Kuhn (Ed.). *Contributions to Human Development, vol. 13*. New York: Karger.
- Packer, M. J. (2007). Interpretive Psychology. In Anne Reid y Miguel Angel Aguilar (Ed.) *Tratado de Psicología Social*. Mexico: Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana Iztapalapa.
- Packer, M. J. & Addison, R. B. (Eds.). (1989). *Entering the circle: Hermeneutic Investigation in Psychology* (pp. 95-117). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Packer, M. J., & Addison, R. B. (1989a). Tracing the hermeneutic circle: Articulating an ontical study of moral conflicts. In M. J. Packer & R. B. Addison (Eds.), *Entering the circle: Hermeneutic Investigation in Psychology* (pp. 95-117). Albany: State University of New York.
- Peters, J. D. (1999). *Speaking into the air: A history of the idea of communication*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Pilger, J. (2002). *The new rules of the world*. London: Verso.

- Potter, A. (2000). *Deeper than debt: Economic globalization and the poor*. London: Latin American Bureau.
- Prilleltensky, I. (2003). Understanding and overcoming oppression: Towards psychopolitical validity. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 31*, 195-202.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Nelson, G. (1997). Community psychology: Reclaiming social justice. In D. Fox & I. Prilleltensky (Eds.), *Critical psychology: An introduction* (pp. 166-183). London: Sage Publications.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Nelson, G. (2002). *Doing Psychology Critically: Making a Difference in Diverse Settings*. New York: Palgrave/Macmillan.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Prilleltensky, O. (2006). *Promoting well-being: Linking personal, organizational, and community change*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Putnam, R. D. (2007). E pluribus unum: Diversity and community in the twenty-first century the 2006 Johan Skytte prize lecture. *Scandinavian Political Studies, 30* (2), 2007. 137-165.
- Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory of community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 15* (2). 121-148.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2001). *Handbook of action research*. London, England: Sage.
- Sarason, S. (1974). *The psychological sense of community*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Schwartz, D. (1997). *Who cares?: Rediscovering community*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Schweder, R. (1991). Cultural Psychology: What is it? In R. Shweder (Ed.), *Thinking through cultures: Expeditions in cultural psychology*. Cambridge: Harvard University press.
- Selvin, M. (2000, August 27). Robert Putnam, join the club: Preaching the virtues of civic life. *Los Angeles Times*.
- SenGupta, S., Hopson, R., & Thompson-Robinson, M. (2004). Cultural competence in evaluation: An overview. In M. Thompson-Robinson, R. Hopson, & S. SenGupta, (Eds.), *In search of cultural competence in evaluation: Toward principles and practices. New Directions for Evaluation* (p. 5-18). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Shoem, D., & Hurtado, S. (Eds.). (2001). *Intergroup dialogue: deliberative democracy in school, college, community, and workplace*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Silverman, D. (2003). Analyzing talk and text. In K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (2nd ed., pp. 340-362). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publications.
- Slocum, R., Wichart, L., Rochleau, D., & Thomas-Slayter, B. (1995). *Power, process and participation – tools for change*. London: IT publications.
- Spradley, J. P. (1970). *You owe yourself a drunk: An ethnography of urban nomads*. Boston: Little, Brown.

- Stein, C. H., & Mankowski, E. S. (2004). Asking, witnessing, interpreting, knowing: Conducting qualitative research in community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 33* (1/2), 21-35.
- Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (2001). *Improving intergroup relationships*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stewart, E. (2000). Thinking through others: Qualitative research and community psychology. In D. Rappaport & E. Seidman (Eds.), *Handbook of community psychology*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Tolbert, C. M., Lyson, T. A., & Irwin, M. D., (1998). Local capitalism, civic engagement, and socioeconomic well-being. *Social Forces, 77* (2), 401-428.
- Van Uchelen, C. (2000) Individualism, Collectivism, and Community Psychology. In D. Rappaport & E. Seidman (Eds), *Handbook of community psychology*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Wah, L. M. (Director). (1994). *The color of fear*. [Motion Picture]. USA: Stirfry Productions.
- Wang, C. C., & Burris, M. (1994). Empowerment through photo novella: Portraits of participation. *Health Education Quarterly, 21*, 171-186.
- Wang, C. C., & Burris, M. (1997). Photovoice: concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education and Behavior, 24*, 369-387.
- Weiner, E. J. (2003). Secretary Paulo Freire and the democratization of power: toward a theory of transformative leadership. *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 35* (1), 89-106.

- Weinstein, R. S. (2006). Reaching higher in community psychology: Social problems, social settings, and social change. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 37 (1/2). 9-20.
- Wiesenfeld, E. (1998). The concept of “we”: A community social psychology myth? *Journal of Community Psychology*, 24 (4), 337-346.
- Wolff, T. (ed.). (2000). Applied community psychology: On the road to social change. In J. Rappaport & E. Seidman (Eds.), *Handbook of community psychology* (pp. 771-8). New York: Kluwer/Plenum.
- Zeldin, S. (2004). Preventing Youth Violence Through the Promotion of Community Engagement and Membership. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 32, 623-641.
- Zinberg, N., Boris, H. N., & Boris, M. (1976). *Teaching Social Change*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MCC GROUP INVENTORY

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

APPENDIX C: PILOT ANALYSIS

APPENDIX D: GROUP G-1 MEETING TRANSCRIPTS

APPENDIX E: GROUP D-2 MEETING SUMMARIES

APPENDIX A: MEETINGS FOR CIVIC CHANGE GROUP INVENTORY

Inventory of Recordings of MCC Meetings and Testimonials								
<i>Group 1-1 and 1-2</i>	<i>Group A</i>	<i>Group B</i>	<i>Group C-2</i>	<i>Group D-2</i>	<i>Group E-1</i>	<i>Group F-1, F-2</i>	<i>Group G-1</i>	<i>Cont. Conversations</i>
8/6/03 Personal interview	10/8/03 (#2) + testimonials (2B)	12/8/03 Commitments(#7)	2/2/04 (Partial) Hope (#1)	5/6/04 Environment Pt. I (#4)	11/4/04 True Wealth (#6)	2/22/05 Economic Fairness (#5)	5/11/05 Reception (#1)	11/12/03 Pilot Round
8/13/03 Round 1A (#7)	10/22/03 (#4)	5/20/04 Testimonials interviews + pilot round interviewee	2/9/04 Race & Div. (#2)	5/6/04 Environ. Pt. II	11/29/04 Response	3/1/05 True Wealth (#6)	5/18/05 Environment (#2)	1/8/04 Pilot/Round #1
	10/29/03 Materialism (#5)	11/24/03 Testimonials	3/1/04 [No title]	5/10/04 Materialism (#5)	12/10/04 Testimonial	3/15/05 Commitments Pt. I (#7)	5/25/05 Diversity/Inclusion (#3)	3/18/04 Round A
	11/5/03 Challenge/support (#6)	11/14&23/03 Testimonials	3/8/04 [No title]	5/17/04 Challenge/Support (#6)		3/15/05 Commitments Pt.II (#7)	5/31/05 Economic Fairness (#4)	4/22/04 Pilot, Round 1A&B
	11/19/03 Commitments (#7)		3/17/04 Comb.meeting C-1& C-2	5/24/04 Commitments (#7)		3/3/05 Testimonial	6/8/05 True Wealth (#5)	4/22/04 Pilot, Round 1- 1, 1-2
	11/12/03 testimonial					3/30/05 6B testimonial	6/15/05 Resources (#6)	11/9/04 Pilot Rd, 1=1,2
	11/12-13/03 Testimonials					3/11/05 testimonial	6/15/05 Resources Pt. II	7/15/04 Pilot, 1-1,2
	6/21/04 Testimonial						6/20/05 Response/Commitmt. Pt. I (#7)	4/26/05 Presbyterian Group
							6/20/05 Response/Commitmt. Pt. II (#7)	12/1/04 Round A

APPENDIX B: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

General Format:

Line #: Speaker name: Utterances

1	FAC: If I'm hearing you right,
2	partly what concerns you is our
3	way of connecting with people
4	or (.) I'm not sure if I'm hearing
5	you right. <i>FAC re-iterates MI's comments.</i>

Speaker name	The speakers are identified by MCC round identification, gender (M)/(F), and a number to distinguish him or her from the rest of the group members. "FAC" identifies the facilitator.
Metatranscription	(inaudible) inaudible reading (cow) tentative reading (cow) combination of inaudible and tentative reading (...) material omitted
Repetition of utterance	/X/ e.g. Go Away!/X/X/
Transcriber's comments	{Tape recorder apparently shut off}
Transcriber's summary	<i>FAC re-iterates MI's comments</i> , "is that correct?" Quotations refer to transcribed utterances followed by summary.
No gap between utterances (latched)	=
Pause	(3) pause of 3 seconds (.) very slight pause
Overlapping utterances	[speaker: utterance]
Self-interruption	- at point of interruption
Intonation	, marks low rise ? marks high rise (questions) . marks low fall (end of utterance) ! marks exclamation CAPITALS marks increase volume <u>underline</u> marks stress, emphasis :: marks drawn out syllable
Other voice qualities	[LF] laugh [WH] whisper [CR] cry [WM] whimper [WN] whine [GR] grunt
Audible breathing	'h marks in-breath h marks out-breath (h) marks laughter within a word

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

APPENDIX C: PILOT ANALYSIS

I provide a pilot analysis below to illustrate my analytic process:

I selected an excerpt of minutes 28-40 of an 80-minute recording of round G-1, meeting #4 of MCC. The meeting theme is “economic fairness.” The transcript includes two extended comments made by program participants, made in response to the flow of conversation. This portion of the conversation involved extended reflection on one of the program prompts – a selection of an article about the experiences of Robert Saunderstrom, a Peace Corps worker in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The author narrates an instance where the indigenous people, with whom he is residing, offer hospitality to two homeless American men after viewing an image of them in an American newspaper. The author highlights the contrasting cultural perspectives between Americans and the indigenous people of the village in PNG. He wonders why Americans are more reluctant to assist those of lower economic means, when the village residents unquestionably offered their time and space to an unknown other.

Prior to the transcribed selection (for review of the transcription, see end of Appendix C), the group reflects upon the article, in response to the direction of the facilitator. The participants’ comments and stories follow a congruous movement: each comment builds upon another, affirming and elaborating upon the previous statement. The following selection is an articulation of the first instance during the meeting where the flow of the conversation shifts. I have provided a paraphrased continuation of the recording in parentheses to provide the reader with an image of the direction of the conversation.

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

Pilot Analysis:

At the beginning of the selection, M2 agrees with the flow of conversation. His first utterance is “yeah” (line 6) in response to the facilitator’s clarification of his earlier comments. M2 elaborates that he would like to assist others without a hidden agenda. “Yeah () don’t have any kind of stupid, hidden agenda, we just want to help them out () doesn’t really care about them anymore...” (lines 6-9). Another participant, F3 moves in agreement to his comment, citing the prevalence of social programs that are offered for the purposes of assisting others: “It’s not, you know, let’s get a couple people together and let’s go feed the homeless. Let’s create a program first and then we can do it” (lines 14-17). M2 echoes her statement in lines 19-20, “Let’s first get us jobs and then we can help them.” F3 laughs and M2 responds with a conclusive “yeah.” These turns of dialogue follow earlier comments made by group participants who are advocating the position of the PNG culture, which questions why North Americans are hesitant to provide assistance to the homeless. M1’s extended comment, however, (lines 32-70) shifts the current. Through a number of turns of speech he questions the efficacy of directly responding to the economic plight of others.

M1 begins his comment by referring to outside material related to their discussion (lines 32-37). “I was reading um, reading something, it was talking about how um, yeah-you talk about programs, we have all these programs, all this bureaucracy, you know, to help people who are in low-income housing (.) and you know, and all this other stuff.” He reiterates the critique of the prevalence of “programs” directed at assisting disadvantaged others. He affirms the groups’ position, seemingly moving in flow with the

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

direction of the conversation. In what follows however, he shifts his position in 3 turns: (1) he proposes an alternative method of assisting others, “in reality if you were to get rid of all those programs and take all the money that went for paying for those benefits, and then just issue stipends, you know, to people who are at, below a certain income level and graduate it” (lines 38-43); (2) he indicates that there is little economic incentive for programs to assist the disadvantaged *too much*, “There’s no incentive to even go beyond a certain point to help yourself out...” (lines 46-51); (3) he claims that despite the efforts made by “programs,” they may “exacerbate the problem” (lines 51- 54). M1’s proposal made in lines 38-43 is in the service of ensuring the incentive of assisting others and preventing an exacerbation of the “problem.” Last, he questions one’s desire to offer immediate assistance to the disadvantaged, “So, a lot of times, you know, we tend to be short sighted and look for a quickie-solution and don’t look at the long term consequences of our actions” (lines 67-70).

Where do these considerations of “incentives” materialize? In lines 6-7 7BM2 critiqued the “hidden agenda” of social programs in chorus with the rest of the group. He also supported F3’s wonderings of non-formal collaborations to assist others and critique of establishing “programs” to assist others. Although M1 seemingly agreed with the flow of conversation, it is evident that his critique of “programs” follows a diverging current.

Prior to his extended comment, he and other participants were reflecting on their desires to intervene directly with economic issues. They claimed that Americans turn to convoluted systems of social programs to assist others so that they may personally benefit from the intervention. M1, however, argues two points (1) that it is not economically beneficial for Americans to assist the disadvantaged *too much*, and (2) that we should not

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

intervene immediately, but take the convoluted approach to prevent ourselves from exacerbating the problems of the disadvantaged. In effect, he supports the very argument that the group seems to be contesting. His relates to program participants, however, in a manner that recognizes and follows along in a similar flow to the conversation. He affirms their comments through reiteration, and “yeah’s.” While his opening statements acknowledge their position, he offers other perspectives by way of outside material. The reading, which he cites, provides substantiation for his argument, “It was just saying how um, how a lot of programs we think are trying to help people in the end, almost, exacerbate the problem” (lines 51-54). He closes his argument with a new consideration to be heeded by the group, “we tend to be short-sighted...and don’t look at the long-term consequences” (lines 68-70).

M1’s statements shift the flow of conversation, opening up other diverging perspectives and challenge earlier movements. Interestingly, his comments are offered as contributing reflections upon effective and sensitive ways to assist others. His comment is not followed by disagreement or challenges by others. Rather, F3 follows M1 with further quandaries about *how* one may effectively assist another.

Unlike M1, F3’s comments are substantiated not via outside readings, but her narrative of interacting with the disadvantaged. She does not respond directly to M1, but to the group, again, seemingly building upon the flow of conversation and positioning herself as caring about their situation. “There are like a lot of problems, with like, (.) things to set up to help, you know, disadvantaged people. I don’t want to sound like I’m against the homeless or the po-oor, or that I don’t care about them. It’s just that you have to look at like their backgrounds” (lines 72-78). She agrees with the group, and M1 in particular –

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

there are “problems” with how we help the disadvantaged. She introduces a new consideration, which she premises with an inoculation of her character – she is not *against the homeless*, but nevertheless, she suggests that the background of a given disadvantaged person may inform the extent of “problems” one would encounter in assisting them. She claims that the disadvantaged are *dis*-advantaged for a reason: they have made choices that have led them to their present state and flaws exist in the social structure aimed to assist them. “It’s not like they were just magically dropped on the street homeless with out anything. They had to have made choices or things have had happened to them to get there. And it’s like, I don’t know, things in place to like help them, like and everything, it is flawed” (lines 79-85).

Through F3’s manner of inquiring, she aligns herself with M1’s wariness of civic efforts aimed at assisting the economically disadvantaged. In lines 79-81, “It’s not like they were just magically dropped on the street homeless without anything,” she gently challenges the groups’ comments of simply considering how to assist the disadvantaged and claims that we must consider why people become ‘disadvantaged’ in the first place. She argues that we must consider the groups most responsive to economic assistance and those most likely to abuse them. “You can’t just look at these people and lump them all together. It’s like, there are the ones who really do need help, but then there are the ones who take the help when they don’t really need it” (lines 111-115).

Following her suggestion that the group consider the “backgrounds” of the disadvantaged prior to assisting them, she provides a narrative of her encounters with a disadvantaged woman representative of the group who “take the help when they don’t really need it.” Through her narrative (lines 85-110), F3 details her position as a bagger at

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

a grocery store who witnessed a woman with five children and on food stamps, purchase expensive food, own an expensive phone, and later purchase an expensive coffee drink with the money she did have. Throughout the narrative, F3 compares herself to the woman as someone who worked hard, “I started as a bagger and went up to assistant manager” (lines 86-88); could not afford the food the woman bought, “but everything she bought would buy was the most expensive things, things that I couldn’t eat, ‘cause you know, I paid with my own money” (lines 92-95), and was fortunate to buy expensive coffee drinks. F3 concludes the comparison with an unfinished question: “Now why can’t she? She needs government aid to feed her kids the most expensive food?” (106-108). F3’s narrative is a comparison between her hardworking background and a woman who “can work the system” (lines 108-109).

F3 narrates the contrast between she and the woman with images of hierarchal positions, and in doing so, illustrates movements along the “recognition” and “being” axes of DeRivera’s (1977) emotional transformations. F3 “went *up*” from bagger to assistant manager, F3 found herself *behind* the woman “who can work the system” (line 103). F3’s questions following her narrative also inquire into the woman’s failure to recognize F3, despite F3’s stated efforts to move up the social ladder via a culturally-recognized behavior: a hard work ethic. Also, F3 began the narrative stating, “And there was this one woman, I could not stand her” (lines 89-90). F3’s comment is a refusal to acknowledge the *being* of the woman. F3’s question, “Now why can’t she?” refers to questions beyond *why can’t she work?* or *why is she exploiting the system?*, it also includes *why must I recognize this disadvantaged other?*

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

F3 comments do not remain with her quandaries, however. She returns to her original argument that one must consider the “backgrounds” of the disadvantaged. She explains that the disadvantaged may be classified, with regards to geographical location and their respective needs. “You can kinda group it up. ‘Cause people in the city, who are like homeless and poor are different that the ones who are in like the more suburban areas, more rural areas, kinda like where I was from...They can be like, they each have different needs. And you can’t create, like programs to help just one overall” (lines 117-122). At the close of her comments, F3 offers a system for appropriately recognizing the needs of the disadvantaged and responding accordingly. She returns to the concerns voiced by M1: one should not take a short-sighted approach when assisting the disadvantaged.

The comments made by M1 and F3 not only depart from the flow of conversation, they involve conservative perspectives about social services in America – a marginal perspective within most MCC groups. Ever so gently, they challenge the liberal ponderings gently trickling through the group conversation. Both speakers speak affirmatively, professing a desire to address the difficulties of poverty. Both speakers use metaphors of “dropping,” and ascending or descending along a socio-economic hierarchy. M1 cautions that efforts of various social programs have dropped off with respect to incentives, “Um, ‘cause one of the big problems is like, lot of programs like that, is you hit a point and just drop off” (lines 43-45). He encourages an alternative route to assisting others by issuing stipends to those “below a certain income level and graduat[ing] it” (lines 42-43). F3 claims that the fates of the disadvantaged are not necessarily held in her hands, “It’s not like they were just magically dropped on the street

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

homeless without anything” (lines 79-81). She notes that the disadvantaged make choices that have led them to their present difficulties. In fact, while she has worked diligently to ascend the economic ladder (lines 86-88), some disadvantaged have cheated their way up the hierarchy, positioning themselves before her (line 103). Consequently, F3 has observed different groups of the disadvantaged and she states that the disadvantaged may be categorized – according to those more deserving of assistance, and those suspect of abusing the system.

These two shifts in conversation continue to flow toward the aim of assisting others, but they are tinged with resistant remarks. In lines 123-135, the facilitator enters the conversation in an attempt to reconnect with the previous movement of conversation. The discourse shifts from an everyday two-turn discourse to a three-turn classroom discourse as he encourages all of the group members to elaborate on the supposed categories of “disadvantaged” people suggested by F3. Following a number of comments by group participants, he summarizes in an evaluative manner, suggesting another method for considering how to intervene with economic issues.

I selected this portion of the dialogue because it involved a sharp shift in the flow of discussion between program participants. The shift involves one participant speaking up in a manner that builds upon earlier statements made in the conversation. His comments, however, shift the direction of the conversation focus – he problematizes earlier statements by encouraging the group not to be “short-sighted” in assisting others. The comment that follows his own, is similar in direction – F3 considers the motivations of the disadvantaged and provides considerations for helping those most deserving of assistance.

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

I was not aware of which participants had completed the survey during my listening, transcribing or analyzing the data. I am certain, however, that the selection includes the comments of participants who indicated that the program process “renewed” and “energized” their commitment to participating in civic action (according to survey data). As the conversation continues, M1 makes several extended comments, which pick up in resistant momentum. Along the way participants agree with him and ask for further elaboration. In a similar manner to his extended comment in the above excerpt, he agrees with the participants and offers a diverging perspective. Approximately twenty minutes following his first arguments, the group challenges his argument. Numerous participants openly disagree and begin to question him.

How does my analysis of this selection inform my research study? It is evident already that the process toward transformative action is not a serene uncomplicated flow of discussion. I am struck by how the group members responded to participants who challenge their perspectives. For the most part, they accept the diverging viewpoints of others, seeking further elaboration and illustrative examples. When the group members do disagree with one another, it is not a forceful clashing, but a shifting in currents. Group members move toward or away from the statements of others, seeking converging flows of conversation. The evidence of an accepting posture throughout the meeting recording suggests that in spite of divergences in perspective, the participants move toward each other, validating each others’ utterances and acknowledging the *being* of each other (DeRivera, 1977, p. 63). Thus, it is fair to presume so early in my analysis, that M1 and F3 are changed through their interactions with group members despite their differing viewpoints.

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

My preliminary analysis of the excerpt includes an evolving elaboration of what is occurring in the program discourse. Thus far, I have described what was said in the excerpt, articulated my understanding of what the speakers are doing with their speech, and commented upon how their actions have informed the movement of the conversation. In further analysis, I will continue attend to the movements of interaction between program participants to further articulate the currents of transformative action.

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

1
2 FAC: If I'm hearing you right, partly
3 what concerns you is our way of
4 connecting with pee-ople that is
5 either kind of bureaucratic, or (.) I'm
6 not sure if I'm hearing you right.
7
8 M1: Yeah, () don't have any kind of
9 stupid, hidden agenda, we just want
10 to help them out () doesn't really
11 care about them anymore, they lost
12 their jobs, who cares, they had their
13 chance, they lost it.
14
15 F3: There's always a program you
16 know, if you ever want to get
17 something done you have to create a
18 program. It's not, you know, let's get
19 a couple people together and let's go
20 feed the homeless. Let's create a
21 program first and then we can do it.
22
23 M1: Let's first get us jobs and then
24 we can help them.
25
26 F3: Yeah [LF]
27
28 M1: that's right
29
30 F4: Pretty much so and then you
31 have the element of if the programs
32 are established then you have to meet
33 (.) 8,000 criteria in order to even
34 benefit from that
35 program...interesting.
36
37 M2: I was reading um, reading
38 something, it was talking about how
39 um, yeah – you talk about programs,
40 we have all these programs, all this
41 bureaucracy, you know, to help
42 people who are in low-income
43 housing (.) and you know, and all
44 this other stuff, and that um, in
45 reality, if you were to get rid of all

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

46 those programs and take all the
47 money that went for paying for those
48 benefits, and then just issue stipends,
49 you know, (.) to people who are at,
50 below a certain income level and
51 graduate it. Um, 'cause one of the
52 big problems is like, lot of programs
53 like that, is you hit a point a just drop
54 off. There's no incentive to even go
55 beyond a certain point to help
56 yourself out because if you go
57 beyond, you know, \$10,000 or
58 whatever, you lose \$3000 of
59 benefits, so basically that \$1 more
60 drops you down \$3000. But, besides
61 from that, It was just saying how um,
62 (.) how a lot of programs we think
63 are trying to help people in the end,
64 almost, (.) exacerbate the problem.
65 One the things I was talking about is
66 the housing projects and stuff like
67 that. Public housing started in 1950's
68 and '60's. When they constructed
69 those houses, the-the low-income
70 housing buildings, they actually
71 destroyed more housing areas than
72 they created. So it actually caused
73 um. Well, the people actually lucky
74 enough to get into those housing
75 developments, were better off.
76 People who you were then, didn't
77 have housing were much worse off
78 because they were having to fit fewer
79 people, more people, into fewer
80 spaces. So, a lot of times, you know,
81 we tend to be short sighted and look
82 for a quickie-solution and don't look
83 at the long term consequences of our
84 actions.
85
86 F5: //I think that| uh, go ahead (2)
87 There are like a lot of problems, with
88 like, (.) the things set up to help, you
89 know, disadvantaged people. I don't
90 want to sound like I'm against the

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

91 homeless or the po--oor, or that I
92 don't care about them. It's just that
93 you have to look at like their
94 backgrounds. It's not like they were
95 just magically dropped on the street
96 homeless without anything. They
97 had to have made choices or things
98 had to have had happened to them to
99 get there. And it's like, I don't know,
100 things in place to like help them, like
101 assistance and everything, it is
102 flawed. 'Cause I used to work at a
103 grocery store for three years. I
104 started out as a bagger and went up
105 to assistant manager. And you would
106 see like the same customers all the
107 time. And there was this one woman,
108 I could not stand her. She had like
109 five children and she was on food
110 stamps, okay. But everything she
111 would buy was the most expensive
112 things, things that I couldn't eat,
113 'cause you know, I paid with my
114 own money. She would always be
115 standing there on like her cell phone,
116 on that Razr phone, the real thin, the
117 real expensive one. And then, I
118 would after work, you know 'cause
119 someone would you know, give me a
120 five dollar tip or something, I'd go to
121 Barnes & Nobles with my friend and
122 we'd be at Starbucks and we'd be
123 behind her in line, (.) you know, and
124 she'd be, you know, cash, she could
125 use her cash for her cell phone, and,
126 you know, for \$3 cup of coffee. Now
127 why can't she, she needs government
128 aid to feed her kids the most
129 expensive food? It's like they (.) can
130 work the system, and that's kinda
131 like, I don't know. It's one of those
132 things, you know, you can't just look
133 at these people and lump them all
134 together. It's like, there are the ones
135 who really do need help, but then

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

136 there are the ones who take the help
137 when they don't really need it. I
138 think with like, when you look at the
139 disadvantaged, the lower class, the
140 poor people. You can kinda group it
141 up. 'Cause people in the city, who
142 are like homeless and poor are
143 different than the ones who are in
144 like the more suburban areas, more
145 rural areas, kinda like where I was
146 from. Who are different from the
147 people who are in the out there,
148 middle of no where, like West
149 Virginia areas. They're not all, like
150 one, the same group. They can be
151 like, they each have different needs.
152 And you try and create like,
153 programs to help just one overall.

154
155 FAC: Well, let's go with something
156 like what F5's saying. We're not
157 experts here, but let's try and think
158 about what are some of the things
159 that we can imagine that are some of
160 the causes that gets someone to be in
161 a homeless situation.

162
163 *M2: Talks about homeless people*
164 *who suffer from mental health issues,*
165 *drug addicts and alcoholics,*
166 *runaways "for various reasons"*

167
168 *FAC: Encourages others to*
169 *participate.*

170
171 *F4: Suggests people who are living*
172 *"paycheck to paycheck" may*
173 *become homeless at any time*
174 *because they do not have savings.*

175
176 *F6: Agrees with F4.*

177
178 *FAC: Suggests women suffering*
179 *from domestic abuse.*

180

Group G-1, Meeting #4: Economic Fairness.

181 F2: *Elaborates on FAC's point,*
182 *describes the circumstances of these*
183 *women. Mentions the funding cuts*
184 *for women's shelters.*
185
186 FAC: *Suggests targeting particular*
187 *issues and groups to support, i.e.*
188 *victims of domestic violence, mental*
189 *health issues, etc.*

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

1 **APPENDIX D: GROUP G-1 MEETING TRANSCRIPTS**

- 2 FAC: *Introduces two poems re: economic disparities and a memoir. Refers to*
3 *importance of looking at all three. Following this, group will spend time “trying*
4 *to live in” to this situation: “What’s it like living on a minimum budget.*
5 *Followed by meeting a change maker (.). Again, we’re not trying to imitate her,*
6 *but think about some possibilities for us.” The first poem by Jim Daniels refers to*
7 *experience of being in a minimum wage job. “Night Janitor, McMan Oil.” Next,*
8 *“first hand story from a peace core worker, a guy named Robert Sanderstrom”*
9 *from the newspaper, “sparechange news” created by homeless community.*
10
- 11 F1: *Reads Robert Sanderstrom piece.*
12
- 13 FAC: *Bear with us folks. Sssuages group regarding heavy reading load.*
14 *Discusses last piece re: poverty outside of large urban centers. Poem, “La*
15 *Moussa” by R. Lunday*
16
- 17 F2: *Reads “La Moussa”*
18
- 19 FAC: *Acknowledges that they went through a number of readings.*
20 *“What struck you from any of those three things? What resonated you particularly*
21 *when you think about our life together in the context of economic fairness?”*
22
- 23 F3: *Struck by article in that the New Guineans were able to come to a solution.*
24 *“Why don’t I have an answer like that? Why can’t it be that simple at the same*
25 *time?”*
26
- 27 F4: *I’m amazed about how in their world they are all responsible for each other*
28 *to the point that, you know, someone’s homelessness is just a foreign concept to*
29 *them because they all feel that care of each other is everyone’s responsibility. So,*
30 *I just think it’s such a, quite a phenomenon {LF in seeming disbelief}.*
31
- 32 F8: *I guess that rings true to the (.). I guess differences in both of these societies.*
33 *The difference is that we live in such an individualistic society and so it’s you*
34 *know (.). survival of the fittest. And if you can’t, if you don’t have your own*
35 *home, then, sorry. But, you know in this culture it’s very different. And it, a lot of*
36 *these poems rang true, as to how much we ignore the help - in quotations. I mean,*
37 *just people who are in just service. Even what M2 was talking about, he was*
38 *talking about McDonalds. Now how many times do you ignore the people that*
39 *work in those types of professions or you ignore the person who comes and gets*
40 *your trash everyday. It just seems like they’ve become this other person, they’re*
41 *meant to be, you know, there, but not spoken to or listened to.*
42

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

- 43 F2: In relation to that there's sort of a dichotomy in that these, you know, jobs (.)
44 like janitor and McDonalds – they're all necessary jobs, but we' think we'd never
45 want those. And so, like, if they're so necessary, but if that's the only job you can
46 get, then something's wrong with you. But at the same time, we need someone to
47 clean up our trash, we need someone to service our hamburgers. We don't have
48 any respect for the things we can't live without.
- 49 FAC: Well, a lot of you have had minimum wage jobs at various points in your
50 life, I mean, what was it like and what could somebody have done to make it
51 better? Make jobs have more meaning, fairer in the broader saying. I'm
52 wondering about your experience
- 53 For a year or so, worked in a deli or bakery of a foodland. I really liked the job.
54 B/c I liked my co-workers. It was a union store, many had been working for 20
55 years, weren't at minimum wage b/c of automatic raises, etc. At same time, we
56 would make fun of the customers because of their requests. Other customers
57 disrespectful – short with us, expecting us to hurry despite safety risk. But I liked
58 the job b/c of the co-workers
- 59
- 60 M2: You don't want to know what the people at mcdonalds say about customers.
61 There's some pretty interesting. {M5 inquires} explains the breakdown of power
62 at mcdonalds, generally comments on what people say over the headsets
- 63
- 64 M3: I definitely agree with that. I worked in a fast food and grocery before that's
65 like, they look at you like you're the one who's dumb, but you listen to some of
66 the customers, man it seems like you're the like– they're driving the nice car or
67 whatever, they got money, feel like you ought to switch role with them, but
68 they're dumber than you are [FAC: Do you feel invisible?] Um, I don't know, I
69 mean, I don't know from that stand point, you know what I'm saying, 'cause I
70 mean if you're in a server's job, they kind of have to deal with you so they can't
71 just ignore you, except when I was at McDonalds, but when I was working in a
72 grocery store, like you know, it was kind of like a customer service type thing, so
73 you know, they would talk or whatever, but, um, that could be a good thing or a
74 bad thing because some of them (.) like the more they talk, the more, the less
75 sense it seemed like they had, you know what I mean, does that make sense to
76 you? {mumbles of agreement from other participants}
- 77
- 78 F8: *Comments on skills required for lower wage jobs – they are not as*
79 *“elementary” as generally perceived. People deserve to be paid more. Discusses*
80 *her personal experience working as a waitress, how difficult it was, how shocked*
81 *she was that she couldn't manage the job.*
82 *“Nobody gets paid what they're worth. We really don't understand the hard work*
83 *and the skill it takes to be in these professions.”*
84

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

85 FAC: *Reflects on a friend with a MBA who planned to go to culinary school in*
86 *order to start a restaurant. She said that culinary school was the hardest thing*
87 *she'd ever done in her life.*
88
89 F4: Did she still open the restaurant?
90
91 FAC: No, she didn't, but never regretted going to culinary school because she
92 learned so much from it
93
94 F1: *Describes a new program at the university, a program where college students*
95 *go into high school where they tell them that students need not go to college, one*
96 *can be a success with out it. Comments on other avenues people can take other*
97 *can college, like technical school, etc. "neat culture shift."*
98 M2: *Comments on similar trend in Germany. Internship programs that begin in*
99 *high school. People graduate with job options upon high school graduation. "Our*
100 *society is so college driven, you have to go to college, you have to have*
101 *degrees...we're starting to realize you don't need to go to college to become*
102 *technicians, mechanics, and stuff. We're seeing som reversion to technical*
103 *schools.."*
104
105 FAC: Asks a participant to speak up
106
107 M4: (inaudible)
108
109 FAC: So, what you – if I'm hearing you right partly what concerns you is our way
110 of connecting with people that is either kind of bureaucratic, I'm not sure I'm
111 hearing you right."
112
113 M4: Yeah, (.) don't have any kind of stupid, hidden agenda, we just want to help
114 them out (.) doesn't really care about them anymore, they lost their jobs, who
115 cares, they had their chance, they lost it.
116
117 F3: There's always a program. It's not let's a couple people get together and feed
118 the homeless. Let's create a program first and then we do it.
119
120 M4: Let's first get us jobs, and then we can help others.
121
122 F3: Yeah [LF].
123
124 F5: Very much so, and then you have the element of, when the programs are
125 established, then you have to meet 8,000 criteria in order to benefit from that
126 program. It's interesting.
127

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

128 M2: I was reading um, reading something, it was talking about how um, yeah –
129 you talk about programs, we have all these programs, all this bureaucracy, you
130 know, to help people who are in low-income housing (.) and you know, and all
131 this other stuff, and that um, in reality, if you were to get rid of all those programs
132 and take all the money that went for paying for those benefits, and then just issue
133 stipends, you know, (.) to people who are at, below a certain income level and
134 graduate it. Um, ‘cause one of the big problems is like, lot of programs like that,
135 is you hit a point a just drop off. There’s no incentive to even go beyond a certain
136 point to help yourself out because if you go beyond, you know, \$10,000 or
137 whatever, you lose \$3000 of benefits, so basically that \$1 more drops you down
138 \$3000. But, besides from that, It was just saying how um, (.) how a lot of
139 programs we think are trying to help people in the end, almost, (.) exacerbate the
140 problem. One the things I was talking about is the housing projects and stuff like
141 that. Public housing started in 1950’s and ‘60’s. When they constructed those
142 houses, the-the low-income housing buildings, they actually destroyed more
143 housing areas than they created. So it actually caused um. Well, the people
144 actually lucky enough to get into those housing developments (.) were better off.
145 People who you were then, didn’t have housing were much worse off because
146 they were having to fit fewer people, more people, into fewer spaces. So, a lot of
147 times, you know, we tend to be short sighted and look for a quickie-solution and
148 don’t look at the long-term consequences of our actions.
149

150 F3: //I think that| uh, go ahead (2) There are like a lot of problems, with like, (.)
151 the things set up to help, you know, disadvantaged people. I don’t want to sound
152 like I’m against the homeless or the po--oor, or that I don’t care about them. It’s
153 just that you have to look at like their backgrounds. It’s not like they were just
154 magically dropped on the street homeless without anything. They had to have
155 made choices or things had to have had happened to them to get there. And it’s
156 like, I don’t know, things in place to like help them, like assistance and
157 everything, it is flawed. ‘Cause I used to work at a grocery store for three years. I
158 started out as a bagger and went up to assistant manager. And you would see like
159 the same customers all the time. And there was this one woman, I could not stand
160 her. She had like five children and she was on food stamps, okay. But everything
161 she would buy was the most expensive things, things that I couldn’t eat, ‘cause
162 you know, I paid with my own money. She would always be standing there on
163 like her cell phone, on that Razr phone, the real thin, the real expensive one. And
164 then, I would after work, you know ‘cause someone would you know, give me a
165 five dollar tip or something, I’d go to Barnes & Nobles with my friend and we’d
166 be at Starbucks and we’d be behind her in line, (.) you know, and she’d be, you
167 know, cash, she could use her cash for her cell phone, and, you know, for \$3 cup
168 of coffee. Now why can’t she, she needs government aid to feed her kids the most
169 expensive food? It’s like they (.) can work the system, and that’s kinda like, I
170 don’t know. It’s one of those things, you know, you can’t just look at these people
171 and lump them all together. It’s like, there are the ones who really do need help,

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

172 but then there are the ones who take the help when they don't really need it. I
173 think with like, when you look at the disadvantaged, the lower class, the poor
174 people. You can kinda group it up. 'Cause people in the city, who are like
175 homeless and poor are different than the ones who are in like the more suburban
176 areas, more rural areas, kinda like where I was from. Who are different from the
177 people who are in the out there, middle of no where, like West Virginia areas.
178 They're not all, like one, the same group. They can be like, they each have
179 different needs. And you try and create like, programs to help just one overall.

180

181 FAC: Let's go with F3's saying. We're not experts here, but let's just think about
182 some of the things that are kind of causes that can get someone toward a homeless
183 situation.

184

185 M2: One of the things that actually happened during Reagan administration,
186 cutbacks in mental health funding, so you do have, in some of the urban areas,
187 people who are mentally incapable, difficulty finding a home. This is a different
188 issue than economic fairness, but I mean, you have people on the streets who have
189 difficulty finding for themselves because they're not mentally capable. The other
190 major difference, addiction (.) you'll see in some areas, like new york or LA,
191 teenagers or adults who were kicked out of their homes for various reasons.
192 [FAC: kidnapped?] M2: no, kicked out, - [LF from grp] either for um- children
193 who were um, you know problematic children who in danger from their parents,
194 either ran away or- [FAC: family break up?] yeah [FAC: =okay, other things?]
195 F8: *Refers to M2, re: conversation last week re: economics. Asks, how many*
196 *people are one paycheck away from homelessness.* "I think that's a group that's
197 out there. They don't have any, [FAC: They don't have any savings] they don't
198 have any, so any thing that depletes in paying their rent (.) or securing a place to
199 stay, they are homeless. Staying in their car or a shelter, you know so - [FAC:
200 they have no safety] right, it could be anybody."

201

202 F4: You're right, the average American [LF] is one paycheck away from
203 homelessness.

204

205 FAC: The one thing that came up last night (.) is abusive relationships. There are
206 a number of people, I think children who are homeless, sort of, homeless
207 groupings, I dnt know the statistics for {their community}, but in Xcity (.) but the
208 numbers are stunning percentage of people who were homeless, including
209 children. And a piece of that can be, you know, an abusive relationship where the
210 mom leaves, takes the kids and has got no resources. There's another piece of
211 that, an abusive relationship is often extreme control, control over the finances.
212 (4).

213

214 F1: I think you'd be surprised how high that number really is. I don't know the
215 statistics either for {their community}, but um, in Xstate, but the numbers are so

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

216 high. I agree with what FAC said, it's a control issue. There's so many variables,
217 you know financial dependency on that person. And there's the decision you're
218 gonna leave and where are you gonna go, and then you're family's angry with
219 you because you're giving up on that relationship. And there's just so many
220 angles. And you really do find a lot of people in a horrible situation and there's
221 government funding being cut from those –shelters as well- specifically for
222 domestic violence shelters. That funding has been slowly deteriorating.

223

224 FAC: *Referring to the comments of M4, M2, F3, and F1*: “I was hearing a couple
225 of threads in what you (M2) were saying. Programs aren't always the ideal places
226 of solving problems. Although they can be a helpful way of doing it, um. But also,
227 the other stream I heard you saying was that that well we often say well, we've
228 got what we need, let's you know, if I was hearing you right, we've got what we
229 need, so let's not worry about those other people (3). And if we take where F3
230 was going, isn't one whole lump of people, it's all a set of people with individual
231 situations. Each of those things can be ways to possibly intervene, which could
232 be around a set of programs, which you can make as personal as you can, or, um,
233 other kinds of ways of approaching things, through say a religious congregation
234 or a collective set of people who want to deal with it on a more – you can sort of
235 say okay, we can try and get to mental health issues, we can try and get to people.

236

237 M2: Yeah, George Bush, isn't he a billionaire? Would he care about the lower
238 income [others join in]? *Refers to watching a show about how rich George Bush*
239 *is*. “But, why do people need to be so rich. I mean, after 10 million what are you
240 going to do with it? (3)

241

242 FAC: How do people feel about the two things M2 is raising here? One is how
243 much do you need? After you get 2 million do you need the next x million. That's
244 one stream, the other, sounded like little bit of a generalization, people in
245 government don't care.

246

247 M3: I think that that's definitely re: government, they're just out of touch. I'm not
248 going to bash Bush, but just as an example. *Refers to Bush advocating for all*
249 *homes to have high speed internet*. “It's like, houses in the ghetto, most of them
250 don't even have computers. How are they supposed to get high speed internet?
251 You know? I just think it's like, they're really out of touch with a lot of the
252 problems people have”

253

254 F8: I think it's a greed factor. You know what I mean. If you go into someone's
255 house
256 with a bunch of junk. And you ask the person, why do have all the stuff. It's just
257 'cause they can. Why stop at five beanie babies when you can have a hundred
258 [grp LF]

259

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

260 FAC: So, you're on the other side of what M2 was saying, how much is enough?

261

262 F8: How much is enough? to somebody who can get it? The power to get that. It's
263 never a question, like, do I have enough? It's like, can I get more, you know? I
264 agree with M2 with them being out of touch. And this is personally coming home
265 for me, in this past year, watching move on how they recruit minorities to this
266 university. And slowly but surely they have eliminated every program that deals
267 with getting minority students here at this university. They eliminated all of
268 them." *Describes programs targeting minority students that have been*
269 *discontinued.* "They cut it, because they're afraid, they're out of touch"

270

271 FAC: Let's go to that, that's a fairness issue, not necessarily, it doesn't need to be
272 broken down by race, it could be broken down by economic [F8: yah, race,
273 gender, age, you can break it down on everything] Okay, so, what could people
274 here in this room as students, as employees of X university or whatever, do you
275 have any voice in that?

276

277 M5: Yeah, we can ask questions.

278

279 F8: Definitely.

280

281 M5: Why is it, that program? Begin to ask some questions.

282

283 F2: Sometimes politicians are out of touch 'cuase we don't write to them. We
284 don't tell them what's going on. I wrote to Reagan once, when I was in
285 elementary school because he was going to talk with the Russian president, my
286 last name is Russian. I thought that that was great, and he wrote me back (2) but
287 I've never written to a politician saying I think you need to support this policy, I
288 think you're forgetting about this aspect or anything like that. You know, people
289 barely vote. (.) If they all took the opportunities they had, they wouldn't be
290 complaining that nothing's being changed. They weren't actually making efforts
291 to change things themselves.

292

293 M3: I think also something we could do to help is just spending time and energy
294 to helping other people out." *Compares this to simply spending money on others.*
295 *"spending time" more helpful*

296

297 FAC: Sort of gets back to the theme of both th personal or structural, With you
298 kind don't want either of those things without the other. I mean, yo can help
299 everybody in the world, individually, personally. Or, you might support programs,
300 that might help someone get into college, make a move back that way. At the
301 same time, if we just have these gigantic bureaucracies, and you don't (.) you
302 know. [mumbles] we're still working?

303

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

304 F4: I think what F2 about writing to politicians is a good point. Observes
305 government shifts regarding who has the majority. "They're getting the support
306 from their party, who they're getting letters from. Refers to university in the
307 south, took sexual orientation out of the discrimination clause, [F8: Oh, so they
308 could discriminate?] yes. Race was another (inaudible) they've eliminated almost
309 all race based programs. Because everything has to be neutral. *Identifies the key*
310 *powers at the university, notes that they're the ones with political pull.* "So
311 they're the ones you need to talk to and getting the ultimate person. *Comments*
312 *that in the college environment, it is not so much the president or chancellor, but*
313 *the governing boards who weild the power.* "That's who you need to talk with."
314
315 FAC: =Certainly a combination. And certain of these issues you don't realize
316 what kind of leverage you think. How many times, how many times do, I don't
317 necessarily mean shouting, although there are times when, sometimes shouting
318 can be okay. How many times, you, do thirty students ask to sit on the meeting of
319 trustees
320
321 M5: Interesting you say that. *Tells story of being a college student at same*
322 *university as F4 and 31 of he and other students sat on a board of visitors meeting*
323 *around the divestment issue of apartheid.*
324
325 FAC: Mhmm. And what was your experience like and what'dya, how dya think
326 you were (.) do you think they were surprised they showed up?
327
328 M5: Ummm, we had a culture of resistance that we were buildg for a few years.
329 And um, were they surprised, the board of visitors? They probably were, but they
330 mayb saw a couple of us as a radical group and we sat in on that group and were
331 arrested and pulled out of that meeting. And unbeknownst to us there was another
332 group and they were putting their hands around the rotunda as another means. So
333 we had a group inside and a group outside. I hate to thnk of it as a hayday time in
334 the past, but um, I thought it was as a graduate student and as a student to make
335 some of those voices known. As a faculty member, I wonderwhere the voices of
336 resistance are.
337
338 F4: =I wonder the same thing.
339
340 M5: =As a faculty member, I'd love to see students raising a little bit of hype or
341 heckle. Um, a slightly different generation. Not that it doesn't exist, but I don't
342 see the same kind of passion are some of the issues that we have a decade ago.
343
344 F1: I would agree with you M5, I think it's an interesting point. When I was an
345 undergrad at the X campus at {a local university}. I had the support of people that
346 motivated me to find a passion. And I was really passionate about students...And
347 it was the support of those around me that really helped me to become a

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

348 changemaker. And they're looking at me and they're saying, yo've got so much
349 power. I was like 'yeah, okay.' And then they started telling me you can do this
350 and you can do that. I started thinking, wow! This is actually a really neat thing,
351 and I think that as administrators, we don't do a very good job of empowering our
352 students because I mean, I'll give you a real quick example of something that
353 happened, it can't leave the room, 'cause if the xx learns about this,
354 {did not record due to privacy} *story about proactive behavior as a student.* "I
355 just use this as an example, you know we talk about change and change can
356 happen, it's just a matter of inspiring people and motivating them and showing
357 them, look this is not right, this is not fair. How do we make that change?
358

359 F4: Not knowing. A lot of times, students are in the positions of not realizing the
360 amount of jpower and authority that you had. And a lot of the issues and key
361 issues that are affecting college campuses and society as a whole are not known,
362 they aren't shared. Or there's a kind of, we're going to sweep it under the table
363 kind of mentality or I'm not going to rock the boat. There's a kind of different
364 dynamics that um, I had to laugh when M5 was talking 'cause I'm a child of the
365 seventies when boy oh boy the campuses were really a different place. There was
366 a lot of emotion and activism, you know and some of the changes in college
367 campuses today resulted from that. And I remember that. So it's um, such a
368 different.
369

370 FAC: Over time, individuals can make a difference...look for the fairness issue,
371 the economic fairness isuee or environmental issue and say hey I can make a
372 difference. And surprisingly, and I'm not saying it's easy, depending on the
373 situation, sometimes a small groups of people can make a difference..."
374

375 F1: One of the things that um, I think um, a lot of people that work in colleges are
376 trying to address, kind of heard bits of pieces of it, the notion of being socially
377 conscious (.) I know the whole {X leadership} program has pieces in that. I think
378 that for so long, and I think part of our American culture, is that, it is aobut the
379 individual, the goal is to get your education, without ever thinkg that you
380 probably made this money on the backs of the very people, that you know, that
381 are working at the, you know, minimum wages. You know there's no idea, that
382 okay, there's no result that somehow make it, give back, or you know, give back.
383 It's not just you know, mine mine mine mine mine. You know, and I think that
384 somewhere down the line we've forgotten that. Now and again. And that article,
385 that is a foreign concept, you know, to the people who were in this village, and I
386 wonder sometimes, how can I really help do that, how can I teach, and I talk
387 about it on an individual basis with students, and again, all of us have to create a
388 value that we're all responsible. It's part of things I've lost, having trouble
389 hanging on to it.
390

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

391 M2: I think that I we-/x/ always talk about there's this widening gap and we
392 always talk about people always wanting to have more money and whatever. I
393 think it's always great to accuse people, they're being greedy and whatever, but
394 I've read enough, talks about economics articles and stuff. And one of the things
395 it talks about is, by people quote un-quote 'selfishness' often times is the best
396 thing that can possibly happen toward a competitive market. Because with people
397 trying to be as thrifty as much as possible, they cause higher wages, they cause
398 jobs to be created, I mean, it's that mentality, the competitive market that in the
399 past, you know, on average has tripled the quality of living for the, you know,
400 bottom 25%. I was reading somethg that was written in 1965, but from 1933-1965
401 it was once the bottom 33% was now the bottome 8th that was still below that
402 level of the poverty line. You know, we look at people in the united states, oh you
403 know they're poor, they're, if these people were to go to some of the other
404 countries in the world, they'd be quite wealthy in comparisions. I think you know,
405 I think our perspectives is quite tilted in a lot of ways that we consider someone
406 less than us to be poor.

407

408 FAC: Very much we're making comparitive differences

409

410 M2: I think it's important to look at the bigger picture.

411

412 M5: I wasn't following you for a little while, I think I am now. If/x/ I'm
413 understanding what you're saying. You're saying, what - that, at one time I
414 thought I heard you saying that we on one hand, our (.) gap was decreasing
415 between the have and the have-nots, and I thought you heard you saying, partially,
416 when in fact, I don't know if that's the case in terms of the number of people who
417 are, who have more. I don't you were going there, I thought I heard you saying
418 toward the end of your argument that part of it was, it's that in terms of what we
419 have in our larger American society, we have much more than what people have
420 in other places around the world.

421

422 M2: Along with that, I think that in general the entire world is starting to get, to
423 have more than they had before. I think in general people's average incomes are,
424 you know, are becoming higher. I mean look at china. I mean everybody is so
425 quick to criticize these um, the-the sweatshops and everything, but if you really
426 look at it, yes, they aren't the best working conditions. Yes, they aren't the safest
427 places, but one, they're getting much better now, if you look at some of the
428 facilities they're immaculate. I mean, you also have to think about it, these people
429 are not being forced to work in these factories.

430

431 FAC: {whole group makes voices of dissent} Let's just do one thing, I just want
432 to stick on the one thing, on the nike thing, which is that it's a combination, it
433 seems to me, it's a combination of things – one: it's good that jobs are being
434 provided and it's good that stuff's happening. Um, also hear, I would also venture

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

435 a guess that one reason nike's paying more attention to quality of their factories is
436 that a lot of people made some noise about it.

437

438 M2: Wel-uh-um- what I mean, big brother, not everybody is being forced to work
439 there. You know, the option is then, we take all these factories out and all these
440 people working at these factories would then be forced to go back to their small
441 farms. [{many voices criticizing} F6: "Why is that bad though?"]

442

443 FAC: Let's unpack that a little bit. Is the option, is our only option no factories,
444 and no jobs? Or, um, the current status quo? Is that our two choices?

445

446 M2: What do you mean?

447

448 FAC: It sounded like you're saying either we've got what we've got. Low wages
449 and somewhat not good working conditions or well let's pull our investment out
450 there, no factories, no jobs. [M2: the point!] are those really our choices?

451

452 M2: I mean, you might say no, but the pt is the reason these companies go over
453 there is to take advantage of the low wages. And of, the lower - I mean, so you
454 can raise the wages there and then the companies would hire fewer people and you
455 know, and their going to (2) things are going to cost more, there would be less
456 reason to go over there, and they're going either 1, going to close the factories or
457 ship them somewhere else.

458

459 FAC: On one hand -

460

461 M2: =And then you're saying you're going to lower your own quality of living
462 and everyone else's quality of living-

463

464 FAC: Going back to what M4 was saying, do we always want to care about
465 ourselves first? And not worry about other people. Or are we going to care about
466 other people at the same time? Maybe we should pay a little bit more for our X-

467

468 M2: That's easy to say that though but, look at walmart. [F8: oh lord!] Everybody
469 hates walmart! But, legitimately, you know, if you are a low income family,
470 walmart's a great thing.

471

472 F8: They're cheap, but at what cost? What's being said here is that, it's great to
473 have a competitive edge, but at what cost are we, what cost does that - what does
474 it cost us, essentially {M3 starts speaking up in support (inaudible)} to have a
475 competitive market. You said oh, we have better technology, better products,
476 better quality of life, but being competitive also does something to us personally,
477 where we don't care about other people. I think the whole concept of fairness
478 deals with other people (.) it can't just be an individual thing. Fairness has to be

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

479 something between two parties, you have to say that's fair, that's not fair. You
480 can't just say, "it's fair for me and I'm cool and don't have to worry about
481 anything else." I think the costs of being competitive and making these people
482 work for these low wages or going somewhere, it costs to something personally,
483 as a society, as a culture.

484
485 M5: One of the issues, one of the issues, it's interesting, for me it's about how we
486 frame our argument. One of the issues, and I go back to the rotunda 31 where we
487 argued for the divestment of apartheid, south Africa. One of the issues that the
488 board of visitors used to say to us was, if you resist apartheid, if you resist what
489 we're doing and how we're investing in caterpillars and machinery and how we're
490 supporting apartheid, then if we don't do that, those black Africans who work in
491 those mines, won't have a job. [M2: mmmm] for them, the argument was, if we
492 don't support them with capital, and machinery in the current south African
493 government, this is pre-mandela, then the black Africans won't have a job. And
494 that's one part of the argument, that if we didn't resist apartheid and we supported
495 the status quo, then black African who were receiving the pennies wouldn't have
496 a job. And that's part of the argument, and I think it's an argument issue here.
497

498 M2: And I agree with that. I think that from historical perspective, if you go back to
499 the 15th-16th centuries, when the American colleges were being founded, the
500 United States was founded, and for much purpose, a way to get cheap labor and
501 cheap resources, and it's been – you know, if you look at the United States, if you
502 look at Japan, if you look at Taiwan, these are all countries that were founded as a
503 way to get cheap resources. It's part, I mean, you know, the same things that were
504 happening in China and you know, India, all these countries, they're things that
505 happened here, things that happened in Taiwan, things that happened in Japan.
506 And it's just become apart of an economic development set where you can't you
507 know, You know we're pushing jobs here and here and wherever. Eventually
508 we're going to run out of places to go, and unless we go and colonize some planet
509 of aliens, and make them work for us [group LF] at some point it becomes where
510 everyone has to start lifting up.

511
512 F8: I just think that people are looking so far into the economic side of things,
513 they're not looking at, I guess, what they're doing to people, even though the
514 United States was a way to get these cheap labor and cheap resources, what came
515 out of that was slavery. And the free labor of millions of people, that's how this
516 country got rich. They didn't have to pay anybody anything to do that. And -

517
518 FAC: That doesn't get us far in the economic fairness

519
520 F8: No – but, I'm just saying that what is missing from here is we're so focused
521 on economics and fitting these numbers in, and figuring out what we need, we
522 forget about the needs of people, and that's what gets run over all the time.

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

523

524 F6: The question is, is doing it this way good [F8: right, yeah] Just because we've
525 been doing it this way for thousands of years doesn't mean that it is the best way.
526 Perhaps it works in the long term, we end up here where we can go to college, we
527 can have computers, we can drive cars, we can live in large houses, but you know,
528 why is it necessary? The people in this, the village, they are happy, and perhaps
529 they're happy without having all these electricity and all these things. Assuming
530 that they're able to get, you know, medicine-

531

532 FAC: So it's not entirely about their being able to get stuff.

533

534 F6: Yeah, they can be, you can be happy without getting things, you can be
535 happy. Of course, progress is good. I'm happy that we can have anti-biotics now
536 and that we can have surgery, learn more things, and I can talk to people in other
537 countries without taking a boat there, and, but the, you know, just because things
538 have been done for so long doesn't mean -

539

540 M2: = and I agree with that statement, but the thing is these are people who don't
541 have electricity, and all that stuff and they're happy, then why are we always
542 pushing, raise these people's standard of living? Why are we pushing?

543

544 F8: That 's a good question! {other comments from group (inaudible)}

545

546 M4: They're looking for other places to send our (inaudible) to. Like you said,
547 where's the next place I can go? The less developed people, like South Africa,
548 South America, you could just ship to produce over there. The countries that take
549 cheaper to produce the same stuff. So, they're just looking for opportunities, I
550 guess.

551

552 M2: I think, economic fairness, we need to help, they're poor. But/x/ at the same
553 time, we're saying, oh they're happy, we don't need to give them anything, I think
554 it come, it becomes, a lot of times, it becomes the people who are saying we're so
555 focused on material wealth are the ones who become so focused on providing
556 material wealth for others.

557

558 FAC: I'm this is good, lets-we've got these tensions, and I think that F. Scott
559 Fitzgerald said, 'the mark of a first great mind is the ability to hold opposing ideas
560 in tension.' And I think we have two important opposite ideas and we want to
561 hold in tension. One is - it's not all about money. That it's not, the only thing that
562 makes a poor person happy or unhappy, or, us as people who can become rich
563 people or richer people. You know we're not necessarily going ot become happier
564 having more stuff. So on one side we want to hold, it's not all about money, and
565 on the other hand, we know that on some level lack of resources causes and lack
566 of fairness can cause real suffering. For instance. Let's take slavery for a moment,

Group G-1: Meeting #4, Economic Fairness
Transcript

567 and you say okay, we're going to have slavery 50% of people or some percentage
568 of the people in the world enslaved. On one level, it would totally be efficient. It
569 would be efficient because it would be low prices for all remaining people, they
570 wouldn't have to pay for all that labor. But we wouldn't want to argue that that's
571 fairness. You're on to something very important, that we've got to hold both these
572 things in tension, which is, thinkg about it's not just about money, thinking about
573 on the other hand, resources make a difference. If the kind in La Moussa was your
574 daughter, I mean, there's some joy in that poem for a moment. There's not entire
575 raw suffering. But on the other hand, if that was my daughter, it wouldn't be okay
576 with me. So we gotta hold both these things in tension.
577 *Encourages everyone to take break. A number of people talking.*
578 "Okay so we'll take a short break." *Participants talking abut food (everyone*
579 *talking in a friendly manner). Someone talks about getting a job – as a waitress.*

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

1 FAC: It really kinda gets us back to the question that we raised in the first session,
2 um, where's that poem by that guy Philip Levine, who said, you know, who was
3 remembering working in this factory in Detroit. And a kid up from West Virginia
4 asked him what are we making? And he says, 'I'm making \$2.25 an hour, don't
5 know what you're making,' and he says, 'what are making out this here metal?'
6 Um, you know, so we're sort of asking ourselves tonight, well what are we
7 making? And, are we getting what we want out of our time and energy, and, you
8 know, are we making the stuff- the kind of stuff we want to experience in our
9 lives together? Um, there's another about this same poet, this Philip Levine guy.
10 He apparently was a really good teacher too and um, one of his students in his
11 class, they really loved the class because he felt so fully alive in the class, and uh,
12 in that class he really made us realize that all of our adolescent fears and
13 preoccupations were just like so much, um, life savings in the wrong currency. I
14 think we want to uh, not get to the end of our lives and go oh, we've got a pretty
15 big life savings but it's in the wrong currency. So, we're going to be reflecting on
16 that. And then we're also going to be thinking, meeting a change maker who's
17 going to help us think a little bit about, oh, I can manage and model. I can find
18 some space for some of these ethical concerns in my life and I can bring other
19 people along with me. So, it's not just me doing it. And the shape of the evening,
20 we're going to have a very short video, then a little poem, then we're going to
21 talk. And then later on, um, we'll take a break, meet a change-maker, um, and
22 then if we can there will be a little bit of music, not sure where that's going to go,
23 and then uh, wrap up, and look- begin actually to think about your own
24 commitments. Um, because we're moving toward, we have next week. We'll be
25 thinking about resources to implement our commitments. And this last week, no
26 surprises where everybody's going to be, you know, thinking about, trying to say
27 to everybody, what's a new or renewed commitment. (inaudible)

28

29 M5: Sorry, what did you say toward the very end?

30

31 FAC: In the last session, um, we're all going to be talking, making some kind of
32 statement about what's the new or renewed commitment to our shared common
33 life, something beyond our own doorstep that I'm willing to make. And that's
34 going to be the focus of our last session, so we want to keep that in view. Begin
35 with the end in mind, and that's where we're headed. So, before we go to our
36 shared looking, I want to take a look for a couple minutes at the beginning, and
37 not necessarily everybody, but spend a little bit of time just asking you a question
38 to kind of set a tone for the evening. If you could share with us, just a moment
39 where you felt you had something you considered enormously valuable, but that it
40 didn't really cost you anything. You know, that could be some moment of
41 relationship with other people that could be you know, some kind of experience
42 you had. It could be a moment when you were fully engaged in learning, or fully
43 engaged in the world around you. I don't know what that is, but some moment
44 where you were, thought you had something enormously valuable, but not

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

45 something you bought. So, I'm kind of interested, you don't I have to go around
46 to all the people, you could just jump in. [7 sec elapsed] Just to get us started, I'll
47 share one, from one of the previous groups. One guy told [inaudible] it was such a
48 good story that everybody for the rest of the evening kept coming back to it. He's
49 standing there with his family at the front room of his house, with this beautiful
50 golden light, this golden light is starting to come into the house and uh, and
51 they're just really entranced by it. They went out on their front porch and there
52 was this beautiful, beautiful sunset, and they're sitting there looking at the sunset
53 and they thought it was really wonderful, and then they realized that everybody on
54 their whole street was outside and looking at the sunset. And, then they sort of
55 turned it into this mini block party. All these people who didn't really spend a lot
56 of time necessarily talking to each other kinda came out on the street, really cool,
57 and just experiencing, you know, the relationship of being with each other and
58 just this wonderful moment, so just to fill you in to get us started people reflecting
59 on a moment when there was something enormously valuable that you didn't buy
60 or spend.

61

62 M5: I coach soccer. So, for me, it's really valuable to sit with these, these middle
63 schoolers, who are extremely rambunctious. Very rambunctious, and they don't
64 want to kick the soccer ball. They're very challenging [inaudible] that's what the
65 parents tell me. They're challenging on the soccer field as well, but it doesn't cost
66 me much. Twice a week with a game on Sunday. Sure they're obnoxious and they
67 do what middle schoolers do, but um, I enjoy it because I talk about more than
68 soccer. You know, so, that's my thing.

69

70 FAC: Other folks, just jump in, you don't need to get called.

71

72 F1: I think something that's fresh in my mind is just this just this past weekend,
73 F8 and I had facilitated this retreat, a leadership retreat with 38 athletes from
74 XUniversity, and what I really like about it, is that I saw within the students a real
75 respect for each other when they did not have, they really didn't have a
76 [inaudible], they were living in their own sport. And what was happening in their
77 realm, and they really were, their eyes were opened to the other things that were
78 happening within the other teams [laughs to self]. For example, the one team
79 member was a track person. And she said, 'you know, we don't even have a track
80 at xuniversity, our home meets are held at YUniversity, 'cause we don't have a
81 track.' And one of the basketball players was really surprised and said, 'wow we
82 were complaining that we didn't have a plasma flat screen TV in our weight
83 room,' and of course that's when I said, 'that might not have been a good time to
84 contribute that particular example [giggles].' And another person, um, in response
85 to that said, who was a swimmer, said, 'You know what, I really give kudos to the
86 basketball and football teams because you're out there and bringing in money for
87 the athletics. You know, for our teams.' So it was a real give and take, and real
88 humbling experience for those who are in the more spotlighted, um, sports. It was

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

89 fun to see that and to really, it really had an appreciation of, wow, they're getting
90 it. There are some pieces that are really starting to connect. So that was really
91 valuable for me. That's just sort of a fresh one.
92
93 FAC: {mumbling from participant} Just jump in
94
95 F6: Well, when I hear you ask that, I'm like, okay I can't think of anything. I
96 think it's cause most of the things I do, it's hard to pick one 'cause there's so
97 many things that I do, that I go through, that don't cost me anything – well –
98 'cause I'm a student. I guess in the end, they do sort of cost me, since I'm a
99 student I have access to go do activities for free. But, I guess in a way I do pay for
100 them. But, uh, it came to my mind, right now. I just came back from the radio
101 station, which is one floor upstairs. And every week I do a show, right before this
102 [F1: that's awesome!] and-and I don't get paid or anything, but for me it's really
103 awesome time, I love doing it. I've been doing it for like a year now. It's
104 awesome.
105
106 FAC: Do you use your own name on the show so if we were listening we would
107 hear your name [F6: yeah] or do you use a different name? [M2: what dial? F6:
108 hmm? M2: what frequency?]
109
110 F6: It doesn't have a very good frequency, it's like within a 10 mile radius. [M2:
111 oh, I could hear it] yeah, you could hear it. You could also, listen to it online, it's
112 streaming online. You could go to www.websiteaddress.edu. [F1: that's so cool!
113 FAC: yep] I don't know, I love music, and for me it's free. I like to tell my friends
114 about it, I'll IM them and be like, 'hey I'm on the radio right now, listen to me!'
115 [group laughter] And, it makes me feel valua- since I love music so much it
116 makes me feel sort of, you know, I guess valuable in some way, hah! [FAC:
117 what's the part of sharing of something that you really care about? And also being
118 in the middle of work that you like to do.] Yah. [FAC: everybody always thinks
119 like, oh work! Work is – I mean there are moments when work is terrible, but you
120 know, it could be crappy without something that you really cared about working
121 on] But it's fun, every week, I'm thinking, ooooh, maybe I can play it on my show.
122 Or, I'm always thinking of songs to play on my show. [F1: that's awesome.
123 M2: yeah that's great] It's fun. [F3: it's really fun, cool]
124
125 F8: It made me think of my experience um, from 5th grade to 12th grade. I played
126 the trombone in the band, and I would say probably from 7th to 12th grade, I was
127 the last chair, which means I was the worst out of the trombone players. But, you
128 know what, everybody thought that that was such a big deal, and I never cared, at
129 all [group laughter] because I loved – I loved playing music so much it didn't
130 matter if they just put me in a bathroom somewhere [more laughter from group],
131 'cause I guess, band in my school was so competitive. I guess 1st through 3rd
132 chair was just, you know, just the epidemy, you just wanted play 1st part and have

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

133 solos and such. And that really wasn't a priority to me, I just wanted to play
134 music. And there was this one time, I – you have to audition every year for your
135 chair. And um, I didn't make it into the highest band, which is the symphonic
136 band. I had to go to concert band, but I was the 1st chair concert band player. And
137 everybody thought, 'Oh gosh, F8, what are you- are you going to quit? I would
138 quit if I were you, I wouldn't do that!' And I said, 'cause we had – I know, 'cause
139 I don't understand why you want to be in there and we had really bad uniforms.
140 They looked like Star Trek [Group laughter] 'cause we had to wear our marching
141 band uniforms as uniforms for the concert band, so it was really embarrassing.
142 But, I said, well, I kind a really don't care 'cause I really want to play. So, I think
143 that was something that although people didn't really understand it. It made sense
144 to me at that time, you know. Do I really care about being 1st chair or do I really
145 want to be in the band? [mumbles of empathy]

146
147 FAC: One more person before we jump on to the rest of the evening. Anybody,
148 just want to share? A moment.

149
150 F2: I guess one time. In front of my kitchen – kitchen window where the sink is
151 that, there's a large pine tree. When my parents moved into that house they
152 planted that tree and I was about 3 or 4 at the time and the tree was smaller me
153 then. The tree is a good 5ft taller than the 2-story house now, so I'm really old, or
154 [group laughter] the tree's just grown fast one of the two [laughs]. The tree's
155 caused a little bit of a problem. It was leaning over the house and then cardboard
156 ants got into one of the roofs. Had to replace part of the roof. So I was a little bit
157 hating this tree, even though it's been around a long time and it provides a lot of
158 shade. I was sitting washing dishes and in the tree branches, I could see in there
159 two morning dove chicks. They were fully feathered, but they weren't old enough
160 to go fly off. Uh, they were mostly just hiding in the tree, and they would just sit
161 there. They were brothers and sisters, I don't know. And they were just sitting
162 there looking so happy against each other, protecting each other against the wind.
163 And I was washing dishes, which I hate doing, also, but they were there, all so
164 happy, that was very sweet to see them in the tree, which I hated was providing a
165 home for them. And I like morning doves.

166
167 FAC: When I sort of listen to all of these together, the sort of thing that I take
168 away is from this is that a lot of the stuff that we do that's very meaningful to us
169 are things that I'd call either multipliables or shareables. Um, instead of
170 consumables. Things that when you invest in them or spend time like making
171 relationships, or playing music, or sharing music with your friends. You put more
172 time and energy into them, they don't get used up, there's more of it to go around.
173 Or, sharing, M5's sharing his time playing soccer, and yet that doesn't get used
174 up. It creates something else that everybody can participate in. All the kids are
175 getting something out of it. And this thing you were sharing about people just
176 interacting with each other, everybody's bringing a different perspective to it,

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

177 that's not something that we're using up. More people bring to it, the more –
178 bigger, it doesn't get used. So, let's jump into our shared looking. We're going to
179 start with a short 3 or 4 minute, short video. And this is from, and to get us in this
180 mode of thinking about true wealth. This is from a movie called Powaqqatsi. Um,
181 which has some pretty heavy hitter people working on it. Um, George Lucas and
182 um, Francis Ford Coppola. I hope I said that right [repeats name]. Um, and um,
183 the music is from contemporary composer Philip Glass. And the film itself is an
184 hour and a half and it's entirely music and images. There's not a scrap of
185 dialogue, there's not a scrap of plot. So this is not everybody's cup of tea. But it's
186 got a bunch of different little chapters, it's entirely a visual thing that you let wash
187 over you. And the word Powaqqatsi is a Hopi Indian word, and I'm going to have
188 to read this, 'cause I can't remember, 'It's a way of life that consumes the life
189 forces of other beings to further it's own life. So that's the thrust of this, whole arc
190 of this movie. And if you guys can turn that thing to [inaudible].

191

192 F8: Now it's actual footage, like real footage that they use, so it's kinda like a
193 documentary musical in a way?

194

195 FAC: Yeah. It's all, they went around got footage from all around the world. Very
196 rich images. This one thing we're going to see is called 'Dream sequence,' and
197 it's very, in a way, unlike the rest of the film. 'Cause a lot of the rest of the film is
198 images of people and also natural settings. This is a little bit more media oriented.
199 Press this button to start.

200 {video playing}

201

202 FAC: Brace yourselves, I'm going to turn on the light here. [group participants
203 WH] The next - this is a kind of companion to that piece. Is something that's very
204 different. It's a poem by a guy Miller Williams, who I thought might be a little bit
205 known to you all. Although everybody looked at me with that sort of glazed look.
206 He was a little bit well-known because he read a Clinton's first inaugural activity.
207 I think he's more well-known because his daughter Lucinda Williams is some
208 kind of country singer. [mumbles, F?: I heard of her] Anyhow, um, anyhow. This
209 poem, I think is a little bit about the issue of um, how difficult it is to hold on the
210 visions of things that are really important, like what we really consider true
211 wealth, that are not really easy to hang on to those. The poem is a little bit long,
212 it's more like a story. It's set during world war II in Russia, what was the Soviet
213 Union. During the siege of Leningrad, then, now St. Petersburg. It refers to the
214 Hermitage, which is a famous art museum, like a gigantic art museum like the
215 Louvre in Paris. And at one point in the poem, there's a long list of painters, and
216 you don't need to worry about that, just know that they're painters. And uh, the
217 title of the poem is 'The Curator.' And a curator is a person who kind of takes
218 care of a museum, makes sure that the stuff is well preserved, presents it, mounts
219 exhibitions, makes sure it's okay for, you know, people to look at, future

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

220 generations. So, 'The Curator' and I'll just read, and again, it's set in WWII
221 {FAC reads poem}

222

223 FAC: So we have the, you know, video dream sequence and the Curator story.
224 Um, what resonated with you in either piece, when we think about this issue of
225 reflecting on tonight of true wealth. Either the dream video- not everybody likes
226 that little thing, saying it was kind of dated.

227

228 F8: I think what I was thinking of, about the Curator, um, today, or last night, the
229 lady um, who was Mel Brooks' wife died. Yesterday, Ann Bancroft played Helen
230 Keller's teacher, and everybody's heard this story of Helen Keller, but I never
231 understood how this woman figured out how to do all of that because she was
232 deaf and blind. And I went online and read biographies that were online and um,
233 when this woman came to teach Helen Keller, she said that this girl was basically
234 a brat, she didn't want to do anything. She was just upset about her predicament,
235 which is understandable, but she was upset that there wasn't anything being
236 taught to her, nobody considered her intelligent. And she took her down to the
237 well or the spout where the water came out. And she made her put her hand
238 underneath the water and while she had her hand underneath the water, she began
239 to sign water into her hand. And she signed it slow, and then she signed it fast, so
240 that she knew what it was that was in her hand. And I thought, I don't even know
241 where to begin if somebody's deaf and blind. And it makes you think about all the
242 –how easy you have it sometimes. Because that's hard. I don't even know where I
243 would begin with my family, or with my children if someone's deaf and blind. I
244 mean, I know they have things out there to, to you know, help these children be
245 successful, but I thought it was, you know, a really good insight into how her life
246 was. That poem reminded me of it. And how they wouldn't come back because
247 how, like you said, the pictures, the stories of the art became matter-of-fact.
248 Because they always assume that because the art is up there, you can always
249 assume that you could see it. And you can see how the orange blends in, but you
250 can't really see. The speech becomes more passionate and more thorough when
251 you have people there who can't see it. You try to explain it to someone, so.

252

253 F4: The dream sequence for me, I was caught up with all the pretty people images
254 [F8: yeah] that seemed to dominate it initially, it didn't seem to get any different
255 until toward the end. And when I see images like that, it looks so artificial, you
256 know a made-up face. It looks hollow to me. So it's just like this shell of this
257 façade that we create. And then, the sort of sad part of it is it's a standard of
258 beauty in each culture that creates that, and it's a sort of artificial standard of
259 beauty that creates that. So I find that just like a – artificial construct that we
260 created. And it always hits home with me when we see that pretty image after
261 image.

262

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

263 FAC: Made me think of this one person in one of the prior groups said, you know,
264 watching this thing, they saw this one brand of this one brand of skin cream or
265 something and it was a foreign thing that had come up, and they said, 'I've seen
266 that before!' And they had lived in Thailand or something like that – skin
267 lightening cream, that people in that culture were taught to like, lighten their skin.
268

269 F3: I've seen that in Indian stores (2) I think that I enjoyed this poem, because it
270 helped to point out that we can appreciate a concept and having something and
271 um, appreciate what it represents. They didn't have the pictures, they were able to
272 discuss what picture represented, how it affected them. How it um, made them
273 feel, made them appreciate what was being displayed there, and um, it wasn't
274 anything about having glorious riches or about being better than someone. It was
275 about how beautiful these things were. And only because it had gone away and
276 they didn't have access to it, they realized even more how beautiful it was. And
277 that they could share that with other people. This is what we have, this is what's
278 amazing.
279

280 FAC: Any other reactions from people, from the talk.
281

282 F2: Just makes me think, uh, people appreciate art more maybe when they're
283 going through tough times. When they're sad, they tend to appreciate, or maybe
284 need art more at that time.
285

286 M4: Like people who listen to music when they're sad or happy. People listen to
287 music to get back their spirits, or associate with they sorrow, depending on how
288 they feel.
289

290 F3: Is this a true story? This poem supposed to be?
291

292 FAC: I don't know the answer. I have inferred that there's something behind it, at
293 least a kernel of a story, that he fictionalized. But I haven't done the research to
294 know.
295

296 F3: Just 'cause I think it's kind of strange that blind people would go look at art. I
297 mean, I don't know, I don't know if it would actually happened. I mean maybe
298 it's supposed to be more symbolic, maybe even more marked. I don't know.
299

300 F2: Well the context of hiding art from Germans was real. It's all been
301 documented throughout Europe at major museums, they buried art and there's
302 even they're still finding where a lot of art was stolen by the Nazi's is now being
303 uncovered. Getting back to it's real home. You know, I've been to the Herm-
304 Hermitage, it's-it's incredible, it's one of the most impressive museums I've ever
305 seen. And it doesn't have anything minor. Every piece of work in there is major,
306 major know pieces. And um, and again. It reminds me, made me think of how we

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

307 value – the great value we put on this kind of expression of each culture in its
308 artistic creation. We value it so much we need to protect it, hide it away, save art.
309 But yet the blind appreciating it was an interesting twist on that. You know, I kept
310 thinking, how are they in fact accessing that art. I mean, they must of heard about
311 it orally. So they're not seeing- they don't have the visual sense to grasp it, but
312 they were hearing the curator talking about it. That's not our experience of art,
313 very different from what we know.

314

315 F7: It makes me think of -, maybe, I don't know, the blind, maybe the blind's
316 reaction to war, maybe they'd be confused, why are people fighting out there. I
317 don't know. It makes me think of that. They can't see the war, they can't see
318 what's going on. Maybe I don't know, maybe they want to see the art, something
319 complete opposite. I don't know.

320

321 F6: In sort of response to F7's comment about-. I think sometimes we think of art
322 as being this very educated, snooty, like only super educated, rich people go to
323 museums. Only they could understand what's going on in this impressionist
324 painting or this cubist artwork. But really, I mean, art can be accessible to anyone.
325 And perhaps, you need to inform people about the background or you know the
326 purpose it was serving when it was done. But we don't have to limit it to a certain
327 - you know, elementary children can go to an art museum and appreciate the
328 beauty that's there, that's not necessarily for you to have a certain class or a
329 certain amount of money to understand and enjoy something so natural.

330

331 FAC: One of the ways that I sort of think about this set of possible connections
332 between dream images and uh, the poem, is that the dream images in a way
333 present us with a set of pictures of you know, holding up a set of pictures of, you
334 know, what, you know, the media in a way is saying we ought to value, what we
335 ought to say is important, what we ought to spend our time looking at, whether
336 that's news casts, advertising or whatever. Um, and then the curator poem shows
337 an alternative social function of this curator. The curator role being to hold up
338 other kinds of images, to put a frame or an explanation around certain kinds of
339 images so that you can, as you were saying F2 so somebody could understand
340 them a little bit and see them in a way, to protect and you know, keep images
341 alive, other stories alive over time, through a culture. Um, and although there
342 wasn't this function exactly in this poem, sometimes curators play the role of like
343 promoting, you know the blockbuster exhibits that they have the big images all
344 around saying, come see the [inaudible] exhibit or whatever. In this one,
345 promoting sort of happens by word of mouth, come see the 'unseen collection'
346 and people just started showing up. Um, so, what kind of ways do you that we, all
347 of us in the room might play a kind of curatorial role in terms of holding up, you
348 know, we've got plenty of images from the media coming at us every day, how do
349 we hold up alternative images.? What kind of roles, ways can we play that? What
350 kinds of things do we want to hold up? Is that making sense?

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

351

352 F8: I think for me, what's really coming to my eyes, is how, um, black people are
353 portrayed in television and media. And, [clears throat] and what's really um, you
354 know, coming to my mind is, for example, you know, you go see, for example the
355 movie that's out called 'The Longest Yard' and has Chris Rock and Adam
356 Sandler. And you know, if want to go watch a comedy, you know, it's fun, but
357 there's this hidden undertones of, you know, slipping into these, these, completely
358 racist, and um- [FAC: for those of us who haven't seen the movie, help us out
359 with a couple of examples] Um, I'll help you out. Um, uh, the running back was
360 Nelly in the movie, Nelly, the rapper, okay. And um, he at first didn't want to
361 play football, but they recruited him to play on the prison- they're all in prison.
362 And they want to play on the prison football team, in their league. And um, [FAC:
363 so we're starting with prison as a given] yes, exactly. So, you know, of course the
364 blacks didn't want to play at first, but they're like, we'll play because we'll get to
365 play against the guards. That's incentive enough for us because we want to beat
366 the guards up for all the stuff they've done to us. And then when they find Nelly
367 [emphasis in voice], they find out that he's this star running back, he can just run
368 like the wind, but the thing is, Nelly doesn't have any shoes, Nelly runs barefoot.
369 And they, Chris Rock points out throughout the movie, and they like, damn, 'he
370 got's slave feet!' And I'm thinking, like, did he just say that? Like, wow, they
371 made a point to go out and say, slave feet. Or, there was one inmate in there who
372 was, you know, spoke black vernacular, but it was just, it was exaggerated to the
373 point where instead of saying, you know, 'I broke my toe,' it became 'I broke di-
374 di-dat.' You know, that type of thing. And if you watch, after 11 o'clock, on
375 public access, they can put anything they want on public access, in case you
376 didn't know that. Um, And they have this thing called, Underground hip hop [M3:
377 mumbles in agreement] You've seen it right, it's a mess. So what they do, is they
378 show all of the x-rated videos that they can't show on MTV and BET. [M3: I
379 mean, I haven't seen that. Group laughter] You should have watched it last night.
380 And just the fact that, I want to get away from the images that portray, like black
381 women as sexual objects and, [FAC: right, so let's, let's go there for a moment.
382 How do we, you, feel like you can play a curatorial role of holding up some
383 alternative image. How do you play a role?] well, I mean, the easiest way, is the
384 control, control of my own money. You know, by not supporting films that have
385 those kinds of images anymore. But how do I get up and convince some girl that,
386 you know, you really don't need to be in that video?

387

388 F2: (inaudible) high school students

389

390 FAC: I'm sorry, I didn't hear-

391

392 F8: She said, high school students that I teach. And I actually used one of the
393 videos as a lesson when I was teaching my high school students because I think
394 that's a good way of doing it, because I said – one of these videos, it's called –

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

395 Nelly, ah 'tip drill' video. And a tip drill is a girl that you will have sex with, but
396 you don't like the way she looks in her face. She's pretty, not, she has a nice
397 body, but an ugly face. And in the video, at the end of the video, he takes a credit
398 card, swipes it down the girls ass, and all of a sudden she starts moving, because
399 she's been purchased. And, uh! I used that as a lesson. Because all the kids have
400 seen the video and I said, what do you think really [group mumbles, nervous
401 laughter] It's really – It's bad. It's beyond anything that I've ever seen, but you
402 have to use those moments as teaching lessons to observe what does that really
403 mean? He probably thought it was cute, he thought, oh yeah, I could just swipe it,
404 witty, right, but what does it mean when you can take something you use to
405 purchase things with and you do it a female? What have you essentially done?
406 You have bought her. She's a prostitute.

407
408 FAC: So right there, there is a curatorial function. You're putting a frame, okay,
409 there's something there. You're putting a frame and a context around that [F8:
410 echoes – 'context around that' uh huh]. It helps people who may be seeing it one
411 way, to look at that same thing and see it another way. And you've chosen to do
412 that by speaking up, talking, using your own voice, and setting a context in an
413 area where you work, where you teaching. [F8: right] So, other examples, not
414 necessarily on this set of issues, but other ways you guys think that we can all
415 play curatorial roles in terms of holding up some alternative to these media
416 images that we're uh -

417
418 F2: =After last week's session, I was talking to a friend of mine, who lives in
419 Winnipeg, Canada. And um, I was talking about what we were talking about,
420 economic fairness, and sort of brought up what he was worried about, where he
421 lived at. He said he was very worried about the environment, I thought Canadians
422 were more environmentally conscious than Americans, but apparently just about
423 everybody in Winnipeg drives, has a car. They rarely take the bus and he's um,
424 very worried about you know, there's all this traffic, a ton of traffic because
425 everyone's driving a car, but you know, if you got those 40 cars and but the
426 people on a bus. Just so much faster. Everyone would get to work faster, get home
427 faster. There'd be less fog and whatever else, but he really felt that there was little
428 he could do. He didn't have a car and he took a bus when he needed to go
429 somewhere. And I was asking him, so you know, what do you think you could do,
430 who could you talk to about it. And later that day, I was reading in um, the city
431 paper and apparently Xcity has an organization called Car-free Xcity, and they're
432 apparently an international organization, which is world car-free. And it had just
433 held a rally earlier in the month, either in Xneighborhood, or- encouraging people
434 to take their bikes around town or take the bus. And they had a little rally, like a
435 neighborhood party to encourage people to do that. I think another one is
436 happening in June. Encourage people to take their bikes – even though Xcity's a
437 pretty hard place to bike around, there, we can alternatively take the bus or take
438 the bike on the bus, they have those carriers. And I pointed that out to him, that

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

439 um, this is something you're worried about, being worried about the environment
440 and being worried about your health, things like that. You can find what's out
441 there. Want to make sure I bring this back to what we're talking about [nervous
442 laugh] But, um, being concerned about the environment can help people,
443 enlighten people to the fact that if they didn't take their car, take the bus instead,
444 things would be better. They wouldn't have to – they wouldn't waste so much
445 time in traffic, spend so much money on gas.

446
447 FAC: Let me – just to underline a couple things that I heard as themes of what
448 you were saying. Partly, you [emphasis] were playing a curatorial role in terms of
449 talking to your friend and helping him – is it him? [F2: yes him] think about
450 things another way. Then there's this whole set of rallies of, you know, making
451 some sort of real public statement about an alternative. It could be this, like, this.
452 And then, this other one is your friend themselves are kind of modeling a kind of
453 behavior, by not having a car and riding the bus. Anytime someone talks to him
454 about his life, or he chooses to tell someone about his life and says, "I take the
455 bus," that's a kind of, you know, modeling right there. Other ways of sort of
456 holding up these things? M2 and F3, you got sort of quiet, is that because you
457 think this is like a – sort of oversimplified view of this thing or- ?

458
459 M2: No, I just [FAC: I'm not trying to put you on the spot, I'm trying to give you
460 a shot at jumping in.] I- I just haven't had any [inaudible] so, [FAC: mmmm, F3]

461
462 F3: Same as him, nothing's really come to mind yet.

463
464 M3: There was something I noticed, um, you talk about the media standards of
465 beauty. And I don't know how I can be a curator in this area, but. How um, in the
466 media, it seems like most of the images of like, the put out of attractive women is
467 always women that um- their ethnicity isn't always easily identified [F8: yep] Am
468 I making sense? [FAC: mmmm, mumbles of agreement from others]. Beyonce,
469 she's black but she's kind of fair skinned, she's got long curly – [F8: long hair]
470 blond hair, you know what I mean? And um, that's just something that I noticed.
471 And I wished there was some way that I could say, you know, it's okay, you
472 could be proud of your ethnicity. You know, you don't have to change the way
473 you look, you know what I mean? [FAC: Let's stick with that and sort of unpack
474 that a little bit. What are the ways that people could highlight, hold up alternatives
475 to that kind of stereotype that we often get. What would be ways that one could
476 do it? I mean you could start in one's personal life by you're at a party and go up
477 to the person who looks sort of neutral, talk to somebody, value somebody else.
478 So there's that one very basic, you know, what you do with your own time and
479 energy. Other thoughts about how you- how somebody could hold up alternative
480 images in this that M3 brought up for us?

481

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

482 M2: I think it's kinda interesting about that comment, I agree with you that you
483 know, what our media's been doing it's something like that. But I think it's kind
484 of interesting that you know, we're all like, everybody needs to have their own
485 culture back after we spent hundreds of years trying to be this melting pot of
486 cultures. Trying to abolish cultural identity, now all of a sudden we're like 'oh,
487 we need that back now. And we've gone so far, that maybe it's like, maybe we've
488 almost gone too far, maybe we're at the point now, maybe it is too far to turn
489 back. [F?: coughs] I hope it's not, but you know, we spent all this time trying to
490 abolish those things and now we're trying to realize they're gone or becoming -
491 quickly vanishing, and all of a sudden we want them back.

492
493 F7: I don't know if I would go so far and say abolishing them, I think a more, a
494 blending. Cause I'm just thinking of even the Xcity area. And, it – I would not
495 call the Xcity area a really much of a melting pot [F6: that analogy was reversed,
496 it's more of a tossed salad.] Yeah! [F1: Because if you look in all the Xcity
497 neighborhoods, you've got Xneighborhood, and all the neighborhoods that are
498 very segregated. Um, ethnicity – M3: Jewish neighborhood, F1: yeah! All the
499 different types and I think if it was more of a blending, I hear what you're saying
500 M2, I just think it's more of a blending than an abolishing. Cause I don't think
501 anyone was trying to lose their cultural identity. [F8: Assimilation] As much as
502 assimil- maybe find more common ground everyone can relate to] And I think it's
503 acknowledged now that this American image, we attracted all these immigrants,
504 and we were going to have the melting pot, you're exactly right. You know,
505 intercultural people now say, it was never a melting pot, it's the tossed salad now.
506 So we're all here sharing the same space in the same country, but we're keeping
507 our distinct identity, so you can identify the tomato, you can see where the
508 cucumber is and that kind of thing. And it's true, the work that I do in studying
509 abroad and focusing on intercultural things – my message to students is what an
510 incredibly exciting, enriching world we live in. And to delight in cultural
511 differences of people and to see them as something we can learn from and be
512 enriched by rather than look at it as something divisive.

513
514 FAC: I'm going to come back to something M3 said, but let's go for a moment
515 with what you were saying about your work teaching. I'm seeing that as a
516 curatorial function. We're all living here in the United States. We're all- pretty
517 much US media, we're all, you know, have our own limited horizons we're
518 moving in, and you're playing a role in your teaching, holding up, oh, here's how,
519 if you look, if we choose to look, that corner is always darkest into which we
520 never look, if you choose to look in another direction, oh, people are doing
521 something very different in x-location. Am I hearing what you're doing correctly?
522

523 F7: Exactly. And I challenge students to – like I said, enlighten them, I learn from
524 that. I personally find that so incredibly exciting, so I share that with my students
525 as – you know, if you want sameness, stay right here, don't go anywhere. You

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

526 know, keep your own little bubble, protect your bubble. If you want to go out and
527 seek difference, then you should see difference out there.

528

529 F4: F7, how might you suggest to some students who can't do study abroad,
530 whether that is, whatever the factors may be, what are some ways you can think
531 of that people could expand that? I knew of some, but I'm picking you [giggles]

532

533 F7: I teach this course on intercultural understanding. And I, one of the first things
534 I do, is tell them take the cultural plunge right here locally. Go someplace you've
535 never ever been before. I mean, we tend to keep going to the places we're most
536 familiar with because we're most comfortable there. Go someplace where you're
537 the outsider, the other and then what they find is it really wasn't as threatening –
538 they were all stressed and they were all concerned about going, but they felt
539 welcomed once they were there. They learned from it, they found it interesting,
540 the found it exciting. A common thing, people go to different religion services –
541 religious services. Or they go to um, a nursing home, or a school for the deaf or
542 blind, you know, being around people that are different than you. And invariably,
543 they all come back saying, 'oh, gosh this was such a great thing, I'm so glad I did
544 this.' Because my challenge to them is if your not stretching yourself her locally,
545 what makes you think you're going to go to another country and stretch even
546 further. So it's just seeking out that new different experience.

547

548 FAC: So this is an absolute curatorial experience, where you say, 'okay, I'm
549 holding up to you an opportunity and encouraging you to not [F7: I'm forcing]
550 Okay, we're all somewhere, and you're somewhere in a classroom, and you're
551 holding up this moment of – don't just take the image you're given, go look at
552 another image. But let's go back to something M3 was saying, because I thought I
553 heard at the heart of what you were saying was that one set of images of what's
554 beautiful and valuable gets portrayed and by implication other sets possibilities
555 for what is beautiful and valuable don't get portrayed in the big media. Is that at
556 the heart of what you were saying?

557

558 M3: Well, like for instance, you know, I was thinking about this too, let's go back
559 to Beyonce or whoever, Halle Berry, she's mixed. And I always thought that
560 Naomi Campbell is just as pretty as one of them, but she's never crossed over
561 because she's dark-skinned. I mean, that might not be exactly why, but I'm mean,
562 let's be honest, that's not, you know, the image that people identify with, you
563 know?

564

565 FAC: Okay, so [F8: She's treated as exotic because she's African, you know?

566 M3: right.

567

568 F8: They have to be, it's almost, I don't wan to say the word alien, but if [M3:
569 yeah] somebody comes from a different country or has like different facial

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

570 features, they have to be exotic and just, 'wow, I've just never seen anything this
571 before. Like the sister that's a supermodel from Africa, she has very very very
572 dark skin, you know what I'm talking about? She's got that shaved head, [M3 and
573 others: yeah] and everybody's like 'wow, she's just-' [M2: she's married to David
574 Bowie isn't she?] No, that's Iman, but again, that's that whole exotic factor of,
575 you know, if they don't match they must be something extraordinary, you know?]
576 So, let's go back to the other side of that of how somebody would hold up other
577 images or make things, different, M5.

578

579 M5: Yeah, I have an example of curatorial example, also an example of the
580 standards of beauty issue. I've got a 6 year-old daughter who used to be 2, 2-3,
581 and we had her in a day care of predominantly white day care, near the- near the,
582 somewhere near the house, less than a mile away. And it struck me one afternoon
583 coming home, you know, 'how was your day,' and mom was furious, and I'm
584 like, what's going on? Well, *daughter, 2 year-old and 3 year-old kids were
585 fascinated with barbies and princesses, right, the princess issue. Well, mom is –
586 my wife is African, born and bred in Africa, schooled in England, so she comes
587 across and seeming to be an African-American if you don't know her. So, she
588 resists almost being identified as an African-American, she's African, so what
589 that means. But she was also resisting what her daughter, resisting who she was as
590 a big brown eyed, bushy haired, nappy head, thin, long beautiful girl, and um, so
591 she got really um – I = I didn't know what to do, quite honestly. Dudes, we don't
592 have those issues, [group laughter] not like that. [F8: not like that, right]. No we
593 have status issues, shoes, clothes, those kinds of things, black people [inaudible]
594 I'm generalizing from my own reality. I don't have those aesthetic issues. So,
595 what the mother did was she took a calendar of all African women, and these
596 were African girls from other places, not one of those UNICEF calendars. And
597 she just plastered all these pictures all over her room- right above her bed. And
598 they stayed there for at least a year. And there were – you know, January,
599 February, she just took off, these are the images that you need to be identifying
600 with young lady. She put them all – there were beautiful pictures, girls from
601 everywhere, but there were the big head, the big lip, big eared, the long, you
602 know, dark brown mocha, pecan, mahogany skinned, she's reminded by that
603 every once and a while, not the- not the fact that these things were up in her room,
604 but that it's fine for you to be who you are. So that was a specific curatorial
605 instance that had to take a home intervention, but she also went to the school and
606 said, look, could you just downplay these white-skinned Barbie doll princess
607 issues because we don't have one of those kinds of kids at our house. So she did
608 two things, that was about three years ago. [F8: wow.]

609

610 F8: The big thing is to have princess parties, you heard that now? Like all the
611 little girls have princess parties, and you go and you're supposed to get made up.
612 You go and get make-up put on you. I'm talking about very small children, 5 and
613 up, and they go and have somebody put make up on them and they act like

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

614 princesses. [M4: [inaudible]; FAC: I'm sorry?] The belle, [M4: It's like,
615 [inaudible] they go dress up and go to the doll house and have like butlers who
616 ring the bell]

617

618 M3: Why is that- why is that the goal? Is that what you're trying to achieve? Like
619 really? If I had a million please. [F8: I wouldn't give you a princess party!] Yah
620 know, like what? [mumbles from group members about issue, all in agreement]

621

622 F5: I recall another curatorial function. Summer at sea and we had an excellent art
623 professor, a young woman from the state of Washington, she was just great. She
624 knew European art inside and out. And I don't know how a discussion- an
625 informal discussion came up about, I wasn't part of it, my son was though, my
626 son was um, like 16 at the time, he turned 17 on the ship. And it was about images
627 of Christ, what does Christ really look like? And this woman went back and she
628 printed out images of Christ coming out of every possible ethnic group. And I
629 remember my son came back to my room at the end of the night and he was so
630 floored, 'oh my god, Mom, look at this!' 'cuase you know, the mainstream image
631 of Christ is this white, white-skinned, often times light eyed, light brown haired
632 person who couldn't possibly have come from that part of the world. We've
633 modified him. And my son came back totally floored, saying, 'mom could this
634 be?!' I said yes, of course, this could be! But he needed – and I thought how
635 wonderful of her to challenge that image that most of them, that I'm sure the
636 white kids on that boat had looking at this Christ figure. And it was a whole page
637 of twenty-some different images. And so, she ah, she shook them there, and it
638 needed to be done. You know, if nobody's out there challenging that then it
639 doesn't help.

640

641 FAC: F4, let's we're about to take a break, let me just leave you with one other
642 thought about this. Um, in a way, we've been talking about some of this sort of
643 personal but also structural things we can do in terms of combating some of these,
644 you know, combating is making it sound like x is bad and something is absolutely
645 good – it's more like holding up alternatives and letting a lot of other voices be
646 shown. But, we haven't talked much about the sharing thing, of share-ables
647 *discusses benefits of opting for sharing as opposed to continued consumption,
648 offers examples, transitions to break

649

650 M3: Reads "change maker" selection re: Oseola McCarty

651

652 FAC: What do you think about this lady, her ability to manage and model? F3,
653 thoughts? Have you heard of this person before?

654

655 F3: No.

656

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

657 M3: I never, I never heard of her, I was like – wow, for one, I don't know how
658 she could have saved \$150,000 dollars making \$2/hr, you know what I mean?
659 Even then it [inaudible], you know? So, um, and then she gave away everything
660 she had too, not even a little bit. She didn't buy herself a car, just completely
661 selfless, you know. And also, it's funny how like, when she donated that money,
662 so many other people started donated money, it's just like a chain reaction. It's
663 just like when one person stood up and um, decided to you know, um, be selfless,
664 work for something she believed in, then so many other people said, well you
665 know what, if she can do it, I can do it, you know?
666

667 F7: I thought the one comment that I found to be very interesting was the Ted
668 Turner line. About well, if this woman can give up everything she owns, well then
669 I can give a billion [FAC: right], I'll still have millions but, [group laughter] I
670 mean, not that it's not nice, it's a very nice thing to do, I just think that the way it
671 was, said in there was kind of funny [mumbles of agreement from others] I can
672 give up say a billion [mimicking voice, laughs] of my- [M3: more like \$20] right,
673 exactly! That's how I heard that.
674

675 FAC: I mean, that was a billion that wasn't there in that fund, the scholarship
676 fund.
677

678 F7: Mhmm.
679

680 F5: Yeah, I remember her getting the medal of freedom [inaudible], tiny little
681 slight African-american woman, very self-effacing, very humble and the fact that
682 she um- that this was not a big deal, that she was doing, from her own
683 perspective, this was just what she wanted to do. I mean, her attitude that she
684 brought to it, was really impressive. I just remember this uh- it was just a natural
685 direction that she was taking with this, and what she was supposed to be doing.
686

687 FAC: So, you didn't get the sense that she felt she diminished her life or made a
688 really big sacrifice to [F5: noo, no sacrifice. It was just what she saw as the right
689 thing to do. Very impressive]
690

691 F4: It makes me think about what is her fam- what, where did she get that from?
692 [F2: that attitude] yeah, how did that come up because thinking about what is her
693 family like and how did that, did her family influence her to be that selfless, to
694 give to so many others, what was her experience? Who knows, I just have a lot of
695 questions. [F8: what's the story behind that?] There's definitely a story behind
696 that and this was a little bit of a tease, I'd say.
697

698 F2: It's interesting that she could have easily have been just very helpless. Just
699 you know, she wasn't rich, she wasn't making very much money. But she
700 decided that wasn't going to be helpless, she was going to you know, be

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

701 proactive, she was going to make something happen. And you know, it took her
702 years to save up this money, but she was willing to be patient and allow things to
703 work out and sometimes we want to change things – I think about becoming a
704 teacher. I think I'll go into the classroom and I'll change all the students [F8:
705 right, FAC: mumbles in agreement] that's kind of an absurd thought. Just because
706 you're only with them, well for a little bit of time. You can definitely have a big
707 impact on people, but um, I shouldn't expect world peace after I teach a science
708 class. But, ah, she- when you're willing to take the time and not just let yourself
709 be a victim or helpless, you can wallow in self-pity of not getting anything done.
710 You can get a lot more done.

711

712 FAC: Do you think she set herself the goal of like, okay, I'm going to save
713 \$150,000 starting this dollar right here? [mumbles of 'no'].

714

715 M3: She even said it just accumulated, it just kept adding and adding, so, I don't
716 know

717

718 F8: I think that the trend that we see with all these change makers we're looking
719 at, is that – and this is really hard, I say honestly for me it's hard to be able to do
720 something like that without knowing that you're going to get recognized when it's
721 all over. 'cause I think we are big on giving certificates and awards of
722 appreciation and thank you's and all this type of stuff and it's getting to the point
723 where people look for that first, they know that they're going to get that. That's
724 their end in mind, that somebody's going to thank me, I'm going to get a
725 presidential honor [FAC: right]. You know, they look at that end in mind instead
726 of the end goal being I have this scholarship or I planted a million trees. So, I
727 think just being able to step outside of that and say, you know I really don't care if
728 anybody ever knows that I did all this. I know that I did it and that's enough. Or
729 the kids know, or whoever I'm benefiting knows that I did this. 'cause if you
730 expect something glorious or your name in lights somewhere, or your 15 minutes
731 of fame, I think it just ruins it. That's very hard, very hard

732

733 FAC: There's the other piece to it that feels hard, which is, you start planting a
734 couple trees or you start saving a couple bucks. But, you don't know that it's
735 going to become \$150,000 or a million trees or twenty million trees or whatever,
736 it's just somebody doing a little bit, not knowing it's going to turn into something,
737 might hope it's going to turn into something, but not necessarily, you know,
738 having that, you know, we always want to say well like, oh it's not really going to
739 make a big difference, why bother start.

740

741 M5: Yeah, it seems so overwhelming as well. [FAC: mmmm, alone?]
742 Overwhelming. [FAC: overwhelming, it's to say-] I mean just to say I'm going to
743 focus on that big issue that I'm going to do, then. But this, small, that [FAC: I can
744 do that, yeah] Well, no, the opposite, that little bit right there won't do anything

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

745 for that big thing so. What's the use in even doing this, it's not going to – ah,
746 forget it, I'm not doing it. [inaudible]

747

748 M2: Maybe I'm missing the point [FAC: nah, go ahead] with all these change
749 makers, it's not so much trying to do something great, is that they were doing
750 something that they enjoy doing. Like um, M5, you talk about coaching a soccer,
751 I coach youth football, so I have similar experiences. And I coached 'cause I
752 enjoyed coaching, I mean, did I know I might have some impact on these kids,
753 yes, was that my reason for doing it? Not really. 'Cause I wanted to be there, and I
754 enjoyed the time I had having to spend there, and if they got something out of it,
755 all the better. But, you know, I feel like some of the other things, you know, these
756 people are doing things that they enjoy doing [emphasis on 'enjoy doing']. And
757 when you enjoy doing something, it doesn't matter if it's going to make a change,
758 it doesn't matter if, you know, you become something great because of it, it's
759 because you enjoy doing it. And I think um- uh I guess another example, is um, I
760 was actually in Xstate for last spring break for um, an alternative spring break, we
761 built a trail. And um, while we were down there this group was showing a video
762 and it was relating to like um, the open face mine as being done in Ysouthern
763 state and down in xstate (where he went for spring break), where they basically
764 rip down mountains [FAC: oh mountain [inaudible] yah, mountain roping and
765 stuff. So basically if you go to Ystate now you'll see this valley or whatever,
766 where once there was 2 or 3 mountains, they removed for coal and power plants
767 and stuff. And I realized when they were talking about this was how, not only is
768 you know, It's just like, easy to stop this in the way that you save energy, but by
769 saving energy, you're saving money. It's not like, you know, people can do
770 because they want to save the environment, as much as it is you're saving
771 yourself money in the process. It's like, you know, you're going through your
772 house and you replace all your incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent light
773 bulbs, that'll save you \$30 a month on electricity in an average sized home. If you
774 get like solar panels for your roof, you really can't do that in the city, but [FAC:
775 oh no, you can-] I guess it depends if you own the house or not, But you can live,
776 like where I live, like in the suburbs and stuff, and you replace that, you can get,
777 you know, say X dollars a month on your electricity bill. It may take a lot to pay
778 that off, in the long run, you will save yourself money. It's all this stuff people
779 like, I mean we are a commerce driven society, money does matter no matter what
780 you say about it. It plays a role in our everyday life, and if these people, their was
781 goal was saving money and in the process they did a great thing for the
782 environment by saving, helping prevent mal-[inaudible], nuclear waste and all this
783 other stuff that, I guess, you know, sometimes we say that the little things don't
784 matter, I think a lot of times, if we put those little things in a perspective that does
785 matter, or we enjoy doing, then it becomes a lot easier to make a change.

786

787 FAC: It can be painful or a cost to make a change, but it doesn't have to be
788 necessarily painful. Just to go back for a second to something F8 was saying. You

Group G-1: Meeting #5, True Wealth
Transcript

789 were saying that um, you admired that she didn't, you know, want to go for the
790 honor of the – and, you know, I think that that is something that we do respond to
791 – you know, she set her money aside and she didn't know it was going to turn into
792 \$100,000, you know finally when it built up, but do you think it would have been
793 better if she had been totally anonymous and hadn't told her story at all?

794

795 F7: No, she set such a great example. She needed to be identified and her story
796 told. But, you know, the other thing, with what F8 was describing for me was a
797 kind of selflessness that people have. You know, you, you it's just not for you,
798 you're not doing it for you and it's um, uhh, and that's hard in American society
799 because we – we celebrate the self, we celebrate individuality. We want each
800 child to grow up and flourish and support themselves strongly, and we let children
801 feel like they are the center of their worlds and suddenly you reach adulthood, and
802 it's hard to keep thinking that the world revolves around you, but a lot of people
803 still try to maintain that. Some of these acts of selflessness, I find is really
804 admirable.

805

806 FAC: It's interesting, it's another one of those moments where we've got two
807 opposite ideas that are absolutely true. Yet, somehow they're better when we hold
808 them both together at the same time. What M2 was saying, about you know, it can
809 be fun, you can do – you can do stuff, you can follow your passion. You can
810 actually save money while you're saving the environment, you know. There's that
811 side of it. There's also what F7 has been saying, it's not just about ourselves, and
812 maybe in a way these two seemingly opposite things come together, like with
813 M5's baseball team or with this coaching, it's not about yourself, you are going
814 and giving time to other people and that's where you get some real value, and
815 that's where we get some true wealth by getting outside of ourselves and making
816 one of these moves and somehow both these things are true, it's not about
817 yourself and it doesn't have to be necessarily easy.

818

819 F1: I would even say in response to – you were saying FAC, you know, does it
820 make a difference- {TAPE ENDS.}

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

1 FAC: The first one's the one we've been stressing all along and that is, you
2 know, we're not trying to be in the mode where we're asking everybody to take
3 on this by heavy obligation that you carry around with you. Um, really, we're
4 looking for this moment, ideally, where your passion or your gladness sort of
5 intersects with the world's need and hunger. That's where the really important
6 things in the world really get done. Where that intersection happens. But there is
7 also this other side of you know, sort of, relationship to the commonwealth; stuff
8 that isn't as glamorous or as passionate – the chipping in we do as family
9 members. The sort of chores we do around the house. The job we sort of – things
10 that you kind of need to do and kind of, like taking out the garbage and that kind
11 of stuff. So in addition to your passion, there's also things that we do as global
12 family members, or human family members that re chipping in – you know the
13 ordinary things as an earner you know, we can donate some – help things get done
14 that we can't do ourselves. As a consumer, you know, we can buy with other
15 people in mind, so we're sort of looking beyond just “how do I get the best
16 bargain for myself?” As a citizen, we can sort of, support investments that are in
17 our shared common life, or do our best to raise our voices in support of other
18 people who have needs around us. Um, so that's one thing we've been talking
19 about the whole arc of our lives so, you know, some of you are students, some of
20 you got jobs, so at a different point of you life. So, you know, we don't have to do
21 anything right now. We don't want to be in just a mode of deferring things of
22 until, but we don't have to do everything now and the point of this is how do we
23 find a way of sticking with them and find a life of, you know, a lot of steps along
24 the way, that we can look back that really adds up to a life of significance. Then
25 this has been my personal hobby, you know, talking about the personal and the
26 structural. You've got to do the things that are just human-to-human, these are
27 very, very rewarding. But, you know, we've also got to, um, work on some
28 structural issues, than just having to resolve the same problems if we don't get at
29 the causes. Um, and then finally this may be the most important one, this business
30 that it's about direction, not perfection. So, you know, it's about moving to action,
31 not waiting until you have the perfect plan or all the answers. You know, you can
32 take small steps and we both learn by doing, and get a lot of rewards by doing
33 something that's actually taking those steps and we can enjoy it. So, you know,
34 those themes to set a context. One last bit of context setting (.) is, you know, I've
35 talked a bit of times about the change maker course. I got a chance to interview,
36 listen to change-makers talk over the course of this semester and it was very
37 moving to me and I'll like us to listen to a very short segment from a guy who's
38 name is Bill Mosher, and he spent his, you know, last, you know, recent part of
39 his life interviewing and meeting change-makers, and recently been the producer
40 of a PBS show that I haven't really seen called the “Visionaries.” (inaudible)
41 people made some significant changes (inaudible). So let us listen to him because
42 he draws some conclusions, some generalizations form his first-hand experiences.
43
44 {Video plays}

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

45
46 FAC: So, it's kind of setting us up for moving to action. Um, taking small steps,
47 experiencing some joy in it. Moving into action. I think I might of mentioned last
48 week, this life from this Paul Simon song, where he says, "I can't run but I can
49 walk much faster than this." Let's get cracking at this point. We talked last
50 session about this [inaud]. Almost everybody said, I'm really forcing this issue of
51 – I'm overwhelmed by this stuff, I've got a lot of things happening, it's really
52 hard for me to find time for stuff. So, I thought it would be useful for us to spend
53 a little bit of time thinking about our existing commitments and things that we're
54 up to. And why don't we spend 10 minutes just to give us a change just to think
55 what are we up to, really quietly to yourself and then why don't we separate into 2
56 small groups and then not share everything we thought or discovered, but, you
57 know, what kind of conclusions, what sort of something that we learned taken
58 from [inaud]. So, I'm going to list or map or sketch, and I sort of deliberately
59 picked a bund of different words because some people like to list, some people
60 like to draw, make pictures, um, of what your existing commitments are. And of
61 course, one thing we're thinking about is your commitments that relate to our
62 larger commonwealth, you know thinking, you know, are you donating,
63 volunteering, do you already have in play. We're also – you also that about your
64 other big life commitments, you're in school, you've got a job, family, you've got
65 relationships with -. Um, we could put up here, your health, some people have go,
66 um, you know, different health issues and that needs to be a commitment, - must
67 keep self whole in order to be of help and service to other people. So, you know,
68 first, map and list some of your commitments and than ask yourself, do you see
69 some sort of pattern, do you see just a bunch of clutter, do you see a void. Are
70 there things that seem like low priorities, that you think, oh well, maybe I don't
71 have to get them off my list entirely, but, I could be spending less time on those.
72 And then, this I think is the most important part of this 10 minute exercise, is to
73 try and get yourself to then think about okay, with each of these commitments that
74 you have put, is there someway that you could nudge it or shift it, or whatever
75 word you want to use, edge it over, so that it is building somehow toward our
76 commonwealth. So, for instance with school, you're studying something, you
77 know, how's that gonna, you know, are there ways you think you can make that
78 contribute over the long term? Or -, um, you know, in your job, are there
79 opportunities, you could sort of re-shape your job or re-focus your job, or get
80 together with other people in your job who might share some of your values, and
81 work with them on something that's productive. Or, you in terms of family and
82 friends, it's also important to spend time with family and friends, how do we
83 bring people along with us, on these journeys in support of commonwealth? So,
84 that's the third and probably most important thing, is that can you think of your
85 existing commitments and how much you nudge you're already doing in a more
86 positive direction? Not to imply that they're bad now. Um, so does anybody have
87 questions about this little 10 minutes of thinking? Um, some people like big paper
88 so I brought a big pad. [laughter from group] so we can pass this around or you

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

89 could just work from your notepads or whatever works for you. Some pens,
90 markers there. So, let's spend maybe 10 minutes doing that and then we'll break
91 into small groups, kind of share with each other what we're learning. [comments
92 amongst group members, paper shuffling, mumbling voices] Also, some people
93 like to work in solitary moment, quiet, so if you'd like to step into another room if
94 you can find a place to be by yourself to do this. [silence, people clearing throats,
95 etc...after approx 2 minutes a student asks another students about number of
96 hours of class time for 17 credits] Gonna give everybody a two-minute warning to
97 kind of, collect thoughts a little bit. (15) So, let us break into two groups, and why
98 don't we 1-2, 1-2 {group members count off their numbers "1-2," etc} Okay, so
99 um, howabout the 2's go in that room and the 1's stay here. [many responses from
100 group, (inaudible)] Very good! And again, you won't have a chance to share
101 everything you thought about, but you know, that's probably some thought that
102 you had in the middle of this that you found useful, and I think – or, in the middle
103 of it, you were just wrestling with something and didn't come to a conclusion,
104 that's fine too. So, just sort of share that with the other members of the group and
105 I think that people will learn a lot from each other's, um, either conclusions,
106 where you thought you can make a move or places where you were a little stuck.
107 And, we're gonna do this just for roughly 20 minutes or something and then we're
108 gonna all end up in the other room over there to look at some X university related
109 resources that are also even more practical things that you could sort of plug in.
110 So, 2's over there and 1's are eventually gonna have to move. [noises, mention of
111 cookies, mumbling voices, "thank you," questions asked between people,
112 someone talking about upcoming plans, talk of an up coming wedding] She's
113 going to be facilitator, [F8: Yes! Let me start!] Okay, alright we've got a number
114 of people here and I'd like everybody a chance to say a little bit of what they were
115 thinking about so we're gonna have to jump on it, so um, let's think, who's
116 willing to go first? Can I turn to you F3 [F3: Sure]

117

118 F3: Uhh, for the first one.

119

120 FAC: If you want to work through them that's fine or start where you ended up,
121 that's fine too, so that's -

122

123 F3: Basically, my main commitments are school and work. I have to go to work
124 so that I can go to school so, that I can like not have to work where I work now
125 forever, it's kind of a vicious cycle. There, so those are the main time consuming
126 ones. Um, and like, and if like, there's any clutter I can avoid, I've already gotten
127 rid of all of those so, it's basically work all day, school all night, all the other
128 things have been cut out. Um, and to shift and nudge them, like basically the way
129 I looked at it is like – my studies, like what I'm majoring in, they're like in areas
130 that are in – they focus in a field that I think I'll be able to use in the future to
131 achieve my goals and um, it's kind of like [FAC- oh I'm sorry] And it's kind of
132 like now is a preparation for then. Basically, is where it stands. [FAC: is it fair to

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

133 generally say that it's sort of around peace, education issues..] yeah kind fo like,
134 basically, conflict and like, political, anthropological type things. So, it's basically
135 like, the preparation for then. [FAC: mhmm] No, like overwhelming like
136 thoughts, it's kind of like a waiting game, basically. [FAC: But, it's- it's an arc,
137 and it's an -] yeah [FAC: an important direction] on the upwards [FAC: yup. F1]
138

139 F1: Um, well I started, you know, kind of looking at like my major, where my
140 major obligation – where my time goes. And it really is divided between work,
141 um school, 'cause I still continue to take classes and you know, kind of keep that
142 part of my life along, and then family I've got a lot of family obligations,
143 including pets and that just really tends to suck up a lot of my time and looking at
144 my volunteer commitments and where I really used to focus a lot of my volunteer
145 time and energy was through my church and one of the things that kind of looking
146 at where my time goes, that's actually where something I've been cutting back –
147 that's where I've cut back – that's what has been sacrificed. Which is a place
148 where I donate, a place where I've been involved in, you know, doing different
149 kinds of work in the community and I've let that go, you know, so that's kind of
150 an interesting – I'm not completely, I've kind of feel like, okay today I can go, but
151 a lot of times I feel too tired, too wiped out, too overcommitted. So, this is kind of
152 an interesting reflection for me to think about what in this crazy life that I have is
153 maybe something that I don't necessarily need to be putting so much energy into.
154 Umm, so I-I don't know if I have a decision right now, but other than thinking
155 that there's some imbalance here, you know, I don't know.

156
157 FAC: The thought I have without spending a lot of time on this is just sort of a
158 little bit about a thing to think about is that, are there things where – by spending
159 time with your family in new ways, you could sort of not, it's not so much adding
160 to your list but, would that be something that would be -

161
162 F1: The one possible way – both of my – I have two college age daughters and
163 they are at home and probably will stay home this next year for you know some
164 other reasons. We all have a love of animals and one of the things that I was
165 trying to get, one of my daughters to do, who's in the process of becoming a
166 veterinary technician, is to volunteer with um, the animal protective league. She's
167 very interested and I started thinking well, what if we all did it? What if we all
168 joined together? Number one, I think for her, it would be a wonderful – it would
169 be a wonderful support, she'd actually do it, instead of me – see what I did is I
170 handed her a contact number and said – 'oh, you ought to do this!' But, if we took
171 an initiative as a family, you're absolutely right! I didn't even think of that so –
172 and I bet she would really, it would be meaningful for me to do something. I
173 really, you know, support her interest in working with animals and caring for their
174 well-being. And um, I would assume that would count [laughs nervously] you
175 know.
176

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

177 FAC: Uh-yah, you know, and it might not feel at the end that you added this har-
178 hard thing, it would just feel [F1: right] like good time with your family [F1:
179 yeah].
180

181 F1: It would bring us together too, because what I find with them back, neither of
182 them have cars, and I'm back to soccer mom days [F?: 'mom can I use your car]
183 yeah! Can I use your car, you know, which leaves me stranded and so, anyways
184 [laughs, F? joins in laughing] I'm adjusting through this part -it's -it's kind of
185 crazy right now.
186

187 FAC: We lost F6 so we'll go to M3.
188

189 M3: Well, most of my commitments, it's just like, school, you know, career
190 related things, um, my job. I've got two jobs I'm working right now. And then,
191 um, just my hobbies, um, that's basically it. And then um, patterns, that I kind of
192 noticed with the things that I do, is like, most of the time I spend, like, is on like,
193 work, most of my time, energy, intention. I don't want to sound like I work 80
194 hours a week, but I feel like I'm a little bit a work-a-holic, you know [FAC: uh
195 huh] and that's one of the main things um, a lot of the time is focused on things
196 that are like just to get by, like uh huh, I've got this bill I've got to pay at the end
197 of the month, I've got to work towards that. I've got to study for this exam I've
198 got to take, you know things like that and I've just kind of maintenance type
199 things and then um, and then I don't make a lot of commitments to um, other
200 people, that um, I guess maybe, it's kind of selfish in a way, but you know, I don't
201 get to spend a lot of time with my friends, you know, close friends and family
202 things like that. Or, just helping out other people in general. [FAC: could you
203 remind folks just both what your job is and what you're studying?] Uh, the uh, my
204 um, I can't even think words [laughter] [FAC: I think you're doing fine] my uh,
205 major's um Economics, and then um, my one job is I'm a research assistant for
206 this Diabetes study and then um, other job is a sales job that I do where I do
207 presentations for people. So um, those are my two jobs and my major. And then
208 um, the main thing I was going to say, for how I could nudge my commitments
209 towards like, commonwealth type goals is to just cut back on time that I spend
210 doing my hobbies, which I think kind of eh- 'cause I don't spend a lot of time just
211 having fun you know, but then the other thing I can say is trying to make
212 commonwealth as part of my hobbies trying to make fun the things that are
213 helping other people. [silence] Am I supposed to say something? [FAC: no, no
214 we're just, we're all just sort of thinking] [M2: we're just taking it all in.]
215

216 FAC: I guess we won't have time to look at this stuff in depth, but I'm wondering
217 if you have any intuitions about that last, interesting thing about making sort of,
218 making some good relaxing times out of doing stuff with and for other people.
219 And then the other question I have, is where do you see yourself taking the
220 economics?

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

221

222 M3: Well, with economics, they weren't going to be like um, I wanted to uh – be
223 a consultant, a business consultant when I graduated. So, that's not really a
224 commonwealth, kind of thing.

225

226 FAC: Well, you know, I guess I would probe there, 'cause there are a lot of ways
227 you could frame what questions get asked and – you know, um, I think there are a
228 lot of possibilities and working with companies in a general way, shaping the kind
229 of things that get thought about.

230

231 M3: Bringing up ethical questions and making them, well you can't make people
232 consider things like that but, just throwing it out there you mean?

233

234 FAC: Yeah {other's echo} and not in a you now, you know, holier than though
235 kind of way, but let's all explore this together. We all got to live together and are
236 there some ways that we can make what we're doing contribute? But, I got us off
237 what everybody's reacting to, which is your other interesting idea, which was this,
238 making a good time with something with other. Do you have some even faint
239 intuitions- I mean this is unfair, we all only had 10 minutes to think about so it's
240 not like [inaud] [others mumble mhmm] expect deep conclusions from you...

241

242 M3: Well, um, you know, I guess if gardening was my passion I could have fun
243 planting trees, but unfortunately, it's not so.

244

245 FAC: Well what was one of the hobbies you felt you cut back on?

246

247 M3: Um, well I was about to say I do read comic books, but I haven't bought one
248 of those in months. I do play video games but I traded those in. I just maybe rent a
249 couple of games a month. Um, I guess I could spend less time watching sports
250 but, I don't spend a lot of time doing that either. Maybe an hour or so a day [M2:
251 sleep less [LF]; F6: Or just have fun watching that hour or so of sports instead of
252 worrying about spending too much time watching sports]

253

254 FAC: There's back to some level you've got to maintain yourself – you know.
255 You can't have no space to cool yourself off. As we turn to somebody else. If
256 sports is something you enjoy, not just watching, but doing sports with other
257 people, kids or whatever, could be something that turns into a fun thing.

258

259 M3: This is true.

260

261 FAC: You now, you never know. But on the other hand, I don't want to say that
262 you don't maybe need that hour of {others mumble in agreement} sometimes you
263 need that hour to kind of collect.

264

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

265 M3: I spend a lot of time doing that too. A lot of times, I'm just tired. I feel like
266 I'm wasting time. But, it's like I don't have any energy or patience to do anything
267 else but just lay there for a little while. {others mumble in agreement} but that is
268 true about the sports thing. I like boxing. So, [LF] so maybe I could spend some
269 time, maybe helping train people how to box, I don't know
270

271 FAC: I know there's a downtown boxing thing. I don't know much about it, it's
272 run by a guy who used to be a police detective guy, who's also a poet. I know him
273 on the poetry side [F?: mhmm] I guess they're doing somethings that are on the
274 commonwealth edge of things.
275

276 M3: I mean, I would, if you like, if like, not to like give you an assignment,
277 but [FAC: oh, no! that'd- one of my roles here, is if I can hook you up with
278 somebody, I'd be glad] Okay, hook me up, let me get his name and number
279 [group laughter] [FAC: His names X X, but I don't know how to spell it, but I'll
280 get you his phone number. Okay, let's jump to M5]
281

282 M5: Yah, um, I-I drew um, three pictures of buildings with a cross on 'em. One
283 is ah, my church, my church elder and head of a preschool board. So, a lot of my
284 time is spent there and I drew a school, X university is a catholic institution so
285 um, I'm a chair of a department, I do service. It says XU and school, and I tend to
286 do service so I do service at FX through the fraternity. I take students to
287 Xcountry, as I've said through service learning. Then I also um, I'm involved in a
288 lot of professional services through national organizations. So, and then the other
289 structure was my house. My house ironically has uh, I don't know the history of
290 it, but there's a cross embedded in the – it looks like a cross. We've kept it as
291 such. It's a gold brick house and it's got a cross right there between the second
292 floor and why there I have no idea, we haven't figured it out, but that's the other
293 kind of sacred space and I'm [nickname] as you all know. Um, I volunteer and
294 coach, but um, I keep each of those three spaces sacred in my mind and so, but in
295 some ways they overlap, there is some pattern and connection. What I do at
296 school relates to what I'm doing at home so there's relation to taking the family to
297 church. So there's arrows that go back and forth between these three institutions,
298 right? And then there's another big arrow, which says shifting and nudging and
299 this is where I got stuck 'cause I wasn't really sure. I'm processing three things
300 right now, and one of them is uh, making more out of my X experiences in X
301 country. (inaudible) married to X country and we've been thinking about moving
302 back. It's going to be in the next 15, it's not going to be in the next 5 years. And
303 so I've tried to think about a way to have my students to not just get a month long
304 experience but 3 month, semester long experience, right? Build something that's a
305 bit longer. Then I'm, I'm, nudging issues around some challenges that are
306 happening around our church school, and how much I want to be committed to
307 some of the issues there in terms of rebuilding ah- it a low, and so taking some
308 time in terms of rethinking, how much do I want to be a part of that. And um,

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

309 we're moving in about a month and a half. I'm on sabbatical so we're going to the
310 Ycountry for about 9-10 months so, somethings going to get done there and it will
311 resolve around these three units as well, I don't know what to shift or nudge to
312 where the commonwealth is, uhh, that's where I stopped.

313 FAC Well you may have gotten a little stuck because there's already a lot of
314 direction there, but it seems like this idea of making even more a more powerful
315 experience for this set of students by perhaps extending it. You know, that
316 happens to be the one specific, that strikes me as – that's not an insignificant
317 nudge, that could be a very big thing. Okay, I'm going to (inaudible) 'cause the
318 poor people who are last, go ahead

319

320 F4: Uhhh, in terms of commitments, um, I eventually do want to return to
321 school, I'm not sure what for. Um, I'm in the process of finding a job so when I
322 do find one I'll be committed, uhh, you know, my family [FAC: and again, this is
323 teaching English, this is very much a service profession] you know, um also I, one
324 of the commitments and it may sound egotistical, but I have to put myself on there
325 too so that my physical and mental well-being, you is preserved [M3: definitely,
326 others mumble in agreement]. Yeah, um, so I think the trend in all of this is that
327 everything is in transition. I'm in this big transititon space. I think the very- I
328 didn't really consider high school to college a transition phase because I knew I
329 was going and it wasn't really a big deal to me, but this one is the big one and I'm
330 a person who's very, I like order and I like things logical and you know, step-by-
331 step, that's how I like to do things, I read directions for everything. [others laugh]
332 So, when I get things like this it drives me crazy, so um, but also it's kind of a
333 tension between that because um, I'm a person who likes order but I also love the
334 value and the idea of change. Because I think that's one of the things that an
335 individual should have, is the ability to look with and realize that they may have
336 the ability to change somethings about themselves so, that's kind of how- where
337 I'm at, and I think in terms of shifting, nudging these commitments, um, you
338 know, I'm either going to have to return, I like the idea of returning to school, and
339 I also put to the school of hard knocks, you know, I need to get education out
340 there on the street. You know, and I need it because I need real world experience,
341 I need practicality, I need to be able to teach a wide range of people. Um, in terms
342 of the job, which is the big issue right now, you know, I think what I've really
343 been hesitant about is that I was afraid of being stuck, like my teaching job I wake
344 up twenty years later and I'm sitting behind a desk, or I take a job at a university
345 and I'm sitting behind the same desk and I realize just today, matter of fact, that
346 um, I'm not going to be stuck, I'm going to have, if I take a job, wherever it may
347 be, I'll be fine because I know it's a step to wherever I want to go. So, um, and I
348 was thinking about, you know, in terms of, my presence in the classroom and
349 whether I want to be a teacher just because people tell me I'm good at it or do I
350 really want to do it, you know [others mumble in agreement; FAC: good
351 question]. And, I found that my passion for education goes beyond the classroom.
352 I want to be in a profession, no matter what it is where I have to opportunity to

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

353 provide training and teach, and it doesn't have to be in a classroom, it could be in
354 a corporate setting, you know, working for nonprofits, it could be anywhere, so
355 that's something I came to terms with today, and I- you know, I feel pretty good
356 about that, and um, you know, I feel like, in terms of the family and friends, you
357 know, they're going to be there, but I think about there's also the whole thing
358 where, the personal objective, a personal goal of mine, um, I kind of really, I
359 don't know, they're going to be there, I'm assuming. [FAC: mhmm] I've never
360 really had a family that's just like, 'oh god, we just not, do whatever you want
361 we're not going to follow you anywhere!' You know, they've always been, you
362 know, very supportive, and I've always been the type of person where I never
363 really asked for their advice, I just did it, because I knew if I did, if I asked for
364 their advice and they said no, it would change my mind, so – they'll be there!
365 [laughs, coughs]. [FAC: I wanna give M4 his shot, but when I-] sure.

366
367 FAC: When I listen to what you're saying, I'm hearing a kind of very interesting
368 thing, which is one the one hand, there are a lot of ways you could teach English,
369 it could be a sort of through a kind of high art event or it could be a thing that gets
370 people reflecting on things. So there's that moment there. But, it seems you've
371 already explained another possibility. [F?: right]. Which is, if you don't want to
372 get stuck in the classroom you could be doing the teaching thing initially and then
373 be doing some sort of forays out into the world sort of in the school of hard
374 knocks as you're saying [F? mumbles in agreement]. Trying some other things,
375 you know, hooking up with someone who's doing something interesting and
376 productive in another one of these areas whether it's corporate education or
377 whether it's something else, and you're both building up a track record so you
378 could make that leap and also exploring what you're doing. But in all those things
379 you could bring some attention, not just have it be about something limited in the
380 classroom, but about our life, [F?: yeah, exactly.]. M4.

381
382 M4: Hi, I figured about that, uhh, out of a 116 hours a week that's available to
383 us, I only have about 45 left for friends, family, myself, my health, food and
384 others and volunteering. So that's not a lot of time, it's basically about um, 6 and
385 a half hours a day, from which I subtracted that, I would like to spend 3 hours
386 working in a shop working on a race car, that leaves me 3.5 hours for all those
387 stuff, so, I'm basically booked. [others giggle] What I would like is, um, the worst
388 possible schedule, but I have to take into consideration that it's going to be during
389 the school year, but right now, I have a lot more time because I only have one
390 class and I will be working a lot, but, not too much and that will allow me to do
391 some more stuff, but um, just not a lot of time.

392
393 FAC: Do you want to share with folks what your studying and where you think
394 that's headed?

395

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

396 M4: Well, I'm studying to become a mechanical engineer, and [inaud], and I'm
397 trying to integrate those, and I think I can cut some time. I'd like to limit myself
398 to one hobby and I think that just being – growing up a little bit and stop playing
399 games and be more like – spending most of my time doing other stuff and just ah,
400 staying in the shop and that would be my hobby, that also goes to my career and
401 my hobby and I can kill two birds with one stone with that, since, and I can have
402 more time with that for other stuff that can be beneficial and not just waste time,
403 actually feel like I'm doing something more meaningful than just living, I'm
404 actually having an impact on society. and um, I don't know, I'd like to, I want to
405 have one of those race car engineers (?) and I don't know how that fits into
406 commonwealth, but um, I don't know, I have to find out, and just go with the flow
407 as she said. Tie it in, if I become really successful, racing school for
408 underprivileged kids [group laughter]
409

410 FAC: I mean that is one of those things that kids really care about, you know.
411 Both the glitz of the racing thing and making and fixing stuff, so that's not
412 entirely a bad thing. Do other people have quick thoughts?
413

414 M5: What shop you talking about?
415

416 M4: Oh, panther racing team. Formula SA, Panther racing.
417

418 M5: Are you on a racing team?
419

420 M4: Uh, I haven't drove yet, I'm just a freshman.
421

422 M5: But you're on the racing time?
423

424 M4: Everybody gets a chance to drive a car. Today was supposed to be my first
425 day of racing. I would have missed this, I would have gone to beaver run and
426 raced but, they canceled yesterday. I'll be another opportunity, Sunday
427

428 F1: You raised something that intrigued me and I, you know, I don't think like
429 this way sometimes, but it's kind of obvious. that within your- within school,
430 within work um, school, doing service-learning kinds of things, work- I know one
431 of my involvements in the *leadership program has been kind of way beyond the
432 scope of my job, but because I wanted to make a difference and really love
433 college students and you know, I can look at these, um, arenas that I occupy
434 throughout my life and look within those contexts to find ways to, you know, to
435 bring some things together. I know, years and years ago, I worked in human
436 services and one of the programs I got to start was a – was called *a community
437 youth program. It was involving young people, and they were at the firehouse and
438 they got to do things in the community that were just really good for the
439 community. And the program, it's you know, almost twenty years later, and it's

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

440 still running. You know, so, I was in *another state. You know, so that was part of
441 my job and I never really looked at it in this context. And maybe just looking at
442 that with new eyes, what – what might occur, or what I might possibly do in that
443 area.

444

445 FAC: And I think that's a creative challenge for all of us. [F?: yeah] And M4
446 sitting there looking well you know, how does racing connect to the
447 commonwealth? We don't have that answer right here, but you've got a life to
448 sort of figure that out. You can sift and sort that. And some people are going to go
449 through life and never raise that question, but if you go into it thinking, how do I
450 make this have some significance, I'm sure there's something there.

451

452 M4: Yeah, I mean, all the drivers I've seen drive formula 1 they're either from
453 Spain, Italy, Britain, there's three, one from Japan, a couple from Brazil, one from
454 Columbia. I mean, there's absolutely no Romanian driver and absolutely none
455 from – there's an Indian. There's no American, but Scott speed(?) might come in
456 next year. I'm thinking wow, what is this going on? But, hopefully the A-1
457 Formula team, which is hopefully the, um, some Shea from Dubai's organizing
458 this racing team, everybody's using the same kind of car and, it's teams from
459 different countries – China, Brazil, Britain, New Zealand, Russia, and they all
460 compete for points instead of companies, like car companies, like BMW, against
461 each other, but this might actually be like a world event and if I can get involved
462 in that and broaden it, but – [FAC: that's a very-] that's only 24 cars and 24
463 countries, but if we can incorporate some more countries and do some like
464 commonwealth.

465

466 FAC: I mean, lord knows, it could be a lot. I mean, I'm inferring then, that you
467 have some Romanian background and I mean, wow, that's an interesting gig.
468 [other's mumble in agreement] Well, we're not going to solve this here, I mean,
469 everybody's life is full of possibilities and [inaud]. Let us walk or hobble into the
470 other room [others laughing]

471

472 F1: Do we need our packet?

473

474 FAC: You might want to take a paper to take some notes, and if you'd like us to
475 carry 'cause you don't have two arms... [F1: That would be lovely thank you!]
476 {[LF and talking amongst participants, plenty of movement, talking from a long
477 distance from group members in another room– inaudible]}

478

479 {Casual conversations: F1 & F4 discussing future plans, other conversations
480 taking place.} [FAC: are you in pain now? F5 no, but for a couple of days I was
481 just miserable.]

482

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #1
Transcript

483 FAC: I mean really, that's just as practical as the rest 'cause no one does this
484 stuff in a vacuum. You know, as we heard in the "visionaries" thing, it could be
485 rewarding, but as we saw in all of our change-makers, all of these people
486 experienced some kind of pretty big obstacles and it wasn't always easy, sledding
487 and so – we all need both support to help us along the way, and challenge, kind of
488 nudge us a little bit when we fall back asleep. And that comes in a lot of different
489 forms, it could be, you know, individuals who are those people who really believe
490 in you and you know, and supporting you all along the way and, but also believe
491 in you deeply enough that they want your best self to come forward and they're
492 not afraid to nudge you a little bit when you're a little less than your best self. It
493 comes in forms of, you know, communities, whether that's the community of
494 other people working with you on the same set of issues, or a faith community or
495 it could be an extended family community, um, and that shows up in a lot of
496 different ways. Or, it could be, you know, models that are inspirational to you for
497 your own, whatever your own tradition is. Or reading that's important to you.
498 There are a lot of ways we get this various kinds of support and challenge. So,
499 um, we're going to listen to just ah short poem and a song, which sort of explore
500 this business about commitments in the face of challenges, um, in different ways.
501 And, um, the first one is um, this very short poem by a woman, Anna Sorinzka
502 (sp?), a Polish poet and playwright and she, um, in Warsaw during the ghetto
503 uprising, which was where there was continued persecution of the Jews in
504 Warsaw and they began to defend themselves. And in this particular poem, um,
505 um, they're building a sort of street barricade to protect their neighborhood
506 essentially from the people to come and get them- END TAPE.

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

1 FAC: The song is from an a cappella group called “Sweet honey and the rock.”
2 Um, the album, it’s from an album called “Sacred ground.” Um, and the song is
3 called, “I remember, I believe.” And I’d like to tell you their lyrics are in your
4 packet. There’s actually a page that should be lyrics, but it’s probably unreadable.
5 I made the copy from the original thing and it didn’t copy very well and now
6 we’re in a second generation, so if you could read those lyrics, you’re ahead of
7 me, but um, by all means, try to read them if you like, along the way, M2’s
8 already working hard at this, taking it up as a challenge, or you could just listen,
9 which may be easier. Um, so you wanna hit the-
10
11 F1: If they ever come to {their community}, I highly recommend seeing them.
12
13 F4: They’re wonderful
14
15 M5: Yes.
16
17 F1: And live, they’re like, unreal.
18
19 FAC: Actually though, they were here pretty recently so, I don’t know that [F?
20 groans] they’ll be back right away [F? that’s kinda sad, other groans from others]
21
22 {playing of “I remember, I believe”}
23
24 F8: What a sound, is that all women or – [F?: yes!] How many are there?
25
26 F4: Uh, what 12- how many? Other’s mumbling, [FAC: sound like a lot of voice,
27 but I think it’s 6.] When we had them last year, there were probably 12, [FAC:
28 oh, ok,] We had to iron all their garb, [FAC: oh well she’d know!] There were a
29 lot of different dressings. They were amazing, very natural, you were up moving,
30 singing along, it’s fun stuff.
31
32 FAC: So, I’d like to, uh- have this opportunity to respond to the stuff as open
33 ended as we can [a woman humming song in background]. What struck you or
34 touched you in both of those things as we think about this kind of combined
35 business of commitments and the resources of challenge and support we need to
36 keep us going.
37
38 F8: I think it’s such a powerful statement, I mean, only you know seven words,
39 she said, “I do remember that’s why I believe.” I mean, I think people give
40 themselves, you know such hassle trying to figure out why certain things happen
41 either to their families or to themselves. But, she says, ‘I do remember and that’s
42 why I believe.’ I think that’s such a, that’s powerful to me. I can’t explain how,
43 but it’s means-it means a lot. There’s a lot of significance in it.
44

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

45 F5: I think following up on that, I know I read a couple articles lately, I think that
46 it's been in the Post-Gazette, of women who have lost sons to violence and um,
47 even other lives have just got wiped out by that sorrow. Just what it does to them.
48 They have started groups to prevent the violence or that kind of thing, and I think
49 again, it's what you do with experiences like you remember and then you move
50 forward in that memory to try to do- try to make something better, you know,
51 rather than just having it totally be debilitating or something, you know, I don't
52 know.

53

54 FAC: I'm thinking they're remembering struggle of course, but also some positive
55 things I think are part of that memory. You know, remembering our father stood
56 our ground, and those sort of emblematic moments.

57

58 F3: I think what's interesting in the last line of the poem, it says, "though no one
59 forced us, we did build the barricade under the fire" and I think with all the things
60 we're doing here, I think no one forced us to sign us - to come sign up to learn
61 about this or, no one's forcing us to review our commitments {group laughter}
62 you're looking at F4 like she insist that you come! {More laughter}, [M2: I'm
63 under attack] But we're not being forced to continue on to do things to help the
64 commonwealth or not. It's our choice to decide to be active and choose to make a
65 difference. So, we can just let nothing happen, we could be active and do it.

66

67 FAC: (5) Anybody else want to jump in?

68

69 F2: I like the line, uh, the last line, 'gave me a song to sing and set me on my way.
70 I raise my voice just as I believe.' I think it illustrates, I guess, sort of what you
71 were talking about, um, finding something you enjoy, um, what is it, finding your
72 passion and finding where the world needs it. Yeah. It's good, I mean, I don't
73 know, trying to think of what your passion is or what you want to do is, finding
74 your song or something, you know? A song is something that's harmonious, that
75 you like, probably would like to do [FAC: mmmm], you know, and people would
76 want to listen to it, you know? Here's your song, now go sing it. [group LF]. Like
77 this is your talent, you know, here's your talent, here's your interests, now use
78 that, use that somehow.

79

80 FAC: I hadn't- I hadn't even thought of it somehow, in terms of tying it back to
81 the music. Clearly, they're enjoying singing [group members: mmmm], but also
82 it's not one person, it's not a solo event. It's kind of interesting. (3) One of the
83 other things that's kind of interesting, in the song, is she sort of talks about, by
84 implication, talks about change and how change happens. And she says, you
85 know, 'I don't know why the snow sometimes covers the ground. I don't know
86 why the hurricane comes through the land, now and then.' I mean, when you
87 think about the kind of change that we've been talking about over these weeks
88 together. You know, making changes toward these positive hopes toward more

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

89 diversity and inclusion, whatever. I mean, does change seem to you more like it
90 happens as a kind of hurricane where there's a whole lot of momentum builds and
91 it's gotta be that moment or is it more like snow, you know, coming in these
92 fragile little flakes sort of add up. And I don't ask that with the implication that
93 there's got to be some right answer. How does it seem, to you? When you think
94 about the part you can play in making change?
95

96 F8: I think it's a matter of perspective. Some people don't like change. So they
97 may look at it as a tornado, coming in, reeking havoc. And um, but some people
98 can look at it as a, you know, a snowstorm, there's flakes here, and you know and
99 have to deal with it as it comes along. So, I think it's a matter of perspective and
100 how well you adapt to change and accept change in your life. So, (inaudible).
101

102 F7: You know, it's hard to have a good perspective on change as it's happening.
103 You know, [F8: mmmm] You know, when you're steeped in the middle of it, it's
104 hard to see it clearly. And you know, hind sight is so valuable, you look back on it
105 and say, 'oh yeah, gee look that happened and that. And here were the
106 connections here and the patterns and now I understand it better.' It's really hard
107 to get a handle on it at the time that it's happening. And it's also hard to manage it
108 because of that. It's challenging. I really like the next to the last verse of the song,
109 'I don't know why the angels woke me up this morning, why the blood still runs
110 in my veins, how I wake to run another day, but I'm here still running.' You
111 know, you're either still running or you're- you're immobile, stuck in the dark
112 room, closeted away. So, if we're running, we need to be running in a good way,
113 you know, running the good race. {mumbles of agreement from others}
114

115 FAC: Your description of that makes me think about the level of gifts we're given
116 that we don't think about. You know, I've got to get up. There's blood [inaud]. I
117 can walk around, I don't have to be in crutches for the month [F? laughs]. Or you
118 know,
119

120 F1: Yeah, does kinda bring that home. I think sometimes change is really thrust
121 upon us. You know, from external factors and a lot of times, how we respond to it
122 makes a difference in what happens. And I really- I was, really struck by the
123 Tsunami, and how, you know, how those people were vacationing and going
124 about their daily life and how in one instant, you know, thousands and thousands
125 of people died. Houses and, there was such a – an un-believable act that was
126 natural, you know, nobody's fault, it just happened. And, how it just kind of jolted
127 everybody. And a lot of people responded by sending donations and you know,
128 man-power, and um, I think sometimes when- I think where I'm going with this,
129 is that in an instant those things that we're so familiar with and so confident, so
130 comfortable with in our modern daily life, they, they can just be wiped out. And
131 you know we take them for granted. And you know, I don't know why that is, I
132 wish there could be more of a consciousness that yes, it can just be blown away in

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

133 an instant and you know, we're all um, we're all vulnerable. You can break your
134 foot any minute! What I'm saying though is that we all just go along in our daily
135 lives assuming that tomorrow's going to be the same and the next day is going to
136 be fine and that, oh if we can just manage our own lives that we'll be fine, that
137 that was an accomplishment. But, I don't know.

138
139 FAC: I'm kind of interested in kind of, where you're taking that thought. Is it the
140 idea that you know, we don't know what tomorrow's going to bring so we ought
141 to make what we're going to make of today, or is it more in the nature of, I don't
142 know there are a lot of ways you could go with what you're thinking and I'm kind
143 of interested in what you're-

144
145 F1: I think what I was really getting at, you were talking about change happening,
146 you know a snowflake at a time, or like the hurricane. And, you know, it's really,
147 it's both. In- in an instant you're life could be completely changed. I think of all
148 of us um, on 9-11. Here was just a typical morning, people were doing day-to-day
149 things and how in an instant, it can, like a hurricane, I think that's a powerful
150 analogy. But, you know, does it mean that the daily, day-to-day, incremental
151 things that we do to make a difference aren't important? But that those kind of
152 huge momentous things can, you know, they rally – they bring us together. I- I've
153 never been so proud of seeing people pull together than after, you know, 9-11.
154 And an- how, okay, we really can make a difference. You know, just so much we
155 can do to help in- in any disaster. I think, more or less, observing something. Not
156 really having an opinion. But, how, just profoundly I felt about my ability to make
157 a difference in the face of the Tsunami. I think that's what was the most, you
158 know, eye-opening for me.

159
160 FAC: Mhmm. In those moments of crisis, when we see something really do pull
161 people together. I mean a lot of times, people say we're not going to respond
162 except in a crisis. And that is a very powerful, you know, in a way, I mean a crisis
163 is bad, but it's a wonderful thing. I mean there's another side of that, which is,
164 that in a fashion, compassion is fleeting, people will respond to a crisis and pretty
165 soon it's business as usual, which kind of gets at why we have to work on these
166 structural responses. 'cause if we're always just waiting for everybody to feel like
167 leaping into action as opposed to setting structures that gradually makes things
168 better, changing the rules, bringing more people into the game, or however we're
169 thinking about structural change, you know, it could be just we're waiting for the
170 next crisis to do the work.

171
172 F6: I don't know. I don't know exactly how to say this but thinking that it seems
173 too that underneath- I mean, I think that we all do our little things that we have to
174 do. Little things by ourselves or with other people and they all make a huge
175 difference, you know, we've seen lots of examples that, but that big structural
176 change that I personally feel that needs to happen like just using that example of

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

177 the Tsunami. I think that most people are basically good and want to help each
178 other, and you can see that in the out-pouring of the Tsunami. You know, that
179 people left their families and went over there to help. There was so much, and yet,
180 there are, and I've read a lot of things, there could be that they're not true, but I
181 think at least some of them are, that um. We always know that some money
182 doesn't go to the right people. That always, but a lot of big corporations are like
183 they use it as an opportunity to clear the beachfront and build the condos and to
184 ah, you know. Some people may not see a problem with that, that might be okay.
185 But, I don't know, I think that's where I then think, you know, what? Is there
186 some kind of an education, is there some kind of structural change, is there some
187 kind of awareness that we can build worldwide that would help when there are
188 kind of things like that to carry through in a humane, in an environmentally, and
189 humanly constructive way. You know? That's what, where I get stuck, like kinda.
190 [F?: mhmm, me too]

191

192 FAC: And when you say 'stuck,' how do you mean, 'stuck?'

193

194 F6: I get like frustrated, and I get like, um. Not- not-not like I'm giving up and I
195 wouldn't do anything but it's like [FAC: 'cause it seems so daunting, or difficult,
196 'cause it's such a big thing] yeah. It's like wow, like how do you harness that
197 goodness of people, to keep rippling good effects all the time [voice cracks]? I
198 don't know if what I'm saying makes any sense. But, you know, I just think that
199 so often I- I think that just in history, that so often good meaning people have
200 been lead to do things that weren't so good. And that's like -. Our efforts to do
201 good have been turned into things that have been harmful for people rather than
202 helpful [F?: yeah.]

203

204 FAC: What are ways that could not be instantly solved, we're not going to find
205 the quick fix, but what are ways that that could be better. This business about
206 people being lead to do not good things instead of people being lead into positive
207 ways. [F5: I personally-]. And that was a question to the whole group. I wasn't
208 putting you on the spot, you know

209

210 F6: I'll just say, I personally think that um, good media and journalism could do
211 very much in our world today because we are so um, it a global world. And if the
212 communication throughout so much of the world- and I think that often times we
213 don't get whole stories, you know we don't get whole stories, but there's so much
214 misinformation and lack of information. And, I think that if more people would
215 get more information that better things could happen for people. I think that
216 journalists, really good journalists have a big responsibility and could have a big
217 impact.

218

219 FAC: Other people...have responses to what F5 was just saying?

220

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

221 M5: I'm a bit more pessimistic. Sorry. Um, and I really like that idea about the
222 role of media and I go, 'ah- the media's controlled a very few people [F5: and we
223 need to break through that] mhmm
224
225 FAC: And do we leave it. So do we leave it just to the media, I mean, how to we
226 break the control? There's two sort of different angles to that, which is sort of
227 work around it, or cut through it. Um, [F?: can it be done?] We spend of time in
228 prior sessions talking about our roles of curators. Our own roles of holding up
229 alternative visions. Our own roles of um, being people who speak up and frame-
230 frame a question differently than the way it's being framed
231
232 F6: I think that it interesting sometimes when people read. Like there are different
233 media sources, but then, people oh well that one, how can I trust that one, that's
234 biased! So, I don't know. I know what my parents watch, they watch news on the
235 TV. They watch, I don't know exactly what they watch, maybe Fox news,
236 channel [grumbles from group members] – they watch whatever. For some
237 reason, that's seen as the important source [mumbles of agreement] that's the all-
238 knowing source. Like that's- I don't know. I can see my parents, if I gave them
239 some newspaper, like if I show them 'Out' or something, 'Out' in {their
240 community} is a- is a queer ah newspaper in {their community}. Well, they'd
241 this is oh- 'how can I, you know I can't talk about this at work, if I read this! This
242 is biased, this is a bunch of gay people wrote these articles!' That's what they'd
243 think. [others: yeah, right, mumbles of agreement]. Yeah, so-
244
245 M2: I think um, kinda going along with that, mm, everybody's either a Roger
246 Moore lover or hater for the most part, but um, you talk about, any of you have
247 seen Fahrenheit 911, most of you have heard about it, obviously. Um, whether
248 you agree with the ideas in that movie or not, um, the thing about that movie is,
249 you know, well that's not true. They've actually had people go and fact check that
250 movie, I don't know how many times. There's several, you know, even right-
251 winged political activists, are like, you know, if you- we'll pay you \$200,000 if
252 you can find out one fault in that movie where something he says is not true. And
253 I think, in the way about media is; I don't care how un-biased you say you are,
254 whatever. Out of any article you write, whatever, piece you give, there's a bias
255 there. What you choose to say and what you choose not the say. If, I mean, if you
256 neglect to mention the color of the person's eye's you're interviewing, it's a bias,
257 you know? You don't think that's an important detail, well someone might think
258 that it is. You know, it's – it's, you know, it's something, you know, to be beyond
259 bias, at least for your own sake, the only way you're going to observe that is if
260 you observe the event. And, you know, not to be pessimistic, there is no way to
261 get rid of bias in media. [F?: right] So, I guess, I understand what you're saying,
262 but I think there could be a more positive spin on the media, but I don't know if
263 it's necessarily un-bias the media so that it's- it's
264

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

265 F3: I'm mean like, [F6: well it's always going to be biased. But, M2: good point,
266]A lot of it is too, where can you hear the whole story?
267
268 M2: You can't [LF]
269
270 F6: Or, at least something that's better than what's on TV, you know
271
272 M2: I -/x/x/, you say it's better, but I mean, and you know, you may think of
273 something better. You know, an alternative media source. And I admit, I do read
274 several alternative media sources and stuff every once and a while and you know,
275 and I wish there was a report in the mainstream news, but the same point I realize,
276 you know, yes this is true, but they are things they aren't saying either. We pick
277 and we choose, I mean, if you were to give the entire story every single detail, it
278 would take, you would have novels of newspapers [group laughter] for one
279 article. You know, I mean, I mean, I think what's better, it's just skewed to what
280 we value. If I value specific things, if I believe in certain things. Then someone's
281 saying or agreeing with my ideals is going to be more valuable to me than
282 someone who's disagreeing with my values. Which, I think is kinda sad, 'cause a
283 lot of times you gain by hearing more by someone else who's against you has to
284 say about an issue, than someone for it has to say. Because if you can understand
285 where they're coming from than you have a bigger validation from where you're
286 coming from.
287
288 F3: Back on the point of like, where you guys were saying about like, the TV
289 news and the media and how you know, it was just better. A lot of it is, people
290 aren't that willing to change things because you have, how they say, a liberal
291 biased media and then Fox news is just like on the other side (inaudible
292 whispering), [group LF] yeah, and like tells like, lies, or leads the viewers to draw
293 false conclusions and everything. And you've had studies done, where people
294 watch like Fox news, and people who watch MSN NBC or something like that,
295 people who watch the Fox news, they ask them, like, forgot who did the study,
296 but some group who does natural studies. They asked three questions, like factual
297 questions, um are there weapons of mass destruction? All that stuff. And they're
298 questions that have a yes or no answer. And the people who watched Fox news
299 got like two of them wrong, where the people who watched NBC or something
300 got one wrong, and people who read, like the Times, or like Washington Post or
301 those things, got like more of them right. And if you can see that there are
302 different news sources that lead you to more correct conclusions or that lead you
303 more towards the truth. Like, if the people were really, like, really, like, all that
304 riled up over it, they'd go for a change and like. But you still have Fox news on,
305 and you still have NBC and- just like people just aren't willing to really go out
306 and change it. Even if they do see that it is wrong. It's more of like comfort level,
307 like, 'well, it's not doing anything really wrong to have news that's not always
308 right, but it's most of the time, it's right.'

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

309

310 M2: And I think also, I mean, I think the power of that study is that, the news is
311 no longer, you know, 'this is what is, this is what happened.' It's become
312 entertainment. I mean look at the stories we have in the news. We have Terry
313 Shiavo, and Michael Jackson trial [others groaning], runaway bride, it's like- it's
314 like- [more groaning, F?: Paula Abdul!] it's like MSNBC has become Jerry
315 Springer! [M5: laughs, you- hehehe] I mean! These weird stories, you know, that
316 have relatively little importance in society to today take up the majority of the
317 news. And the majority of what we see on TV. I mean, very little outside of your
318 local paper, you know, are you going to see, you know, important issues. You
319 know every once in a while you may see something important in the New York
320 Times or something like that. But, I mean, you know, I think it is, the Liberal
321 media, not the liberal bias, but the liberal independent sources, which- which- put
322 out these little stories about things that are happening abroad about you know,
323 social injustice, or about events that are political crises, are sometimes the best
324 places to get media, but you know, they're limited to what each one's going to
325 offer and if you don't. Very few of us have the time to go out- and be like 'okay,
326 well let's look up 37, you know, webpages today and see what's going in 37
327 different areas of the world.'

328

329 F5: We can do that though, we haven't been able to do before. Access that much
330 information [M2: it's easier now, mumbles of agreement] yeah, it's out there

331

332 F2: In relation to this though, sometimes we get so caught up in fixing the world
333 that we don't fix our neighbors. And, you know, I couldn't personally go and
334 build a house for someone who lost it in the Tsunami, but I can go and volunteer
335 down at a soup kitchen. Or I can go, um, and help clean up my neighborhood
336 park. And, sometimes those things are so much easier, just in that, you know,
337 they're right here, we don't have to - they just take a Saturday morning, we can
338 do them repeatedly. Whereas, hopefully there aren't Tsunami's every other
339 weekend that needs [group LF] major catastrophe, everyone needs saved right
340 away. But we can do things right here, which we can go find out ourselves. We
341 don't have to rely on a media source to tell us what's wrong. [F5: help these
342 people]. Right, we can go and see that, you know, there's litter over in my park, I
343 can go and clean it up or I can see that these, you know, these kids don't have
344 anything to do and maybe I can organize a playgroup or whatever else might
345 (inaudible) [FAC: mmmm]. Then we don't have to rely on other people to tell us.
346 The truth is we can go and check in our backyard and see. See what's there.

347

348 FAC: I'm hearing a lot of themes emerging. We've got, in a way, this complain
349 that we started with the media either obscures some things or is biased or heavy
350 on the entertainment thing. And you know, um, one theme we've got is, well
351 there's always going to be some biased. Somebody's going to make some
352 selection about what could be in a story or not. So that's one thing we can kinda

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

353 put on the table. And that sort of suggests that we need to listen to multiple
354 people. And that's in one way what we're doing here, listening to each other. So
355 we can value listening to lots of different people and we can value listening to
356 other media sources. And we've got other strategies; we can try and change the
357 media, either by as consumers. We can saying, okay, 'not going to watch that
358 one.' Or by writing to them and sort of making it clear that you know, there are
359 whole boycotts movements around, say okay I'm not going to do that. Or, people
360 can choose to move into those careers or we can take more localized action, F2
361 was talking about, ok, maybe instead of watching TV, I'm going to do something
362 concrete. Or, there's other ways of engaging your neighbors, talking with your
363 neighbors. You know, not in a hostile way, but in an exploratory way, beginning
364 to explore and, you know, challenge things with folks. Go ahead,
365

366 F8: One thing that I was thinking of [FAC: there was one other direction too,
367 though, keep going] we, we pick and well it seems like the media picks the stories
368 that we should know about [FAC: mhmm]. And it seems like for the last fourteen
369 weeks they think that we should know and care about Michael Jackson. [group
370 laughter] And, it seems to me, I thought it was very interesting because one of
371 my- one of my good friends works at CNN. And she works in a department called
372 'feeds.' So, any news that comes in off the AP wires, that could be news, it could
373 be actual footage from anywhere around anywhere comes into this station. And
374 all she does is log it, puts it on a tape and shoves it off to somebody else who
375 decides for us what the news should be. And, looking at it from that perspective,
376 she is the only person, and the other people in the 'feeds' department are the only
377 people who I think in America that know the real news. Because they see it before
378 it gets cut and pasted, and put in front of our eyes for us to decide whether it's
379 true or not. And I think if we could have something where we could go and pick
380 the news that you know, we want to see, the news that we care about, the news
381 that means something to us. The local news I think we were saying that is, the
382 things that are really relevant in our community. Like there are people being shot
383 [others mumble in agreement] because they're reaching for a wallet. I care about
384 that more than Michael Jackson being upset. You know? I just had to vent, that's
385 all I had to say. [FAC: no, that's alright. others laugh]
386

387 F3: It's like, I'm not trying to- it's just something I was thinking about what M2
388 was saying, I'm not trying to pick on you at all F2, but just what you said, I can't
389 go and help the Tsunami victims, but I can go like plant trees. The thing is that
390 you can though, if you were really/x/ determined to, you can go help the Tsunami
391 victims. I mean, [F8: if you knew about the Tsunami, like we didn't know about
392 Rwanda, so we couldn't help those people] yah, people think that it's so far away
393 [FAC: F7 and M2 have been making the oh *name correction, have been making
394 the point about well they're all out of making alternative things out there that we
395 increasingly have choices of looking and finding]
396

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

397 M2: The thing that amuses me most about the news is um, the little ticker at the
398 bottom of uh- CNN and Fox news about how, you know, we can condense a
399 whole story into two sentences! [mumbles of agreement, other talking –
400 inaudible]. Or, if that! It's like- it's like 8 words!
401
402 F4: That's all that I watch is the ticker [M5: humh! F?: that's what I do.] I just
403 watch the ticker go by and if I'm with somebody and they'll be like, did you just
404 see that! Or did you just hear what they said? And they'll be like what are you
405 talking about? You're watching the ticker again! And that's like the only thing
406 I'm getting actual information.
407
408 F3: I saw like one time on Saturday night live and they were making fun of all
409 that. And they had like the face and then the ticker, and then the stock quotes, and
410 then the weather and everything. And by the time they had everything on the
411 screen, the newscaster was trying to go around that to still, to like, get his voice
412 heard. {Others laughing and talking}.
413
414 F8: Remember when that came out, everybody thought it was crazy, we're not
415 going to be able to pay attention to the news, 'cause all this stuff is still is on there
416 now? [M5: deep, others mumbling in agreement] Easy isn't it?
417
418 F4: What were you going to say M5?
419
420 M3: I was just gonna say, like um a lot of times like with the news shows, all that
421 stuff, like, the people- that the people talk about, is just like analyzing it, they're
422 putting their spin, their posture, got their opinions, whatever. But the actual news,
423 you already know what happened. Why do we need to see, you know, all of CNN
424 last night, and then the Larry King show is about Michael Jackson. It's like, okay,
425 he went to trial, they found him not guilty. Alright, that's basically the end of the
426 story [F8: alright get over it, right!
427 F1: Why do you think? {mimicking voice} [group LF].
428
429 F4: I mean that's the whole gist of the news is to, delving, uh! [more group LF]
430
431 M3: And then you know, the people on the shows, most of the time, they've got
432 their own agenda, you know, like Bill O'Reilly or what's his name that got fired
433 from CNN? [M2: ugh, Bill O'Rei-] Um, Tucker Carlson, they've got their own
434 little opinions and agendas. And that's a big part of it.
435
436 FAC: Ok, so we're all pretty dismayed by this [group LF]. And we, [multiple
437 people talking at same time, seeming agreement with one another]
438
439 M3: You have to take it upon yourself to go out and find the news that you think
440 is relevant, you can't rely on them. 'Cause it's an entertainment industry [many

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

441 groans and comments of agreement]. They're going to put out what they think
442 you need to see [more moans of agreement]
443
444 F7: I think that's what they are, they are an entertainment industry.
445
446 M5: Or propaganda [F7: yeah/x/]
447
448 FAC: Alright, so if we're dismayed exhausted by this, of course we could turn it
449 off. But, then again, I want us to get out of here, sort of close to on time. But, one
450 thing I'd sort of like us to explore is, okay, well what are the ways, that if all of
451 this, I'll make a bad parallel 'cause it's the word coming to mind, this Tsunami
452 of entertainment news [groans of agreement] is coming at us, or news or
453 whatever, coming at us. Okay, what are the ways that we keep, what are the
454 resources that we can draw on that are going to kind of keep our hope and our
455 ability to move ahead alive in the face of things that we're finding sort of
456 dismaying, or exhausting in the media.
457
458 M5: Family resources, turn the news off. Talk to my children, talk to my-
459
460 FAC: Do you mind if I – I- don't want this necessarily to be a listing exercise.
461 But, I'd like to capture some of these things that people are saying. [Mumbling,
462 M5 echoes, "turn it off," {paper rustling}]. So, I mean
463
464 F4: That's so creative (.) M5, last weekend, anytime I'm away, if we go to this, X
465 lake, I – we did not turn the television on one time in two and half days and I
466 thought this is soooo lovely!
467
468 F8: I find when you turn it off they do not have anything to talk about. That's
469 when you know you're in trouble. That's when they go, 'what are we going to
470 talk about, I'm bored. I want to watch TV.' You know! [LF, others join in].
471
472 FAC: Ok, so we've got already- we've got two little strategies here for how do we
473 sort of keep our [more laughter – F8: no, I'm serious! I'm serious!].
474
475 F8: Look, I grew up in a house with 8 televisions. [F4: oh my god, other moans]
476 There was a TV in every room including the kitchen. And the den was like two
477 feet away that had another TV in it. So, I can understand. TV can mess you up.
478 [group LF] You have to turn it off.
479
480 F3: We had one in our garage [louder LF]. My dad has one in the garage. [F?: you
481 can't go anywhere! F4: Less TV's too].
482
483 F8: Yes. And I think you should make a conscious decision to look for good
484 news, because now, you know, if it bleeds, it leads. So if you know, if it's blood

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

485 and guts, [F4: if it bleeds it leads? LF] That's the slogan that journalists use.
486 [Others echo in agreement].
487
488 FAC: So there are things out there like this 'Visionaries' series that you could
489 spend, you know [M5: history channel, F? That's all I watch is public television,
490 others agree] look for other kinds of stuff. Okay, what are other things that we
491 turn to, to keep our hope going -
492
493 F1: Support public television and radio. I mean-
494
495 M2: Oh, this is kind of off- off topic, I don't know if you guys have heard, they're
496 actually trying to get rid of PBS. [M5: that's what we're talking about right now]
497 There is actually a like an email thing that's being sent around. I don't know if I
498 have it off had.
499
500 FAC: Yeah, there's been a whole lot of series of hoaxes where internet go out
501 and say that this is under challenge, but it's been a urban legend kind of hoax, but
502 now there really is a kind of thing in front of congress that actually is [M2: inaud,
503 F?: ask inaud question, M2: no, to get rid of it.]. inaud
504
505 M2: I think what it was, was um, it was basically, it was going to cut most of PBS
506 programs, most PBS shows would be gone. Um, it was something like. The
507 average- it costs the average American for those services \$1.10 a year.
508
509 M3: So, so, why, why are they cutting it though, what's their excuse?
510
511 M2: To fund social security, probably.
512
513 M3: Don't they see it's funding [F?: inaudible] Don't they see it's a public service
514 by having it around. [F3: but it's not what they want. Others comment in
515 agreement: They can all afford cable, watch other stuff; F8: 'cause we're all going
516 to watch that now, 'cause we don't like from the mass media, which is like, kind
517 of a lot what the government wants us to hear, and their spin. And so if we're
518 going to stop listening to them and watch something else they're going to say,
519 well it costs a dollar, we can't have that anymore]
520
521 FAC: So, that's a specific opportunity if you, and- I'm trying to make this a little
522 bigger than just the media discussion. But, that's a specific opportunity if you
523 want to lead into some kind of action, you can say, okay, I'm going to write to
524 somebody, join an email petition, and say, you know, sure is worth a dollar to me
525 to have that kind of public investment in some sort of shared news and
526 programming sources. [Others moan in agreement]. I mean, you know, in
527 England they have the whole BBC, which is a bigger operation. Thinking about
528 our own lives, and our only- and our own ability to stick with stuff over time,

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

529 we're exhausted by TV and the media and stuff, what are other things that we can
530 do to sort of keep ourselves going ahead? We've got turning off the TV, we've
531 got family resources, what were people drawing on in the things that we listened
532 to.

533
534 F3: Well, just looking at all those websites, there are so many things that we can
535 do, sometimes I feel like, I want to do something, but I don't know what to do.
536 Well, there are apparently hundreds of volunteer opportunities, just. And it's not
537 like you'd have to have a, you know, weekly commitment, there's some things
538 where they just need you for a weekend to volunteer your hours at if that's what
539 or something like that. Just looking at the volunteer opportunities, you know, you
540 could be involved if you don't have, you know, three hours every week to do it.
541 You could do it one Saturday or, [F8: get out of the house, right, huh, good idea]

542
543 FAC: So there's this sort of doing it and seeing these small first had results that
544 can, you know, give you a sense of hope.

545
546 F4: I think reading books [group participants: Yes!] is really, I'm a huge book
547 reader and I've got to tell ya, I've learned more from just reading non-fiction and
548 I mean, I'm more of a fiction reader because I like to escape reality. [Group LF]
549 But when I have read non-fiction books, I really gain a lot, and it's so much more
550 believable to me because I can see it in print and I can check the resources. You
551 know, check the bibliography and see that it is accurate. And I feel better about
552 what the source is. And I think from that, then I have intelligent conversations
553 with other people and talk with and persuade friends, not persuade, but educate--
554

555 FAC: Then there's also this inspirational value of- depending on what book your
556 choosing to read. You know, you could be reading about the green belt movement
557 and go, 'huh?' And there's another choice here. There's reading books alone, and
558 [others echoing: book clubs] with others.

559
560 M3: You could check the reader too 'cause I'm big on the- to really know what
561 you're reading sometimes you've got to check the author's background. So, at
562 least it puts a face and name to what you're reading. It's not like the news where
563 you just get all these facts but you don't know where it's coming from. With this,
564 you know where the person's background is and you can say, I agree with this or I
565 don't. You know?

566
567 FAC: I'm sorry, so you were saying sort of, check about the author?

568
569 M3: Well, I was just going along with what F4 was saying. What she was saying,
570 well yeah, they've got a bibliography you can look [FAC: okay, yeah, okay] up
571 the facts yourself, you know? It's - it's just got- it's more authentic. It's more
572 legitimate [F?: mhhmm].

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

573

574 M2: I think, not to interrupt you, but I think um, you know- yes, you know, non-
575 fiction's great, but I think you can get a lot of you, specifically, there's a lot of
576 classic fiction novels that really do have a lot [f?: sure], I mean, conception- like
577 you know, Huxley, and you know Orwell, and I mean, you know, there's just
578 those [F?: or historical fiction], and a lot of historical fiction. You know, there's
579 actually, I'm, at the honors college, there's a book club that meets every weekend
580 at *café. And we go there and we read that book like every three weeks. And like,
581 we discuss you know, the topics that are relating to the book, be they, you know,
582 historical topics, philo- philosophical topics, you know. And I – there was a lot of
583 discussion, we read um, um, Brave New World by Huxley. 'Cause there's so
584 many, um, there's so many concepts, you know. We've talked about, we've
585 talked about, you know, there's consumerism, you know, what it means to truly
586 be alive, 'cause you talk about, we had this discussion about these people in this
587 book, are they actually alive because all they feel is happiness, you know? Is, this,
588 if, if you only feel happiness, is, you know, does it have any value? You know,
589 when you don't have the sorrow to take, to counteract it with. You know there are
590 a lot of- , not only –

591

592 FAC: That's actually the whole premise of conversations, we're going to take
593 distilled human experience, look at it with other people, and you know, try and
594 talk about things that really matter, instead of a whole set of chatter. And by
595 choosing to pick what you read, fiction or non-fiction, distilled human experience,
596 or what's really happening out in the world, either way, with some intelligent
597 selections, we can shape a lot of our
598 inspiration and our-. Alright, well let's! In the spirit of, oh go ahead- yep,

599

600 F4: We're part of a university community, and really, this is a forum here, for the
601 exchange of all ideas. [M5: mmmm] And I sometimes think we lose sight of that.
602 There's great speakers that come to this university. When political events happen,
603 you know, our center for international studies puts panels of people together who,
604 who come in and you can hear various points of view and things. World's affairs
605 council downtown brings in people from all sorts of parts of the world. And they
606 talk about issues. The world federalists do the same thing so, you know, you just
607 have to actively seek them out. And again, it's a matter of time, but there's a lot of
608 good presentations, live presentations and people who are really there to give us
609 first-hand information.

610

611 F6: This last semester Rebecca Walker came to speak and she was one of best
612 speakers I've seen, ever. [FAC: for those of us who don't know Rebecca Walker-]
613 She's Alice Walker's daughter, who's a big, um, activist for women's rights, and
614 for black rights. {paper rustling}.

615

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

616 F5: You know, just along those lines, I think, just um [FAC: that's another to pick
617 up on this, inspiring models] does the university have the blackboard or billboard
618 about the-? I'm sure individual things come out in the, um, *university
619 newspaper, but -

620

621 F1: The university times has a whole calendar. *term for university source, has a
622 website, I mean you have to seek it out, it's there. {Others discuss university
623 calendar, agree}.

624

625 FAC: Underneath what F6 was saying was another idea for how do we keep our
626 hope alive, is, inspiring models. I mean, people around us who we live up to, you
627 know. [She was so inspiring to me, I had to read her book, stared reading it, it was
628 awesome] yep. [M5: Alice walker? F6: Rebecca Walker]

629

630 F6: She put together this book called ah, what makes a man, and there's a bunch
631 of, 22 authors, 22 essays by 22 authors. They all right on masculinity, on being a
632 man. Most of them are written by men. I think it's really interesting [F?: that's
633 really cool stuff]

634

635 FAC: Alright, let's look toward next week. [Group mumbling] Which, actually is
636 our last formal week together, so, next week, same time, different day, right [M2:
637 dun/x/x/ laughter]. Ok, so, that's a little bit of a trick, we've got to get ourselves in
638 the mindsets of it's really Monday, not Wednesday next week. So please make
639 sure you've got your calendars straight. 'Cause really, the last session in a way is
640 one of the most difficult. Alright, um, one thing that's a resource for hope is, you
641 know, being with other people who can support and challenge you and a
642 community of support and challenge. And in a way, this group is in a loose way,
643 serves that function. And the question I'd like to ask, is a sort of preamble to that.
644 Is, would you be willing for me to compile a list of your names and addresses, and
645 contact information and share it with others in this group. And what I was
646 proposing to the last group on Tuesday, they said, they were okay if I lumped the
647 two groups together into a list. Are you guys okay sharing with that. And I'm not
648 saying, giving everybody in the big world your contact information, but are you
649 okay, on that [mumbles of agreement]. Alright, pressing ahead, let's ah snag
650 somebody's packet to use as an example.

651

652 F1: FAC while you're seeking packets, can I inject one quick thing? [FAC: do
653 you want to do your evaluation thing?] just real quick, or do you want me to wait
654 [FAC: ahh, let's, ahh, that's okay, or we can put it with the evaluation part] Okay.
655 [FAC: if you'd like to do it now, goooo] No, it's ok, I'll wait.

656

657 FAC: Alright, in your packet, taking it from the top, the barricades poem, the
658 illegible lyrics, um, the email with some of the website information. This was just
659 another list that was kind of, we generated from people ideas about, you know,

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

660 how do we keep hope alive and how do we keep ourselves going? The first list
661 was from this course I mentioned, where they interviewed changemakers and on
662 the last big lecture, they asked individuals in the course, you know, the same
663 question. And in the second list was one that another conversations group
664 generated and they said, we liked our list, put it in the packet! Okay, a couple of
665 readings selections, we talked about books here, um, first one is called The call of
666 service, by a guy named Robert Coles, who's best known as a child psychologist,
667 but he's um, this is a book where he explores service-learning and people who are
668 involved in services. He talks about the real world issue of burn out and stuff, but
669 why do people stick with it and do it. It's a wonderful book. He's also written a
670 book called the Call of stories, which is what M2 was saying about how fictional
671 stories really can make a difference in peoples lives and, okay. This second book
672 is not everybody's cup of tea, a very dark, angry book called, The night is dark
673 and I am far from home, from Jonathon Kozol, who is primarily an education
674 writer, who writes about impoverished schools. In this instance, he was writing
675 about the whole American school system, more typically, non-impoverished
676 schools. And his premise is that the main function of the American school system
677 is to put people ethically to sleep. Now you can like that or not like that but it's a
678 challenging book. I could only read about 40 pages of it. [some groans]. Now it's
679 such an angry book that he wrote it in 197-something when he was a young guy,
680 there's a second edition, and I would say if you can get that, get that 'cause when
681 he went back and made notes himself saying, 'oh, I was such an angry guy, how
682 could I have oversimplified things so much on that.' So, it's a book that's out of
683 print, but you can find it pretty easily in used book used book websites. Third
684 thing is ah, last week I gave you in your packets that sort of long bibliography of
685 possible readings on this subject of books from a book called Soul of a citizen,
686 from Paul Rogat-logue, and that's full of good-not Pollyanna-ish, but good,
687 stories about people becoming engaged in civic life. Ok, here's a little newspaper
688 article about a woman, I think I might of mentioned to this group, who is blind
689 and she was concerned that in Tibet blind people are not valued, they're not
690 taught to, in some instances they're not taught to walk. She went to Tibet, she
691 rides horses. She went to Tibet and started programs for them, and I just love the
692 part, the end of the article where she says, 'blind people can't do everything, I
693 can't drive a truck, but I can read in the dark, who else can do that?' Cause she
694 can read Braille. Alright, these next set of pages with pictures are something that
695 just came in my mail fairly recently. And it was, it was called ten who served and
696 it was from an alumni magazine of a different institution. But, they just
697 interviewed people who were engaged in service. Um, interviewed 10 of them,
698 and I love the questions they ask them, you know "how, when did you know you
699 were on the right track? What keeps me going? And at the end of it, it says,
700 'advice to new grads'". So, it's just fun to see what 10 different people engage in
701 10 different service things all had the same- um, yah – [M2: inaud question] 93
702 when they graduated, so that would have been their year of graduation. You can
703 sort of get a sense of how old these people are. Um, from their class of

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

704 graduation. So that would be like, you're about to be a senior, you'd be the class
705 of 2006. Okay, so we get through those guys. And that brings us pretty close to
706 the end of the packet, to this pretty microscopic list, which is someone had asked,
707 "could we see what other conversation participants had made as their
708 commitments?" So I tried to get them onto two pages and it turned out fairly
709 small. I'd ask you not to circulate this really widely 'cause I didn't go through it
710 real carefully and say, 'oh is there something embedded in these that could
711 identify the person, um, I didn't put their name, but you know, you can read it,
712 don't put it out on the street. And then, last, but assuredly not least and then we're
713 going to come to give M4 her shot, um, is um, the assignment and this is pretty
714 important 'cause we're coming to our last session. So, I've been putting in your
715 face each week this you know, commitment letter to yourself and now is time to
716 really put hands to paper, or hands to keyboard, and write a letter to yourself, you
717 know, what's moving me to action? What kind of new or renewed commitment
718 and I going to make. And again, it doesn't have to be something you're doing
719 that's totally new, but it can be, ok, here's how I'm going to direct my education,
720 or you know, how I'm going, something you're already doing, but you're going to
721 ratchet it up, and make something out of it. So, there's a little series of questions,
722 you know, what's moving you to action. What kind of commitments do you have
723 in mind. Be specific as you can, but again, you don't have to have the perfect
724 plan. Just sketch out some steps are you're going to take, and then how's your
725 commitment going to support some structural, long-term change. Um, and you
726 know, and that may or not, apply to everything, but it's good to have something
727 be in your portfolio that's structural. And then, where are you going to look for
728 support and challenge along the way. Is it to family members? Is it to allies in the
729 cause? Is the- where? Where are you going to turn? And it might be something
730 that doesn't exist for you that you've go to build. Maybe you say, at work, I've
731 got to get other people around me with similar values and I'm going to have some
732 little lunches with them. Okay, so, what's going to happen with this letter, is
733 we're going to take it, fold it in a folder, make a copy of it, unless you tell us
734 you'd prefer us not to make a copy of it, we'd make a copy of it and use it for
735 evaluation purposes to see what kinds of things people in conversations have
736 committed to. And, but, we're going to take the original and send it back to you in
737 six-or eight weeks. And so you're going to get a little reminder from yourself of
738 well, what was I think about? And it's going to be sort of helpful to get that. As
739 they say on Candid Camera, 'when you least expect it.' [group laughter] And feel
740 free to add any other comments about MCC, but, then the next piece of assignment
741 is, if you could bring in an image that gives some suggestion of the direction of
742 your commitments. Let's say you, you say you're going to work on tutoring and
743 I'm going to do it at this location. You don't have to have to picture of a sign of
744 that location, just something that gives you a feeling of, you know, what you're
745 direction is, and some people like to bring in three-dimensional objects that were
746 meaningful to them, and I say, just get to a Xerox machine and copy them so that
747 we'll have something that we'll paste onto a little montage that we'll build

Group G-1: Meeting #6, Resources, Part #2
Transcript

748 together. Um, don't bring in your precious one and only existing copy of a photo,
749 you can bring it in and take it home, but also make a copy or something. So, that's
750 the assignment for next week. Does anybody have questions about that? M3
751
752 M3: Will you send out a reminder email, like about this assignment too. Just to,
753 like sometime this weekend or something.
754
755 FAC: Ok, I could but it's now only how many days away. Oh, because of your
756 structure, you don't have a lot of time to work on this, but, ok, I can send out a
757 reminder.
758
759 M3: It seems like a long time away [M5: I agree]
760
761 FAC: Alright, [F2: aren't we in mid-terms, finals, M2: yeah...] ok, here's the
762 thing about this letter, it doesn't have to be fluent and well crafted. If you want to
763 make some notes, 'cause it's primarily for yourself, it can be in the form of some
764 bullet-points or whatever. It doesn't have to be, you know, the declaration of
765 independence or something. So, um, let it be in a form that is meaningful, that has
766 some content, but it's primarily for you, so, you know. Then, evaluation, F4
767
768 F4: Okay, one more assignment, for next week, sorry I know, we've had like no
769 assignments and this second to last week [some groans]. Um, what we're trying to
770 determine and we need your honest and open feedback on this evaluation, if MCC
771 and *leadership program, are going to be able to a permanent thing, is it a good
772 fit. We are really seeking honest and open feedback. So what I'm asking is if you
773 can take this evaluation with you, return it next week, it would be extremely
774 helpful for us. The last question on here asks if you're available to meet as a
775 group for additional feedback so we can debrief the process and see how this
776 works with *leadership program. Um, so if you could just circle yes or no on
777 there. I don't need your names unless you want to. [FAC: although if they have to
778 circle yes or no whether they-] it's not a focus group, it's just giving me an idea as
779 to whether they want to attend [FAC: oh how many] and then I'll send out a
780 blanket email, that's all. Anyways, that would be extremely helpful and we would
781 greatly appreciate your feedback on that.
782
783 FAC: Great, and if you can fill out your little session notes, that helps too for this
784 session. Thank you guys, we ran pretty late, I'm sorry. [rustling, people talking,
785 goodbyes] – {END TAPE}

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

1 FAC: Um, so what we're going to be doing tonight is really spending all of our
2 focus time, really uh uhh um, on your own imagined contributions that you've
3 been sort of working on, um, sort of sharing with each other and responding to
4 each other, and doing that in the big group so that you can all hear what each of
5 you has been thinking. Um, and then, if it seems right and we've got time
6 although, I think it's not likely, we might come back to what we talked about last
7 time in terms of the resources to stick with it over time. Um, and then in our wrap
8 up, we'll be thinking about how and in what ways you guys want to or be able to
9 continue to support each other as a kind of informal community of support and
10 challenge. Um, so as we start, I'd like to start us with two very short quotes that
11 are in your packet if you want to look, but again, they're so short that, you know,
12 feel free to just let it go here. There-uh, the first is from, uh, a child psychologist,
13 Robert Coles, who originally did a lot of work with um, um, kids who were sort
14 of, elementary school kids, who were sort of from Little Rock 9, who were sort of
15 at the cutting edge of integration. Um, but this is in a book of his that is about Erik
16 Erikson who is another psychologist. And, Coles, writes, 'In this life we prepare
17 for things, for moments, and events and situations. We worry about wrongs, think
18 about injustices, um, read what Tolstoy or Ruskin- ' who we say are poets or folks
19 we focused on- 'And then all of a sudden, the issue is not whether we agree or
20 disagree with what we've heard, or read, and studied. The issue is us and what
21 we've become.' And the second quote is one we had at our first session, um, this
22 little snippet from the poet James Russell, who says um, "All the beautiful
23 sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action." So again we're
24 moving from this business of intent and into action. And tonight we're going to be
25 supporting each other in kind of what we're becoming because nobody becomes
26 something and then stops. And your voices are going to be the art for the evening,
27 that's what we'll be focusing on. Uh, and this, just to set a context, is not going to
28 be a moment of comparison. Um, so when you start talking about your
29 commitments, and [inaud] on the other side of the room there listening, and um,
30 and somebody starts talking about a commitment and you start thinking 'oh,
31 they're commitment is so global and so important and I only thought of a really
32 little thing to do.' And meanwhile you get around and you say your sort of quote
33 little thing and the person on the other side of the room is thinking 'oh my
34 commitment was so over blown and so out of touch [others laughing] and that
35 other person picked something so concrete, you know.' So, you know, it's not
36 about comparing with each other. It's really about just seeing, getting a sense of
37 what's right for you and taking your best step at this point in the arc of your life.
38 And, again, all of these things are kind of a mystery, and that's another part of
39 what we'll be, I think learning as we listen to each other this evening, is you
40 know, um, you know, some people have, um, are change makers that are really
41 quiet, like Fiola McCarty who just saved and saved. And some people are much
42 more public like Wangaari Matthai, who steps out there are creates a whole
43 movement, becomes engaged politically. Um, and there's also this mystery where
44 somebody who raises a couple kids really well, like M5, for instance, who's

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

45 raising kids, can you know, maybe have more impact by what happens with those
46 kids, then they might by stepping in some big public arena. You know, we don't
47 really know how these things play out. Although I think we do have some sense if
48 kids are being brought up by a parent and see their parent taking action and
49 stepping up and moving into the sort of public sphere, that's going to have a sort
50 of, positive effect on the kids lives. And the other thing I think we know is that if
51 even if somebody's in the business of raising kids and trying to do it well, they
52 can benefit from a lot of shared action that we might do. Whether that's, you
53 know, helping them get a living wage, helping them have access to healthcare,
54 good quality education, um, safe environment, all of that stuff helps individual
55 parents raise kids, and yet it's a shared activity we can all be engaged in. so, um,
56 as we support and challenge each other this evening, if you could try and think
57 and try and be for each other, like the people who have been very meaningful to
58 you and your life. Your guides and your mentors. The folks who really kind of
59 believe in you and believe in two ways, 1. Willing to support you along the way,
60 you know, toward being your best self, and also, believing to you also in that
61 they're willing to ask you a little bit of hard questions and nudge you a little bit
62 further than you might go on your own. So that's what we're up to tonight. And
63 the question is, how is this going to work? It's going to work fairly simply. And
64 that is, [paper rustling] like this! We're going to spend roughly thirty minutes
65 asking everybody to sort of go around the circle and just talk for a couple minutes
66 only, you know three minutes or so, but talk just a little bit about your
67 commitment. And if you brought an image with your commitment, you can sort
68 of talk about the picture you brought or whatever you brought that sort of suggests
69 your image and then it might be something that's new or renewed. You can talk
70 about a little bit about, you know, it might not be as meaningful to say here's the
71 thing I'm doing, but here's the thing I'm doing, here's where it's taking me. So
72 you wanna, you might wanna talk about your art or your trajectory. Or, if you
73 have time, you might wanna say, 'well, here's what I'm committed to doing, but I
74 really have this question I'd like a little bit of input from the group about. So,
75 we'll go around the circle and we'll get a chance to listen to everybody. And then,
76 we'll take 45 minutes and go around the circle again. In the second time that we
77 do that each person is going to listen, so let's say F1 goes, and she will have
78 talked about her commitment and you will have listened to her, she'll be quiet,
79 and you'll get a chance to sort of share with her the things that are, you know, the
80 things that are sort of support or challenge for her. So you might say, 'Oh F1, I
81 really want to support about what you shared about your commitment was x, y,
82 and z. The things that sound really just right to you about it and seem very
83 imaginative and really practical or whatever. And then, you might also want to
84 challenge something. Raise some question that she may want to be thinking about,
85 you know. 'Is there a way you can make this more structural?' Or, 'is there a way,
86 do you think you'll be able to stick with this over time because it sounds so hard,'
87 Or, you know, whatever. So, each of you will have the chance to offer support
88 and challenge to the others of you. And not necessarily everybody has to say

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

89 something to everybody, but we want everybody to get a chance to get sort of
90 feedback from the group. So, that will be the second time around and that will
91 bring us up to just before 7pm. So, we'll head along a little further than normal
92 before we take a break. Then we'll take a break, and get up, do whatever you
93 want to do, get some more food. Then we'll also in the break, take your image or
94 if you brought one, and bring it up to our montage board, and however you want
95 to do it, make it fit with anybody else's stuff, anyway you like. And, there's pens
96 and markers if you want to get artistic about it. And then, when we get back
97 together. We're going to go, yet a third time around the circle. And this time, just
98 ask you to do a very crisp, re-statement, not of your whole story up here, a crisp
99 re-statement of, you know, here's what's moving me to action. 'Here's what I'm
100 committed to doing. You know, I'm renewing my commitment to do X, I'm taking
101 these steps,' and be as crisp as you can about it. And this is kind of, it's a little
102 like the 'take-away's,' by saying it clearly for yourself and for the rest of the
103 people in the group you can kind of take it away better than if you know, you give
104 this long mushy story about it. So, is that kinda clear enough? We're going to do
105 three times around, one time where everybody gets a chance to talk, sort of
106 generally about their commitment, issues they might be facing, then we'll do the
107 second thing, where you get to be quiet, while other people give you some support
108 and challenge. And then we'll do the break, and then we'll do this crisp re-
109 statement. Um, so the one other thing is this is not a force march to a
110 commitment. So if you've been here seven weeks and you think you know I'm
111 really not ready to make a new or renewed commitment, we're not going to shun
112 you or something. So, um, if that's your case and you want to say, 'well I've
113 thought about it and I'm not quite ready,' feel free to jump in with something else
114 as an alternative and you make up your own alternative. One possibly might be,
115 you know 'as I've thought over these seven weeks, here's the specific thing that
116 most affected my thinking, or affected my connection with our shared common
117 life.' So, everybody's okay on [F?: mmhm.] where we're going for the evening?
118 And then we'll wrap up, the last 10 minutes or so. Okay, so um, because I uh,
119 know it's sometimes hard to listen to people while you're thinking about what
120 you're going to say, um in your packet is a {participants mumbles} I'm going to
121 borrow F6's 'cause she's not here yet. {paper shuffling} In your packet right after
122 the quotes, you know, is a little crib sheet if you want to make yourself a little –
123 couple notes of what you want to say. Or you can pull out your letter to yourself,
124 or if you didn't get as far as really writing the letter, maybe you wrote some notes
125 toward writing the letter, whatever you've got, you know feel free and make
126 notes, but just take 2 minutes to kind of collect what you're going to say in this
127 first session-section [people mumbling] and then you'll be better able to really
128 listen to everybody else. {Papers shuffling, some participant laughter} (140). Is
129 everybody, okay to, okay to go here? Um, now if you look in your packet right
130 behind that first crib sheet is another tool, which you could choose to use or not,
131 but it looks kinda like this, there are two pages that look kinda like this. And you
132 know, if you choose, not everybody likes this little tool, some people will say this

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

133 is too structured, but, you listen to each person, you know, you're going to want
134 to give some response and feedback each time, you can fill in their name, what
135 they say their commitment is and then a couple notes about what you want to
136 support in that and what you might want to raise a challenge or question about.
137 So, this will give you something so that when we come around the circle a second
138 time 'cause it does get a little bit dizzy, you get to the fifth person and you go,
139 'what was their commitment again? Alright, are they the one who's going to teach
140 school and um, in Atlanta or not, I can't remember? ' [LF] So, feel free to make
141 use of this, and ah, as we turn to this, I'll go back to a little quote from the
142 theologian Paul Tillich again, 'The first duty of love is to listen,' so that's what
143 we're really going to be doing. And, I feel like I've been working hard on this
144 side of the room a lot [laughter] So, what we're going to do is instead go in this
145 direction [F?: Ha ha! And I used to sit over there, laughter from group] in part
146 because M4's got to leave, so we'll work around this way, both times, so, F1 [F1:
147 Do I have to go first?! Ohhh, F? supports F1 to go ahead] If you really want to
148 pass, you get one pass. [laughter, F?: it's going to pass all around to this side]
149 Everybody gets one pass, so if (inaud) [F1: I'll go, I'll go]

150
151 F1: Um, okay, I, I really actually came up with three commitments. Umm, that's
152 pretty immediate, which is, and I think I mentioned this before, one of the things
153 that I really let slide in my own personal life, which is my involvement in the
154 church and in the community. I've had the opportunity to be involved in a number
155 of service oriented projects and um, one of the ones that I think I'll probably do,
156 hopefully this summer is that um, there's a group that goes to the poverty stricken
157 areas of Appalachia and they do service projects and I've been wanting to do that
158 so I'm probably going to do that. But, there's just a lot of other opportunities. One
159 that's not immediate, but um, in the next several years, is I really want to get
160 involved in the next presidential campaign because I'd like to have some tiny
161 bitty influence, however small, maybe on that outcome because I didn't like the
162 outcome, so I think maybe I could have somehow made a difference [FAC:
163 mhmm]. Um, and then, and then third, really has to do with my daughters and
164 strengthening their, their commitment. I have a daughter who's going to be a
165 veterinary technician. I think as a family, um, we're going to get involved in the
166 animal rescue league, um something that they can engage in and as a family we
167 could be doing something to make a difference, and I know that that's important,
168 so those are the three big things.

169
170 FAC: Any other issues or questions that you want to bring to the group that you
171 want to kind of ask particular feedback from people when it's your chance to
172 listen?

173
174 F1: Well, I think one of the things that has always um, you know, for instance,
175 my, I have a question, for instance about getting involved in the next presidential
176 campaign – how do I do it, where do I go, who do I know who's already doing

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

177 something? You know, what's out there for me to get involved with? So it is a
178 matter of resources, it's a matter of not knowing. I do know somebody who was
179 involved in the presidential campaign from last year and so I thought okay well,
180 contact her, and you know, see what I can do, but, you know. And then well,
181 church, I just need to show up [laughter]. Hi it's me again. [LF]

182
183 FAC: Alright, okay, F7.

184
185 F7: Okay, well, this has been really a good program for me. It's made me think
186 and reconsider. Um, I've really been wrestling with how much longer I want to
187 continue in my professional role here at the X school. Don't tell anybody, keep it
188 in the script! [LF, FAC: Let's be serious about this, keep it in the ground rules.
189 When someone says keep it in confidence here. So, let's like really let that, she's
190 taking a risk here, so, F7, thank you] Well, I've been doing this for 24 years. I've
191 – I've kind of made my mark and I'm just deciding, you know not that many
192 people hang in as long as I have, and so I've really been wrestling with what do I
193 do next: take early retirement, do a career change, and on and on. And then
194 actually in talking about all the kinds of issues that we've been discussing in the
195 program. It made, it enabled me to make a renewed commitment to my
196 professional work because I do believe by internationalizing as many young
197 people as possible, more of these big issues can be better managed by more
198 informed citizenry and by people who are sensitive to others and understand
199 cultural differences and I could go on and on with that. So, in fact, I've made a
200 renewed commitment. It's still though prompted me to think, what do I want to do
201 when I retire? At regular retirement age, not early retirement age. So, I've been
202 looking into different kinds of counseling degrees and I just went to ah, today, I
203 went to the social work, masters of social work has one for counseling. So, that's
204 looking do-able to be. And then, in terms of what focus I'd want to do, I wish F7
205 were here today because she really reminded me of so many of my former
206 students have come out after leaving school and then come back to share that with
207 me. And I've seen so much pain and really anguish with the gay community in
208 really coming out to family and friends and stuff. And so, if I would end up
209 counseling, I think I would like to have a specialization focusing on gay, um
210 GLBT issues, I think that's really where I see a need, um. I mean, I don't really
211 know a whole- whole lot other than what I experienced directly with my students.
212 But I think if I could pick a niche in counseling for myself, that's really what I'd
213 do. So that's the longer term thing, I have maybe 8 or 10 years to get to that
214 commitment. Um, more immediately though, I do have a commitment at my
215 church, I'm on my parish counsel, I chair the education committee, and I sit on
216 the school board, and I'm not happy with spending my time there because we
217 really just nod to things. So, I think I might want to withdraw from that and work
218 directly with the X society, which helps needy families and individuals in my
219 community. And I like how they do it. They do it in a way that it's not transparent
220 who's being helped in what way. People get a certificate, they go to the store, they

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

221 buy what they want or they're helped in mortgage payments or car – I mean I just
222 like the way they're helped. It's not like, they're the needy ones and they're
223 getting all the help, it's just not. And finally, I live close to X water body, and I –
224 I kept feeling like I want to help clean up, I want to do something to make the
225 water body more usable and more appreciated by people. So um, I've been an
226 inactive X club member for years, and they do regular clean ups along X water
227 body, so I think I'll get some friends and go out there and help clean up the water
228 body. That occasionally comes up, and hopefully make that a longer term
229 commitment. So: recommitment to my work. I know what I can do there, I know
230 that I can shift in my church, and I think it's pretty easy to pick up with the X
231 club. Um, this longer term goal of, I mean is it really feasible for me to do this?
232 There's an X-credit practicum in this program, so that's the bigger one. It's really
233 appealing to me right now, um, and I'm just, I'm going to look into it further, talk
234 to people, and see what I'm going to do. [others: mmmm]

235

236 FAC: Well, thank you. Okay

237

238 M4: Hi. I have a little bit of commitments to myself and to others. Uh, my first
239 commitment was to try to not be so wasteful with money and you know, live a
240 little below my means and save something for a rainy day because my parents
241 have taught me that and 'cause...you never know. Also, um, I would say that um,
242 if somebody, go to place, I should leave a bigger tip because some people
243 (inaudible) poverty. And, if anybody watched '30 days' [F?: I heard that was so
244 good, F?: what's that] mmmm, '30 days' is a show where the guy from 'Supersize
245 Me' and his fiancé try to live on minimum wage for 30 days and they went to
246 Columbus, OH, cause that's like poverty stricken area, and they basically, they
247 froze all their accounts, they put their credit cards away. Their starting money
248 they had was how much a person who have working full-time for minimum wage,
249 which was about \$300. They got a place in a really crappy neighborhood where
250 the person – they change the locks because that morning a homeless person was
251 living there before and there was a crack house living right underneath them. So,
252 but they worked their butts off for 30 days, but they were still \$1000 in debt,
253 because the lady, during the show, his wife got an urinary tract infection, had to
254 go to the emergency room and that cost \$400, and he had to get x-rays and that
255 cost \$500. And they only worked, they were \$1000 in that one month so [FAC:
256 wow] yeah. And also, I learned that they got help, I'd recommend it, for anyone
257 who wants to see that [F1: what's that?] I downloaded it. I can put it on a DVD,
258 it's forty minutes so it's long. And uh, also, my commitment would be to find
259 more information about the one elderly man who's house is being harassed by the
260 X school because they want him to move out because the house, doesn't look
261 appeal, doesn't have curb appeal. Maybe I can help him, get curb appeal back.
262 And also I'd like to, incorporate- I'd like to stick to one hobby and get um, which
263 is X racing team, and I just remembered that once a year we go, take a car out to
264 the X center and kids climb in the car, get them interested in mechanics, so I want

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

265 to be a part of that. Take the car out the X center. Uh, challenges? I was thinking
266 about (inaudible) elderly man because the xschool wants some claim in that
267 property, I don't know what's going on. And um, well, my job doesn't make that
268 much, but if they want something nice, may have to spend a lot of money, but um,
269 the places I go to, Wendy's I cannot tip people at Wendy's. [group laughter] I tip
270 at x (inaudible) but they need them.

271

272 FAC: Alright, thank you very much, and we'll make sure we circle back to you,
273 so that you get a little bit of feedback so that you to, work at another job.

274

275 F2: Alright, well, um, did you want, were we supposed to show the picture that
276 we brought in? [FAC: whatever you'd like, yeah]. Well, I apparently don't get to
277 use my colored pencils [laughter] very often, so I got some clip art that talks about
278 what I want to do [oohs, ahhs], so – I'll pass around. And, one thing, uh, that we
279 here that has um, sort of revitalized my desire to be a teacher. It didn't seem so
280 much of an option then I talked to F8, and then oh yeah! It can still work and get
281 the certification so that um, what I want to do, and in the past I'd done some
282 tutoring at x high school for a semester or so and now I'm going to see about
283 tutoring at y high school. And I have the forms that I need. I just need to send
284 them in to the state and then send them back and then hopefully everything would
285 be ready for the fall. I want to make sure that I finish my education and actually
286 be a full time teacher and have an impact than just a tutor after school. Well, they
287 can definitely have an impact. Um, I also, I was looking at the volunteer website
288 and found that um, X elementary school just a xminute (short distance) from my
289 house has an after school program that's like from 4-6 or 4-5 and I would get
290 home right at that time if I would want to do that so, um, that's another possibility
291 if say y school doesn't work out or if I only do one night at y high school or
292 another night a week at the other school. And, I'm also interested in um- in
293 addition to this, making voluntary, at least monthly somewhere else, I want to
294 involve my sister in this. My sister graduated from X university in environmental
295 science, so she's interested in energy policy, but um, doesn't have the money right
296 to go to graduate school. She's been accepted at y university, but it's X\$, it's an
297 excellent program, but they don't really give tuition help for that year. Right now
298 she's just working but I think that she needs to get out and do things related to her
299 field, I think that she's studied for- graduated top of her class type thing and so I
300 think she needs to get out the house and sort of be involved in things. So I want to
301 take my sister along and involve her in the environmental cleanups or just uh,
302 help people with awareness. So that's what I want to do. And uh, finish my
303 education, tutor, and re-involve my sister in environmental causes. And, my uh,
304 well, I should graduate, 2 classes to graduate, so that's not really a huge problem.
305 And then I just wait for the Fall to come for the- and I'm just waiting for the
306 clearances to come. Getting my sister involved might be a little of a challenge, but
307 [laughter] we'll see. I'm the older sister so maybe I can [laughter, FAC: doesn't
308 always make it easier] right!

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

309

310 FAC: Just so we're not keeping F7 (just arrived?) in the dark, what we're doing is
311 going once around the circle and asking people to share very quickly if they have
312 their commitment in mind and their issues or questions they might want to be
313 asking the group about that. How does this play out in the arc of your life? And
314 then, after we do that, we're going to come around the circle a second time where
315 each person will be quiet and other people will offer both support and challenge to
316 in response to whatever they heard the first time. And then the third time, we're
317 going to ask people after the break to make a very crisp statement of 'I'm
318 committing to do this.' Okay, uh, so. M5, are you on here?

319

320 M5: I'm on, but (coughs) I'm vaguely on. Um, I've got this institutional, this
321 building thing going on. I said that I would um, (inaudible). I'm committed to
322 building bridges of hope, um, between seemingly divergent or seemingly uh,
323 seemingly impoverished communities. Or seemingly deviant or seemingly, let me
324 see if I can bring an example. Um, just earlier today there were a group of
325 students from a city high school who came to visit, ah, visit me and a couple
326 colleagues at Duquesne, and I made contact with one of the staff members, said
327 they had a group of black men at a high school and junior high, and they were
328 reading a book about – this could be a long story, but they're reading a book
329 about academic engagement and disengagement and how, it's a book by
330 [inaudible] about how, how um, to cut a long story short. How a wealthy
331 community in Ohio, how African-Americans themselves, still find themselves
332 um, despite, middle class, still find themselves struggling academically. So,
333 they're reading this book, this group of students. They asked if I could talk with
334 them, encouraging them about school and talk about success. For me it was a
335 coded way of saying, "can we just have a talk?" This group of students who were,
336 who seek role models. For me it was the coded way, it just came out through a
337 variety of different ways. So I contacted a variety of people, people who I knew,
338 colleagues and friends and said could you come in as well? And we talked to the
339 gentlemen this afternoon, about 3:30-4:30. Not only about staying in school, but
340 also what it is to be a young black man in the US. And, and achieving. So it was a
341 message about uplift. How we've overcome certain challenges in our society and
342 those things. We have to constantly see ourselves and life ourselves because there
343 are societal images that don't necessarily want to uplift our own community and
344 our own family. I don't mean to get on a soap box, but-. And so for me the kind of
345 building bridges of hope issue among seemingly diverging communities of
346 African-American men in high school, x high school, x university. I volunteer at x
347 jail as part of my church so, again, building bridges of hope. Um, uh, a group of
348 students, what I've already shared, who I take to x country. These are a
349 seemingly, seemingly privileged group of x university students, but taking them
350 to the US, they realize how much they don't, taking them to X country, they
351 realize how much they themselves don't actually have, they have materially, but
352 they don't actually have spirit of life that exudes in x country. You know these

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

353 things, F7, you talked about how to internationalize students, you kind of get, you
354 take for granted what you have until you go across the street or across the water,
355 you realize people who have less, actually have much more. And so um, this
356 building bridges and building bridges of hope, and ways to build school. And so
357 there's building bridges of hope and also build schools. I've got this passion of
358 building schools. I'm not only in the university professor but I'm also in, I'm
359 hanging around, schools are my place, the laboratory. And so, um, I've been
360 working pretty challengingly in a preschool environment and it's been wrought
361 with political and variety of other issues. If you can imagine in a preschool what
362 would be the political issues, but- political issues, economic issues and so forth,
363 but I was writing a letter to myself today I thought, ok this is great, this is helping
364 me to realize when I actually at- I am slowly building these schools, but they're
365 not so rosy. I keep imagining, this image of building this school in the countryside
366 with rural, very hands-on, but very academic, and um, this is, this is part of the
367 training ground. That's what I'm realizing there are so many things that I'm part
368 of the training ground of something bigger that I want to start. And so, um, that's
369 um, like I said, it's vague, but the theme is building bridges of hope in certain
370 communities. Um, and also building schools.

371

372 FAC: F6, do you feel comfortable going now? Or do you want to let a couple
373 other people to give you another moment to collect?

374

375 F6: I'm probably not going to get collected [group laughter]

376

377 FAC: Ok good, then don't collect. That's one of our things, step out there, learn
378 by doing, see what comes out of your mouth [F?: you crack me up F6,(laughs)
379 that's so great!]

380

381 F6: I thought I would have time to write the letter today and I didn't have time so
382 I gonna look at the things I can write and send it to you, and the church can send it
383 back [FAC: we're really about trying to get this stuff moving in your life, it's not
384 so much about the bureaucracy of the letter, so, keep going.] Um, part of why I
385 put it off is because I feel very not focused in a certain direction, but I've noticed
386 that since I've started in MCC, and even before that, but this just keeps it in
387 present mind that I want to do something. There are several things that I'd like to
388 do, that I've noticed have come sort of, sort of connected to what MCC is sort of
389 about [mumbles of agreement]. And I mean, there's so many, so many things. I'm
390 still developing as a person. I want be more, who I feel I really am. Like, by
391 taking, like there's certain interests that I've always wanted to explore. For
392 example, I've always wanted to learn to play a drum. I don't know why that's
393 continues to ring in my mind, but it's something that I feel something more
394 toward becoming who I am. You know? I've always been sort of afraid to do that
395 and I think I need to let go of these fears of things I like to do, like admit I what I
396 want and just do it. So that's one thing. Another this is that I live with my parents,

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

397 uh right now, so they're very much like an influence on my life, and I have
398 difficulties with my parents, especially my father. I want – uh, and I think I want
399 to improve that, it's been very difficult, I've tried. And for several reasons we
400 can't seem to get along. But, one, um, uh, a goal or something that I could, that
401 I've been thinking about was how can I put my interests with my dad, you know,
402 to make our relationship better. 'Cause my dad has totally different interests than
403 me. He's a cyclist. And, that's what his passion is cycling, it's always been
404 cycling. And, he has a very interesting life. He's from Puerto Rico and, I think
405 he's a fascinating person I just don't really like him [group laughter]. It's the
406 truth. I don't get along with him, I love him but we just, for various reasons, I
407 have a lot of bitterness toward him. It's the way he was when I was growing up. I
408 think his life would make a great movie, a great story because he's gone through
409 so many things, from Puerto Rico, uh, I'd like to um, record his life and I think
410 that would be a good way to. I've always wanted to be a movie – filmmaker or
411 something. I don't know if I'll ever be able to do that but, maybe that would be a
412 good way to connect with my dad, and maybe he would feel – it would be proof
413 that I love him, because I know sometimes he doesn't think I like him, like or love
414 him. I think he knows, (giggles), I think he suffers because we don't connect and
415 that would be a good way to connect. And maybe I could get over some of my
416 family, because I think that that affects me in my daily life, like that disconnection
417 from my roots [F2: mhmm]. And that's one, and another thing. One of the things
418 that's affected me most of my life has been my sexuality and coming to terms
419 with that and I'd like to do something with that. I'd like to help – when I think
420 about it, I think about what I want, I don't want people to have to go through the
421 pain and confusion that I went through. I'd like to help young students, but
422 sometimes I feel like it's impossible, like where I am right now. Maybe I'm not in
423 the best place to be a mentor to someone, I feel really confused too, I feel like I
424 need a mentor, really. Uh, but maybe that's something in the future. It's probably
425 not going to leave my mind, that I can contribute to be an aspiring mentor. And,
426 another thing that I've done, I've tried to look for a mentor and I've done that by
427 going to some churches, actually. I wasn't raised religious at all, but um, just two
428 weeks ago, I went to your Presbyterian church to check that out, I also went to a
429 Unitarian, universalist church. And I really liked the Unitarian, universalist
430 church. And I thought there were a lot of people, a lot of older people, that I- I
431 was really surprised, that I could really get connected with. Since then I've gotten
432 a job, and I can't -, I work Sunday mornings, so I can't do that right now,
433 unfortunately. [F2: mhmm] Though, I think there's ways I can maybe work
434 around, like I can go to other activities, maybe they have on evenings or
435 something [FAC: mhmm]. So, that's maybe where I am, right now.
436
437 FAC: Right, we'll see when people, we'll see when it comes around, we'll see if
438 anybody got's- can pull some of those strands together and not force them
439 together, but we'll see what happens. So we need to hasten along here, so M3
440

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

441 M3: Alright, well um, my will be quick so [group laughter, FAC: didn't mean to
442 give you too big an out here] We'll see but, um, I'm not, um, I'm still not
443 completely sure about what route I'm going to go in with my plan but I want do
444 something with mentoring. As far as a letter goes, I pretty much just jotted down
445 some ideas and notes that I have, brainstorming wise but, I want to do something
446 with mentoring, um, some of the things that I thought of was maybe like academic
447 tutoring or something like that. In high school I tutored and um, for two years.
448 And you know, it was a good feeling, you know, its fulfilling. And um, you know,
449 to help people out like that. I want to do something, maybe, with America Reads
450 or something like that to help people to learn how to read because um, I've said it
451 before but, um, something that I really value is just knowledge. And like I said,
452 I'm no real bookwork or anything like that but I can appreciate you know the
453 power of knowledge, you know and it's something that um, a lot of people don't
454 really know about or don't really get to value until they get older, you know? So
455 that's something else. I was also um, we talked about last week in the um, the
456 smaller group, um, I thought about, um, maybe helping train kids how to box. I
457 know M2 and M5 both talked about um, being like a little coach, and you know
458 kids sports and whatever, and that's something that I would like to do, that I think
459 would be fun and um, I don't know how much of a social benefit that would give,
460 but you know, you know, it's something. You know, it might be small but, it's
461 worthwhile. And then the other thing is um, maybe do something with the big
462 brother program, where you know, it's another form of mentoring. So, those were
463 just some of my ideas. Um, some questions I had was maybe um, how to just
464 make it apart of my life because I'm pretty busy right now and, you know, the
465 time and energy, and finding a way that I can make it work. And um, can I
466 actually do more than that? All the things sound good, but I think I can probably
467 do more than that so um, maybe I need to make it a little more broader. And then I
468 just wanted some, to reassure myself that is it for myself or for other people? Like
469 the whole thing with boxing, I love to box, you know, and in my mind I'm
470 thinking is this really an excuse for me to go to the gym and mess around or is
471 really to help other people? So um, those were my ideas and some of the things I
472 was wrestling with a little bit. [F?: awesome; FAC: wonderful, thank you] your
473 welcome [laughter by F? FAC: F5]

474
475 F5: Ok, um, I have some um, two things that are very specific and should be easy,
476 whether they will be or not, I don't know. One is um, the um, I mentioned I think
477 in the smaller group um, the green pages that was mentioned in one of our
478 resources, it's like shopping that's environmentally friendly and they have things
479 that um, like Co-op America too, where different places where you can buy things
480 that are environmentally friendly and uphold social justice concerns, and I just
481 want to really research. I even have that information at home and it's in a stack of
482 things of do and that's something I really definitely want to do. Um, sometime
483 over the next year. Uh, also, I just want to look over my finances get a more
484 specific budget and see if I can give more money per month to things like Oxfam,

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

485 United Farmworkers or any interesting like, things that I, places that I really
486 respect and I know who are into real development and self-help type of things and
487 see, just, if I can allot more to groups like that. Um, these other two things are a
488 little more vague and kind of- well the first one is trying to get a grasp on work so
489 it doesn't consume my life. I really love my work, but it just- it tends to take over.
490 I work 50, 60, 70, whatever, I take stuff home. I'm thinking there has got to be,
491 there are ways to control that so I have time for other things in my life, you know.
492 And um, that's one of the things I want to work on. And then the other things
493 that's related to work, which is um, but, I think some of the things I've thought
494 about through this is um, I'd like to explore ways that um the university- we are
495 such a resource and I'm sure there's a lot of things that we do, I know, in different
496 departments and everything. But, I often think for instance, like with some issues,
497 like I can't even remember what it was. I think it was this year, or two years,
498 when the decision um, to go into Iraq happened. And, I felt badly- there were
499 some movements on campus, but demonstrations or whatever, but I thought this
500 would be the perfect time for some kind of a Teach-in, and I don't mean a
501 political thing where it's definitely like rallies against or something. But I feel
502 like, as a university with all these resources, we have the responsibility to get
503 some good information out there and help people make decisions. And I think the
504 dean of the university should be more involved in that kind of thing. You know,
505 around certain issues again, not to necessarily take a political stand. Um, and one
506 thing that motivates me on this. I remember, this was, I think 8 years ago, the
507 presidential election, and they did this study. It was a media study and I think it
508 was out in I believe in California, where they um, did some education with some
509 of the voters and um, like took some of the issues and what each candidate was
510 saying and then gave a little background. Supposedly objective background. We
511 know everything's a little bit colored but, gave um, it was just amazing to see the
512 differences to see how people maybe changed their views, like their, when they
513 voted, they voted for different reasons, than like than a control group did. I just
514 think that the university has a responsibility on education and I would like to
515 somehow help to have those things happen. So, that's it.

516
517 FAC: It is pretty exciting. F8.

518
519 F8: Umm, I would like, I have a few ideas, um, basically my new, I think most of
520 my commitments are renewed, and the reason why I say that is because they've
521 always been ideas in my head, but I've never, um, taken them to, I guess, to
522 action. I- I'm always an idea person I can come up with the best idea, boy but if I
523 had to do it shhh- [group laughter]. I don't know, so, I think my first renewed
524 commitment is to make sure that every situation I'm in is challenging because um,
525 I realized that going through grad school and you know, working with, you know,
526 higher ed administration is that, I get - I need to be in a place that challenges and
527 uses, you know, my talent, my brain, my resources, I don't, you know, I need to
528 feel used in a way. I need to be challenged to really think about things. And also I

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

529 want to – my renewed commitment is to pay more attention to um, you know, the
530 disparities of you know, um, disparities the wrong word, um, how power exists in
531 this world. And how, you know, power in just any term or any – just unequally
532 distributed. And I need to be able to locate those little sources of unequal power
533 and figure out whether its something I really want to take action on and be
534 involved in it. Um, because, I feel that that’s where some of my later work is
535 going to be involved, be in, just understanding where that power comes from. And
536 learning how to deal with that. And I also want to, you know, renew my
537 commitment to writing more. Um, I mean, I love writing when I’m doing it, but
538 you know sometimes again I get sidetracked and you know, oh this is not good
539 enough, I don’t want to write this and I’m not sure what I should write about, but
540 I think its such a- such a fun thing to do and a healing thing to do. It’s just a great
541 thing. And, the last renewed commitment is just to get myself back into music.
542 And I remember you guys remember my band story [F?: laughs]. And, you know,
543 how I just, even though I was the worst trombone player in the school, I was just
544 gung ho, but you know what? Even though I was the worst trombone player I was
545 a pretty good bass player, and I want to pick that up again and play piano as well.
546 So, I think – I want to, I want to do that. I’ve had too much fun doing it, so I want
547 to get back into it. [Coughs] So yeah. And so maybe I guess the challenge I need
548 is you know, well not challenge, what’s the- the question! Is you know, how do I
549 know that that person- I need to be surrounded by people who do challenge me,
550 because sometimes I can’t rely completely on myself to put myself in those
551 situations. So I need to – how do I know somebody’s just challenging me for my
552 own good or for their own good, you know? And should I even think of it that
553 way? I don’t know. You know what I’m saying? [mumbles of agreement from
554 others]

555
556 FAC: Ok, thank you. F4 has a very rugged day, so may expect her to be a bit brief
557 [laughter and mumbles]

558
559 F4: I could be a- [more laughter] Let’s hope that everything comes out coherent at
560 this point. Um, mine were very much from a personal growth perspective, I think.
561 This has made me um, think about where I want to be going. And I’m working on
562 figuring that out. I think one thing um, that’s really come to life for me is this
563 whole inspiring or motivating students to want to be more active and um I’ve
564 really missed that. What I’ve really missed with my job is I don’t teach and I
565 don’t facilitate and I don’t have interactions with student, aside fortunately I have
566 the peer facilitators now. But, that’s a new thing. Um, that’s been a real hard
567 challenge for me because I always been a teacher and I’m not right now and I
568 didn’t realize how much that had an effect on me until I was removed from it.
569 And so I’m really moving, I’ve already said that I’ve got to facilitate this coming
570 term or else I’m not going to make it in this position for much longer. Um, and
571 trying to figure out – this is really broad- what I really want from life, sort of over
572 the next two years with my career and family. Um, you know, thinking about, you

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

573 know, do I want to start a family? Do I want, what do I want out of this and where
574 do I see myself in two years. I'm not even looking at the five-year plan. I just
575 want to start low with two and figure it out from there. Um, and part of that is I've
576 been really putting this on the back burner and I really don't want to anymore is
577 figuring out- my husband and I are really struggling with what religion we want to
578 be and go church shopping- [laughter, mumbles of agreement] that's got to be!
579 I'm mean, that's so hard. I grew up catholic and um, I don't want to, I don't really
580 agree with many of the Catholicism pieces at this point and I've got to figure out
581 and leave that comfort zone and it's so comfortable, and I have a hard time with
582 any other church because it's a safety net for me. I feel I can walk into any
583 catholic church and be okay, but if you put me in another church, what am I going
584 to do?! And I still need that structured environment. That's sort of been a struggle,
585 and my husband's been a Methodist, so we're trying to come up with a happy
586 medium and consider this whole children situation. So that's really, that's a huge-
587 huge one for me, and it's kinda tough figuring out what to do and make the time
588 to this shopping. And I'm nervous, I just get nervous to go to a different church,
589 that freaks me out in a big way. I don't know how I'm going to do that, actually.
590 Um, because I like to know the music, I like to sing in church, and we're taking
591 me away from all the songs that I know and I don't like that very much [laughs,
592 others laugh]. Um, and I think, the last thing is that I do, I want to try and become
593 more involved with the community. And by doing that I need to learn about the
594 community in which I live. Um, because I'm just not familiar enough with my
595 own surroundings since we just moved there in December. Um, so I've got a lot
596 of questions about where do I see myself what career do I really want to take on?
597 Should I be back in teaching, because that's where I really, what I really love.
598 But, at the same time I really love college students and it's fun for me. Um, and
599 I've got to figure out how to go about this church shopping business. So that's a
600 big question on my dock here. And I need to find people with all different
601 religions and go with someone because I need a friend to go with. 'cause I feel
602 nervous walking in by myself, I feel like I'm this outcast, and they're all going to
603 be like 'there's the non-member!' [group laughter] It makes me so nervous [F7
604 & F?: don't be so glad, don't you worry about that] I'm worried, I'm convinced
605 it's a Catholicism thing because when you, I can only speak – from my own
606 experience, but growing up in the catholic church, that's all that you know and
607 you don't learn about other faiths, and so I'm nervous as I get up to trust
608 something different. But I know that's not where I want to be so, I admire you F6
609 for trying these different churches! I can't do it yet, I'm trying.

610
611 F6: I've never gone to church before so, for me it's just [F4: good for you, that's
612 awesome, group laughter, F4: F6 and I are gonna start church shopping!]
613 (inaudible) Unitarian one.

614
615 FAC: Okay, M2
616

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

617 M2: Mine's kinda a renewed commitment, but also at the same time, a new
618 commitment. Um, the only thing I've always been involved in is um, state parks
619 and stuff, and they aren't any really state parks in {their community}, but um, I
620 would like to get back involved in doing stuff, um, with parks and with natural
621 resources and stuff. So, um, again actually next spring break, um, I'd like to go to
622 actually [organization] does several trips. I went to Tennessee this year, and I
623 think next year I want to do Mexico for a week and build trails. And you stay out
624 there and you camp for a week out in the middle of the woods, in the middle of
625 nowhere. With [F?: (inaudible) in the middle of Mexico? F?: deserts!] It snows
626 usually in March, because you're up in the mountains. But, you build trails up
627 there. It's something I'd like to keep involved with. It's also like to look for some
628 more opportunities around this area as well as at home, but I'm not there very
629 often so, may try to find something, go home for a weekend, head back there. Um,
630 other than that, I've been inspired by every body's talking. I do actually want to
631 get involved in the next presidential election. Um, 'cause I think it's very
632 important. I don't even care which side you're on, just to know the issues, and to
633 know both sides of the issues and or multiple sides, I think there's more than two
634 sometimes. I think we're so, we tend to pick which side we're on and we're like,
635 "I'm only going to listen to this side." I think it's, I think we're so, um, I think- I
636 think, the thing that bothers me about this whole thing is the way we have this
637 whole two party system, and you're one, or you're the other. And I hate that. I
638 agree with half this stuff and half this stuff, and a third of these I don't agree with
639 either side, and there's no happy medium. And I think um, that's something I
640 wish, you know, hopefully maybe, might come to change in the next few years.
641 Because really, people generally are starting, to be dissatisfied with the whole
642 system of two parties. (inaudible) in Europe it's an amalgam of an 8 party system.
643 But, um, so I think that's also something else I'd like to be involved in. Um, for
644 me in terms of support, I have a lot of my friends here, that have done, actually
645 done stuff with prior, a bunch of people I went to [western state] are all involved
646 in similar things. So, I know they're there, to have people to go with, 'cause It's
647 pretty boring if you go by yourself, 'cause you don't know anybody and you're
648 like 'uh, what am I doing?' [FAC: like church] Kind of like church you know
649 [group laughter] trail shopping, church shopping, it's all set [F4: That's right]
650 Um, other than that, I just need to sit down and actually be like, I'm just going to
651 do something. I think we all have these great aspirations, but when it comes down
652 to actually sitting down and doing them it's like 'ohh, when am I going to do
653 this?' you know, I just need to make the time, you know, [F?: mhmm] maybe I'll
654 have time next weekend, you know.

655
656 FAC: Okay, thank you all. Okay, what we've done was wonderful. We've taken a
657 little bit longer, but we're actually the largest group here. So, let's make some, a
658 little bit of decisions about where we are here. The idea was maybe to go 'til 7pm
659 sort of in that range and go around and have everybody have a chance to listen.
660 Would people like to take a little break now and come back and do that? And I

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments, Part #1
Transcript

661 think what we'll need to do is um, when we come back. This is going to be a little
662 hard because we're all going to have things we're going to want to say to each
663 other, so we're going to have to find a way to um, sort of listen. If someone's
664 already said what you think you want to say. I would say don't, not communicate
665 that. Maybe take the time to communicate that with them by email later. We're
666 going to have to sort of come up with something creative to make this thing work.
667 Oh, sorry-

668
669 F5: Uh, I don't know and there might be, you've done this before so this might
670 not be a good idea, but what I'm wondering is, and what you just said, we
671 shouldn't pull this out interminably, but, I'm wondering if #3 is necessary? You
672 know, and I'm wondering if #2 is more important and if we, if it happens that #2
673 extends, should we just, I don't know, I'm just wondering if #3 is..[M2: that's an
674 idea, FAC: No, I think that's fine, because I think people have been, you know,
675 pretty good about, so maybe what we'll do is make #3 is if you feel like in the
676 process of the evening you've gotten more clarity, you can- F7: you can add it to
677 your letter- FAC: maybe say your thing, you know, if you want the opportunity to
678 do that, but that's a good way to pick up more time, F?: good idea F5, FAC: F5,
679 excellent, others make encouraging comments] once in a while, you know! [group
680 LF]

681
682 FAC: So we are going to do the take a little break. If you did bring your image,
683 put it over here on our little montage board. And um, and then we'll come back
684 and – {TAPE CUT OFF}

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

- 1 F8: =her name so that maybe you can even do something with that specifically her
2 kids or something like that. I loved the environment, because it was challenging
3 so I'm sure that you'll, you know, find the same thing [LF] {others laugh} see ya,
4 so.
5
- 6 F5: Along those lines, if you did tutoring and things like that and found that you
7 really were interested, um, you may or may not want to consider instead of the
8 traditional, um, um, teacher certification with would take you a while
9 academically and then the certification, um, they, there's something called 'teach
10 for America, I don't know if you've looked at that? [F2: I'm interested in possibly
11 doing that] that could be [F2: not inner city, but I thought some other place [F8:
12 and they take a lot of places, pay loans, F2: that's very attractive to me; F?: and
13 very prestigious, F2: any place that let's me bring my cats – (group LF), I'll worry
14 about (inaudible) but I still have to graduate, so.] (8).
15
- 16 FAC: That was both a support and a challenge I think. Other things people would
17 like to offer to F2?
18
- 19 F4: Well, I just think that dedicated teachers are wonderful. Never have enough of
20 them and if this is your passion, then you'll really give it your all and you'll be a
21 wonderful inspiration to young people. And wonderful thing about teaching is that
22 ripple effect. You know, what you give to one classroom, then it can go on. The
23 benefits can be so long term.
24
- 25 F8: It's always good to see a, you know, female, science [several group members:
26 Yes! FAC: good point] teacher. Girls are going to flock to you [other group
27 members mumbling in agreement, "definitely," F?: and the job market is fabulous
28 {comment echoed by others} M2: LF] Fabulous for science teachers [F?: what
29 kind of science are you interested in?]
30
- 31 F2: Um, I'm interested in general science education, which means, like, I've taken
32 organic chemistry, chemistry, biology, physics, astronomy, I'm taking geometry
33 in the fall and I'm taking microbiology and environmental biology for all the pre-
34 certification things I need to take for general science education. So, I could teach
35 every science class there is but, it's not so focused on advanced chemistry or
36 advanced biology.
37
- 38 F5: I think again, the three things that you mentioned, at least I think you
39 mentioned, um, are a nice mixture of the very concrete, you know, idea, doing
40 tutoring to see if that is something that would fit you, and I think F8 said
41 [inaudible] would be an excellent thing, and excellent place to [inaudible]. And
42 then, the longer range goal of maybe teaching and maybe the other specific thing
43 of doing the humane society, or maybe environmental things with your sister. I
44 think you know, covered the nice range of things.

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

45

46 FAC: Yep, to mention your sister, yep.

47

48 F2: She's taking care of my mom, so just lives in the house, takes care of my
49 mom, doesn't leave the house. (inaudible) so, hopefully she'll just get out and do
50 something.

51

52 FAC: And the things that leapt out to me is that you're thinking about this whole
53 arc of your life. Things you can do to move you toward this business about
54 teaching so. Um, and I do love this thing about always trying to bring somebody
55 along with you. Because it makes it better and more powerful at the same time.
56 Um, and my last thought, is a little on the structural side. On the one hand there's
57 this sort of ripple effect that you do get from being teachers, that all of us can
58 name that teachers have this incredible effect. Um, but the other possibility is to –
59 when you in the teaching setting to be thinking about, ok who are my colleagues
60 and how do we engage to make this school the best school it can be? Beyond this
61 school, how do we engage to say that resources are getting adequately distributed,
62 education, whatever and may be a spokesperson on that. So there is that structural
63 dimension, which might not play out immediately, but as you get a little bit of,
64 kind of stature in the set of networks keep your ear cocked to those sort of
65 opportunities is really important. Um, and it keeps you from feeling alone in the
66 classroom [F2: mmmm]. Which is that other sort of danger of teaching, being
67 teacher alone with the students and you're sort of give, give, give, you're also
68 getting back from that but it's also isolated moment.

69

70 F8: You also might want to try again, just a student membership to like a,
71 teaching science organizations. I know like there's a national counsel of teachers
72 of English so I'm sure there's the same for teachers of science [mumbles of
73 agreement] and you can get very cheap student memberships and you can get
74 incredible ideas on teaching science in the classroom and all that types of stuff.
75 So, you'll be ahead of the game before you get in the classroom. [F2: all the ideas
76 and what's expected, practice it beforehand so you, [inaudible] be surprised]
77 exactly. And you'll be, you know, be abreast of the latest theories of teaching and
78 everything. Really good.

79

80 FAC: Okay, so we're going to plunge on here. Because even with that's an
81 excellent idea, we're going to be pressing to M5 who's been talking about
82 building bridges of hope between a set of folks and mentioned a number of ways
83 he's already been engaged in working with that; working with folks who are
84 incarcerated, through church, the opportunity he just had with kids who had just
85 come from high school to X university, and this other thing he's been doing in
86 terms of X country. Um, and ah, there's an opportunity to ah- and spoken of
87 course to being a parent of kids. So, support and challenge for M5, quickly.

88

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

- 89 F1: M5, when you were saying you had an image, of building schools, were you
90 thinking of a whole, independent school? [M5: yes, schools, yes. I was thinking
91 generally institutions, but schools as being where an institution [inaudible] family
92 but I also think about building schools as well.] I mean, a free standing new
93 school? [M5: sure, I mean ah-] Go for it! Go for it. Yah, I think that's a fabulous
94 idea. I mean you certainly have the experience, you have the background. We
95 need more of those schools. We don't have enough. We keep trying to fix the
96 existing ones. As you said, we're not making big gains there. People start from
97 scratch on something, that would be incredible.
98
- 99 FAC: Just as a footnote, charter schools movement is making resources available
100 for that sort of thing that didn't use to be available. I got some folks in that
101 movement if you want contacts M5.
102
- 103 F4: I know the X foundation is really really interested in education, young people.
104 Particularly here locally in our city and region. I don't know exactly what it
105 would take to get their attention um, and get money out of them, but you might be
106 able to do that. Are you thinking more high schools? College?
107
- 108 M5: I was thinking more grade school. K-12. [mumbles] yeah.
109
- 110 M3: I'm a fan of your idea, um visiting those people who are locked up. I had a –
111 not a close friend but a guy who I was friend's with who was in jail. A lot of
112 people really appreciate that. Um, you know, people, when they go to jail, you
113 think you've got all these friends and family who are going to see you, but a lot of
114 times you really don't. A lot of people forget about them. People really do
115 appreciate that [M5: mhmm] so that's something I thought was good. [M5: The
116 activity actually is church for the year, but I wrote somewhere that I go there to
117 inspire, but often times what happens is I'm also inspired by stories that I hear]
118 Definitely, definitely.
119
- 120 F8: I was inspired as well, because I was so bored on day that I googled some
121 high school classmates just to see if their name would pop up. And one did and he
122 was just arrested for the third time for burglary. And you know I've always had
123 the interest of teaching writing in prison. I thought you know, the way it is now,
124 there really is no rehabilitation. It's just they thought, if you're away from the
125 outside and you have to ask to go to the bathroom, you possibly could get
126 rehabilitated. And I thought since writing has such a you know, it's a way to
127 rehabilitate, I thought it would be a good way for people to tap into that resource.
128 [M5: mhmm] So, I would be, I think that's one of the things that would challenge
129 me is to do some of the things that you have done.
130
- 131 M3: And I think um, and just rambling on a little bit, but, I think that you hit the
132 nail on the head too when you said um, you get inspired by some of those stories

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

133 of people who are locked up, who can um, give better, um, you know, advice, or
134 you know, teach a lesson to somebody who's been through some of the things that
135 people go through. You know they may have made a bad choice or whatever, but
136 um, a lot of times, you will be inspired by um, the people who are in jail. 'cause
137 they've got a lot to give back to other people so um, that's something else that's
138 good about that.

139

140 F2: I think in connection to what you were speaking to, um the young men having
141 been um, look for ways to improve their lives and perhaps um, learning mistakes
142 other people make and helping make better choices and um, learn more, just, give
143 more resources for things they can do.

144

145 FAC: My little conclusion M5 would be, we haven't talked much about it but not
146 to undervalue the stuff you're doing at the college level [F2: mhmm]. And that
147 this thing about possibly extending, I don't know whether it's better for a short
148 period of time, but getting folks to spend 3 months in X country learning what
149 they can contribute or learning what they lack can be such a life saving experience
150 that keep pressing on that one seems like a powerful thing to me.

151

152 F5: And I guess to carry that through if there were any opportunities for some of
153 the other things that you're hoping for is to hope that some of the people who's
154 done the experience in X country to plug into other things. Cause sometimes
155 people who have a life-changing experience and then it's like well now what?
156 And go back to reality and if they have some of these other things going, not that
157 they would be forced to do it, but they would have that avenue and it wouldn't be,
158 might be easier to tie it all together.

159

160 M5: That's a great point and the challenge is a bit, is, the challenge here is really
161 what to do with the group. It's only been 10 of them that have gone, but, how to
162 be connected, right? 'cause they've all, we've all been like 'oh I want to go back
163 and I want to do something!' One recently had a, um, a um, donation fundraiser at
164 the x location and brought x students from x country dancers and drummers and
165 raised money for the agency she volunteered for, the way that she extending
166 herself by having her own event but contributing back to the agency. I'm giving –
167 I'm writing letters of recommendation, and these students are in X state, X state,
168 and wherever, but um, yeah, the connect.

169

170 FAC: I'm going to hasten us along here [M5: please] 'cause we're not halfway
171 through across the room here, poor M2's going to get 20 seconds of time at the
172 backend [group laughter] okay, so F6 had expressed a little bit of feeling of being
173 a little out of focus but did mention a number of things, some of them being a
174 little, kind of personal things that she'd like to get done. Admitting that she'd like
175 to play the drums, and um, improving her relationship with her father perhaps, by
176 telling a life story, telling his life story um, helping to bring her experiences as a

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

177 mentor to folks, to younger folks in the GLBT community, um, and then possibly
178 looking for a community herself in terms of looking for a church. Okay, so
179 support and challenge, people would like to offer F6, and I'd hate to say quickly,
180 but we are going to have to hasten a little bit. [group snickers].

181
182 M3: Um, I liked what you talked about, um, making a film, um maybe about your
183 father's life, um, you can actually, I don't know, I think you said that it might be
184 kinda hard, but if you've got a camera and an idea, you could pretty much, just so
185 cheap now with digital cameras it's so amazing, it wouldn't take as much money
186 as you might would think to do that. You know I thought about doing my own
187 little documentaries and whatever, it never happened, but um it's something that I
188 would encourage you to do. I think that ah, I like that idea [F?: I do too; F?: it's
189 neat. F?: I did an oral biography of my grandmother and that's something you can
190 start immediately, just get a tape recorder and it took me a week in interviewing
191 and I just- and that gave me- I mean if you wanna, wanna, eventually do the film,
192 this would at least give you all the information. You would have it on tape,
193 document it. My grandmother loved talking about herself, your dad will
194 appreciate the fact that you're taking this interest in him and you're valuing his
195 life by doing it. I think it could be a great starting point for you to improve your
196 relationship with him (F6:mhmm) and learn a lot about him too, along the way.]
197

198 F8: If you can possibly um, afford it, one day. Move out. [group laughter] You
199 learn [loud group laughter; M5: that's great], you learn more about yourself when
200 you are out of that house. And you learn more about your parents, when you are
201 out of the house. And it won't make sense until you get your own space 'cause I
202 was like you, you know, me and my father [gestures: punching hand repeatedly]
203 you know butting heads, and I realized when I moved out it was cause we are just
204 alike. You may be just like your father and that's why, you know, you butt heads
205 all the time. But, you know, once you move out and you have your space, and
206 then so many things are going to click for you. [mumbles of agreement] And you
207 may be broke, girl, I mean eating beans [laughter], but it's ok because it's your
208 apartment. [more group laughter] It's your food, you'll be alright, and you'll be
209 happy, so if you're thinking about taking that risk one day, and you'll be thinking,
210 I'll just be getting a little apartment or share something with a roommate or
211 something like that, it will be probably one of the best experiences you can do.
212

213 M3: I second that [others mumble in agreement]

214
215 F6: I thought about doing that, for my senior year but I think I'm going to wait
216 until, like, grad school

217
218 M2: I know you said something about drumming, and um, I actually uh, took
219 African percussion for 2 years in uh, middle school. And it was probably one of
220 the best times of my life, so much fun. And believe it or not I- I have no musical

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

221 talent what so ever, I'm horrible. I can't even play the recorder, I'm bad [group
222 laughter] but actually it was one of the, it's actually a lot easier that people –
223 there's a lot of rhythm, but other than that it's fairly easy, and you can really get
224 into it, it's really really enjoyable.
225
226 F?: You did that in middle school?
227
228 M2: Yeah, it was actually required class. [F?: you can take a class too, you can
229 take it;
230 F6: I'm actually signed up for a class already; F?: do it! Do it!]
231
232 F6: I had a friend who took it, she really liked it
233
234 F8: And also, I think if you like the Unitarian uh- uh- congregation. I think, I've
235 actually been to the Quaker church- the society of friends and they're very
236 similar. And this one here in X neighborhood and they start every X day at
237 10:30am, and there's no, it's complete meditation for an hour. There's no pastor.
238 And you sit in a room like this, in a circle and you meditate on whatever you feel
239 like you should do- it's very very interesting. If you just have an opportunity to go
240 and- and experience it, it's really interesting.
241
242 F6: I'd like to go at least once [mumbles of agreement] just to go
243
244 F1: I was thinking about the comments you were making about wanting to be a
245 mentor someday. Kinda looking at it in the future. And I thought I was almost
246 hearing you say that you don't feel like you don't have anything to offer anyone
247 right now. I don't know if that's what you were saying but, I always think that
248 part of becoming a mentor is really just doing it [M5: mmmm] and there's always
249 someone who can be helped by you [F6: right] someone who is where you were
250 once upon a time. And so if you can just be looking back one step and- and that
251 process actually helps you become a better mentor you know.
252
253 F6: Sexuality is really hard. People in high school are hidden. I mean, I'm trying
254 to think when I was in high school how could someone have found me? No one
255 was going to find me. I was too [F8: but nobody- were they looking] I was too
256 like [F1/4: yeah; F8: were they looking?] No one was looking [F8: ahh, maybe
257 you need to be that person] I wish there was a GLBT thing in my high school, I
258 don't know if there is now, [F1: I've heard, I've heard; FAC: increasingly there
259 are now GLBT groups within high schools, increasing movement there; F1: I've
260 heard they're really starting to look at that at the high school level, recognizing
261 that that's when a lot of young people start to deal with that issue, and then] I
262 dealt with it over the internet with like chat rooms. [F1: wow, yeah; F5: they even
263 had an alternative prom this year, they had an alternative prom – this year, city of

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

264 X, which is quite an acc- did you see? That's quite an accomplishment, I think
265 especially for X city; F?: yeah!]

266

267 FAC: Okay, I'm going to be a bad guy and move us along here. Um, this uh, a last
268 thought that came to me for F6 is that I think I mentioned to you this organization
269 [spells out name re: gay and lesbian neighborhood organization], which gets
270 involved in community service projects but not always in the GLBT community
271 as a way to sort of broadening people's perception because you're working on
272 habit for humanity together and the person says oh, I'm here with X organization
273 and you get into this conversation and the person says 'oh well you're a real
274 person!' [group laughter] anyhow, I think that can be a sort of interesting thing, as
275 a way to find out more about mentoring opportunities, meaning chances for you
276 do what F1 was saying, which is sort of jump in, and also, you sort of said you
277 were looking for a mentor, you never know what's going to show up and that's a
278 good way of get in with people who already sort of screened themselves by saying
279 I'm willing to put my hand out and do something. Okay we're onto to M3, who
280 was talking about himself playing a mentor role, uh and mentioned a number of
281 specific places he already starting to think about doing it, America reads, and um,
282 and uh, um a couple possibilities. He mentioned boxing and made me realize that
283 I failed in my promise to get you boxing contact, but I will. And he also
284 mentioned Big Brothers, Big Sisters. So, um, support and challenge for M3
285

286 F2: I'd say go do it, go find out what your schedule is and then contact those
287 organizations and say I have this time available and they say 'well we need
288 someone right then' and just go out and do it. [mumbles of agreement]
289

290 F4?: I think you'd be a great mentor, tutor, coach, whatever you're feeling the
291 most strongly about, but you'd be the most – I could see you very successful at
292 any of those, I think that I'm going to sort of double up [M3: come on, don't
293 make me blush; loud group laughter] No I mean it! I mean, I've really, I've really
294 enjoyed, I mean I knew several people in here, but I've really enjoyed getting
295 both of you a bit better, and I'm just going to jump back to F6 for a second, and
296 I'm not trying to slight you M3, but I just wanted to add, I think there were so
297 many times in conversations that you were like, "I just don't know," and every
298 time you said that I thought, man you know so much! It was always such an
299 encouragement, I think, to a lot of us when were talking. And I know that several
300 people even mentioned you in our, in our talks, like gosh, that was really cool that
301 you knew that! And, I just really think, I think that you're a really cool person,
302 and I'm glad that I participated in this 'cause I got to know you a bit better. But,
303 back to you M3, I think you'd rock at being a mentor and I think that kids would
304 really benefit from what you have to offer. And I think that you'd serve as a really
305 nice role model for them.
306

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

307 M5: I- have [inaudible] comments about these two, I have to start with these two,
308 they're totally unassuming, but they're brilliant. [F1: yeah] And they're radiant,
309 so I was really encouraged by both of you, and inspired. And M3 as well, I
310 thought the idea of you being- the kind of [inaudible] that you are, very
311 unassuming, um, you can't judge a book by its cover, there's no question, I think
312 um, I didn't judge, but I thought, I made the presumption when I saw you initially
313 and I can be available to that, but I knew there was more, and I'm so glad that you
314 shared that more with us. And so, as well, best of luck, go for it and train, box,
315 box. So, best of luck.

316
317 F8: Go up to the upward bound program here at the university. Probably the only
318 one left on this strip of upward bound programs, and they do, right now their
319 summer program is in effect, and you could be a tutor counselor, where you can,
320 during the year, the academic year, if you need a work-study job, you can tutor
321 high school students who come in from the x city schools who come in to the
322 center and you know whatever subject you're capable of tutoring and in the
323 summer, you can actually help them with their summer program, you can help
324 them move in, you can be their dorm counselor, but you're also their tutor, you
325 keep them on check, I mean it's basically all the things that you said you wanted
326 to do.

327
328 M3: So, it's like for people who are coming to the university?

329
330 F8: No, they, they're- it doesn't have to be specifically to X university. It's the,
331 the idea is to get these high school students in here to make sure that they stay in
332 high school, they graduate and go to a 4 year institution or some type of post-
333 secondary option. So and you know, you know on the verge of being cut, because
334 people don't feel they're necessary, but they've saved a lot of people's lives and
335 they need, they need black men, 'cause that's a lot of their students, and they're
336 looking for mentors and they're starving for them. So as soon as you can, and you
337 have space in your schedule, go to the upward bound project, talk to um, Dr. X X,
338 she's the head of the project, she will put you on, and you'll be tutoring in a week.

339
340 FAC: Ok, alright, and F3 has joined us, so you get the drift of what we're doing,
341 we're offering support and challenge to folks who had talked about their
342 commitments that they have in mind, and we've come back to give a moment for
343 you to talk about the commitment that you have in mind. But we're really in
344 trouble time-wise [group nervous laughter] really 30 seconds for me for M3
345 would be, um, one thing I'd challenge you, I didn't hear you sort of talking about
346 you're career arc and where does that take you, where does that take your
347 connection with the commonwealth, and you know, don't play small [M5:
348 mhmm] and I suppose that's where we're getting from the whether it's the real
349 Mandela quote or the quote that's always attributed to Mandela, but you're
350 playing small doesn't serve the world so, you can do, and it's wonderful that

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

351 you're thinking about some things that you can do right now, but keep your ear
352 cocked to what's that thing where your career is a real wedge that does something
353 significant, and the other thing I'd want to support without trying to pick things,
354 because outward bound could be perfect, but the boxing thing, well you were sort
355 of saying, 'well I love boxing, I just don't know if that would be too much fun for
356 me, am I allowed to have fun doing this?' you know? [group laughter] And I sort
357 of think, well you know, it's a mentoring opportunity too, so I don't think you
358 ought exercise yourself from what you're doing because you'd have fun, too
359 much fun. Ok, so now we're to F5, uh, who talked about a number of things, uh,
360 about educating herself to shop environmentally, um, about looking at her budget
361 to set aside more space for donations, um, about putting some boundaries on her
362 work so that she could say that, you know, not have that be the one thing that's
363 controlling her whole life. Um, and then also talked about pushing to the
364 university to play a little more active, energetic role on sort of civic issues, so
365 support and challenge for F5.

366
367 M5: Is there- is there a sort of social justice group or faculty or staff here at x
368 university?

369
370 F5: There's something called- one that I know of it's uh, X group for 'peace and
371 justice' but I've gone to a couple of their things, to my knowledge, it never really
372 got off the ground too much. And it really was open to students and staff and
373 everybody, so unless I'm just unaware of other things, it never really went too far.

374
375 M5: We have a pretty active social justice group at Y university, and it would be a
376 sort of interesting contact, um sweat shop issues have been brought to the
377 university recently, and wage campaigns, there's something always going on,
378 tends to be local to Y university. I'd be happy to forward a name, but I don't
379 know if that will help here at x university. But, this, X X is the contact, but he-

380
381 F1?: (inaudible) social work, some of the social work faculty seem to be
382 extremely involved in the community. X X is one person, um, you know, any of
383 the folks associated with X organization are going to be, I mean, that's really what
384 they're doing, and I bet they'd be at least knowledgeable or maybe even a place to
385 plug in. [F5: mhmm]

386 29:00 F4? And it could be something you could bring up through X
387 organization. I'm sure there would be people who'd want to - who'd want to be a
388 part of this. It just, you may need to be the person who instigates it. [F5:mhmm]

389
390 M3: I liked your idea about isseus and things like that. I think that's why people, a
391 lot of times, people who are like our age, don't really seem like they care, 'cause
392 they don't really know what's going on exactly. So, if people were more aware
393 then you would make a big difference, so that's, I like that idea a lot.

394

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

395 FAC: M5 talked about the power he experienced as a graduate student, sensing
396 that they were faculty and other people around in the same mode. Other quick
397 support challenge for F6.

398

399 F6: I'm just curious, where is X organization located.

400

401 F5: Well, this, this is a like a national group, so I don't know, I have information
402 in my stack at home, so if I find that – I will pass that on. But, there's an east end
403 (branch of organization) here – [F2: I have a friend (inaudible)-] X organization
404 America includes not just food but other kinds of, you know, goods and
405 everything. Like I said, I've been wanting to research more and if you're
406 interested it'll help me look more for it and pass on the information [FAC: yeah,
407 I've heard of them too and I think can get some education-] I can probably google
408 it and find it, then you can forward the information for me [laughs, others join in
409 laughter] how's that's you do the work for me! Encourage me to do it!

410

411 FAC: Mutual challenge and support, it can go both ways [more laughter] last
412 things for F5, 'cause we're going to move on 'cause we're almost to 7:30pm,
413 which is our theoretical time to leave. Okay, so um, my quick things that I just
414 want to underscore from you guys for F5, is what she's giving too, she's thinking
415 structural, OxFam, um United farm workers, places she's already identified as
416 making a difference where she can herself put her hands to work. And then, I
417 liked that she's being realistic about your own work situation, okay well, you
418 know, one thing you can do when thinking of being more active is say I'm going
419 to do less of this. Alright we're on to F8, who, [ruffles papers] who, is interested
420 in making the move of turning her ideas, the idea a minute person into some real
421 action, and part of this is putting herself into some positions where she's going to
422 be challenge herself to give her best, pay more attention to power inequalities that
423 around her that play out, nearby. And then a couple personal opportunities, which
424 I'm going to quote 'cause we can all see how personal opportunities can play out
425 into other things: both around writing and music. So support and challenge for F8.

426

427 F6: I would challenge you to involve other people in these pursuits, perhaps
428 writing more maybe you could um, start a writing group where people share the
429 things they write and encourage people to tap into that creative side. Um, maybe
430 you could choose, I don't know if you write fiction or non-fiction type things, but
431 maybe in writing you write to senator, tell them what you think about something,
432 about how power is allocated somewhere, in the wrong place, you need to switch
433 it around.

434

435 F5: I think along those same lines, your idea of teaching writing in prison. I would
436 say two things to that. It's a wonderful idea, I'd say if you're starting teaching in
437 the fall, I don't think I would take on something like that in the beginning, 'cause
438 I think the teaching is going to be challenging enough, and I think that when you

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

439 have a year or two under your belt and you feel a bit more comfortable that
440 teaching in a prison would be a wonderful compliment and it would probably, it
441 would feed both ways. I think that would be (.)

442

443 M2: I think um, one of the things you said, you were kind of worried about um,
444 when people were challenging whether they were challenging to challenge you or
445 just to get something done – for their own benefit, who’s benefit is it for? I think
446 the thing I would encourage you, I think really, you said this yourself before, I
447 don’t think it matters. I think if you’re being challenged that’s an opportunity for
448 growth no matter what it is, no matter for what reason you’re being challenged.
449 ‘Cause you know you being challenged is just an opportunity for you to get better.
450 And you know, even if it’s not going to immediately benefit you, in the long run it
451 will. So I think, just being challenged is always a good thing.

452

453 M5: Yeah, I’ve heard – I’ve heard, I’m thinking about um, of ways that- I know
454 you’re looking forward to your soon to be teaching job, but I’ve also heard you
455 say, I don’t believe in the classroom necessarily to do the work that I need to do. I
456 was struck by that some weeks ago, I’m hoping that um, and sending great vibes
457 along with you as you find your teaching position, but also as you use your talents
458 and skills, that issue of writing and (inaudible) prison spaces seems intriguing to
459 me, actually. I don’t see it in anyway cross purposes to utilize a variety of
460 environments and use your own talents, whether in prison or in your own
461 classroom. So, I know this is a little different from what F5 is suggesting. But it’s
462 possible to bridge worlds as well in a variety of ways to use your talents to write.
463 And there are people who would love to be tutored and mentored by you. I love
464 that you’re – you’re bigger than life attitude ‘cause there are loads of things
465 waiting for you to tap.

466

467 F1: And I think you need to see yourself as both a role model and a very strong
468 communicator. And you have just very obvious strengths in both those areas and I
469 think you’ll be utilizing them at the same time. If you keep that awareness, as M5
470 was saying, I think you’ll just have so much to offer both in the formal classroom
471 environment and in the community and whatever context you’re going to find
472 yourself. But, just your- just you will be a role model and then what you can
473 communicate is all bonus on top of that.

474

475 F3?: When you start your new teaching job, what grade are you going to be
476 teaching? High school? [F8: 9th through 12th grade] That’s good. I was thinking
477 that would be a good age for you. [F8: yeah, I don’t think I can do anything lower
478 than that; she laughs, others join in]

479

480 FAC: Other support challenge for F8 here?

481

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

482 M3: Um, I like your idea about [clears throat] of going back and playing an
483 instrument again. I played an instrument when I was young and looking back I
484 wish I hadn't gave it up you know, [F8: mhmm] but it's a – it's a fun way of um,
485 expressing yourself you know. I don't know maybe like they were saying you
486 might want to get a group together, you know? Um, people who played
487 instruments when they were young or whatever [group laughter, F8: who were
488 last chair and they quit!; more laughter multiple comments concurrently F2: that
489 could be a band name, 'last chair!'] And I mean, when you're young in middle
490 school, and you don't like it, it's like a chore. I'll be in your 'last chiar' group [F4:
491 F8 maybe it's writing and music; F8: writing and music, right! More laughter]
492

493 FAC: Well, one thing I have, you know, you're going into this pretty hard thing of
494 teaching, you know, and that's going to be a challenge. And I sort of echo what I
495 said to F2, there's the teaching that happens in the classroom and then there's also
496 how do you make the school better and push that further. But in the middle of that
497 you're going to need some joy and where I heard that was around this music, and
498 maybe that's the good thing for this first year of teaching. Do the teaching, do the
499 joy, you know and keep your ears open for the kind of other, very specific things.
500

501 F8: Yeah, 'cause I also use music to teach writing, so it makes sense doesn't i?
502 [group mumbles in agreement]
503

504 FAC: Alright, we're onto F4.
505

506 F4: You know, you can skip me, I'm comfortable with that and we can move on
507 to M2. [FAC: ok we're going to move on to M2 and F3; F8: Awwww, we coming
508 back, don't worry, we're coming back; M2: we'll find you F4, we know where
509 you live. F4 laughs]
510

511 FAC: Okay, so we're onto M2, who sort of talked about the you know very
512 specific thing of going on and working on the trail building as the thing to do both
513 during spring break, but also finding some opportunities to do that here or at
514 home setting on a regular basis. Oh, and the presidential election – yep.
515

516 F2: There are a lot of state parks around X city within an hour easily. And I don't
517 think you need – although it's good to go across the country to make trails there, I
518 think um, there's a lot of work in X state that could be done that maybe could just
519 be done on a Saturday with a group of friends, I don't know if you're involved in
520 any groups, but if you're looking for ways to go out of their traditional role on
521 campus to, you know, provide service for other areas, you know, going to X state
522 park, or the other parks that are all around here that need their (inaudible) cleaned
523 up because they're full of municipal waste or whatever it might be, but they could
524 probably use help in having things cleared out and make them more useful so
525 people can enjoy them.

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

526

527 F1: I just want to ask, does it have to be a state park, 'cause we have county parks,
528 we have city parks, we have x park right over here [M2: oh- ; FAC: I think it's the
529 wilderness experience/ F1: wilderness, oh/ M2: oh, I – yah, I mean, I know there
530 are community parks but X park doesn't really have, it has trails, but I mean
531 they're like 8 ft wide, you could drive a car on them.] Mhmm. I can understand
532 better [M2: They're not like a backwoods trail, which is kind a like more what I
533 enjoy doing.

534

535 M5: I was digging – I was digging hearing M2, not just because of the natural
536 piece, just because of the metaphor or the motif of being a trailblazer. For me, I
537 was struck by being trailblazing.

538

539 M2: Which is fun, by the way. [group laughter] Have you ever gone off a trail?

540

541 F8: And did you get that email I sent you today? [M2: you sent me an email?]
542 yeah I sent you an email. Whitehouse intern. [M2: oh yeah yeah yeah, I saw that,
543 haven't gotten a chance to look at it] opportunity to do something with, I don't
544 know if you're right with the presidential election, but you could be in there
545 making some moves. So if you're interested [FAC: don't play small] That's right,
546 go up in the whitehouse and hey, you know give us- share with us some of that
547 wisdom you shared about, you know, (inaudible) and that's open to everybody.
548 Does everybody want the email? White house intern? [M3: I suppose, I mean, it's
549 like yeah right, no way] And then they are, they expressed a commitment to
550 having a diverse population at that program so. [group laughter] alright, so I'll put
551 you down, put you down.

552

553 FAC: Alright, support and challenge [F8: you're all going to get it! [LF, group
554 follows in LF] Other things for M2.

555

556 M3: I definitely liked your idea of parks and recreation. I'm not an outdoorsman,
557 I've never even been camping, or whatever, but I can appreciate the need for that.
558 You know and it's like, I can imagine like if I had um, went through some of
559 these natural tours, everything would look different around you after doing that. I
560 think that's great.

561

562 F5: I think it's good that you tied in your personal interests with doing something
563 that way it's part of your passion and who you are and not just something to do
564 'cause you think you should. And the idea of getting other people involved and
565 broadening it out with the presidential election I think – I don't know you that
566 well, but you seem to be a very pragmatic person. You see something, try to look
567 at the whole picture, try to make some decisions and do it. And I think it's
568 interesting.

569

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

570 FAC: We're going to give F3 in the sun here, but, um, but my couple words for
571 M2 are, one to be really, underscore the gift that you brought to this group and I
572 think you also mentioned to be something that you were concerned about and also
573 this ability to look at all sides of things and say, this is a little more complicated
574 than you're making it out. And I think this is the thing he's tried to interject in
575 discussions, and I think very helpfully. And I think that's an important thing,
576 don't give up on it, we've got a very polarized society and you've got to get in
577 there and say, 'this is right too.' And then the next thing would be, you know as
578 you're doing the trail thing, I'd get to think a little bit structurally about that too.
579 Not just the structure of the trail, there's all sorts of habitat issues, this whole set
580 of bigger stuff that kind of gets attached. Ok, so, F3 the part you missed was the
581 first part where everybody sort of went around and talked about their
582 commitment. So you can do that and people will offer some support and challenge
583 to you.

584
585 F3: Alright, well um, you might know this, might not know this. I majored in like,
586 Anthropology and political science. People often ask how do these go together,
587 well, they do. And that's like what I'm really focused in. I'm more focused on
588 like, my interests lie in like the third world and those kinds of populations and I
589 think, like you know people go through the peace corps and all that and actually
590 go there and help the people, that's great and I admire those, but where my
591 political science comes in, what's called in politics, the low politics, it's more the
592 helping of the people rather than like all the high fancy things, you know policies
593 that help the third world, and aid, that kinda thing. And that's where I'm like
594 really like focused on that part. And my like, it's like hard 'cause you've got to
595 get like, background and like you know, in both. And I was thinking like, the
596 Somali refugees and thing that X university has through those, but like other than
597 that, like I'm just going to wait and see what comes my way and like get like
598 background credentials that will maybe help me along the way.
599

600 F1: One thing I would strongly encourage you is you could take some economic
601 courses too, and they have specific courses here on development economics and
602 that type of thing because they're so tied together the political aspect and the
603 development aspect. So, I think they would be very helpful. Or study abroad
604 [multiple "yeahs" in agreement from others; F2: that's what I was going to say] I
605 was thinking the trip to India [multiple members mumble in agreement]
606

607 F4: I see you at this point where your big focus is, but you're trying to get there.
608 [F3: yep, the steps-] yep, you need the degrees and you need the experience in
609 another country as well. But it's a great- great direction to go.
610

611 F1: And actually, Oxfam – are you familiar with Oxfam, have you heard of it?
612 [F3: I've heard of it] it's a national, it's an international actually, development
613 group where they do self-help projects, you know, and they do, I think, a lot of

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

614 solid kind of work, but they have a program, and again I can email you the
615 information, where they actually have ah, representatives within universities and
616 um, you work to build kind of a group, you have Oxfam as a support and a mentor
617 ah- on the international development issues. They have a lot of resources and
618 information. Remind me if I don't, say 'where is it?' okay? [group LF]

619
620 M5: There's World teach. www.worldteach.org, which is Not peaceful, it is not
621 Americorps, it's a more ah- non-profit kind of entity for teaching and studying
622 abroad. [F3: what's it called?] World Teach. Org.

623
624 F8: I guess what I first noticed about you was that um, I guess from being a vocal,
625 myself being a vocal person that people were not as vocal as I am. And um, when
626 you said those two majors, I kept thinking about how, you know, that would seem
627 to be a very outspoken, just in the – just in the mix of it, just getting feet wet, you
628 know. But then I thought, that would be good for you because I think at times we
629 need people who know how to listen and who can just sit back and watch it,
630 watch it come in. And when you get that real big observation that just blows
631 people away, that's what's going to shake them up. And that's, you know, I
632 respect that, respect that.

633
634 FAC: Other folks who- we're- we're formally out of time, but we don't want to
635 miss a chance to support or help F3 along the way. The sort of thing that struck
636 me (inaudible) was um, that you know, you've got a very clear arc in an area of
637 extreme need, this idea of working on low- low [F3: low politics] low politics,
638 where a lot of the power is. My thing would be to take some opportunities now to
639 really learn by doing, because that's both going to build your credentials along for
640 the big arc, and it's going to really inform what you're doing. So, as much as the
641 classroom stuff is a sort of a theoretical level, take one thing to jump into whether
642 it's the Somali thing to jump into, it doesn't have to be a million things, one thing
643 that's a sort of learn by doing thing, throw yourself into it to compliment to the
644 big arc. Alright, so this has been, I think, pretty wonderful so, we're not going to
645 do this, because we've already past our time. [F8: I want to hear from F4! (others
646 agree)] alright, let's let's, it's already 8 o'clock, so let's give people a few
647 moments to share a little bit with F4, and if you want me to give a little playback,
648 F4 was thinking about her issue of getting back to teaching, which was feeding
649 her direct contact with students um, and then also looking for a little church
650 community, but partly as a way of thinking about a whole set of family life
651 choices about how much career, how much family, and doing this sort of church
652 shopping as one precursor to some of that. I'm sure I left off other things. [F4:
653 more involved with the home community] So support and challenge for F4.

654
655 F2: I challenge you to think of what you actually believe, because I think um,
656 once you decide what you believe in the church that you find will fill in the rest
657 that you decide to believe. But, then you'll know what you're looking for. If you

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

658 decide that Jesus is your savior, then you won't go to a Jewish congregation or
659 another congregation that doesn't hold that belief so, um, and does it matter if the
660 church is near you? You don't mind traveling to farther away to a church that
661 might fit your needs better but is going to involve you having to make more effort
662 getting there. So, (inaudible) believe in and find (inaudible).
663

664 F5: Over the last year I've gotten to know you as a person and I just- you're such
665 a teacher. You amaze me in how you work with students and I see however you
666 can keep doing that, it's really clear it's a gift.
667

668 M3: And I definitely um, if you can go ahead and do this. You talked about
669 motivating students um, I definitely think that would be a good thing. It's just like
670 I was saying with F5, um, you know, people don't, I think a lot of students,
671 myself included, don't really know what we can do, you know, and I wouldn't
672 really mind having a coach saying, come on, you can get involved in this, you can
673 do this, you can do that, whatever, but I think that would be a good thing for you
674 to do.
675

676 F4: Maybe I need to do a workshop on how to get involved [mumbles of
677 agreement; F8: x services, you got the outlet; F1: send that out on X program
678 website] You both, all my students better be in there! [LF from group]
679

680 F8: Also, I know it might be a time constraint, but you want to get back into
681 maybe, arrange for you to teach your own section of x program, or a freshman
682 studies course [M2: won't let you teach freshman studies; F4: they won't let me
683 teach freshman studies] we won't talk about that! [laughs] [F4: not x services
684 because I'm not a faculty member; M3: that's a cause we need to fight/F4: that's a
685 cause we need to fight! [LF]] I know faculty member who don't teach [F4: I
686 know] Awww crap, well there's other, you know, [F4: well I am going to be
687 facilitating in the fall, I am; M2: I volunteer you to (inaudible due to group
688 laughter)]
689

690 M5: I was really struck by you're x (past) university experiences in your radical,
691 and it sounds like those were actions not so far removed. [Group laughter] So it
692 sounds like you still have, and it's wonderful because you have great relationships
693 with students, it seems, and to continue that vicariously through them is a great,
694 um trait. I was – I was- how long have you been married, sorry? [F4: four years]
695 so that's nothing. I mean, I've been only married 12 but, [FAC: that's nothing?!
696 I've been married almost 13, sorry keep going – group breaks into laughter] So
697 one of the things I started thinking about as you (inaudible) with your significant
698 other, is that I thought about my significant other, we've been able to use our
699 relationship to experiment, not experiment with one another, we experiment, we
700 found that through our relationship we've done the shopping around things,
701 experiment, kids and you know, but um, we were able to develop a company

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

702 together, we do things together. And so maybe there's an avenue of that part
703 of...something or other. [F4: yeah, mhmm].

704

705 F3: I definitely think that you should be involved with the students, because as a
706 student, I've been by your office or I've walked by and seen all different kinds of
707 students come in and feel free to talk to you, and that is like just incredible that
708 you reach out. 'cause I know a lot of like faculty or teachers, that they only, that a
709 certain kind of student will go to them, and I've seen all walks come to your
710 office. [group laughter]. Like some I've come in and see and been like 'whoa'
711 [more laughter] and it was just like incredible, you have like this connection, and
712 I've even been like feel comfortable, and I'm not a person, like you know me well
713 enough to know if I'm comfortable talking to you then you've done something
714 right [F4: you're going to tear me up F3, knock it off!; M5: tear her up, tear her
715 up! F8: I've been waiting on some, come on!] Definitely stay involved with
716 students. Like teaching would be good, but when you're teaching there's still that
717 barrier, but like more involved, helping like organizations, that would be like-
718 being less of like a teacher and an authority figure and more of like a friend with
719 contacts and power of that sort. [F?: yeah!]

720

721 F1: I mean, following up on that I think don't underestimate what you're doing
722 with this X program. [FAC: I was just about the say that] This is so significant,
723 this X program was floundering for a long long time, I mean, it turned around and
724 you're coming in now at a time to really run with it. I mean what you're doing
725 here tonight, you know, you're notching it up to the next level here to get a
726 second year. This is really significant. And the impact on the participants' lives
727 can just be lasting, it could just be transformative, so you are teaching, it's not
728 formal classroom, it's not giving a body of knowledge, passing it on, um, but
729 you're teaching some really amazing life skills, you're facilitating that. And if,
730 what F8 and F5 said, you just need to get in there yourself a little bit and do
731 enough of it too.

732

733 FAC: Yeah, just as a kind of um, to keep this other stuff, to keep from getting
734 stale.

735

736 F1: And I wish there was an easy way to balance – with professional life [F4: I
737 knew it!] We women want it all and it's tough and finally it's good, somehow it
738 works out in the end, somehow, we'll have lunch. [group laughter] it's a long
739 discussion.

740

741 FAC: I mean the one other thing I'd have to say, and not to get us stuck on this
742 church shopping, But if you think about this church shopping as okay, not just
743 where's this place where, you know, you know, theologically both my husband
744 and I could intersect, but this also is kind of a finding a kind of community. And
745 if you think about finding a church as kind of- what's the kind of community of

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

746 faith that's going to stand and support you? Is going to help from getting burned
747 out, that's going to help you raise kids, that's going to help you um, you know,
748 contribute to the commonwealth, none of can do this alone. And finding that place
749 is probably more important than you know, 'do we have the right theology?' so
750 keep -

751
752 F2: I just want to say it was cool to see you in X program, you seem like this
753 figure, [group laughter] female figure, and then to see you on a more personal
754 level is kind of really cool. You know. Good to get to know you.

755
756 FAC: Alright, here we go. The deal is I took you way past our promised 7:30 and
757 some people may just about complain about that on the evaluations and you're
758 right, so I'm sorry. Ok, here we go, a couple follow up things. Clearly this is a
759 group who can function as a support and challenge to each other, I think we saw
760 that in spades today. So, there area couple of ways that this can continue, one is
761 okay information is in your packet, so do please stay in touch with each other and
762 a lot of you made implicit little promises to each other to forward information,
763 please stick with it that way. There are a couple other possibilities that I think we
764 need to decide as a group. Other possibilities for staying in touch as a community
765 for support and challenge. One is MCC holds what we call continued
766 conversations on the 4th Tuesday of each month, so the next one would be June
767 28th, shortly, or July 26th, and we hold them at 6pm in X neighborhood, over at X
768 bulidng near X building. And there are a couple ways this could play, you could
769 say, okay we're going to commit as a group to show up every second month so
770 we would all come at the same time and stay in touch or whatever, so that's a
771 possibility. Or you could just use it as a drop in thing where you never know who
772 else is going to be there. That's a possibility. So if you're interested in staying in
773 touch I will just send out reminders of these to everybody who's in- Okay,
774 another possibility is say you're going to make your own university group, and
775 check-in with each other, not necessarily monthly, but 3 times a year, and say
776 how we doing on our commitments with each other, and then all you'd need to do
777 is figure out how you're going to schedule that and sort of maintain that over
778 time. Ok, now why would- why would you get together in any of these ways?
779 Well one is the goal is, the group can set it's own thing of what it wants to do, the
780 main idea would be how would you be an ongoing support and challenge to each
781 other. And the way we've done that in these continuing conversations is to ask
782 people to bring materials, bring an experience you had, something that's
783 supported you or challenged you since the last time you were together with other
784 folks. And by everybody bringing their one little kernel, it's usually a pretty
785 interesting evening. We are going to be talking, maybe on the 28th about maybe
786 putting themes to each of those sessions. So instead of just jumping in together
787 and whatever, everybody just brings, it becomes a tossed salad, you know, we
788 might say, okay, maybe theme is: avoiding burn out, and everybody brings
789 something related to avoiding burnout, or it could be environmental stuff. So,

Group G-1: Meeting #7, Commitments , Part #2
Transcript

790 alright, so with this sort of menu of choices. What do you think you want to do?
791 Do you want to try and- oh, there's one last thing. That's periodically, MCC tries
792 to bring together all the past participants together in one evening, maybe once a
793 year, so I'll let you know about that. So, from among these two immediate things,
794 what would you like? Would you like to tap into a continued conversation? Do
795 you want a form your own group? And again, you signed up for 7 weeks, so you
796 don't have to do anything more. You've fulfilled your commitments. But do
797 anybody have intuitions of what you'd like to do, or what you'd like to -?
798
799 M5: Thank you, thank you all [F4: see you M5; group says 'bye...thanks'] .
800
801 FAC: Or do you see each other through x program that this is a moot point?
802
803 F5: I think one of the nice things that I got from the group. {TAPE ENDS}

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

1

APPENDIX E: GROUP D-2 MEETING SUMMARIES

2 FAC: *Encourages M1 to speak up, though it is a “policy” comment, rather than*
3 *“imagery”*

4

5 M1: *States that the government is not addressing issues well enough, “talking*
6 *general” and that economic interests dominate all other interests. Simply because*
7 *people are working on the environment does not mean that “things are being*
8 *done.”*

9

10 FAC: *Asks M1 to come up with “images” to illustrate his argument. Afterwards,*
11 *he summarizes what M1 referred to as “big economic interests”*

12

13 M1: *Despite good intentions, people get exploited*

14

15 F1: *Clarifies his comment*

16

17 FAC: *Moves from this comment to a sharing exercise where participants describe*
18 *an image of the environment – either in tune with it or not, encourages F2 to*
19 *share with group*

20

21 F2: *I hate to start with something that’s negative- [FAC: negative is fine] She*
22 *notices places that were once “great scenery...now the big equipment raping the*
23 *land,” wonders “now what.” Observes that “we need green space.”*

24

25 F3: {Enters room} *Excuse me, I’m sorry, I had a bad day.*

26

27 F4: *I’m always negative, hard to be optimistic. Describes that at least 13 original*
28 *states are more forested than before. Reflects on past experiences of “camping a*
29 *lot.” Discusses environmental degradation, cattle ranching in particular.*

30

31 M1: *Doesn’t believe in protecting environment, “nature itself cleans itself”*

32 FAC: *Asks F5 to comment, she requests to pass, FAC asks F3 to participate, she*
33 *asks to finish eating, further elaboration of activity.*

34

35 F3: *Describes positive experience as walking along ocean, her negative image is*
36 *a lower SES neighborhood in the city. Asks if its specific enough, FAC agrees.*

37

38 F5: *Describes enjoying her walk along college campuses in Istanbul. States that*
39 *her*

40 *hometown used to be clean, now it polluted, “it hurts me, makes me sad”*

41

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

42 FAC: Let's look ahead to this evening. *Wonders about the human relationship to*
 43 *nature. Warns group of "problem language" regarding discussion of jobs vs. the*
 44 *environment. Wonders about the persistence of environmental problems,*
 45 *"what's underneath the thing that keeps this going on?" He also asks, "Where do*
 46 *we stand in the middle of it and what are the things we might be able to do {text*
 47 *cut out} we can do individually or change structures." Sets up 2 poems – looking*
 48 *at environment impacts, the other half of evening – "What might it look like for us*
 49 *to move toward substantial reconciliation." Notices knocking at door, welcomes*
 50 *additional participants. Introduces Mary Oliver poem, "Questions you might*
 51 *ask." Then introduces W.S Merwin poem. Opens floor up to conversation.*
 52
 53 F1: *Enjoyed imagery, enjoyable, liked the questions.*
 54
 55 M2: *Reflects, asks about iris (the eye)*
 56
 57 FAC: *Clarifies that the author is referring to a flower. (15)*
 58
 59 F2: *Made her think about imagery, each line was thought provoking*
 60
 61 F3: *Asks, "first one?" (re: poem)*
 62
 63 F2: *Finds herself getting "analytical", "considers soul in objects like stones,*
 64 *"energy in it", believes that living things have a "soul, life force."*
 65
 66 F5: {Clears throat}
 67
 68 F2: *It's almost nat-anthropomorphic (.) 'What about things in moon light?'*
 69 *{Quoting poem}*
 70
 71 FAC: *Re: M1 – "Who gets to decide?"*
 72
 73 M1: *Refers to article on classification of objects regarding "who is at bottom,"*
 74 *i.e. source of meaning of all objects. Notes a ranking, refers to inanimate objects,*
 75 *animals, etc.*
 76
 77 FAC: *We're conveniently on top?*
 78
 79 M1: *Humans, are definitely are on the top (2) because they can use the others and*
 80 *know the others*
 81
 82 M2: *What are we talking about, {group laughter} when we say soul? Is this*
 83 *mythical and mystical, something related to religions?"*
 84

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

- 85 FAC: I'm not the answer guy.
86
87 F4: *Refers to poem, states that the poet suggests, "who are we that human beings*
88 *are the only to have souls."*
89
90 F3: *Asks M1 if he's ever used the word soul, he agrees. She wonders what it*
91 *means to him.*
92
93 F5: *Notes that it is hard to explain.*
94 F3: *Agrees, asks if it's part of the religious vocabulary of Islam – All Turkish*
95 *participants agree. States that it is part of vocabulary and "I would assume –*
96 *Judaism" – it's not a thing that has materiality to it, but it is a part of the divine*
97 *spirit."*
98
99 M2: *Out of religion context, it may have a purpose*
100
101 F3: *Clarifies poet's objective: As I'm listening to her (poet), she questions*
102 *whether this stuff has innate value.*
103
104 M2: *Refers to a Rumi poem, makes a distinction between artistic understandings*
105 *of rain and scientific understandings. He claims that understanding of soul is*
106 *dependent of the perspective one takes.*
107
108 FAC: *Turns group to other poem, re: the shadow. He reviews the poem (moving*
109 *from the beginning where people are controlling nature. Asks group, "how do you*
110 *see this thing playing out and what kind of implications do you see for our lives*
111 *together."*
112
113 M1: *I think it's better if we start with one of us, not me*
114
115 F4: *Discusses poet's impressions by the tone and structure of the poem. Thinks*
116 *that he's trying to illustrate people's arrogance. Claims that she doesn't*
117 *understand.*
118
119 M1: *Reflects back to cartoon character [red kid] who is able to beat his shadow by*
120 *his speed, poem illustrates that the shadow is unbeatable*
121
122 FAC: *Refers back to F4's question, regarding 'arrogance,' {first quotes poem}*
123 *"You think you can control everything.' What do you the rest of you think about*
124 *the appropriateness or the inappropriateness of this thing that seems to happen in*
125 *the poem that things seem to spin out of control more and more?"*
126

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

- 127 F2: *Quotes the poem to explain that “when we think we’re invincible, something*
128 *occurs to prove just the opposite.” Notes that she can’t “interpret that”*
129
- 130 F4: *Claims poet believes that “man’s relation to nature is conquest.” Her*
131 *expectation was that “man” would feel sorry at some point and work through.*
132 *She can’t make sense of how some got punished and others did not. Tries to make*
133 *sense of the symbolism of the shadow.*
134
- 135 FAC: *Notes that F5 is quiet, tries to get her to participate.*
136
- 137 F4: Curious more about the cultural, is the environment very important in
138 Turkey?
139
- 140 M3: *Refers to people’s spiritual connection to the earth and living things*
141
- 142 F4: *Provides more examples of how they could be engaged. “but is there more*
143 *efforts to recycle, live a simpler life, etc.”*
144
- 145 M2: Not at that level. Not like that, people wouldn’t buy a car because of
146 environmental reasons. *Notes that the Turkish are very late to the “financial*
147 *situation.”*
148
- 149 F5: Most of the people in Turkey live a simple life, especially the eastern part.
150
- 151 M1: Kyoto protocol to reduce CO2 emissions, people considered whether Turkey
152 should participate because their emissions are expected to triple (.) Turkey is still
153 at the stage of industrialization. *Compares the US and Turkey (i.e. not everyone in*
154 *Turkey drives).*
155
- 156 FAC: *Clarifies, “Is that what you meant by people living a simpler life?”*
157
- 158 F5: We have an environmental problem but it’s not that big.
159
- 160 M2: Turkey, not as bad.
161
- 162 F5: *Talks about very polluted rivers in Istanbul.*
163
- 164 F4: Does Istanbul have a problem with clean drinking water?
165
- 166 M2: Yes
167
- 168 F5: *Disagrees, “Not right now.”*
169

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

- 170 M2: *He disagrees, F5 continues to challenge him.*
171
172 F4: So people have to drink from water bottles?
173
174 M2: *He agrees with F4. F5 disagrees and continues to challenge him.*
175
176 F5: *She describes the challenge of cleaning the water over the past 5 years, she*
177 *mentions that her family drinks it presently. She asks of participants, “why do you*
178 *smile at me?” Infers that M2 thinks that something is wrong with her. “My family*
179 *drinks from just the sink. I believe it is safe now, but in the past it wasn’t. Why do*
180 *you smile?! Nothing happened to me! No, it was too bad in the past but now it is*
181 *not.”*
182
183 FAC: *Refers to F5, refers back to her experience of watching the water go bad*
184 *and M1’s comments about Kyoto. He wonders if they see a connection to the*
185 *“Shadow” from the poem.*
186
187 F1: *Wonders if he’s creating a leading question.*
188
189 FAC: *Explains his position, “We’re creating something that’s gotten out of*
190 *trouble and it’s coming back to bite us.”*
191
192 F4: *I’d say that’s a good interpretation, that helps me.*
193
194 F1: *What are you saying the Shadow is the pollution from the CO2 (.) that makes*
195 *us-*
196
197 F4 & F1: *continue to suggest images in US culture*
198
199 FAC: *He suggests in a “symbolic kind of way” that the ‘shadow’ is a result of*
200 *pollution actions.*
201
202 F3: *Tries to “bail” F5 out of the water situation and wonders about their*
203 *community’s water*
204
205 F4: *Makes comparison to the community water, claims she drinks it “all the time,”*
206 *but that she won’t drink New York or DC’s water.*
207
208 F5: *Comments that she uses a filter.*
209
210 F4: *States that she won’t visit certain countries because of the polluted water –*
211 *Mexico city, Beijing. Comments, in jest, that she won’t visit Turkey.*
212

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

- 213 F5: *Demands that one can drink Turkey's water.*
214
215 F4: *Continues to discuss the effects of pollution in Beijing, "Not the quality of life*
216 *I would want."*
217
218 F5: *Continues to defend Turkey. F4 interrupts, notes that she's not talking about*
219 *Turkey.*
220
221 F4: *Talks about a show on Beijing, effects of pollution on people's lives.*
222
223 F3: *Compares conditions in China to the US, "Don't we have that here?" Refers*
224 *to*
225 *ozone levels on the elderly.*
226
227 F4: *Hadn't we had that in {their community} lately?*
228
229 F3: *Last summer*
230
231 FAC: *Echoes F3, "ozone action days." Returns to Beijing issue – comments about*
232 *a government policy about who can own cars. F4 claims that everyone is not*
233 *allowed to have a car, F5 disagrees – they are promoting that people should own*
234 *one. They go back and forth 3-4 times.*
235
236 FAC: *Encourages group to consider what it would be like if it were true, that*
237 *everyone did or could have a car.*
238
239 F4: *Discusses why every Chinese person is not permitted to have a car and the*
240 *repercussions if they did. Makes clarifications about what she means by*
241 *government, notes conflicts between various factions in government. Finishes*
242 *comment with, "I wouldn't want to live in Beijing if everybody had a car, I*
243 *wouldn't want to live in Los Angeles if everybody had a car."*
244
245 F5: *It is hard to live in Istanbul, too. F4 asks about smog, F5 clarifies, that there*
246 *is no traffic.*
247
248 M1: *Issue is not that many people own cars but if there was an increase, it'd a*
249 *similar problem as China.*
250
251 F5: *Defends that a similar problem is "impossible" because gas prices are so*
252 *high.*
253
254 FAC: *Asks what gas prices are in Turkey.*
255

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

256 M2: 4 times
257
258 F5: It was 4x now 3x.
259
260 FAC: *Asks other members to consider the dollar cost, notes their shock.*
261
262 F5: *Rises voice slightly over others, “Anyways, it’s too much for Turkey”*
263
264 F5: *Recounts a memory of difficulty of seeing outside because the area was so*
265 *dirty. There are interruptions during her story, side conversation. FAC interrupts*
266 *“let F5 tell her story.” She closes tale by saying that the area is no longer this*
267 *dirty, “it is clean, not so much clean.”*
268
269 F3: *Asks how the area became clean.*
270
271 F5: *Notes the shift to natural gas from coal, before emission tests were not taken*
272 *seriously, now they are.*
273
274 FAC: *Summarizes the three choices that Turkey has made to address*
275 *environment, F5 agrees with summary with some elaboration.*
276
277 M1: *Notes that Turkey became dependent on outside sources for natural gas.*
278 *Notes that the cities in Turkey are no longer “black.”*
279
280 FAC: *Returns to the importance of identifying the choices being made, F4 agrees.*
281 *FAC asks F4 to tell story about the Expressway, she’s not sure what he’s*
282 *referring to, he summarizes and she claims that he told the basic story.*
283
284 F4: *Provides story of the “east side expressway.” Turns to the issue of land use,*
285 *believes that the US has not been wise in how to use land. “People make choices*
286 *whether they term it that way or not.” Talks about preserving the character of*
287 *town by thinking critically about how land is used. Supports the idea of limiting*
288 *car use.*
289
290 FAC: *Summarizes the conversation and reminds, that they’re role is not to be*
291 *“policy makers” but they can think of different ways of engaging environmental*
292 *issues. {TAPE CUTS OFF}*

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

- 1 F4: Where do you find this stuff [FAC]? *referring to the story of W. Maathai*
2 {laughter from participants}
3
- 4 FAC: Heard about book on the radio and then it fit so much with the other reading
5
- 6 F2: I really am intrigued, the poetry too” *asks FAC if he likes poetry a lot.*
7
- 8 FAC: Yeah. *Stumbles, states his background- a poet and community development.*
9 *Refocuses group, not much time left, asks group to consider what they*
10 *read/listened to. “Twenty million trees now {text cut out for brevity} also turned*
11 *it into a political empowerment thing...I find this pretty powerful..”*
12
- 13 M2: *Refers to it as a dream, in terms of a very good example of an*
14 *accomplishment. He states that he does not mean dream in terms of something*
15 *that’s far away to reach.*
16
- 17 F4: I think that it’s a good thing that you find these things {referring to FAC}.
18 And that you end our sessions with them. Otherwise I would go home and have
19 nights and nights of sleeplessness. I mean, I feel like the last time you end- and I
20 was being sincere, the last time you ended it with stories of, where people’s
21 personal efforts have made a difference and I mean, I’m only speaking as one
22 cynical person who often feels like it doesn’t, so it’s a good anecdote for me. A
23 little wake up call to say, oh yeah I can.
24
- 25 FAC: At the risk of going negative (.) this last sentence, that this person has been
26 beaten and gone to jail for this stuff.
27
- 28 F4: =Not because of the trees. It was because she challenged the power structure.
29 I mean that was my take on it. *She continues a back and forth with F2 in an effort*
30 *to argue that Maathai got in trouble because she became more political. “If she*
31 *just stuck with the trees (.)”*
32
- 33 F2: Wait a minute, I didn’t go that far, all she did was build - was build the trees.”
34
- 35 FAC: *Clarifies the events of W. Maathai’s circumstances, and then encourages*
36 *the group to complete the chapter reading for more information.*
37
- 38 F4: Well if she just stuck to trees=
39
- 40 F2: She’d be alright.
41
- 42 F3: Well, I think there’s some social problems as well. I mean, she instigated -
43 here’s a woman who has inspired many other and now they’re changing some

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

44 structures. To question, um, you know, everything from their husbands' control,
45 to president Daniel Loy's rule. So that touches to the heart of households in
46 villages. You know, so we're not just trees here. It's the structure.

47

48 F4: That might not be good in the United States, it would be one more reason why
49 the environmental movement would get a bad press.

50

51 F2: We, you know, we can look to US whether you like him or not. You know,
52 look back to the 70's with Ralph Nader. I mean, we have seatbelts because of
53 Ralph Nader. And whether what you think of him today or not, it was his being a
54 pain in the butt that had got it done. This makes me uncomfortable for two
55 reasons: it's the frustration of what's the one thing I can do? And #2, I don't have
56 the guts to get shot at and beaten. It scares the heck out of me."

57

58 F4: Well, you might not have to.

59

60 F2: Well, I mean, if you go to Africa – and I was Malawi, I mean, people were
61 telling me how the students closed the university and how they got beaten because
62 they published um, letters, you know, anti-government, ah poisoned, you know? I
63 thought I don't have that kind of courage.

64

65 F4: But the thing I like about that story is, as well as this other thing that is
66 included in the packet of information is that (.) is more that I see it as a call to
67 action where you could, you could have an impact without necessarily having to
68 take on – 'cause I don't know, it's not about being beaten, sometimes for me it's
69 about not to expend, to beat my head against the wall, expend energy in a
70 pointless fashion. Like I don't feel like I would be able to necessarily change
71 atomic energy policy in this country, but I could plant trees.

72

73 F2: Isn't because the issue, this is – being too old? Refers to efforts in the 60's
74 and how everyone became involved. "Is there anything that sparks the
75 imagination and will power of any of us today or are we all worn out?"

76

77 F4: I don't think, to me, I don't think it's not that at all. People are called to action
78 in ways that's directly proportional to the threat they perceive...I think it wasn't
79 just civil rights and the war, but in the sense, it's a lot easier to galvanize people
80 around a single issue when um, threat is fairly close to home, and I think in
81 certain situations that's been true in environmental issues. The more um, popular
82 an area is, the more people perceive the issue is direct- relating to them and
83 affecting to their life. The more they're willing to get involved. Whether it's
84 effective or not is still questionable, but um, I – I know every time I go there, just
85 on a personal basis I get discouraged, so for me I appreciate the fact there are
86 stories of how one person can – effort can make a difference. And I particularly

Group D-2: Meeting #4, Environmental Degradation
Summary

87 felt that way at the end of the video. Because for me the AIDS epidemic in Africa
88 is overwhelming and so to see that doctor who said, ‘irrespective of what people
89 tell me I’m going to forge ahead’ and was able to say he was able to make a
90 difference in spite of that, is reassuring. And stories like that are reassuring to me.
91
92 *FAC: Closes up. Notes that they may not have to face jail, but may have to bear
93 some sort of cost for challenging things. Encourages group to also consider the
94 benefits of taking on these costs, i.e. speaking up, teaching differently, paying
95 more for gasoline. Organizes for the next week. Refers to packet, prepares for
96 commitment meeting, comments that someone wrote that he provides too much
97 information in packets, reminds them that they can choose not to read it all.*
98
99 *F4: States {jokingly} “Because FAC listens to too much NPR.” F2 says that she
100 listens to it as well, and then refers to both of them as communists.*
101
102 *FAC: Talks about rescheduling to next Monday. Asks for readers for next
103 meeting. Interaction between participants. Thanks participants for bringing
104 additional readings, elaborates on the days readings. Closes meeting with a
105 second poem – called “Gold ” by Mary Oliver, outlines other poems and books.*
106
107 *F4: Asks for a bibliography.*
108
109 *FAC: He continues to discuss other readings, talks about the fact sheet and an
110 assignment page regarding participants’ new or renewed commitment to civic
111 engagement at the close of the program process. Encourages group to write a
112 letter to themselves where they outline what they are thinking about in terms of
113 making a commitment. Encourages them to begin thinking about it. Encourages
114 participants to complete evaluations of the evening’s meeting. {TAPE ENDS}*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 1 FAC: Testing, is it hearing me?
2
- 3 F4: *Complements F5, saying she looks nice in her outfit, F5 says thank you.*
4
- 5 FAC: *Introduces visitor, V, from local newspaper who's not doing a story on the*
6 *program, but wants to learn about the program and listen. Opens meeting theme:*
7 *Materialism and the media. First part: explore the question, "what is*
8 *wealth...looking at language we use to talk about wealth." Group will look at two*
9 *poems, then consider the choices everyone makes about what we have and others*
10 *have, look at video, last part, imagine actions group members can take. Begin*
11 *with going around the circle, not focused on responding to each other, getting*
12 *everyone to speak up, can refer to past week, if preferred. New question: Think of*
13 *a time in your life when you had what you considered 'real wealth' but it didn't*
14 *involve paying money for it.*
15
- 16 M2: Family (.) in general terms, we don't get to choose our families.
17
- 18 FAC: *Asks him to elaborate.*
19
- 20 M2: *Discusses father, trusts him, his ability, "like friends."*
21
- 22 FAC: *Encourages other responses.*
23
- 24 F1: *Feels similarly about the public library. "I always feel rich 'cause you can*
25 *whatever book you want, particularly in {their community}."*
26
- 27 FAC: *Somebody else?*
28
- 29 F2: *"Community, meaning broader family and friends."*
30
- 31 M1: *I like driving a lot, my car is not an expensive one. FAC clarifies that M1 is*
32 *referring to the experience of driving, and encourages him to talk more about the*
33 *experience. Talks about experiences in Turkey driving, reiterates that he does not*
34 *believe that its not a good example. Group encourages him. He discusses the*
35 *experience of freedom while driving*
36
- 37 M3: {FAC prompts him} *Close friends. FAC asks for a more specific example.*
38 *He talks about how they do things for you to help you out.*
39
- 40 F5: {FAC prompts her} *She says that she talked about this topic the night before.*
41 *Everything in her life is a gift, her health, every organ she has, her eyes – this is*
42 *given to her, she did not earn or pay for it, her family. This is unbelievable to her.*
43 *She could be someone in very bad conditions, be disabled, be poor, not a student,*
44 *no family, no husband, everything in her life is pretty much a gift.*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

45

46 FAC: *States F5's comment is a good transition for what is wealth? First one –*
47 *what is wealth, hopes to shift from 'consumables' to 'sharables,' like the library*
48 *or 'multipliables,' like close friendship, refers to participant comments. Example*
49 *of Philip Levine – "Life savings in the wrong currency." Last, consider group's*
50 *impact as consumers – how focus on consumables or choices can be damaging to*
51 *others.*

52

53 M1: You {referring to FAC} chose the topic, do you think there's a relationship
54 between the two {*Materialism and the Media*}?

55

56 FAC: *He agrees and elaborates with examples (i.e. media encourages*
57 *materialism), asks*

58 *M1 If this helps him out? He agrees, he realizes that it's about something more*
59 *than he considered. FAC outlines the poem to be read by P. Levine ("What work*
60 *is").*

61

62 M1: He is a leftist guy? FAC agrees and says that he also refers to himself as an
63 anarchist, but doesn't know what poet means by that.

64

65 F2: *Asks what connection is between the question whether P. Levine is leftist and*
66 *discussion about his poem.*

67

68 M1: *Explains, by looking at the title of poem. People who care more about work*
69 *and labor issues tend to be leftists. M1 identifies himself as not a leftist.*

70

71 F2: *Finds this intriguing.*

72

73 F4: *Agrees that she makes this assumption, not always but an easy generalization*
74 *to make.*

75

76 F2: *Intriguing because it separates capital from labor as if they are separable in*
77 *an information age," Leftist has a negative connotation for her*

78

79 M1: *Disagrees that it is not so in the US.*

80

81 F2: *She does not understand {laughter from the Turkish}*

82

83 F4: *Why bad connotation in Turkey?*

84

85 M1: *It is bad in Turkey, likes European leftists, not Turk leftists. [F4 asks why*
86 *and how they are different] He states that they are completely different and that*
87 *he distinguishes between them.*

88

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 89 FAC: *Notes people not from Turkey are trying hard to understand why they're*
90 *different.*
91
92 F5: *Says that they are very religious, leftists are discontent*
93
94 M3: *Qualifies, "Religion is not the only factor, they are very discontent."*
95
96 F4: *Wonders, being discontent is not necessarily a bad thing (.)*
97
98 M1, M2, M3: *Elaborate on issues in Turkey, "they are not rational people in*
99 *Turkey..." Problems with leftists' issues with Cyprus (3).*
100
101 FAC: *Turns back to poem, notes that some find it "baffling." Reads poem, "What*
102 *work is"*
103
104 FAC: *Introduces second poem (Robert Coles) to be read by F5*
105
106 F5: *Didn't know it was a poem, FAC tells her that she can read it however she*
107 *likes, she says that he told her that it wasn't one, and she believes that it's not like*
108 *one. (he continually responds to her, "it's fine..."*
109
110 F5: *Reads poem (Robert Coles, "recession 1992")*
111
112 F4: *I thought you did an excellent job {reading}, I don't know what you were*
113 *concerned about.*
114
115 FAC: *Asks for responses, refers to how people in poems are experiencing*
116 *economic pressures from both ends of the spectrum of class, silence (5) from*
117 *participants.*
118
119 F4: *Refers to M1, says that the second poem is right up his alley.*
120
121 M1: *Desires to clarify his meaning of "discontent," FAC encourages him to, but*
122 *he refuses, he doesn't want to "divert the topic."*
123
124 F4: *Wonders if the first poem (Philip Levine, "what work is") must be clarified,*
125 *refers to FAC's earlier comments that it would need to be. She claims that she*
126 *understood it fine until the end. She finds the line, "just because you don't know*
127 *what work is" confusing. FAC asks her to elaborate. She claims that she doesn't*
128 *know how it fits into the poem. Up until this point in the poem, the character is*
129 *pretty obvious about how he hasn't been clear about what really matters in life*
130 *and then he makes this claim (3).*
131

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

132 F2: *She thought that in the poem, “what work is,” work is so integral to one’s*
133 *identity, without it, a person is despondent.*

134

135 FAC: *Asks for more comments by saying, “other people thinking about the poem*
136 *in the same way, just finding it confusing (.) or (.) thinking differently.”*

137

138 F5: *Didn’t “get anything” from either poem.*

139

140 F4: *Even the one you read?*

141

142 FAC: *Asks F5 if it’s about language? She agrees.*

143

144 F5: *Are you thinking it’s because it’s a poem, it should have some hidden*
145 *meaning, because I think it was pretty straight forward. She goes on to explain the*
146 *second poem, which F4 read. “Things beyond a person’s control (the upper class*
147 *business man) is still understood as something that he could control.”*

148

149 M2: *Asks about the context of second poem, whether the poem refers to the*
150 *recession in the US in 1992. FAC agrees, M2 says he only knows of what*
151 *happened in the 1930’s.*

152

153 F4: *She says that she’s sure that the US has had others (.)*

154

155 FAC: *He asks F5 to consider what the character was thinking about as he*
156 *summarizes what happened in the poem. She begins to respond by saying, “I don’t*
157 *know...”*

158

159 F4: *Cuts off F5 by explaining her understanding in terms of placing the students*
160 *from Istanbul in the character’s position – “if the economy was as bad as that*
161 *now, and you all were graduates, would you be concerned about the economy,*
162 *about finding a job?”*

163

164 F5: *First asks for clarification, then says, “yeah sure”*

165

166 M3: *He talks about when he arrived to the US, in 2000 – “during Clinton time.”*
167 *At the time, his friends found jobs “alright.” Lately it has not been so easy to find*
168 *a job, and he believes that he will have difficulty in the near future.*

169

170 F4: *Says that M3 should be alright by the time he gets out.*

171

172 M3: *He disagrees, F4 reassures and then turns to M2 to view his “crystal ball” to*
173 *forecast the job market.*

174

175 M2: *He says that it depends on the field of work*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

176

177 F2: *She believed the first poem was set in the 1930's. She had "no sympathy" for*
178 *the second poem. FAC asks, why no sympathy. She elaborates that the character*
179 *will "have a cushion through" because of his class. He is unlike the characters in*
180 *the first poem because he does not experience "despondency, those people are*
181 *protected." She compares the characters and how they will suffer in different*
182 *ways. She discusses how some of the lines in the first poem illustrate images of the*
183 *Depression for her.*

184

185 F4: *It's a gloomier setting than 'Brooks Brothers.' F2 agrees, "right, right." She*
186 *asks F2 about her earlier separation between Capital and labor.*

187

188 F2: *She refers to Catholic thought, that Capital and labor are artificial*
189 *separation. "you cannot separate them."*

190

191 M3: *He asks F2 if this refers to the past as well?*

192

193 F2: *No, overtime the line between capital and labor has become harder to*
194 *differentiate, M3 agrees, "yes." You cannot talk about them separately any*
195 *longer, they have become "one whole." She continues, "I mean what is it you sell,*
196 *you sell your ideas today? You don't sell your muscle."*

197

198 M3: *For today I agree with you, but for the past, it was affected, there was labor.*
199 *F2 agrees.*

200

201 F4: *Even today, it remains a question, considering outsourcing*

202

203 M3: *Disagreeing, he asks for an example of this, M1 & F5 talk about the*
204 *differences between companies*

205

206 F4: *Discusses the mobility of capital,*

207

208 F2: *Claims that she is changing the definition of labor,*

209

210 F4: *Disagrees, F2 elaborates on her point, F4 clarifies that she is talking about*
211 *knowledge & service economy, but "it's not changing the definition of labor."*
212 *Discusses the mobility of capital, compares countries (i.e. US struggling for*
213 *capital, Saudies have more, etc)*

214

215 F2: *Challenges, "you can have money, but if you don't have somebody to have an*
216 *idea, what is it?"*

217

218 F4: *Answers, "a raw material, but which is more scarce?" Makes argument for*
219 *capital as the reason why something is sold more than another.*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

220

221 FAC: *Elaborates on the complexity of the discussion. States that he wants to bring*
222 *the group back to the poem, refers to comments made by participant, F2 about the*
223 *differences between the poem – re: the “safety net” [safety cushion]. Continues,*
224 *“let me push on how the poems are similar...” Discusses each poem in terms of*
225 *main character, and wonders aloud about “the real work of his life.”*

226

227 F4: *She believes it goes back to the capital/labor distinction, diminishes the*
228 *complicated nature of it. “The sort of – the message that I see is similar in both of*
229 *them is that, you as a person is powerless against these forces. You can stand in*
230 *line, but you are at the mercy of the man about whether you will have work or*
231 *not. And, you know, even if you are this writer, and you’re in this shop and you*
232 *buy the Italian – and you conform, you are still at the mercy of the recession. I*
233 *mean, um, for me that’s what the economy is. You have this popular culture kinda*
234 *thing that says go to school, get a good education, but that’s the point that, not*
235 *that that is the point of your life, but the point of having this kind of education is*
236 *that it becomes a means by which you can afford the rest of your life, that you can*
237 *have a family, you can protect your family. You can sustain yourself, even if that*
238 *is not what life is about. It is a means- you can also not have a life without it, and*
239 *at the same time, there’s sort of this message in these poems that’s saying, this*
240 *underlying despair of do what you can, but it’s not within your power, you won’t*
241 *have any say over that.”*

242

243 FAC: *Reiterates that what she sees in both poems, “is that people are pretty*
244 *unprotected” F4 says, “right.”*

245

246 M3: *He believes that although people choose their life paths, he believes that the*
247 *person in the second poem may not have had a choice because he was born rich.*

248

249 F4: *Asks, why is it not possible for him to do something else, M1 wonders as well.*

250

251 M3: *When people challenge his comments, he defends that a person with wealth*
252 *has to maintain it.*

253

254 F4: *Comments, “in some ways, I think that’s a circular thing.”*

255

256 M3: *Protests, I don’t like there life [articulating that he’s not preferring the*
257 *character’s life, but defending the character’s life]*

258

259 M1: *Wonders that even with the career path that M3 has chosen, it may preclude*
260 *him from spending time with his family.*

261

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 262 M3: But, I, I, (stumbles) one of the reasons why I chose to be a faculty (3). *Talks*
263 *about the career choices he made that were based on allowing him more*
264 *flexibility.*
- 265
- 266 F5: *Interjects, asks why M1 believes that M3 won't have time for his family if he*
267 *pursues his career path. M1 begins to explain. She interjects, "but there are many*
268 *faculty members who spend time with their families."*
- 269
- 270 M3: I know I have to work as hard as you do- [F5: it's just time and location. She
271 goes on to explain how it can be done.]
- 272
- 273 F4: I just find it interesting that M3 would say, perhaps this person is wealthy and
274 they don't want to live that life [M3 tries to interject, F4 raises her voice] as if –
275 as if that person would be trapped and not have the op[ti]on. Because as an
276 economist, it's often that people act in their own best interests...so they make
277 choices, whether they acknowledge that or not, they make choices. So I can see
278 why a person on an emotional level they inherent the business from their family,
279 that they have an obligation to their family, to-
- 280
- 281 M3: Not to family, that's my point, to wealth, I mean. If you have the wealth –
282 people do not throw away their wealth –
- 283
- 284 F4: people do, people have. *There's chuckling, a number of people start speaking*
285 *up, M3 tries to speak up, F4 speaks over him, sharing examples of people who*
286 *have given up their wealth (baskin robbins, the Kennedy's and their moral*
287 *obligation...)*
- 288
- 289 FAC: F2 was going to try and say something.
- 290
- 291 F2: *Claims that the group is confusing: wealth, materialism, and work. [FAC: uh*
292 *hmm.] She claims that the two poems are disconnected. States that there are three*
293 *themes in Coles poem, "And I wouldn't read this on my own without you!" She*
294 *quotes a part of the poem that she believes refers to the poem. FAC interjects and*
295 *asks if F5 is understanding what F2 is referring to (no stated response from F5).*
296 *"But..If I may say, I have a vow of poverty, I don't keep anything."*
- 297
- 298 FAC: Speak to that, what does that look like?
- 299
- 300 F2: Empty. *She goes on to claim that she is a lawyer at a firm, has taken a vowed*
301 *life in her religious community, anything she owns "belongs to the religious*
302 *congregation to be used by the community for its purposes."*
- 303
- 304 F4: What is poverty? *She states that it's not the same as homelessness (.)*
305

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 306 F2: *Begins listing her degrees, explains that she does not “keep the fruits of her*
307 *labor.”*
308
- 309 F4: *Continues to challenge F2, claiming that she still has some luxuries in her*
310 *life.*
311
- 312 F2: *Disagrees, claims that about present nationwide collection to support women*
313 *in similar religious communities.*
314
- 315 F4: *So, you are concerned that you may starve? F2 and she go back and forth*
316 *about the realities of F2’s vow of poverty.*
317
- 318 FAC: *Clarifies a term that F2 is using in her discussion with F4 (a state*
319 *supported hospital care available for everyone).*
320
- 321 F4: *Makes clarification, “we’re talking about wealth” She makes distinction*
322 *between a person who has support and peace of mind, in comparison to someone*
323 *who does not have the means to support themselves.*
324
- 325 M3: *Tries to enter conversation, is cut off.*
326
- 327 F2: *Reiterates the reason why she shared her personal example, that she believes*
328 *that group is confusing wealth, materialism and work. She states that she*
329 *wondered if people give up wealth (clarifies – money).*
330
- 331 FAC: *Money may not equal wealth.*
332
- 333 M1: *Acknowledges that F2 has made a risk, he wonders if it still makes her*
334 *comfortable or happy? Reflects that some people who have left their wealth has*
335 *become more happy, he wonders about her situation.*
336
- 337 FAC: *Refers to F2’s comments, states what he hears, refers to her relationships in*
338 *her religious community.*
339
- 340 F2: {Shrill voice} *I use the word community, I heard you use the word, ‘network’*
341 *– different thing [F4: I didn’t hear him use the word network; FAC: okay.] She*
342 *goes on the say that network is a secular translation of “communal,” which means*
343 *communion. Concludes, “That is wealth, for me”*
344
- 345 F4: *Interjects, she states that she believes people make decisions based on their*
346 *choices.*
347
- 348 FAC: *Cuts in, begins with GDP, states that it captures a particular kind of wealth*
349 *within a country, but it does not capture the value of “community, for instance.”*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

350 *Goes on to state that just because country increases its GDP, doesn't mean that*
351 *other kinds of wealth flourish.*
352
353 F4: "right." *States that she doesn't believe that people believe that simply having*
354 *an increase in GDP would translate to a sense of happiness within peoples lives.*
355
356 M3: *Agrees, no one in the world believes that more wealth equals happiness.*
357
358 F4: *Elaborates, even in a capitalist society people don't believe that happiness*
359 *comes from GDP.*
360
361 FAC: {Befuddled}. *But, I just heard M3 say something to the contrary*
362
363 M3: *Agrees with his earlier comment, believes that enjoyment does come from*
364 *money.*
365
366 F4: *You can be trapped by your wealth" M3 agrees and reiterates, F4 cuts him off*
367 *– "but you still have the choice of giving it away"*
368
369 M3: *"yeah, but people cannot do that." Everyone disagrees with him. He provides*
370 *a personal example of making a purchase (cheaper in comparison to someone*
371 *else's). Claims that the more they spend, the less option than the person who*
372 *spends more.*
373
374 F4: *Challenges him, reinterprets his comments, based on his choices and his*
375 *perceptions (F5 and others laugh at him).*
376
377 FAC: *Clarifies, refers back to F2's personal example and discusses the*
378 *significance of her trade-offs.*
379
380 F4: *Articulates her point that people are always making those kinds of "trade*
381 *offs."*
382
383 F2: *I have a tremendous reaction to that F4, because it reduces the human person*
384 *to someone that is always choosing between things and trade offs. I just have an*
385 *intuitive response to say –*
386
387 F4: *They do –*
388
389 F2: *I think the human person is more than that –*
390
391 F4: *Whatever that good is, it represents something to a person...but underneath,*
392 *whatever that is, is essentially what they're buying...that is a good, we just don't*
393 *call it that. She goes on with many examples.*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

394

395 F2: What I'm resisting is that you're making it an economic choice –

396

397 F4: It's always an economic choice.

398

399 F2: See and I don't think that.

400

401 M2: *Agrees with her arguments, but* “your connection to the final point, the
402 economical one, that's no-”

403

404 FAC: Yeah, that's not clear to me. *F5 pipes up too in agreement with M2 & FAC.*

405

406 F4: You are essentially expressing what matters on an ethical and personal level
407 for you, and often times, it is expressed in economic – either in foregoing
408 economics, or in acquiring economics. *A number of people pipe up,*

409

410 M2: *Gives example of his religion. States that it encourages him not to keep*
411 *money, if he follows this path he will be happier -*

412

413 F4: *Cuts him off and continues to explain example.*

414

415 F2: *Cuts in, and discusses what she hears F4 saying, “Religion then, becomes and*
416 *subordinate and derivative of an economic choice.” F4 disagrees, claims that*
417 *M2's personal choice is expressed in economic terms.*

418

419 M2: *Tries to interject.*

420

421 F4: But really its about how much your religion is important to him. *Asks F2 what*
422 *would happen if she did not follow through on her vow of poverty* [F2: put me
423 out].

424

425 F2: Yeah, but that's not an ec-ono-mic choice. You see where I have problems
426 with you, is not your examples, and not your examples (.) but you reduce the
427 human person to an economic derivative to me.

428

429 M2: What you said [referring to F4] is correct if you put it in a textbook to teach
430 economic students, but in general terms I will not agree with you.

431

432 F4: Because?

433

434 M2: Because I don't want my religion to be related to economics.

435

436 FAC: *Interrupts, shares a book, quotes author, who says that* “the problem with
437 the economist is that they're always treating people like they're always going to

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

438 do something that's in their narrow self-best interests (.) as if they're covetous
439 machine (2) his point, which is F2's, and M2's point is that people are more than
440 that"

441

442 F4: *Claims that she's not saying that people are not more than that, "I'm just*
443 *saying it's possible to take being more than that and translate it into – even if*
444 *you're not thinking in economic terms (2) for example, women who decide to*
445 *spend more time with their kids, like it or not, it's an economic choice, down the*
446 *road they're forgoing a level of income (.) you're giving up something to get*
447 *something else...people are choosing what is of value (.) in everyday life people*
448 *are making those choices, they just don't count them that way"*

449

450 F2: *She and F4 go back and forth about the term "economics" and F2 questions*
451 *whether she's favoring economic actors over.*

452

453 F4: *States that economics is not about money or wealth, but about the choices that*
454 *people make.*

455

456 FAC: (10) *Offers a break. F5 says that they should take a break. F2 asks about*
457 *the cookies that F5 made, "they're wonderful." Everyone talks about how much*
458 *they enjoyed the cookies.*

459

460 FAC: *Informs group that they are going to look at two poems and look at*
461 *something. Poems are read, tape cuts off.*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 1 M2: What you said is correct, but- {M1 interrupts}
2
- 3 F2: Oh he sounds like an American lawyer {group LF}
4
- 5 M2: *Refers back to last week's discussion*, "Just a way of translating language
6 you're using." *Re: using economic terms for making meaning of motivation to*
7 *serve others*
8
- 9 F3: So you help yourself to make yourself happy [M2: yes one interpretation,
10 right]
11
- 12 F5: Just to please yourself, but it also pleases yourself, but you're doing it because
13 of your religious beliefs but it also- pleases you.
14
- 15 M2: But what they are saying that we are not helping people because we want to
16 be happy-
17
- 18 F5: But you are saying that. [M3: this is what you are saying] You're helping
19 people because of your religious beliefs, but helping people also makes you
20 happy.
21
- 22 FAC: So it's what we might call a 'by-product' [F5: yeah]
23
- 24 F5: Not helping people because it makes you happy, but it is a by-product.
25
- 26 FAC: *Observes that F2 wants to speak, F2 begins to speak*, [M2: They're the same
27 thing]
28
- 29 F5: They're not the same thing! {F2 echoes F5, Refers back to last week's
30 discussion}
31
- 32 F4: It's an externality [M2: what's that?] [Group LF], *F4 explains, externality is*
33 *something not factored into the key motivation for action*. "What I hear you
34 saying is that it's not the same thing because the motivation is to serve God. But,
35 the externality is the happening-" {M1 and F5 interrupt}
36
- 37 F2: Because I think they're reducing everything to the lowest utilitarian
38 explanation. It is useful -, I heard you say something different. What I heard them
39 say it that it's is useful for you to be helpful to others because the utility to you is
40 to make you feel good. That's not what I heard you say. I heard you say that what
41 motivates you is your belief in God. I fill in the blank – from that sentence to say,
42 therefore it is part of your identity {F5 begins to interrupt} it is not something you
43 do as a secondary thought, it is part of your identity.
44

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 45 M1: But the second thing is natural outcome of what I do.
46
- 47 F2: But anytime you are a whole person, I mean if you take a bath and feel good,
48 you clean. That's part of your identity. If you speak your own mother language,
49 makes you feel better than a second language, correct?
50
- 51 F4: I'm sure there are times you help people and don't feel good, but you do it
52 anyway.
53
- 54 F5: But what you're saying is different than what you think," {M1 and F2
55 interrupt, (inaudible)}
56
- 57 F2: But I heard him say, I heard- as an economist, [group LF] say that the utility
58 to you of doing good is the good feeling you get. Would you do good without the
59 good feeling? Would you?
60
- 61 M1: For me, it's the same thing. If you follow the first rule, you will get happy.
62 You will be happy, and maybe this happiness encourage you to do much more
63 things, but the reason you do this helping people is the first one.
64
- 65 F2: I agree, but what you made me think of is the Christian tradition we call
66 agape, that it is love, not because of what it returns to you, [M1: yes] but that it is
67 the attempt to have a pure form of love, which in the Christian tradition we
68 believe mirrors God's love, God gets nothing from me.
69
- 70 M1: Yes, I mean [F5: we have the same thing] religion, religious story that- [F5:
71 We talked about it! We talked about it!] I forgot – [F5: after last weeks
72 discussion, you don't think what you say. [group LF] You are not aware of what
73 your are saying now!]
74
- 75 F4: I don't know about M1, but I definitely know that I'm saying that. I'm saying
76 that people do, and I know that last week you were saying that my attempt is the
77 reduce everything down to utility or- and I think what you took me talking about
78 econo- money. It's not the same the thing, but it is what I am saying. That people
79 do what' in their self interest, that money or the free market is merely the way of
80 measuring that, but often times, that self-interest has more to do with expressing
81 what their values are. Some people value their leisure time. Some people value
82 doing service to God and their country, some people value being faithful to their
83 family, and so those things um, those values, that wealth will be evidenced in
84 their behavior and in their decision-making. And so, that's what makes them feel
85 good. And I think um, M2 is talking about doing services because he says he does
86 it because it's duty to God, right M2? That's what makes you want to help other
87 people? Because of your religious beliefs?
88

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 89 M2: Yes, but I don't see any consolation in two statements, yeah-
90
- 91 F4: I don't see any inconsistency either, I'm not saying they're inconsistent. [M2:
92 okay] I think all your wife was saying is that they're not inconsistent as much as
93 one is not the primary motivator.
94
- 95 M3: I think she explained it really well.
96
- 97 F2: What I have a difficulty is that it's reductionistic, pure and simple. The chap
98 said you will do good because it makes you feel good, I heard you say something
99 different [M2: yes; F5: yes]
100
- 101 F4: But what is wrong with reducing it?
102
- 103 F2: Because, that is, because, just in a sentence, if you reduce something, some
104 part of reality to its smallest piece you don't have reality.
105
- 106 F4: You have a portion of it.
107
- 108 F2: That's all, that's right. [F5: well, it is a logical explanation] He started off
109 with something more inclusive, embrasive, the whole identity thing. He does it
110 because it's the core of his religion.
111
- 112 FAC: I'm interested in the piece with um, listen to three different things, [group
113 laughter, multiple comments] no no, listened to a couple different things about
114 people talking about their experience of doing some serving and stepping out
115 together, and in one of them, "I remember, I believe" song, um, it's hard to reduce
116 that song in one line, but they're talking about their sort of memory and their kind
117 of – kind of deep fail resources that are kind of supporting them. In the Quatrains
118 poem, by Rumi you can pick out a lot of different parts to the poem, but the thing
119 that strikes me is this business of trying to sort of listen to the world around you
120 and somehow not fall asleep, to somehow stay awake to both some other world,
121 talks about the doorstep between two worlds, but also he talks about listening to
122 the breeze, you know, listening to the world around you, and also we have the
123 other thing of building the hurricanes. In none of those three things do I hear
124 people saying, okay I'm really going to go out and get happy. And if I'm going to
125 try and get happy, I guess in order to get happy, I'll do x thing. I just- it doesn't
126 feel like a fair summary of, I'm kind of with F2 on this, it doesn't feel like a fair
127 summary of sort of the richness of the experience of with them, including M2's
128 point.
129
- 130 F2: You're making me think of what we would call hedonistic. That is the
131 philosophy of life to do that which pleases you, to avoid that which displeases
132 you. That's not what – and I heard M2 say something opposite."

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

133

134 F4: Doing what pleases you that is in accordance with your values is totally
135 different than hedonism.

136

137 FAC: So let me ask you F4, what are the things that motivate or support you when
138 you are trying to be, um, you know, your best self toward other people? What are
139 the things that really sustain you? I know you experienced some discouragement,
140 so this talking about being sustained is a little bit difficult, but the points when
141 you felt sustained, what's done it?

142

143 F4: Well, my discouragement has not been about helping people. [FAC: mhmm]
144 Mostly it's been about not accomplishing, not having the satisfaction that comes
145 with accomplishing what you set out to accomplish. But, um, and the occasions
146 when I have helped people, to me, there's also different types of help, there's
147 helping people directly, when you're actually working one on one with somebody
148 and there's a certain- for me, satisfaction comes from feeling useful, being of
149 service, being of, um, and to me, there are differences in that too, I mean, when I
150 help somebody build a barricade, to me, if I – if I envision myself in the Polish
151 story, that's not about, that's like duty, that's like desperation, that's ah, we're
152 afraid, we do what we have to do in spite of the circumstances. That's not really
153 the same thing to me as being of service, foregoing a pleasant skating to do
154 something to help somebody else. It could be, um, [FAC: They could of sat it out,
155 they could have sat in their house] That's a totally different situation. To me
156 doing, feeling like um, you must take this act or dire consequences are going to
157 befall you is less of a choice than um foregoing pleasure in order to be of service.
158 You know, volunteering to me is you give up your free time, you give up the
159 opportunity for pleasure in order to be of service to somebody else, which is very
160 different than um, when I was in basic training, you'll dig the ditch, you'll build
161 the sand bag, but not because you're being of service, not because you're building
162 the barricade because you want to, you know, you're being ordered to, it is where
163 you go to work. I mean, I don't necessarily go to work because I want to, I'm not
164 of service, it's an exchange. It's not as a much a free transaction. Whereas you
165 give up your free time and are of service and helping somebody, the reward is so
166 much less tangible. So for me when I do that it is more a feeling I get or a
167 satisfaction I get being of assistance, mostly when it's one on one it has to do with
168 um, having been in a situation like that myself and understanding how meaningful
169 that kindness would mean to somebody else. Sometimes I think of it as paying a
170 debt, paying it forward.

171

172 F2: I guess, I hear so many ideas floating around here, one is the difference
173 between doing something that is meaningful (emphasis on word), doing
174 something that is a quid pro quo, you give it because you got this debt going
175 forward, or something that, um, it is a fundam-, for me a religious belief is
176 something above and beyond the subjectivity that I am capable of as an individual

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

177 person. And I guess what I'm struggling with is someplace that I read the
178 difference between one religion and another is whether service is an ethical
179 optional behavior from belief and whether it's the essence of – in my case, the
180 essence of the meaning of the gospel, it's not a choice. And I'm hearing, for me,
181 I'm hearing three different ideas, meaningfulness, the religious essence, and I
182 would use the word 'essence' as opposed to option, um, making me feel good or
183 utilitarian idea, or quid pro quo idea, going forward. And I – I don't know where I
184 am, when I hear all these different perspectives, I'll say, where am I in all the four
185 issues.

186
187 F5: mixture of everything.

188
189 F2: Well, I come out of a religious tradition though that really does separate them,
190 and prioritize them. [F5: yes] Alright it leaves me, F3, you may remember this,
191 we were taught what we were doing was not natural, it was supernatural. Okay,
192 [F3 agrees] so the idea of pleasure was really made quite subordinate and not
193 significant. That we ought, the duty [F3: and the spirit and the body were -] the
194 spirit and the body, yeah, and therefore, um, it never got the separation of spirit
195 and body but the body was driven by the spirit. [F3: mmmm, and it was our lower
196 nature] yah, so, you know you didn't do something, I'm trying to fall back,
197 obviously meaning, maybe I should ask this for everybody here, is meaning
198 different than feeling good about something? [F3: yeah; F5: definitely]

199
200 F5: By the way, tea is ready if you want. [F4: tea? Thank you.] If you want,
201 anything else [M2: I can, serve it] please let me know. Well if everyone wants a
202 cup of tea, I can serve you, no? you don't want?

203
204 F4: I don't want you to have to serve me. [F5: why not? F2: why don't we just get
205 up as we talk? M1: this is Turkish culture, we don't take to tea, so she needs to
206 serve. I mean she don't need to of course, but this is the way - ; FAC: she would
207 like to serve; M1: yes; F2: hospitality]

208
209 FAC: And then we'll come back to the question F2 is raising for us about um, this
210 issue of meaningfulness and [F4: feeling-] yes, feeling good, significance.

211
212 F2: Can you be angry and not feeling good because you feel compelled to do
213 something because [inaudible]?

214
215 F4: Absolutely. Why not?

216 F2: Than you give up, then you don't do it because you feel good.

217
218 F4: But, um, it depends, see what's difficult about this conversation is I feel like
219 I'm the only non-religious person, I mean, not that you're, I mean, non-religiously
220 affiliated person participating in the conversation and I feel like um, [FAC: feel a

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

221 little beleaguered] not, not beleaguered, but in the way that sometimes the
222 conversation, for people that are that religious there's always that higher order, we
223 answer a higher calling, and I think, well crap I do things, help out, be of service,
224 blah blah blah, without having the higher calling so I don't know think it's, you
225 don't need to be part of a religious affiliation in order to answer a higher calling
226 or a concern for your – the well-being of your fellow man. And there's always
227 this justification built around it in religious terms, that, I don't feel beleaguered,
228 it's more that I feel – or resented, as much as I feel like it undermines the value of
229 it. That somehow people are only good because they have to be because of their
230 religion, and I think that there's lots of examples where I think that people are
231 kind to their fellow man or help out or whatever, that have nothing to do with
232 religion, but do have to do with duty. And oftentimes the argument that says, even
233 if you don't feel good, you're not happy, you're doing it out of a sense of duty
234 because you live- to live in accordance with the beliefs that you've been brought
235 up with is um, easier, more peaceful, uh, brings you a level of happiness that
236 comes with not having to question. You know, so even though, when I talk about
237 people do it to make themselves feel good it's not like, 'let's get happy,' it's
238 living in accordance with your beliefs makes you happier than to [FAC: having a
239 kind of integrity, you would say] exactly. That even if it's that, you don't want to
240 help your friend move, but you believe it's the right thing to do, so even though,
241 um, maybe you're motivated by anger or you're not happy, in the jubilant sense,
242 doing it because you live – because you now are able to feel righteous and able to
243 live in accordance with your belief makes you happy.

244
245 F2: And I have knee jerk reaction to three points. 1 – makes you feel righteous.
246 And I think um- [F4: there is a philosophical school of thought that says that's
247 why people participate in religion, so they can feel better about-] sure, sure, sure.
248 But there's also a philosophical and human experience that says that is an opinion,
249 not human reality.

250
251 F4: Well everything's opinion" [Turkish participants having side conversation in
252 background]

253
254 F2: Fair enough. So when I- when I hear you [F4: thank you M1] ascribe to
255 religion, when I hear you make religion equal righteousness, I have a knee jerk
256 reaction. [F4: okay] Like, where, like not only knee jerk, but um, from whence
257 come such a declaration? By what authority? Secondly I think um, if I could
258 quote something I read, maybe this helps [people preparing food in background]
259 It is true, that in some of the literature that I would read based in my own faith, it
260 would make a distinction between something out of quote purely eleemosynary
261 motivation. [F4: purely?] eleemosynary. [FAC: you're going to have to help us
262 with that definition, it's a pretty hard word] Philanthropic or purely, um, public
263 benefit, charitable, um, philanthropic motives. As opposed to a deeper motive of
264 the reality of God and the reality of a people, that are the people of god. That

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

265 there's something, bigger reality out there than just my being good to you because
266 of my own subjective personal view of life. I mean that's that's where I would be
267 coming from.

268

269 FAC: Right, I think F4 is saying that she doesn't [F4: I don't have that so I can't
270 relate]

271

272 F2: So, which is alright, alright, but to ascribe to either perception, right or wrong
273 to righteousness is a little bit unfair.

274

275 M2: I would like to say something [F4: I didn't hear you, go ahead M1] No, no, I
276 did not, I could not hear some of your conversation, but you were talking, I want
277 to say something that talking to you. But you go and talk, [FAC: um, well I was
278 going to take us in a slightly new direction still building one what I think has
279 already been said, but shift focus. Did you want to say something M2 before I
280 shift?] I just want to say, I mean, we should agree that helping people makes
281 people happy. I mean no matter what you are doing this is a fact. The second
282 thing, when we do some action and we want to legitimate that action some people
283 say this is due to my religion, and that gives the meaning to their action. In their
284 case, you said, I feel useful than give you the meaning, so that main thing here is
285 the meaning. So this life has a meaning. Okay, this way or other way. If you don't
286 help the people, then you go to the level of the animals. Even the animals help
287 each other.

288

289 F4: But don't you think it's possible that other people have a different belief that
290 that's – right [M2: I mean that-] you would agree that there are lots of people out
291 there who believe that life is just about accumulating goods or that people do
292 things to make money, not because they have meaning. There are, to me, there are
293 lots of people in the world who's motivation has nothing to do with the deeper
294 meaning or spiritual belief or helping people [M2: that is correct; M1: so religion
295 is one of the many ideas; M2: yes, as I said, one of them. And that comes from the
296 same conclusions. Helping people makes people happy. I mean, that's why people
297 are actually motivated. But, utility, let's say, the things that encourage people to
298 do-] I don't agree, there's lots of people who help people not because - I mean I
299 have a doctor who fixes my ear, he helped me but his motivation may not be
300 about making himself happy, it might be all about money, all about prestige.”

301

302 M2: That's not help in that case. I mean- [F4: sure it is. I mean, I'm grateful
303 what's helpful, it was wonderful. To be able to hear, I don't care what his
304 motivation is, I'm glad he did it. If a fireman comes to your house and puts the
305 fire out, you're happy he helped you. Whether he did it for good reasons or not.
306 He helped you.

307

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

308 M3: That is just exchange. If you think that that doctor does it without getting any
309 money, you know, you will be more happy than otherwise [F4: he helped me.
310 And if somebody puts out the fire in your house, you're happy, they helped you.
311 Wh-, M1, you were going to say something - {multiple people interrupt (M1,
312 FAC, F5)} I hopes it's not a side thing, I hope it doesn't deteriorate to a side
313 thing]
314
315 FAC: Did you get to say what you wanted to say, M1?
316 [F4: I don't think he did. M1: yep] He's saying yes.
317
318 M1: In fact, I was thinking about the political, not there are elections coming, it's
319 not a political thing, but, like I thought about Ralph Nader. Um, it's about him. He
320 is known as an environmentalist, and I think in his past life he tried to do many
321 things about the environment. So, yeah. So, I don't – huh. Say that I am a poor
322 people, okay? [FAC: say that you're?] I'm a poor people. [FAC: poor person,
323 right] And, like and if I am some people are trying to help me out, okay? They are
324 going to try to give me something. Uh, they are trying to help me. So, yeah, so
325 why they are doing it? Why they are trying to help me? I think it's -. Will, for
326 example, they may try to help me just to make themselves happy, they may try to
327 help me – their helping me with their leftovers, for example. Uhm, they may be
328 helping me with like, with the food they were supposed to eat, for example. So,
329 uh, yeah it's different.
330
331 F4: So there's lots of different motivations for helping?
332
333 M1: yes, and I think I will not value all of these things. They will be different to
334 me [F4: to you?] yes [M2: the intention will be different] yeah. Some of them is
335 helping-
336
337 F4: But if you were Ralph Nader and there were 100 people coming to help you
338 and 10 of them were coming for religious reasons and 10 of them because they
339 thought they were going to benefit later, and 10 were helping you because
340 politically they saw – would it make any difference or would you take their help?
341
342 M1: I would take there help, but I will not appreciate them at the same level.
343 Some of them. [F4: who cares?! Will they care? No, I mean will they care?] No,
344 not about myself, okay. [F4: right, you will care] Right for example, if for
345 example someone gave me the food that he was about to eat, then I will try to do
346 something back to him, okay, but not to the other one who is giving to me because
347 of his political purposes, okay, I will just take the food and go away, for example.
348 But for the other one, I will try to do something back, um, I will show my
349 appreciation.
350

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

351 FAC: I'm- I'm going to bring us back to a term, that is- okay, there was pretty,
352 it's something that F4 said, and is something that is fairly close to something that
353 F2 was on a little bit. And I'm going to move us to this term, something like,
354 integrity. A sort of wholeness and significance of life. Well, I'm not going to say
355 that's a perfect definition of integrity, but will you let me use that as a sort of
356 marker?
357 F4: It's a fine definition to me.
358
359 FAC: Um, so I'm sort of talking about the wholeness of life and also a kind of –
360 and this is a little bit of a loaded term, a significance of – of life. Um, [F3: how
361 about, I would use the word well-being.] Um, I'm trying a little bit to stay away
362 from that because I think that moves us to these things of, oh this makes me feel
363 good, or whatever [F3: no, I don't – I definitely don't think that's synonymous]
364 Okay [F3: When I think of well-being, this crosses religion- religious lines, it's
365 basic human relationship. And I think that um, I don't want to get into the nitty-
366 gritty where some people are much more out there or relational and others aren't,
367 but I think that we are made to be relational, we relate to each other. And some of
368 us do it with more feeling, but and others have different motivation, but I think
369 that ultimately, we talk about the call – you mentioned the call of the higher order,
370 the call- to – how did you say that? [F4: M2. That's M2's claim] Well, okay, let's
371 talk about some – some central core thing that we're going to call [F4: I have a
372 question for you before you go on. Is helping people different than being of
373 service? Because what you're talking about is being – I thought being involved, I
374 thought participating, which is not- to me synonymous with helping. When you're
375 saying, when you're talking about] I'm trying to get us, not into some abstract,
376 ethereal thing. I'm trying to get us on our own lives, right here, where shortly the
377 question's going to be, what sort of new or renewed commitment do you want to
378 take, stepping out to help, to be of service, to help other people that can take
379 political shape, that can take volunteer shapes. So okay, having said that for a
380 moment, now I'm trying to focus us on, not so much on what do you plan to do,
381 although that is certainly a significant question, but, when you're stepping out in
382 that direction and to me, I think there is an important element of when you step in
383 that direction, you step toward, I feel I'm stepping toward some center of
384 integrity, some center of meaning, some center of significance. The question I'd
385 like us to spend a little bit of time on is, what sustains you, you know, when you
386 move in that direction? What keeps you, you know, stepping in that direction
387 toward an integrity, toward this, you know. You know, it could be this, when I
388 feel better when I'm more integrated, but I'm kind of more interested in the things
389 in your life that help you achieve that. And I pointing now for a moment to these
390 things that we listened to. I mean the one of them was talking about my tradition,
391 my history, the sort of things that I listen to, the voices that I carry. Um, are
392 meaningful to me and help that person in the song, I think, step out in a kind of
393 integrity even at some cost to themselves. The Rumi poem, is saying okay, I'm
394 moving toward this kind of integrity and the move there is saying, okay, I'm in a

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

395 listening posture. I'm in a kind of not falling asleep, kind of posture. I'm kind of
396 interested in what tools, what things sustain you, help you move both in this
397 outward direction toward others, which is also a move kind of, toward integrity.
398 So I'd like to ask everybody to talk a little personally, not so much intellectually
399 about what sustains you.

400

401 F4: I guess what- I guess the only reason that I said that was only because I think
402 it's possible to move towards internal integrity without necessarily helping
403 people. You know, when I heard M2 and F5 say is that in their role as students
404 they don't see much of an opportunity for them to volunteer, to get involved, and
405 what I remember is when you were showing the tape about AIDS in Africa, it was
406 sort of like saying there are ways in which you can be involved without being
407 involved. You know, showing this um, movie to your friends, or, it's not
408 necessarily about just volunteering or um, and – and- that was the only thing that
409 I was thinking about was that our focus was on that's the only way, and what I
410 like about [FAC: which is the only way?] To volunteer- [FAC: oh no!] to get
411 involved in an organization rather than, um educating yourself or, even the poem
412 about which washer do you pick, to me, um, I find that most of my struggles
413 about trying to live in accordance with my ethical beliefs is some, have to do with
414 stupid and civic decisions like that [FAC: mhmm] you know, driving a SUV,
415 well, you know, how in accordance with my environmental standards is that?

416

417 FAC: And the way I would like to frame this conversation for all of us, I think in
418 the broadest way so that we can all think about all the sorts of choices we have,
419 and we're all trying to sort this out in different ways at different points in our life
420 curve, is that we've talked about some pretty big problems in the world, I mean
421 we haven't touched all of them even, you know, we've certainly listed a whole lot
422 of other ones. Um, and there are a lot of ways one could move out in response to
423 that. And I feel like I don't have a lot of integrity for myself, and I'm speaking for
424 myself, you know, my own personal sense, I don't have a lot of integrity if I say
425 oh, there are all these problems, people are suffering, you know, and it's just
426 okay, I'm going to live my life. I mean, plenty of people do that, I'm saying that
427 doesn't give me a sense of significance, integrity, that doesn't put me in the space
428 that I think that on some level we've said we'd like to step towards. Many many
429 possible responses to that. Could be volunteering, could be structural change,
430 could be political action, it can be, and I'm not saying these are exclusive, it can
431 be what kind of consumer choices do you make, because as we talked, that's one
432 way of affecting these things. We're all in the middle of this, and we're going to
433 be talking sort of more about what we hope to do, but tonight I want us to talk
434 more a little about some of the things that support and challenge us, sustain us in
435 making those kind of moves, which ever, whatever they are. Whether it's
436 volunteering, donating money, [(inaudible) –Muslim term? Zakhad?], making
437 wise choices, deciding to be a vegetarian rather than eating mean because it uses

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

438 less world resources, um, I'm interested in people talking out of their own lives
439 for the moment about what sustains you as you step, step in this direction.
440
441 F4: M3, you've been awfully quiet." States she thought he'd answer the question.
442
443 M3: *Clarifies FAC's question, "what sustains us, rather than what starts us?"*
444
445 FAC: Continues to clarify question, offers people can discuss areas where they
446 may be stuck, and what they need for assistance.
447
448 F4: *Adds that people can discuss "what starts you."*
449
450 M3: Every justice is a feeling.
451
452 F4: *Asks whether this sustains him, "feeling like you're doing the right thing?"*
453
454 M3: *Clarifies that he's speaking "generally"*
455
456 F4: *Re-directs M3, encouraging to speak of himself.*
457
458 M3: *Identifies himself as "one of those people with the feeling of justice"*
459
460 F4: *Attempts to clarify his understanding of justice*
461
462 M1: *Interjects, offers that having colleagues and friends who are politically active*
463 *motivates him. Observes that it makes it easier for him to get involved in the*
464 *problem, as well as the likelihood that he engages is increased if he has an*
465 *affiliate taking part. Provides example of a friend how has motivated him*
466 *.*
467 F4: *Wonders what would motivate M1 to "work on something just on your own."*
468
469 M1: *States that it would be more "difficult," that this is something that would*
470 *keep him engaged.*
471
472 FAC: *Summarizes: "ability to have friends and colleagues working along with*
473 *you." M1 agrees. Asks for other examples for sustain people for hope.*
474
475 F5: *"Images." FAC asks for further explanation from her own life. She describes*
476 *seeing images of poor people on the news. These images "motivate me to do*
477 *something." Provides examples, to donate, charity, to "pray, at least."*
478
479 FAC: *Summarizes F5's comments*
480

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

481 M2: *People who appreciate what they have more, are more willing to contribute*
482 *to others. He then clarifies that this is not a key motivator. Re-iterates. With*
483 *appreciation of one's own, comes understanding of what others are lacking.*
484

485 FAC: *Offers to re-phrase M2's statement to "cultivating habits of appreciation.*
486 *Put yourself in a mode of appreciating this small good things that come your way,*
487 *you can have a kind of balance and a set of resources that let you, you know, deal*
488 *with another kind of discouragement."*
489

490 M2: *Agrees, provides example of education. Notes that not everybody values it.*
491 *Continues that he values most what he "has in my mind...my education."*
492 *Compares material wealth to intellectual wealth.*
493

494 F4: *Asks M2 if he saw others with inferior education, would he help them and*
495 *what would motivate him to do so?*
496

497 M2: *Identifies question as "another sub-," refuses to answer.*
498

499 FAC: *Reflects on M2's comment, that what he heard was M2 identifying*
500 *education as a gift, resource, and something sustaining for him, and it makes him*
501 *want to give that to others in a generous manner.*
502

503 M2: *Underscores the importance of helping people upon seeing dire*
504 *circumstance. Observes that this is human nature to help others in times of*
505 *urgency. Provides example of recently discussing idea with advisor to make*
506 *volunteering with kindergarten children compulsory based on the belief that*
507 *helping others will make them "more happy." Believes there are no words to*
508 *describe this compulsion.*
509

510 F2: *Interested in the context of this – asks if M1 is in economics, he corrects and*
511 *says physics. Wonders "what made the choice to go to little children, what made*
512 *the rational choice?"*
513

514 M2: *Says the choice is not a rational one. "There's no rational reasoning behind*
515 *this, you know that it works. It's much better in terms of making people feeling*
516 *better and better." States that he has no explanation for this.*
517

518 F4: *Wonders how this sort of activity makes people feel better. Offers examples,*
519 *i.e. better teachers, understand their concepts better.*
520

521 M2: *I don't know. Tells her not to look at it so concretely, "make you a much*
522 *better person in terms of dealing with people, talking to people (2)"*
523

524 F4: [GR] *Maybe that's what we need. {F5 laughs}*

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

525

526 FAC: Some people in previous groups have said something similar to what M2 is
527 saying in that spending time with young people, and this is not exactly what you
528 said, but I'm sort of pushing this a little bit toward this sustaining us in our action
529 toward others, serves as a sort of resource for hope, a kind of freshening [M2:
530 yes] thing. Opens our eyes to these kinds of habits of appreciation, that um, M1
531 was talking about.

532

533 F4: You can say the same about spending time with elderly people. That shifting
534 your perspective period. Putting yourself in a different situation, um is what's,
535 you know, freshening your perspective.

536

537 FAC: I'd like to ask M2 just a little bit, you talked about urgency as one thing,
538 and we talked about both support and challenge and urgency is often a kind of
539 challenge. Um, how do you kind of, find ways to keep, you know a lot of these
540 problems are in f-, in the real world they are urgent, people are dying. Um, but we
541 don't experience them as urgent because we're sitting in a living room. I mean do
542 you have ways that you, - that help you that gives you a sense of urgency, F5
543 talked a little bit about, she keeps her eyes open for pictures of things that she sees
544 and those give her a sense of urgency. Do you-

545

546 M2: I mean it's all around us, we don't need to pay, be careful about this one.
547 Even if you try to ignore them you will be exposed to lots of information. And
548 that information will tell you that there's some urgent problems that you may
549 contribute in some way. I mean, I didn't do anything special to get this AIDS
550 problem or poor people in Africa. I mean, even in our neighbors, maybe there are
551 people- if I encounter in some way, I will come in conclusion that there are some
552 people, and I will search for some solutions"

553

554 M3: Compassion is something that motivates us to go out. Mentions that some
555 people have more compassion. Comments that when you act with compassion,
556 you don't act with the expectation that something will be given to you in return.

557

558 F2: Observes that group is made up from different cultures, wonders about the
559 "compassion of the culture from which we come.

560

561 F4: *Asks for clarification*

562

563 F2: Whether or not we would define our cultures as compassionate cultures.
564 Individuals may be compassionate, but –

565

566 F5: What do you mean by compassionate culture?

567

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

568 F4 *Doesn't believe American culture is as compassionate in comparison to*
569 *her experiences in "Tribal" Africa, and Italy, "where there's just an assumption*
570 *that you're obligation is to your family." Doesn't know how F5 views her own*
571 *culture in comparison to the US.*

572
573 M2: *Asks for clarification.*

574
575 F2: *States that she's continuing with M3's comment that humans are by nature*
576 *compassionate, some more than others.*

577
578 F5: *Agrees, believes that compassion is intrinsic to humanity.*

579
580 F2: *And if there are lots of those, do you have a compassionate culture. Then does*
581 *that pour out into the political system and into public policy?*

582
583 M1: *Offers to give an example in Turkey- children are responsible to care for*
584 *parents. Emphasizes the boys are more responsible, F5 counters that girls are just*
585 *as responsible.*

586
587 F2: *States that this is a good example, relates to her own Italian culture (seems*
588 *like descendent). States that it's a shame for a parent to go a nursing home.*
589 *Observes that this kind of care is not necessarily true for all cultures.*

590
591 FAC: *Asks, where does F4 turn for finding compassion in the US, considering her*
592 *view that it is not as much so [F2: our business culture isn't! FAC in response,*
593 *"I'm first to agree with you." Observes that she looks to other cultures as a model*
594 *for the way it could be.*

595
596 F2: *I vacillate between approach avoidance. You know, you can't do anything*
597 *unless you're in it, and when you're in it, you can't do anything so get out of it.*
598 *[group LF] I think that is a perpetual frustration that I personally – the ideal is that*
599 *the views is supposed to change. The reality of life is I'm running out of time.*

600
601 FAC: *Your current strategy is to bump up a level?*

602
603 F2: *Doesn't know, refers back to FAC's first question. "If you asked me that*
604 *question today, I'm struggling to have my hopes and proceed and over power my*
605 *disillusionment."*

606
607 FAC: *Re-directs group, trying to get group to share the things they turn to in*
608 *order to "keep hope alive." Acknowledges difficult challenge of this. Observes*
609 *that sometimes that their hopes may be lost at sea [F4: oh my god, yeah]*

610

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 611 M3: That was a good example of compassion and culture. *Believes that*
612 *compassion can be taught. Shares example of learning about AIDS and people*
613 *who suffer from it. Believes that continued learning about others and their*
614 *situation builds compassion. Relates religion and compassion in Turkey, noting*
615 *that compassion comes from “religious identities.”*
616
- 617 F4: *Notes that she has a “personal question” for M3, relates to his upcoming*
618 *transition to grad school, states that she’s never been a doctoral student.*
619 *Imagines that he’d probably becoming increasingly isolated in his studies,*
620 *making getting civically engaged difficult. Wonders what would encourage him to*
621 *get more involved, “live with more integrity.”*
622
- 623 M3: *First states that he won’t be in an isolated environment, will be with people,*
624 *[F2: so you don’t think that’s an issue?] He first claims that work will not*
625 *overwhelm him, goes on to discuss his interest in science, in which he becomes*
626 *“amazed by the creation of God.”*
627
- 628 F4: *Asks for clarification, repeats, “amazed by the creation of God.”*
629
- 630 M3: *Discusses what he has learned from “science,”*
631
- 632 F4: *Your pursuit of knowledge is about an act of faith?*
633
- 634 M3: *This is helping me to improve my faith.” He continues that he also expects to*
635 *learn from others on personal level.*
636
- 637 FAC: *Echoes his second point, “looking out to other people as kind of models?”*
638 *M3 agrees.*
639
- 640 M3: *Notes a “third thing:” not isolating himself from world. Contrasts himself*
641 *from those whose only concern is science. Lists his other concerns: compassion to*
642 *help people, being with people, helping friends, others, helping others who need.*
643
- 644 M1: *Adds, that people for the most part like to share with others. Example of*
645 *liking a restaurant and wanting to tell everyone about it [F5 initially disagrees,*
646 *M2 corrects that she’s misunderstanding, F2: “you used the word, share?”]*
647
- 648 F2: *What I’m asking is whether there is a natural tendency in humans to want to*
649 *share?*
650
- 651 M1: *That’s not what I wanted to say. Natural tendency. If you have something*
652 *good, you want other people to enjoy that too, but not from what you have, okay?*
653

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

654 F2: Not to take your half or your piece? [M1: yeah, maybe not, maybe sometimes
655 yes. Like knowledge is free you can tell it and don't lose anything. So, that kind
656 of thing]
657

658 F5: Not all people do that (.) people do not share their thoughts. *Gives example in*
659 *university setting.*
660

661 F2: *Agrees*
662

663 M1: *Referring to university example, he agrees that there are times not to share*
664 *information, particularly with rivals in research – otherwise he would be out of*
665 *“resources.”*
666

667 F2: Questions whether education is a commodity and not a human resource.
668

669 F4: It depends.
670

671 M1: Yes.
672 M2: *Speaks of rivals and competition with respect to knowledge.*
673

674 FAC: “I think we’re very conveniently always wanting to talk about these sort of
675 general other people. [Loud group LF].
676

677 F5: okay, I will talk about myself.
678

679 FAC: I would like think about us talking about ourselves in the difficult business
680 – [F4: F5’s stepping up to the plate]
681

682 F5: *Discusses the “very poor people” who tend to the harvest at her family’s*
683 *home. Observes that these people travel to the village just for work, and this work*
684 *pays just enough for their “food need for the day.” “So you see those people and*
685 *help them.” Discusses how family members provide charity. States, “I used to live*
686 *there, and I used to see those images too, so that was motivating me to give away*
687 *– not only money...my time, everything that I have.” Discusses giving away*
688 *“zagat” (re: religious offering). M3 observes that she can cook. She agrees, that*
689 *she can do this too.*
690

691 FAC *Observes that F5 had indeed shared dinner that evening. {F5 giggles, says*
692 *“thank you”}*
693

694 M1: *Explains ‘zagat’ – not just money given but any offering. Provides example*
695 *of saying hello to someone on street.*
696

Group D-2: Meeting #6, Communities of Challenge and Support
Summary

- 697 F2: Asks, re: definition of 'zogat' whether it's sharing what you have, or the
698 'extra' of what you have. [M1: what you have]
699
- 700 F5: Further explains the obligation of 'zogat' in Islam, building on what M1 said.
701
- 702 FAC: Observes that F5's family members' giving behavior is both a model and
703 resource for her.
704
- 705 F5: Discusses the constant reminders her mother gives her to be mindful of
706 others. "My mom, even now, you know, when I talk with her, she tells me, you
707 know, don't forget to do this...don't forget them. But here, we don't see them
708 around, that is the problem. In Turkey, we are in the middle of them, we are
709 among them. So we see them and instantly, you know, without anyone in
710 between, we used give it away, to help others."
711
- 712 FAC: Relates to F2's comment re: compassion within various cultures. Re-directs
713 conversation, observes time. Reminds group of final meeting in which they are
714 expected to discuss their commitments. Shares 3 "tools" to help them think about
715 the commitment they will make. Directs group through their packet. Tape cuts off.

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

1 FAC: *Introduces meeting as “celebratory.” Plan for the evening includes the*
2 *group sharing “Commitments, give you a chance to respond to each other,*
3 *support and challenge.” Group will end with group members “hopes,” but focus is*
4 *on participants’ commitments. At the end of meeting group will discuss possibility*
5 *of continued meetings. Shares two quotes: (1) from Robert Coles and (2) from*
6 *poet James Russell Lowell. Outlines the structure of the meeting more in depth,*
7 *where participants take 3 minutes to think to themselves about their plans for*
8 *action or reactions to the group experiences. Encouraged participants to write a*
9 *letter to themselves (which he would mail back to them) about their commitments.*
10 *Starts the moments of silence {papers rustling}. Encourages participants to listen*
11 *to each other and to focus on supporting one another instead of comparing each*
12 *other. Notes that he will take notes as people talk so that he can remember their*
13 *goals and better support them when their turn comes around. Asks for someone to*
14 *participate first in sharing his/her commitment.*

15

16 F2: I drew a chart and I tried to list under personal what my commitments were
17 and under congregational what my commitments were. And what my other things,
18 were. And um, I start- I came out with where my first commitment was and where
19 I am right now in this point in my life is, at this point in my life, my goal is to
20 clear my calendar to get rid of- hello! Did you get something to eat [FAC:
21 *welcomes participants M1&M3 who just entered the room, briefly updates them*
22 *on the structure for the evening*]. So after I did all this chart and came down under
23 column again. I’m back to re-committing myself to something I’ve been working
24 on for the past two months, and that is just to get my own personal eco-system
25 back in line. And that is to, reduce my workweek to 40 hours and try to do
26 something besides work. I just got to get rid of all this before I take on something
27 new because I um, I find that maybe it’s when you finish a big project, you screw
28 is just sprung, and so there’s no more energy. And so, thinking about my
29 commitments, I’m going to renew my commitment to myself and that is, my
30 exercise three times a week, trying to eat three meals a day, trying to reduce my
31 work week to 40 hours and trying to do something, that is not work the other time
32 – So I came out just as negatively as I went in, I think. [FAC: I don’t hear
33 anything negative in that so- (. Um, can I ask a little follow up/x/ question, and
34 that is, when you try to think beyond this little space that you’re trying to carve
35 out a little bit for yourself to kind of cock your ear and listen a little bit, into
36 yourself a little-back, quieter, less frenetic, mode, do you have any hints,
37 glimmers of where you think you might head after that or do feel that’s the whole
38 purpose that you’ve got some much stuff happening with work, you don’t have
39 any intuitions?] I guess, the truth is, I can’t even answer your question because
40 I’m just a project-oriented person. I don’t know how to navigate without projects.
41 And um, what I find is that I have a hard time reading poetry, you know, I have to
42 get on with this. And I used to love the poetry form. And I haven’t even thought
43 about that. I can’t tell you the last time I’ve read any poetry other than this class
44 [LF]. So to answer your question, no, I think I need to do the neo-natal if you will

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

45 – get to the point where I could clear the deck to see where I could go further (.)
46 because psychologically I'm not free enough, I'm thinking there must be
47 something I'm forgetting to do. So it's looking for space [FAC: okay, fair enough,
48 fair enough. *Provides participants who entered (M1&M3) further background of*
49 *evening's discussion and structure. Asks for next speaker*
50

51 M1: *Discusses his academic plans.* "But what will be different from this moment
52 (.) I will- I was tutoring in Turkey. and I am thinking doing the same thing here.
53 Doing some kind of tutoring some elementary or high school students – tutor
54 math classes, I mean tutoring. I can share my experiences with them. So (.) this is
55 something I can do. [FAC: *Asks whether he would tutor alongside his current*
56 *studies.*] Yes. So I will start next fall. [FAC: *Asks about his ideas regarding how*
57 *he will start doing this*] The first thing I will do is just go to the department
58 secretary and say that I want to this, I think, it's free, so maybe they can advertise.
59 I don't specifically choose a group, anything that can give my information is
60 okay. But I think the high school students would be best. [M2: (inaudible)] He is
61 talking about (.) in Turkey the curriculum is much higher that here. [M2:
62 *compares is schooling in Turkey to schooling in US*
63

64 F4: Are you making fun of our country? [Group LF]
65

66 F5: Yes!
67

68 M2: Not all of it. [Group LF]
69

70 F2 That's a common complaint we're getting. In English! [M2: when you ask
71 students, they can't even find the slope of a graph, it's basic, to find slope; F5:
72 =yes, but our students don't know how to swim, either, they don't know how to
73 present something. They don't do enough presentations]
74

75 FAC: I'm going to focus us back, just for a moment, M1, if there's anything you
76 want to say about –kinda what – is pushing you to action. In a way, this is a
77 renewal of something you've done before. Is there anything you want to say about
78 what's moving you into action or is there any support or challenge you think you
79 might need to stick with it?
80

81 M1: =Why tutoring is because I believe that if you have some time to do some
82 volunteers work, it should be the best thing you can do-I mean-there are lots of
83 works that all the people can do and there are some works that only some people
84 can do. So, since I am a great student I think the best thing for me is to tutor the
85 high school students [F5: yeah, I know] Of course there are lots of things that I
86 can do, but I believe I can leave that space for other people. Of course, if there is
87 some- I mean, I will participate in discussion groups in school, in places like here,
88 but any club, I would love to meet with new people, share ideas, it will be good,

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

89 but, as a commitment, lets say a few hours in a week, I would like to tutor. [FAC:
90 okay, thank you. M2? M1 was brave, who would like to go next?]
91
92 F4: I'm not brave. [Group LF]
93
94 F3: Well, um, I'll start –I mean, I'll continue. *Refers to her past year as an*
95 *“extended retreat” because she has been unemployed for the past eight months.*
96 *Finds herself free to do things, feels like she’s found “a new world out there.”*
97 *Shares story that after many months of thinking, she decided to resign from her*
98 *job, which is unlike her. “I was something I had to come to and I really have to*
99 *thank God for that because it was a really wonderful um, turning point in my life.*
100 [FAC: asks what she resigned from] I resigned from- I had been our program
101 director at our family support center up in Y neighborhood.” *Discusses previous*
102 *involvement in social service. Notes that she did not find the work satisfying*
103 *overall, did not speak to her creative passion. “So, I did have a plan, and almost*
104 *immediately I decided, I/x/, this nagging desire that I had, which was since high*
105 *school, that was to work in the arts. For lots of reasons, I didn’t get there. So, I’ve*
106 *been on this circuitous route and I thought, by golly, that’s it now, I’m doing it!*
107 [LF] I’m not going to renege for myself. So, as it turns out, I have done a lot of
108 outreach and networking with people that I don’t know – this group is one of
109 them. I was very fascinated by the-the flyer when I read it. And I um, I felt that it
110 was something-first of all, I’m interested in community, community, um, civic
111 community. What’s happening with people’s quality of life, what’s happening in
112 our government and why do we in America just seem to be in a rut right now.
113 We’re not living and enjoying our lives as we should – I don’t think so, as we
114 could. So I have um (.) I can’t say that I have made a commitment to that, but I
115 have strong leaning in that direction to um, to get involved with people, a
116 diversity of people, which I like. Because I too need to have that um, challenge to
117 me of my ideas and what I’m accustomed to doing. And the only way I know how
118 to do that is to go out of myself to meet people that I don’t know and um, share
119 myself, and have them share with me. So that-/x/ concretely I would say what I
120 have been able to do – what I’ve done and I’m really happy with it. Um, I
121 learned- and I probably have said this so bear with me. Um in xneighborhood,
122 which doesn’t have a whole heck of a lot going for it, it’s a place where I grew up,
123 but it’s very um (.) it has declined because of the whole economic situation and
124 now the social services just have blossomed. Well that means that the whole
125 economic level has declined. But due to the talents of Father Xname who has with
126 that project, thirty years. Um, they are now renovating a building into a cultural
127 arts center. When I read about that I was so excited I called him up and said, I
128 would to be involved in this. Because it’s more than just the arts, it’s/x/ getting
129 people together and rejuvenating, I think, a spirit that has been lost. And I/x/ think
130 that’s very life giving. So, um, that’s a commitment that I’ve made and I’m
131 already doing it. And I can say I will be with it until they finally get this up and
132 running. Um [FAC: And just for clarity, um, first, we’ll give that program a name,

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

133 is it “Xprogram re: renewal?”] Yes. That’s the general program, right. [FAC: And
134 then, at the moment, what role are you starting to play and hope to play in this
135 thing?] At the moment, I’m on the advisory committee and uh, we’ll work into
136 working directly- I am on- I put myself on the volunteer for the program
137 committee, that’s where my interests and my talents lie. I’m not a development
138 person. I know nothing about construction, so I stayed off those two committees,
139 but this is what I do know- the programming. What kinds of things are going to
140 come into the town. There’s also a partnership with Xuniversity, so that’s what
141 this partnership is all about. [FAC: And when you try to imagine the kinds of
142 things you might be doing, do you have any hints of that, at the moment? In terms
143 of-] =I would like to be involved directly as a teacher. Um, and also, this is a, this
144 is a challenge to me. You would think that I would do my own art work, but I get
145 busy doing – I’m a detail person, that’s another thing, and I can get lost in the
146 details. So I have to just say – my big word for the year has been focus. Stay the
147 course [LF] and do some serious art work. So, I’ve challenged myself to do 8
148 paintings on the theme of providence unfolding –ah- for my community.
149 *Describes the kinds of paintings she will make, including size and ability to be*
150 *reproduce. Discusses her anxieties about painting.* [FAC: So if I’m hearing your
151 commitment right, it’s around deepening- with this specific project, and at the
152 same time continuing to do your own art and not getting that lost] = Yep, because
153 art, the word art work is not just a term it is definitely work. But people, many
154 people do not see it that way. But if you’re a working artist, you’re working at it,
155 you’re always taking those ideas and translating them into an art form.

156
157 *FAC: Asks other participants to share commitments.*
158

159 F4: So if you wrote the letter, should you just read it? Or should we just follow
160 the format and just talk about it? [FAC: You should do whatever you like.] Um,
161 for me the- um, my commitment is to um, I’m going to volunteer for an
162 organization called X, I think I told you guys about it before, it’s the organization
163 that goes to third world countries and does surgery. So I’ll volunteer for that. [M3:
164 what kind of surgeries] *Explains the process of organizing surgeries. M3 asks*
165 *about her background. She mentions that she does not have medical background.*
166 *She has assisted the organization in the past doing office work and medical prep.*
167 *FAC asks whether she plans to travel with the organization or just working*
168 *locally. She would like to travel, but does not think that it’s an option.* “[FAC: can
169 you talk about what’s moving you in that direction?] Well it’s really serendipity,
170 there wasn’t really any um, you know, part of it. I happen to be in that doctor’s
171 office and he has photo albums of several of his trips, um, and I just thought, ah I
172 would like to be involved in it, and that was probably in February or March, so I
173 sort of feel like it’s a cop out to bring that here. It’s not something new or
174 renewed. And it’s not something that really is coming out of my experience here,
175 I would have done it whether I was here or not. [FAC: That’s okay, I don’t think
176 we have to be under any sort of false illusion that people’s lives started [Group

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

177 LF] you know, on-on day one of *Meetings for Civic Change, I mean that's folly.
178 This is about giving people a space in which to sort of think about this stuff and
179 follow through or not, so-] Yeah but to me giving a person a space to think about
180 it means what will come out of it for me is some sort of thing – you know and to
181 be In exactly the same place I was to begin with is not thinking about it. You
182 know really and it's not so much coming out of – I've enjoyed *Meetings for
183 Civic Change immensely and it's been a wonderful experience but, um, there are
184 other things that I do – um. I had skated for a long time for several years and I
185 was part of an organization and then last year I was sick and I didn't skate at all
186 so, um, part of doing the whole Xorganization thing, I also will get back into
187 skating, get back into some of the things I used to do before that. It has more to do
188 with just um, not being sick, getting on with, you know, um, and I -part of not
189 wanting to do- taking on too many things is I know I'm going to have to make a
190 decision about changing careers in a couple months, I'm not exactly sure where or
191 when, but um. So I find it sort of interesting balancing the desire to move forward
192 and get out there with um, also not wanting to get too busy, so that I don't really
193 have to pay attention to- you know, who really wants to think about jobs? I don't.
194 For me, I much rather play. It's interesting that you have to [F3: LF] I don't have
195 that problem at all! And it- I did used to have a job where I felt like ah (
196 submission) where I felt like I worked way too much and for me I sort of took
197 that project mentality. And for me that's how I don't really like to exercise, I hate
198 exercising but, you get involved, it becomes this project [F2: me too] so for me, I
199 get involved in skating, that's how I weaned myself in that direction. Because left
200 to my own devices, I don't know how I could um, and it's a lot more fun being
201 involved that way. So I intend to – I just don't think of that as a commitment, to
202 me that's like a fun thing. [FAC: right, you are doing some volunteer stuff around
203 that too. Let me just ask one other question and feel free to say I don't want to
204 take the conversation in this direction. But um, you know, you are thinking about
205 the possibility of job change. Do you have any hints, glimmers, thoughts about
206 how it relates or doesn't relate to service, our shared life together?] I don't so
207 much about service. I have gone back and forth and struggled with doing work
208 that has meaning and doing work that is financially successful. I mean, I've had
209 jobs that I have enjoyed and to me had a sense of commit-bigger commitment that
210 just this is my job. I wouldn't say it's vocation as much as a sense of submission
211 or whatever. I certainly enjoyed them more, but I can at least in the experiences I
212 had, it kinda takes over and there's no balance. There's no – they're more difficult
213 to me to balance and most of the time all the work that I like is not financially um
214 (3) or I have not so far at this point found work that could be as financially
215 rewarding as work I don't like. So, once I bought a house I re- I talked myself into
216 doing work I didn't like. But I think I'm more in the mood to – I want to do work
217 that I like rather than work that I have to do. And that it somewhat has to do- there
218 is a sense of mission about that but I'm a little worried about going in that
219 direction. I don't want to be here two years later talking about how all I do is
220 work. [F2: LF]

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

221

222 FAC: asks M2, M3 or F5 to speak.

223

224 M2: *Discusses increased commitment to engage civically, more motivated. First,*
225 *he wants to take time to complete his studies. “It will take 5 or 6 months. During*
226 *that time I’m going to observe what I can do around that place. (inaudible). There*
227 *is a new student group, they are mentoring the kids in the high schools or*
228 *elementary school. There are some undergrads, they are helping. I might attend*
229 *that organization-club. Uh- [FAC: This is something you saw at M2’s previous*
230 *university?] Yeah, but I haven’t seen it here in Xcity. Um (3) actually I have been*
231 *involved in the main activities about youth counseling since I was in high school.*
232 *And um, I like to teach them and mentor them. But I don’t like to be taught [LF].*
233 *Discusses his interests in jobs where he helps others, particularly medical doctors*
234 *and teachers. F4 asks him to clarify what he said about his interests in these jobs.*
235 *“These are the most valuable jobs for me in the life – being a teacher and being a*
236 *medical doctor.” FAC clarifies that M2 finds these jobs meaningful, but looking at*
237 *his own life, he does not believe that he could do either effectively, therefore will*
238 *not invest his time. M2 reiterates that he wants to help “the youth and kids.” He*
239 *continues that he would like to participate in a program where he volunteers in*
240 *hospitals or health care centers for people who are suffering from illness.*
241 *Mentions that he plans on taking part in book discussion groups, particularly*
242 *those focused on multicultural issues. [FAC asks about his career directions, “do*
243 *you have a sense where that’s taking you?] That’s a nice question. The first thing,*
244 *that’s why- I’m planning on being in the faculty- a professor in one of the*
245 *universities because this way I could use my time, you know. I could be kind of*
246 *free as working as engineer. Describes academic life as less stressful compared to*
247 *industry work. FAC wonders where he plans to live. M2 states that he’s open*
248 *staying in the US depending on job opportunities and his situation with his wife.*

249

250 FAC: Asks F5 to speak.

251

252 F5: *States that she’s going to the Middle East for 4 months. “And my*
253 *commitment is – the most important reason I’m going there is my professor is*
254 *going there. So, my first commitment is to work more on my thesis, and the*
255 *second one is I want to read and learn more about different cultures in the world*
256 *so that I can –um- know about different people and I can understand them. And*
257 *the- third commitment is, I want to have a kid, myself. And I want to raise him or*
258 *her. [M2: I didn’t know that. {Group LF} Just kidding!] Discusses her desire to*
259 *raise a child. FAC asks about her career trajectory. F5 states that she wishes to*
260 *work toward a faculty position. She is not sure whether in the US or Turkey.*

261

262 FAC: *Observes that everyone shared their commitments. Notes transition to*
263 *everyone receiving “support and challenge” from other participants about each*
264 *participant’s commitment. Group will begin with supporting and challenging F2*

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

265

266 M2: *Clarifies F2's work week. Learns that she works greater than 40 hours per*
267 *week.*

268

269 F2: *Offers to clarify her situation, but only if tape is cut off. FAC agrees. Tape*
270 *cuts out.*

271 F4 *asks questions about her work options. F2 underscores that she wants to write.*

272 *Currently she works a lot as a lawyer, travels too much. FAC encourages F2 to*

273 *listen to F4's "challenges."*

274

275 F4: Well it's a challenge. You know and probably it's my brutal economics kind
276 of thinking. You know when we talked about wealth, what do people – you know,
277 to me it really is what matters to you. And (.) there are lots of reasons why people
278 make certain decisions that keep them from getting what they want, um, you
279 know, and certainly I'm not expecting you to answer that for me here and now.
280 But that would be the question: what's standing in the way of you getting what
281 you want. I mean to a certain extent when I think about um, when I would look
282 back when I worked all the time and, you know, I had this perception of my job as
283 being, you know, and some of my friends might of said, you know, delusion of
284 my importance. You know, if I wasn't there, then this wasn't going to get done.
285 Or, um fear of looking bad – any number of things, but I know that often times I
286 had- and particularly around exercising. I always meant to, I was always going to,
287 but I never had a plan that said on x day I'm going to do x, you know and I'm
288 going to make sure I meet a friend in order to do it. Or whatever it was, I never
289 came up with a plan that said – and in many ways what I heard you say was that
290 you'll treat certain things like a project. But, this is your life, this is the most
291 important thing to you and you're not treating it like a project that says in order to
292 accomplish x, if I want to get from here to there. I'm sure you have x amount of
293 work to do, but I don't hear a plan that says in 3 months this project will be
294 finished and my intention- you know, here's the map to get to a to b. And I don't
295 know if you thought about that.

296

297 FAC: Okay, this is the point where F2 doesn't speak. But, if I'm hearing you
298 right, you're saying well, you've been in this hard work pattern for a pretty
299 extended period of time, the challenge is to think pretty hard about why- why-
300 what's behind that pattern and how to get yourself unstuck from that and – and –

301

302 F4: =more how to get yourself unstuck in the sense that if you've been there
303 already and it's – I would imagine, because I know other people in similar- each
304 year they start out saying we'll work less, I will- and they intend to and they mean
305 to and there's always something that happens. But there's never a clear path on
306 how to make that happen. As if they're not in control of it. So, it would be more
307 the challenge to say you probably need a more concrete plan.

308

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

309 FAC: Okay, other people both in terms of support and challenge that you want to
310 offer to F2.

311

312 F5: Support. [FAC: Go ahead!]

313

314 M1: I just want to add something to what F4 said. Do you think if you didn't do
315 more than 40 hours per week the job would not be done? There would be
316 somebody else will do something? Or- the responsibility comes from - there is a
317 job – somebody needs to do that and there is (inaudible) people [FAC: okay-]
318 =because these things – these things -you want to write a book, you want to be in
319 this job? [FAC: I think for the moment, I think she's catching the drift of what
320 your question is, which is kind of what's – what's behind this thing. You wanted
321 to offer some support F5, what would you want to say?]

322

323 F5: You say you want to exercise regularly? [F2: mhmm]. But, it's not fun? You
324 don't like it? *Suggests that she should do belly dancing because it would be more*
325 *fun. F2 laughs, F4 suggests that belly dancing would help motivate her writing.*
326 *F2 says the suggestion is "wonderful."*

327

328 F4: *Wonders if F2 had to give similar advice about writing a book to someone*
329 *else, what would she tell the person? Observes that F2 can't answer, FAC*
330 *observes that she can't answer but should think about it.*

331

332 F3: *Reviews F2's three goals. Challenges her to focus on getting to a 40-hour*
333 *work week. Notes support of F2's current efforts to make lifestyle changes.*

334

335 M3: *comments that he was once asked to work more than 40 hours and he was*
336 *"shocked." Jokes that he if did work more often his work would be more*
337 *successful, group laughs.*

338

339 FAC: *Encourages F2 to get into a "quiet enough space" so that she can make the*
340 *decisions most meaningful to her. Also supports her writing efforts. Challenges*
341 *her "along the line of F4's" in that she should work at remaining focused on her*
342 *personal goals. Mentions F2's work in non-profits, observes that she didn't*
343 *mention these. F2 mumbles in agreement. Encourages F2 to use a guiding image*
344 *to keep her motivated. Asks participants to make last comments before turning*
345 *focus onto someone else.*

346

347 F4: "Another thing that's disappointing for me – on a personal level (.) is that I'm
348 envious of that –I don't have a calling to and you do. And to me in some ways
349 you're squandering that. I mean- [FAC: =Although again, we haven't given F2 – I
350 mean – F2 gave us a certain set of things and she let her, didn't speak a lot about
351 positive aspects of her job-] True.

352

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

353 FAC: Okay, let's turn to somebody else for a moment and then you have the great
354 challenge of being sort of quiet (.) while someone else talks – not so easy is it?
355 {F2: mumbles in agreement}. *Turns to M1, asks for “support and challenge for*
356 *him.”*

357
358 F4: *Encourages him to help high school students because there is a “shortage of*
359 *people willing to do that.” Emphasizes that assistance with Physics is particularly*
360 *challenging. Reflects on her experiences at his university, notes that the*
361 *secretaries were not as connected as she thought. Suggests that he learn about the*
362 *high schools in the city by internet or contacting the high school nearest to him.*
363 *Wishes him “luck” in his efforts.*

364
365 F2: *Impressed by M1's desire to tutor physics. Encourages he focus on 7, 8, and*
366 *9th grade females, “because that's where they say that's when in our culture*
367 *women fall out of being interested in math and science.” Continues, “On the other*
368 *hand, the other side of your personality that I've seen that fascinates me, that, is*
369 *the ability to be just as comfortable talking about ideas (.) and so a role model for*
370 *young kids and even for high school – boys or girls or both, is to see somebody*
371 *who can talk physics and poetry and religion all together. Seems to me that would*
372 *be even fun because you deal with physics at least – as you say 24 hours a day.*
373 *Maybe you want to share the other side of you. [M1: yeah] And wh-what*
374 *fascinates me is this whole dialogue that I've seen at least with all four of you is a*
375 *much greater comfort with philosophy, religion than what one is inclined to see*
376 *among your peer group in the United States. Um, I think that's a real cultural*
377 *contribution to this country. 'Cause we have incredible polarization in our society*
378 *against those two. And yet I was fascinated by the four in this dialogue that you*
379 *don't. You- you- (.) I would like to say that the tutoring was good, I'd like to*
380 *support that either physics or- but I'd like to challenge you and say, what about*
381 *the other side of you to be tutoring. [FAC: as a kind of complement to the kind of*
382 *stuff-] relaxation for you.*

383
384 FAC: *asks for other support and challenges*

385
386 F5: I support you for everything! [LF] I'm with you. [M3 and F4 tease F5, F4
387 *comments that she enjoys seeing F5's sense of humor*]

388
389 FAC: *asks for other support and challenges.*

390
391 F3: *Encourages M1 to do tutoring and teaching. Echoes F2's comments,*
392 *underscores the significance of role models and the learning that comes from the*
393 *experience of mentoring.*

394
395 F5: One more support. We can do this together. I can offer math classes and
396 physics too. [M1: we can open a tutoring center].

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

397

398 FAC: Let's not brush by this, the ability to do these things together, particularly
399 when people are busy and to have enough – another moment of shared
400 commonality where you're spending sometime both off doing different kinds of
401 studies. And to have this thing, even though you may not be exactly in this-
402 talking to each other, to have that little intersection in your life where you're both
403 doing the same thing and compare notes on it, that's a thing not to brush off
404 lightly as a suggestion or as an idea. (inaudible) Anything else before I jump in
405 with (inaudible). Um, I would want to support two things, especially. One is I
406 thought that M1 was very realistic, that he's got all this stuff and studying, and he
407 bit off something that's – not too big to do. It's limited enough, it's really
408 achievable. Um, and I liked that it was very specific. Um, the challenge I would
409 have in one way would be to make it more specific. And that is- to think- spend a
410 little bit of time to talk- talking to other people in this group who might have other
411 ideas about who you can plug in to – to either-if you like this idea of high school
412 thing, how do you hook into that. To take it so that it's not just a general idea.
413 And then the other challenge I would have would be sort of thinking about the
414 long view (.) would be to sort of give some thought about your own career in
415 terms of what it means, in terms of service, and the broader life beyond, you
416 know, just being in a place where you can make enough money, you know, to sort
417 of get by. Um, and also even as you think of the tutoring stuff, to think about the
418 long view there. For instance, if you're spending time and getting to know kids
419 and seeing their needs, then not during this two years or three years whatever
420 when you've still got a ton of studies to do, but in the back of your mind, think
421 okay, what am I learning about and from these kids that I later on need to go
422 ahead and try and change at the situation so that there won't be that problem as
423 much in the future, you know – structural change. So, if you're doing the
424 immediate thing if you could cock your ear to the structural thing and think about
425 in the future {mumbles, inaudible}. Okay next stop, F3!

426

427 *F3: suggests that F4 is next. Others disconfirm, she realizes her error.*

428

429 *F2: Refers to F3 as doing "approach/avoidance." Explains, "the more you want*
430 *to do something, you're on the brink and you avoid doing it." Observes F3's*
431 *challenge is to find a way to deal with it, claims that she does not know how to*
432 *deal with it. Her "support" is that F3 should not force her artistic process.*
433 *Believes that avoidance will give way to eventual productivity.*

434

435 *F4: Supports "unemployment." Describes it as a time to work on things that she*
436 *prefers. Observes that it can be easy to get lost and lose track of projects.*
437 *Encourages having some sort of structure so that she can remain focused on her*
438 *goals. Admires her goals, but encourages her to set out a plan about the kind of*
439 *support that F3 will need to bring her projects to fruition. "It's another one of*

Group D-2, Meeting #7, Commitments
Summary

440 those nice fluffy good intentions, but no- I don't hear a plan about how she's
441 going to make it happen."

442

443 M1: I just want to catch three things she said, "I'm a details person," she pays
444 attention to details, that's something very good. And she said she likes working,
445 being a working person. And the third one, I think you said, you just – uh – enter
446 a new world of art and you're excited about that one. It was different before that
447 one, am I right, and now you enter the painting- [FAC: I think she was saying she
448 had that interest for a long time and in various ways set it aside] =from the high
449 school but didn't have the chance – and it's very uh – I will say, it's very
450 something good that you try. And you search for something and you decide to go
451 for it. I appreciate that, yah.

452

453 M3: I think traveling would be a great motivation and inspiration for you.
454 (inaudible) [F4: and you're offering to pay for her trip to Xcity, will you?]
455 traveling will give you more (inaudible) [LF].

456

457 *FAC: Supports F3's effort to put her artistic efforts to other "work." Believes that*
458 *her community oriented work and artistic efforts can be complimented. Also*
459 *supports that she was "less nebulous" than other participants because she*
460 *identified a specific program in a specific neighborhood, with concrete plans*
461 *about how she will contribute. Offers a challenge to think about the "big picture"*
462 *and think of a "structural" {TAPE CUTS OFF}*