

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: **UNFOLDING THE BLANKET OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE LISTENING SPACE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF 'BEING-WITH' IN THE NURSING STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP**

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This hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry is called by the question, What is the lived experience of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship? I engage with eight senior baccalaureate nursing students in teaching and learning together in a psychiatric-mental health nursing course. Text is gathered through their narrative work in reflective journals and taped classroom conversations, as well as through taped individual hermeneutic conversations. The exploration into the phenomenon of 'being-with' is philosophically grounded in the work of Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and David Levin. The framework of activities as identified by Max van Manen (1990) brings the research to a practical possibility.

As the students and I dwell together through listening, 'being-with' in the context of our pedagogical relationship is opened up for our understanding. Accounts of lived experiences are offered and become opportunities for deep interpretation.

Through this hermeneutic work experiential structures of the phenomenon of 'being-with' are brought forward and named in the presence of listening. Students and teacher alike risk vulnerability, enter into silence, and engage in profound meaning making of being in teaching and learning together.

'Being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship unravels as the following dimensions: creating soul space, flowing and blending in community, soul-friendship, hand of comfort in the midst of anxiety, opening an inn-between, and holding eternal echoes. Transformation through the experience and language of 'being-with' offers up possibilities for being in pedagogy and curriculum. This hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry into the phenomenon of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship unfolds as a blanket of understanding and necessarily leads toward a pedagogy of 'being-with' the world of nursing education.

UNFOLDING THE BLANKET OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE LISTENING
SPACE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF 'BEING-WITH' IN THE
NURSING STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

By

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DEDICATION

*May a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life.
–O'Donohue*

I dedicate these words of love to:

Julia, my mother and Russel, my father;

John, my husband;

Colleen, Molly, and Aidan, our children;

Francine, my teacher;

And all nursing students and teachers everywhere.

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*Live as if your life were a curriculum for others,
and balance that principle by realizing that
every life you meet
could be a curriculum for you...*

–Schubert

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As safe-keepers of poetry through which deep understandings are opened I thank the publishers who grant me permission to reprint the following:

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CHAPTER ONE: TURNING TO 'BEING-WITH'

Reflections from a Listening Place

On the door of my classroom where I teach psychiatric-mental health nursing I have a sign posted: "The Listening Space." As students enter, the exploratory questioning begins: "What does listening space mean?" I light a candle; turn music on for background and I wait for my students to arrive. I reflect on the possibilities that lay in listening, dwelling, and 'being-with' my students in teaching and learning. With each new group I imagine the creation of community, the risk of becoming vulnerable, entering into silence, being listener, hospitable companion, and co-creating a more humane place of being. I ponder the possibility of authentic, living relationships and teaching nursing as creating sacred space. Van Manen (1990) asks: "What is it about teaching that makes it possible for it to be what it is in its essence (is ness)?" (p. 42). What is the essence of teaching nursing?

'Being-With' as Sacred Space

In her essay on "Meandering and Mattering," Louise Berman (1998) says "We need to respond to what calls us to search more deeply, and to create spaces where the young are invited to join us in our searches" (p. 171). She shares the words of Maxine Greene, and I listen:

To feel oneself enroute, to feel oneself in a place where there are always possibilities of clearings, of new openings. This is what we must communicate to the young if we want to awaken them to their situations and enable them to make sense of and to name their worlds. (Greene, as cited in Berman, 1998, p. 171)

Nursing students are the "young" in the world of nursing academia. They find themselves face-to-face in encounters with life through clinical nursing courses that

challenge who they are and their places in the world. They begin a journey, which has the possibility for leading them to quite unfamiliar and sometimes painful places.

They are choosing nursing and making a commitment to the study of nursing, long before they see themselves as persons becoming nurses. What is the experience of engaging in this search? One of my students, Noelle, age 22, writes in her Journal Reflections (2001) after her experience as a student at the shelter for domestic violence:

I went to [the shelter]—I was very disturbed after the experience. Even though the group members seemed to care about each other by verbalizing concern, physically lending support, and not interrupting the person speaking, it was painful to hear of their wretched experiences. I could see a woman's body reacting to the anger she felt towards her abuser. She had labored breathing, her body started shaking, and she couldn't form complete sentences. After I left, I cried and called my mother because I do not think those women who are abused and living in fear are really living—that saddens me and makes me feel guilty because things in my life have not been that terrible.

Shaken by the experience of being at the shelter as a nursing student, Noelle responds with deep emotion and calls her mother. She meets through her clinical work a world that is not familiar, a world that is threatening. Noelle enters a place of darkness and looks to connect with safety and trust that she has long known—in her mother. I raise questions about what it means to meander in darkness and am called in my own search to make room for my students. As Noelle shares this experience in class, I acknowledge how helpless she feels while at the shelter, and then sad and lonely afterward. This experience of helplessness for a nurse or a nursing student leads me to ponder and live deep within the tension between doing and being. Students begin to live the questions: What am I to do? Who am I supposed to be? In class, we talk about what gets stirred up in our own lives as we enter the difficult lives

of others. What allows us to search deeply, tending to that which really matters? What will allow Noelle to stay with me—and to avoid fleeing this strange and threatening space? What is most fundamentally important in my way of being with my students?

O'Donohue (1997) reflects: "Understanding nourishes belonging. When you really feel understood, you feel free to release yourself in to the trust and shelter of the other person's soul" (p. 14). Perhaps through accepting the invitation to enter the shelter of her classmates and me, Noelle begins to experience the unfolding of the blanket of understanding. She dwells, and belongs—in the *Inn* -between space.

Humanness in the Nightspace

The mother creates through her caring love for the child a space of trustworthiness, of dependability, of purity. What is found in this place seems to belong, to have sense, to be alive, trusted, close, and approachable. (Nitschke, as cited in Bollnow, 1989, p. 13)

This original relationship between mother and child, then, may be a place of belonging, of meaning making, aliveness, trust and intimacy. As I attempt to live phenomenologically with my students of nursing, perhaps these very qualities are possible experiences in the lived relations between student nurses and teacher? Perhaps it is in re-collecting memories of a caring love that we get closer to understanding what it means to 'be-with' another human person in an authentic way—what 'being-with' means in the pedagogical relationship in nursing education. As he unravels the meaning of the pedagogical atmosphere, Bollnow's words reverberate openings in the nursing student-teacher relationship:

Only the parent's love—and in later years the common trust of other caring adults—draws around the child the signs and symbols of the world of trust, and raises it as a glowing region against a background of darkness and mystery. (1989, p. 13)

As a teacher, as a caring adult with my students in the experience of becoming nurses, I am called to linger with them, re-collecting memories of trust, illuminating darkness and mystery—keeping open the possibilities of clearings.

What is it that keeps open the possibilities of clearings? I am drawn deeply to the search and to reflect upon what it means to ‘be with,’ as I live in authentic relationship with others. In particular, as a nurse educator, I am called to be with nursing students as their teacher. Meredith, age 21 writes from a place of being stirred through new learnings:

As the years go by I would think it would get easier to talk about the death of my mother. However, for me it seems to get harder. When my mother *first* passed away I was able to talk about it openly. I think that I then protected myself when I was younger by not letting myself feel a lot of the feelings that I am experiencing now. Now that I am a nursing student I am faced with caring for a lot of patients with terminal illnesses. Although it is hard sometimes to see people suffer the way my mother did, caring for these people is very rewarding. I am very proud of the career that I have chosen for myself, and I know that my mom would be so proud too. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

Meredith is allowing herself to experience the intensified grief that flows out from the “ground of the soul” (Eichart, as cited in Hultgren, 1992, p. 233) as she finds she no longer needs to protect herself as she did when she was younger. My own familiarity with grief through the loss of my mother offers me an ineffable place of connection with Meredith as we meet as student and teacher in the absence of our mothers. “Only by way of trusted people do things present themselves” (Bollnow, 1989, p. 13). How privileged I am to be with the students as they dare to shift horizons and enter new worlds and places of being—as they are called to open up, live in the tensions, and at the same time—comfort others.

Voice of the Mother

Mother...you arched the friendly world
 Over his new eyes and shut out the strange one...
 You hid so much from him this way
 Rendering harmless the room that grew suspicious at night
 And from the full sanctuary of your heart
 You mixed something human into this nightspace.
 (Rilke, as cited in Bollnow, 1989, p. 13)

Rilke's words in the above poem inspire me as a teacher, as a pedagogue, to open up some of the fundamental tensions in the student-teacher relationship and to call deeper into question: What is the nature of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship? As I listen to the words of Rilke's poem, they lay out for me, on one level, an understanding of the tensions that are, indeed, present in many relationships, including the pedagogical relationship in nursing—the tensions of the familiar and the strange, being vulnerable and protecting from harm, of hiding and opening up. I do imagine that the relationship is possibly a place of sanctuary and that I may, through a caring and authentic way of being with my students, "mix something human into this nightspace." In my experience of relationships, however, 'being-with' is not only to "shut out" the unfamiliar and scary, but also to invite its opening. 'Being-with' allows a side-by-side living—dwelling, connecting, and being a companion in the scary, dark, and "suspicious" places as well. The authenticity called for in such 'being-with'

...is not an occasional act that occurs in time. It is not, literally, a caring comportment, a simple being-toward which occurs in time and has a certain measurable duration. It is not, by any means, a feeling that comes and goes, not an occasional state which is or is not present...[Authentic care] is the way that temporality concernfully opens itself to itself...To be authentic in care-taking is to dwell habitually in the moment of decision...it is a newness which can be repeated. (Anton, 2001, p. 156)

To keep open the possibilities for clearings calls me to dwell in phenomenological relationships with my students (Hultgren, 1995)—remembering, imagining, and concerned ‘being-with’—in this moment—in this night-space.

Reflecting on the etymology of educator, *educare* (Simpson & Weiner, 1989) reveals meanings of the word educate to include a “drawing out” (p. 74), and a “leading forth” (p. 74). The meaning of the word education continues to be unraveled in yet another understanding of the word—education as the “process of nourishing” (p. 74). Leading out from the known to the unknown, from the unknown of the night-space, to the known, and a coming to know together—we are ‘being-with’ each other. Imagining education as a drawing out of the other while nurturing along the way as “contrasted with the imparting of mere knowledge or skill” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 74) invites a possibility of ‘being-with’—opening us to new ways of being and dwelling together. And in this spirit, along with Dickinson,

I dwell in Possibility—
A fairer House than Prose—
More numerous of Windows—
Superior—for Doors—

Of Chambers as the Cedars
Impregnable of Eye
And for an Everlasting Roof
The Gambrials of the Sky

Of Visitors—the fairest—
For occupation—This—
The spreading wide my narrow hands
To gather Paradise—
(Dickinson, as cited in Johnson, 1960, p. 327)

Knowing that flows from my own lived experience leads me, indeed, to dwell in possibility. Dwelling with Noelle and Meredith and my other students, in possibility,

calls each of us to wholeness, to the heart of nursing, and to a more humane place of being. Thinking of ‘being-with’ my students brings to mind the words of Nel Noddings: “It’s time for the voice of the mother to be heard in education” (1984, p. 200). Perhaps it is also time for the touch of the mother—to ‘spread wide my hands to gather Paradise’—to dwell in the sacred place of ‘being-with.’

I later bring forward more of the students’ voices who are engaged with me in one of the courses I teach each semester—N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice—as a way of exploring the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse and teacher relationship. But first, in light of Gadamer’s wisdom that “The horizon of the present cannot be found without the past” (1960/2000, p. 306), stroll with me through a retrospective meandering. Stroll with me in re-membering horizons and moving toward horizons of a world not yet discovered. Listening together through conversation leads to possibilities of understanding, and to the hermeneutical place of fusing horizons (Gadamer, 1960/2000). In the telling of my own remembrances, I invite you to understand and discover with me as I continue to turn to my experience of ‘being-with’ in relationships with my students.

Stories at the Hearth—Re-membering the Sunrise

As a nurse of 25 years, I have been engaged with many persons in places of despair, grief, loneliness, and pain. As a nurse psychotherapist, I have experienced the intensity and “intimate immensity” (Bachelard, 1958/1994, p. 183) of ‘being-with’ other persons in their vulnerability and anxiety in times of physical and mental illness. Many persons in my life have gifted me with their presence—challenging me toward becoming, and drawing me into the center. And I wonder: What is it that

draws another in to the center so as to be part of the search? Is it a sound that reverberates deep within my being, or a light that guides? Rilke says his heart was moved upon seeing the light in the distant hermit-hut...as though “seeing night for the first time” (as cited in Bachelard, 1958/1994, p. 36). What does it mean to see night for the first time? What does it mean to see night when a light is waiting? What is the nature of listening in the night? Let’s wait and listen.

Listen, if you can stand to.
 Union with the Friend means not being who you’ve been,
 being instead silence: A place: A view
 where language is inside seeing.
 (Rumi, as cited in Moyne & Barks, 1986, p. 31)

Please gather round the hearth here. Oh—I have been waiting for this moment—the crackling fire, the telling of tales, sharing heart—full sanctuary. Have a throw, a comforter—let it unfold and warm and be close, as needed, as the intensity of the heat waxes and wanes in its own time—“where language is inside seeing”—where body is inside listening. The wafting aromas of tea and cranberry bread interpenetrate and draw us near. How broadranging are our possibilities in this cozy home place. How much we learn, too, when we enter the places where the fire’s glow has yet to show—where at once we feel at-home and no-where. This is the place where the stories hold the answers to questions not yet asked. This is an evening of presence—gifts given and received—mine and yours. I am glad we are in this place, one with possibilities for “subtending and enfolding,” “lying perpetually under and around”—“subsistent and enveloping” us (Casey, 1993, p. xvii).

I share some of my story through memories of home and early days of nurturing and learning caring. Grumet (1990) writes:

If telling a story requires giving oneself away, then we are obligated to devise a method of receiving stories that mediates the space between the self that tells, the self that told, and the self that listens: a method that returns a story to the teller that is both hers and not hers, that contains her self in good company. (p. 70)

In our listening and receiving, we indeed, find ourselves in good company. Some of my present reflecting in story calls forth deep remembrance and perhaps new ways to make meaning of the ‘now.’ I unveil a few letters, stories, and reflections that teach me life lessons on pedagogy and life and love—integrating historicity—opening to new horizons (Gadamer, 1960/2000). Perhaps, then, into the wee hours, a little poetry will make us glad to Be here—with a new story—in this now-new place.

Dwelling in Currere—Home in Phenomenology

The word curriculum has as its Latin origin, *currere* (Murray, Bradley, Craigie, & Onions, 1933/1961), meaning the “course, or running the course” (p. 1271), as in taking a course of study, such as nursing. Curriculum generally is thought of as a prescriptive plan—one that guides the teacher in “teaching” the students. A blueprint—something that is designed as such. Curriculum may ordinarily be seen as an outline or steps laying out what content is significant and what is to be completed in order to arrive at the “right” teacher-determined place. As I turn to the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship, I pause along the course—not only in the course of a particular curriculum plan, but in the place of present and remembered significant life experiences. *Currere* refers to an “existential experience of institutional structures” (Pinar & Grumet, 1976, vii). In this place of being and re-membling experiences, curriculum is transformed and becomes, indeed, an authentic place of living—a dwelling place. In the deep connection with

my own experience I am invited to create places of curriculum transformations with my students in the nursing world. And so with that leading me, I thoughtfully attend to my particular *currere* as a student, a teacher of nursing, a mother, and a daughter.

Discovering with Mom and Dad: The Most Original and the Origin

Both earlier and later memories of ‘being-with’ find themselves in horizons deep within my being. The sunrise calls forth a ‘being-with’ meditation, a treasured learning that opens me to gazing within. My dad and I shared such a still gaze of the rising sun over the immensity of the ocean when I was a teenager. I treasure the photo taken with my then new 35-mm camera. The photo brings me to my father’s side—‘being-with’ him—the horizon once again gently receives our shared moment. My heart swells in memory, showing me a way of being “present at the birth of meaning,” to use Merleau-Ponty’s words (as cited in Moran, 2000, p. 431).

In my mother’s last days, she and I, too, became aware of daily sunrises, as a shared dwelling or resting place on our way back to her bed from the bathroom. Leaning on her walker with her hand holding open the lace curtain, she would say, every day as if the first time: “Mary, look at that sky.” The sunrise through her hands and lace open spaces—shifting horizons. My mother created an opening for a new seeing—light in darkness—a clearing, interpenetrating horizons. As T.S. Eliot says, “There is a lifetime burning in every moment” (as cited in Connelly, 1993, p. 15). My father’s death and my mother’s illness and death were, indeed, for me a seeing of the night for the first time—two times—ten years apart. I still see night; I imagine a waiting light. I keep open the clearing—engaging lace—I re-member.

I invite you now deeper into my memory—join me in a reverie—a poem
written in the midst of reflection after a phenomenology conference. Meet my dad.

Let us gaze together, listening and fusing horizons of meaning.

Phenomenology and Chicken Pot Pie—
Reflections on the SPHS Conference 2001

Standing in the kitchen of Cedar Hill, thinking about the
conference—

And the transition from there to here—
From phenomenology to chicken pot pie!
It is all the same—living
In the heart—mine—and others—and then,

Maybe it was the acorn hitting the roof of the house,
Reverberating and rolling off.

Or—the crispy smell of Fall—
But I felt Dad

Immediately and unmistakably as Marcel says.

Gazing outdoors,

I see his brown jacket—the one he is only allowed to wear
To go out in the back to get wood or to fix something.

The smell—of his skin—in this air—

A particular fragrance—fresh clothes from the line—Ivory soap?

His nose runs just a little,

And in that distinctive way, excuse me, he says—

He reaches in to his back pocket

For his ironed and folded handkerchief.

His mouth with a certain half smile and his eyes alive—

Quiet and all present.

And I thought he might walk through the door—

oh, just like yesterday.

I stand at the kitchen sink,

Ready for him to say how scrumptious the chicken pot pie smells.

I see him tossing the new little football John got for Aidan at Dick's

Yesterday—

To Aidan—

Aidan Russel Helie, that is.

And after that, Dad holds Aidan up in the air just so they can look a
little Closer—

And their eyes meet, and twinkles connect, and the snuggle is forever.

And then he takes Aidan by his side and lights the fireplace

For the first time of the season—
 Such a nice thing to do together—that first fire—
 The whole out of doors receives word of the heart inside.

I picture Aidan laughing so hard—giggling with four-year-old-
 delight—
 And Dad so pleased.
 Showing Aidan details and accurate ways of doing things and easy
 ways of Being.
 Let's see how that supper is coming along, Aidan Russel, he says—
 Aidan reaches up to meet my Dad's hand—such a natural pair—
 Life companions.

And then I don't see Dad—and then I remember that he isn't here.
 And I look at Aidan, still smiling—not yet questioning.
 I wish I didn't remember that he isn't here—
 Now my gums throb and my eyes ache—in unforgettable ways.
 They do know each other—don't they?
 I wonder, and raw are some questions.

Does he know Colleen is getting braces or that
 Molly is going to be a hippie for Halloween?
 Or that Colleen worries about being late?
 Or for Molly soccer is a spiritual activity
 Because “you're happy when you do it?”

And what about *my* comforters and candles—
 And friends that matter—that I open to gathering at the heart of my
 soul—
 Does he know how deep his life lessons are?
 Does he know?
 Does he know...
 Echoes.
 What is it about knowing and presence?

It all fades and the timer brings me back.
 And here I am—tender and
 Crying in a poem.
 Chicken pot pie is different now.
 (Packard, 2001)

Bachelard's (1960/1971) words that follow resonate with my experience of chicken
 pot pie and other images of *discovering* passages, ways *in* to the center of the

phenomenon of my inquiry—‘being-with’ in relationships, particularly pedagogical relationships in the teaching and learning of nursing:

And thus it is that I have chosen phenomenology in hopes of re-examining in a new light the faithfully beloved images which are so solidly fixed in my memory that I no longer know whether I am remembering or imagining them when I come across them in my reveries...Furthermore, the phenomenological requirement with respect to poetic images is simple: it returns to putting the accent on their original quality, grasping the very essence of their originality and thus taking advantage of the remarkable psychic productivity of the imagination. (pp. 2-3)

Then and now, together—fusing as poetry begins to join horizons. There is a promise in poems, a presence that passionately urges both a drawing near and turning away—a withdrawing to let-be (Hultgren, 1995). There is indeed for me an “accent on the original quality.” Chicken pot pie then and the intensity of new relationships now—faithfully beloved images of ‘being-with.’ In my search for the essence, I am drawn to my memory store of lived experiences—of being in teaching and learning as a student nurse with Grace, my teacher, and later as a young faculty member with Grace, my Dean. I share her letters of invitation as an invitation to ‘let-learn’ and to ‘be-with’ in a person-centered relationship, a place of tension—eventual clearing—a place of grace.

An Invitation to “Let-Learn”—A letter from Grace

Georgetown University
School of Nursing

January 12, 1976

Dear student enrolled in Community Health Nursing,

I will look forward to being with each of you on Tuesday the 20th at my home and to a semester filled with learning together. We will

spend time getting acquainted and creating the syllabus for our work in Community Health Nursing. I am enclosing directions and a map.

Warm regards,
Grace

And so, we arrive at Grace's house and sit out front waiting for the other carload of students to arrive. Infinity passes and they finally arrive. Twelve of us, then, meander to her door. Grace greets us: "So glad you are here." We fill her living room, sitting everywhere, including the floor. Grace brings us in some large pillows. Nervous excitement and puzzlement permeate the air along with the tantalizing fragrance of orange and spice. Grace says: "Well let's get started with some tea and date nut bread. Come on in." We enter the kitchen; my good friend, Mary D. and I are first in. The tea is simmering in a large kettle on the stove. Orange peels are floating on top. Date nut bread is on the kitchen table. Some of us have previously shared a few beers at the pub; *never* a cup of tea at our professor's home! Our eyes fix on the refrigerator with notes and magnets and pictures. We awkwardly ask Grace questions. Imagine, I thought at that time, a professor with a kitchen table, who makes bread, who has magnets on her refrigerator, a West Highland Terrier named Eliot, and two kids with job lists. Twenty-five years later my student, Amy, writes in her Journal Reflections about me: "She is willing to contribute to our group—this makes her seem *human* (my emphasis) to us." What is it that keeps secret over generations that the professor is a person?

Little and private conversations make their way to the center and before long someone kiddingly asks if we will have tea every clinical day. Grace says something like: "So there are some questions about the course?" Eventually we do an

introductory activity and a wave of relaxation, at least temporarily, comes over the room. Grace tells us she believes we are partners in learning and in responsibility for planning what we want the course to be like. She tells us we will work hard—facing some situations for the first time. She goes on to say, “I will tell you what I have in mind.” She talks about listening as hard work, listening to your patients, to each other, and to your selves. We had heard from an older student to expect words on epidemiology, mortality and morbidity in the community, safety, bugs, filth, and the little black bag. These notions are not mentioned. “You will be going into your patients’ homes, you are their guest,” Grace says. “You take the lead from them.” She smiles, we are engaged and we do not know yet about the invitation for transformation through ‘being-with’ in this student nurse-teacher relationship.

I feel at home. I feel at home and it feels serious to me. There is a felt intensity, however, hard to put into words. I feel I am given a gift. So different. I cannot wait to have patients and to be able to talk with Grace about them. That afternoon feeling connected and anxious all at once, I am aware of the new tension. It is different from many of our courses where there is plenty of tension about the tests. No tests here. But plenty of tension. Grace talks about freedom to learn (Rogers, 1969). Contemplating and living the questions of what it means to be free to learn and free to be in meaningful relationships would become a life long passion for me. This person-centered way of being (Rogers, 1980) would come to guide me in my nursing and psychotherapy practice, my teaching, my mothering, and my living in significant relationships.

I never dreamed at that ‘pedagogical moment’ that exactly four years later I would receive a letter from the Dean of the School of Nursing at the Medical College of Ohio. But first I would have the privilege of learning in sacred space with my patients. I would find myself over the years—both leading and following—engaged in a powerful dance of becoming.

‘Being-With’ Margaret: Finding Without Seeking

Whatever is in memory is also in the soul.
(St. Augustine, as cited in Casey, 1991, p. 157)

As I look back on my work in nursing, my thoughts turn to Margaret, a woman who was one of my first patients as a new graduate nurse. I tell Margaret’s story as a narrative of my own becoming as a nurse, and learning so profoundly what it can mean to ‘be-with’ in relationship from a young and inexperienced place. Margaret was my first “primary patient” at Georgetown University Hospital. Perhaps remembering her story calls me back to freshness and a wide-awakeness that may reveal again or anew, something about the essence. Remembering Margaret returns me to yet another horizon of meaning. I stand in awe of the possibilities for the overlapping of horizons, for the interpenetration of horizons, and for as Gadamer writes, “a fusion of horizons” (1960/2000, p. 307).

I remember the day she was admitted to Room C6304. She was in a wheelchair, accompanied by her son and a person from the Admissions Office. “I will be with you while you are here, Mrs. R., my name is Mary Packard, and I will be your primary nurse” I said without breathing. She was 65, I was 21. I asked her what I was to call her. “Margaret,” she said and went on to say, “After a while I’d like to know what you mean when you say you are my primary nurse.” She looked worried, but composed, and with a sense of being in charge she sent her grown-up son to her condo to do a few things for her.

Margaret had been experiencing leg weakness, had fallen a few times, and was experiencing some numbness and tingling in both legs. She was knowledgeable about the myelogram she was to have the next day. Our hopes for a herniated disc removed by surgery with full recovery gave way to the reality of a large, malignant, strangulating spinal cord tumor. Margaret was in the hospital probably 3-4 weeks initially recovering from the exploratory surgery, getting a bit stronger, before becoming weaker again. It's hard to say when it was that indeed she became paralyzed in both arms and legs. No bowel or bladder control. Margaret and I spent many hours together over the weeks in the midst of total caring for her body and finding ways to provide the most comfort.

The floor of the nursing unit itself was carpeted, but the patients' rooms were tiled. Margaret came to know my "walk" as I crossed the threshold of her room with my crisp white "Clinic" brand shoes. "It must be you, Mary," she would say if she were turned toward the window. Margaret was a bell collector and she had a few of them decorating her room. For a while, she used her bell to get our attention when she was no longer able to use the call button on her bed rail. I remember stopping to leave her a note before I would leave at the end of my shift if she were sleeping—just in case.

I received a phone call one night around 8 PM from a colleague at work, telling me "Mrs. R. is not doing well, she is still awake, she is asking for you." I was due in to work at 11 PM. "Oh, I better not wait," I said. She is dying, I knew this—but now she is really dying. She and I had already had the difficult conversation around her wishes for no resuscitation. I had helped her to call her son and others. Her room though torn apart during times of personal care, had the ambiance of a dignified woman.

*That last evening I walked in—she didn't say, "It must be you, Mary." My heart dropped. Had I missed her? Was I too late? I walked up to her face and she opened her eyes. "I knew you would come." I told her I would bring her pain medicine regularly and would turn her frequently. She embraced me with her eyes, and whispered: "I love you." My words "Me too" made their way around the lump in my throat and through my tears. I took both of her hands in mine, leaned down, and kissed her— goodbye.
(Personal Journal Reflections, 2001)*

I treasured the bell she gave me. In looking back now, Margaret was certainly an early teacher—an early call to care. A presence was learned that works to create

more room for presence. Touch is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as “an impression upon the mind or soul” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 294). Locke writes in 1754 that “The fifth and last of our senses is touch; a sense spread over the whole body, tho’ it be most essentially placed in the ends of our fingers” (as cited in Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 293).

Touch is a lovely way of expressing the soul in a lived body way. Holding Margaret’s hands and kissing her goodbye, indeed, touched me—for the impression is still there after all these years; the impression is deeply inscribed in my soul. For me, her story is a re-turning that continues to open up questions of the meaning of nursing and what it means to ‘be-wth’ others.

‘Being-with’ Margaret is an experience of being in sacred and intimate space—a place of connection with being. Perhaps it is here in the deep personal connection where transformation from being powerless to empowering happens—where anxiety and comfort meet—where the “with” connects “beings,” person to person—I and Thou—taking care.

What is it that happens in the absence of the “with”—as inside the words I overheard about my own mother as I walked toward her hospital room in the summer of 1999—“The gall bladder in Room 711 refused the MRI.” I found my mother to be in excruciating pain, not having received any pain medication for more than eight hours—not able—not refusing. The absence of “with” is taking care away.

Be-coming a Teacher—Another Letter From Grace

*Medical College of Ohio
School of Nursing
Toledo, Ohio 43699
February, 1979*

Dear Mary,

I heard from Mary Kay that you are finishing up your Master's Degree in Nursing at The Catholic University of America in May. I would like you to come out to the Medical College of Ohio in Toledo and visit with the faculty and me. We have a faculty opening and I want you to consider a full-time faculty appointment for the Fall. I have been here for two years now. We are working on the development of a curriculum by way of self-care theory and a person-centered approach. I told the faculty you would be of great help in these areas and they too are eager for you to come. Please call me to talk in the very near future.

When you are here, I will arrange for you to meet with Dr. Marc Rayport for a possible faculty practice opportunity as well.

I look forward to your call and to seeing you in the next few weeks. Take care.

*Warm regards,
Grace*

The following fall semester finds me in the living room of my new apartment in Toledo, Ohio. My students are coming to my new home for brunch and first day of class activities—including tea with orange peels floating on top! I happily (and anxiously) await their arrival. We talk about teaching and learning together in nursing—in Toledo—a new home place. Together we talk about our hopes for the semester and engage in co-creating the syllabus. Carl Roger's writings, *Freedom to Learn* (1969) and *A Way of Being* (1980), as well as Grace's mentoring in a person-centered approach with students and patients, comfort me in my new place of anxiety—being a “new faculty member.” Within this comfort, I have the courage as a then new nurse educator to begin to engage in a meaningful teaching and learning endeavor—a way of being—that I would later come to understand as living

phenomenologically (Hultgren, 1995) with my students and “letting-learn” (Heidegger, 1954/1968, p. 15).

In early English, to “learn” meant to teach or to let learn, as well as to learn. It would then be correct to say that someone could “learn” someone to learn something. In the Dutch language, “to learn” (*leren*) is still used interchangeably for teaching and learning. “Teacher” is *leraar*; “student” is *leerling*. Etymologically, to learn means to follow the traces, tracks, or footprints of one who has gone before. (van Manen, 1986a, p. 44)

A passionate path was clearing for me back then—with traces, tracks and footprints to follow. So many years later, in my doctoral program, I would be led to Francine, a new mentor. And now, I *know* through her *power to be* (Hultgren, 1991) what it means—to “let learn.” I know what it means from the inside.

Letting-Learn—the Teacher is Student

As I reflect on what it means to live phenomenologically with students in the teaching and learning of nursing, I turn to my lived experience of being a student of Francine Hultgren. Here in chapter one, I share my own journal reflections from the spring of 2002 as I attempt to articulate from the inside out, my lived experience of “letting learn.” I also share reflections as I dialogue with the text she created—her articles on *Being-With* and *Doing Phenomenology*. In chapter two I reflect pedagogically from the sacred space of her scholarship. Later on in chapter three I will lay out my understanding of phenomenology and existential philosophy as a philosophical grounding for this project. My own experience is of *living* phenomenology, not as a conceptual notion, but as powerful place of inside knowing. With a tremble of vulnerability I invite you to join me here—between the tendency to

leave and the passion to stay—in the ‘laying open and letting be seen’ (Heidegger, 1953/1996).

What a privilege it is to read Francine’s writings, hear her voice, and experience the pedagogical place of teaching and learning through a phenomenological telling and listening—from a place of phenomenological engagement. I keep feeling and saying to myself, that the experience of reading her articles “Being-With” and “Doing Phenomenology” is soul-stirring, that it is profound. Profound is the word that sounds the “deepest” to me, but what does it really mean? I will have to consult the OED later and see what’s there! To be “pro” is perhaps to be all in favor of, as to support, or to be on the same side of. And then I wonder, to be on the same side of what? Maybe to be on the side of finding or being found. Finding deeply—searching deeply? Or pro-found—“found” as in foundational, fundamental, something necessary and strong and not seen. Or fundus, as in that part of the uterus which makes room for growth of the baby during pregnancy and which is carefully assessed after birth so that it returns to “normal”—a way of attending to the mother’s health. Francine cites Eickart’s notion of the “ground of the soul.” Maybe it is that I am drawn to the ground of my soul—or is it that I am drawn by the ground of my soul? At any point, I end up there as the articles invite me there—with firm footing, yet falling. Maybe Gadamer’s notion of “falling into conversation” fits here?

As I read there are several layers of being pro-found. One is my immediate connection to what it means to ‘be-with’ and to create a place, to “withdraw in order to draw in” as Francine describes “letting-learn.” I have experienced with Francine what she brings forward in her writing. And there is indeed a pre-linguistic sense of my being that is awakened through Francine’s listening voice in her articles. I hear the phenomenological relationships through her students’ responses to her, as my own reflections of my relationship with her. Her listening, her practice of “hearkening” about which Levin (1989) writes engages me in the deep and sometimes overwhelming practice of Self, again to use Levin’s words.

There is yet another layer of experiencing and wondering. My own writing is led by and toward my own experience of ‘being-with’ students and patients, as well as in more recent years, through living with my own children. The title of my paper emerged early on to be “Reflections from the listening space: Echoes in the student nurse-teacher relationship. So imagine my response as I read *The Listening Self* this semester. My heart leapt with a resonance and a reverberation that echoed through my being—at the same time wishing that I hadn’t

read it yet! Will need to try to articulate this. Again, and similarly only “profounder” in nature was my experience of reading Francine’s work. She shows through her writing what it means to ‘be-with,’ and meanings emerge about ‘letting-learn.’ It is like she tells of my experience—of ‘being-with’ her as a student of phenomenology and also the experience for me of ‘being-with’ my own students as a teacher in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing. So, an incredible place for me of already being here, of belonging, of invitation, of understanding, of familiarity, and with all of that—of comfort. This is what it is like for me and my students as we engage in nursing. Francine is engaged in “doing” phenomenology phenomenologically—I am “doing” nursing phenomenologically. I feel comforted by Francine’s words about ‘letting-learn’—standing back so that learning can take place. I feel strengthened, fortified again by the understanding echo, connecting again and again. Sometimes in the day-to-day of my teaching with my students in the baccalaureate nursing program, it feels that this echo is what sustains me—that gives me the courage to be authentic in my work. The connecting and connecting again is sometimes a hermeneutic dance of delight.

There is a tension with the delight and an also different sort of heart leaping experience. I read the articles first thing in the morning of the second day of a two day writing “re-treat.” During the previous day I experienced feeling good about what I was doing, feeling that my life is integrated and that I am living this writing. Writing is not a separate life activity, compartmentalized—rather it is a wonderful reflective opportunity for me to be in touch with my life, to embrace the delight and wonder, and in the “temporary” open space to find stillness. Reading and writing create a still space for me to hear the tensions—always there, but not tended to—more openly. This particular reading and writing was in a little coffee shop, Café Appassionato, where classical music and the occasional turning of pages of a well read Washington Post from a nearby table create the background—a place where café latte and smoked salmon are available to accompany deep thinking! The Café Appassionato names a passion, indeed for me a passion for what it means to ‘be-with’ another and to be able to write about it. The café this day, too, is a place where the other sense of my heart leaping is experienced as an anxious one: “I guess I will stop writing now—I have nothing more to say.” And even, scared that I cannot continue writing. After all, Francine has already said it! On one hand, an immediate and unmistakable phenomenological nod; on the other hand, an experience of existential anxiety! Tension. It is here—between the wonderful feeling of connection and reverberation in every fiber of my being, a strengthening place, that is—comfort—to the “It’s already been said and more eloquently and scholarly than I will be able to do.” There is a piece, too, of feeling insecure. There is

the tension between “now I cannot continue”—and “Now I can really continue!” A funny, even embarrassing feeling. Another place to reflect—what does it mean to be embarrassed?

Perhaps being embarrassed emerges in the being seen—uncovering—re-veiling. I uncover and reach for cover at the same time. I had thoughts in reading Francine’s article on “letting learn” and in listening to her words including echoes and vibrations of care that: “I guess I need to change the title of my paper.” I have been drawn to echo as naming some dimension of the experience of back and forth, of reciprocity, of ancient and new—of an ongoing connection—listening to what is—deeply and with new meanings. After I read Levin’s *Listening Self*, I was excited to continue exploring the echo in the student nurse-teacher relationship, drawn even more now to the idea of echo as essence (Levin, 1989) and delighted with the connection with phenomenology as the study of essences—with listening and all that may be discovered. It is what I do; it is who I am in my practicing of teaching with my nursing students. And yet—maybe I need to change not only the title—but maybe I need to do something else! I am just not at all original! Heidegger’s famous words fit here: “Phenomenology is to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself.” Engaging with Francine’s writing is doing phenomenology—showing myself from myself. And indeed I feel unsettled—the “what” in this case is ME!

And then, I think with a palpitation of recognition—perhaps because of my experience of the “phenomenological promise” (Hultgren, 1995) in being a student with Francine, and in engaging with her writings, that maybe now I can really do this! I hope to allow the lovely connection to deepen my work, not stop me. The tension is not comfortable and yet necessary. I take a deep breath and enter the clearing that Francine’s scholarship offers me. In the dialog with her text, new text is created. And like a conversation and the gentle giving and receiving of stories, the persons and projects become changed. The stories become new ones—transformed. Gifts given and given back, open up a possibility for transformation—a new wonder-filled practice of Self. And my heart still leaps and I am drawn by the ground of my soul. In the tension, in the clearing is the passionate place of “letting learn.” And it’s a long way there. (Personal Journal Reflections, 2002)

My experience of tension and comfort and clearing allows for and enriches my own ‘being-with’ students in a way of “letting-learn” (Heidegger, 1954/1968;

Hultgren, 1995). Heidegger shows the tensions of teaching and offers up what it means to be a “real teacher” in the way I have experienced with Francine:

Teaching is even more difficult than learning. We know that; but we rarely think about it. And why is teaching more difficult than learning? Not because the teacher must have a larger store of information, and have it always ready. Teaching is more difficult than learning because *what teaching calls for is this: to let learn* (my emphasis). The real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than—learning... The teacher is far less assured of his ground than those who learn are of theirs. If the relation between the teacher and the taught is genuine, there is never a place in it for the authority of the know-it-all or the authoritative sway of the official. (1954/1968, p. 15)

The courses I currently teach help in providing structure for some important searching and for ways of thinking about being and nursing—a place of clearing and tension—a place for phenomenological living with my students. Previously, my way of being was consistently in conflict with the technical expression of the syllabus and overall curriculum plan. I struggle with the tension between the curriculum as plan and the curriculum as lived—indeed, a large in-between zone (Aoki, 1991).

Two years ago as part of a curriculum course I was taking, I finally put some words on paper by way of re-visioning the syllabus for the clinical section of a course I teach. The re-vision opens up new ways to start the conversation about what it means to be a nurse, what it means to work with patients in my specialty area of psychiatric nursing, and what my beliefs are about ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. Course development is always a work in progress, but this was a start at using language openly that is genuine and congruent with my worldview, and that to which I can be faithful. I feel worlds opening up and my relationships with students are enriched in very profound ways. Van Manen (1990) observes that “There is a difference between comprehending the project of phenomenology intellectually

and understanding it ‘from the inside’” (p. 8). I feel through my own experience of ‘being-with’ Francine, my mentor, who brings phenomenology alive as a grounding for pedagogy and living, that I, too, am finding ways to *be* in the most genuine way I know. I am learning to “let learn.”

Van Manen (1990) writes: “Indeed, if there is one word that most aptly characterizes phenomenology itself, then this word is ‘thoughtfulness’” (p. 12). I have experienced phenomenological pedagogy as an ‘expression of thoughtfulness’ through my personal lived experience as a student. I have experienced the “transformative power of ‘being-with’” (Hultgren, 1992, p. 321) in the teaching and learning relationship with Francine.

It is nice to be here at the hearth—‘being-with’ in the many significant places of memory—re-collecting and tending to stories which gather hermeneutic significance along the way. But now, it *is* time to go. Badger’s words in the lovely fable, *Crow and Weasel* send us forth:

I would ask you to remember only this one thing. The stories people tell have a way of taking care of them. If stories come to you, care for them. And learn to give them away where they are needed. Sometimes a person needs a story more than food to stay alive. That is why we put these stories in each other’s memory. This is how people care for themselves. One day you will be good storytellers. Never forget these obligations. (Lopez, 1990, p. 60)

The stories filled with care lead me to a place of caring obligation in my present work. I now share part of the syllabus for a course I teach—N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice—as something that is part of this transformation, understanding, growth and—homecoming for me. The stories invite a new horizon.

A New Horizon

*N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice
Group Process Clinical Experience
Spring 2002*

Description of Clinical Sessions

This part of N 426 spanning a six week period is designed to provide senior nursing students with experiences for personal and professional growth in ways of 'being-with' self, colleagues, and patients as persons who struggle with mental health concerns. In the Listening Space we will focus on group process with each student as "member-leader" of the group and the teacher as "leader-member" of the group. Through the group, students will intensively address therapeutic helping relationships and selected issues related to mental health and wellness. Our emphasis is on understanding self as a way of deepening understanding and caring for patients.

Group Process is an opportunity to experience being a member of a group. Though not a therapy group, issues will be encountered that influence our way of being with persons with mental health concerns. Many issues are sensitive and may touch individuals as deeply personal. Personal strengths and areas for growth are brought forward and talked about. Group process is illuminated through participation in this clinical group as well as through reflection on experiences observing at 12 step meetings and the support group sessions at the shelter for domestic violence.

Anxiety, loneliness, changes in self-esteem and grief are areas of patient responses to which nurses are called to be at home. I have selected readings that will serve as departure points for thinking about caring for persons with mental health problems, including substance use disorders. Reading, reflective responses to your experiences and engaging in thoughtful conversations, are all valuable parts of this clinical experience.

The world of nursing education enlarges, and in both the academic and practice worlds, one lives in myriad tensions. There are tensions between care and technology, doing and being, efficiency and understanding, caring for self and other, autonomy and lack of control, knowing and "know-how," and despairing and meaning-making to name a few. It seems that such tensions are lived places where one is called to authenticity—called to respond in a caring way. As I reflect upon and live in the tensions, I am led to the obvious and yet sometimes ineffable: "What does

it mean to be human?” What does it mean for a nurse to enter into a covenant relationship with a patient?

As one who lives day-to-day in the classroom with students of nursing, I ask: What is the nature of the experience of the student on her way to becoming a nurse? What is the lived experience of the student in one of the places where learning takes place—the student nurse-teacher relationship? What does it mean to create a space for the student to join me in the search? What are the new tensions that may be created along with the opening of spaces? Through phenomenological exploration I desire to “reflectively bring into nearness” (van Manen, 1990, p. 32) what this relationship means and what may be revealed through the relationship.

Laying Out the Blankets of Understanding

In her essay “Greener Pastures,” Fine (1998) reflects on the ideas of Maxine Greene around the struggle with the world “not yet invented” and the one we have inherited. She raises questions of teachers and I hear them as my own. I look to embrace the mystery of these questions and to call these into the open in the teaching of nursing. She asks: “Where are the grown-ups? Are we creating safe spaces? Are we interrupting silences? Are we laying blankets for them to stretch out their identities? Or, are we watching awed and scared” (Fine, 1996, p. 212).

The students of nursing are telling us of their fear of vulnerability. As a nurse educator, I take seriously their questions and recognize the intense moral nature of their asking. The questions lead deeply to the search for understanding the nature of the pedagogical relationship in the world of student nurse and teacher. As I imagine what safe spaces may be, I wonder in what ways is it possible to protect my nursing

students from harm while inviting them to risk vulnerability? What is the experience of feeling protected? The word protect, as a verb, is from the Latin origin of *protegere*, meaning, “to cover in front” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 610). The word protection, also from Latin *protectionem* shows a meaning of “a covering over” (p. 610). Reflection upon these meanings leads to new openings of understanding about the lived tensions between vulnerability and comfort as one engages with students of nursing. Perhaps providing comfort, while not covering over, is a way of creating safe space. Opening to vulnerability in the presence of comfort draws us into the heart of life itself.

And so, what does it mean to lay out blankets, perhaps “comforters” for the students? What is necessary so that comfort is felt without the taking away or covering over of the student’s freedom or hurt in need of experiencing in order to fully experience self? “Phenomenology,” writes Heidegger, “means: *apophainesthai ta phainomena*—to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself” (1953/1996, p. 30). What is it like to be seen, to show oneself—to be exposed on the blankets of care and comfort? How is comfort meaningfully experienced? What do the students teach us about what they need through their silences? I cherish the placing of the blankets together, gracefully and mutually, in the in-between spaces. The word comfort in the Chinese language is represented by two characters—one meaning “iron” and one meaning “heart.” I imagine smoothing the wrinkles of the blanket, and wonder about the experience of ‘being-with’ as comfort? I lay out the blankets and ponder the laying out of understanding—the blanket of understanding. I imagine smoothing the wrinkles of the heart.

What is it like to be understood? “Philosophy is a conversation leading towards mutual understanding, a conversation, furthermore, where this very understanding comes as something genuinely experienced” (Moran, 2000, p. 249). Moran (2000) goes on to say, “Phenomenology is the best way to access properly and describe the experience of understanding itself” (p. 249). What an honor it is to engage in phenomenological ways and to be led in by my students. What a privilege it is share a “comforter”—and to share sacred space.

Leaping Ahead to a Sanctified Clearing

What is the nature of being in sacred and intimate space? What is this place? The word sanctuary from Late Latin, *sanctuarium*, means a “sacred place” or a “private room” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 633). The extended meaning as “a place of refuge or protection” is first recorded in English about 1380 (Barnhart, 1995, p. 633). Imagine the classroom or the place where nurses encounter patients as a place of protection. The encounter of a nursing student and teacher when imagined as a place of protection seems, then, to be a place where growth is invited and possibilities for safe passage are nurtured. What might it mean to care for a student from a “predicament of unplacement” to situations of “secure implacement” (Casey, 1993, p. 34)?

The caring encounter has empowering possibilities for inviting movement toward wholeness, for mutual understanding, and for opening up possibilities for becoming a morally response-able person on the way to becoming a nurse. What are the ways of being-in relationship that uncover opportunities for knowing and being

that become more? What are ways of being that cover over, conceal, or distort the same?

Heidegger (1953/1996) speaks to these differing ways in *Being and Time*:

Concern has two extreme possibilities. It can, so to speak, take the other's "care" away from him [her] and put itself in his [her] place in taking care, it can *leap in* for him [her]. Concern takes over what is to be taken care of for the other. The other is thus displaced...In this concern, the other can become one who is dependent and dominated even if this domination is a tacit one and remains hidden from him [her]...In contrast to this, there is the possibility of a concern which does not so much *leap in* for the other as *leap ahead* of him [her], not in order to take "care" away from him [her], but to first give it back to him [her] as such. (p. 122)

What is it that goes on in this sacred space of the student nurse-teacher relationship?

What is the nature of the caring in this encounter? What is it like for the student when the teacher leaps in? What is it like for the student when the teacher leaps ahead? The space created when the teacher leaps ahead may indeed become a place of anxiety.

The belief in the student that is expressed through the teacher leaping ahead and not taking over, also may become the invitation and balance necessary for one to learn to live in the tension between comfort and anxiety. Is this the presencing that invites becoming? What might it mean to protect a student from relinquishing one's sense of self? In what ways is teaching a giving back of care to the student? What is the nature of the pedagogical relationship that helps the student to get back into place (Casey, 1993)?

Aoki (1991) speaks of an in-between zone, a place between the plan and the living where teacher and student may open up possibilities for new ways of being. This sanctified clearing is not usually at the beginning, but somewhere deep inside. I recall a heightened sense of such a sanctified clearing while cross-country skiing with

my husband. We found ourselves amidst the pines and white birch in New Hampshire near Franconia Notch—there was much snow in the stillness of the sun, not yet setting. We were cold and had thoughts of turning back, realizing we had as far to go back as we had come. I guess we had not gone far enough though as we continued on—a tough uphill—and a creeping anxiety—what if night falls? And then we arrive. A magnificent large opening—a sanctified clearing.

This image of the large opening comes to me when I try to put into words with my students about this place of learning where comfort, anxiety, and fear find themselves. This clearing is perhaps where persons authentically encounter other persons. It is not an easy place to reach. It is a place of tension, not readily apparent, and often referred to as a “don’t go there” place. And what if we do? Heidegger (1953/1996) connects the idea of clearing and being there with the possibilities for showing self—disclosure:

Only for a being thus cleared existentially do objectively present things become accessible in the light or concealed in darkness. By its very nature, Da-sein brings its there along with it. If it lacks its there, it is not only factually not of this nature, but not at all a being. *Da-sein is its disclosure.* (p. 125)

Creating such a space—enlarging the room—seems to require a passion to be fully present and surrendering to a stance of not always making it better. A clearing is necessary for a coming to be—fully human.

It seems that this sanctified clearing is a place of presence-ing that is experienced bodily. What is it like to feel the presence of another? What is the experience of ‘being-with?’ What does it mean to be present? Marcel (1981) draws us in to a moment of ‘being-with’ through his words:

There are some people who reveal themselves as “present”—that is to say, at our disposal—when we are in pain or need to confide in someone, while there are other people who do not give this feeling, however great is their good will...the most attentive and the most conscientious listener may give me the impression of not being present; [s]he gives me nothing, cannot make room for me in him[her] self, whatever the material favors which [s]he prepared to grant me. The truth is that there is a way of listening which is a way of giving, and another way of listening which is a way of refusing...Presenting is something which reveals itself immediately and unmistakably in a look, a smile, an intonation, or a handshake. (pp. 25-26)

Presenting or ‘being present,’ is a golden thread in authentic relationship, in the nurse-patient relationship, and in the student nurse-teacher relationship. Marcel helps me to hear the possibilities of difference between authentic presence and being physically present. Heidegger (1953/1996), too, makes this distinction in *Being and Time*:

Being-with existentially determines Da-sein even when another is not factually present and perceived. The being-alone of Da-sein, too, is being-with in the world. The other can be *lacking* only *in* and *for* a being-with. Being alone is a deficient mode of being-with; its possibility is a proof for the latter. On the other hand, factual being alone is not changed by the fact that a second copy of a human being is “next to me,” or perhaps ten human beings. Even when these and still more are objectively present, Da-sein can be alone. Thus being-with and the facticity of being-with-one-another are not based on the fact that several “subjects” are physically there together. (p. 113)

The nursing students’ reflections lead me along with Marcel and Heidegger to a deeper understanding of what it means to be present—to ‘be-with’ in my relationships with them. Listening begins to uncover some of what is experienced, but not ordinarily brought forward for gazing. Meagan perhaps shows it the best as she writes of her reflections upon her dialogue with a required article she read. Meagan tells of the nature of ‘being-with:’

I believe God is most present when I am “nursing” at my best—when I have time to listen to a patient, share a moment of happiness or sorrow. Carr and Rehorick state that human connectedness draws on a connectedness with a higher being that provides the meaning and healing in a shared segment of time. Professor Packard, you speak to me of a living spirituality—being present to others—this has enabled me to recognize when God is sitting next to me whispering in my ear. (Meagan, Journal Reflections, 2002)

What brings one to a way of listening as giving? Perhaps listening as leaping ahead is a giving—a giving that makes room for the other. Perhaps too, ‘being-with’ is a way of being present in a whisper—being blankets and comforting bodies with another.

In the Clearing—the Tension of the Rose

It Felt Love

How
Did the rose
Ever open its heart

And give to this world
All its
Beauty?

It felt the encouragement of light
Against its
Being.

Otherwise,
We all remain

Too

Frightened.

(Hafiz, as cited in Ladinsky, 1999, p. 121)

Rachael, age 23, a student who is a licensed practical nurse (LPN) returning to school for her baccalaureate degree in nursing, opens her heart and reads her written journal reflections to the class:

Of all the experiences I have had, I feel that my most important work was caring for a ten-year-old boy named Jonathon. This little guy when I met him was seven years old and had neurofibromatoma. The tumors had started off small, but eventually grew on his spinal column and lung resulting in paraplegia and tracheotomy along with ventilator dependency. The first shift I did I was scared and I remember driving to work crying, “I want to go home to my mom.” Did I really know what I was doing?

Over time, my faith in myself and his faith in me grew. Slowly, he became my friend and more like a brother. [Several months later] Jonathon was admitted to Hershey Medical Center as he swallowed and aspirated a piece of steak. While in the hospital they did routine tests and found a tumor in his liver—prognosis was not good. After Christmas I went to see him. Once I walked into his room and saw him, the tears strolled helplessly down my face. There lay on a hospital bed—a swollen, red, lifeless, little boy who could not even whisper: “Hi.” His body was so red and hot—his lips were swollen shut. I tried not to cry but the tears rolled down by face. He gave me a long and tight hug and said goodbye. Not long after New Year’s he died. I never cried so much in my life as I did at his funeral. His parents had put up pictures of his life and one towards the end of the casket was a picture of me in my uniform. I decided right there—I would never do pediatrics again.

It is almost three years later and I still cry at night when I go to bed. People say: “Leave your work at home.” Well, I cannot. This little guy touched me in a way I will never forget. He brings out a vulnerable side of me I rarely let people see. I tell this experience only to those I trust and feel comfortable with. A lot of people know that I took care of Jonathon, but few know the hurt I still have. (Rachael, Journal Reflections, 2001)

He brings out a vulnerable side of me I rarely let people see...few know the hurt I still have. How privileged are this class and me. Rachael let the class and me into this frightening, painful and sacred place through her remembrance of caring for this little boy, Jonathon. The class was drawn closely into this tension and tears, and a hush of warm embrace filled the room. This place for Rachael has been covered over partly with grief and with her words of protection that “I will never do pediatrics again.” In the context of experiencing trust and comfort, though, in the classroom,

Rachael dared to linger in this place of both deep pain and love. Perhaps she will be able to experience a transformation in this space—a space now kept open with some good company and new questions.

What is Jonathon now calling you to do? Who is he calling you to be? Perhaps she will gaze longer in the presence of trust and comfort. As a community the class entered the “in-between space,” the *in diesem Zwischen* (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 295; Moran, 2000, p. 251),—the center of the rose. As petals curled one about the other, the students and I gathered around Rachael, keeping open the tender place. In the quiet of the tears, the class had the opportunity to enter into the stillness of their own questions.

In the intimacy of Rachael’s telling of her story and of the rest of us receiving her story, I experience a knowing and a resonance again with the words of Lopez (as cited in Witherell, 1995): “How wonderfully all this fits together, to indicate what a long fierce peace can derive from this knowledge” (p. 42). A long fierce peace—indeed, a moment of what constitutes the “real texts of teaching and learning” (Lopez, as cited in Witherell, 1995, p. 42).

Beverly, one of my older, 40-something students, writes about her experience in her journal reflections:

Your reply in the last section of my last paper made me cry. You know you are one of the few persons that ever made me feel that I made a difference. I didn’t realize till now how important it is to truly have someone believe in you. I haven’t heard words of encouragement in a long time. The human spirit needs that from time to time. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

Perhaps Beverly “felt the encouragement of light against her being” (Hafiz, as cited in Ladinsky, 1999, p. 121). And in this light I ask: What is the nature of ‘being-

with' in the pedagogical relationship in nursing? Perhaps it is like that of Mother in Rilke's poem, *Third Elegy*: "mixing something human in the night-space" (as cited in Bollnow, 1989, p. 13).

We meet in the Listening Space—the students and I. Through telling of our stories and lived experiences we indeed "become friends of one another's minds" (Greene, as cited in Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. xi). The students' journals offer up ways for us now to join in a "living conversation" (Witherell, 1995, p. 41)—to be drawn in—to be companions along the way. Witherell (1995) reminds us: "In rare moments, we may sense that we have entered a profound, even sacred, place" (p. 41), the moment of 'being-with.' Let us continue to enter and live in the phenomenological question that calls this inquiry: **What is the lived experience of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship?**

Turning-With in Living Conversation

As I reflect from the Listening Space I engage in the wonder, comfort, and anxiety in the moment of 'being-with' my students in the teaching and learning of nursing. I stand in awe of the mystery and wonder in the everyday life of the classroom.

What is 'being-with' in its essence? Called to engage in this necessary phenomenological inquiry, I look to Max van Manen (1990) who presents a structure of research activities that brings the exploration of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship to a practical possibility. He describes and I engage in a "Methodological Structure of Human Science Research" which includes six non-linear research activities:

- Turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
- Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;
- Reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;
- Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
- Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
- Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole.
(pp. 30-31)

Here in chapter one I turn to my own lived experience of ‘being-with’ in significant and precious relationships. I gaze steadily deep within and engage in a dance of understanding and interpretation—with memories gathering hermeneutic significance (van Manen, 1990) along the way. In the present context of the classroom I live in relationships with my students and open myself to what may be revealed in the lived tensions in the pedagogical space—the Listening Space. The turning is to the lived experience of the nature of ‘being-with’ in the midst of quite a technical academic and professional discipline. In the narrative of my turning to the phenomenon, my pre-understandings (Gadamer, 1960/2000) of the nature of ‘being-with’ are shown in the telling of my unfolding experience. The horizon of these pre-understandings includes:

- that *care* for the students along with a *passion* for connection and understanding of the students brings forward the possibilities for ‘being-with’ in the tensions of the teaching and learning situation;
- the experience of ‘being-with’ opens up possibilities for *living* in the necessary tensions of the teaching and learning of nursing, particularly the tensions between being and doing and comfort and anxiety;

–‘being-with’ in authentic relationships in the classroom calls for a risking of *vulnerability* that allows for personal transformation;

–as students and teacher engage in a *pedagogy of ‘being-with,’* a caring community is created and meaning is made of the work of learning nursing;

–possibilities for holistic caring with others deepen as one engages in understanding and caring for self; and

–engagement with students is meaningfully understood as a conversation about that which matters.

At the end of a semester, on the last day of class, Christine reached into her backpack saying: “I have a gift—may I please share something?” With face flushed and heartfelt tone she read her own words:

Fly on the Wall

If I were a fly on the wall I would see
 Lovely girls who are nurses to be.
 Brought here together by one who knew well
 The stories of struggle and life they would tell.

This small group met first only as peers.
 How quickly bonds formed through laughter and tears.
 The whole room was filled with the sweet scent of spring.
 Open minds and hearts they needed to bring.

Their leader, a woman with a soft-spoken voice
 The rules of this group determined by choice.
 Honesty, love, and respect were just some
 Of the norms expected by everyone.

Two mornings a week four hours they came
 Each shared emotion without any shame.
 If I were a fly on the wall I would know
 How each of these women was able to grow.
 What brought you here, this question, this thought
 Nagged at the ladies who thought they ought not,
 Think of such things so silly and dull—
 Though what was revealed was not dull at all.

If I were a fly on the wall I would shout:

They learned first hand what groups are about.
 Secrets were shared from deep in the soul.
 Listening and leading were part of the goal.

Vignettes of a struggle made them nervous as hell,
 But relaxing helped them connect with the self.
 They came together in many different pieces
 Now they're a whole, one group completed.
 Got through it they did—the weeks flew by,
 Friendships formed in the blink of an eye.

If I were a fly on the wall I would say:
 Mission accomplished, each week, each day.
 Coping is eased with a group that will care.
 A good lesson learned and one to be shared.
 (Rash, 2001)

Christine shows in her poetry her lived experience of being a student in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing. She shows the tensions of anxiety and comfort as well as the surprise in 'being-with' in the Listening Space. Together we begin to open up the phenomenon in a way that helps to understand 'being-with' as a lived experience rather than as a conceptual construction—a shared endeavor of “listening and leading” (Rash, 2001).

In chapter two I continue to open up the phenomenon of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship through ongoing dialogue with students in conversation and with their written journal reflections. As the layers are peeled back, I am led to explore writings in pedagogy and accept the challenge and responsibility that authentic living requires. I dialog with each text—parts and the whole. Poetry, mine and others, engages me in powerful ways—allowing a retrieval of experience that becomes available for reflection and interpretation. Openings clear for the possibility of new understandings of the phenomenon calling this inquiry. I tend to

the place of 'being-with' as a delicate place of tension between anxiety and comfort. In the context of care and comfort—with a blanket of understanding—necessary questions are posed and the phenomenon begins to be brought out into the open. The questions emerge with a promise of eventual unfolding toward answers—keeping open the possibilities for further exploration.

The challenge of chapter three is to show my philosophical understanding and grounding for my phenomenological investigation of the lived experience of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship. I enter into conversational space with Heidegger, Gadamer, Casey, Levin, and others who help me to engage the questions and eventually live into answers. The plan for ways to meet those who become co-researchers in this inquiry is proposed in chapter three, along with what is possible in the creation of text to be understood and interpreted.

As I come to know through 'being-with' my students (Hultgren, 1991) in the teaching and learning of nursing, themes emerge which offer up new understandings about the very nature of the experience of 'being-with.' Thematizing chapters reflect a 'to and fro' dialogue with the text as I make meaning of the lived experiences and deepen my ontological understanding. In the final chapter with the phenomenon of 'being-with' more available for our understanding, I bring forward the possibilities for transformative practice in the teaching and learning of nursing as well as for possibilities toward a pedagogy of 'being-with' in nursing education and caring with patients.

CHAPTER TWO: DWELLING TOGETHER THROUGH LISTENING— UNFOLDING THE BLANKET OF UNDERSTANDING

An Invitation to Dwell in the Echo

Pilgrim

Pilgrim how your journey on the road you chose
To find out where the winds die and where the stories go.
All days come from one day that much you must know
You cannot change what is over but only where you go.

One way leads to diamonds, one way leads to gold
Another leads you only to everything you're told
In your heart you wonder which of these is true;
The road that leads to nowhere, the road that leads to you.
Will you find the answer in all you say and do?
Will you find the answer in you?
Each heart is a pilgrim each one wants to know
The reason why the winds die and where the stories go.
Pilgrim, in your journey you may travel far,
For pilgrim it's a long way to find out who you are.
(Enya, 2000, track 9)

The experience of 'being-with' students in the teaching and learning of nursing is indeed to engage with others upon a journey—a place of traveling far—and of self discovery on the way to becoming a nurse. As I continue along the way with my students I am invited here to think of ourselves as co-pilgrims and I return to the question that is calling this inquiry: What is the lived experience of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship? What does it mean to be-with in the pedagogical relationship?

As I attempt to bring this phenomenon into nearness, I dwell with my students through listening—to hear through their experience the nature of the relationship. I linger *with* my students and follow the traces, tracks, and footprints of those who come before. At the same time, as I engage *as* the one who comes before, with my

students, I “marvel at the strangeness of the world. That strangeness, the intriguing life of another people, it is a crucial thing to know” (Lopez, 1990, p. 59). In the intimacy of relationship, are opportunities for the familiar to become strange—for the strange to become familiar. In the quiet of the listening are possibilities for hearing the ancient and the new, the familiar and the strange—in the echoes themselves. I am invited by my students to go behind what is taken for granted. Phenomenology insists upon this—to live in the question. Enya sings the questions here: “Will you find the answer in all you say and do? Will you find the answer in you?” Perhaps answers will be lived into as teacher and students live together—as co-pilgrims—on this particular journey of learning and “learning to let learn” (Heidegger, 1954/1968, p. 15). I am called to engage with my students through listening, in ‘the art of living,’ a *techné tou biou*—participating fully in the practice of Self (Levin, 1989, p. 2).

I find it very precious when for some moment in time, I have felt very close to, fully in touch with, another person...so I have learned to ask myself, can I hear the sounds and sense, the shape, of this other person’s inner world? Can I resonate to what he is saying; can I let it *echo* (my emphasis) back and forth in me, so deeply that I sense the meanings he is afraid of yet would like to communicate, as well as those meanings he knows? (Rogers, 1969, p. 227)

As I revisit these words of Carl Rogers in my attempt to articulate an authentic dwelling through listening, and to hear the questions in the echoes of the student nurse-teacher relationship, I find myself in a place of nostalgia, sweet strains of memory. Filled with echoes, I hear Roger’s listening presence and easy way of being—shirt hanging on the outside, khaki pants, sneakers, and black glasses that were already out of date in 1982. Rogers turned 82 that summer—the summer of 1982—La Jolla, California. I hear these words and re-member them as penetrating my

being. To be in touch, to feel close, and to regard the inner world of another in its fullness is to engage in a “precious” way of listening. Being in his presence at a summer institute 20 years ago was a privilege indeed. Carl Rogers showed a way of peeling away the psychotherapeutic clinical jargon that leads to an opening up of possibilities for a genuine human-to-human encounter.

What is revealed through echoes? In what ways does listening here bring me to this “precious” experience of ‘being-with’ student nurses on the journey of becoming nurses? What is the nature of the student nurse-teacher relationship when ‘being-with’ is regarded as “precious?” Listening to the echoes continues to reveal meanings in their essence. Listening to the echo is a peeling back, uncovering, getting closer, and journeying to the center—with another human person. Perhaps it is here that we open ourselves to the ‘Question of Being’ and to this “ontological gift” (Levin, 1989, p. 7) of Being that lies within. My students speak to their discovering of the gifted-ness of who they are through classroom learnings. Amy F. writes of ‘being-with:’

I never thought it possible to learn so much about others or myself in six weeks in a psychiatric nursing course. This course has played an integral role in allowing me to evaluate my life at this point. I have learned how to *be* (my emphasis) with others. I had the enriching opportunity to read articles by Cameron and Flickinger regarding “being” (Amy’s punctuation) with patients and actively listening. I am more at ease when a close friend, family member, or a patient engages in silence—I know that I don’t have to say a word in order to “be” with that person. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

Exploration of the ontology of Being is woven later on in chapter three. But for now in order to deepen understanding of listening as I dwell with my students, I turn to Levin’s (1989) work on *The Listening Self* and to his words on listening and echoes:

When listening really echoes and resonates, when it allows the communication to reverberate between the communicants, and to constitute, there, a space free of pressure and constraint, it actively contributes, quite apart from the speaking, to the intersubjective constellation of new meanings, meanings actually born within this intercorporeality; and it promises, because of this, the achievement of mutual understanding—if not also consensus. (Levin, 1989, p. 181)

Such “new meanings” are born for Sara as she writes: “This course has challenged me to grow in accepting myself for who I am and that it is alright to share my ideas. This course was not what I expected, but I am glad that it is the way it is. It sure has changed my life for the good.” Perhaps Sara is “called into question by our listening” (Levin, 1989, p. 137). And Karen writes:

I was brought to tears sitting in the presence of my classmates who were willing to share the most intimate details of their lives—such an overwhelming feeling. To know that each person felt they could trust each other in the class to listen to their experiences and then carry these stories with them in confidence was a privilege. At no other time in my school career have I felt such a strong connection to my peers. I feel that this connection arose from knowing that each person was truly listening and wanting to learn about another person’s life. (Karen, *Journal Reflections*, 2002)

Through listening, echoing, and resonating, a Listening Space is created.

Diamonds and Gold: The Journey of Letting-Learn

Hultgren (1995) writes of the unfolding meanings of “letting-learn” that emerge through her experience of phenomenological presence with students in a Phenomenological Research course. She finds that “letting-learn” means:

- To prepare a space for listening that intertwines identities in a retrieval of being;
- To let ourselves be put in question by the question;
- To develop a pedagogy of not-knowing that echoes the vibration of care;

- To allow for the finding of one’s voice through a cultural remembering;
- To provide for an opportunity for getting lost in order to write one’s way out in the finding;
- To allow a place and time for dwelling;
- To open up opportunities which encourage conversational relation through experiential partnerships;
- To receive in humbleness the teaching that is given back to you. (Hultgren, 1995, p. 386)

Her words resonate and reverberate with my lived experience of ‘being-with’ my own students in teaching and learning. As I listen to my students’ stories and weave them with my own experience and with those that bring forward the above meanings, I feel a sense of “one-heartedness that such stories can weave” (Witherell, 1995, p. 44).

The Listening Space is prepared now with a communal spirit—together let us allow ourselves to risk being put in question by the question. The rich experience of being in relationship with my mentor as well as my students offers me the possibility to center myself and to create a dwelling place. Led by Hultgren’s discoveries, I continue to reflect from the Listening Space.

Jennifer writes: “It’s hard and we are reluctant sometimes—our fear of being vulnerable and getting too close and knowing too much about one another is there.” Feeling there is so much to be discovered behind her words, I ask her: What happens when one is vulnerable? What are the risks? The word vulnerable is borrowed from Late Latin around 1605 *vulnerabilis*, meaning “wounding” and from *vulnerare*, “to wound” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 866). The student fears becoming hurt, even wounded, through “knowing too much about one another.” The student also may fear becoming

hurt through knowing too much about her Self. And a question calls: What does it mean to ‘let-be?’ What is Jennifer’s experience of “letting-learn?” Perhaps “letting-learn” is being able to begin to experience vulnerability. Perhaps it is self being revealed—from a self usually concealed.

Sweet Scent of Compassion

Jennifer reveals in her journal, “Some tears were shed as the stories were told and a sense of compassion filled the room.” A scent of compassion? A lovely pink tinged rose bloom, by the same name—Compassion—is described as being “vigorous and sweetly scented” (Mattock, 2001, p. 94). “Compassion” has flowers known to bloom for a long season—flowers have been gathered as late as Christmas Day (Mattock, 2001). I ask Jennifer: What is it like for compassion to fill the room? The word compassion is traced to *compass*, a stem of *compati* meaning, “to suffer together” (Murray, Bradley, Craigie, & Onions, 1933/1961, p. 714). Jennifer writes:

The class provided the students with the opportunity to be in a group and to learn from the lived experiences of the others. I take away a sense of satisfaction I have learned to listen with my heart, respond honestly and respectfully, and maybe some day be confident enough to lead a group in a meaningful manner. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Perhaps Jennifer feels a companionship in her struggles and in this dwelling, learns to listen with her heart. Compassion “in the room,” in the Listening Space, while sweet, vigorous, and enduring, does not necessarily prevent a wounding. It may allow, though, the possibility for experiencing vulnerability in a place of comfort—or perhaps for the experience of comfort, new strength and vigor in a place of vulnerability.

Elaine, bringing her pain to the table of learning in nursing writes:

I shared about my mother's death (through suicide) which is still very emotional for me. I am crying while typing this paper. My mother's death is emotional for me because I have not found the closure that I need to move on in my life. This year I am getting married and graduating. I will not have my mother here for me. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Through her words, and telling of her lived experience I wonder if it is openness rather than closure that is necessary. Or a question that Francine Hultgren once asked: "What about the endings makes new beginnings possible" (2001)? I ask for myself and for my students, also, what Flickenger (1991) brings forward: What does it mean to hear what is being expressed at the deepest level and to respond to it? "To 'let-learn' means: To prepare a space for listening that intertwines identities in a retrieval of being, a leading in itself that withdraws from teacher to being-in-teaching-together" (Hultgren, 1995, p. 377). I raise the basic question of what it means to be human as I read Amy M.'s words:

I also appreciate the fact that Professor Packard is willing to contribute to our group; this makes her seem human to us... she appears to genuinely care about our lives and well being...she helps to keep us focused and grounded, and on track. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Perhaps there is in Amy's words a sense of having a companion on the journey—a "being-in teaching-together." In listening and retrieving being (Hultgren, 1995), we are co-pilgrims.

Companion comes from the Late Latin, *companionem* literally meaning "one who takes bread with someone" *com*-together + *panis*-bread (Barnhart, 1995, p. 144). Van Manen emphasizes that phenomenology is "interested in the human world (as we find it) in all its variegated aspects and that it wishes to meet human beings there

where they are naturally engaged in their worlds” (1991, p. 18). I meet Debbie in a class on domestic violence as she writes:

I spoke to my mother after class and she filled me in on her first husband, my birth father ...I am very angry right now—even though this took place long before I was born, it is new to me. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Hultgren (1995) writes: “To let learn means: To provide an opportunity for getting lost in order to write one’s way out into the ‘clearing’ and to be celebrated in the finding” (p. 383). Finding herself in a new and uncomfortable place—lost and angry—Debbie began seeking ways to make sense of questions that surfaced through classroom conversation. My hope is that she will eventually be “celebrated in the finding.”

Liz writes:

It was easier to talk about our weaknesses, but not so to talk about what we like about ourselves. I wonder why it is that I see myself so differently than others see me...I’m looking forward to the things we will share next week and the friendships that will continue to grow as result. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

So while it was difficult for Liz to face some areas of her life, she felt strengthened by the sense of community forming. “To let learn means:” writes Hultgren, “To open up opportunities which encourage conversational relations through experiential partnerships” (1995, p. 385). I am led to the pedagogical question: What is the nature of teaching nursing as co-pilgrim, ‘being with’ one another on the long way of the discovering journey?

The Soft Silence of the Listening Night

Turning to my students and to their reflections illuminates the students' experiences of this semester in process—and the meaning of 'being-with' in relationship in the teaching and learning of nursing. About our class, Misty writes:

It's about the topics we are covering in class—I fear all this shaking up of the nice little world that I have worked so hard to build...How does a nurse get past her personal background so that she may sincerely be there for her patients? My impulse is to stay away from all of this personal discomfort. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

The experience of the “shaking up” of the “at home” sense that Misty describes is the very experience philosophy “intends to deepen” (Safranski, 1998, pp. 190-191). “Philosophy,” Heidegger says, “is the opposite of all comfort and assurance. It is turbulence, the turbulence into which one is spun, so as in this way alone to comprehend *Dasein* without delusion” (as cited in Safranski, 1998, p. 191). Misty is telling me that facing her own vulnerabilities is painful and uncomfortable and may be easier to not search her self. There is, indeed, a natural inclination to flee the anxiety. I feel her words call for nurturance and comfort so that she may continue to gaze inwardly, dwell in the anxiety, live in the turbulence, and encounter *Da-sein*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers a line from Thompson by way of explicating the meaning of listening, who says, “Thro the soft silence of the listening night” (as cited in Murray, Bradley, Craigie, & Onions, 1933/1961, p. 338). *Soft silence. Listening night*. Perhaps soft silence and listening night are ways of thinking about presence of comfort in the midst of anxiety and vulnerability.

While Enya asks: Will you find the answer? Where do the stories go? I sit in reverie and listen to her lilting voice. I light a candle and listen as I prepare to take up

the reflective work of listening to the meaning behind the words of my students. I am grateful to them for their conversational time and presence—for allowing me to stitch their stories in my being—for being together in teaching and learning—“drawing out, nurturing with, and sending forth.” Many students have given me permission to draw upon their written journal reflections to explore the essence, in a preliminary opening, of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. The students’ voices in this research project are senior nursing majors engaged with me in continuing conversations through one of the courses that I teach—N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice.

Through conversations with my students I am led more closely to the phenomenon of the student nurse-teacher relationship as a lived relation to the other (van Manen, 1990). I invite you into this relational space, which is “highly personal and charged with interpersonal significance” (van Manen, p. 106). I am led in the interpretive work of being drawn to the image not yet created. My pen as a needle and thread opens to the possibilities of the canvas. The colors begin to emerge softly and lovingly, inspiring liveliness in the stillness. T.S. Eliot in his poem, *Burnt Norton*, writes so beautifully of the tension of this dialectic:

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,
Where past and future are gathered.
Neither movement from nor towards,
Neither ascent nor decline. Except for the point, the still point,
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.
I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.
And I cannot say how long, for that is to place it in time.
(1909-1950/1976, p. 119)

In the stillness of the song for the journey, I center myself, drape the students' shared lives and questions over my lap, and listen. Will you find the answer in you? I treasure the becoming, the stitching, the image emerging, and the bringing into nearness the nature of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship. I love the feel of the new crisp canvas and the excitement of the beginning; I love the soft, comfortable feel of the canvas as it wears and becomes at home in my hands. Stitching, like philosophy, allows me to slow down and dwell in the journey. I gather threads of insight from these encounters as well as from the many encounters of our "ordinary" life in the classroom. I dwell in the journey through listening, responding thoughtfully to this gift of nature (Levin, 1989). I listen for the questions revealed in the essence, in the echoes. We live in the Listening Space, my students and I—being blankets and comforting bodies, creating home.

Listening Space: Echoes in the Inn-Between Places

What is this "Listening Space?" On the campus of a small independent liberal arts college, it used to be MKN 139—Communication Skills Laboratory. It is my classroom to use when I have a class size of less than 22 students. It is a physical space with tables and chairs, a large screen TV/VCR, a lovely CD player, Van Gogh prints on the walls, a wreath, candles, and fragrance of presence—a reverence of being. The room is transformed in the living side-by-side with my students—from doing to being—from laboratory to listening. A place to DO becomes a place to BE.

There is no need to run outside
 For better seeing,
 Nor to peer from a window. Rather abide
 At the center of your being...

Search your heart and see...

The way to do is to be.
(Lao Tze, as cited in Connelly, 1993)

The “inn” between opens up a place for listening, living, and better seeing—a place of ‘being-wih’ at the center. Van Manen (1990) writes:

Lived space is felt space...We may say that we become the space we are in...The home reserves a very special space experience which has something to do with the fundamental sense of our being... Home is where we can be what we are...lived space refers us to the world or landscape in which human beings move and find themselves at home. (p. 102)

The sign on the door names our classroom as the Listening Space. The Living Space would name this place as well. We are at home here—in the Inn.

Listening Space—A Pedagogical Promise

Colleen runs up to one cherry tree, and then another, and, then as if a moment of recognition of this one particular tree, exclaims: “This is our tree, Mommy! Do you like this one? Our picnic blanket goes here!” With that claim made, Aidan, with his 3-year old wonder and still scampering, pulls off his socks and shoes as the next natural thing one does once a tree is claimed. The barefoot “ouches” fade through the sibling exuberance. “Lift me up, Daddy!” Molly shouts with arms joyously outstretched. “I need to climb into the blossom!” “Me too, me too” the excited voices join in a chorus of discovery.
(Personal Journal Reflections, 2001)

Van Manen (1986b) writes about the “unteachability of pedagogy” and offers interpretations: “Pedagogy is neither the theory we have of teaching, nor is it its application; pedagogy is neither the intention nor the action; pedagogy is neither the body nor the heart” (p. 87). Instead, “Pedagogy constantly and powerfully operates in between” (van Manen, 1986b, p. 87). Van Manen asks: “Where should we attempt to find the location or the space where pedagogy may be seen to reside?” (p. 85). Perhaps the location of pedagogy is under a tree, creating a place, inhabiting a blanket together. Perhaps it is experienced through the removal of extraneous coverings—

with grass between your toes. Perhaps, it is in the climbing into the blossom as if one belongs. And perhaps, it is a family outing to see the cherry blossoms in Washington, DC—an invitation to deep questioning about the nature of pedagogy.

Showing the “splendor in the grass” my children reveal understandings about pedagogy—they show what they teach. Levin (1989) invites openings for us through questions about hearing and listening. He asks: “Can we retrieve the hearing of a child of joy? And can we begin to listen to the world with a hearing that is in touch with that joy? Can we hear with the child’s sense of belonging?” (p. 211).

Those with whom we risk to engage in pedagogic relations teach us about the nature of pedagogy. Understanding about pedagogy and engaging in research on pedagogy seems, then, to require that one climb into the blossom of our inquiry and listen to the wonder and mystery of its essence.

The Listening Space is for me a pedagogical place—a place for the unfolding of our pedagogic nature. Van Manen writes that “Pedagogy is something that was and is at the very core of the adult’s relation to the child” (p. 39). In my inquiry, I wonder what is at the very core of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship in the teaching and learning of psychiatric-mental health nursing. Casey so beautifully connects place and being: “The place we occupy, however briefly, has everything to do with what and who we are (and finally *that* we are)” (1993, p. xiii). A pedagogical promise is in the echo—in the Listening Space.

Listening Space as a Re-searching Place

Van Manen poses the question: “What research texts must we produce that are sensitive to the peculiar question of the nature of pedagogy?” (1986b, p. 91) and

offers a response: “To do research is to be involved in the consideration of text, the meaning of dialogic textuality and its promise for pedagogy—for pedagogical thinking and acting in the company of children” (p. 91). The Listening Space is a place of pedagogy and offers possibilities for such pedagogic textuality in the company of nursing students.

What is the nature of pedagogic text? What makes the Listening Space a pedagogical place? Van Manen (1986b) writes of four conditions for a pedagogic textuality that offer me a way of reflecting on the nature of pedagogical research in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing: the pedagogy is necessarily “oriented, strong, rich, and deep” (p. 92). I sit sipping *Genmaicha*, a green tea with toasted rice—and named a “Tea of Inquiry.” It is nice to sip tea and *be* inquiring. I invite you to join me, to meander, to inquire with me toward bringing into nearness the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. Let us dare to *be* together in the *in deisem Zwischen*—the true locus of hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1960/2000); let us linger in the moment of anxiety knowing that turbulence is necessary (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Be with me in your own questions as they keep open the possibility for deeper understanding. What is the experience ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship? What is the meaning of this pedagogical relationship in the world of nursing academia? What is the nature of ‘being-with’ another who is risking becoming a nurse? What is the experience of student and teacher being-together in the places of discomfort and vulnerability?

Cixous offers up her thoughts on the in-between place and shows the necessary feelings of vulnerability one experiences before a comfort of sorts is possible.

The word ‘entredoux:’ it is a word to designate a true in-between—between a life that is ending and life which is beginning. For me, an entredoux is: nothing. It is, because there is entredoux...these are the innumerable moments that touch us with bereavements of sorts. It is frightfully all new: this is one of the most important experiences of our human histories. At times we are thrown into strangeness. This being abroad at home is what I call an entredoux. (Cixous, 1997, pp. 9-10)

I offer my hand—let us enter the in-between space. Let us take our ‘tea of inquiry’ into the “*entredoux*”—to this true place of ‘in-between’ in relationships.

Phenomenology is a way of living life, of grounding pedagogy, of seeing with a “listening gaze” (Madjar & Walton, 1999, p. 10) that offers possibilities for understanding the student nurse-teacher relationship from the place in-between. As I risk engaging in pedagogical relationships, as I risk engaging in the work of phenomenology, and as you participate in the to and fro with me in textual meaning making, a hermeneutic conversation emerges, in this Listening Space. What is the life that is ending? What is the life that is beginning? Who are we called to be in the many bereavements along the way? What will allow us to gaze in new ways, to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar? What is the experience of de-centering and re-discovering? Perhaps it is in the ‘in-between’ that ‘being-with’ is experienced. What will phenomenology allow? This.

A Listening Place for Being

Listening and pedagogy are deeply woven in my own experience of ‘being-with’ my nursing students. Eliot’s words echo here: “Except for the stillness there

would be no dance—there is only the dance” (1976, p. 119). Except for the listening there is no pedagogy. Listening and pedagogy—stillness and dance. What might it mean to be inside listening?

Perhaps the Listening Space is a place to listen to the echoes, to linger in the silence behind the words, and to be in the in-between place of meaning making—a place to be responsive to the questions contained in the echoes. The Listening Space is a place where new questions are discerned through dwelling in the stories of students’ lives. Gadamer writes: “The essence of the question is to open up possibilities and keep them open” (1960/2000, p. 299). I wonder about what it is that keeps open the possibilities? Continuing conversations, text and canvas of the lived experiences of my students bring into nearness some rich dimensions of relationship.

Learning the truth, Palmer (1993) says, “requires that we enter into personal relationships with what the words reveal” (p. 43). I am moved more deeply to ask what is the experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship and what is revealed in its presence?

Francine Hultgren’s words in *Toward Curriculum for Being* (1991) inspire me and become a meditation—“My knowing is revealed in my power to be” (p. 16). Knowing and being are woven so thoughtfully, carefully, and powerfully in her words. This knowing revealed in being, echoes possibilities for the nursing world. Another powerful connection to the idea of echo is found in a quote by Tyndall from 1860: “The echoes talked down to me from the mountain walls” (as cited in Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 54). “My knowing is revealed in my power to be” (Hultgren, 1991, p. 16). I must live in my own question: What is the nature of my capacity to

BE? What is revealed in *being* in the student nurse-teacher relationship? What is revealed in the un-veiling?

A Safe Place

(I protect myself and put up walls)

“I protect myself and put up walls and I didn’t have to because everyone was listening. It was hard, but it was good,” says Diana. Something was different here. Diana begins to put words to the experience of the lived tension between the natural tendencies of wanting to cover over self in hiding and the longing to open up and connect with others. She experienced listening. For Diana, listening in some way took the place of walls; listening removed the need for such protection. What is it about listening that renders walls not necessary? What is it about listening that protects? “You can’t put a wall up in this room,” she says. “You all interact together—it takes away the roles. You know what I mean—the student role, the teacher role? People talking together—nice!” Roles and walls are used almost interchangeably. In what ways do roles and walls cover over, distort, distance, and protect oneself from vulnerability? In the perceived absence of such covering, Diana may experience authentic engagement—“a habit of passionate responsibility...the practice of openness” (Anton, 2001, p. 160). Roles and walls hold hiding places for the Self. Opening and searching behind these places may bring forward what it means to engage in authentic relationship.

The experience of fear and anxiety streams through the students’ stories along with the feelings of growth through companionship. Diana tells me:

I guess you would say I bonded with the other students. I got to hear their stories, and not feel so scared...about nursing and about establishing my values and becoming a nurse. Right now, this

semester, has been my biggest growth...I am not the type to put myself 'out there,' but when I did it was like—understanding.
(Personal Conversation, 2001)

A sense of community is created through shared stories, and values can be openly faced in a safe space. Room to become and be vulnerable is risked. And I wonder, What is it like to be understood? What is the nature of 'being-with' *out there*? What might it mean to put oneself "out there" and "stand under" in the open space? What does it mean to be vulnerable in this place? Perhaps it means we have the opportunity to be "held in the flow of life" as O'Donohue (1997, p. 154) reminds us:

Vulnerability risks hurt, disappointment, and failure. Yet it remains a vital opening to change and to truth. The slow and difficult work of living out your vulnerability holds you in the flow in life. It is great when we can learn to behold our vulnerability as one of the most important gates of blessing into the inner world. In giving love we are most human and most vulnerable. (p. 154)

A risk of vulnerability, too, allows for an opening up and deepening of the "act of understanding" (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. xxx). Gadamer writes in *Truth and Method*:

...In any case it is true that everyone who experiences a work of art incorporates this experience wholly within himself: that is, into the totality of his self-understanding, within which it means something to him. I go so far as to assert that the act of understanding, including the experience of the work of art, surpasses all historicism in the sphere of aesthetic experience. (1960/2000, p. xxx)

Diana expresses this idea of incorporating experience—of gathering in—as she tells me: "It was so good because even if we talked about something in class, it helped us to deal with things after we went home. It like opened us up." April speaks also to the felt need of having grounding in the way of meaningful support and understanding through her words:

This [relationship] is really a security to me, that there is someone who cares that I become a good nurse, who is my support system outside of home, who cares...if you don't have someone, it gets to be a cause of exhaustion. (Personal Conversation, 2001)

Perhaps understanding and 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship is in some way a place of protection where one can be—a “gate of blessing into the inner world.” What meanings might emerge when thinking about 'being-with' in relationship as a sanctuary, or a little more portable, like a tabernacle? Where does thinking about 'being-with in the student nurse-teacher relationship as tabernacle lead?

The word tabernacle, the noun, is from the Latin *tabernaculum* around 1250, “meaning ‘portable sanctuary’ or ‘tent’ such as that which was carried by the Israelites in the wilderness” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 791). Tabernacle as a diminutive of *taberna*, also Latin, means “hut” (p. 791). What is it about 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship that is hut-like, that has possibilities for creating safe and intimate spaces? April says:

It was such an overwhelming situation I was in...I thought to myself—if only I could talk to you, I would be okay, in a way, knowing I could eventually talk to you got me through. (Personal Conversation, 2001)

The Hearth in the Hut

Sanctuary, tabernacle—hut. What is the hut sense of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship? Bachelard (1958/1994) writes that the “[hut]’s truth must derive from the intensity of its essence, which is the essence of the verb ‘to inhabit’” (p. 32). “The image of the hut,” Bachelard goes on to say, “leads us on to extreme solitude” (p. 32). The tensions of comfort and anxiety and solitude and intimacy that are experienced in lived relationships are revealed through the hut. In its

primitive nature, the hut “possesses the felicity of intense poverty; indeed it is one of the glories of poverty...it gives us access to absolute refuge” (Bachelard, 1958/1994, p. 32). Perhaps ‘being-with’ in the relationship between the student nurse and teacher when experienced in intimate and genuine encounters, is indeed a hut experience. I wonder, then, about the relationship as a place of opening up possibilities for freedom. The relationship as refuge reveals a presence of caring for the well being of the other.

Bachelard (1958/1994) writes that in Bosci’s novel, *Le jardin d’Hyacinthe*, “A lamp is waiting in the window and through it, the house too is waiting” (p. 34). By means of the light in that far-off house, “The house sees, keeps vigil, vigilantly waits” (p. 34). Though far off, April experienced being able to get through, just knowing she could at some point talk with me. Rilke (as cited in Bachelard, 1958/1994) invites me to wonder, What does it mean to ‘be-with’ in the experience of the night? What might be revealed in the waiting light?

There seems to be a lovely tension in the hut—one of solitude and one of invitation to be-with another. What is the experience of such a presence in the relationship? Diana says: “The room was different—the set up and all. It was quiet and the candles were lit. It is a nice room. We sit close together and look at each other. So it is a conversation.” From the comfort of this hut, Diana was able to put herself “out-there.” Misty, in her journal, expresses the living tension through her reflections. She writes:

This is so different—perhaps it is the genuine caring I have responded to...if I had not felt so sure you were safe I would never have told the class what I did...it’s so hard for me—it literally takes me the weekend to recover. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Misty finds herself in the delicate dance between un-covering and re covering.

In the morning Misty arrives to class early.

I found myself looking forward to going to the room a few minutes early each day as it was predictable that there would be pretty soothing music on and candles lit, making the room very comfortable and relaxing. Then I would often start the coffeepot and set up the counter with coffee fixings while I waited for the others to come.
(Journal Reflections, 2001)

Misty came to the place where she found both anxiety and comfort and created a centering time before class started. She worked at making the space her own. In my care for Misty, Hultgren's words echo here: "To let learn means: To develop a pedagogy of not-knowing that echoes the vibration of care" (1995, p. 380).

A Resting Place

(Stressed out at yoga)

We are extremely stressed, we have no life, I mean NO time. We have not even dealt with some things ourselves that we get thrown into. I had a patient who was in the hospital, suicidal, because she had just gotten out of a bad relationship. Oh my God, I just got out of a bad relationship. You get to the point where it stresses you out to take yoga because you should be doing this, this, and THIS. You're stressed out at yoga because you should be DOING something, studying.
(April, Personal Conversation, 2001)

With intensity and pressure in her voice, April begins to unfold the complexity of the tensions she experiences as a student with a major in nursing. The tensions between the required "doing" and the life giving "being" are intense, leading her to a sense of "no life." She is feeling closed in, even trapped by the incessant doing. April shows the sense of a loss of control, of being "thrown into" a relationship in a way that an object might be thrown. What does being thrown mean in light of who the student is becoming? While it is uncomfortable for April to be

thrown, and an initially negative experience, I turn to Heidegger (1953/1996) for his wisdom here:

The being of Da-sein is care. It includes in itself facticity (thrownness), existence (project) and falling prey. Da-sein exists as thrown, brought into its there not of its own accord. It exists as a potentiality-of-being which belongs to itself, and yet has not given itself to itself. Existing, it never gets back behind its thrownness so that it could ever expressly release this “that-it-is-and-has-to-be” from its being a self and lead it into the there... Because it has not laid the ground itself, it rests in the weight of it, which mood reveals to it as a burden. (p. 262)

The experience of being thrown, to be “initially thrust aside” (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 127), may allow April to “get back behind the thrownness” in the presence of the caring and nurturing atmosphere of the Listening Space. In this getting behind and *there* (my emphasis), she may, indeed, *find* herself in her thrownness (Heidegger, 1953/1996), and experience herself once again as whole and response-able.

What is it like to be in a responsible position with a patient while not feeling response-able? April says: “I was looking for a guide, someone who would walk through it with me.” In a sense, April’s statement is a plea to be cared for herself. She is seeking care in a freeing way—care as I understand Heidegger (1953/1996) to mean—as a “leaping ahead” (p. 122).

The word stress is from *stresse* meaning “hardship, coercion, and pressure,” in part developed as a shortened form of Mid English *distress* meaning “distress” and borrowed from Old French *estrece* for “narrowness and oppression” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 766). The words stressed and “stressed out” are frequently used by nurses and nursing students. Listening to the meanings revealed in the notion of stress as coercion, narrowness, and oppression begins to illuminate possibilities for new

understandings. Diana says: “No matter what, clinical is always stressful...but you set a tone that was not stressful.” What is the nature of a “tone” that for Diana may provide comfort in the midst of anxiety? The etymology of the word tone helps out here. Of interest is that the words tone and tact both derive from the same German root word:

The German word *taktgefühl* expresses a more subtle sentient quality than the English “tactfulness”—meaning feeling, sensitivity, sentiment: the sentient quality of having a feel for something. Thus, to be tactful with another person one must be able to hear, feel, and respect the essence or uniqueness of this person.
(van Manen, 1991, p. 133)

In what ways might “tone” touch the students, helping them to hold onto a sense of themselves as persons? It seems that, indeed, a listening tone may echo “vibrations of care” (Hultgren, 1995) and allow for an opening up to the possibility for dwelling in the necessary tensions.

In a lived body way, April actually tells of the atmosphere she experiences in nursing. To be coerced is to go in a direction that feels perhaps counterintuitive, yet one, if not chosen, may present consequences of an undesirable nature. The path along the journey of becoming a nurse, of learning about caring for others becomes constricted. What is the experience of learning nursing and caring for persons in a place where the student herself feels distressed and held in a narrow sense of hardship? The word stress also has roots in the Latin *strictus* meaning “compressed” and *strigere* meaning, “to draw tight” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 761). April, indeed, feels compressed. She tells me:

During our clinical experiences we are used to struggling— we were all also looking for a mentor. We were always in a panic, never anything emotional or spiritual. (Personal Conversation, 2001)

During panic, certainly one's options are limited; one is closed down to full experiencing. What does it mean to be looking for a mentor? Estes (1995) in her essay "Who is Teacher?" reminds us of the saying, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears" (p. 34). The students are ready.

What is it like to live in the tension between being drawn tight and feeling out of control? April exposes some of these contradictions. She also goes on to show a bodily sense of relief from not having the teacher *leap in*, in a Heideggerian sense, by not having expectations lowered, work taken away or being saved from her patients. "Now," she says, "this is so different—it's like I'm taking a deep breath. I can talk here and someone is going to listen, and think my ideas are important."

It seems that for April, listening releases. When one engages in slow, deep, abdominal breathing, the muscle fibers lengthen, the blood vessels dilate, and in fact, there is a sense of control along with a bodily opening up. What is it in a relationship that allows for opening and release of compression? What is it like to experience presence that allows for deep breathing? What inspires a sense of self to be at once a student and a person? What are the possibilities for being calm and quite quiet? Estes (1995) speaks of 'teacher' in a number of ways, including teacher as rememberer, personified, clay-footed, having integrity, and as culture and life in general. She tells us that "life as teacher" instructs and renews through love, reception, refuge, and blessing (1995, p. 37). Perhaps through this love and reception, refuge and blessing, April is able to take a deep breath.

An Understanding Place

(Candles were lit; we sit close and look at each other. So it's a conversation)

What is this place? Is it a room? A room for presence? What is the meaning of relationship as a lived place? What is the experience of bodily presence in this place? What are the students in the circle telling me? Over and over again, both in the students' written reflections as well as in the taped conversations with April and Diana, the words understanding, real and listening are prominent. They stand out in the student experience, both through their felt absences and presences. The experience of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship has very little at first glance to do with academic concerns. April shares:

Any professor can sit down with you and help you with a paper or something really academic. But not very many professors sit down and *help you figure out yourself* (my emphasis) or why you feel this way, or that it matters... it makes the really hard work worth it all.
(Personal Conversation, 2001)

Again, what is it like to be understood? April touches on the experience of being understood as one that "makes the hard work worth it." Understanding is experienced as creating new meaning or turning to a new perspective. It extends value and becomes part of the person who experiences understanding. April says, "Oh to be listened to, understood, just how hard it is—like it means so much to be able to look to my professor for a sense of 'you can do this, because I believe you can.'"

April expresses what van Manen writes of as "pedagogic hope" (1986a, p. 27). He tells us: "This experience of hope distinguishes a pedagogic life from a non-pedagogic one. What hope gives us is this simple confirmation: 'I will not give up on you.' Hope gives us pedagogy. Or is it pedagogy that gives us hope?" (van Manen, 1986a, pp. 27-28). Another person believing you are worth it begins to validate a becoming sense of personhood. In the circle of understanding, in the sitting around

and as Diana says: “people talking together,” April gathers in and longs for a sense of self. Gadamer expresses that the circle is fundamental to understanding: “The circle of understanding is not a methodological circle, but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding” (1960/2000, p. 293).

Diana reveals the circular nature of understanding with the anxiety that leads the way, making possible the experience of comfort, as she exclaims:

My roommate had you before and oh—well they weren’t horror stories, but she told us it was such an emotional experience. I got nervous. WE ALL GOT NERVOUS!”
(Personal Conversation, 2001)

Students come in to the course, anxious and with many questions. Diana reflects:

At first, when the class started it was like how are we going to accomplish all of this? It was a different role and a different atmosphere than we had ever had, so it was hard. THERE WAS NOTHING TRADITIONAL! Like we were here together, and we are here to begin, like who was going to start? How would *you* maintain control and focus? (Personal Conversation, 2001)

It seems through Diana’s words, layers of meaning are being revealed. There was a sense of something different and unfamiliar about the learning environment. It was scary—like being in a dark, maybe even a chaotic place—out of control. There is a natural inclination to seek the familiar. Being somewhat de-centered, she expresses resistance through questions and her doubts. She may even have been wondering, “Am I going to learn what I need to know?” in this place. Beyond the traditional learning concerns, Diana expresses anxiety about being exposed; she is frightened of the possibility of painful emotional experiences that she has heard through her roommates’ stories. Anxiety was high and there was no quick cover.

Perhaps the students, like Sabina Arnaud in *Death of a Nun* have over the years, learned to use words as a cover-up, as camouflage. They no longer served to tell the truth, but to hide the truth...I felt secure and invulnerable behind them” (as cited in van Manen & Levering, 1996, p. 89). Through our listening and being together in the Listening Space, the students often let themselves be seen in new ways as they engage in authentic relationships in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing. They feel unsettled and fear vulnerability; they experience a closeness and sense of belonging in a new community.

What goes into an understanding way of being? Moran (2000) tells us “Gadamer follows Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, in seeing understanding as the central manner of being-in-the-world” (p. 248). In what ways is understanding central in the student nurse-teacher relationship? What gets us even close? In her own words Diana says: “It was quiet, candles were lit, it is a nice room, we sit close together, and looked at each other. So it is a conversation.” Perhaps part of it is a lived body sense of turning to one another in an intimate place. The way in which she groups her words to describe a conversation has an intimate tone. The atmosphere Diana describes allows for an encounter between student nurse and teacher. The atmosphere invites the ability to listen—to belong.

Gadamer (1960/2000) suggests that being situated in one’s pre-understandings with attention to one’s own tradition makes “freedom of knowledge possible” (p. 361). He goes on to say:

Knowing and recognizing [one’s tradition] constitutes the highest type of hermeneutical experience. It too has a real analogue in the I’s experience of the Thou. In human relations the important thing is, as we have seen, to experience the Thou truly as a Thou—i.e. not to

overlook his claim but to let him really say something to us. Here is where openness belongs. Without such openness to one another there is no genuine human bond. Belonging together always also means being able to listen to one another. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 361)

Gadamer shows respect for what each person in the hermeneutic conversation brings to the table. My own longing for this form of encounter has rooted my psychotherapy practice. It is my hope in ‘being-with’ my students in teaching and learning as well. Being open and invitational to self and others is a tough assignment for young nursing students. “[In class] you have a chance to learn from one another’s experience—what you go through, what I go through—it’s growing in relationship,” says Diana. April says the “big thing of understanding is that what we are going through is real.” Diana believes that what is important about listening is “being a real person.” Diana and April lead us to understanding and truths through genuine conversation. Gadamer speaks to such truth in listening and conversation as well:

[Partners in a successful conversation] come under the influence of the truth of the object and are thus bound to one another in a new community. To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were. (1960/2000, p. 379)

We come to the table of learning nursing—as companions along the journey—taking care and sometimes breaking bread together. With compassion, we suffer together. Students and teacher turn together in conversation “under the influence of the truth,” celebrating a new sense of community. Karen writes in her journal about her experience in the Listening Space: “At no other time in my school career have I felt such strong connection to my peers” (2002). Around this table transformation is possible—Christine shows us such transformation in her poem

about our class: “They came together in many different pieces, now they’re a whole, one group completed” (2001). Together we prepare this table.

Hermeneutic Conversation in the Sacred Kitchen Table Space

The voices of students’ experiences led me to Palmer’s (1993) book, *To Know As We Are Known* and to his words “To teach is to create a space in which obedience to the truth is practiced” (p. xii), or “To teach is to create a space in which the community of truth is practiced” (p. xii). What is the nature of creating this space in nursing? What is the experience of truth emerging in the context of ‘being-with’ in relationship? What is possible in that sometimes chaotic, yet creative space, between the curriculum plan and the lived curriculum? (Aoki, 1991). Palmer (1993) reinforces, “In a thousand ways, the relationships of the academic community form the hearts and minds of students, shaping their sense of self and their relation to the world” (p. 20). What is the student nurse experience with the nursing academic community, of the student nurse-teacher relationship? What is the nature of ‘being-with’ and belonging on the comforter—under the influence of the truth?

I look to Bollnow (1989) for his scholarship on “pedagogical atmosphere.” What is the nature of this dwelling place for teachers and students? He writes: “I take the term *pedagogical atmosphere* to mean all those fundamental emotional conditions and sentient human qualities that exist between the educator and the child and which form the basis for every pedagogical relationship” (p. 5). I ponder these conditions and qualities as I reflect on ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. What forms the basis for the pedagogical relationship of student nurse and teacher? What is the tone around the table? What are the sentient human qualities? In my

experience of ‘being-with’ my students, the qualities are those embodied in a tactful stance—“hearing, feeling, and respecting the essence of a person” (van Manen, 1991, p. 133).

To hear, feel, and respect the essence of another seems to require a dwelling together. Heidegger tells us that “The Old English and High German word for building, *baun*, means to dwell” (1971b, p. 144). Most telling here are his words: “The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans are on the earth, is *baun*, dwelling” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 145). Another beautiful opening to the understanding of creating a place in which to dwell is through the unfolding of the word *chora*:

Chora actually means “place.” The word goes together with choreo: one could paraphrase the meaning of this verb as: to give place by withdrawing and becoming an embracing space. (Held, as cited in Anton, 2001, p. 18)

The way in which students and teachers find themselves being together expresses the nature of the pedagogy. Let us withdraw—being embraced—and dwell here in a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’

In my home growing up, we lived at the kitchen table. The kitchen table is where tea was shared, stories were told, bread was broken, home-work was done, and caring was lived with family members. So too, students and teacher share life, engaging respectfully around a communal table of learning—a place given by withdrawing and becoming embracing. This is a place of emerging and creative tension.

The word *bauen*, originally meaning dwelling, also means “to cherish and protect, to preserve and care for” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 145). What is the nature of

the pedagogical relationship in nursing academia? What might it mean to cherish and protect, preserve and care for my students in this dominantly technical world? In what ways might I stand in-between so as to understand the becoming nurse? I am called even more deeply to wonder about the laying out of blankets of understanding as I listen to April.

I feel like I am cared about as a person. I have a sense of someone cares about me—not only whether I hand a paper in on time, type of thing. With you, I feel you care about me—that I am OK. You care about me, not only what is going on.
(Personal Conversation, 2001)

Respecting and reflecting on the very nature of the distance which opens up between the worlds of the classical text is emphasized by Gadamer (1960/2000). He writes that the “true locus of hermeneutics is in this in-between” (p. 295). It seems that hermeneutics finds its home place in some surprising ways— and in open spaces between the public and private places.

A poem I wrote in the summer of 2001 at the time of my husband, John’s, mother’s death makes its way into the open space of the classroom during a class on understanding and caring for persons with Alzheimer’s disease. I write from the *entredoux*, inviting learning from the soul. My telling of Dorothy (*Mémère*) through *The Open Kitchen Door* invites my students to ‘be-with’ me in a powerful pedagogical moment.

The Open Kitchen Door

Lover of stories you are—
Leaving your gifts page by page
Around the kitchen table of life.
We all learn from you, *Mémère*
Gentleness and Humility.
Letters beautifully penned are forever imprinted

Inscribed in our souls.
 Delicate and thoughtful lessons—
 Treasures full of care, loving,
 Care-full you are.

You bless us all—your faithful Robert—
 Lives the stories of Dot, young pretty girl
 Bride of almost 60 years.
 Your devoted children—Rose, Joan, John, and Rita
 And their families gathered with you for many vacations—re-creation.
 At the kitchen door your smiles welcomed us home,
 Your tears bid us farewell.
 And your ten grandchildren from 3-32
 Each one—bathed in your sink, drenched in your love.

Illness covered you over, a raging storm it was.
 Snatching you—back and forth
 Away from your Self, leaving
 Tension, fear, chaos—
 Lost.

You re-cover now.
 Calm and transcendent
 Laying out for us eternal presence, echoes deep within.
 And now, we re-member and pray—
 You bless us with your skilled and knowing hands.
 Nursing and nurturing and knowing by heart.

Hands holding stories you tend and share
 Music, lobster stew, clothes fresh from the line,
Cretons, chicken pot pie,
Tourtière and prayer.
 Butterscotch sundaes and giggles too
 Fill our senses
 Opening us to your for-ever presence.

With open hands, now letting go—
 You re-turn and
 Peace once more.
 Dorothy, Dot, Mom, *Mémère*, Grandma
 The kitchen door is open—
 And we know from you that
 Fare well is coming home.
 (Mary Packard, 2001)

The sharing of my own life with Dorothy holds an invitation of presence for others.

Rumi writes:

Listen to presence inside poems.
Let them take you where they will.

Follow those private hints, and Never leave the premises.
(Rumi, as cited in Moyne & Barks, 1986, p. 37)

Phenomenology insists that I follow the hints, the wafting secrets of the soul being uncovered. Phenomenology calls for a dwelling in the premises of comfort and anxiety. Pedagogy and phenomenology make possible a living of life in the center, in-dwelling—reflectively bringing into nearness (van Manen, 1990, p. 32) the essence of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. Diana says with a grin:

I mean you still taught us what we need to know, but it wasn’t like this ‘a,’ ‘b,’ ‘c,’ and ‘d’ that you need to know. It was like an interaction with each other. We learned from you how to ask questions, and to ask more questions, and when to move the topic. You still keep things going and guided the learning without standing out as ‘I am the teacher and you are going to do as I say.’
(Personal Conversation, 2001)

And so I wonder, what might it mean to ‘stand in’ in this space? April says, “Maybe it is saying I want to help you, I want to be present in your life.” The students and I learn from Dorothy to lay out presence that echoes within. Keep open that kitchen door—open to the hearth—in the listening space. “Being-with’ offers hope and promise.

Hermeneutics—the Dance of Understanding

Meagan writes in her journal reflections of the interconnectedness of her modern dance class with her experience as a nursing student:

I am very happy that I took that class. Dance allows my brain to stretch itself and think in corporeal terms versus conceptual terms. In one of the first dance classes I took, my instructor critiqued me by

saying that I was thinking too much! What a shock to me...when did thinking too much ever hurt you?!? Well, in dance if you get too caught up in where your feet are going while placing your arms correctly and maintaining your balance by tucking your tummy and don't forget to point your toes!!! You get confused and instead of moving— you stand there. I needed to just *dance*. And what a challenge that was for my brain. It's a nice philosophy for life—keep moving, live and listen to the beat of your experiences and let the details fall into place without worrying too much about them. This will allow a person to be alive—gracefully. In nursing, this idea shows itself too. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

What is the meaning of the dance? Meagan says: “I needed to just *dance*.” What is the nature of the dance in the pedagogical moment in nursing? In what ways does a relationship reveal a person alive—gracefully so? Meagan begins to raise existential questions: What does it mean to be human? What is the nature of being alive?

Phenomenology is a way of being that draws me to an uncovering, compelling me to stand under, and to engage at the center. Hermeneutic phenomenology unveils and reveals—allowing an unfolding of the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. The unfolding is a dance of understanding.

What is the nature of the dance in the nursing world? Gadamer (1960/2000) writes, “Hermeneutic work is based on the polarity of familiarity and strangeness” (p. 295). The back and forth, the to and fro—the play—this is the dance of understanding. Oriah Mountain Dreamer (2002) in her poem, *The Dance*, opens up a way of embracing the familiar and the strange and shows persons, as Meagan (2002) states, “alive—gracefully so” (p. 2) in authentic relationship. I share the poem here as a way of opening to the nature of the hermeneutic dance and to a deeper place of questioning.

The Dance

I have sent you my invitation,
 The note inscribed on the palm of my hand by the fire of living.
 Don't jump and shout, "Yes, this is what I want! Let's do it!"
 Just stand by quietly and dance with me.

Show me how you follow your deepest desires,
 Spiraling down into the ache within the ache,
 And I will show you how I reach inward and open outward
 To feel the kiss of the Mystery, sweet lips on my own, every day.

Don't tell me you want to hold the whole world in your heart.
 Show me how you turn away from making another wrong without
 Abandoning yourself when you are hurt and afraid of being involved.

Tell me a story of who you are,
 And see who I am in the stories I am living.
 And together we will remember that each of us always has a choice.

Don't tell me how wonderful things will be...someday.
 Show me you can risk being completely at peace,
 Truly okay with the way things are right now in this moment,
 And again in the next and the next.

I have heard enough warrior stories of heroic daring.
 Tell me how you crumble when you hit the wall,
 The place you cannot go beyond by the strength of your own will.
 What carries you to the other side of that wall,
 To the fragile beauty of your own humanness?

And after we have shown each other how we have set and kept the
 Clear, healthy boundaries that help us live side by side with each other,
 Let us risk remembering that we never stop silently loving
 Those we once loved out loud.

Take me to the places on earth that teach you how to dance,
 The places where you can risk letting the world break your heart,
 And I will take you to the places where the earth beneath my feet
 And the stars overhead make my heart whole again.

Show me how you take care of business
 Without letting business determine who you are.
 When the children are fed but still voices within and around us
 Shout the soul's desires have too high a price,
 Let us remind each other that it is never about the money.

Show me how you offer to your people and the world
 The stories and the songs you want our children's children to
 remember,
 And I will show you how I struggle,
 Not to change the world, but to love it.

Sit beside me in long moments of shared solitude,
 Knowing both our absolute aloneness and our undeniable belonging.
 Dance with me in the silence and in the sound of small daily words,
 Holding neither against me at the end of the day.

And when the sound of all the declarations of our sincerest
 Intentions has died away on the wind,
 Dance with me in the infinite pause before the next great inhale
 Of the breath that is breathing us all into being,
 Not filling the emptiness from the outside or from within.

Don't say, "Yes!"
 Just take my hand and dance with me.
 (Mountain Dreamer, 2001, pp. xiii-xv)

I receive this poem at the "ground of my soul" where its invitation turns to questions of hermeneutics—to questions about the nature of 'being-with,' particularly here in the student nurse-teacher relationship. The invitation is familiar in my own offering—as one that I extend and live with my students in the teaching and learning of nursing. I call my students to "Show me how you follow your deepest desires, and to spiral down into the ache within the ache." As they engage in required written thoughtful reflections and attempt to make meaning of their experiences in psychiatric nursing practice, they find themselves in vulnerable places. Through autobiographical renderings on the first day of class, they respond to this: "Tell me a story of who you are." As we gather in our work of the semester, we do dance in the "silence and in the sound of the small daily words."

“Stand by quietly and dance with me.” As I face this invitation in a pedagogical context—as I bring the invitation in to the center of my being—I hear questions within questions. I find myself being addressed by the questions in new ways as I dance with the invitation as Gadamer would have us do with a work of art (Gadamer, 1960/2000). I am discovering that through this ‘to and fro’ I am called not only to ‘be-with’ others in their “ache within the ache,” but to open to my own as well. Through questioning, the dance calls for an un-covering of the person who is teacher. Oriah Mountain Dreamer’s words challenge me as one who wishes to engage in a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning—at the core of my being.

And I am compelled to ask: In what ways do I show my own humanness and fragility? What makes my heart whole? In what ways do I show myself in the stories that I live? As a teacher, I reach inward and open outward and I take my students to “places where the earth beneath my feet and the stars overhead make my heart whole again”—yet I cover over the ways in which I “crumble” when the wall is hit. Is the story I tell one of who I am or one of who I ought to be? The questions to be lived into answers eventually are asked from a place of genuine vulnerability, from the “ache within the ache.” The dance moves in understanding and interpreting ways and holds many “moments of anxiety” (Heidegger, 1953/1996). Heidegger connects here with me again as I am intertwined with my questions. He sheds light on the profundity of such questions:

But if the question “What does call for thinking?” is asking what it is that first of all directs us to think, then we are asking for something that concerns ourselves because it calls upon us, upon our very being. It is we ourselves to whom the question “What is called thinking?” is addressed directly. We ourselves are in the text and texture of the question. The question “What calls on us to think?” has already drawn

us into the substance of the inquiry. We ourselves are, in the strict sense of the word, put in question by the question.
(1954/1968, pp. 115-116)

Being “put in question by the question” calls me to “spiral down to the ache within the ache” (Mountain Dreamer, 2001, p. xiii). The dance is one of living in questions—a place of hermeneutics unraveling the nature of ‘being-with.’ As a teacher the questions, indeed, cause me to wonder, ponder, stumble and to be “drawn into the substance of the inquiry.” I learn that the dance simultaneously shows the way and lies deep within—‘being -with.’ And perhaps, too, I learn that the choreograph calls for one “to give place by withdrawing and becoming an embracing place” (Held, as cited in Anton, 2001, p. 18).

Dancing in the circle.

A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting. He projects a meaning for the text as a whole as soon as some initial meaning emerges in the text. The initial meaning emerges only because he is reading the text with with particular expectations in regard to a certain meaning. Working out this fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 267)

I am charged with the richness and complexity of what it means to understand when the text is living text—persons in relation to other persons. What is it like, then, to “penetrate meaning?” What is the experience of understanding in a face-to-face, lived body way? Significant marriage, friendship, and pedagogical relationships hold possibilities for such intensity and possibility for infinite levels of understanding. Imagine—the beauty of the dance of the interpreter and understanding, the liveliness of the dance of understanding in the circle. Imagine the beauty of the dance of the tensions. Imagine the dance—in the listening circle—the dance of the in-between, the

(p)lace of hermeneutics. What is the experience of being in this circle? Some of the questions to which the dance is the response have been raised in the last section.

Now, in the circling—and in the questioning—“Just take my hand and dance with me” (Mountain Dreamer, 2001, p. xv).

Dancing in place.

Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditionary text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which the text speaks. On the other hand, hermeneutical consciousness is aware that its bond to this subject matter does not consist in some self-evident, unquestioned unanimity. Hermeneutic work is based on the polarity of familiarity and strangeness. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 295)

What is the position of seeking understanding of one with whom one is in relationship with, as in the teacher with the student nurse? Or student nurse with the patient? Jill, a senior nursing student writes in one of her Journal Reflections:

First, I want to reflect on the “Nursing ‘How Are You?’” (Cameron, 1992) conversation we had as a group in class. When I think about the reality of the “How are you?” it really seems so superficial. It’s like we say it because we mean well, but we really just say it to be polite. When I think about my class experience, I really hope that when I ask, “How are you?” of a patient or of an acquaintance or fellow class members, I can really mean what I say and care about an answer. I want them to know that what they are feeling is important to me. I want to make time to know the truth. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

The student becomes teacher in reflecting a certain desire to understand her classmates and patients, along with a position or belief of the truth as something inside the other that may show itself with time and a certain presence. What is the nature of ‘being-with’ when understanding is desired? Having thoughtfully reflected on what matters, Jill lives in the tensions that are brought forward in the introduction to Heidegger’s *What is Called Thinking?*

Heidegger's conception of truth as the revealing of what is concealed, in distinction to the theory of truth as correctness or correspondence, is probably his most seminal thought and philosophy's most essential task, as he sees it...only by thinking that is truly involved, patient and disciplined by long practice can one come to know either the hidden or disclosed character of truth. (Gray, 1954/1968, p. xii)

Jill expresses wanting “to make time”—and struggles between knowing who she is, her hopes for ‘being-with’ patients and the fears about time and authentic living in practice. The dance is slow and involved; the dance is fast and falling. In the dance, student becomes teacher. Following becomes leading. In the circle, the dance—is.

When we sat together for our first clinical day and were told to give an autobiographical rendering, I think that each person's heart started beating about ten times faster. We think we know each other really well, and they know as much about us as we want them to know, and we like each other for who we are. But when it comes the point of digging a little deeper into our lives it becomes an area of great unease. Each of us feels vulnerable, in that we are afraid to open up because maybe we have something from our past that others might look upon and think “oh, how could she do that, I cannot believe I was friends with her.” We are vulnerable because we are exposing ourselves and are afraid of being hurt. We are afraid of what is going through the other person's mind as we reveal a little more about ourselves. However, as I did tell my story I found that the group could really be a support to each other, and they listened intently to me. Each person has a unique experience to share and this made the learning experience richer. I will remember as I work with my patients, that yes, they may be a “patient” in the hospital but they are people too, just like you and me and what is on the outside is just a small piece of their life story on the inside. (Melissa, Journal Reflections, 2001)

Melissa, through reflections on our first class meeting and of autobiographical work, brings forward many of the tensions that are lived in the experience of ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning—feeling vulnerable and finding comfort through listening—and the often unknown story on the “inside.”

Stories invite us to know the world and our place in it. Whether narratives of history, present experience, or the imagination, stories

call us to consider what we know, what we hope for, who we are, and what and whom we care about. (Witherell, 1995, p. 40)

In our Listening Space, Melissa experienced the power of intense listening, and perhaps new ways of being with self and patients. The Listening Space becomes place.

Heidegger (1971b) helps to open up the meaning of space and place as he explores etymologically the ancient word for space, *raum*, *rum*. “*Raum* means a place cleared for settlement and lodging. A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 152). The inn-between space is cleared for lodging—free—with room for presence. Cleared through the dance, the Listening Space becomes Place.

Belonging at the Listening Hearth

The Listening Space, my classroom, is becoming a metaphor for me to continue to open up understanding of the sacred place of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. As we gather in this Listening Space in the teaching and learning of nursing, the space, indeed, becomes place. Our way of gathering allows for an understanding that is a gathering-in—a return to a home place as well as to a world not yet known. The Listening Space becomes a place for living in questions, and a new question emerges through Gadamer: “Where exactly is the dividing line between the present world and the world that comes to be?” (1960/2000, p. xxx). Perhaps understanding ‘being-with’ at the hearth of the classroom helps in this unfolding. And so we return here once again, echoing and caring with new stories.

Casey (1993) writes of hearth and home in a way that leads and envelops me with a notion of a listening hearth:

To allude to the hearth, however, is to land immediately in another elusive binary pair: “hearth and home.” Even in Romance languages that do not have different words for “house” and “home,” hearth is a metonymy for home, e.g., *le foyer familial* or *focolare domestico*. But just as we must deliteralize “home”—[hearth] is the primary point of distinguishing “home” from “house in the first place... “It takes a heap o’ living to make a house a home.” This is why homes can be “somewhere in” places: deeply ensconced there...no wonder that the hearth can stand in for home, since it this feature deepest within a house and a place we literally inhabit. (pp. 299-300)

As the students and I engage in a “heap o’ living’ the hearth shows itself in the gathering. Through this place of “localized caring” (Casey, 1993, p. 299) the students live in the tension between ‘being-with’ and going out. And again an invitation calls.

Berman (1998) writes that Maxine Green invites persons to “inner probing and outward action” (p. 173). I learn from her about “being free to meander, and am also called to create and be in lively communities concerned about complex dilemmas. Maxine Greene calls persons in to conversations about what matters” (p. 173). What is the nature of such a mattering conversation between nursing students and teachers?

The word converse is traced to the Latin word, *conversen*, in about 1380, meaning “to live, or dwell” (Barnhart, 1995, p.159). Conversation, the noun, means a “living together, a manner of behaving” (p. 159). What does it mean to be called in conversation? Conversation as dwelling opens up questions about what it is like to live, dwell in relation to another human being, in this case with the student nurse and teacher. What is it like to be called into conversation?

Further exploration of the word conversation from the Latin *convertere* reveals the meaning of “to turn about, or to change” (Barnhart, 1995, p. 159).

Annmarie writes:

The experience of being a part of this group has truly been an enlightening experience for me. Watching each of us “bloom” through each of our beautiful layers was exhilarating—even though the “blooming” of some of those layers brought tears of sadness as well as of joy. Being a part of such a wonderful and dynamic group has brought much happiness to me...and even though the “blooming” has been difficult for me at times; I do not regret sharing with you or the class. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

What is the nature of the conversation that allows one to turn, perhaps to see anew, and to change in the direction of becoming whole—to bloom as a way of opening up?

What is it that matters of what we bring into conversation? What is it that allows the inner probing to become outward action? Perhaps it is belonging at the hearth.

What will make it possible for the inner probing that Melissa experienced to be brought forward to the outward caring of her patients? Will Annmarie be present in new ways to her patients as she experiences a deeper and richer knowing of herself? Mel writes of her experience of the first day:

As the minutes drew closer to entering the ‘Listening Space,’ I dreaded it more and more. I did not want everyone to know how I felt about things and what causes me pain and frustration in my life. I try to keep things covered up...and I was so tired and I didn’t want to get up early on that Wednesday morning, especially not to talk about feelings. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

Mel may eventually come to experience the Listening Space as a place—offering unfolding comfort—as understanding—a blanket enveloping her. Lisa shows her experiencing of being in the teaching and learning situation as one that transforms:

Although I was disappointed to be leaving the group at the end of the rotation I was also very excited about the gift I had been given through the group. This intellectual and spiritual gift changed both my views of myself and the ways that I look at others. It has helped me to reflect on

my own beliefs and values, as well as my attitudes towards others. This gift has not only influenced my personal life, but it has also influenced my professional practice. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

What is it that allows inner probing to become outward action—to be never again the same? Perhaps it is the creating of a home place that allows one to risk the journey, going out from the inner hearth. People live here—students and teacher. So does anxiety, fear, not knowing, comfort, joy, risking being vulnerable, and learning caring: Listening Space be-coming—embracing Place.

Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.
(Frost, as cited in Lathem, 1979, p. 38)

You are welcome here. You belong.

Grace, lace, and a shared cup of tea.

The *in diesem Zwischen*, the in-between zone, the place of converging horizons, the “moment of anxiety” about which Heidegger (1953/1996) writes—the true locus of hermeneutics—this is the place that begins to reveal the essence of what it means to ‘be-with’ in the teaching and learning of nursing. With great care, I return home now to the question that calls this inquiry: **What is the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship?** I hope to uncover with gentleness, listen with intensity, and engage in “preparing a space that intertwines identities in a retrieval of being” (Hultgren, 1995, p. 386). The tensions— between delicacy and strength, covering over and opening up are as lace—revealing both in their veiling and un-veiling.

Heidegger, Gadamer, and others provide me the textual foundation; the blankets, the candle, the circle, and lace await a ‘lying open’ and ‘letting be seen.’

And now, before we move on to chapter three where we sit with the philosophers—before we engage in a deeper sense of living in the questions, let us take a break as companions—here at the hearth of my soul. Let us take a creative pause for renewal and share grace, lace and a cup of tea.

Grace, Lace and a Shared Cup of Tea

Calling into presence with joy, first, before
Lively conversation at the hearth of my soul—before also a
Cup of steaming Irish Breakfast tea
Which invigorates and invites essences in the Home place—
Inhabit stillness *anam cara* and
Be.

Candlelight and closing eyes envision,
Attune to the holiness of the gaze of deep within.
It is presence—listen!
Music in the beat of hearts and rhythm of the silence.
Body breathes itself and inspires peaceful
Presence.

Tensions and paradoxes find their place, making room, creating
space—
Fighte fuaight—woven into and through the other—the Irish say
They are.
Gentle breezes flow through us too—grace.

Lace

Here is the invitation to belong.
Awaken and call to recognition the rich texture of the soul.
The Listening embrace of the *claddagh* circle calls
Love—friendship—fidelity
Hands weaving into and through hearts hold the crown
Lace and grace filled—re-veil soul love!

This is the threshold.
Let us lay down the blankets in this place.
(Packard, 2001)

**CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGICAL GROUNDING
A QUESTION OF BEING—THE GROUND OF THE SOUL**

My dear Mr. Kappus:

I have left a letter from you unanswered for a long time; not because I had forgotten it—on the contrary: it is the kind that one reads again when one finds it among other letters, and I recognize you in it as if you were very near...I feel that there is no one anywhere who can answer for you those questions and feelings which, in their depths, have a life of their own; for even the most articulate people are unable to help, since what words point to is so very delicate, is almost unsayable...If you trust in Nature, in what is simple in Nature, in the small Things that hardly anyone sees and that can so suddenly become huge, immeasurable...If you have this love for what is humble...then everything will become easier for you, more coherent and somehow more reconciling, not in your conscious mind perhaps, which stays behind, astonished, but in your innermost awareness, awakens, and knowledge. You are so young, so much before all beginning, and I would like to beg of you, dear friend, as well as I can, to have patience with everything unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

Yours,
Rainier Maria Rilke (1903-1908/1984, pp. 32-35)

Rilke, one of 20th century's greatest writers, wrote this letter to a younger poet, Franz Kappus on July 19, 1903—99 years ago. As I now enter into conversational space with Rilke, I receive his letter as a vessel of precious gems—outpouring thoughtfulness—engaging me at the core of chapter three—the questions of meaning. In a moment of solitude, I seek deep within myself, longing to live life at the center. In the midst of the continuing search, I see my then four-year old son Aidan's apple juice-filled yellow plastic sippy cup with faded dinosaurs on the trim, I see my students' diet Coke cans, my own Starbucks' coffee cup—and my husband

John's silver chalice given to him by his parents on his Ordination Day. And I live in the questions "in between"—in between the plastic and the silver. Bachelard (1958/1994) is right: "Every chalice is a dwelling place" (p. 55), a place to encounter the center. My study seeks to encounter the center of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship. This chapter provides a grounding for this place through the philosophers I call upon as I am called by the questions that give rise to this hermeneutic phenomenological exploration.

Being—Called By the Questions

I interpret Rilke's (1903-1908/1984) words as advice to slow down and ponder thoughtfully what it means as a teacher to be put in question by the question. His words are mine as well, as I engage with my nursing students on their beginning journeys. Love the questions and eventually live into the answers. The question is this: "What is the nature of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship?" The answers may be revealed through the practice of thoughtfulness and in time—as students and teacher live together in the teaching and learning of nursing—awake in our innermost beings—in this dwelling place.

In the preface to Bachelard's (1971/1987) *On Poetic Imagination and Reverie*, Colette Gaudin writes: "Bachelard never lets his readers forget that the word method has a double connotation" (p. xxi). Method "suggests the rigor of a system and the indeterminacy carried by its Greek root *hodos* ("way"); it mixes personal discovery and conceptual construction" (Gaudin, 1971/1987, p. xxi). In this chapter, a challenge is to open up the questions and to make way for continuing inquiry and discovery. I

invite you to live the questions with me—living in the tensions that may allow us eventually to experience answers.

The questions call for a methodology—a way of knowing—shown through being. Hultgren (1991) writes: “My knowing is revealed through my power to be” (p. 13). We come to know as we come to Be. Hermeneutic phenomenology leads the way to the center of the question, unfolding and enlarging possibilities for living. The methodological grounding is rich and deep—compelling discovery at the ontological core of our being (van Manen, 1990). The grounding is not merely a method to follow or a conceptual construction—phenomenology is a way of being. Van Manen (1990) tells us that: “Phenomenological research has, as its ultimate aim, the fulfillment of our human nature: to become more fully who we are” (p. 12).

The horizons of living and loving embedded in Rilke’s life lessons merge with that of phenomenology through questioning and understanding. What allows me to spiral deep into the essence of the question? What will lead me in to understandings of the meaning of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse teacher relationship—to the richness and sometimes ineffability of such lived encounters? Hermeneutic phenomenology offers possibilities for leading the way to the center of the question to which this inquiry is given. “Hermeneutic phenomenological research,” writes van Manen (1990), “is a search for the fullness of life” (p. 12). Phenomenology may allow us openings in to the “locked rooms” and new ways of understanding treasures covered over in “books,”—the texts of our lives.

Ontology: A Sacred Play Ground

At this point it is important to begin to explicate the significant philosophical areas of grounding for this study. The essence of this study, while concerning pedagogy in the dominantly technical world of nursing education, is not meaningfully named through a technical-quantitative mode. As I tend to the questions posed, I must by nature of the questions I am posing, participate in an *ontological* investigation. And so, I turn to the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, Martin Heidegger, Edward Casey, Gaston Bachelard, and David Levin for their contributions in the way of understanding the nature of being and ‘being-with’—ontology as explored through *Da-sein*, care, play, conversation, listening, questions, and the significance of place. I enter into conversational space with Max van Manen, Francine Hultgren, Otto Bollnow, and others who provide possibilities, ways, and guidance for living in phenomenological relationships and “doing” phenomenology.

The way to understanding the nature of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship requires a thoughtful attunement to questions regarding the meaning of being that are posed by these philosophers, phenomenologists, and others. Living the questions and eventually living into answers is the work of one who engages in hermeneutic phenomenology. A ‘to and fro’ with the text created by students and teacher, authentic being in the tension of living “in-between,” sensitivity, and an interpretive dance leads to possibilities for greater understanding of the nature of ‘being-with.’ “Hermeneutics is an *art* and not a mechanical process. Thus it brings its work, its understanding, to completion like a work of art” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 191).

As hermeneutic phenomenological research is characterized by always beginning in the lifeworld (van Manen, 1990), this human science investigation necessarily questions the way I experience the world of nursing and pedagogy. Van Manen shows the poignant and artistic wholeness in his way of thinking about research itself as pedagogical:

Hermeneutic phenomenological research edifies the personal insight contributing to one's thoughtfulness and one's ability to act toward others, children or adults, with tact or tactfulness. In this sense, human science research is itself a kind of *Bildung* or *paideia*; it is a curriculum of being and becoming. (1990, p. 7)

Researcher, conversants, and the text created and interpreted offer up possibilities for new ways of being and living in the nursing world. The research itself is a work of art—a curriculum of listening through light and dark—play and care. I am humbled to imagine, as van Manen suggests of human science research, this particular research project as a curriculum of being and becoming.

Da-sein: Being—Embraced By the Silence

The question at the heart of this inquiry: **What is the lived experience of 'being-with' in the student nurse-teacher relationship?** both springs from and longs for a stillness—a silence. The experience of silence is at once new and familiar—deeply personal and relational—welcoming and frightening. Living into the answers requires a present dwelling together through listening—both in the silence and in the echo.

On the last day of class in N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice last semester, one of my students, Becky, suggested a closing exercise that my 12 students and I would do together. She asked that we save a half hour from the end of class for

the activity. We had experienced a semester rich in personal growth, a strong sense of community, and the responsibility that the students took for their own learning is any teacher's dream.

As time draws near to the last half hour, I express both my delight in the time we have shared together and my sadness in our parting—and then Becky takes the lead. She prepares us by putting on a CD now familiar to all—Stephen Halpern's soothing instrumental, "Comfort Zone." Becky passes out 13 pieces of paper, one to each of us, telling us to write our name on the top of the paper in front of us. Reflect on the semester together, and pass the paper to your right. We now have a paper with someone else's name on it. We reflect and then write a message to the person whose name is on the paper. After a few giggles, the room becomes fully alive with quiet. Each person writes, and in one graceful motion, passes the paper again to the right. And again. And again.

And then, in a moment of surprise that brings us to new tensions, we now have our own page in front of us—transformed by the messages of those who had written to each of us. Heads down, with words not yet spoken—a rich hush fills the Listening Space, the silence of reflection.

Silenced by the stillness of reflection—reflection on what has been said and on what remains to be said, even merely with a feeling of gratitude for the profundity achieved in the conversation. And when the conversation finally does sink into silence, it is no empty silence, but a fulfilled silence. The truth, not only of the insight that has been acquired, but the truth of life, the state of being in truth that has been achieved in the conversation, continues to make itself felt, indeed becomes deeper, in the course of this silence. (Bollnow, as cited in van Manen, 1990, pp. 99-100)

Tears and sniffles. Time goes by. Thank you so much. How I treasure that notebook paper with my students' handwriting—gifts on the page. This page is imprinted in the curriculum of being and becoming.

Heidegger's words reverberate here:

Being-with-one-another is based initially and often exclusively on what is taken care of together in such being...when they devote themselves to the same thing in common, their doing is so determined by their *Da-sein*, which has been stirred. (1953/1996, p. 15)

Indeed, the room is charged with the *Da-sein* of teacher and students together having been stirred, and Becky doing this activity with us—determined care-fully by being. How lovely to be in truth together—as student becomes teacher and teacher becomes student—made possible through authentic relationship. Again, Heidegger (1953/1996) must have been in the classroom this day: “This authentic alliance first makes possible the proper kind of objectivity which frees the other for himself in this freedom” (p. 115). As shown through the tender messages written, this freedom was indeed experienced. The “doing” of this particular phenomenological study, I believe, is likewise determined by *my* own Being—having been stirred.

This day the students and I experienced a “hearkening back to the silence from which words emanate” (van Manen, 1990, p. 13). Becky writes about this very day:

The last class session was so emotional for me. Not just because the stories shared were touching, as they all were, but because it was our last clinical group together. We were not saying goodbye, as we still will have graduation, which I will have an extremely difficult time doing, but we were bringing our clinical skills rotation to a close. I would see these people for several more classes and all of next semester, but we would not be in our safe haven that is the Listening Space. It was as though no one wanted to leave the room at the close of the group. We even went over by 20 minutes and there was no

shuffling of papers or looking at the clock. There were only silent tearful looks of contentment and thanks. At that moment I felt closer to each and every person in that room than I ever had before. In that short time, I believe that lives were changed, eyes were opened, wills may have been broken, and hearts perhaps mended ever so delicately. (Journal Reflections, 2002)

Stillness envelops us; I am embraced by the silence—urged to discover the “secrets and intimacies” that lie at the ontological core of my being (van Manen, 1990). So, in the spirit of phenomenology, I open myself to myself and to the privilege of encountering my students in the silence—in the still dance of understanding the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the everydayness of the classroom and in this act of research. Van Manen writes:

In doing research we question the world’s very secrets and intimacies which are constitutive of the world, and which bring the world as world into being for us and in us. Then research is a caring act: we want to know what is most essential to being. To care is to serve and to share our being with the one we love. We desire to truly know our loved one’s very nature. And if our love is strong enough, we not only will learn much about life, we will come face to face with its mystery. (1990, pp. 6-7)

This phenomenological inquiry into the nature of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship is intended as a caring act—engaging in understanding about what is essential to ‘being-with’ as student and teacher. The inquiry leads also to questions not yet named and to the mysteries embedded in the familiar and ordinary practice. As we continue to journey through conversations and places of methodological grounding, join me in the many possibilities that being-with-others-in-the-world offers. I turn to persons who have come before me and who are with me—phenomenologists, existential philosophers, writers, poets, students and others, who in this relational space—become text for this project.

Estragon: In the meantime let us try and converse calmly, since we are incapable of keeping silent.

Vladimir: You're right, we're inexhaustible.

Estragon: It's so we won't think.

Vladimir: We have that excuse.

Estragon: It's so we won't hear.
(Beckett, 1954, pp. 68-69)

Estragon and Vladimir, in the tragicomedy, *Waiting for Godot*, show their anxiety as they engage in the wait for Godot. Through their bantering back and forth, they show us the human struggle of living in the tension between desire to understand and fear of uncovering the capacity for listening and caring. Living in this very tension—in the question that this inquiry calls—invites us to hearken back, to think and to listen together, to sink into silence, and prepare the way for meaningful conversation and discovery. Rumi affirms such a search with his question:

Dear soul, if you were not friends
With the vast nothing inside,
Why would you always be casting your net
Into it, and waiting so patiently?
(as cited in Barks, 1995, 24)

'Being-With': Da-sein Penetrating the Listening Space

I pause now in this silence to offer a philosophical contextual grounding, to continue to attempt to embrace both the mystery and the simplicity of 'being-with,' and to show connections through experience in the Listening Space. Heidegger (1953/1996) brings forward a significant paradox revealed as *Da-sein* is explicated through his words: "What is ontically nearest and familiar is ontologically the farthest, unrecognized and constantly overlooked in its ontological significance" (p. 41). The

unraveling of this paradox may bear significant relevance to the pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education. So close and yet so far away—how much simpler are the words as expressed in this once popular song! Yet, careful attunement and understanding of *Da-sein* has everything to do with revealing the meaning of ‘being-with.’ My hope and attempt here is toward a way of unfolding this blanket of understanding that will allow for questions that may in fact lead us to the possibility of a richer experiencing—in the practice of teaching and learning together.

What in the world is *Da-sein*? Who in the world is *Da-sein*? Heidegger’s (1953/1996) work in *Being and Time* is central to this ongoing exploration in the nursing world. He lays out the meaning of *Da-sein* in ways that show philosophical grounding for what goes into my laying out of blankets of understanding and comfort with my students so that *they* may be seen.

The world of *Da-sein* is a *with-world*. Being-in is *being-with* others. The innerworldly being-in-itself of others is *Mitda-sein*... [The others] are encountered from the *world* in which *Da-sein*, heedful and circumspect, essentially dwells... The other is encountered in his *Mitda-sein* in the world... The *Mitda-sein* of others is disclosed only within the world for a *Da-sein* and thus also for those who are *Mitda-sein*, because *Da-sein* in itself is essentially being with. The phenomenological statement that *Da-sein* is essentially being-with has an existential-ontological meaning... *Being-with existentially determines Da-sein even when another is not factually present and perceived* (my emphasis). (Heidegger, 1953/1996, pp. 112-113)

To explore the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship is to explore the Being of the persons who are students and teachers. Reflecting on the existential-ontological meaning of ‘being-with’ calls me to yet a more passionate path regarding the profound place ‘being-with’ has in the teaching and learning of nursing. ‘Being-with’ as determining *Da-sein*, even when another is

not present connects back to chapter two in the emerging notion of student nurse-teacher relationship as place—a “portable sanctuary or tabernacle.”

‘Being-with’ as encounter is expressed through understandings of I and Thou, significance of dialogue, and relationships (Buber, 1970/1996). Heidegger (1953/1996) here again opens up and connects meanings of encounter, Being, and ‘being-with’:

[B]eing-with and the facticity of being-with-another are not based on the fact that several “subjects” are physically there together. Being alone “among” many, however, does not mean with respect to the being of others that they are simply objectively present...Even in being “among them,” they are *there with*. Their *Mitda-sein* is encountered in the mode of indifference and being alien. Lacking and “being away” are modes of *Mitda-sein* and are possible only because *Da-sein as being-with lets the Da-sein of others be encountered in its world. Being-with is an attribute of one’s own Da-sein. Mitda-sein characterizes the Da-sein of others in that it is freed for a being-with by the world of that being-with. Only because it has the essential structure of being-with, is one’s own Da-sein Mitda-sein as encounterable by others* (my emphasis). (p. 113)

I stand here in awe—in this Listening Space—as I think of the possibilities that lie in the pedagogical relationships for tending to life at its very core. That ‘being-with’—*Mitda-sein*—allows for the ‘being-with’ of another *with* another calls me to a profound place of moral sensibility—to a serious place of a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ *Da-sein* as ‘being-with,’ encountering others, and dwelling together-in-the-world of the classroom becomes a profound pedagogical grounding for my practice of teaching and learning. I am, once again, humbled by the students who take serious the reflection of their experience in class. They, indeed, risk vulnerability in the revealing of their genuine Being as they open themselves to the experience of others—classmates and me.

Tricia, a senior nursing student, writes in her journal of her experience of self after preparing a vignette for an assignment on intensive interpersonal relating for one of the courses I teach. She offers up these reflections:

As I sit down to reflect on this week's activities I find myself very confused as to where to begin. So many thoughts run through my head and it is kind of difficult to put them all in order. Over the weekend I did not really think much at all about my vignette. It was no big deal; I was just going to speak about the stresses of school, or the fears of stepping into the real world very shortly. And these were my plans up until the point of stepping into your office. But as I sat there I could not get the thoughts in my head to stop racing about my eating disorder. I think that this obviously was because of that morning's lecture. During the 2 hour break between classes it was all I could think about. I revisited that time in my life over and over again in my head. And for me, the coincidence that the lecture would fall on the same day as the vignette exercise was a sign that I needed to speak about it. Never did I think I would become so emotional about it.

One way that I could put it into perspective is to compare it to building a wall. But for myself, I built this wall on top of the most unsteady bricks: fear, shame, embarrassment, lack of control, etc. As time went on I piled on bricks of strength and determination, pushing down the emotions that served as my unstable foundation of the entire wall. In doing so, I would ignore the fact sooner or later this wall would come tumbling down because of the lack of a stable foundation. And on Monday afternoon in class, that is exactly what happened—my wall came tumbling down and my emotions were exposed. I have not visited that inner place in such a long time that I had forgotten how powerful these emotions could be...I basically laid it all out there, so to speak, putting myself in a very vulnerable situation. I have never sat down and openly spoken about my problem with anyone except my therapist at home. I think the main reason for this is my fear of being judged and possibly losing respect. These fears were dismissed when I shared my story with our group. The class received my struggle and me with such gentleness and acceptance that although the tears streamed down my face I was truly smiling on the inside. It meant so much to me—and I am so very grateful.

(Tricia, Journal Reflections, Spring, 2002)

As I listen to Tricia, I wonder: What frees one for an experience of 'being-with?'

Tricia shows us through her heartfelt lived experience what Heidegger (1953/1996)

alludes to when he says that “being-with is an attribute of one’s own *Da-sein*” (p. 117). The depth and nature of relationships “depends only upon how far one’s essential being-with others has made it transparent and not disguised itself” (p. 117). Tricia’s experience of ‘being-with’ in the classroom with her classmates opened her to looking deep within and encountering others with her “essential being.”

Tricia encountered her classmates and me in a genuine or transparent way—*Da-sein to Da-sein*. In this moment, Tricia, indeed, experienced ‘being-with’ in the physical presence of her classmates and me. Perhaps through her own embrace of this pain, along with being received in gentleness, Tricia may be free in a new way to ‘be-with’ her patients. Again, Heidegger connects: “*Mitda-sein* characterizes the *Da-sein* of others in that it is freed for a ‘being-with’ by the world of that ‘being-with’” (1953/1996, p. 113).

And of course, more questions emerge including: What allows for the possibility of the student nurse and teacher to disclose “a relation of being from *Da-sein to Da-sein*” (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 117). Indeed, there is a challenge to nurse educators as well as for students toward self exploration and knowing self—toward a further understanding of one’s *Da-sein*. I am grateful for the conversational and pedagogical time with the students who accepted my invitation to engage with me as researchers in this project that explores the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. Once again, the researcher is placed in question by the questions themselves.

'Being-With' In-Between–World and Toy

On a recent family vacation with my husband and three children, during a long drive to Maine, we stopped along the road searching for a luncheon picnic place. The children were tired and even were losing interest in our favorite car pastime competition—counting Volkswagen beetles or “punch-buggies.” The picnic place we found had tables, a few grills, a field perfect for playing frisbee—on another cooler day—and large rocks grouped around a weeping willow tree. With lunches half-eaten, the children ran to the rocks. And while deciding whether or not to call them back to the table, we overheard the magic and mystery of discovery. The rock formation, now a building—a castle—draws each of the children in to an unrehearsed play. The Queen, the Knight, and the Maid were each absorbed in a knowing way as they addressed each other in new ways and tended to the life of the castle. Knowing as such through phenomenological living is a “kind of being of being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 57), a being without pretense.

Gadamer (1960/2000) writes: “In being presented in play, what *is* (my emphasis) emerges. It produces and brings to light what is otherwise constantly hidden and withdrawn” (p. 112). How easy it is to miss a rich pedagogical moment and to cover over the essence with procedural instructions. In fact, there *are* 300 miles left to go. Van Manen (1990) provocatively writes about being trapped by a positivistic perspective, and his words help here in this showing:

What does it mean to “listen” to pedagogy? What does it mean to “see” pedagogy in our daily lives? So much of traditional (more positivistic) educational research and theorizing suffers from a certain deafness and blindness...It fails to see that the meaning and significance of pedagogy remains concealed as a consequence of the theoretical overlays and perspectival frameworks we construct in the

paradoxical effort to see more clearly the significance of certain pedagogic practices (usually called teaching behaviors, curriculum effects,” [“*outcomes assessment,*” “*behavioral outcomes,*” “*evaluation plans,*”] (*my addition in italics*) etc. (p. 149)

The children were crossing moats with sticks becoming scepters and wands. Three hundred more miles to go is such a grown up thought. Play transforms. “Pedagogy is something that a parent or a teacher continuously must redeem, retrieve, regain, recapture in the sense of recalling” (van Manen, 1990, p. 149). Allow theory, knowledge, evaluation plans, and desired outcomes their proper places, mingle in the tension, and enter the castle—this is an invitation for pedagogic reflection.

Wonder with me—ponder what it means to know and question the nature of the encounter that allows for knowing to be. Heidegger (1953/1996) illuminates the meaning of knowing and the deeply personal connection to being as he writes: “If knowing ‘is’ at all, it belongs solely to those beings which know...In that knowing *belongs* (my emphasis) to these beings and is not an external characteristic, it must be ‘inside’” (p. 56). This inside knowing indeed has profound implications in my work with nursing students and the concern about “knowing” nursing. Knowing in this manner requires an “inside” connecting with the person who is teacher. Perhaps, this inside encounter is quite simply what it means to ‘be-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship.

In silence, as grownups, we hearken back to these primordial places—to something not yet known, yet intensely familiar. Will you play-with me? Will you be-with me? Words spring forth—morning-like and wakeful—as veils are removed and a sacred play ground is uncovered. And I wonder: What is the nature of a ground of play? What is held there? What is the nature of the figure when the ground is play?

Play as beautiful lace holds infinite possibilities for covering over and bringing forth—holding in its finitude, meaningful expression of the infinite—“everlastingness.” The open play places offer up new ways for being. I take delight with Gadamer (1960/2000) in unfolding play as a “clue to ontological explanation” (p. 10) and to the meaning of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. I listen to my children and once again here—to Rilke in his poem, *The Fourth Elegy*.

Then there's at last a play.
 Then there unites what we continually
 part by our mere existence. Then at last
 emerges from our seasons here the cycle
 of the whole process. Over and above us,
 then, there's the angel playing. Look, the dying—
 surely they must suspect how full of pretext
 is all that we accomplish here, where nothing
 is what it really is. O hours of childhood,
 hours when behind the figures there was more
 than the mere past, and when what lay before us
 was not the future! True, we were growing,
 and sometimes made haste to be grown up,
 half for the sake of those who'd nothing left
 but their grown-upness.
 Yet, when alone, we entertained ourselves
 with everlastingness: there we would stand,
 within the gap left between world and toy,
 upon a spot which, from the first beginning,
 had been established for a pure event.
 (Rilke, 1903-1908/2000, pp. 84-85)

Gadamer (1960/2000) in his explication of play as a clue to ontological explanation writes about play as a “process that takes place ‘in between’” (p. 109). Understanding play, then, is significant to the understanding of the place of “in-between.” Hermeneutics and play are, interestingly enough, woven in this place—“a spot which, from the first beginning, had been established for a pure event” (Rilke, 1903-1908/2000, p. 85). A place where one returns ‘to the thing itself’ to use the

words of Edmund Husserl (as cited in Welton, 1999, p. 367). Or the “thotful spot” where Winnie the Pooh waits for Poetry and Hums to find him (Milne, 2001, p. 311)—“to let what shows itself be seen from itself, just as it shows itself from itself” (Heidegger, 1953/1996, p. 30). This in-between is a place of lace—grace-filled.

And so what is play and what allows us to engage in play? The concept of play as it unfolds with Gadamer, resonates on many levels with the project at hand. He writes about play as, “What is intended is to-and-fro movement that is not tied to any goal that would bring it to an end” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 103).

The word “Spiel” originally meant “dance”...The movement of playing has no goal that brings it to an end; rather, it renews itself in constant repetition. The movement backward and forward is obviously so central to the definition of play that it makes no difference who or what performs this movement...in our concept of play the difference between belief and pretense is dissolved.
(Gadamer, 1960/2000, pp. 103-104)

In chapter two Meagan opened up her experience of being, nursing, and dance as she states, “Sometimes you just have to dance!” She shows what Gadamer intends as he writes: “Play fulfills its purpose only if the player loses himself in play” (1960/2000, p. 102). The back and forth movement, questions and more questions, discomfort, moving in deeper to the core, understanding, vulnerability, authentic meeting, giving and giving back, risking, renewing and transforming—this is play in the student nurse-teacher relationship. What is the experience of the student on her way to becoming a nurse when the difference between belief and pretense is dissolved? Play is a place of experiencing authenticity and the possibility for authentic relationships.

The Dominion of Play: Entertaining Everlastingness

As I stand in Rilke’s “gap left between the world and toy” I wonder in what ways the Listening Space might be such a gap left behind? Might the Listening Space be a place now where students and teacher can be drawn into the teaching and learning of nursing in a way that is meaningful and transformative? And while Gadamer speaks of play in relation to a work of art—the experience of the aesthetic—the invitational sense of the classroom and the openness to the possibility of play seem to hold significant pedagogical relevance.

We have seen that play does not have its being in the player’s consciousness or attitude, but on the contrary play draws him into its dominion and fills him with its spirit. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 109)

I have experienced and named my classroom, The Listening Space. Perhaps in the way of “entertaining everlastingness” the Listening Space also becomes a “dominion of play?” As the students and I are drawn in through the to-and-fro of meaning-making in the area of psychiatric nursing, the technical goals and objectives of a traditional curriculum are transformed. Persons are changed. Play—in “its own, even sacred seriousness” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 102) transforms.

Amy F. shows a personal transformation and a sense of everlastingness through her written journal reflections of her experience in the course:

I never thought it possible to learn so much about others or myself in a psychiatric nursing course. I do believe this course has played an integral role in allowing myself to evaluate my life at this point...I realize I have always seen a situation basically one way: I have viewed outcomes for myself negatively, while viewing others’ possible outcomes very positively. This makes for a very anxious human being. It was not until I realized I did not have to think this way that I started to understand a much different way of life...I have always stayed in the “familiar,” avoiding the “strange.” I knew I did not want to continue to hide in the comfortable zones that I had built around me. I

now know that I can attempt and succeed at anything I want to. I want to help others, whether in an emergency situation or a feeling comfortable in a moment of silent reassurance for a grieving patient...I am becoming more comfortable about new surroundings. This has led me to the familiar feeling strange. As threatening as this sounds, I enjoy knowing that this is true. I have vowed to view new beginnings as opportunities for growth and learning, as hard as they may be. This new approach to thinking demands I look at how I view myself. I have learned how to be with others. I hope that one day I can help someone come to great realizations, similar to those that I have come to this semester. I have had so many life lessons that I would never take back for the world. (Journal Reflections, 2001)

Amy tells us that she has become another person as she has lived in the tension of the in-between created through the course. Amy shows her self uncovering as she experiences a phenomenological openness—to the strange becoming familiar and the familiar becoming strange. Again, I am humbled as I listen to Amy's words, hearing her accept my invitation to new ways of knowing. I breathe in wonder about the profundity of everyday life in the classroom—in touch with the mystery. My body responds before my words are available. Beckett's words resonate here: "I, of whom I know nothing, I know my eyes are open, because of the tears that pour from them unceasingly" (1970, p. 22). As her teacher, I too, am transformed as I play with Gadamer's text filled with a sense of the seriousness of Amy's transformation.

Gadamer writes:

Transformation is not an alteration, even an alteration that is especially far-reaching. Alteration always means that what is altered also remains the same and is maintained. However totally it may change, something changes in it...But transformation means that something is suddenly and as a whole something else, that this other transformed thing that it has become is its true being...When we find someone transformed we mean precisely this, that he has become another person, as it were. There cannot here be any gradual transition leading from one to the other, since the one is the denial of the other. Thus transformation into structure means that what existed previously exists no longer. But also

that what now exists, what represents itself in the play of art, is the lasting and true. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 111)

The place between world and toy, between the familiar and the strange, between life and curriculum, between Amy's anxiety and new sense of beginning—the “in-between”—this is the place for the hermeneutic dance. This is a serious dominion—this dominion of play. This is the place of ‘being-with.’

Reflective Beholding: Caring as Method

In speaking of his own investigation on the meaning of being, Heidegger (1953/1996) brings forward the difficulty of doing phenomenology. “Even in the concrete work of phenomenology,” Heidegger writes, “lurks possible inflexibility and inability to grasp what was originally ‘grasped’” (1953/1996, p. 32). I have pondered these difficulties from within the circle with my students. I am setting out to explore the nature of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship, and yet realize that getting to the core of the meaning of ‘being-with’ may not be fully reachable. My hope, however, is to be able to listen from a place where “there unites what we continually part by our mere existence...upon a spot which, from the first beginning, had been established for a pure event” (Rilke, 1903-1908//2000, p. 85). Heidegger is instructive in the way to begin:

The way of encountering being and the structures of being in the mode of phenomenon must first be wrested from the objects of phenomenology. Thus the point of departure of the analysis, the access to the phenomenon, and *passage through the prevalent coverings must secure their own method* (my emphasis). The idea of an “originary” and “initiative” grasp and explication of phenomena must be opposed to the naïveté of an accidental, “immediate,” and unreflective “beholding.” (1953/1996, p. 32)

Exploration of the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship is a journey of encountering “being,” encountering *Da-sein*, and indeed a reflective beholding of the heart of the relationship. What might it mean to pass through the prevalent coverings of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship? The nature of the passage through prevalent coverings about which Heidegger (1953/1966) writes calls for ongoing reflection on where the journey is meant to lead—on what calls the search. What is the nature of being, ‘being-with,’ and being-on-the-journey toward uncovering what it means to ‘be-with’—for the researchers participating in this work?

The Chinese calligraphic characters open up meaning here when the connection is made between what may be the essence of the phenomenon of this investigation and reflection on the importance of the passage. The characters “passage” and “heart” when joined form one word—“caring”—caring as passage to the heart. What are the possibilities that caring is the passage, and care is what calls the caring? I listen with reverence to the question. As I meander with Heidegger on this journey, I find words from his own inquiry directive here:

[T]he expression “taking care” is used in this inquiry as an ontological term (an existential) to designate the being of a possible being-in-the-world. We do not choose this term because *Da-sein* is initially economical and “practical” to a large extent, but because the being of *Da-sein* itself is to be made visible as *care*...*Da-sein, ontologically understood, is care. Because being-in-the-world belongs essentially to Da-sein, its being toward the world is essentially taking care.* (1953/1996, p. 53)

Being-in-the-nursing world in pedagogical relationships belongs to *Da-sein*. The blanket of understanding ‘being-with’ continues to gently unfold—filled with care. In

the presence of comfort, is the risk of the unfolding. Perhaps the passage itself calls the method to be a phenomenology of ‘being-with’ in care.

Stars and Reference Islands: Understanding Guides for Doing Phenomenology

For further help along the way, I look for what Casey (1993) terms “landmarks” as well as my own “pathmarks” (p. 26). Casey writes: “To retrace the steps of one’s own making is to remark one’s own marks, and thus to find one’s way” (1993, p. 26). He tells the story of the Puluwat of the Caroline Islands in Micronesia—a group who has been successful as navigators for centuries—who have found their way—long before the Europeans. The story invites a way of thinking about what it means to find one’s way in the doing of phenomenology, offering a profound illustration of phenomenology and pedagogy. The story invites us to imagine the hermeneutic place of ‘in-between.’

Puluwatan navigators transform into a reliable scene of sure directedness what would be for Europeans an acutely disorienting prospect. Puluwatans navigate hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles in open ocean without the use of compasses or other navigational instruments and only rarely fail to reach their destination. How is this possible? It turns out the Puluwatans make use of a complicated system of signals from the seascape and skyscape surrounding them at all times. From the sea, they observe ocean currents and flotsam and above all the exact size and character of ocean swells...They also pay close attention to signs of underwater reefs...These unlikely and often seemingly trivial factors constitute “seamarks.” From the sky, navigators pick out a certain star seen as standing over a “reference island,” itself located beyond the horizon...In this system, landmarks in the conventional sense have been replaced by barely perceptible seamarks and, most importantly, by dimly visible stars and an altogether out-of-view island. The latter is not perceived but “envisioned in mind’s eye.” The navigator thus takes advantage of the horizon’s capacity to contain what is not yet visible in the actual seascape; what might seem to be an obstacle here becomes a distinct virtue...Conversely, what appears to be a virtue in the case of a standard landmark, its unmoving rigidity, is now a disadvantage, since a stationary physical object, once overtaken and

out of sight, is rendered useless for the remainder of a given journey.
(Casey, 1993, p. 27)

The practice of doing phenomenology necessarily requires that I find my own way. Van Manen (1990) guides me in the way of bringing this study to a practical possibility through his offering of the methodological structure for human science research which was introduced in chapter one of this project. Comprised of six research activities, the structure includes:

- turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world;
- investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualize it;
- reflecting on the essential themes which characterize the phenomenon;
- describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting;
- maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon;
- balancing the research context by considering parts and whole.
(van Manen, 1990, pp. 30-31)

This structure of interrelated research activities in which I engage, offers a horizon—a horizon with capacity “to contain what is not yet visible” (Casey, 1993, p. 27). I behold the mystery. Perhaps it is dimly visible stars and out-of-view islands that open up the ability to ask and live in questions. I seek to live in these questions with my students in my attempt to bring into nearness the meaning of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship. And like the Puluwatan navigators, I am compelled to tend thoughtfully to who may be drifting away as well as to the nature of the “currents” in the lived relations. The research activities offer possibilities for

uncovering what may be hidden and to listen to what is revealed in the silence. I look to the rich direction of stars over changing horizons.

Turning to 'Being-With'

Lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research. The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of its essence—in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflective re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful: a notion by which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience. (van Manen, 1990, p. 36)

In chapter one I invite you into my lifeworld through my own turning to *my* lived experiences—reflections of ‘being-with’ tenderly stored in autobiographical remembrances. Perhaps you engaged with me in sacred places—a patient’s hospital room, at the hearth, in letters, chicken pot pie, poetry, and ‘being-with’ students in teaching and learning of nursing in the Listening Space. My passion for understanding and meaning-making with students of nursing calls forth my engagement in a hermeneutic phenomenological exploration of the phenomenon of ‘being-with.’

Flow down and down in always
Widening rings of being.
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 3)

Flow down with me here in ever “widening rings of being” as I continue to engage in the research project at hand—continuing to investigate the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning with senior nursing students. My personal *carrere*, conversations with students in the Listening Space, and written journal reflections create text for this ongoing journey of meaning-making in the nursing world.

Gadamer tells us: “Understanding begins when something addresses us” (1960/2000,

p. 299). Flow down and down with me—together addressed by the question—let us “fall into conversation” (Gadamer, 1960/2000). Understanding begins here.

Investigating Lived Experience

The exploration deepens in chapter two as I continue to investigate ways of understanding through living with students in the courses I teach—in awe of the Listening Space becoming place. Pedagogical reflections on “letting learn” create a clearing to become both unsettled and to find comfort in a phenomenological “living in” relationship. Reflections on my own lived experience and laying open to being called into question brings me to pondering “radical hermeneutics” (Caputo, 1987) and that which Hultgren (1994) brings forward for understanding here:

It provides a kind of thinking that is at once hermeneutic and deconstructive, both unsettling and recuperative, and in its exposure to the flux allows for a deeper understanding of beings that we are and, as is our concern, beings that we are *in caring* (my emphasis). (p. 31)

Opening up of the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the teaching of nursing together with my students continues with a deeper understanding as more text is accessible to my reflection. Through the privilege of listening to lived experiences as expressed through lived language, the phenomenon is opened up and available for our care rather than an object of our conceptual construction.

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty
And frightened. Don’t open the door to the study
and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 36)

What is it that may allow for the researcher to “take down the instrument” and enter the lived world of the students? As I find myself in the midst of the nursing

world of teaching and learning—searching and attempting to bring into nearness the phenomenon of ‘being-with’—I appreciate the dimly visible stars that show light along the way. Max van Manen (1990) offers up such light as he identifies certain existential themes that “pervade the lifeworld of all human beings” (p. 101). He refers to these themes as “lifeworld existentials as guides to reflection” (p. 101) and names them: lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), and lived human relation (relationality or communality). The existential themes are stars to guide my desire to understand and investigate the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship—allowing us together to “perceive an immediate immense richness of meaning” (van Manen, 1990, p. 105).

The listening-lived space. In this particular investigation, I am concerned and care-full about the meaning of ‘being-with.’ Reflections on the meaning of lived space lead me to a recognition of the deeply interwoven nature of lived space, being and ‘being-with.’ As I dialog with text created through my own lived experience with that of my students, I delight in an experience of “inside” knowing that connects to the understandings brought forward by phenomenologists, geographers, architects, and students.

Van Manen (1990) writes that “lived space is felt space” (p. 102). In chapter two Jennifer tells of our classroom—The Listening Space—as where “compassion fills the room” (Journal Reflections, 2001). The geographer Tuan tells us quite simply, “When space becomes thoroughly familiar to us, it has become place” (Tuan, 1997, p. 73). As students prepare coffee in the room, bring snacks, move tables, turn on music, lay open their vulnerabilities, tolerate anxiety, comfort others, experience

community, stay after class ends, and re-cover—they show a sense of knowing the space in a particular way. ‘Being-with’ in the student teacher-relationship, as it unfolds in chapter two, is a *place* of rest, of comfort, of opening to anxiety, and of listening—it is a hut, a portable sanctuary—a tabernacle.

The Listening Space, while the actual name on my classroom door, is a *metaphor* for the locus of hermeneutics. As I engage together in teaching and learning with my students, the Listening Space as a felt place offers rich possibilities “for inquiring into the ways we experience the affairs of our day-to-day existence” (van Manen, 1990, p. 103) in the nursing world. Reflection on lived space indeed helps us to “uncover more fundamental meaning dimensions of lived life” (van Manen, 1990, p. 103)—the lived experience of ‘being-with.’ Now here together in this lived space of listening, “take down an instrument—and let the beauty we love be what we do” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 36)!

The Lake Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight’s all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet’s wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;

While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
I hear it in the deep heart’s core.
(Yeats, as cited in Rosenthal, 1996, pp. 12-13)

The Lake Isle of Innisfree is a listening space—‘being-with’ is re-collected in the

deep heart's core.

Lived relation in the listening space. In this study, the nature of the phenomenon opens preliminarily and profoundly to the existentials of lived space and lived relation, 'being-with' in the Listening Space. The existentials of lived time and lived body join the others in "intricate unity which we call the lifeworld—our lived world" (van Manen, 1990, p. 105). As I, indeed, reflect on lived space and lived relation I am led into the closely connected experience of dwelling, belonging and 'being-with.' I turn to Casey (1993) who unpacks ways to dwell in *Getting Back into Place*: "I feel that I belong there not because I have been there for an allotted stretch of time, but because I am so much with the place—and it is so much with me—that we seem to belong to each other" (pp. 128-129). Dwelling places offer a place to belong, a sense of belonging that transforms spaces into places. Dwelling together in lived relation invites a dance of understanding of 'being-with'—*Mitda-sein*—the "with" that connects beings.

Of course, as Heidegger (1953/1996) points out, 'being-with' is not automatic just because one is in the presence of others—at the same time, it is possible to 'be-with' another in the absence of physical presence. The student nurse-teacher relation "is experienced as a special lived relation to the other in the sense that this relation is highly personal and charged with interpersonal significance" (van Manen, 1990, p. 106).

Lived moment in time. April's words, referring to herself and other nursing students, echo as I reflect on the existential of lived time: "We have no life—I mean NO time!" Van Manen (1990) writes of lived time or temporality as:

...subjective time as opposed to clock time or objective time. The temporal dimensions of past, present, and future constitute the horizons of a person's temporal landscape. As I make something of myself I may reinterpret who I once was or who I now am. (p. 104)

At this time of feeling overwhelmed, even distraught, April expresses with lived language the deep connection Heidegger (1953/1996) makes to Being (no life) and Time (NO time)! Time, language, and 'being-with,' are closely connected and such presence is revealed in its absence with students—they have “caught on” that time or lack thereof in some way justifies a not-‘being with.’ There is a sense of time, indeed, as being a precious commodity in this time of nursing shortage. The use of language expresses a certain way of being in the world—a way of being in the world that is given over to “not enough time.”

Linschoten continues with an understanding of our sense of temporal shaping:

The past changes itself, because we live toward a future which we already see taking shape, or the shape of which we suspect as a yet secret mystery of experiences that lie in store for us. (as cited in van Manen, 1990, p. 104)

The notion of temporality and its connection to 'being-with' is lived through this “secret mystery of experiences that lie in store for us.” I share an excerpt from the convocation address I gave last spring to a class of nursing seniors on the eve of their graduation—a story about being one of my mother's last encounters:

You may get nervous, and may even be thinking—but there is a nursing shortage. We don't have time for all of this. Let us ponder though, and ask together: Is it a matter of time? Or is it a matter of being? I will tell you a story of Abdul—a story that may allow us to live into the answers.

Abdul was the intensivist who cared for my mother the night before she died. In the quiet of the Intensive Care Unit at night, Abdul frequently and methodically checks her urinary drainage bag, holds the tubing, longingly as if willing the urine to pass through. He listens

to her lungs—so too, hoping for a different sound. With gentleness, he strokes her face, he gazes at the clock, and words reverberate—she might be able to pull out of this—we will be aggressive until the morning. He looks at me—I try to stall the morning—keep it away—don’t let it come. His look tells me he is so sorry to know my mother is dying. Morning comes and afternoon too. As our family sits around my mother’s side, Abdul enters the room—slides in behind the chair where I am sitting and leans over to my mother’s face. In one graceful move, he took my mother’s hand with A-line and IV not yet withdrawn—his touch that of a loving son. In an intimate cocoon, he told my mother—who was in a coma—goodbye. “You will not be here when I get back to work. I want you to know that it was an honor taking care of you last night, at this precious time in your life—this time of leave-taking.” He placed his hand on my shoulder as he slid back out, and said: “Thank you for being here. She dies with love.”

Abdul’s words create the “soft silence of the listening night” (Thompson, as cited in Murray, Bradley, Craigie, & Onions, 1933/1961, p. 338). This one person’s encounter with my mother was less than five minutes; his lived presence is inscribed forever in my soul. It is not about clock time. It is ‘being-with’ the other in the moment of the present—the ‘being-with’ that then offers up possibilities for past re-collections to shepherd one through the unbearable now—to the secrets of the mystery that lie in future store. Being and Time. “Forever—is composed of Nows—” (Dickinson, as cited in Johnson, 1960, p. 307). Indeed.

Reflecting on Text as Thou

While following chapters will become home to the hermeneutic interpretation of themes that emerge through the conversations that have not yet taken place, reflection is ongoing and an essential part of the thoughtful practice of teaching nursing and doing phenomenology. Each encounter with my students—through classroom conversations, written journal reflections, one-to-one meetings, along with that which is revealed in silence—creates continuous text for interpretation and

deepening understanding of ‘being-with.’ I engage with and reflect on text as “horizons containing what is not yet visible.”

Van Manen (1990) shows ways for coming to show and understand themes as they emerge through the lived dialogue with my co-researchers. He writes of three basic approaches for uncovering what lies behind the text in the way of themes. Understanding what the text may come to mean may involve: “the wholistic or sententious approach, the selective or highlighting approach, and the detailed or line-by-line approach” (pp. 92-93). Whether the researcher expresses the *overall* meaning of a text as in the sententious approach or in a *line-by-line* interpretation of meaning of the detailed approach, the meaning making is “a creative hermeneutic process,” and not a “mechanical procedure” (van Manen, 1990, p. 96).

Showing and Telling

In the writing and rewriting care is taken to wonder about “touching, hearing, seeing, and breathing any”—to use the words of e.e. cummings (as cited in Firmage, 1994, p. 662) in his poem “I thank you god.” Through words—the art and craft of writing—the co-researchers and I offer a caring passage to a deep place of understanding. In this phenomenological exploration, the research is lived in the writing—mine and others.

And so may a slow
wind work these words
of love around you,
an invisible cloak
to mind your life. (O’Donohue, 1997, p. v)

In the play of conversation, “words are worked,” text is transformed, and “lives are minded.” In the writing and rewriting is recognition of the moral claim of

those with whom we have entered into pedagogical relationship. My hope is for the words to un-cover and show the depth of the in-between—the “middle voice”

(Dallamy, 2002, Society for Phenomenology and Human Sciences (SPHS) meeting notes)—and dwell there. It may be dark and at times—unsettling. About this van Manen writes:

Writing that searches for human meaning can be a profoundly unsettling experience. Why? Because we risk coming face to face with the allusive-ness of infinity, radical Otherness, with the realization that our desire to understand is ultimately unfillable, that at the level of wild being the search for significance confronts us with nothingness (no-thing-ness). At the level of raw existence there are no “things,” only the darkness of the night from which all human insight and meaning arises...the act of interpretive writing, if done with utmost seriousness, confronts the writer with the dark, with the enigma of uninterpretability. (2002, pp. 244-245)

Writing is, indeed, one of entering the *Claddagh* circle of love, friendship and fidelity as stories of lives are told, received, and transformed in the listening and writing. In the dark and in the echo, Cixous (1997) calls and challenges me:

For me everything is in the vibration; and I say to myself: will our ears hear the vibration? That is to say: will the economy of the text, its woven construction, allow the vibrations to be heard? For us to hear the vibrations, there must be silence. Poetry works with silence. (p. 64)

The words here are those woven of love—an invisible cloak—protecting and opening up.

Pedagogical Relation to ‘Being-With’

Maintaining a strong and oriented relation to the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship is another research activity in which van Manen (1990) invites careful reflection on the nature of pedagogy and what leads me to ask the question in the first place. Here the lived experience and the philosophy of

‘being-with’ weave their ways and bring about the transformation of practice in the Listening Space and other places in nursing education.

To maintain a strong relation is to be thoughtfully attuned and attentive to the students in my care. Van Manen (1990) writes of desire as a “certain attentiveness and deep interest in an aspect of life” (p. 79). He goes on to unfold the meaning of desire etymologically—with desire traced to meaning “expecting from the stars” (p. 79). My desire to ‘be-with’ connects nicely in this way as being quite a powerful and significant guide for along the way. Desires draws from the center.

These research activities are fully engaged in a circular and woven way of listening and writing in circles. “If you want to be held” writes Rumi (as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 3), “open up your hands.” At times the writing is an interpretive dance—writing itself. I share a piece of the children’s book *Draw Me a Star* (non-paginated) as an opening to this dimension of phenomenological writing.

Draw Me a Star

Draw us a cloud, said the flowers.
 And the artist drew clouds heavy with rain.
 And a rainbow.
 Draw me the night, said the rainbow.
 And the artist drew a dark night.
 Draw me the moon, said the night.
 And the artist drew a full moon.
 Draw me a star, said the moon.
 Down, over, left, and right,
 Draw a star oh so bright.
 It was a good star.
 Hold on to me said the star to the artist.
 Then together they traveled across the night sky.
 (Carle, 1992).

I open my hands. I “hold on”—and go with the star.

The Conversations—Creating New Stories

It is time to engage in the conversations now—alive and awake—and listening from “the deep heart’s core” (Yeats, as cited in Rosenthal, 1996, p. 13). As teacher and students we come together in the classroom—the Listening Space—in the customary practice of teaching and learning together in the course of the spring semester 2003. I invite the students who engage with me in one of the courses I teach, at a small independent liberal arts college in Pennsylvania, N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice, to participate as conversants—co-researchers—in this study. All of the students are pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in nursing. Seventeen students enrolled for the spring semester offering.

N 426 – Mental Health Nursing (a four credit course) comprises two sections: N 426. 51 and N 426. 52, with 8-9 students per section. Each section meets for six weeks, nine hours per week. I teach N 426. 52 – Group Process twice over the semester. In the opposite rotation, students are engaged in clinical experiences in the hospital and outpatient clinical agencies with another professor. As the coordinator of the psychiatric nursing curriculum, I meet with the entire group of 17 students and other faculty on the first class day of the semester, January 27, 2003, for an overall introduction to Mental Health Nursing Practice. During the last one and one-half hours of the first week’s class, each professor meets with her clinical group for orientation. Concurrently, the students take N 425 – Mental Health Nursing: Concepts, a course that I also teach.

When the students and I come together for the first time in our smaller class during this orientation time on January 28, 2003, I open up conversation about

teaching and learning and ways of being-together-with-each-other and patients. As we offer autobiographical renderings as a way of orienting to each other in care, I share my own journey of the research project here. I extend an open invitation to all eight of the students to participate with me—with varying possibilities for involvement. At this time, I distribute two letters of invitation to participate in this study—one to participate in the research *in* the actual classroom (see Appendix A) and one inviting students to participate with me in individual conversations and written reflections outside of class time (see Appendix B). I also distribute two consent forms—one to all students participating in the class (see Appendix A), and one to those students who volunteer to engage in individual conversations with me (see Appendix B). I collect the consent forms from the students at the beginning of the first small class meeting on February 3, 2003. I have previously received approval from Dr. Jacquelin Harrington, Chair of the Nursing Department to carry out the study with my students in the course that I teach (see Appendix C).

The dissertation research is enacted in the context of teaching and learning in N 426.52, a clinical section of a course I teach: N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice (see Appendix D). The text that I gather as possible passages to the heart of the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the student nurse-teacher relationship includes a variety of ways of being together—thoughtfully attuned toward the phenomenon of inquiry:

- Tape-recordings and transcriptions of all class meetings;
- Written journal reflections that are part of the usual course requirements;

- Two tape-recordings and transcriptions of hermeneutic conversations with each of the eight students in this clinical section;
- Tape-recording and transcription of the final class group conversation;
- My own journal reflections.

In order to clearly situate my research in the context of the course and to bring alive the Listening Space for our hearing I tape-record all class meetings of the clinical rotation. Meetings are scheduled every Monday from 12 N – 4:30 PM and every Tuesday from 7:30 AM – 12 N from February 3, 2003 through March 11, 2003. Exceptions are made when the students are meeting in small work groups for a substance abuse project. The dates of exception are February 24, February 25, and March 3, 2003. I risk myself as researcher in the open place of genuine conversation—vulnerable—not knowing in advance the course the conversations would take. Gadamer addresses this:

We say that we “conduct” a conversation, but the more genuine a conversation is, the less its conduct lies within the will of either partner. Thus a genuine conversation is never the one that we wanted to conduct. Rather, it is generally more correct to say that we fall into conversation, or even that we become involved in it. The way one word follows another, with the conversation taking its own twists and reaching its own conclusion, may well be conducted in some way, but the partners conversing are far less the leaders of it than the led. No one knows in advance what will “come out” of a conversation. (1960/2000, p. 383)

I gather text of hermeneutic significance from all of the students through their weekly written journal reflections which are a usual part of the course. I encourage the students toward phenomenological writing so as to get as close as possible to expressing meaningfully lived experiences. Additionally, I ask the eight students who have agreed to participate with me in individual conversations to engage in a

narrative writing piece showing their experience of ‘being-with.’ For direction with the more in-depth writing I share a variation of the suggestions from Barritt, Bleekman, Bleeker, & Mulderij (1984) on “Analyzing Phenomenological Descriptions:”

Write an account of a single experience, something simple and straight forward; as much as possible stick to descriptive language and watch out for interpretations and attributions of causality in your writing. Don't lose yourself in factual details. It all begins with the lived experience and what you should strive to describe. (Barritt, et al., 1984, p. 2)

I respond as usual practice to the students’ narratives and seek to deepen my understanding of ‘being-with’ through the second taped conversation.

As I reflect on the two hermeneutic conversations I had with each of my eight students I return to the wisdom of Gadamer with his words that “the partners conversing are far less the leaders of [the conversation] than the led” (1960/2000, p. 383). How this resonates with me as I meet my partners in conversation—my students. Indeed, the conversation is what leads. The first set of hour-long conversations was held in my office during the weeks of February 17, 2003 and February 24, 2003. The second set took place between the weeks of March 10, 2003 May 5, 2003. The conversations are a “process of coming to an understanding” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 385) of ‘being-with’ in the teaching and learning of nursing. “Thus,” says Gadamer:

It belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. (1960/2000, p. 385)

My hope is always to create openings for true understandings through questioning. My questions, then, are necessarily open and exploratory, so that responses, too, may be open and exploratory—reflecting meaning. I begin the conversation with a question from the following, yet I am committed to honoring the students with their lead—my questions emerge from their experiencing. “What is it like for you being in this psychiatric nursing course with me this semester?” “What is your experience of telling your autobiographical story to your classmates and me?” “What is it like for you to be a part of this class?” “As you think of your relationship with me as your teacher, consider what this relationship means to you.” Such questions are not an effort to gather “methodological exactness” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 469) such as might be achieved through a “statement response to an interrogation” (p. 469). Rather, my hope and the pedagogical promise lie within the hermeneutic possibilities. Gadamer’s words here resonate with my hopes:

Such a realization is speculative in that the finite possibilities of the word are oriented toward the sense intended as toward the infinite. A person who has something to say seeks and finds the words to make himself intelligible to the other person. This does not mean that he makes “statements...” To say what one means, on the other hand—to make oneself understood—means to hold what is said together with an infinity of what is not said in one unified meaning and to ensure that it is understood in this way. (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 469)

It becomes necessary to hold possibilities for the infinite in a finite way.

Through a focused conversation, our final class meeting on March 11, 2003 provides an additional opportunity for the opening of the circle and for the deepening of understanding which is, likewise, circular in nature. This one hour conversation responds to the question, What is your lived experience of being with me and each

other in this group? The group setting and pondering this question allows for conversation that might not ordinarily come forward.

My own reflections bring possibilities for authentic engagement showing reciprocity in relationship and the sense of the to and fro in a hermeneutic conversation. I have one reflection before the first small group meeting and one after the rotation to reflect on my experience of ‘being-with’ my students in the teaching and learning in this group. In a spirit of “hermeneutic generosity” (Dallamy, SPHS meeting notes, 2002) I have shared my reflections with my students. As this text is gathering we see that the “hermeneutic experience has its own rigor: that of uninterrupted listening” (Gadamer, 1960/2000, p. 465). I am grateful to be here in this place—The Listening Space. Thanks.

More founding than poetizing,
More grounding than thinking
Remains thanking.
(Heidegger, as cited in Petzet, 1929-1976/1993, p. 224)

Once again, I am in awe of the infinite possibilities through interpretation of the text in process of creation—of explicating what it means in the listening and in the echoes. With a sense of intimate immensity (Bachelard, 1958/1994) and incredible responsibility to receive my students’ infinities in gentleness, I ponder: What is the experience of ‘being-with’ the question of ‘being-with?’ Listen again to Gadamer as he speaks of infinity:

Explicating the whole of meaning towards which understanding is directed forces us to make interpretive conjectures and to take them back again. The self-cancellation of the interpretation makes it possible for the thing itself— the meaning of the text—to assert itself. The movement of the interpretation is dialectical not primarily because the one-sidedness of every statement can be balanced by another side...but because the word that interpretatively fits the meaning of the

text expresses the whole of this meaning—i.e. allows an infinity of meaning to be represented in a finite way. (1960/2000, p. 465)

The phenomenological question, **What is the experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship?** is a question to love and to live in. Living in the question is to live phenomenologically—with thoughtfulness and hermeneutic generosity—patience and “partaking in the other” (Dallamy, SPHS meeting notes, 2002). Living openly in the question is a promise of someday living into the answers.

In thematizing work in chapters four and five, I engage in serious, deep interpretive work with the text as it is created through the varied dimensions of hermeneutic conversation. Meaning is made and being is disclosed through the dance of understanding and interpretation with my students in the practice of teaching and learning in nursing. In chapter six I bring forward my own experience of *Mitda-sein*—being as ‘being-with’ in the world of nursing education—my own transformation through living phenomenologically with-the-nursing-students in-the-nursing world. I offer up insights gathered through this dwelling with my co-researchers to articulate a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in care in the teaching and learning of nursing.

And now, blessings for all of us engaged in ‘being-with’ in this work—this continuing caring act of research:

A Blessing

May the light of your soul guide you.

May the light of your soul bless the work you do with the secret love and warmth of your heart.

May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.

May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light, and renewal to those who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.

May your work never weary you.

May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration, and excitement.

May you be present in what you do.

May you never become lost in the bland absences.

May the day never burden.

May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises.

May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.

May you go into the night blessed, sheltered, and protected.

May your soul calm, console, and renew you.

(O'Donohue, 1997, p. 160)

**CHAPTER FOUR:
THE HIDDEN DRIFT OF DIALOG TOWARD THE CENTER:
LISTENING TO THE MAGIC AND GATHERING SONG OF ‘BEING-WITH’**

I begin this gracious act of hermeneutic interpretation as a reflection on many pedagogical beginnings—a reflection on many past groups of baccalaureate nursing students over an 18 year span. I have the privilege of many past gatherings and times of sending forth that recognize eternal echoes (O’Donohue, 1999) in ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. This day though, I turn myself toward eight students who engage with me in teaching and learning psychiatric nursing. With these eight students I begin again—this time in the work and gift of hermeneutic phenomenological exploration.

This beginning, in the context of my continuing research, leads me on quite a profound path. I come to sense that the process is one of discovery—discovering through the “hidden drift of dialogue” (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 30). With a spirit of patience and waiting, I open myself to letting the words of my students find their way in to my presence. I know that the dialogue has its best chance of drifting into my being in a place of quiet—a place of silence. “Silence,” writes van Manen, “makes human science research and writing both possible and necessary” (1990, p. 112).

What became possible and necessary in my searching is the place I discovered at Bon Secours Spiritual Center (BSSC). The intense resonance of this Listening Space shows me the silence and *bon secours*, meaning “good help,” that I gather in to myself—the silence that makes necessary a long listening and gathering in of the students’ experiences through their voices. The journey at BSSC led by the experience of listening to the students’ words becomes a journey of my own soul. The

meaning of the research is so much deeper than a doctoral dissertation or a project for a degree. The project becomes one of a lived experience of living life in deeply connected, compassionate, and meaningful ways.

A Meditative Method: Listening to Spaces

The writing days follow a schedule of meditation that allows for a meandering and re-turning to the phenomenon that calls this research study: **What is the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship?** The question before me becomes the question through me, in me, and with me—the question of ‘being-with’ pervades life at its deepest level. I create my home place in the small library—my LL Bean bag full of books, tapes, and Walkman. I have a round table near a wall with an outlet for when I need to use my laptop. I start my days by stacking a pile of books on the table, making sure to have a bottle of water and suntan lotion. The library becomes a “built place” in which to dwell—a place, too, from which to wander (Casey, 1993). I take my journal, pen, one book that attracts my imagination, and along with one tape at a time, I settle in on a bench outdoors. I place my water bottle on a stone wall, a perfect coffee table, and Merton’s words resonate:

Be still
 Listen to the stones of the wall
 Be silent, they try
 To speak your
 Name.
 Listen
 To the living walls
 Who are you?
 Who
 Are you? Whose
 Silence are you?
 (1977, p. 280)

Gadamer's (1997) essays on *Who Am I and Who Are You?* come to mind as well in the openings made possible through staying with silence. I am invited to be still so that I may truly hear what is brought forward to be named.

The splendor of nature calls on every fiber of my being to awaken. I listen. I write. I reflect on who I am and upon whose silence I am. Who is my student in relation to me? In what ways are we revealed through each other? What is the nature of the necessary unconcealing that allows for a naming of essential themes of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship? I recall the conversation between Heidegger and his Japanese scholar friend. Heidegger (1959/1971a) perhaps offers "good help" here this day as he writes of the "unconcealment of the two-fold" (p. 53) through his conversation with his friend.

- Heidegger: Indeed—so long as man has not yet given the pure gift of the messenger's course that the message needs which grants to man the unconcealment of the two-fold.
- Japanese: To call forth this messenger's course, and still more to go it, seems to me incomparably more difficult than to discuss the nature of *Iki*.
- Heidegger: Surely. For something would have to come about by which that vast distance in which the nature of Saying assumes its radiance, opened itself to the messenger's course and shone upon it.
- Japanese: A stilling would have to come about that quiets the breath of the vastness into the structure of Saying which calls out to the messenger.
- Heidegger: The veiled relation of message and messenger's course *plays* everywhere.
- Japanese: In our ancient Japanese poetry, an unknown poet sings of the intermingling scent of cherry blossom and plum blossom on the same branch.

Heidegger: This is how I think of the being-toward-each-other of vastness and stillness in the same Appropriation of the message of unconcealment of the two-fold. (p. 53)

On my way to the pool, two deer greet me from the edge of the apple orchard. How nice to think of cherry and plum trees as well. So lovely is the image of cherry and plum blossoms—students and teacher—on the same branch. I reflect on the message of the students as it is revealed to me here in silence and stillness—I know that their message “shines upon” my own course of the telling. I wait—in the vast out of doors, opening my senses to the invitation and the necessity of our mutual unconcealing. I long for the eventual “Saying” of ‘being-with’—I listen to the call of the students and follow on the path in their radiance. I breathe in the “intermingling scent,” and transformed—I taste ‘being-with.’

I raise my hand to open the gate to the pool and the church bells usher me through. I am alone in the quiet—pondering the space between “message and messenger.” What does the message require of my particular course? This place I inhabit here is, indeed, “making writing necessary.” With journal in hand, *Gadamer on Celan* on my lounge chair, and students’ reflections in my bag I celebrate from this altar of life. There is magic and song in my being. Holderlin must know this place—this time and space of good help. He gives poetic rendering:

I was raised by the
 Song of the murmuring grove
 And loving I learned
 Among flowers
 (as cited in Moore, 1996, p. 270)

The bells announce the noon hour, the “grove murmurs,” and I take in liturgy.

I am aware of the attunement from this place—made possible as many new

dimensions of my self are opened. My relationship with my project is changed—different than it would be otherwise. Life is simply different with a hummingbird on the arm of my chair. I listen and gaze differently from this place of stillness and quiet. A listening space is created that allows for listening to the listening spaces. I recognize a new listening when the early part of my day includes counting the baby ducks to make sure they are all still there and safe. The gentle and deliberate thud of the apple falling into the receiving earth changes the listening. The work of the dissertation is experienced as a soul-making journey—a meditation—a prayer.

Tears flow out—tears of a cherished sense of connected-ness. Then, through a mixture of tears, sunscreen, and “learning among flowers” I see a rubber ducky with black sunglasses floating in the pool—I smile as I ponder the thought of “nature’s tabernacle and the rubber ducky!” Perhaps getting close to ‘being-with’ is something about the rubber duck in sacred space, the extraordinary in the ordinary—the enchantment of everyday life. Heidegger tells of an experience with seeing a film. He writes: “I believed that I was experiencing the enchantment of the Japanese world, the enchantment that carries us away into the mysterious” (1959/1971a, p. 16). I am carried “into the mysterious” as I get on this path toward the center of ‘being-with.’ The work of this doctoral research brings forward the possibility for me to be in this place where the noon hour is filled with the Angelus.

I go to lunch where I have a choice of dining rooms. Today I choose the silent dining room—and leave journal and pen behind. And still I write as I come to understand the words of van Manen (2002):

Writing is not the practice of some clever technique; neither is writing restricted to the moment where one sets pen to paper, or fingers to

keyboard. Writing has already begun, so to speak, when one has managed to enter the space of the text, the textorium. The space of the text is what we create in writing but it is also in some sense already there. In other words, to write, one has to write already. (p. 245)

There is tremendous beauty in the *what* of the “already there” as it meets up with what is “not yet.” My listening space sings the echoes of generations and lays open in waiting for what is next. I am in awe and stand in the receiving presence of the “now.”

Listening Before the Beginning

January 26, 2003

Dear Mary,

I have been savoring this last weekend that started out so wonderfully on Friday with you and me in Annapolis. Just like we were trying to hang on to summer together, it seemed right that we were doing the same thing as the new semester is about to begin. You are right, there were several serious things on our minds, but that makes the time together even more precious—to be able to live those moments together. As you begin your study this week, as we both begin teaching, this poem by Rumi seems so fitting. It seems so right in a description of you as you teach:

BEGIN

*This is now. Now is. Don't postpone
till then. Spend the spark of iron*

*on stone. Sit at the head of the table.
Dip your spoon in the bowl. Seat yourself*

*Next to your joy and have your awakened soul
pour wine. Branches in the spring wind,*

*easy dance of jasmine and cypress. Cloth
for green robes has been cut from pure*

*absence. You're the tailor, settled
among his shop good, quietly sewing.
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2001b, p. 33)*

Francine sent this note and poem to me the day before my first meeting with my students who have come to be my pilgrim companions in this hermeneutic phenomenological exploration of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. As I “begin” again now to take up the hermeneutic work of making meaning of what the students tell me in our taped conversations, their written work, and in our being in teaching and learning together—I reflect on this note and on these words of Rumi. I am humbled to think of this description as my classroom. I am blessed with knowing what it means to ‘be-with’ in teaching and learning with Francine, my teacher and advisor—and delight in the “precious” nature of “living those moments” of ‘being-with.’ ‘Being-with’ is, indeed, a precious living of moments. I am humbled also and delight in my students as they come to know, teach and learn, become, and transform—while allowing me to bear witness.

We all sit around this table—dipping our spoons and opening to the joy that is each other. I am privileged to be around this table of learning nursing and begin to ponder the words, humble and humility. I find a surprise in the meanings. In his book, *Original Blessing*, Fox (1983) writes:

Meister Eichart points out that the word “humility” comes from the word *hummus* or earth. To be humble means to be in touch with the earth, in touch with one’s own earthiness, and to celebrate the blessing that our earthiness, our sensuality, and our passions are. (p. 59)

To be around this table is to celebrate the “earthiness,” to touch one another, and to live in the “ground of the soul” (Eichart, as cited in Fox, 1983, p. 59).

There is, indeed, in the pedagogical atmosphere in the Listening Space, an “easy dance of jasmine and cypress”—a dance of comfort and anxiety—tensions and

contradictions. And new knowing emerges sometimes from not knowing and through listening to the silence of “cloth cut from pure absence.” Megan says, “We all share and talk equally around the table. We each hold the power” (Personal Conversation, 2003).

I work to name the intimate dimensions of ‘being-with’ through chapters four and five all the while connecting with Rilke’s words, “I feel closer to what language can’t reach” (as cited in Bly, 1987, p. 101). Here in this chapter, I celebrate the passion for knowing my students. I invite you, too, to know my students—so join us with awakened souls—dip your spoons in. We gather here in the Listening Space at the table of N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice.

Sitting Next to My Joy—The Students

My co-pilgrims on this research journey—those persons with whom I celebrate the many blessings of teaching and learning are students enrolled in N 426 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice during the spring semester of 2003. We meet for 8 eight hours per week for four weeks, with each class meeting being four hours long. All of the students are first semester seniors in a baccalaureate nursing program in southern Pennsylvania. Around this table to my left, please meet: Marc, Lynn, Jennifer, Jackie, Heather, Colleen, Megan, and Renee. There are seven women and one man, ranging in age from 22 to 40 years of age. All of the students are European-American. Lynn, Jackie, Renee, and Colleen are married and have children. Marc and Colleen have previous bachelor’s degrees. Megan is a respiratory therapist and took charge of tape recording the class meetings. Jennifer and Heather are “traditional” college aged students.

Marc, our only man in the group is a good sport in this company of women. He is 40 years old and is engaged to be married to a woman who lives in Hawaii. After completion of his BS degree, Marc plans to return to Hawaii and to cut back on his use of “telephone calling cards.” Marc has a previous degree in psychology and has significant experience as a psychiatric tech working in acute psychiatric units. Over the past two years, Marc has suffered tremendous losses—the deaths of both of his parents and his younger sister. He tells us that he is not good at writing “personal kinds of things.”

Lynn is attentive and present in her listening and responding. A mother of five children from 7 to 17, Lynn tells of the present turmoil in her family—now living through the aftermath of divorce from the children’s father. She is engaged in the difficult work of integrating family life in the midst of new marriages. She is frightened of this psychiatric nursing course as she says, “It brings to the surface, issues I am facing.”

Jennifer shows her sense of warmth and humor immediately. She opens her introductions with “I am the baby of this group and I LOVE these guys.” She has a new boyfriend, works at Victoria’s Secret, and worries constantly about her brother with alcoholism. Having lost her dad when she was 9 years old, she delights that her mother is recently married again—giving her the gift of a stepfather.

Jackie is balancing care of three children, marriage, and school. She frequently uses the word “juggling” as she talks about her life. Her seven year old son, Steven, was diagnosed with diabetes 3 years ago and “living with a pump” in the midst of Little League is a way of life. Jackie says she eventually hopes to facilitate a

support group for children with diabetes.

Heather is soft-spoken, ever present, and hopes to become more outgoing. She feels “self-conscious” in groups, saying, “I feel better with only 2 or 3 people.” Heather was diagnosed with juvenile onset diabetes at age 9 and has shared a strong bond with Jackie. Heather is engaged to be married after graduation.

Colleen was pregnant with her second child at the time of our first meeting, giving birth to Sydney, a beautiful baby sister to 3 year old Jacob at the end of the semester. I remember seeing Colleen’s appointment calendar—color-coded with highlighter to organize due dates of assignments. She tells us, “I like everything to be clear cut, black and white—and I already know that this class won’t be like that.” Colleen is a fitness counselor with a previous degree in Statistics, graduating magna cum laude. Her husband is a teacher who is a prostate cancer survivor.

Megan is deliberate and articulate, taking her time in her responses. She says, “I’m afraid to find out about myself.” Her thoughtful and compassionate nature leaves silence and invitation in its wake. She is engaged to be married to John and meanwhile lives at home with her mother. Megan is a respiratory therapist.

Renee is outgoing and forthcoming—passionate in her expression. She is married to Jeff and has a 5-year-old son, Ethan. She delights in finding the extraordinary in the ordinary such as “clouds that are kangaroos.” She is grieving the recent losses of her grandfather and Jeff’s grandmother. Renee is clear in her “War is not the answer” stance regarding the war in Iraq.

On this research journey together we engage in the work of meaning making in the world of nursing education. I offer up interpretations, and at Heidegger’s

suggestion, I “bear the message and tidings” (1959/1971a, p. 29). This is the work of hermeneutics. This is a new “now.”

Pilgrim Companions Around the Table

As we continue together on this journey of research—on this journey toward understanding **‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship**, the notion of pilgrim and co-pilgrim resonates as we gather around this table of learning. We are companions in preparing to serve persons who suffer with psychiatric-mental health problems. The journey inward begins the journey outward—and we are blessed by the lives of each other. A tune and words by Marty Haugen (1986/1994) echo through my being: “We are a blest and a pilgrim people...Love our journey and love our homeland...” (p. 468). We are at once privileged and tension-filled. Such is the nature of the lived curriculum (Aoki, 1991).

- Mary: We start today in a way we will never forget—through autobiographical sharing—our own stories. Together we move beyond the therapeutic communication “skills” to trying to *understand* each other—to getting behind the words persons are saying—persons who are each other—persons who are our patients. And we begin with the curriculum of our lives—our stories. So, let’s take a few minutes to reflect and to ponder some of the significant experiences along the ways of our lives—what influences who you are today. Write your reflections and then, like your weekly journal reflections, you will share them by reading your own words.
- Colleen: Are the reflections to be in APA format? And how many pages do you suggest?
- Mary: Your final reflective paper is to be in APA. Several pages each week and probably 10-12 for the final one.
- Heather: I am confused. Are the reflections about one topic each time, and do we do two every week?
- Mary: You will write about what catches your attention with the work

we are doing, readings, and any other experiences such as ACCESS or AA/ NA. You will be writing to make meaning of your experiences.

- Jackie: I have a hard time being reflective—because that is personal. Someone else will read it—ugh.
- Mary: There is something scary about writing the first sentence when you don't know where it will lead you or what the last sentence will be—it is personal and hard—and especially knowing that someone will be reading it.
- Jen: My brother is trying to go to AA—I think having to go to a meeting for this class is going to motivate me to go with him. He likes it—said you know people understand because they are going through the same thing and some do really good.
- Mary: Jen, you are describing some of what Yalom calls “curative” or “therapeutic” factors of groups—an experience of universality—that your brother is not alone; and instillation of hope—that he sees others who are doing well. If you feel up to it later, Jen, please tell us more as we go on.
- Mary: Alright, a few minutes of reflection and writing and then when it seems time—why someone can volunteer to begin. And then, we will continue with who ever feels inspired to follow.
(Classroom Conversation, 2003)

On this first day of class, the path is not clear. Tensions between anxiety and comfort are embedded in my invitation to move beyond the known, the usual—the expected. Questions of a procedural nature emerge as we are about to embark on a journey of self-discovery. I try to answer the questions to allow for some decrease in anxiety, but hesitate to dwell there so as to not let the technical stance dominate our atmosphere. I desire the students to hear immediately how much they bring with them to this new phase along the way. I long for them to begin to experience what Schubert offers through his words: “Live as if your life were curriculum for each other” (1986, p. 423). Our lives are, indeed, curriculum for each other.

Drawn by a Dream

Barry Estadt, a professor of pastoral counseling in 1986 introduced me to a way of thinking about “co-pilgrim” in the context of doing psychotherapy—with nurse and patient as co-pilgrims on the journey through therapy. Years later, I would find myself listening to the unified voices of educators in *Curriculum for Being* as they write:

Curriculum for being involves a journey on which pilgrims attempt to make sense of their lives. This sense-making more readily occurs when fellow companions share the reflective mode, when they are caring, and when they value dialog as a major way of conducting inquiry and generating knowledge. Teachers then are fellow pilgrims—thoughtful professional beings ever reflecting upon their own assumptions and ever dwelling in questions significant to them, even as they encourage students to dwell in their own questions. (Berman, Hultgren, Lee, Rivkin, Roderick, & Aoki, 1991, p. 9)

From my writing place this day, I hear women’s voices, also unified in song. I am called by a gathering song that previously is unknown by me. I enter the sanctuary. This journey is homeland. The liturgical music inspires; the words invite thoughtful understanding—opening again and deepening the notion of what it means to be co-pilgrim. I receive a paper with the words of “Pilgrim Companion:”

Drawn by a dream, lured by a love,
Pilgrim companions, as friends on the journey
We come through the storm,
Pass through the fire
Hungry yet hopeful...
(Schutte, 1991, non-paginated)

I am “drawn by a dream” and “lured by a love” toward the work that I am engaged in with my students. I am drawn toward a companionship with them. I am lured by love and care of my students and to persons with whom they will eventually care—to ‘be-with’ them in the world of nursing education. There are storms, fires,

anxieties, and vulnerabilities—there are questions calling for quick answers rather than “sense-making” reflection. There is confusion. As the students show in the initial dialog, an invitation to a “reflective mode” (Berman et al., 1991, p. 9) stirs up discomfort and a natural tendency as Heidegger says, “to satisfy their thirst for handy information” (1959/1971a, p. 13). Still—I am hopeful. “The flower is always in the almond” (Bachelard, 1958/1994, p. 24).

This is a Flip-Flop Place

Well, it isn't a classroom setting—traditionally. Even Taylor, my five year old said, ‘This is not a classroom.’ She is right, IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A TYPICAL CLASSROOM; IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE ONE. (Jackie, Personal Conversation, 2003)

The students enter, for the most part, an unfamiliar world in my classroom, and they set out as Casey writes to “get the lay of the land” and to “establish a group of fledgling habits” (1987, p. 151). In his chapter on “Body Memory,” Casey points out the intense discomfort of feeling disoriented:

Getting the lay of the land is a matter of realizing our being in the world...The main function of orienting is to effect familiarization with one's surroundings. To be disoriented, or simply unoriented, is to find these same surroundings unfamiliar, *unheimlich*: “Not to know where we are is torment, and to not have a sense of place is a most sinister deprivation.” In particular, it is not to know which way to go or to turn—which route to follow. (1987, p. 151)

As Heather shows her sense of disorientation and anxiety in her expression of “I am confused,” I take comfort and strength from the dialog between Heidegger and the Japanese scholar in *On the Way to Language* (1959/1971a). The Japanese scholar wonders why Heidegger did not give his way of thinking about Being a “new” name:

Heidegger: How is one to give a name to what he is still searching for? To assign the naming word is, after all, what constitutes finding.

Japanese: Then the confusion that has arisen must be endured.

Heidegger: Indeed, perhaps for long, and perhaps for only in this way, that we painstakingly labor to unravel it.

Japanese: Only this will lead us into the open.
(Heidegger, 1959/1971a, pp. 20-21)

The questions that the students pose are a way of figuring out the route. There are some “painstaking” moments, for sure, and discomfort is sometimes experienced in the “unraveling,” as Megan shares what it was like for her during one of the first days of class:

I can't have my friends see me emotional like this. I am not going to be able to make it the rest of the day—it triggered something so deep. It was really an anxious feeling to show this side of myself. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

The work of the unraveling—the existential practice of Self about which Levin (1989) writes is, indeed, hard work. It may even be that an experience of ‘being-with’ is first experienced as anxiety—a place from which one wants to flee—or do anything to stay in control. Once into the “clearing” Megan tells me in a personal conversation:

I always try to think and plan ahead of time what I will say. I want everyone to accept me. There really is a fear of judgment. The fear didn't remain in here though—I really was able to let it go. I was actually OK the rest of the day. (2003)

Renee tells of her “flip-flop” experience and my heart leaps in promise—the unraveling leads us, teacher and students, “out in to the open” (Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 21):

Usually you don't talk as a student; you just listen. *This was a flip-flop.* The candles were lit. And another thing is that *you sit at the table with us*—not at a podium or lecture board. You do not take an authoritarian position—it was more equal ground. Of course, we know you are our professor, but it is comfortable. You do not look down on us. (Renee, Personal Conversation, 2003)

The students come to teach me, as I write about their experiences. Perhaps one of the deepest dimensions of ‘being-with’ is being together—being enduring companions—standing under. It takes a while to prepare this table. I place myself in a listening space as I prepare to leap deeply into the students’ experiences. As Heidegger says, “Leap and vision require long, slow preparation” (1954/1968, p. 233).

A Touchful Way of Listening

And so I begin—it is time. Now. I come to inhabit Bon Secours Spiritual Center as a reflective space and begin to dwell here—inside the words of my students. The gracious journey with this research continues. I enter the labyrinth with a question, “What are ways in which I may begin?” Perhaps this is the journey toward understanding ‘being-with.’ The naming of some of the many dimensions of ‘being-with’ is to prepare a “place of proximity” (Irigary, 2002, p. ix).

As I put one foot in front of the other on this path of stones, I am filled with questions within questions. I find myself in an anxious, though thoughtful and hopeful spot. And I listen. I notice this day, with insistence, the gravel in between the rows of stones. At the same time I become more acutely aware of the in-between spaces allowing for the path to emerge and be seen. In my own unsettledness I feel how quickly one can get quite up close to the center—an illusion of indeed being there. I move toward and away—much winding, wondering, and questioning is necessary. This is all about relationships—including pedagogical relationships. How often do I scoot along the center and think I’m there? I experience today, like many days, a necessary vulnerability in the choices and decisions I am making. I invite my

students to do the same. How brave they are. And so, I live phenomenologically with my students and strive toward a phenomenologic pedagogy in nursing. The way of love (Irigary, 2002) unfolds like the “awakened soul pouring wine” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2001b, p. 33).

The Opus of Listening

I have my new journal and a favorite pen; I have a tape of an individual conversation with Megan in my Walkman—earphones around my neck. A Common Flicker woodpecker intermittently announces himself with distinction and dominance. The staccato echoes and resonates this day. The “call is a loud and repeated flick” (Robbins, Bruun, & Zim, 1983, p. 194). I rather long for bells and song. I listen harder. Bachelard (1958/1994) opens up new meaning:

However mysterious and invisible among the leaves the woodpecker may be at times, he nevertheless becomes familiar to us. For a woodpecker is not a silent dweller. It is not when he sings, however, that we think of him, but when he works. Up and down the tree trunk, his beak pecks the wood with resounding taps, and although he frequently disappears, we still hear him. He is a garden worker. (p. 97)

As I listen to him “work” my compassion swells. In the listening, I learn:

The word “work” is derived from the Latin *opus* meaning “to work.” Also associated with music, *opus* suggests that soulful work has something to do with rhythm and harmony. (Henry & Henry, 1999, p. 66)

My thoughts turn to Marc. On the last day of class as I invited one last reflection on our being together in teaching and learning, Marc got up out of his seat, turned the overhead lights on saying, “I thought with only 20 minutes left of class we might be spared any more reflection—sorry, sorry—I have ants in my pants.” With that he again dimmed the lights and sat back down. I too have “ants in my pants” as I

long for a return to the center. Perhaps ‘being-with’ on the way to the center calls for an opening up to the experience of the gravel—to an opportunity to listen to what the ants in one’s pants are revealing—to staying with the “repeated flick.” All is part of “soulful work.”

Listening is Candle Lit

What is the wisdom that Marc is revealing in his desire to have the lights brightly on? What is shown through the ants? One may think that turning the lights up may be a way of bringing something to light—to illuminate. Here it seems that turning the light on brighter is a way of protecting self from one more moment of vulnerability—vulnerability that is possible in reflection. The notions of light and darkness as well as those of seeing and hearing, offer up openings for understanding and inspire wonder as to the nature of ‘being-with.’

Levin (1989) gives an account that brings forth some of the intricacies of listening as he writes:

In *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, Nietzsche expresses his contempt for the gift of hearing. The ear, the organ of fear, could have evolved as greatly as it has only in the night and twilight of obscure caves and woods, in accordance with the mode of life of the age of timidity, that is to say, the longest human age there has ever been: in bright daylight the ear is less necessary. (p. 218)

Perhaps Marc needs a respite from the “very hard work of listening” (Colleen, *Personal Conversation*, 2003) and turns the light on in order that the ear may be less necessary.

I am taking awhile to get to the listening. The journey itself—the way in—is its own kind of listening. The labyrinth is the inner ear. I am called to an inner hearing—to listen, as we say in psychotherapy, with a third ear. I listen longer and

more—receiving—hearing now the softer more musical sounds. And then, as a gentle and comforting hand, I hear the Mourning Dove calling from afar, “ooah-ooo-oo-oo” (Robbins, et al., 1983, p. 166)—a call to a wakeful, mindful, listening presence. I delight in the spirit of *Entsprechung*, “a condition of attunement in which one is turned toward the other in an event of listening” (Gadamer, 1997, p. 24). Jennifer shows a purity in attunement—a lovely and natural capacity to hold open the space between “world and toy” (Rilke, 1903-1908/2000, p. 85):

Being the baby of the family, I don’t know how I got here, but everyone comes to me to talk about problems. And because I have always been so much younger and without many life experiences, *I usually don’t have much advice. So, I have learned to listen very well.* (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

I hear Jennifer’s openness—a listening space free of the clutter of advice. And I, too, open myself to a deeper hearing; Irigary (2002) invites me to a “touchful way of listening:”

In order to talk to the other, to listen to the other, to hold a dialogue between us, we have to again find an artistic, musical, touchful way of speaking, saying, and of listening able to be perceived in a written text—then not reduced to a simple assistance for remembering meaning or to some code to be respected. (p. xx)

I put the headphones on—preparing to listen to Megan—and walk with her during this listening event. I take instruction from an ancient Irish proverb, “Your feet will bring you to where your heart is” (Sellner, 1991, p. ii). I feel an incredible sense of responsibility as I am about to listen. It is through thoughtful listening that the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ is revealed. All of nature stills. There is an expectant pause just before the drum roll. Megan’s voice is clear; her words are precise—I am brought right in to her presence in my office. I am drawn to get inside her words—to

“climb into the blossom” as my daughter, Molly, once said. I also am reminded immediately of my son, Aidan, who last year at age 5 upon receiving his first Discman, and putting in his first CD, exclaims, “This music fills up my body.” This listening here calls on my whole person to take in and to re-pond. Indeed, the students’ voices “fill up my body.” Levin speaks to this tremendous life work:

Listening is a “gift of nature”—the gift of an unfilled capacity, an unrealized potential and unfinished task. The gift calls for existential work: the kind of work that could be described adopting a term introduced by Foucault, as an authentic ‘practice of Self.’ (1989, p. 2)

The students and I are engaged by this gift. This research project is our *opus*.

I continue to listen to Megan and then to each of my other students. I pay attention to the words, to the silences—I kneel behind their words. I know I am in a sacred place—“on the way to nearness” (Irigary, 2002, p. ix).

‘Being-With’ Soul Bridges

I go to a new bench—showing me a new perspective and dimension. With Levin’s *The Body’s Recollection of Being* in hand I gather in the wonder of the morning freshness—the newness of the color and texture of nature. The sleepy mallards slowly are coming to life. My view at the moment is of the bridge—the bridge connecting the two shores of this tiny reflecting lake. Particularly drawing my attention is the bridge’s reflection. Perhaps it is this underwater bridge that connects the shorelines of the heart. And I wonder, what are the shorelines of my own heart? Is it in this place that I walk with my students—exploring what it means to ‘be-with?’

Renee says in class:

You sit back and watch the way we are. You watch the ways we interact with each other. You hear what is really going on, not just what we tell you in our answers. You are very non-judgmental—

real—it is not something you say; it is for real. Everyone feels like this or they wouldn't have cried that first day. (Class Conversation, 2003)

It seems that getting to a place of understanding 'being-with' necessarily requires that one already *be* in 'being-with.' Renee speaks to a dimension of 'being-with' that includes "watching" and listening to the silences—getting in behind the words. I am humbled to hear her experience of my knowing through watching and listening—knowing through being. Echoes of Hultgren's words resound: "My knowing is revealed in my power to be" (1991, p. 16).

As if in response to Renee's words, Smith (1999) unravels the notion of "watching" in his essay on *Identity, Self and Other in the Conduct of Pedagogical Action*. Renee and Smith open up some new pedagogical understandings as I listen to her experience of our classroom along with his story of the aboriginal people:

There is a likeness here to the practice in many aboriginal cultures in North America of appointing elders gifted with discernment to the post of "child watcher." Their job is to keep watch over the children, at play, in community activities, and so on, to see what the particular gift of each child might be, as it arises naturally in the context of everyday life, and then to guide each child into efforts that can bring the gift to its fullest expression. Such a practice holds up for criticism all those pressures in modern capitalist culture which encourage students to fit the requirements of the corporate agenda, taking a narrow, time-bound characterization of success to be of universal application. (Smith, 1999, p. 21)

As the phenomenon of 'being-with' unfolds I live in the tension between delight and anxiety. I am grounded in 'being-with' my students and hope to "bring their gifts to full expression;" I strive to hold open places of "being" that I may "know" the ways to "guide." I turn with Renee to a question previously asked in chapter two: What is the nature of my capacity to BE? The question deepens in a reflective wondering and stillness and I find myself in a meditative way of being in the world. For sure, 'being-

with' envelops watching and listening. I am reminded of Abram (1996) who during one of his travels in Bali finds himself in a cliff cave during a rainstorm. He writes from a place of watching and listening:

It was quiet inside, a kind of intimate sanctuary hewn into the stone. I began to explore the rich resonance of the enclosure...I was delighted with the overtones the cave added to my voice...Soon as I was looking into a solid curtain of water...My senses were all but overcome by the wild beauty of the cascade...And then I noticed a small delicate activity. Just in front of me, a spider was climbing a thin thread stretched across the mouth of the cave...I lost sight of the spider then, and for a while it seemed that it had vanished, thread and all, until my focus rediscovered it...And suddenly I realized that there were many overlapping webs coming into being...My senses were entranced. I had the distinct impression that I was watching the universe being born, galaxy upon galaxy. (pp. 17-19)

As I give myself over to the listening, I, too, am “entranced” and I watch the “universe being born” through the voices of my students. ‘Being-with’ is sensuous.

The bridge under the water or in the water is clearly a bridge—soft and motion-filled—moving ever so constantly and subtly with the flow of water. The bridge on top is clear, strong, distinct, and motionless. The bridge in the water dances with fish. I am drawn in—deeper and down. The still water shows the footbridge with vibrant certainty and presence. As the breeze breathes on the water the bridge diffuses—and withdraws. ‘Being-with’ is about withdrawing and connecting with others right here—in this ‘in the water’ place. Why this has to be the soul! According to the Greek philosopher, Thales:

Everything is water and water is the basic element in all life. With our modern ears, we may hear that statement as a scientific fact, but over the centuries many philosophers have understood that water is not just H₂O but also an element of the soul—fluid, deep, changing, tidal, cleansing, amniotic, nurturing, and threatening. (as cited in Moore, 1996, p. 14)

Perhaps it is this reflection of the bridge *in the soul*, that is the “with” connecting beings. A ray of sunlight into the deep now shows the top of the bridge and I am led even deeper—to the “ground of my soul.” There is a handrail! Imagine—a hand rail on the bridge of ‘being-with!’ Perfect! The hand rails are present—tiny rudders. And then not. Questions open up as I behold what seems to be an un-grounded depth of the bridge. In what ways does the meaning of the ground take on new meanings when one reflects upon the reflection? What is the ground of profound reflection? What is the experience of ‘being-on’ and being held by a bridge that is not always “amniotic”—constantly perceptible by a secure embrace? In what ways does this thinking take a “flip-flop,” causing one to feel unstable and threatened—maybe even unsafe and vulnerable? Rumi shares his wisdom:

Every part of you has a secret language
Your hands and feet say what you have done.
And everything, every need, brings in what’s needed...
Ask a difficult question,
And the marvelous answers appear.
(as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 169)

Heidegger asks a particularly hard question in *Introduction to Metaphysics*: “Why are there beings?” (1959/1987, p. 1). He writes inclining to answer:

[This question] has its ground in a leap though which we thrust away all the previous security of our life. The question is asked only in this leap; it is the leap; without it there is no asking...the leap in this questioning opens up its own source—with this leap the question arrives at its own ground. We call such a leap, which opens up its own source, the original source, or origin (*Ur-sprung*), the finding of one’s own ground. (pp. 5-6)

Heather shares with me a sense of finding new ground for herself—something different for her than in past classroom situations. I think she holds on to the handrails as she says:

Um, well, I know for one, some of the things that I've shared—I don't know about my classmates but, some of the things that I've shared, um, I wouldn't normally talk about with my classmates and with a professor. And I did. So, this is a lot different. I'm not used to that. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

I enter into a wondering about the *what* of the difference that Heather experiences.

Pondering “who we shall we become together” (Casey, 1993, p. 23) in this Listening Space, I kiss the ground.

A Poetics of Listening Space—I and You

IN THE STREAMS north of the future
I cast the net, which you
hesitantly load
with stone-written
shadows. (Celan, as cited in Gadamer, 1997, p. 83)

This simple and profound poem of Paul Celan may weave its way into understandings of a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ Listening to Gadamer as he unfolds the who of the “I” and of the “You” offers up some space for reflecting on the I and the You of all who are engaged in listening through this phenomenological research study—students, teacher, and readers.

The sun shines through the water to the very bottom. The stones which load down the nets cast the shadows. All this is highly sensuous and concrete: a fisherman casts the net, and someone else helps him by loading it down. Who am I? And who are you? The I is a fisherman who casts the net. Casting the net is an act of pure expectation. Whoever casts the net has done everything he can do, and he must wait and see if something is caught...The I is not alone and cannot haul in the catch by itself. It needs the You...But who is this You? It almost sounds as if someone here knows just how much the I can be loaded...What is really present in these verses, and what lends reality to the I, is the interplay between I and You that promises a catch. (Gadamer, 1997, pp. 83-85)

Perhaps, the “interplay” between the students and me, the students with each other, and the reader with each of us holds the promise—the interplay is a dance of

depth of understanding. I listen to the students' words as I listen to the poet's words—pondering the I and the You—beholding in awe, the I and You intertwining. I enter now a place to deepen my own listening space—making room for presence.

I sit on a bench about 25 feet from the small lake taking in the beauty of this writing place. I am mesmerized by the concentric circles flowing out from a center created by water falling in to the lake over a lovely formation of rocks. The lake is clear and pristine, birds and butterflies abound—a listening pool—reflecting this symphony of nature. Quiet, serene, alive—still.

Drawn to the water, I leave my bench for a closer spot. I sit in the grass and dip my toes into the water. I see a bunch of moss under the water and tiny brilliant blue flies—tiny batons with sapphire ends, quietly and rapidly buzzing at the water's surface. I see large rocks and pebbles and a few left over maple leaves from the fall. The circles have changed. The water is dancing—no longer in circles. More shimmering.

The reflection of the trees and cattails changes, too, from this close-up place. I see the reflections with less clarity. I follow the tree's image as far as I can and I am not able to get to the top of the tree—as I gaze deep within the water. From here I see a surprise reflection of the purple flowers in the lake—not seen from my first spot. My little blue flying sapphires dance and play. Had I not come closer, I would have missed them. I am splashed by four mallards as they take a flying leap and skim the surface in front of me. Oh, the tiger lilies are shown by the sun, decorating the underwater with their reflections. This is “a place and time when my soul breathed deeply and freely, and I felt as if could reach out and touch the face of God” (Sellner, 1991, p. 110). This listening space at the retreat center is indeed soul space—a place to reflect on Who am I and Who are You?—a place to reflect on the intimacy between them. (Packard, Personal Journal Reflections, 2003)

As I dwell in the bridge's reflection and sharing soul breath—“tasty like rose marmalade” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1999, p. 6) I respond to Celan and my students.

I offer a new sense of invitation:

Cast your nets. Fish
From the footbridge
In my soul.

I offer my hand to hold
Your promise.
(Packard, 2003)

‘Being-With’ is Entering the Story of Another

I invite the students to engage in reflective narrative in the classroom. Some students start to write immediately—others struggle with sighing discomfort. Eventually the tension eases and the Listening Space becomes a reflective place for gazing inward and a re-remembering of stories. Some students put their pens down and we wait in stillness for those who are living in their writing, experiencing what Casey (1987) calls immanence:

In matters of body memory we should speak of immanence rather than “intersection” between past and present. Instead of taking up a perspective on the past—getting a clearer “view” of it as we often attempt to do in recollection or in reminiscence—in body memories we allow the past to enter actively into the very present in which our remembering is taking place. (p. 168)

Eventually, I say, “Well, why don’t we just begin with where you are—beginning with you reading your reflections?” Marc gestures that he will begin:

I’m not good at writing these personal things and I hate to have you guys all suffer through my story again, you know. But anyways, I was born and raised in York County in Dallastown of Scotch, Irish, and German parents. And tradition plays a large role in my family. I was brought up in the Methodist church and attended Dallastown High School. Upon graduation, I went to Shippensburg University and majored in Psychology. In 1985 I graduated with a BA in psychology. Then to the chagrin of my parents, I moved to Hawaii. In Hawaii I got a job in a large hospital working in in-patient psychiatry.

Marc’s story connects with Gadamer’s story. In Grondin’s (2003) new biography of Hans-Georg Gadamer he writes:

[Hans-Georg] was inwardly torn between the unmistakable pressure to fulfill his father’s understandable wishes by means of some kind of accomplishment and the equally understandable need of young people

to go their own way and assert themselves against paternal authority.
(p. 33)

I hear in each of my students' stories of the influence of their parents—both through presences and absences. I listen carefully for the pedagogical lessons to be learned through their lived experiences. Jen wishes her mom had given out as many “hugs and kisses” as she did “chores.” Jackie remembers as a 7 year old not knowing why everyone was crying when her father died.

Marc continues:

In 1998, after almost 10 years of being in Hawaii, my mother died of leukemia. And then in May 2000, I came home to assist my father after a serious surgery. Uh, the very next year I moved home to help take care of my father. He died on February 23, 2001. Uh, my sister then died two months later of a short four-month illness and so I had to drop out at the beginning of N 210 to take care of my father with hospice. In the last two years I have aged 20 years and I have learned a lot about nursing during the last two years. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Marc brings us to the outside surface of his experiencing of traumatic loss—one after another. I acknowledge that his dad's anniversary is coming up shortly as he is so specific with the date. Marc quickly replies that he does not honor the day, saying “I know that some people take the anniversary hard, but, I don't find it to be any different from any other day.” He covers over his feelings—though expresses them through his actions of coming back from Hawaii and then taking a leave from school. While Marc has a lot of experience working with patients as a psych tech, his personal gazing inward meets with significant discomfort. I hear the discomfort expressed as he verbally diminishes the intensity of his experience.

Hans-Georg joins our human conversation around this table. Through Grondin (2003) we hear the story:

Johannes Gadamer [Hans-Georg's dad] died on April 15, 1928 after a long and severe suffering. Even on his deathbed he took care for the future of his son Hans-Georg. Thus he summoned his son's teacher, Martin Heidegger, who had recently confirmed his status as the rising star of German philosophy with the publication of *Being and Time*. Immediately coming to the clinic Heidegger asked, "Mr. Councilman, what can I do for you?" to which [Mr. Gadamer] replied, "Oh I am worried about my son." "Why so? He is doing very well. Of that I am fully confident. He is one year away from his Habilitation." "Yes," the father sighed, "but do you really believe that philosophy is enough of a vocation to occupy one's life?" (p. 29)

As we enter the stories in the "place of remembering" (Casey, 1987, p. 168) I am convinced that 'being-with' my students is surely a way of responding to their "vocation"—their call to care as nurses. Huebner writes:

A vocation is living life intentionally and openly, not routinely. It means to be prepared to accept newness and surprise, pain and happiness; for these are dimensions of the world that make us rethink, almost daily, who and what we are...a vocation is not simply being called forth; it is also being called by. (1999, p. 380)

The students and I are each called to live in the center of being—that we may be able to be there for others—in the tensions of the day-to-day in the nursing world. 'Being-with' is a way of taking "care for the future."

'Being-With' in the Well of Being: Together in Grief

Jennifer responds to Marc with her experience of losing her father through death when she was 9 years old. She asks Marc if he was present at the time of death. Marc replies with a deeper and softer tone, "Both of them [father and sister] died in my arms, you know, looking at me right in my face. And that's a heavy experience." The students and I all connect to the image Marc shares—so differently than was the response to the factual rendering initially given. Tears flow—all except for Marc—who is quiet. We share this lived moment of bodily remembering. We are all drawn

into the lived experience. Bachelard (1958/1994) deepens this understanding through his words:

But the image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface...It takes root in us. It has been given us by another, but we begin to have the impression that we could have created it. (p. xxiii)

Conversation opens up with all of the students with comments like, “Marc I never knew you went through all of this.” They have been in classes together for 2 years. Our “depths” are indeed touched.

Lynn raises her hand saying through tears, “I think I can handle it.” I suggest to her that she is in charge of her telling. She begins:

My crying has little to do with today. Um, um, my parents are becoming as important to me in my older years as they were in my younger. Their unconditional love and support has shaped me every step of the way. My father died of lung cancer when I was 16. Sometimes I still miss him so much it hurts. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jackie tells of her loss:

Um, my father also died when I was really young. I was seven and he was 30. And that, that’s changed me in ways that I’m still learning about—that you just don’t even realize the, the effect that it has at the time. He worked a lot and I didn’t really know him—and it was no big deal. And I remember all the adults crying and thinking, what’s the big deal? But, um, now, you know, mostly it affected me growing up—being different. All the other kids at school had two parents and I just had the one. We didn’t have a lot of money growing up so that was something that really affected me. All the other kids—well I went to a Catholic school, so it seemed like everybody had so many material things and I didn’t. That was always something that bothered me. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

So much is brought to the table. I am reminded of Colleen’s words in a personal conversation, “It is so neat how people can offer up such help to each other from their own stories without taking the focus away from the person telling the

story.” Levin (1989) affirms just how “neat” this gift of listening is—the gift of *bon secours*:

The way of thinking that will be open to an experience with Being, as speculative reason never has been, needs to be a way of thinking deeply intertwined with an ontologically developed listening. (p. 17)

The students are on a path of listening toward Being. Perhaps a new way of thinking intertwined with listening is necessary for one to be open to an experience of ‘being-with’—a listening that is a giving over rather than a “taking away.” Heidegger further connects thinking and listening:

You will make close listening essentially easier for yourselves if you will rid yourselves in time of a habit which I shall call “one-track thinking. (1954/1968, p. 26)

‘Being-With’ is the Face of Intimacy

Marc tells us he has “aged 20 years and learned a lot in nursing over the past two years.” His most significant learnings were through his lived experiences of his personal losses. How necessary and rich it is to enter this lived curriculum as one prepares to work with persons as a nurse in any clinical discipline. Marc has bodily remembering of these moments at the time of death of his loved ones—“in my arms” and “looking at me right in the face.” What does it mean to experience leave-taking in a touching and face-to-face way? I believe that Marc teaches about ‘being-with’ another at the time of death. I reflect on the notion of face through the words of O’Donohue:

In the human face, the anonymity of the universe becomes intimate. The dream of the winds, and the ocean, the silence of the stars and the mountains, reached a mother-presence in the face. The hidden, secret warmth of creation comes to expression here. The face is the icon of creation... The face is the mirror of the mind. (1997, pp. 37-38)

Beholding the face and holding in one's arms at the time of leave-taking is "heavy" and rich—a time of holding on and letting go. 'Being-with' holds the "hidden, secret warmth of creation"—touching the heart of nursing.

In the Listening Space, the students are called to face one another and themselves in order that they eventually may touch their patients. I have written the following in our course syllabus:

Anxiety, loneliness, changes in self-esteem and grief are areas of patient responses to which nurses are called to be 'at home.' I have selected readings that will often serve as departure points for caring for persons with mental health problems, including persons with substance use disorders. Reading, reflection on your experiences, and engaging in thoughtful responses are all valuable parts of this clinical experience. (2003, p.1)

Autobiographical work calls forth a spontaneous telling and receiving of grief stories—a place deep inside that calls for authentic presence. On the first day of class Colleen says, "I will go but I think I avoid somber things so that is why I don't write about them." She later tells me of a change in the feel of the group with her words:

The intimate things we share—oh there is a great deal of comfort in this group...The autobiographical sharing the first day of this class was the beginning of [our group] getting more intimate. I knew everyone, I thought, VERY well—but never LIKE THIS. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

And now, listen to Rumi (as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 136):

If anyone wants to know what "spirit" is,
Or what "God's fragrance" means,
Lean your head toward him or her.
Keep your face there close.

Like this.

Heather's experience resonates with Colleen. Through 'being-with' in teaching in this class, Heather leans her head toward the others and her relationships deepen:

Um, like I said, I felt like I was pretty close with everybody in my class but I learned a lot of things about, um, the people in my group that I didn't know before. I guess, just, um—maybe we just—I wasn't as close as I thought I was. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Being together in autobiographical work draws on the powerful presence of body memory. One comes into being in the telling of the story. Jennifer says:

I had a really hard time writing this down. I don't know why. And it was hard just because *I really don't know who I am yet*. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

This telling of stories is one way of preparing the way toward becoming—a clearing—for caring with patients. This is also a place for discovering how one has been all along as Jennifer continues, “I feel like I'm still trying to truly be who I am.”

Megan tells in a written reflection at the end of the rotation, “We have been brought together on a deeper level.” Heather similarly expresses, “I just feel a lot closer to them now. Just like, you know, talking about and sharing our personal experiences.” Just as I am about to take a break from listening again to my students' stories, I hear Colleen saying:

You're willing to share your experiences and your life and your personal things, so therefore, that opens you up to us, so... that's helped the class for being open with you and each other. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Colleen is showing what Heidegger writes about in *Being and Time*:

The disclosedness of the *Mitda-sein* of others which belongs to being-with means that the understanding of others already lies in the understanding of being of Da-sein because its being is being-with... Concernful taking care of things is understood in terms of what is taken care of and with an understanding of them. Thus the other is initially disclosed in the taking care of concern. (1953/1996, p. 116)

Oh—smell the “intermingling scent of cherry blossom and plum blossom on the same branch” (Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 53)! Colleen, indeed, teaches about the “unconcealment of the two-fold” (p. 53).

I go outdoors for a stroll along the path at the retreat center and find a perfect bench. I treasure the stories of the students and reflect on Remen’s words as they shed insight:

Everybody is a story. When I was a child, people sat around kitchen tables and told their stories. We don’t do that so much anymore. Sitting around the table telling stories is not just a way of passing time. It is the way that wisdom gets passed along. The stuff that helps us to live a life worth remembering. Despite the awesome powers of technology, many of us still do not live very well. We may need to listen to each other’s stories once again. (1996, p. xxv)

In the quiet of this late afternoon sun, I know more than ever of the moral claim that the students have on me. In chapter six I delve into what is the “stuff” in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing that composes a nursing “life worth remembering.” I behold an orange and black jeweled butterfly sipping wine from the Meadow Sage—not missing a blossom. I too sip wine in the listening—sipping the wisdom through my students words. I do listen to the stories once again.

Let’s get back to the table now and listen to Jackie:

I didn’t, I didn’t do this right I’m sure. I started with my husband because he’s affected me the most even though he wasn’t the first one who affected me. Um, just, that he’s so different than I am and we kind of balance each other out, where—and he has a lot of really good qualities. He helps me to try to see that too. Um, having a son with diabetes has really had an affect on me. It makes me aware that everything’s not perfect. I mean, my father died, and my son has this disease, I tend to kind of think the worst in any situation before I think the best. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jackie worries that she is not telling her story “right.” As we begin to lean toward one another in the telling and receiving of who we are—we learn. ‘Being-with’ is being together in the stories.

Please meet Megan through her words as she, too, opens her story through a protective covering by saying, “This is very superficial. Like, I didn’t go into detail about it. I wrote:”

Who am I? Every day I challenge myself to be someone better in all aspects of my life. Each day I have to fill certain roles, as student and professional, daughter and sister or girlfriend to friend. Some days are challenging, but I reflect on my role models. In particular, my Grandmother, who passed away 11 years ago. She was an amazing individual whose support and strength was overwhelming. My mother is also another person who I admire. Life’s obstacles have certainly presented themselves to her and she continually focuses on her faith and determination to overcome her battles for our sakes, my sister and I. There are those as well that, although I love them deeply, I strive to be opposite of. In particular, my father. But regardless of how hard I try, I know I am a spitting image of him. Um, I don’t know exactly the person I am today. Rather I know who I want to become in the future. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Megan starts out with owning what she names “superficiality.” In a later conversation though, Megan shows wonderful personal insight:

At our first gathering I felt as though I was superficial—not sure how much I wanted to disclose myself. Our friendships have not delved deep into our lives. I was superficial to protect myself...As the weeks went on we became more vulnerable, willing to accept each other, and to understand them more...It becomes easier to reveal ourselves...I usually take the back seat and this time I didn’t. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Friendship begins to emerge as a place where one risks vulnerability. Tensions are recognized and, as Megan suggests, understanding calls for the students to lay out and be seen—peeling back the protective covering. Intimacy, friendship, and vulnerability are intrinsically connected in the experience of ‘being-with.’ Megan engages in the

hermeneutic work at hand—revealing and understanding—at the invitation of now new friends.

‘Being-With’ is In-Tense—The Fierce Tenderness of Compassion

Renee follows, stating that, “I think I did mine wrong.” I offer to her along with the other students, that there is no right or wrong where telling your story is concerned. The story is hers and we are here to receive it. She reads her reflections:

I didn’t do dates or any sort of timeline. So I don’t know if that’s what you wanted or not. Um, so I just wrote about people in my life who have shaped me to be who I’ve become more than anything. As a child I was never allowed to make fun of other children in school, um, as so many of the other children do. In doing this, my mother taught me the value of kindness and compassion towards others and the importance of inclusiveness rather than exclusion.

With her beginning story, Renee invites us in to a deep life lesson of living and ‘being-with.’ I take note of its profundity in the relationship between nursing student and teacher as well as its centrality in what it means to ‘be-with’ patients in clinical practice. Renee comes to this table with the values of kindness, compassion, and inclusion. Renee’s words fly out in resonance with those of Nassal (1997) in his lovely book, *The Conspiracy of Compassion*:

Seems that being compassionate means more than tolerating differences. Being a compassionate inclusive community implies a deep and abiding respect for the dignity and the dreams of those with whom we differ. (p. 99)

In a later chapter, I am led with insistence to a pedagogy in nursing that holds dear the meanings that are being uncovered here. For now, I am in awe and compelled to work with the precious curriculum that is part of Renee’s being through her mother—the work of continuing to enlarge the capacity for compassion with one another and our patients. Nassal reminds us of the importance of reverencing the stories of each other:

We seek to create an atmosphere of trust where we allow stories of our solitary experiences to spill out on the floor. We reverence these tales of woe and wonder, and we realize there is very little we can *do* except *be* present to each other. (1997, p. 148)

The students do sense an atmosphere of trust in the classroom. I asked Megan what it is like for her to be present in a place of vulnerability. Her response builds on Renee's and fills me with such love of my students—a gift received over and over. I hear Megan's words in the way that Gadamer hears Celan's poem, "Consoled You May Welcome Me With Snow"—as a proem for the rest of his poems. Megan's beautiful telling is a "proem, and as in musical composition, establishes the key for the whole with the very first tone" (Gadamer, 1997, p. 73). She sets a tone for the many lived, profound, and genuine offerings that follow in chapter five:

[Being-with] is a moment to be regarded—others are in a way giving themselves to you in a way that they may not have ever before. They are trusting you, trusting confidentially. Being vulnerable allows you to be more compassionate. (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Renee continues with her "sacred anecdotes" (Nassal, 1997, p. 129):

My father taught me the legacy of hard work and work ethic. I remember a certain Christmas Eve on the dairy farm delivering a calf in the freezing rain and chopping wood wearing a hard hat after dangerous ice storms so we'd have wood for the fireplace. Um, he taught me if there's a job to do, then do it. And this is probably the root of forming my "suck it up" mentality. It's from my father. Um, my brother is not like that; he's more like my mom. Sort of more sensitive type, I guess.

Perhaps Renee is showing the fierce side of tenderness as she uses the words, "a suck it up mentality." She continues to tell us of significant learnings borne out of love of her son—a selflessness and aggressiveness that is experienced only in deep commitment to another: "Having a child has taught me to be selfless and aggressive

in his best interests.” ‘Being-with’ as mother presence eventually opens and finds its way—cradled in chapter five. At this time, Renee continues through tears:

I’ve learned through grief how strong I can be and how fragile. About the same time, um last semester, um, we got the phone call that nobody could find my Grandfather. And, I’m sorry, maybe I should stop. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Her tears are received by the group with a collective tearful response and a compassionate silence. The students ask her questions and she continues. Renee eloquently tells of the tensions in her rich experiences—“selfless and aggressive,” and “strong and fragile.” I call these tensions to the group’s attention. We talk about the many tensions that live side by side in our lives and therefore the many tensions that call us in our nursing world. What does it mean to be selfless and aggressive? What does it mean to be at once, strong and fragile? A feminist theologian, Mary Hunt (1991) writes of this particular tension, “fierce and tender” in friendships (p. 22). I believe that this creative tension is possible in all relationships, including pedagogical relationships, and opens up to a dimension of what it truly means to ‘be-with’ another human person:

I call friendships “fierce” because of the intensity of attention. It can be hard to be known so well, to be understood and transparent to friends who pay attention. Likewise we all crave the tenderness that only those who love us can offer. Tenderness does not affect the ferocity, but it is the quality of care and nurture that only friends share. (p. 22)

The students take notice that once they risk vulnerability they meet tenderness and experience comfort. The students reveal this more and more as the semester goes on. Rumi shows us that in this tension there is a sense of being “outside of time:”

Fierce Courtesy

The connection to the Friend
Is secret and very fragile.
The image of that friendship
Is in how you love, the grace
And delicacy, the subtle talking
together, in full prostration,
outside of time. When you're
there, remember the fierce
courtesy of the one with you.
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1999, p. 41)

'Being-with' unravels in the many connections—friendships and necessary tensions.

'Being-with' embraces a "fierce courtesy."

During our classroom conversations there are many opportunities for the telling and receiving of stories—for entering the stories of one another from places of lived memory as well as clinical tales. Reflective narrative writing, too, opens to possibilities for thinking and feeling and dwelling in tensions that may not have been risked before. In our being together in the classroom we find necessary reflective space. Neuman and Peterson write:

The experience of reading and writing autobiography may provide the reader/writer with the reflective space necessary to reimagine her life, and her work as reflective of her life. (1997, pp. 7-8)

As the stories are told lives are truly intertwined and strengthened—comfort is experienced. How rich, humane, and necessary it is for the work of nursing to be authentically "reflective of one's life." The work of nursing grounds itself in creating soul space.

'Being-With' is Creating Soul Space

Sellner (1991) writes, "I drink deeply of the silence, inhale the quiet, lose myself in timelessness—that is soul space" (p. 69). I, too, "drink deeply of the silence"

that my students' words leave behind—gesturing me to look deeply within myself as I listen—leading me necessarily to soul space. Being in this research is to experience expectation. Being in this research is to search I and You and to delight in the words and their receiving becoming one.

In *On the Way to Language*, Heidegger (1959/1971a) and the Japanese scholar talk about the Japanese word *charis* meaning “graciousness” (p. 46). “This saying [*Charis*],” says the Japanese friend, “comes closer to putting into words the breath like advent of the stillness of delight” (Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 46). *Charis* names for me the bodily-known experience of being—*Dasein*—on the brink of discovery! Levin (1985) beautifully writes into my own understanding with his words:

As we begin to feel the call in our body of pre-understanding, as we begin to sense the significance of our attunement, the ontical fact of our belongingness-to-the-field becomes an ontological question that cannot be avoided; and our very existence becomes the answer. Our decision is how we live; how we are moved to comport ourselves, how we bear witness to that which has moved us, the kind of stand we take, and the various postures and positions by which we continually manifest what we have understood of the attunement. (p. 103)

I greet this new day, grateful for the “stillness of delight” that is preparing me to recognize what is being brought forth in relationship with my students. I listen to Abram as I ground myself in the sacredness of life:

Direct sensuous reality, in all its-more-than-human mystery, remains the sole touchstone for an experiential world now inundated with electronically-generated vistas and engineered pleasures; only in regular contact with the tangible ground and sky can we learn how to orient and to navigate in the multiple dimensions that now claim us. (1996, p. x)

‘Being-With’ is Flowing and Blending in Community

I go to the chapel. At mid-afternoon, all is in darkness except for a spot of

light on my journal as radiance of the message on the messenger's course (Heidegger, 1959/1971a). I open to a new page—my pen falls to the bench and echoes. I feel anxious. Today I need to let go of all that which keeps me from making a decision about changing jobs. I am feeling pulled apart—torn apart—yes that is stronger. I need to re-member here and re-collect.

I get my headphones in place and push “play.” Jen’s voice fills the sanctuary as a call to worship:

In this class, it's a unity—feels we are all kind of one—everything feels like it flows really well. We feel free. You are part of our group.
(Personal Conversation, 2003)

In the midst of my own tumult, Jen’s words fill up my body—the sanctuary of my being. ‘Being-with’ is experienced by Jen as a “oneness”—as “free” and “flowing.” Her words wash over me, calming me. What does it mean to experience wholeness, to experience freedom and trust? The word whole, health, and soul all originate from the Saxon word *hal* (Henry & Henry, 1999, p. 12). “Carl Jung in particular liked to associate wholeness with soul. It represented his way of describing soul as magnificently unbounded” (p. 12). ‘Being-with’ comes to be understood, in one of its many dimensions, as “soul space”—indeed “magnificently unbounded.”

Colleen speaks to a “natural” and “blending” feeling:

We [students] have been together for two years—having you now in our group feels very natural. *You blend in with us—letting it grow from there.* (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Colleen’s words draw me to her—and to the center of ‘being-with’ in pedagogical relationships. There is an organic feel to her experiencing—and an invitation to the circle as a place of belonging. Lynn, as well, expresses a sense of unity-with one another, including with me:

Just the fact that you are kind of, you're among the group. You're not separate from the group. You're not standing up and, you know, dictating how it goes. It just felt very natural that we all kind of talked and, you know, kind of chimed in when they felt the need—instead of it being the traditional classroom. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Behind Lynne's words is a sense of trust and empowerment. Also using the word "natural," Lynne expresses the pedagogical atmosphere. Perhaps rather than "traditional" and "dictating," Lynne experiences "a space of trustworthiness, of dependability, of purity" (Nitschke, as cited in Bollnow, 1989, p. 13). The students bring a sense of life to the experiencing. My soul opens to flowing as Jackie's words echo the others:

In the Listening Space, we feel free to express ourselves. And that's what everybody does. And everybody else listens and kind of grows from there. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Surely there is a connection with the place Nitschke knows, "What is found in this place seems to belong, to have sense, to be alive, trusted, close, and approachable" (p. 13). I am humbled and honored to engage in a pedagogy that is alive, trusted, and close. I respond to my students:

My soul spills into yours
And is blended
(Rumi, as cited in Helminski, 2001, p. 45)

'Being-With' as Leading Together: An Easy Dance of Jasmine and Cypress

I return to the beginning and inhale the quiet that the students' words create here and take in the loveliness of the jasmine.

When a simple jasmine flower is held in the hand it speaks a fragrant language to those hearts which is exquisitely profound because it resonates without any need for recourse to spoken word and links the individual with a devotional attitude which encompasses millions of souls both past and present... The opening notes of jasmine sombac impress me as being heavy and sweet with a richness and depth that

immediately draws into the realm of profound mystery...The buds open around 11PM and the fullness of the odor permeates the atmosphere in the darkest hours of night.

(<http://members.aol.com/parijata/jasmin.html>)

‘Being-with’ students is an experience of “richness and depth”—an easy dance. What is the experience of leading and following in this dance? What does ‘being-with’ mean to the students in the experience of the classroom? Jennifer opens up this question:

To truly be with is not always just being physically right beside—or talking all the time. YOUR presence is definitely known in the classroom and it’s not a presence where we are afraid to say something, or to give a wrong answer—It is like you build on what we say and offer suggestions that we can build on and question. It is just a nice give and take all the time. Like I feel that you are WITH us not LEADING us—well, you ARE leading us. You don’t dominate us. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

‘Being-with’ offers up possibilities for a mutual sense of leading together—of engaging in the hermeneutic dance. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ reveals a connection between persons where leading is shared and experienced as care.

Megan’s words here behold the intimacy of the “intermingling scent” of

‘being-with:’

I feel you allow us to verbalize our feelings—you are the leader AND part of the group. You have shared your stories as well and we are listening together. We are learning from you and you are learning from us. (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Sometimes the students open the most in the “darkest hours of the night.”

Jackie in her reflections after having shared her grief related to her son’s diagnosis of diabetes writes:

I was feeling pretty overwhelmed and it didn’t take much to bring my emotions to the surface. After we walked out of there the first day, I was feeling pretty depressed. It surprised me because I did not feel that bad coming in. I think because of the emotional turmoil of the first

week, I was especially sensitive. I was mentioning on the second day that I was embarrassed and it was kind of everyone to let me know that it was okay, but somehow I felt weird. I am used to being very strong—like the mom of the group. I know I am human, and that it is okay to cry, but it was pretty intense and it even surprised me...I felt much better after [day 2]. I guess I needed to let it out the first day, and after I did—I was able to move on. (Journal Reflections, 2003)

I acknowledged to Jackie in the margin of her paper, “You allowed yourself to remove the covering which exposed some tender spots. You must have felt quite vulnerable.” Jackie goes on to write, doubting her own acceptance of her son’s illness:

When something happens like on Monday, I wonder how well I really am coping. Maybe letting it surface like my husband does helps him to deal with it in a healthier way. This will definitely make me analyze my perceptions and reactions to Steven’s disease more closely. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

There is such a natural tendency for analysis to take precedence over attention to the living through of such experiences. The dance continues in the margin with my response to Jackie:

I believe that “acceptance” is not a place at which you arrive once and for all—but rather a place of meaning-making and healing. It is a journey that is more circular in nature—like grief. (Packard, 2003)

How my heart leaped with her later written words, “I hope to someday be the leader of a group, possibly a diabetic support group. There, now that it is in print, I have to do it!! See you Monday!” (Journal Reflections, 2003). From the stillness of this receiving place, I whisper in thanksgiving:

Because my soul has
Absorbed your fragrance,
I cherish it (Rumi, as cited in Helminski, p. 45)

The fragrance permeates being—and I indeed cherish it—the fragrance of the

delicate jasmine flower. Let us bask together now in the unfolding and closing of this delicate flower and dwell in the lessons she offers. As well, let us honor the cypress tree, the “tree of life” and reflect with Moore (1996) on all trees: “If we stop to think about trees in our life, we begin to understand how fully capable they are of relatedness, intimacy, and meaning” (p. 22). This lovely, easy dance of jasmine and cypress is a way of offering up new poetic insights for being part of the ontological condition of *Unterwegssein*: “always on the way” (Gadamer, 1997, p. 21). To embrace this *Unterwegssein* in the pedagogical atmosphere is to dance easily—dancing with richness, depth, and mystery—dancing through relatedness, intimacy, and meaning. Writing and re-writing in this act of research keeps me “always on the way” toward the question, **what is the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship?** Writing and re-writing makes “my dance daring enough to finish” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1999, p. 43).

I take my headphones off, connect myself with ground and sky, follow the sun’s radiance to the handrails of my soul and I write a dissertation meditation of praise:

Dissertation Matins

Good day, sweet, faithful Mourning Dove.
Your call brings me home—
Pure beginning.

Hello precious Ducklings and Mama—
Silly splashes and almost first flights
Caught in the cattails
You tickle my Being.

Greetings! Stately Tree of weeping elegance,
Full of strength and flow.
Dear Sun, you dry the tears with holy radiance.

I hear you, Journey Stones.
 Your center beckons—
 And warmly cradles.

Thank you gracious Orchard—
 Handing apples to the waiting deer,
 You nurture.

You are there—
 So clear and soft—Oh
 Foot Bridge of my soul.
 You are the hyphen between
 Being and With—
 Standing under the
 Swirling sapphires and golden fish.

Shadows and echoes,
 Reflect, resonate—Awaken.
 Withdraw—
 Connect—and praise
 Hold the hand of
 Magic and song—
 Embrace this
 Liturgy of Life!
 (Packard, 2003)

I behold the bridge as it gathers the shores of being and with. I dwell in footbridge
 mystery.

'Being-With' is a Just Known Mystery

A language of 'being-with' seems to be showing itself—perhaps more than a
 naming at *this* point along the journey. As Heidegger (1959/1971a) says, “How is one
 to give a name to what he is still searching for? To assign the naming word is, after
 all what constitutes finding” (p. 20). And so, I continue to trust that it is in the
 openness to the mystery that the finding will be. Dwelling in the mystery is part of the
 work. And so, here I wait—gathering in. I listen for the magic and song through the

voices of my students.

Derived from the Latin word *misterium*, mystery alludes to a truth incomprehensible to full understanding. It reflects that which remains concealed from full knowledge or view, that which inspires wonder. (Henry & Henry, 1999, p. 9)

Dwelling in the mystery in this way allows for discovery to be responsive to wonder—allows for responses to one another to be led by the other—the other’s soul. After the students all left the Listening Space one afternoon, I stayed in my seat for a few minutes reflecting on the work of the day. I sat—listening to the hush of the room. We had been talking about and experiencing silence. As I listen now to the tape of the class, I find myself again listening to the room—listening to the quiet between responses. There is a feeling of fullness and softness in the listening. The silence seems to hold the stories as we receive them—as we receive each other. There really is no need to “break” silence. The language of ‘being-with’ calls more for an entering into the silence.

‘Being-with’ and a “listening way of being” seem to come together in experience as something known but not named. Megan says,

It’s like you are willing to share more. It is hard to name or put your finger on it. It is KNOWN between the two people, you know? It is something known to each individual. An observer can’t necessarily know. You can open yourself up. You can tell from the tone of voice too—body language too—there is full concentration on the other. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

I listen to the quiet of narrative work—where lives are written—with a sense of mystery:

Yeah, the pen just kind of wrote itself. I mean, I didn’t really stop and think too much about forming thoughts together. Sort of, you know, really different if you’re writing a test or an essay, making sure everything’s structured correctly. I didn’t really stop and do that, I just,

it just kind of came out of my pen, I guess. And then when I read it aloud it sort of took on text. (Renee, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Opening up of self means allowing oneself to be vulnerable. In the listening and language of ‘being-with’ is an invitation to show oneself and to trust in the shelter of the other in the showing.

The song, “Mystery,” from Paul Winter’s *Missa Gaia*, invites us into the silence and echo of the words—echoing the mystery in the words of the students:

Mystery

It lives in the seed of a tree as it grows.
 You can hear it if you listen to the wind as it blows.
 It’s there, in a river, as it flows into the sea.
 It’s the sound in the soul of [one] becoming free.
 And it lives in the laughter of children at play,
 And in the blazing sun that gives light to the day.
 It moves the planets and the stars up in the sky.
 It’s been the mover of mountains since the beginning of time.

Oh mystery! You are alive.
 I feel you all around.
 You are the fire in my heart,
 You are the holy sound.
 You are all of life,
 It is to you that I sing
 Grant that I may feel you always in everything.

And it lives in the waves as they crash against the beach
 I have seen it in the gods that [persons] have tried to reach.
 I feel it in the love that I know we need so much.
 I know it in your smile, my love, when our hearts do touch.

But when I listen deep inside I feel the best of all.
 Like a moon that’s glowing white, and I listen to your call.
 And I know you will guide me,
 I feel like the tides rushing through the ocean of my heart that’s open wide.
 (Winter & Castro-Neves, 1978, track 4)

Oh, mystery “grant that I may feel you always in everything”—in the hidden drift of

dialog with my students in this gracious act of research. I enter the labyrinth open to the mystery “in the smile” of the students “when our hearts do touch.”

Being-With' is Cradled in the Center of Listening

I “listen deep inside” and know that there will always be more. I reflect on today’s daily walk of the labyrinth and try to discern where I am along this journey. The sign near the entrance of this journey of stones reads: “The labyrinth—the path of compassion, healing, and liberation.” Indeed. Today I enter the curved path without particular questions but with joy as co-pilgrims finding our way.

The summer wears on with fall announcing itself in perceptible ways. One such way is that my thinking draws near to yet another new group of students at a new college. As I walk I imagine the new syllabus and new listening spaces. I am grateful for the gift of the message of my co-researchers that continues to inform who I am and whose presence will live through future groups of students as eternal echoes. In my final chapter, of course, I will dwell deeply in the possibility of what all of this means for future nursing education. For now, though, as I approach the center of the labyrinth, as I approach the center of the listening, I know that it is just about time for the “Saying”—time for bearing tidings for what is being shown. The journey needs to become one now of going forth—singing the sending forth song. And as is often my experience of walking the labyrinth, I approach the center at this moment with great longing, a sense of delight—and with an anticipatory pitch of grief for the leaving.

Once in the center, I find myself lost in time. The late afternoon sun and the bells of the 5 o’clock hour enter my step. For the first time of many labyrinthine walks, when I arrive in the center, I sit—I sit in the center of the labyrinth. I hear my

student Colleen's words echo: "'Being-with' means staying there." And so, I stay. 'Being-with' is, indeed, sitting in the center of the stones, being cradled in the center of listening. With stones around me I am enveloped in a blanket of understanding.

Moore (1996) connects with me on this path:

We need stones around us to echo the substance of our own lives—hard, solid, heavy, timeless, and subtly hued. People go to therapists to find answers to their problems and strategies for working out difficulties, but their real work might be to discover the heavy, solid nature that lies like stone in the very deepest pit of their heart, and the knowledge that is carved into that stone self at the quick of their being. (p. 34)

I glance down into the center of the labyrinth and I notice a little pewter heart that was left behind in the gravel by another who traveled here. Such a lovely pathmark. Contemplating the surprise heart I pick it up—and hold it. "Contemplation has been described as taking a long, loving look at the real" (Nassal, 1997, p.61). This phenomenological study is this—a long, loving look at the realness of 'being-with.' 'Being-with' is sitting in the center holding a heart. I put the heart back in the gravel. I open from the "quick of my being;" I live where mystery is "alive," and I journey out. My hand re-members the heart, precious and enduring, and gestures a sending forth song.

**CHAPTER FIVE:
SENDING FORTH FROM THE CENTER OF THE STILLNESS
OF DELIGHT—BEARING THE MESSAGE AND TIDINGS**

This is now. Now is. Don't postpone
Till then. Spend the spark of iron
On stone. (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2003, p. 24)

Rumi's words echo with continuing instruction. My journey stones beckon the Saying of the themes as they continue to unravel in the listening. The intimate dimensions of 'being-with' are shown at times as "swirling sapphires," sparkling the water's edge at Bon Secours; others are held deep within the depths of the soul and softly call out to me for the Saying.

Precious sparkling stones also evoke the theme of *scintilla*, the spark of vitality that resides in material, natural and artificial. This sparkle is a sign of the soul in matter, and reflecting the brilliance of the stars, it's an indication that the material world always contains something of the eternal. (Moore, 1996, p. 35)

I go forth from the center of the labyrinth with a "spark of vitality"—attuned to the Now. I journey outward and engage in the continuing naming of the "experiential structures" (van Manen, 1990, p. 79) of the phenomenon of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship. I pause to reflect a moment on such naming of themes and listen to van Manen's (1990) invitation:

Let us examine what meaning the idea of theme has for phenomenological description and interpretation in the human sciences...Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure—grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of seeing meaning. (p. 79)

As the messenger along the course, I offer my humble discovery and "insightful inventions" as I see, hear, and live meaning in relation with my students—beholding

the “sparkle” in their words. This “free” hermeneutic act is shown through thematic understandings and genuine encounters woven-through lived relations, lived place, lived body, and lived time. The existential unveiling shows ‘being-with’ as celebrating soul friendship, opening the inn-between, offering the hand of comfort, and dwelling in eternal echoes.

‘Being-With’ Celebrates *Anam Cara*—Soul Friendship

You allow us to give ourselves over to you. You accept us as who we are. In return, I don’t look at you as a professor all the time. (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

I enter the space that Megan and I share together—created with her soft and deepened tone and language of ‘being-with.’ Silence holds open the space with sacred regard. What greater gift is there than to give oneself over to another and in the giving to receive acceptance? Being in the world in this way is a gift given and given again. To give oneself over to another is a profound act of intimacy. Megan brings forward a dimension of ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning that goes beyond an experience of relationship between student and a “professor.” There is an expressed sense of belonging. O’Donohue writes:

We need more resonant words to mirror this than the tired word *relationship*. Phrases like “an ancient circle closes” or “an ancient belonging awakens and discovers itself” help to bring out the deeper meaning and mystery of encounter. (1997, p. 24)

I ask Heather what it is like for her to be with me in teaching and learning. She thoughtfully says, “The biggest thing I can say is that it is, like, we are friends.” She pauses between the words “we are” and “friends.” Her face flushes with a sense of risk-taking, a hint of vulnerability, and a Saying of what best shows her experience. Friends. Perhaps moving from “professor” to “friend” is a re-naming of

the “the more subjectively felt meanings” (van Manen, 1999, p. 17) of relation to each other. The simple word, friend, extends an invitation and honors the experience of what is, where the “tired” word professor does not!

The word professor is from Latin *professus*, and later from Latin *profess* which is the stem of *profiteri*—“to declare aloud or publicly” (Trumble, 1933/2002, p. 2358). Two definitions of the word open to greater understanding of the students experiencing—experiences of perhaps dwelling in tension between the role of professor and their experience of ‘being-with’ me in the Listening Space. One meaning, “have taken the vows of a religious order” (p. 2358) suggests a public commitment to beliefs, values, and a way of life to be deeply and authentically lived. Yet another meaning of the word profess unveils itself, “to lay claim to a quality or feeling especially falsely or insincerely; pretend to be or do” (p. 2358). The experience of the ‘being-with’ relation that the students and I have come to know is one of genuineness; a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ unfolds from a center of authentic meaning of being.

The students name ‘being-with’ as friendship—with the relation being sincere and without pretense. How blessed I am to receive this gift of friendship and to be in teaching together in this sacred space—turning together not in pretense, but in conversation. We live through the tension of professing together and dwell in the pause—in the space that “allows your otherness to find its own rhythm and contour” (O’Donohue, 1997, pp. 29-30). Together in ‘being-with’ seems to offer closeness along with space to breathe. I am led to Yeats’s poetic telling of such a space in his poem, *To the Rose Upon the Rood of Time*:

Come near, come near, come near—Ah, leave me still
A little space for the rose-breath to fill! (p. 6)

‘Being-with’ draws forth the breath of the rose as Jennifer tells me what ‘being-with’
me means:

Feels like we are friends—it’s relaxing. I WANT to share my
experiences with you. It is a nice feeling. I don’t feel obligated. You
are part of our group. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

In chapter two while taking a moment for renewal before continuing on with the
methodological grounding of the soul, I offer the poem *Grace, Lace, and a Shared
Cup of Tea*. At that time, I did not yet know the students who come to name
friendship as one of the dimensions of ‘being-with.’ I offer select words here again—
this time receiving the words as from my students.

Here is the invitation to belong.
Awaken and call to recognition the rich texture of the soul.
The Listening embrace of the *claddagh* circle calls
Love—friendship—fidelity
Hands weaving into and through hearts hold the crown
Lace and grace filled—re-veil soul love! (Packard, 2002)

Colleen speaks of listening as an important aspect of the relationship and
experiences me as a ‘role model.’ She says:

We are all learning how to really listen and respond. YOU are our role
model. We can tell you are totally focused on the person who is
speaking—letting them say what they want to say. In the end, you
always know the right thing to say. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

There is an attention to language: to *words* as Colleen says the “right thing to say,”
and to *tone* as Renee tells in a personal conversation:

I think you’re easy to get comfortable with and to let your guard down
as a student and just be yourself. It is easy to be honest with you
because of the atmosphere you set up in the room. Some other teachers
both here and at [another university], even though they say they want
you to be able to let your guard down, you just know that your grades

could suffer for it. I get a feel on the first day of class about a teacher—I know with the words teachers use and the tone they have. I just get a feel. You are genuine—we just know—you wouldn't hold a grudge. (2003)

Jennifer spontaneously tells of letting her guard down, “We don't guard what we say to you like we do in the lobby when a teacher walks past—I trust you” (Personal Conversation, 2003). In my listening, Jen's words leap ahead and weave vulnerability, comfort, and friendship in the experience of 'being-with' in teaching and learning. To guard is to protect oneself from further pain and discomfort and wounding—as with one who after surgery protects the incisional area. Or, in psychiatric practice a guarded response is one where the person tells only enough to answer a question—all the while staying essentially covered over. Jennifer here honors me with the message that trust in our relationship allows for a natural uncovering and exposure. Lynn shows her “guard” coming down as she recognizes a circle of friends:

I was not going to say a word, then thought I better—you know participation and all of that. Then you looked at me and I knew, I just knew that I didn't have to—but all of a sudden I was in the middle—just with friends, and then, thank you—that's all I can say—thank you. I am so glad I did. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

The word friend is derived from the words *friunt* in Old German, the Gothic *frijojan*, and pre-Teutonic *priyodear* meaning “one joined to another in mutual benevolence and intimacy.” The words “love” and “free” share etymological roots (Murray, Bradley, Craigie, & Onions, 1933/1961, p. 35). As friendship is recognized, the students experience permission to be real, to let their “guards” down and to share who they are in genuine ways. In our love and care the blanket of understanding continues to unfold—we are each being seen. Friendship invites one to be free.

It seems that a pedagogy is emerging as ‘being-with’ is named, that includes a pedagogy of friendship. How lovely to think of joining with students in “mutual benevolence and intimacy.” There is indeed a quick sharing of intimacies which speaks to a pedagogical understanding of friendship, as O’Donohue (1997) reveals old Celtic meanings of the word, *anam cara*. As soul friendship is unraveled from the ancient understandings, I hear strong resonance with the students’ words. It seems there are deeply personal as well as almost archetypal dimensions to *anam cara*. O’Donohue’s words open a listening space from which to ponder a dimension of ‘being-with’ that both grounds and sends forth many other possibilities for ‘being-with’ to be named:

In the Celtic tradition, there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship. One of the fascinating ideas here is the idea of soul-love; the old Gaelic term for this is *anam cara*. *Anam* is the Gaelic word for soul and *cara* is the word for friend. So *anam cara* in the Celtic world was the “soul friend.” In the early Celtic church, a person who acted as a teacher, companion, or spiritual guide was called an *anam cara*. It originally referred to someone to whom you confessed, revealing the hidden intimacies of your life. With the *anam cara*, you could share your innermost self, your mind and your heart. The friendship was an act of recognition and belonging. (O’Donohue, 1997, p. 13)

Lynn’s all of a sudden experience of being “in the middle—just with friends” shows this act of recognition and friendship. Lynn expresses gratitude for this gift.

Anam Cares

I write by hand in my journal—reflecting on *anam cara* as a theme that emerges in my work with my students—showing a dimension of ‘being-with.’ As always, I read back and forth engaging my students, philosophers and others in conversation. I am called by van Manen’s guidance to stop a moment and take a somewhat critical stance around the naming of *anam cara*. Van Manen (1990) asks in

a general way, “Is the phenomenon still the same if we imaginatively change or delete this theme from the phenomenon?” (p. 107). And so here, I ask, Is ‘being-with’ still the same if we imaginatively change or delete *anam cara* from ‘being-with?’

I set out to write my way through this question—not defensively as I “just know” like the students say, that ‘being-with’ is experienced in connections beyond and behind the words. But I do set out in earnest reflection. I begin to write. I write *anam care*. I start to “correct” the mis-spelling and stop. Ah—a precious invitation to open up care in relation to *anam cara* and to ‘being-with!’ For the student to experience a “soul” who cares, or caring from the soul, surely creates a context for teaching and learning that goes beyond a context set through a traditional technical paradigm of learning objectives and measures of evaluation. There is a boundless quality to the soul which opens to mystery and to that which is ineffable. A connection with the soul is more known than measurable—more “mystery than mastery” (Remen, 1996, p. 292). To be together in an ineffable place is to share a spot of vulnerability and uncertainty; to engage with one’s soul is to enlarge the room of presence.

What does it mean to engage with soul in psychiatric nursing? The word *psyche* itself means “personification of the soul” with the proper translation of the word psychotherapy being to “pay tribute to the soul” (Henry & Henry, 1999, p. 12). How wonderful for our work together to be about “paying tribute to the soul!” In the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing, ‘being-with’ is “soul care.” What is it that allows for and prepares one to give and receive such soul care? What is it that nurtures the ‘person’ of students and teachers? Let us each “pay tribute to the soul”—

yours and mine.

Re-Veiling Relationships

I have spent much time and reflective space pondering the richness, power, and necessity of friendships in my life. An old proverb, written in 1552 sings with resonance. “A frende is more necessary than either fyer or water” (Taverner, as cited in Murray, Bradley, Criagie, & Onions, 1933/1961, p. 35). Certain significant and necessary friendships—individuals and groups—gather at the “hearth of my soul” (O’Donohue, 1997) making it possible for me to open myself to more. As I stand this moment in the center of a theme, I am compelled to look far out and beyond with a receiving stance to those students not yet known—charged with possibilities for future pedagogical contexts. The thought of ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning with students becomes more and more precious from this *anam cara* place. My co-researchers show me the possibilities in the present and offer me the connected desire to re-member 18 years of teaching with gratitude. I am humbled as I study the meaning of the teacher as translated from Hebrew, *Rabbouni*. The word reveals “a sign of deep respect and recognition” (Dobbels, 1990, p. 103). The friendships in my life weave this respect and recognition. The ground of my soul is re-veiled—allowing an opening that shows the delicate place of ‘being-with’ in teaching.

Father Dunstan Morrissey (2000) creates a retreat center in northern California. I am moved by his words as I reflect on soul friendship as a dimension of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. As shown in earlier chapters, the deep connection between lived relation and lived place continues to show itself in the experiencing. Father Morrissey writes:

Over the years, buildings and a chapel seemed to grow from the landscape and from the unfolding generosity of those who have helped me. As I have taken care of the place, the place has revealed itself to me. I have become aware that what the place really calls for is solitude and silence. It's the place that has dictated that—the place, along with my own growing sense of monastic vocation. And now I offer Sky Farm as a place of retreat to others. (2000, p. 34)

“As I have taken care of the place, the place has revealed itself to me.” The words join my breath in an experience of inspiration and insight—getting behind questions of *knowing*, *caring*, and *being* more fully. I have been caring for students and now they reveal themselves to me—inviting me to deeper understandings of care, friendship, and ‘being-with’ in teaching. I connect also with the words on the cover of the *Parabola* journal in its issue dedicated to teaching:

True teaching is always an epiphany:
Sometimes a clap of thunder...
But often only a whisper,
Easily missed.
(2002, non-paginated)

As I listen to the students’ words my experience is one of epiphany. Transformation. I am forever changed by these “teachers.”

Friendship as a lived place is a place I now knowingly offer to others—including my students. Heidegger (1959/1971a) is right—naming is, in a sense, a discovery! What I discover, I can now freely give away. This naming of relationship as friendship with my students is recognized by the students perhaps as O’Donohue writes: “There is an awakening between you, a sense of ancient knowing” (1997, p. 23). Morrissey and the students open me to a deeper sense of understanding that *mitda-sein* makes ‘being-with’ possible (Heidegger, 1953/1996). I come to know the lived place of friendship as place; I recognize my growing and passionate sense of

commitment to living life phenomenologically. Being in this lived place “along with my vocation” to phenomenological living dictates my pedagogical choices and way of being with my students in the teaching and learning of nursing. The epiphany reveals with strength the synergy in the web of connection among friendship places.

Dancing in the Claddagh Circle—A Lived Place of Friendship

Faithful friends bless my life—my husband John, Colleen, Donna, Ann, and my mother even in her death. Others too bless my life—college friends, colleague-friends, graduate school friends, and moms-of-my-children’s-friends’ friends. And now, as my doctoral program and research unfolds to include this life work, I find myself in the middle of a theme of friendship—in new and sacred friendships—caring for friendship places.

My doctoral journey contains the wonder and surprise of a group of women coming together first as students, graduates, colleagues, and advisor—further coming into being as a friendship group. In immediate and gradual ways, projects due become ways of revealing and entering lives themselves. Roxie, Linda, Francine, Barbara, and I met in the context of “doing” phenomenology (Hultgren, 1995). Drawn by the center of our beings to a life lived phenomenologically, our friendships insistently took hold.

You meet your friend, your face brightens—
 You have struck gold.
 (Kassia, as cited in Berry & Traeder, 1995)

The experience of care deepens and the group comes more into being with the naming of *anam cara* as our circle of connected-ness. Van Manen’s words resonate clearly here:

Giving names is a most peculiar act. What occurs when one gives a name? asks Derrida (1995). What does one give? One does not offer a thing. One delivers nothing. And yet something comes to be. What is this something? And why do we re-name? We seem to rename when the usual name is found to be lacking of something. (1999, p. 17)

We have “come to be” a friendship group. All five of us find in each other an embracing place, a safe place, a connecting with the self place—a listening place. We bring our own stories to the table and experience “listening without an agenda” (Carnes & Craig, 1994, p. 36).

We are advisors and students journeying through dissertations—we are girlfriends “doing” lunch, going shopping, laughing so hard we cannot breathe, keeping secrets, receiving tears and tasting salt. We talk about the meaning of life and are *anam cara* in varieties of ways to each other. O’Donohue (1997) writes, “When you really feel understood, you feel free to release yourself into the trust and shelter of the other person’s soul” (p. 13). Perhaps when Jennifer told me she trusted me she was telling me that she felt understood. As *anam cara*, we celebrate—and release ourselves “into the trust and shelter” of each other—we dance in the *Claddagh* circle. We dance the words of Rilke: “There is nothing so wise as a circle” (as cited in Carnes & Craig, 1998, p. xix). I cherish the poesy our rings show—*anam cara*.

A few months ago at a presentation at the International Association for Human Caring Conference in Boulder, Colorado, I offered a soul rendering for this friendship group with my poem, *Dancing in the Claddagh Circle*. I share it here with a new listening—with re-cognition. My friendships here prepare me to engage in soul care and to open myself more fully to friendships with others, including my students! My friendships inspire me to weave footfalls with words of many new beginnings—

and to invite my students, present and future into the *Claddagh* circle of my life. As I re-search, I enter the dance anew—with my students in this circle of love, friendship, and fidelity. The words that honor my friendship group become a hand offering to my students who are my co-researchers:

Dancing in the *Claddagh* Circle

Greetings dear friends! Tis good to be seen!
 A kiss is a curtsy—a gentle footfall—this grace-filled embrace
 A *plié* gestures the overture —and
 Unmistakably the music begins—
 Immediately, as presence, we dance.
 In circles—spiraling—
 Through words to inner worlds, in cycles—we are
 Drawn in with the insistence of the moon—
 Porch to soul.

Celebrating, honoring, and being vital signs for each other
 We take hold—
 With knowing hands—

Guiding and gracing and leading forever impressions—
 Caring, comforting, breaking bread and then,
 Listening and letting go—a stitch pain
 Silence—falling into
 Not knowing.

Oh—
 The dance too calls us to re-new depths—and we attend
 Turning together to and fro—
 Interpreting the understanding dance.
 The dance is still—in the *enterdoux*.
 Listen.

Dresses flowing long for the center.
 We dance! Weaving longing words—we belong.
 Notes of Friendship—we are keepers of secrets, sisters of souls,
 advisors and traveling companions—
 listeners and honey makers—the right kind.

We are tellers of stories, co-creating more—with secret giggles and
 catching twinkle Glances—just knowing.
 Tenderly receiving tears we taste salt—

Wearing our poesy—*anam cara* we are.

Behold the veils—showing and protecting joy and sorrow
 Weaving—love, friendship, and fidelity—
 Veiling again and again in this *Claddagh* circle.
 Unfolding the presence of absence
 Tenderness comforts—irons heart's wrinkles.
 Shards of sea glass reveal mermaids' tears—
 And in this embracing place, broken Cheerios turn too
 Angel dust!

Weaving veils, we are—gypsies and nesters,
 Bringing our lives to the table we emerge—woven.
 We turn with, lean toward, inhabit the strength of the weave.
 We withdraw—in awe—sunlight through delicate lace.
 Twirl and re-turn—a *pirouette*—
 we nestle deep in the mysteries of stories we bring—
 We dwell in this place—friendship.

Being-with recipes for living, we gather at the hearth—
 Glazed salmon—baklava—apple gjetost—green tea soup—
 Irish soda bread, s'mores and Love—this is a festival of life.
 Full of faith we are—sharing
 Dissertations and snuggles.
 Life converges here.

What is the nature of this dance?
 An *arabesque*, a nod, being *anam cara*—
 With soul matching slippers size seven and indeed one half, we
 dance—*adage*—slowly and poetically through life's raw edges.
 We come to know the “fragrance of God”
 (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 136).

May I have this dance? May I have this dance?
 Intertwining our lives are—
 resounding yes, opening up, covering over—
 Being the dance.
 Flashdance! Truth or dare.
 All matters here.

Questions hold open our places
 Until we meet again—
 Savor the forever hold—with elegance and stillness— dear friends
 Delight and dwell in this *Claddagh* circle—
 Full of faith— friendship, and love—
 We are—

This. (Packard, 2003)

In their own ways, the students accept my invitation. Megan tells me: “I feel your concerns are for us to be better persons and nurses. This is a profound aspect of teaching that not many others have” (Personal Conversation, 2003). Mountain Dreamer’s (1999) words from her poem, *The Invitation* echo here:

It doesn’t interest me what
You do for a living. I want to
Know what you ache for,
And if you dare to dream
Of meeting your heart’s longing.
(p. 1)

I reflect on her words as they intermingle with my invitation to my students to “dance with me through life’s raw edges,” to “savor the forever hold,” and to “dwell in the *Claddagh* circle.” I spiral with Mountain Dreamer to new depths as I listen to her reflection on her invitation from her new book, *The Call*:

The Invitation was the long, low wail of my heart opened to its own longing... That wail reminded me of what mattered and what did not, of my deep ache for rest and intimacy, needs I had tried to leave behind. Our longing may be just the beginning; just the door into a deeper knowledge of what we are and why we are here, but it is a necessary beginning. (2003, pp. 196-197)

‘Being-with’ allows for the possibility of knowing beyond the task at hand in the classroom—there is a sense of the whole and connected-ness to life as it is longed for and meaningfully lived. ‘Being-with’ in teaching and learning is profound—certainly an act of “recognition and belonging.” Colleen perhaps recognizes invitation as acknowledging, as she says:

I think caring is part of [‘being-with’], part of the piece of the acknowledging that we have other aspects in our life that are important. I think that, that you show you care. (Colleen, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Heidegger gives Colleen a phenomenological nod with his words, “*Da-sein* dwells in *taking care*” (1953/1996, p. 112). The connection between care and being is shown also through the words of Mountain Dreamer where she is instructive once again: “We cannot go deeper into our lives or the world until the heart has had its say, until the heart has been heard” (2003, p. 197).

Heather speaks of ‘being-with’ in this dance as, “I think it’s just a matter of trust...I know there aren’t any negative consequences for sharing here” (Personal Conversation, 2003). She seems to experience a bit of falling into ‘not knowing’ as she continues, “Also, I feel like I am invited to share—not necessarily wanting to, but I do feel invited.” Megan is “drawn in with the insistence of the moon” as she shares:

It just speaks to the relationship you have with each person. We can disclose and know we will still be accepted. (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Perhaps Megan experiences her heart as having had its say—“her heart has been heard.”

Our pedagogical dance is lived in stories and circles—stories of lives as we weave love, friendship and faithfulness—crafting, reflecting, and being in the *Claddagh* circle. Stories of beginnings and endings call us together in this lived place of friendship. *Anam cara* or soul-friendship in the context of phenomenology connects being-in-the-world with time in profound ways—reflecting the “brilliance of the stars” (Moore, 1996, p. 35). I reflect on one such beginning in the midst of endings:

With tenderness, I remember being a brand new doctoral student with Francine as my professor and advisor in the research class. My mom had moved in with us—to our dining room now transformed with her

presence. She loved to read my papers and looked forward to my coming home from class in the evening. She especially enjoyed my papers with Francine's handwritten comments in the margins. I can hear my Mom saying as if yesterday, "That girl surely reads your work."

My mother saw Francine's hand-writing in many ways—her words—words holding hands with our souls. Our friendship now weaves together past, present, and future. The friendship is story—holding a place for my mom in the Claddagh circle. (Packard, Journal Reflections, 2003)

While phenomenology called our friendship, our friendship is a call to phenomenological living in its many dimensions. As I live phenomenologically in friendship with my students, my experience is transformative—one of breaking open the compartments of human living—teaching, research, family, and friends—allowing me the most authentic way of being in the world. I have come to know friendship as a lived place—showing “*fihte fuaighte*, “woven into and through each other” (O’Donohue, 1997, p. 90)—“knowing that we are accepted” (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003). In this friendship teachers become students and students become teachers.

Perhaps together we come to discover that friendship is at the center of a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ We all engage in gathering courage to let our “hearts have their say.” A language of ‘being-with’ unravels here and primordial connections are made; a technical language is transformed with namings of intimacy, friendship, love, and caring. The experience of ‘being-with’ when expressed as friendship connects us with the “source of the spring” (as cited in Hultgren, 2003). Spontaneously, stories of mother presence continue to be entered.

‘Being-With’ is Mother Presence

isi umili
the source of the spring—the mother
(Ibo saying, in Hultgren, 2003, p. 12)

During our classroom conversations, mother presence shines through the lived experiences of the students in many subtle and complex ways. As we work to uncover the essence of ‘being-with’ together, mother stories bring us together in an ineffable place of connection. Earlier chapters show the call for mother presence after disturbing clinical days, painful remembrances of abuse, and meetings at the edges of life. The words of my students in this research project echo those who have come before and reverberate here in the present of chapter five. I continue with my students on this journey as reflections of mother are interpreted and meaning is “freely seen” (van Manen, 1990, p. 79).

Marc “aged 20 years” and “learned a lot about nursing” through caring with his parents at the time of their deaths—his mom with leukemia and his dad with cancer. As a class we were invited by Colleen to journey along with her during her pregnancy. She shows us her tummy as the baby kicks our shared table of learning in the Listening Space. During a conversation in my office with Jennifer she says:

It is so weird, but so neat, but I took care of an 18 year old boy this week—he was cute and close to my age, but I felt, like a mother. He just needed listening to—and that’s what I did. And last week my patient was 67 years old. I felt like a mother with her too. They are hurting—you know—and I just well, I just love them. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

A knock on my office door startles us and Jennifer reaches and pushes “stop” on the tape recorder. It is Colleen with her new 2 week old baby girl, Sydney. Colleen hands me the baby and says she will be back. Jennifer and I continue. For the rest of the

conversation, Sydney is in my arms, snuggling—and with many complex layers of mother presence in the room. Mother presence—even in absence brings to my mind the words of Gerard Manley Hopkins in his poem—*God's Grandeur*:

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil.
(as cited in Farrell, 1992, p. 142)

I connect also here with Nel Noddings (1984) who writes, “It is time for the voice of the mother to be heard in education” (p. 200).

Absence Seeks Presence

I remember one dear student whose mother had died of breast cancer a few years prior to graduation and pinning. I turn to Carole for a moment as I prepare for discovery with my students:

I suggested to Carole in a classroom conversation that, in addition to being pinned with the college pin, she might want to be pinned with one of her mom's pins...I stood at the podium and as I read her name at the ceremony, her grandmother pins her with her mom's pin—tears stream down our faces in soul connection. Carole told me later that by openly acknowledging her mom she felt her presence in a very real way. This was truly a profound moment for me in my 'being-with' my students in teaching. (Packard, Journal Reflections, 2002)

Reflections on mothers and mothering draw us to “the source of the spring”—into nearness with the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ and to the heart of nursing—caring. Carole returned to her mother’s side at her pinning ceremony. Jennifer, too, recognizes the “source” as she says: “There are many things that have helped define me as a person up until this point—mainly my mother” (Classroom Conversation, 2003).

I share a remembrance of my own mother here that continues to lead me along

with the students in our journeying together toward ‘being-with:’

It is the last Friday—that last Friday evening in the emergency room at the hospital—Mom finally sinks into comfort, having received some IV pain medicine and IV fluids. I am at her side in the cubicle reading Being and Time for the first time—underlining too. Reading about Dasein. I read several passages aloud to Mom—getting giddy with her relief of pain and Heidegger’s 90 word sentences. When the doctor comes in to check on her, she asks him if he is familiar with Being and Time—and tells him as only a mom can tell, “Jeff, it is good to be well-rounded—let Mary read you something.” I might have ordinarily been embarrassed, but not by my mother who is dying.

Later, on a piece of scrap paper, I write my mother’s blood work lab values (Hct=OK, Na=126, K+=OK, WBC=14,000, BUN=53) and stick it in the book. That paper is still there. Words weaving again—being temporality. Had I known she was going to lose consciousness within hours and die within 2 days, would I have read Being and Time to her? Perhaps she knew—and in this way she holds open the place for me. Each time I ponder Being and Time or look to ground my work with Heidegger’s thinking, I re-turn to my mother’s side. (Journal Reflections, 2003)

I learn. Soul friendships, in the way of mother presence, transcend and gather beings together. Jennifer intermingles presence and absence in a poignant re-collection of moments with her dad who died when she was nine years old:

I remember this one day so clearly. We are running errands—just he and I. We go to the bank, the cleaners, you know, the usual. We go to his work—and I loved that—ALL BY MYSELF. Oh yeah, we get an ice cream cone. It was the best day—just the two of us being with each other. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

The silence of our listening cradles Jennifer as she cries in remembrance of her dad’s embrace. She continues, attempting to re-cover from the veil of tears with her words, “Um, my older sisters also helped to fill the void of losing a father. What’s better than one mom? It’s three” (Classroom Conversation, 2003). Jennifer experiences mother presence in her sisters as well as her mother. She comes to know comfort and presence from a stark place of absence—where grieving her dad’s death meets the

comfort and strength of her mother and sisters. Perhaps mother presence in the classroom invites a new knowing as the students prepare “to go deeper into the world” (Mountain Dreamer, 2003, p. 197).

No Running Away

Renee reflects on her mother’s teachings:

My mother taught me the values of kindness and compassion toward others—and the importance of inclusiveness rather than exclusion. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

While the response of compassion is opened up in chapter two, its sweet scent still permeates—drawing words with connecting incense. Dobbels (1990) writes of his experience facing end of life transitions while suffering with AIDS. He describes persons in his life as being in one of three groups: persons who become “hysterical with initial emotional outpouring” (p. 60), persons “who had been close, but now there has been lots of time between contacts” (p. 62), and persons who show the essence of ‘being-with.’ About this third group, Dobbels (1990) writes:

They are the ones who allow themselves to feel helpless as they see us suffer and they do not run away...Staying close to us changes their whole world and they meet the challenge with tenderness, compassion, tears, and confusion. (pp. 62-63)

Perhaps ‘being-with’ in the heart of nursing is to open the presence of the mother—to stay close, feel helpless, and to be forever changed. Jackie tells of the “forever change” and of the profundity of ‘being-with’ in the beginning:

Having children, like Renee was saying, definitely changes you in a way that you can’t even describe—and you can’t ever go back. It’s like, everything looks different...Until you start having kids you don’t even think about what it means to see them learn things for the FIRST TIME. It is so neat. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Megan tells us about her mother with a sense of the ways in which her mother met the challenge:

My mother is a person who I admire. Life's obstacles have certainly presented themselves to her and she continually focuses on her faith and determination to overcome her battles for our sakes, my sister and me. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Deep within mother presence is an experience of living in the tension between joy and pain—even the bodily tensions are shown in an email from Colleen the very day after her baby was born:

*Dear Professor Packard,
Sydney is here—arrived last night, weighing 7 lbs. She is beautiful. I am tired and a little sore, but that is OK...
Thanks for understanding and letting me take the tests at home....
I will bring Sydney in to meet you soon. Thanks for everything!
Love, Colleen*

“Sometimes, I just feel like running away,” says Lynn. “But, I stay, or I think to myself, well, I will take all [five] kids with me—I don’t want to run away—I just want 5 minutes alone in my room” (Personal Conversation, 2003). Lynn reminds us that ‘being-with’ also offers space—“a little space for the rose-breath to fill” (Yeats, as cited in Rosenthal, 1996, p. 6).

Hugs, Kisses, and Chores

Jennifer imagines that she may be a different person if she had had two parents growing up. She shows the notion of “hard work” in the midst of ‘being-with:’

I try to imagine, I try to imagine how different I would be if I would have had the balance of two parents while growing up. But this I will never know. My father died when I was nine and my mother worked very hard to provide for me a very comfortable life. I feel blessed to have had the mother that I have after my father passed away. She held

strong and was very dedicated to the family. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jennifer also brings forward some of the necessary tensions experienced in ‘being-with:’ “I wish [my mom] would have handed out hugs and kisses as much as she handed out the chores.” Such is the richness in the dialectic of ‘being-with.’

Renee shares thoughts about being a mother and the experience of both joy and pain:

I can’t put into words the wonder of having a child, the knowledge that my body could do anything—endure the pain. Ethan has taught me the amazement of everyday joys that you seem to forget about as you grow up. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

There is a secret in mother presence that opens to other pedagogical relationships—hugs and kisses and chores are all important! Let us listen to the *Hidden Music* of

Rumi:

I asked for a kiss
 You gave me six.
 Whose pupil were you
 To become such a master?
 Full of kindness, generosity...
 You are not of this world.
 (as cited in Kolin & Mafi, 2001, p. 40)

Renee’s four-year old son teaches her:

Everyday joys of sunshine and clouds that look like kangaroos and flowers and bugs on the ground and stuff like that. Um, he taught me how to stick up for myself, um, how to defend my beliefs and my values and to be his advocate, no matter who disagrees with me. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

“I love being a mom,” says Colleen:

Like Renee said, it makes you stop and appreciate the little things. Because I tend to not live in the moment. I’m always rushed to get to the next place. And I always have been that way. And I wish I wasn’t, but that’s the way I am. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Hugs and kisses are in the moment—making possible the chores. The “pupil” becomes the “master” and the “master” becomes the “pupil” in authentic ‘being-with.’ This is a forever dance. Mother presence holds generational hands.

She is the One

Colleen tells of a strained and critical relationship that she has with her mother. She also tells of Ann, a woman she met in her previous career as a fitness counselor. Ann led Colleen to nursing:

And I loved the relationships I had built with my clients. One client was a 53-year-old retired nurse who had become a very close friend. And when my son was born in June of '99 she watched him every day from three months to one year with no payment, just, just was a dear friend with a big heart. She now lives in Arizona but we, we're really close. She's like another mom to me. And she's really the main reason that I came back to nursing school—because she was a nurse.
(Personal Conversation, 2003)

What a privilege it was for me to meet Ann at their Pinning Ceremony in December 2003. She flew in from Arizona to ‘be-with’ Colleen in this celebration and new beginning.

I am reminded of the lyrics of a song “You Were the One:”

You were the one who stayed to listen
When nobody else was there.
You were the one to find what's missing
When I couldn't find a prayer.
You offered your hand, opened your heart,
Whispered your wisdom to me.
Now I would ask that you do your part
In letting yourself receive.
(Michael Stillwater, 1998)

I hear these words now as Colleen's gift to Ann—a daughter to a mother. The song reverberates in my being, sounding ‘being-with.’ The music fills my body—

brimming with mother presence. ‘Being-with’ as lived memory is the experience of a “hand” offered, a “heart’ opened, and whispered “wisdom.”

One day in class Renee mentions her grandmother in response to a conversation about empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard. I ask what she remembers learning from her grandmother. She responds, “Now you’re going to make me cry,” and continues:

I have learned from both of them—my grandmother AND my grandfather. I’m proud of Mom Mom and Pap Pap. Um, just the biggest thing I ever got from them was unconditional love. Absolutely without a doubt. I remember they got me this gorgeous antique baby doll with this little porcelain face. It wasn’t cheap and after, I had it for like two days I dropped it on the kitchen floor and her face shattered. Mom Mom just picked her up and super-glued her back together. Just anything. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Unconditional love is experienced again as selfless and aggressive—unconditional love shows a fierce tenderness. ‘Being-with’ is unconditional. Along this way of exploring mother presence is a relational dance—from friend to mother as with Colleen and Ann—and from mother to friend as Jen now reflects:

My sisters and I are very close and as I have gotten older the almost mother/daughter relationships we once had have turned into beautiful friendships. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Tensions are revealed in the telling, as between fierce and tender—and transformation is possible. The students find themselves risking vulnerability and experiencing love and understanding through ‘being-with’ in the space between joy and pain. Over and over again the students tell of their experiences of comfort in the midst of anxiety. As their teacher, I am called in response to reflect anew—to stay to listen, to open my heart, and to offer my hand.

‘Being-With’ Is a Hand of Comfort in the Midst of Anxiety and Vulnerability

The wind chime in the Spring-like breeze announces my entering the labyrinth. The last hour of the four o'clock winter sun is there for the basking. Two wispy clusters of wheat with white feather flowers decorate the path—acting like snow, they smile with whimsy on this 60 degree December day. I read the sign that is nearby: “Labyrinth: A path to compassion, healing, and liberation...May this sacred path lead all who walk it to wholeness in body, mind, and spirit.” This dissertation work is just this—a sacred path—leading toward wholeness—toward compassion, healing, and liberation.

My questions and thoughts turn to this section on ‘being-with’ as a hand of comfort in the midst of anxiety. I love this section which is inscribed in my soul many times over, and now finally making its way into chapter five. I love moving toward a Saying of a pedagogy in nursing that finds itself rooted in that which nursing is rooted—*nourir* meaning to nourish, to nurture. I journey this day with an Advent sense—with great expectation—as a “person on tiptoe” (Burghardt, 1984, p. 26). The students’ voices resound in my being as they beautifully call out the presence of comfort in and through their experience of anxiety and vulnerability in the classroom. This prominent dimension of ‘being-with’ is gently uncovered—exposing little by little—allowing for an authentic coming into being. The uncovering is with a delicate presence of hand. This theme is so familiar that it feels already written—so new that I tread on expectant tiptoe.

I take my steps into an “unknowing”—wanting to listen all the way around and not only to what I know and value. I deeply am drawn and respond to the call. And as sure as I write that I am “drawn” toward, I am challenged by Heidegger’s

words:

What withdraws from us, draws us along by its very withdrawal, whether or not we become aware of it immediately, or at all. Once we are drawn into the withdrawal, we are drawing toward what draws, attracts us by its withdrawal. And once we, being so attracted, are drawing toward what draws us, our essential nature already bears the stamp of “drawing toward.” (1954/1968, p. 9)

I am challenged in my exploration of the many dimensions of the theme the students bring forward. I walk slowly and wonder about comfort and anxiety—I wonder, too, about drawing toward that which withdraws. Compassion, healing, and liberation nestle and echo through my thoughts.

Pedagogical Work of Our Hands

My work here is not to find an answer just yet, but to dwell in the center of the tension of comfort and anxiety—withdrawing to receive not only the words of the students but rather their deepest meanings. I raise my hands in praise. ‘Being-with’ is the presence of the hand of comfort in the midst of anxiety!

A bird does not sing
because it has an answer:
It sings because it has a
Song.
(Chinese Proverb)

And so to begin again, and as a way of further unfolding the blanket of understanding I live with the questions and sing the song. Magic and song connect once more—here in the hand.

The hands become a showing of giving comfort while allowing anxiety to be recognized and experienced. Hands tell stories, touch, hurt, caress, praise, long, become one, and let go. Hands—such a powerful bodily rendering of possibilities of inner comfort or despair. The hands bring a lived bodily dimension to the experience

of 'being-with.'

The hand is an apparition of the soul and its work is an extension of the spirit breathing into ordinary life...the presence of the hand quickens the world in which we live. (Moore, 1996, pp. 71-72)

As the nature of 'being-with' opens through the unfolding of our hands, I reflect again with Irigary (2002) on her writing about gestures in language that "could help on the way to nearness" (p. ix). Perhaps the gesture of the hand in language is what extends the "spirit breathing into ordinary life"—into ordinary life in the classroom of teaching and learning nursing. The words we offer to each other, teachers and students, may indeed be an "apparition of the soul." Thinking of one's hands in the context of pedagogy and curriculum work offers an ineffable richness of human connected-ness. Students respond to words and genuine presence as one responds to comforting hands—receiving strength. Language used and set forth even in syllabi begins to show 'being-with' as comfort—a gesture of open hands—an invitation to BE. The presence of the hand in the teaching and learning of nursing is transformative in "quickening the world in which we live"—bringing into being in the world of nursing academia!

Perhaps my connection to the power of the hand is what keeps me close to these handwritten journal pages—to pen and paper. Perhaps the hand holds the strength and power of the handwritten responses in the margins of my students' reflections that a pre-determined list does not hold for me. As I prepare to study the layers of meaning of the presence of hand in curriculum and pedagogy, I dwell in the center here during this winter journey and reflect on the ways we come to know our world through our hands—our hands of word and flesh.

The Listening Hand Holds the Heart

During a class meeting where the students respond to each other through videotaped vignettes that they made, Lynn tells of her personal struggle of living through divorce. The students have read the article “Therapeutic Listening” (Flickinger, 1992) and my hope for them is that they move beyond *communication* as a repertoire of skills, to *listening as a way of being*. I call the students to practice what Heidegger refers to as a way of listening that is thoughtful—a thinking that listens (1954/1968). The students and I gather around the table—and around the student who is showing her or his struggle.

I ask the students to risk putting aside the previously learned skills of clarification, restating, selective reflecting and so on. I encourage the students to respond to one another from the deepest place in their hearts—and assure them that clankiness from a genuine place is far more connecting than a smooth rendering from a prepared formula or script. I appreciate Heidegger’s advice here again:

On the other hand, you will make close listening essentially easier for yourselves if you will rid yourselves in time of a habit which I shall call “one-track thinking.” The dominion of this manner of perception is so vast today that our eyes can barely encompass it...This one-track thinking, which is becoming ever more widespread in various shapes, is one of those unsuspected and inconspicuous forms in which the essence of technology assumes dominion. (1954/1968, p. 26)

The students and I talk about listening deeply in order to understand each other and to be open always to connecting in the most authentic ways possible. “Let your listening lead your response,” I tell them. “Once you are formulating your responses, you have stopped listening.” Heidegger (1954/1968) offers beautiful thoughts on the gesture of the hand in language and listening:

The hand's gestures run everywhere through language, in their most perfect purity precisely when [one] speaks by being silent. (p. 16)

How I long to reach deeply into the open work of curriculum in chapter six—a curriculum rich in the gestures of hands.

Let us listen here to Rumi, as well, as he asks “What is the deep listening?”

What is the deep listening? *Sama* is
A greeting from the secret ones inside

the heart, a letter. The branches of
Your intelligence grow new leaves in

The wind of this listening. The body
reaches a peace...

There's a moon inside every human being.
Learn to be companions with it. Give

more of your life to this listening. As
Brightness is to time, so you are to

The one who talks to the deep ear in
Your chest. I should sell my tongue

And buy a thousand ears when that
One steps near and begins to speak.
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1999, p. 90)

The students express significant anxiety with this project. They are risking vulnerability in their personal sharing; they are finding themselves in the midst of feelings of inadequacy as “helpers”—there may be the experience of “*unheimlichkeit*—the uncanny anxiety of not feeling at home” (Casey, 1996, p. x). I assure the students that they are in charge of their telling. I usually take the lead with the first student—listening with a “thousand ears” as each one “steps near and begins to speak.” And then I sit back—allowing the students who feel lost eventually to celebrate themselves in the finding (Hultgren, 1995). The students are able to let go of

some of the technical orientation to communication skills as they indeed accept the invitation to “give more of their life to this listening.”

On this day, Megan poignantly responds to a sharing by Lynn involving her children: “Lynn you are sparing your children some of the adult honesty—allowing them to be children—protecting them in the best sense.” The room is charged with connecting stillness—the students and I are witness to a sacred encounter as Lynn receives this invitation to reveal herself. Lynn feels affirmed and later writes about how meaningful this experience in class was for her. I raise questions with each of the students about what goes into their responses. I turn to Megan and ask, “Megan, what leads you to be able to respond to Lynn in the way that you do—showing understanding and care?” Megan starts to answer with words—and then tears take over the telling.

That which breaks the voice by interrupting the stream of its words still belongs to it. Such is the case with tears, which speak without naming anything, without saying anything, in the pure effusion of meaning... Thus perhaps our tears, in truly giving away, would gather in themselves the sadness or the joy of that which cannot weep, and it would be the world that shines in their ephemeral crystal. (Chrétien, 2003, p. 152)

Through her tears, Megan shows “pure effusion of meaning.” She shares her own experience of being a child suffering through the painful divorce of her parents.

Indeed, in class this day, her world shone through the “ephemeral crystal.” She later reflects and allows us to hear her inner dialogue:

I am not an emotional person. I don’t usually cry in front of others—afraid of the judgment they may pass. The tears were certainly unexpected. As I was crying, so much was going on—oh, I thought I would have to leave the room. It was like the ‘fight or flight.’ Control yourself. (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

The tension between comfort and anxiety and vulnerability seems to be the most insistent of the themes that expresses what it means to ‘be-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. I reflect on Buytendijk’s words as they shed light on Megan’s experience of comfort and anxiety: “The experience of comfort fills, absorbs, and takes possession of us” (1961, p. 22). As if in response, Megan says:

The fear didn’t remain—I really let it go. And I was actually OK the rest of the day. I felt comforted that you understood a bigger part of me and what I was going through. You genuinely care about our lives outside of school and on a daily basis you ask us about our circumstances affecting our lives—and you care about that. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Filled with comfort, Megan both experiences and lets go of fear. Colleen experiences comfort as a strengthening in sharing with the group—living through an avoidance of to a staying with vulnerability:

I definitely don’t look at vulnerability as being so much of a weakness anymore. Because I think you can, you can still find strength in it, so... Whereas years ago I just would avoid, you know, maybe deep conversations or something painful because of the vulnerability. Now it’s like, you can get so much out of that now if you do share it. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

‘Being-with’ turns vulnerability inside out—revealing strength. Jackie shows her initial sense, too, that vulnerability means weakness as she says:

And I don’t want to seem so vulnerable to my classmates who feel I have a strong personality. You know what I mean? I didn’t want everybody to think ‘oh, my gosh, look how weak she is.’ I’m going to cry and everybody’s going to think, you know, what a basket case I am. But then after the first day, and discussing how I felt everybody was, you know, more than understanding—really listening. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

I do find myself “sitting next to my joy” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2003, p. 24) as I hear hints of transformation in my students’ words. I imagine the possibilities for

them in their work with patients. ‘Being-with’ has a hand in making staying in the tough places possible—and growing stronger. That is, after all, what it means to comfort. Slunt (1994) speaks to such possibilities:

An empowered person is more acceptable to self, and personal strength or comfort with one’s own Being is the foundation for reaching out to the other, for living the call to nursing. The call comes from Being and opens possibilities for encounters with others, encounters that are more authentic and meaningful. (p. 55)

Perhaps ‘being-with’ is offering a hand of human tenderness (George, 1990) to the other—a comfort at the heart of nursing. While I offer my hand in the classroom in both word and flesh, ‘being-with’ in teaching and learning nursing offers a hand that is also invisible—a comfort that sustains in lived memory—a hand that re-members. Steinbeck’s lovely passage between mother and son in his novel, *Grapes of Wrath*, inspires me further toward contemplative presence of the hand:

“I know. But I wanted you near. I was scared for you. I ain’t seen you. Can’t see you now. How’s your face?”

Gettin’ well quick.”

“Come clost, Tom. Let me feel it. Come clost.” He crawled near. Her reaching hand found his head in the blackness and her fingers moved down to his nose, and then over his left cheek. “You got a bad scar, Tom. An’ your nose is all crooked.”

“Maybe tha’s a good thing. Nobody wouldn’t know me, maybe. If my prints wasn’t on record, I’d be glad.” He went back to his eating. “Hush,” she said. “Listen!”

“It’s the wind, Ma. Jus’ the wind.” The gust poured down the stream, and the trees rustled under its passing.

She crawled close to his voice. “I wanta touch ya again, Tom. It’s like I’m blin’, it’s so dark. I wanta remember, even if it’s on’y my fingers that remember. You got to go away, Tom.” (1939, p. 569)

‘Being-with’ is crawling close to the voice that holds the words of the other—reaching in to meaning. ‘Being-with’ is hand-remembering the face of intimacy.

The Reflective Thing is Scary

The invitation to engage in reflective work in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing is met with fear and anxiety. Renee brings forward a profound existential showing of anxiety through her words:

I just don’t know—with this whole reflective thing. It is such a scary thing to think about looking at myself. Gosh, what am I going to find? What if there is nothing inside of me? (Personal Conversation, 2003)

“What if there is nothing inside of me?” The level of anxiety and sense of vulnerability is so profound that this lovely, vivacious, thoughtful young woman raises the possibility of “nothingness” inside. Renee experiences a vulnerability that Lashley (1994), drawing on Tillich’s work, names as an “ontological risk:”

This ontological risk involves facing the joy and the pain of revealing one’s innermost, secret self. Vulnerability involves self-disclosure. To disclose means to unveil, to make manifest, and to show. In self-disclosure, one makes oneself known in a different way to oneself and to others. Authentic self-disclosure requires the courage to be in the midst of threats to Being. (p. 44)

An etymological tracing of the word courage brings forward clear and profound connections. From Old French *corage* and Latin *cor*, the word courage has its roots in heart (Trumble, 1933/2002, p. 538). Courage is defined as “the quality of character which shows itself in facing danger undaunted or in acting despite fear of lack of confidence” (p. 358). As each of the students engages in thoughtful reflection and risks vulnerability, they act with courage to BE.

Colleen experiences a non-judgmental ambience which allows her to risk opening up:

I think everyone in here is nonjudgmental. I think that provides comfort and helps you open up and share things we might not if you think they're going to be critical of it.

(Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Heather speaks of a continuing sense of vulnerability and, yet, feels less threatened.

In the classroom, she has found comfort in the group that is allowing her to come more into Being:

This is where I think that I am right now—I still feel vulnerable but take the risk anyway. I think I don't feel threatened anymore, but, I'm so used to kind of keeping to myself and being quiet about things. I think I'm kind of slowly coming out of that. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jennifer brings forward the hand of comfort as being non-judgmental and natural:

I don't feel vulnerable sharing in the group because nobody's judging me. And secondly, because everybody else is disclosing things of the same nature. So it makes it much easier. I mean, I don't know, I'm surprised how comfortable I am, sharing things in there. But it seems natural, so, you know, I'm fine with it. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

It seems the students experience liberation through comfort on this life's journey together—the journey that is curriculum as lived in the Listening Space.

Comfort is named by Megan as understanding and not fearing “judgment:”

Your persona is very different from other professors. You genuinely care about our lives outside of school and on a daily basis you ask us about our circumstances affecting our lives—and you care about that. *I felt comforted that you understand a bigger part of me, what I am going through. I was not afraid of your passing judgment.* (Megan, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Megan is comforted in the ways I have come to know her—beyond objectives and groups of learning activities—to a “bigger part of her.” My heart skips a beat in humble bodily responding—Megan speaks of *currere*. Pinar and Grumet connect here with Megan and with our existential experiencing in the classroom:

Currere is the Latin infinitive of curriculum meaning to run the course. Thus *currere* refers to an existential experience of institutional structures. The method of *currere* is a strategy devised to disclose experience, so that we may see more of it and see more clearly. With such seeing can come deepened understanding of the running, and with this, can come deepened agency. (1976, p. vii)

Comfort along the *currere* opens the students to a deepened understanding of the running—of the course of becoming a nurse.

For Megan, being comforted in the classroom has to do with teacher “persona”—“one different from others.” I reflect on the word *persona* and unveil its meaning. The word *mask* is a way of understanding “*persona*” and carries along with it a sense of pretense. She further comments on genuine care, understanding a bigger part of her, not being afraid of judgment. A poem by an unknown author (n.d.) resonates here:

I let go of pretense,
And blessings flow in.

Resonating with Megan are students’ voices who participated with me in a preliminary opening of the phenomenon of ‘being-with.’ Diana in chapter one says, “Listening takes away the walls.” Anxiety and vulnerability are not taken away—but a space is opened up—clearing the way, as Megan suggests, for a deepening of compassion:

Being vulnerable allows you to be more compassionate. The more you understand the more you know their sorrow. (Megan, Classroom Conversation, 2003)

With comfort and understanding along the way of being-in teaching and learning together, compassion and blessings indeed flow in! Let us dwell here.

‘Being-With’ is Staying There—Opening an Inn-Between

I think that [being there] means being in the room even if you’re uncomfortable—it’s being emotionally available. It might mean going against visiting hours policy and you bring in a chair for the wife to sleep there instead of saying it’s time to go. *Being with is staying there even when you are afraid you won’t know what to say or do.* (My emphasis) (Colleen, Personal Conversation, 2003)

“‘Being-with’ is staying there even when you are afraid you won’t know what to say or do.” I dwell in Colleen’s profound words and hear the echo of a lived vulnerability—I hear, also, the power of a call to stay in the in-between space with another person when running away might be the natural inclination. The echo reverberates: Stay—not do or say—listen—be-together. Colleen (2003) continues through classroom conversation:

There is so much more than completing tasks, even in ICU. This class brings together nursing in a holistic way. In the ICU there is intimacy even if the person is unconscious. It is about ‘being-there.’

To be with another outside of saying and doing is to enter a sacred House of Being (Heidegger, 1959/1971a)—to open an Inn-between.

I bear tidings of lived experiences of the students as they reflect on being in teaching and learning together over the course of the semester. They tell me of the physical nature of the Listening Space as well as of the interpersonal place the metaphor names. Their telling calls me to serious reflection on the power of place—to re-turn to ‘being-with’ as a powerful, enveloping, and sustaining place. Casey (1993), once again, brings together place and being:

The power a place such as a mere room possesses determines not only *where* I am in the limited sense of cartographic location but *how* I am together with others (i.e. how I commingle and communicate with them) and even *who* shall we become together. (Casey, 1993, p. 23)

Colleen tells me about her experiences in the Intensive Care Unit where she works on weekends. As I listen to her tell of a place inside doing and saying, I respond, “It’s like being in an ‘in-between’ space with another person.” She spontaneously replies, “Yes, like purgatory!” I smile and then tend seriously to perhaps what Marc’s experience may have been in this Listening Space. As I stay in the reflection of her words, I find the question in Casey’s statement and enter the mystery, “Who shall we become together?” The question holds an offering of belonging together. Imagine these words being offered on the first day of the semester—opening gracefully to the Inn. Imagine these words being woven through the planned curriculum in nursing academia—bringing to life a place of being—weaving Being.

‘Being-with’ is indeed “staying there,” with all of one’s vulnerabilities—making room at the inn. Colleen creates a home place for her patient’s wife. Colleen shares concerns about intimacy with patients and the place where ‘staying’ and discomfort meet. I take note of the tension between staying and not knowing what to do—the tension between *being* and *doing*.

I bring many questions along on this labyrinthine journey. This day from inside a place of the language that the students use, I take note of the tension between the corners and the curves. As I walk in contemplation, I am drawn by the warmth of the curves. I enter into Bachelard’s (1958/1994) reverie:

Language dreams...For it is a poetic fact that a dreamer can write of a curve that it is warm. But does anyone think that Bergson did not exceed meaning when he attributes grace to curves and, no doubt, inflexibility to straight lines? Why is it worse for us to say that an angle is cold and a curve warm? That the curve welcomes us and the oversharpe angle rejects us? That the angle is masculine and the curve feminine? The grace of a curve is an invitation to remain. We cannot break away from it without hoping to return. For the beloved curve has

nest-like powers; it incites us to possession, it is a curved corner. (p. 146)

I reflect in the curve of the question of ‘being-with’—being-in mystery. The possibility of curved corners offers hope to ways of thinking beyond the technical understanding of curriculum in the nursing world. In the curve of the question, I know that ‘being-with’ is a place of invitation to stay even when one does not know what to *do*. ‘Being-with’ lures a hope to return to *be-ing*.

Invitation to Gather Inn

The honor of your presence is requested in this project for being. Receive this invitation and gather in:

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living.
I want to know what you ache for, and if you dare to dream
Of meeting your heart's longing...
I want to know if you will stand in the center of the fire with me
And not shrink back...
I want to know what sustains you, from the inside,
When all else falls away.
(Mountain Dreamer, 1999, pp. 1-2)

This is the invitation and the question calls, who are we to become? Please come in. Rumi (as cited in Barks, 2001b) reminds us that “The entrance door to the sanctuary is inside you” (p. 15). Gather again in textual conversation with me and my co-researchers—at the hearth of my soul. Re-member past times through earlier chapters as we now create new memories in the inn of chapter five—on the way to imagining even more. Let us allow the blanket to continue to unfold around us. Perhaps it is a fleece blanket stitched with “Being-With”—a gift from my Anam Cara group. Or it may be a throw—with the words, “Ingredients of a Happy Classroom” given to me by my students and specially stitched with a quote they selected, “If you have knowledge

let others light their candle by it.” Let us unfold ‘Being’ as we are with one another. Let us live the invitation in this reading and writing and in so doing—open the Inn-between. The candle is lit with our shared knowing—knowing through the “darkness that we search” (Rumi, as cited in Helminski, 2001, p. 42). Tea is about ready—and for sure, the waft of the baking bread calls us together as one.

Listen to Jackie as she accepts the invitation to “stand in the center of the fire:”

I think it’s important to be strong and you know, I don’t want to be weak. And, you know, I was very weak. I cried in front of everybody and, um, was a total basket case. I couldn’t figure out why I was talking—and I couldn’t stop. I remember that it was OKAY. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

In the shadow of the candle light’s reflection Jackie exposes a to and fro—and in the dance, shows a previously concealed part of herself. She says, “And it surprised me—just kind of came out of nowhere. Where did that come from? It was scary.” Perhaps in the tension Jackie experiences a sense of Being-toward-home:

From the moment we are born, we seem compelled to travel homeward. In places and people, we seek the elusive feeling of being welcomed. Home is the goal of the epic journeys of the human spirit. Jesus returns to his heavenly father. Moses leads his people to their homeland. Buddha reaches the immovable spot of enlightenment beneath the bo tree. (Lawlor, 1997, 14)

Traveling homeward although confused, Jackie “couldn’t stop.” Perhaps she finds a sense of welcome in this Inn. Remember—the jasmine and cypress dance here!

Lawlor tells us that the “adventures and trials of the Odyssey arrive at the following scene:”

Then the well-ordered hall was filled with rejoicing. The minstrel drew sweet sounds from his lyre and waked in all the longing for dance. Gaily they trod a measure, men and fair-robed women, till the great

house rang with their footfalls. For Odysseus at last after long wandering had come home and every heart was glad. (1997, p. 14)

As my students tell of the many ways they find home after wandering, I rejoice. And I ask, Who are we becoming together in this Listening Space? The Inn-between “wakes in all, the longing for the dance.” I invite you here to delight in the dance—being in the *Claddagh* circle. In chapter six, I weave word footfalls toward a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ as awakening this longing for the dance. For now—I invite you to rest here—in the Inn.

Opening the Sanctuary Doors

‘Being-with’ envelops us in a circle—preparing us for the dance. “Being-with’ is the dance. Jackie says:

You know we had the music and the candles and sometimes the lights were down a little. It’s the CIRCLE—the way everyone sits in the circle—OH and the topics. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jennifer experiences ‘being-with’ in the Listening Space as connecting pedagogical atmosphere with thinking:

The relaxing environment allows me *to open* my mind—to be more open minded. I can think more clearly. I don’t worry about anything else when I am in here—and it’s a long class too—4 hours. I have a different mindset for this class than any other class. (Classroom Conversation, 2003)

Jennifer experiences a place where she opens her mind and while here does not “worry.” There is a “sanctuary” sense here—a place of single mindfulness, freedom from worry, and safety. Renee brings forward what a safe place allows:

We [student group] have been together all along—but if you have a teacher that you just really feel as though it’s not safe to let these things out, then it certainly wouldn’t have happened this way...I mean, because in no other class would we feel comfortable enough to, to do that—share our feelings. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

The students feel safe in this listening sanctuary. In her journal reflections, Jennifer shows her experience of the sacred nature of the Listening Space:

The experience of the vignettes was really emotional. I related to Flickinger (1992) when she wrote, “having access to a person’s private suffering is like being ushered into a sacred place, a kind of inner sanctum where the most vulnerable human secrets are kept” (p. 188). I felt like I was taken to that sacred place during each vignette.

Oh, how I imagine that Jennifer, now in practice in caring with patients, being a tabernacle—a portable sanctuary for her patients.

Continue to listen, now to Heather, in this sacred place of ‘being-with.’ She shows her reverence in listening to her colleagues through her words: “In this room [Listening Space], I feel honored to be able to listen.” Indeed, an honor it is for me as well. Listening receives lives—holds lives in our very hands. Jackie, too, brings forward the Listening Space as sacred space: “We have another class in there—it is wrong to have another class there. Other classes just don’t belong in there.” The room itself is experienced as calling a certain way of being together.

The sanctuary door opens little by little and wide. I am humbled by Jackie’s words to me. “We open up because you are a good listener—you always give everyone your full attention. You are right there—listening” (Personal Conversation, 2003). In a note at the end of the semester, Renee writes a note of thanks:

Thank you for *opening up* (my emphasis) a class where we all focus on the holistic and “being present” dimension of nursing. It is SO important. I value and admire your insight, communication skills and ability to listen. This class aided us in understanding ourselves as well as others—it would not be possible to do so without an instructor who created such a secure, open environment.

An experience of openness as told by the students leads me to re-turn to the notion of

a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ as “open-work”—and to a quick and insistent memory of my mother’s hand holding open the lace curtain. Through the students and my mother I glimpse a moment of eternity. O’Donohue (1997) tells us:

We cannot seal off the eternal. Unexpectedly and disturbingly, it gazes in at us through the sudden apertures in our patterned lives. A friend of mine who loves lace often says that it is the holes in the lace that render it beautiful. (p. 42)

Holding open the lace curtain, eternity streams in. Beautiful openings hold patterns of eternal echoes.

Being Deeper Together

I worried what if I’m really not that deep?
(Renee, Personal Conversation, 2003)

Jackie says, “This room makes things happen—a lot of things that seem to happen just aren’t part of the normal classroom.” She speaks to the power of a place and says more of what she means. “I mean, we already knew each other really well. Now it is DEEPER!” Heather also experiences a new depth:

Um, like I said, I felt like I was pretty close with everybody in my class but I learned a lot of things about the people in my group that I didn’t know before. I guess, maybe I wasn’t as close as I thought I was. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

“Oh my gosh,” Renee says:

Some of the fears and apprehensions I had were how deep am I going to dig and look at myself? I am much better at looking at others than I am at looking at myself...I worried what if I am not really that deep? (Personal Conversation, 2003)

Along with the others, Megan goes the next level down toward the center:

The vignettes were so uncomfortable—but we were able to dwell in each other’s stories to a deeper level—dwelling through the conversation. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

I respond to Megan through the words of Rumi (as cited in Barks, 1999): “As you live deeper in the heart, the mirror gets clearer and cleaner” (p. 43). Through listening conversation a clearing is possible. Diaconis (2001) writes, “Home may be understood as a place where we dwell to receive our strength” (p. 65). Perhaps it is a hand of comfort that leads one home to such clear dwelling.

Re-searching through Darkness

I mean, it was, like, 10:00 at night, everybody’s sleeping, and I was typing [my reflections] for this class and, and crying. (Colleen, Personal Communication, 2003)

Colleen’s solitude here at the computer while engaged in class lived reflections brings forward and returns to some of what Heidegger explicates as he writes about *Da-sein* and *Mitda-sein*:

Thus, being-with and the facticity of being-with-one-another are not based on the fact that several subjects are physically there together...Lacking and “being away” are modes of Mitda-sein and are possible only because Da-sein as being-with lets the Da-sein of others be encountered in its world...Mitda-sein characterizes the Da-sein of others in that it is freed for a being-with by the world of that being-with. (1953/1996, p. 113)

How lovely to think of Colleen and the other students as Beings free to encounter and to be encountered by others—to be “encounterable,” to use Heidegger’s words (1953/1996, p. 113). Perhaps a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ as more deeply explored in chapter six offers possibilities for students and nurses to be more encounter-able.

Jackie recounts her experience of crying in the classroom in her Journal

Reflections:

I was feeling pretty overwhelmed and it didn’t take much to bring my emotions to the surface. I was embarrassed and it was kind of everyone to let me know that it was okay—but somehow I felt “weird.” I am used to being very strong—like the mom of the group. I

know that I am human, and it is okay to cry, but it was pretty intense and it even surprised me...I guess I needed to let it out and after I did, I was able to move on. (2003)

I write in the margin of Jackie's paper:

You allowed yourself to remove the covering which exposed some tender spots. You must have felt quite vulnerable. What did you learn about yourself and 'being-with' others through your surprise? (2003)

Jackie continues:

[Heather] has cried a couple times. And Lynn was crying, it's like, you know, no big deal to them. And I'm no different than anybody else and I don't need to be stronger than everybody else. AND THAT WAS NICE. (Personal Conversation, 2003)

As I dwell in the tears of the students here in this darkness, I listen to

Chrétien's insight and enter into enlarged understandings:

We speak commonly of a face veiled by tears, which is not true: a face can be twisted with fear, spite, rage, or disappointment, but what is more unbearably naked than a face in tears? As to the streaming of tears on window panes: it opens days, arranges cracks of light as hazardous as they are precise, allows a glimpse of that which an instant before was hidden. When the panes weep, the world is purer. (2003, p. 152)

The "nakedness" of a face in tears indeed opens to a deeper and less protected encounter. 'Being-with' as free to open oneself in a safe haven—an inn—"allows a glimpse of that which an instant before was hidden." Such unconcealing takes place in the inn-between place of tension where the blanket is unfolded and gently draped aside—in reach—of comfort. In the light of the candle, the warmth of the hearth, and with comfort close by, the students "search the darkness" (Rumi, as cited in Helminski, 2001, p. 42). Let us listen to Rumi's advice here:

Sit with your friends; don't go back to sleep.
Don't sink like a fish to the bottom of the sea.

Surge like an ocean,
don't scatter yourself like a storm.

Life's waters flow from the darkness
Search the darkness, don't run from it.

Night travelers are full of light,
and you are, too; don't leave this
companionship.

Be a wakeful candle in a golden dish,
don't slip into the dirt like quicksilver.

The moon appears for night travelers,
be watchful when the moon is full.
(in Helminski, 2001, p. 42)

Life flows through the students' reflections in their narratives—sometimes indeed from dark and uncomfortable places. As narratives are shared, as lives are given over and received, connections give rise to light. Heather writes after attending a support group meeting at a shelter for domestic violence:

To be honest, I felt uncomfortable being there. I felt intrusive and that I didn't belong. I think somewhere inside of myself I experienced some feelings of guilt in that I felt badly that I was there at the meeting yet I had never experienced domestic violence.
(Journal Reflections, 2003)

As Heather searches inside she finds feelings of guilt which open dialog for making meaning of her experience. The clinical experience is transformed from that of "observation of group process" to one of "entering one's interior life." Marc writes of his discomfort with being male in the presence of women who suffer abuse, in this particular case, at the hands of men:

I felt uncomfortable. I was getting hostile looks from one woman in particular who sat across from me. Finally, she asked, "Who the hell are you?"...I explained that in my future practice it would be important for me to understand violence first hand from women who have lived through it...I felt angry at the type of men who could be so

cowardly and evil to inflict this type of torture...The experience was uncomfortable but very educational. I felt ashamed for being male.
(Journal Reflections, 2003)

Marc opens to the experience through feelings of anger and shame—causing him to look more fully at himself as person. So rich and full is the learning when not bounded by teacher-made objectives.

Lynn, too, started out anxious and uncertain about telling her story. Earlier in chapter five are her words of finally being glad she shared. I reflect now on my response to her in the margin of her reflection:

Dear Lynn,

Always keep in mind that you are in charge of your telling. So glad you were able to express your concerns in class and that you stayed. There is indeed a natural inclination to want to flee the anxiety—and yet as you have learned in your life, opening up and allowing self to experience anxiety may make new growth (even transformation) possible.

I am glad she stayed. The moments were dark but Lynn came to know she was not alone.

Renee who initially was so frightened about searching inside and finding nothing now tells me:

I believe I really can be-with others. I do believe that about myself now. I can sort of just sit with someone and you know, understand where they are coming from—and just love them and care about them and for them and be empathetic. My fear was that I couldn't.
(Personal Conversation, 2003)

Renee and the others begin to live what Rumi (as cited in Barks, 1999) instructs: “The hurt you embrace becomes joy. Call it to your arms where it can change” (p. 66). Fear opens to self-knowledge and makes room at the inn. Renee makes room for such presence in her words, “I just love them and care about them and for them.” She

invites with her language—a language of love (Irrigary, 2002).

From this Inn-between I stay—and call my students to my arms. By the light of the timber glow—I open my journal and with Mountain Dreamer’s (1999) help, I write:

During the course of this journey, as students and teacher together experience a ‘house of being’ here in the Inn, I hope for you to:

-know what you ache for and discover what gives meaning and purpose to your lives and to the lives of your patients;

-dare to dream of meeting your heart’s longing and connecting with me and your patients from this place;

-stand in the center of the fire with me and in the center of vulnerability with your patients, without shrinking back—staying here;

-know what sustains you from the inside and offer up such strength-finding to your learning community here and to your patients.

I have listened to the hidden drift of dialog with my students in chapter four—delighting in the magic and gathering song of ‘being-with’ in the center. From this center of stillness, I send forth through chapter five—bearing a message and tidings of discovery—naming experiential structures of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. Now it is time to enter a new Inn-between. I offer up a place for us to stay—to share hopes, confront tensions, and make room for presence. Please stay—and join me for the final Saying in chapter six. Let us gather in again and together send forth a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education.

**CHAPTER SIX:
'BEING-WITH' HOLDS ETERNAL ECHOES—
A BRIDGE TOWARD A PEDAGOGY OF 'BEING-WITH'**

*A mountain keeps an echo deep inside itself,
That's how I hold your voice
(Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 104)*

I gaze out from the present of a new chapter—another new beginning. I engage in thoughtful re-collection of memories and loving imaginings of the future from this new place. In chapter one, I turn to the experience of 'being-with' in teaching and learning with my nursing students from a reflective place in my classroom—the Listening Space. From this place I reach depths of memory where I dwell with many first experiences—as a new nurse with my patient, Margaret, and as a new teacher with my students in Toledo. I gather memories of my father and mother and draw toward the wafting fragrance of chicken-pot-pie; I linger in the rising of the sun through the enduring lace. I re-member my first mentor, Grace, and nursing stories held in china cups of tea with floating orange peels. I re-awaken to the voice of Vicki, my daughter Colleen's primary teacher at Montessori, with her teaching the children "a worship of life." I treasure the students who through 'being-with' me in the Listening Space offered preliminary openings into the phenomenon of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship.

As I re-collect, I hold deep inside and dear the many voices of those who have engaged with me in 'being-with' in teaching and learning. Tyndall is right: "The echoes talked down to me from the mountain walls" (as cited in Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 54). I re-member the gift given to me by Margaret so many years ago—a

bell. Here in this new beginning, the bell calls us to “a worship of life”—to a “worship of life” lived in the presence of tensions in the nursing world.

My experiences in ‘being-with’ others over the years have led me to rich and wonder-filled places; they have brought me to moments of excruciating tension. The tensions reveal themselves through differing ways of being and thinking about what matters in teaching and learning of nursing. A technical paradigm with its doing focus dominates the world of nursing education while caring stands as the moral heart of nursing itself. As I am called in a worship of life and to engage in a final Saying, I am called to dwell, also, in the tensions between being and doing. My co-researchers and grounding philosophers show the necessity for staying in the tension—“even when one doesn’t know what to say or do” (Colleen, Personal Conversation, 2003). And so, valuing these teachers, I stay.

As a nursing educator/researcher my work now is to bring forward a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ from this tension-filled place. I recognize the place of tension as a large inn-between—a lived inn-between space in the nursing profession. I take a deep breath and open to this entire inn as being sacred space as I listen to connections between inn and soul. “The soul is the inne of God” (Coverdale, as cited in Trumble, 1933/2002, p. 1380). The Saying is prepared from the depths of my Being, and dedicates itself as soul space is created in the inn-between.

A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ necessarily gathers and connects persons in meaningful relationships, opening up possibilities for transformation. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ offers a place of belonging—a place from which to acknowledge, experience, confront, and eventually embrace the tensions in nursing education. As

eternal echoes make their way through the tensions, I gather courage, offer hospitality, and bridge a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ Stay with me. The lived experiences of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship echo, resonate, and meet with reverberation in this passionate call to gather in a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education. ‘Being-with’ students teaches teachers.

Bridging the Journey Home

I have come to know this re-searching project of hermeneutic phenomenology in the fullness of the circle—the seasons. Summer brimmed with life in the stillness of the thick and deep interpretive work. On this day, from a winter bench, I look back now to an autumn that during those summer days could only be imagined and promised. I pick up a copy of *Seasons that Laugh and Weep: Musings Along the Journey* (Burghardt, 1983) and continue to re-member:

Immediately I find my self in the late 70’s at Georgetown University sitting on a bench at Dahlgren Chapel. Walter Burghardt, S.J. is presiding at liturgy and there is standing room only in the sanctuary. College students with studying to be done, boyfriends and girlfriends to see, and hangovers to be healed find their way to this wise and humorous presence of this then 60-something Jesuit priest. Always in three points he gave his homily—a welcome gift to the congregation. His words are filled with deep personal connections: “When you were at the Tombs last night, pitcher of beer on the table, after an evening in the Medical Library...” I remember sitting there turning red and wondering, “How does he know?” His words filled us—like a call to an intimate and meaningful conversation.

He was controversial and well loved; he uncovered tensions and contradictions—holding them open for the pondering. One Sunday, I heard him say from the pulpit of this prestigious Catholic Jesuit institution: “Is being Catholic really worth saving?” I loved the questions and felt invitation to dwell there. Fr. Burghardt showed us the popular bumper sticker which instructed us to “Question Authority.” I loved that. (Personal Journal Reflections, 2003)

I sit here today, 25 years later in a familiar yet brand new place. I am still on a bench dwelling in questions—still questioning authority. I am in a sanctuary—the sanctuary of this dissertation project. The branches of the maple trees show themselves with clarity—unconcealing—no longer hidden with the rich foliage of the autumn. At the same time I experience a new concealing—my sapphire dragonflies are absent, the baby ducks are indistinguishable from all the others, the pool is covered over, and the mourning dove is silent. Our lives are indeed seasons—“seasons that laugh and weep.” The cool air stirs a nostalgia while the echoes of many deeply held voices bring me back, keep me company now, and lead me to the future.

Within the voices of my students who are my pilgrim companions on this dissertation journey I hear the voices of students from my first year teaching in 1980-1981. As I listen through the change of seasons in the re-searching of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship, I hear the echoes. The themes of comfort in the midst of anxiety, friendship, staying and being home in the Inn-between, flowing and blending in community, and creating soul space meet in the present with my research companions of the spring of 2003. The themes are stitched with threads from experiences of ‘being-with’ through the years—leading toward and flowing from this formal project. ‘Being-with’ itself unfolds as a blanket of understanding and offers an eternal presence. Like love, ‘being-with:’

Is a tree with branches
 Reaching into eternity
 And roots set deep in eternity,
 And no trunk!
 (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2003, p. 121)

The voices of my co-researchers are met in resonance with the words and gestures of my former students whose voices are heard in chapters one and two. Their voices meet my new students with reverberating meanings. Echoes of my first students find their places as well as show through the listening with one of my very first students. Margy sends me a photo with the following words in the summer of 1981. She speaks to her experience of the tension between comfort and anxiety and of 'being-with' experienced as "staying there:"

Dear Mary,

Failing the boards was the worst thing that ever happened to me; your staying with me for hours in my sadness was the best.

Love always, Margy

In my new listening space in the fall of 2003 Amy engages in the circle as a student who continues to bring forward the experience of comfort. After the death of the father of a classmate in our course, she writes in an email message, "Thanks for all you did for Heather. You have no idea what a comfort you are to ALL of us." Sarah blesses me with an end-of-semester gift—a beautifully sculpted clear glass hand holding a separate sapphire marble heart. She gives me the symbol of the theme that my co-researchers bring forward—hand of comfort in the presence of anxiety and vulnerability. Sarah was not aware of the "research findings"—she shows them instead through her symbolic gift. From this same class, Bethany, writes on a note:

Dear Mary,

Thank you for teaching me this semester. I have learned so much—not only about nursing, but also about caring for people in everyday circumstances. Your kindness and understanding have inspired me to develop those characteristics in myself...I also want to thank you for a wonderful clinical experience. Your depth of knowledge about

psychiatry amazes me. I feel that you enabled me to use my clinical time wisely and encourage me to think deeply in every situation. I also continued to learn how to be a better listener—and not only to what people say, but to listen to what people mean...Lastly, thank you for being my friend.

Love, Bethany

In this new listening space, Bethany continues to bring forward the named themes of 'being-with' as being deeper together, with a listening heart, and friendship. 'Being-with' in the context of teaching, indeed, opens one to 'being-with' patients and to the world in which one seeks to know. Bethany teaches me that a pedagogy of 'being-with' is woven by the very threads that are essential to the experience of 'being-with.'

JoAnn, a master's prepared nurse manager and nurse of ten years writes:

Mary was my first nursing professor...I remember as a student being pleased to accept a clinical nurse intern position at [a university medical center]. I was placed on the Adult Medical AIDS unit. My first day working was overwhelming. The staff was very nice and welcoming, but I was frightened to the point that I wanted to leave as soon as I arrived. I remember calling Mary and coming over to her house for dinner. I told her I wanted to transfer to the operating room that "It would be a better learning experience for me." Instead of agreeing with me, Mary took the time to help me work through my fears. I ended up staying. And after graduation I stayed on this unit as a new nurse. The best professional decision I ever made was to stay on the AIDS unit.

I am pleased to say I have obtained my master's degree in nursing administration and am currently working on my MBA. My plans are to pursue a PhD in nursing.

Mary is not only my mentor; she is my dear friend. Her continued support over the years has empowered me to face fears and new challenges in the nursing profession on a daily basis. (Reflections, March, 2004)

JoAnn's experience of 'being-with' me in teaching and learning offers, again, echoes of the themes of staying there, comfort in the midst of anxiety and vulnerability, and

soul friendship. JoAnn's words further unfold the enduring nature of 'being-with.'

Together In the Sending Forth

I gather my treasures from my new students at the end of yet another semester of being in teaching with my students and stand in a new Inn-between. My pilgrim companions in my research project have invited me back to give the keynote talk at their pinning ceremony on the eve of their graduation. This 'being-with' is at once my home-coming and their fare-well. I prepare a talk to the graduates—I reach back behind their words, to the present of my interpretations—offering humble tidings for their futures. At the request of the graduates, Joan, a dear faculty colleague, precedes me at the podium—sharing reflections about her recent experience of 'being-with' a nurse-friend at the time of death. I follow Joan and address the assembly gathered this 16th day of December:

***TOGETHER IN THE SENDING FORTH:
FRIENDSHIP, COMFORT, AND SACRED SPACE***

President Waldner, Chairperson, Dr. Harrington, Esteemed Faculty, Alumni, Students, Families and Friends of the Graduates, and Dear Graduates:

Friendship and sacredness. Joan brings forward and offers up her gifts of friendship and sacredness—gifts revealed in the experience of nursing—gifts recognized with a new knowing through her 'being-with' Tanya at the moment of death. Through Joan, we are all ushered into this sacred space. With Joan and the assembled nursing community, I sink into reflective stillness as a nurse, in this precious place of belonging. Bollnow's words come to mind as he writes:

Silenced by the stillness of reflection—reflection on what has been said and on what remains to be said, even merely with a feeling of gratitude for the profundity achieved in the conversation. And when the conversation finally does sink into silence, it is no empty silence, but a fulfilled silence. The truth, not only of the insight that has been acquired, but the truth of life, the state of being in truth that has been achieved in the

conversation, continues to make itself felt, indeed becomes deeper, in the course of this silence. (Bollnow, 1982, p. 46)

And so I pause here and reflect on the story that is told—recognizing its profundity and power—listening to the wisdom. I hear words to be woven—friendship; hands and comfort; creating sacred space. “Being in truth” in nursing is indeed about such weaving and ponderings about ways of being with each other and our patients. I am filled with gratitude this evening for your presence in my life; I am privileged, too, to be a part of Joan’s story. I am honored by your invitation to be with you at your convocation on the eve of your graduation from the York College of Pennsylvania and to deliver my remarks that I have named, “Together in the Sending Forth: Friendship, Comfort, and Sacred Space.”

I take the lead from you, dear graduates and offer up humble understandings on what it means to be-with others in the nursing world. My words this evening are given by you, received by my soul, and now returned to you. I urge you to gather in the rich meaning and to go forth in the gifts that you are. I would like you in these few moments to wonder with me from the center of your beings about naming ‘being-with’ in nursing in three ways: ‘being-with’ as soul-friendship; ‘being-with’ as the hand of comfort in the presence of anxiety; and ‘being-with’ as creating an inn-between.

First, soul friendship. Unfolding in the presence of Tanya and her community of nurses is what is known in ancient Irish language as Anam Cara or “soul friend.” In this Celtic tradition, there is a beautiful understanding of love and friendship. Listen to O’Donohue:

One of the fascinating ideas here is the idea of soul-love; the old Gaelic term for this is anam cara. Anam is the Gaelic word for soul and cara is the word for friend. So anam cara in the Celtic world was the “soul friend.” In the early Celtic church, a person who acted as a teacher, companion, or spiritual guide was called an anam cara. It originally referred to someone to whom you confessed, revealing the hidden intimacies of your life. With the anam cara, you could share your innermost self, your mind and your heart. The friendship was an act of recognition and belonging. (O’Donohue, 1997, p. 13)

Look around and breathe in the beauty of friendship that has sustained you over the years in your nursing program. Within this nursing community is the experience of being companion on the journey—you have broken bread together—pizza and other

delicacies, you have shared secrets and intimacies. Your friendship IS an act of belonging. Joan tells us, “We were all friends, even those of us who didn’t know each other.” Nurtured through the love of your community, you become more able to be fully present to your patients. You will offer your patients a giving presence—one that is, as Gabriel Marcel (1981) names, “immediate and unmistakable” (p. 26). Genuine. Authentic. You will be changed as you open yourself through deep understanding. Gadamer says,

To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were. (1960/2000, p. 379)

You are transformed—you told me “We thought we knew each other before—but never LIKE THIS!”

Creating an inn-between. One of the graduates here shared her wisdom with me, saying, “‘Being-with’ means staying there even when you don’t know what to say or do.” There are times when our natural inclination is to flee. And yet, you heard Joan’s words: “Many of us, each to ourselves, silently promised to stay with her that night.” Stay. We may indeed be spun into turbulence; ‘being-with’ in silence and vulnerability may also open us to sacred space. The inn is a place of hospitality—of shelter and protection. Be this for your patients—a sanctuary. Stay.

The hand of comfort in the presence of anxiety. You have indeed comforted one another through family tragedies and difficulties—births and deaths, through academic challenges—multiple choice exams and DEEP reflective papers—and meaning making all along the way of becoming nurses. In the Chinese language, the word comfort is represented by two characters—one meaning “iron” and one meaning “heart.” I imagine smoothing the wrinkles of your hearts with my hand and wonder about the experience of ‘being-with’ as comfort. The hand of comfort reflects the power of our nursing experience—the hand that touches the soul of the other—a knowing hand, a compassionate hand. I was given this gift by a student the other day—a hand holding a heart. I treasure this beautiful piece. Even more is the loveliness in what it means for nurses to comfort in the presence of anxiety and vulnerability. In the act of comforting, one is strengthened. Each one of you has reflected on your call to care; each one of you is in a privileged place now to offer your hand to those persons who entrust themselves to your care. Your caring hands hold the hearts of one another—and your patients. Offer your open hands.

The community of nurses offers possibilities for such compassion, for suffering with other human persons. A student last year told me of our classroom—the Listening Space—that “compassion fills the room.” How lovely. Let the scent of compassion fill your place of being with your patients. Open your hand and dwell in the holding on and letting go that is part of the life we share with our patients. A lovely pink tinged rose blossom, by the same name—Compassion—is described as being “vigorous and sweetly scented” (Mattock, 2001, p. 94). “Compassion” has flowers known to bloom for a long season—flowers have been gathered as late as Christmas Day (Mattock, 2001). As you leave this evening, please accept my gift of a rose that like compassion is “vigorous and sweetly scented.”

You are responding to a vocation in nursing; you are entering the powerful community of nurses. As you once advised me, be “selfless and aggressive” in your caring. And during this time of holding on and letting go, I invite you always to wonder and dwell in the questions of what it means to offer your self as Anam Cara or soul-friend; to offer your hand in the presence of anxiety and vulnerability, and to create an “inn” between with your patients and one another. I offer a blessing now as you go on your way—dear friends—on the way of always becoming—and ‘being-with’ in the work of nursing.

A Blessing

May the light of your soul guide you.

May the light of your soul bless the work you do with the secret love and warmth of your heart.

May you see in what you do the beauty of your own soul.

May the sacredness of your work bring healing, light, and renewal to those who work with you and to those who see and receive your work.

May your work never weary you.

May it release within you wellsprings of refreshment, inspiration, and excitement.

May you be present in what you do.

May you never become lost in the bland absences.

May the day never burden.

May dawn find you awake and alert, approaching your new day with dreams, possibilities and promises.

May evening find you gracious and fulfilled.

May you go into the night blessed, sheltered, and protected.

May your soul calm, console, and renew you.

(O’Donohue, 1997, pp. 160-161)

MAY YOU CELEBRATE THIS Day—and as Marc would say, “Mahalo!”

I reflect on the intertwining words—the students and mine—and am led once again by the intermingling scent of the cherry and plum blossom on the same branch (Heidegger, 1959/1971a). Home-coming and fare-well intermingle here too. This phenomenological project calls for living in the tension as holding on lets go—as coming home means farewell. There is a gathering in the letting go. Heidegger and his friend talk about this. Let us enter into their conversational questions:

- Heidegger: Then the farewell of all “It is” comes to pass.
- Japanese: But you do not think of the farewell as a loss and denial, do you?
- Heidegger: In no way.
- Japanese: But?
- Heidegger: As the coming of what has been.
- Japanese: But what is past, goes, has gone—how can it come?
- Heidegger: The passing of the past is something else than what has been.
- Japanese: How are we to think about that?
- Heidegger: As the gathering of what endures...
- Japanese: ...which as you said recently, endures as what grants endurance...
- Heidegger: ...and stays the same as the message...
- Japanese: ...which needs us as messengers.
(Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 54)

Discoveries of ‘being-with’ and “gathering of what endures” in the nursing world open to more tension—“the past is the ‘no-longer-now,’ the future is the ‘not-yet-now’” (Heidegger, 1959/1987, p. 206). I am called to be faithful along the bridge to a

pedagogy of ‘being-with’—faithful now to *Da-sein*—“being-there” (Heidegger, 1959/1987, p. 28).

A Gathering Bridge

You are there so clear and soft
 Oh Footbridge of my soul!
 You are the hyphen between
 Being and With
 Standing
 under
 Swirling sapphires and
 Golden fish.
 (Packard, 2003)

On this sunny afternoon in February I go the opening of the bridge and find my place along a stone wall—bench-like. Cradled by this opening and held in awe, I contemplate. How I have come to know this bridge—this hyphen between being and with! I enter a reverie and re-turn to earlier journal pages. I read my own reflections:

On my way back up from the pool—how delicious to sit with my feet in the water, sunglasses on—savoring every word of The Body’s Recollection of Being. I need to find shade and it is time to write at the computer now. I leave the sunny oasis and meander up the long hill toward the reflecting lake. From the valley I glance up—and with a quickening surprise I see my bridge! At least the top part of the railing and a few spindles. Nice to see my bridge present to me. I continue up the hill instead of my usual way of going around through the orchard. I know I am coming toward—and then it disappears. Just at the moment that I know I am so close to the bridge—is when I no longer am able to see it. I keep going—and then in a flash—there it is again—so clear and so soft! (Personal Journal Reflections, July, 2003)

Oh! It is so true of this ‘being-with’ journey—moving toward even when the guideposts disappear. The journey itself becomes one of trust—allowing even self to be lost (Hultgren, 1995). “And then in a flash” there it is!

A duck gingerly walks on ice, tapping webbed-toes—and clumsily struggles for balance. Surrendering to her tummy, she brings me back from the warmth of my

reverie—to winter. The water is solid ice—“swirling sapphires and golden fish” are covered over—only memory brings them to presence. The stately weeping willow raises her hands draping a brown wispy shawl. I open to the felt strangeness of what has once been so intimately known. The frozen lake calls me to be—still. I draw toward the bridge and reflect along with Heidegger:

With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other
expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank
and land into each other’s neighborhood. The bridge gathers the earth
as landscape around the stream. (1971a, p. 152)

What gathers here in this listening space of chapter six as I ponder the bridge? This bridge gathers the valley and the pool with its memory of sun and first time listening to tapes of hermeneutic conversations. The bridge gathers the earth and sky—body and soul—morning and sunset—matins and vespers—being and with—research and transformed practice. Roots and branches gather in this place.

The Bridge Questions Me

The bridge lets the stream run its course and at the same time grants
their way to mortals so that they may come and go from shore to
shore. Bridges lead in many ways. (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 152)

The bridge gathers and—it leads. The bridge connects, too, the phenomenological researching of the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship WITH a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education. I must go. It is time to offer up that which is gathered by the bridge.

The sun is setting and I move toward crossing. There is tension in the stepping and questions pour forth. With a sense of urgency I wonder about the best place to be when the sun gets to setting? I need to be on the new side of the bridge—but where is east and where is west? Where am I? Who am I and who are You? What is it like to

be in the shadow of the sunset? Can I get from east to west in time—or will I miss the sunset while on the way? I have waited patiently to be on the bridge at this moment and now I feel too cold to stay. I cannot hear the comforting sound of the mourning dove.

Stop Chasing the Sunset

In what ways do I get from an inside knowing of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship to a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education? Now on the bridge I notice the water falling—clearing a space on the ice for the ducks to meet. Who are the babies? I hold a “hand” artifact that fell from my journal and my heart swells—I contemplate a pedagogy of being-connected—a pedagogy of connecting beings. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ is being gathered; I am led to a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’

I finally reach the other side of this footbridge to a brilliant-red waiting cardinal! I know I am here. Nature—like poetry bypasses the orderly knowledge on the way to knowing. Even in the cold stillness of the moment the cardinal winks. Saving my place till I arrive—he flies off. Warmed by nature’s phenomenological nod I stay and take my place along the stone wall. I write:

From this side
of the bridge—
Branches are
deep within the lake—
Sending forth roots—ah!
Branches’ reflections—
reaching and grounding-with
drawing hues of pink and blue—watery colors in-between.
Earth and sky are one
Being emerges—

From this leading bridge

In my soul—
Sun sets.
(Packard, 2004)

I experience a momentary respite of being-in the fullness until the questions return.

What do I do to experience this sunset in the best possible way? In what ways might I best present a pedagogy of ‘being-with?’

Gadamer says in an address to his students at Freiberg, “Be awake for the fire of the night” (as cited in Grondin, 2003, p. 91). I hear his words, not as an answer to my questions; I hear in his words an invitation to stay with the tension of the questions and to be open to full experiencing. I am not called to design a “how to” manual for a pedagogy of ‘being-with;’ I am called to be awake to being-in a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ I am called to be thoughtfully attuned to what “draws hues of pink and blue in the watery in-between”—reflecting oneness of earth and sky. I connect with Kaufmans’s words in his prologue to *I and Thou*:

A good book or essay or poem is not primarily an object to be put to use, or even an object of experience: it is the voice of You speaking to me, requiring a response. (as cited in Buber, 1970/1996, p. 39)

Gadamer again enters my reflection and re-awakens me to my passion for continuing the phenomenological exploration of ‘being-with’ through writing about and enacting a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education:

The mission of humankind is to stand between the emergence of Being and its withdrawal. (as cited in Grondin, 2003, p. 108)

This place between emergence of Being and its withdrawal is surely an in-between—a place to experience the fullness of life. It is the still point that is the dance! (Eliot, 1909-1950/1976). I listen to the voice of each You—and I respond:

All you who are dreamers, too,

Help me make our world anew.
 I reach out my hands to you.
 (Hughes, as cited in Rampersad, 1994, p. 546)

Perhaps our connecting hands might be bridges—bringing curriculum, pedagogy, and as such, our lives into “each other’s neighborhoods” (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 152).

Withdrawing to Emerge

I step back—and take a look at the themes as they unfold—the essential structures of the phenomenon of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. Perhaps stepping back is helpful in bringing together the many ways ‘being-with’ shows itself. Having lived phenomenologically with my students in this act of research, I recognize a new place in my lifeworld. This research, as a bridge, necessarily leads.

[The bridge] does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream. The bridge designedly causes them to lie across from each other. One side is set off against the other by the bridge. Nor do the strips of the banks stretch along the stream as indifferent border strips of the dry land. (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 152)

I hear ‘being-with’ expressed existentially through lived time, lived place, lived relation, and lived body (van Manen, 1990). I have heard the themes through my students as they have allowed me to enter sacred space with them—to know them in their vulnerabilities, fears, and hesitations. Van Manen’s words become a backdrop for the setting of the sun:

Especially where I meet the other person in his or her weakness, vulnerability, or innocence, I experience the undeniable presence of loving responsibility: a [person] who calls upon me may claim me in a way that leaves me no choice... When I love a person I want to know what contributes toward the good of that person. So the principle that guides my actions is a sense of the pedagogic Good. (van Manen, 1990, p. 6)

Having heard the themes I am left with “no choice” but to articulate and bring not only the research, but a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ to a practical possibility. I ponder what it means to be guided by a “pedagogic Good” and I respond to this moral claim. I pause and in this most evening time I give thanks:

Dissertation Vespers

On the new shore—gathered in
Day surrenders to night and
I give evening thanks and praise!

Nestled in the face of East, ducks in orange-webbed skates
Pause in this prayer—
Standing under the sunset blanket.
Comfort stills.

Floating Crystal you show—
Through your covering—Unconcealing
You withdraw.

Deep and tall you are Sweet Maple.
With root-reflections
You draw sky with prayer hand-branches.

Bless you Dear Footbridge—
Joining sanctuary and play ground
In you, earth and sky kiss goodnight.
So precious is Being-in
Between
Withdrawing and Emerging.
You graciously connect and go beyond—
Gathering, holding, leading, faring well
toward Home.

Giving thanks—
I follow.
(Packard, February, 2004)

Indeed, “I follow” with insistence and turn to the ways in which a pedagogy for nursing education may reflect ‘being-with’ as named by my co-researchers. I re-turn to van Manen’s understanding of “progress” in human science research:

Phenomenological human science sponsors a certain concept of progress. It is the progress of humanizing human life and humanizing human institutions to help human beings to become increasingly thoughtful and thus better prepared to act tactfully in situations. In other words, sound human science research helps those who partake in it to produce *action sensitive knowledge*...It must animate and *live* (my emphasis) in the human being who dialogues with the text. (van Manen, 1990, p. 21)

I have accepted the invitation to “partake” in this dissertation project, a **phenomenological exploration of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship**. Now, with a phenomenological promise (Hultgren, 1995) I must be on my way to producing “action sensitive knowledge”—on my way to continuing to unfold a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ The journey continues.

More Steps Along the *Currere*—Entrusted to the Nature of the Saying

I continue along the *currere*—tending to the existential experience of the course (Pinar & Grumet, 1976)—the path we meander together. Meaning unravels with each step and I dedicate myself to leading toward a new beginning here. From the edge to the center and to and fro—such is the nature of curriculum—unconcealing step by step. I return to the conversation about the unconcealment of the two-fold between Heidegger and his Japanese scholar friend:

Japanese: But who today could hear in it an echo of the nature of language which our word *Koto ba* names, flower petals that flourish out of the lightening message of the graciousness that brings forth?

Heidegger: Who would find in all this a serviceable clarification of the nature of language?

Japanese: That nature will never be found as long as we demand information in the form of theorems and cue words.

- Heidegger: Yet many a man could be drawn into the prologue to a messenger's course once he keeps himself ready for a dialogue of language.
- Japanese: It seems to me as though even we, now, instead of speaking about language, had tried to take some steps along a course which entrusts itself to the nature of Saying.
- Heidegger: Which *promises*, dedicates itself to the nature of Saying. Let us be glad if it not only seems so but is so.
(Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 54)

Perhaps the “action-sensitive knowledge” here is engaging with the “graciousness” of the students’ message—not in the “form of theorems and cue words.” As “flower petals that flourish out,” Colleen writes, “You made every word we said seem important” (Journal Reflections, 2003). The nature of a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education dedicates itself to the “nature of the Saying” of ‘being-with’—to a being-together-in such pedagogy.

The Leader Necessarily Follows

I am led by the invitation of my students and the nature of the Saying to lead—to lead in ways that includes bringing forward a pedagogical thoughtfulness. I am led as a pedagogue and as a researcher “to humanize human institutions to help human beings to become increasingly thoughtful” (van Manen, 1990, p. 21). As a nurse educator I hope that the text created here in chapter six leads us to dialogic places for such humanizing possibilities in the nursing world—where leading and following become “an easy dance of jasmine and cypress” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 2001b, p. 33). Van Manen encourages our reflection here:

It is helpful to reflect on the term leading (*agogos*). In the literal sense the Greek pedagogue had to lead the way to show the child how to get to school and get back home. But, of course, there would also have been a richer sense to this notion of leading... There is a kind of

“leading” that often walks *behind* the one who is led... The original Greek idea of pedagogy has associated with it the meaning of *leading* in the sense of accompanying the child and living with the child in such a way as to provide direction and care for his or her life. (van Manen, 1991, pp. 37-38)

The sanctuary of nature invites me to bask in pedagogical life lessons. I turn to my journal and open to a piece I call *Bearing Witness*:

So many thoughts and connections are swirling as ‘being-with’ comes to me. Sapphire sparks of dragon flies dance in celebration of the birth of the baby ducklings! Less than 24 hours after hatching, mom led the chicks from a nest behind the refectory kitchen to the grassy area bordering the lake. So sorry I missed the solemn procession. I see mom sitting quietly at water’s edge. I am filled with a sense of anticipation. In time, she slowly rises, proudly presenting seven baby chicks. She takes a few steps, gently leaves the bank, and gracefully glides into the water. All seven follow her for their baptismal swim! I watch with awe. Sitting cross-legged on the bank of this reflecting lake I witness a life lesson. I remove my headphones to be in full attention. The mother drops behind once all of the babies are in the water. She dips her beak in the water, perhaps getting food— perhaps creating a wake-nudge. Five babies swim in front of her—clumsily bumping into each other; two get stuck in a cattail! Mom encourages them from behind. The babies explore the edges, snooping around the rocks while she perches with a view of them all—smiling and quietly watching. Knowing—she moves around from one to the next—kissing each one—applauding their beginning steps!

My writing day is about over. But before I leave, hours later, I come back out to see the new family. And a lovely twilight sight indeed— Mom is sitting on the grassy bank. Where are the babies, I wonder? Shh. Quietly I watch—and listen. She turns her beak inward through her feathers. I hear a muffled sound of tiny chirping voices—hidden. How beautiful—this warm under-wing embrace. Belonging in the natural circle of nature. Ah—such “fulfilled silence.” (Journal Reflections, 2003, July)

Still stirred by nature’s lesson, Jennifer’s words bring forward the experience of certain pedagogical choices when she says: “Like I feel that you are WITH us not LEADING us—well, you ARE leading us. You don’t dominate us.” Being led is

understood as a sense of “direction” intermingled with “care.” The students experience “unity” as well as “flowing and blending”—“the hidden wholeness” that Palmer seeks to recover in community (1993, p. xiii). What an honor it is to live with students in a pedagogy that offers possibilities for direction and care for the students’ lives.

I invite all who engage with this text to wonder with me and meander through ways of bringing many threads to a meaningful and beautifully possible whole. I invite your “response of the heart to the world” (Bradbeer, 1998, p. 7). Let us dare to stay in sacred space—amidst the “theorems and cue words” (Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 54) in the nursing world—for, as at Bon Secours, “where the sacred manifests itself in space, the real unravels itself” (Eliade, 1987, p. 64). Perhaps the “real” of the pedagogy of ‘being-with’ unravels itself in the reflective and open spaces—deliberately created with students in the classroom and clinical teaching situations—with faculty in listening meeting places.

Terrain of the Heart

I enter the labyrinth today with a quick step—moving toward the center of chapter six. The high 20 degree breeze, the friskiness of the wind chimes, and the increased tension toward a Saying of a pedagogy of ‘being-with’—all hasten my pace. I hold on to the image of the hand and head for the center. So many walks, so many questions—this is indeed one path. I experience one path over many years and in many different ways. I am along the way. Always drawn to the center—I gather in and send forth. And now what?

I arrive at the center—once again. The sun shines warmly; the chimes come to a rest. What is the best way to respond to the moral obligation insisted upon by this dissertation project? Diaconis (2001) tells of imagining a book in one of the labrys of the center. Do I write a book? An article? *My life flows in—4th grade science projects showing the work of ions through bouquets of balloons, 1st grade sounding-out-of-words as in “ba-u-u-k,” and 6th grade violin practice set to the kitchen timer. My garage is too full for cars; my basement too packed for storage. I remove the Christmas ribbon from our front door wreath and add a shamrock to make way for spring!* Do I prepare a paper for presentation at a conference? For faculty development at my college? Perhaps I need a list of bullets of what a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ might look like?! What ever would be the bullets? In what ways do I carry on conversations about NCLEX pass rates? Is there a place for a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in the tidiness of the NLNAC driven evaluation plan?

The questions feel like debris on the path—not clearing questions. The anxiety of “how to” get such a pedagogy “out there” brings forth what the pedagogy is not. And yet—as I listen “deep inside” to the Mystery “that is all around” (Winter & Castro-Neves, 1982) I open to what is revealing itself in the tension of the terrain. Perhaps I am preparing for necessary conversations. New questions emerge from this centered-reverie:

In what ways are nursing faculty taking care of themselves? In what ways do we bring students in to our deep caring and passion for our own work? In what ways are we freeing ourselves of extraneous details in order to make room for presence with students in classroom and clinical situations? In what ways do we show our love for our students in order that they may become free, autonomous and response-able? What are experiences of caring that take over and take away from the students and from each other? What are ways of

creating and affirming curricula that are rich in gestures of the hand, hospitable inn-betweens, mother presence, and soul friendship?

I live in the tension—in the big and scary moment deep within the emergence of Being and its withdrawal (Gadamer, as cited in Grondin, 2003, p. 108). I do not much like the notion of withdrawal when I am not the one withdrawing. I put the hand image in my pocket and search the whole center. My heart flip-flops as my eye catches sight of a tiny pewter heart in the gravel around the center! Is this the same one? I pick it up so that I might know for sure.

I have walked this path many times since I first found this heart at the center—and the heart no longer was visible. With a sense of delight and anticipation, I pick up the heart and hold it in my gloved hand. I close my hand to cherish and to keep it safe. I open my hand again—letting the heart be seen. Pedagogical understandings unfold in my hand. Revealing the heart in a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ means not covering it over with the gravel; it also means not covering it over with a protective hand. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ finds its origin in the center.

Stirred by the walk—the centered practice of my writing—I go to the chapel and sit in the gentle stream of the stained-glass quiet. I explore the heart’s terrain in this same hush that held my students’ voices during the summer. The gravel’s imprint draws in the gentle rose hue. This time I have no earphones. I have a heart—ready for the giving.

Being Lace—Eternity Gazes In

I come to the table of reflection today in my home study—greeting the day little by little as daylight ever so subtly comes into being. The sun through the lace

curtain so beautifully rises over the pages of my journal and brings me to the words of O'Donohue:

A friend of mine who loves lace often says that it is the holes in the lace that render it beautiful. Our experience has this lace structure. (O'Donohue, 1997, p. 42)

I, too, have long been attracted to lace and ponder the tensions and contradictions that are covered over as well as opened. Indeed, “experience has this lace structure.” Experiences of my co-researchers are unfolded, uncovered, and turned-inside-out for the seeing—enriched by new and present students.

The sunlit words and their interpretations shine with radiance and show a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education. A description of lace is fitting:

Lace is available in a wide variety of patterns and weights...Used flat, laces display their patterns; gathered they filter light and provide privacy. (Barnes, 1993, p. 32)

I ponder the lace-likeness of lived experience—and the delicate place of ‘being-with’ in pedagogical ways. I am drawn by open work, care-fully tending to the creation of open listening spaces. Marc writes, “I learned in this class that wherever we go we can create ‘listening spaces’ for our patients” (Journal Reflections, 2003). Listening spaces open up the possibility of the beautiful.

A cottage in Ireland, my mother’s hand, my home study—all tell stories held in lace. During the day, light shines through lace—opening the room for presence. The lace at once protects, offers privacy, and invites the beams of radiance. At night, the light within sends forth into the darkness—offering welcome to night travelers. By its very nature, lace covers over and shows forth. Etymologically lace re-veils meanings through Old English *laz* and Latin *laqueus* of “noose” or “trap” (Trumble,

1933/2002, p. 1523). Along with the loveliness of its usual images, lace is defined as a “net, noose, and snare” (p. 1523) The paradox here opens up even further possibilities for coming to know the underside of the shadow—where vulnerability and comfort dwell together. Lace is said to show both “simplicity and beauty” (Rankin, 1990, p. 6).

Pedagogy and Lace

A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ celebrates a lace structure—intimate, delicate, fragile, open, and enduring. At this place in my dissertation journey I stop once and for all to reflect on ways that I might un-veil a pedagogy in more concrete ways. I reflect on ways such a pedagogy may take hold in the souls of persons—teachers and students—who come to the table of teaching together in nursing education.

I resist a set of directions, that while desirable to some, is simply not possible for me to provide; I cannot create for you—this life is at your own center. Coming to stand under such a pedagogy requires just this—being together in the giving and receiving—together somewhere between the unfolding and the enduring nature of ‘being-with’—and staying there. Heidegger shows through here with the essential nature of staying:

From out of staying’s simple onefoldness they are betrothed, entrusted to one another. At one in this being entrusted to one another, they are unconcealed. (1971b, p. 171)

In their many ways, the students tell me they trust me; trust allows for the opening up and risking vulnerability. “In this being entrusted” the unconcealing is possible. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ emerges around the grounding of being entrusted to one another—not around a traditional curriculum blueprint. Coming together in such

pedagogy is to experience the intimacy that offers us closeness separated only by that which allows our different-ness.

I step back and linger ever so slowly—moving closer toward bringing into being a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ in nursing education—an offering to my profession—an outpouring of my care for those who entrust themselves to me. I imagine beautiful lace with “delicate three-dimensional flowers, leaves, and sprays that characterize Irish crochet” (Waldrep, as cited in de Dillmont, 1986, p. 3). I hear my student, Renee echoed by others, saying, “We trust you—otherwise we would NEVER say these things.”

I linger in the layers of complexity. Although flowing and blending—there is a deliberate dimension to the lace that is made—to a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ as enacted. The tension between being and doing calls out. I move slowly toward the “doing” that makes possible the “being;” I move toward the “being” that necessarily informs the “doing.” Hultgren’s words in the form of a question resonate:

What then is called for if we are to move beyond a *doing* approach to teaching and give expression to the teacher as person, a *being* in the process of becoming? (1987, p. 35)

Her question reverberates in the core of my being with my hope to move beyond doing to being in the world of nursing education.

I go to the directions for lace-making—the step-by-step nature of the instructions seems incongruent with the delicate *place* of lace. I think of curriculum-building and resist a step-by-step approach there as well. I continue to walk the path and the Irish proverb echoes, “Your feet will bring you to where your heart is” (as cited in Sellner, 1991, p. ii). My steps are led by my heart—authentically grounded in

the core of my being and the care of others. My steps stand under—understanding as “footing” on the delicate lace curtain. Connected to the ground I gather in the sky. I stitch not only the themes but ways to hear and see through. I tend to ‘being-with’ in the open spaces. I attune to the tension and the mystery of the thread.

Pedagogical Showing and Lace-Making

To make Irish lace some skill in crochet work is requisite, as well as some acquaintance with the pattern. The patterns are not worked in consecutive rows, as in ordinary crochet—their execution is more complicated. (de Dillmont, 1986, p. 7)

The directions for lace-making begin by emphasizing that patterns are not worked in consecutive rows—that there is a circular nature to the emerging lace. The process of making lace includes tending to the figures, patterns, groundings, and footings (de Dillmont, 1986). *Physis*, or nature “is a process of a-rising, of emerging from the hidden, whereby the hidden is first made to stand” (Heidegger, 1959/1987, pp. 14-15). There seems to be a similar process for lace-making. Let me lay out the instructions:

~The making of Irish lace

Begin by crocheting all the subjects that form the pattern properly speaking; these subjects are worked over a cord foundation, which is laid sometimes in straight lines, sometimes in curved, thus admitting of the composition of the most varied shapes. (p. 7)

~The pattern

The pattern should indicate the outlines of the subjects and also the direction the ground should take.

~Execution of the crochet figure

The subjects in plain crochet, which form so to speak the pattern of Irish crochet laces are composed chiefly of figures executed in plain stitch. Various subjects include the wheel, floweret, bud, leaf, and spray. (p. 7)

~ *Groundings*

The grounding can be begun when all the crochet figures are laid down on the pattern, which should be strengthened by a lining...of strong linen. If the subjects consist of several detached parts these must first of all be joined together by invisible stitches...the empty space between the figures and the outside edge is filled with a crochet web, worked to and fro and joined to the subjects of the pattern whenever they come in contact with each other. (p. 26)

~ *Footings*

The ground that unites the different figures of a pattern is finished off by a scalloped or straight edge, made over the outside row of chain stitches. (p. 38)

~ *How to finish off and clean pieces of lace work*

As Irish lace takes a good deal of time and trouble to make, it is seldom fresh enough when finished to be used as it is and generally needs washing first. (p. 41)

The very nature of the open work of ‘being-with’ is invitational to letting be seen. Through the practice of listening, I now offer italicized theme-threads that emerged within chapters four and five; I humbly seek to work these threads of many sizes and strengths, to be gathered and laid out here in a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’

Levin (1989) offers lace-like connections:

For listening is a gathering and a setting out, laying out a communicative field and gathering together the sounds of the elements—earth and sky—and all forms of life—above all the ‘gods,’ who are the projections of our embodied ideals, and the voices of our fellow human beings, who belong to the response-abilities of the communicative field. (p. 203)

Through the open work of listening, the themes are interpreted delicately and deliberately as footings—uniting the understandings of ‘being-with’ as brought forward by my co-researchers. At the same time, these experiential structures become the grounding for a pedagogy of ‘being-with’—bringing together a natural wholeness—*flowing and blending* in community.

At this moment, shadows of blossoms and scalloped borders on my paper show the delicate beauty of many experiences. The gleaming bud image on the surface of the laptop holds many paradoxes. My thoughts turn to Shannon and to my very most recent experience in being-in teaching together—last evening’s class. My vocation is to hold open new spaces in my new place—and to *stay there: opening an inn-between*. I think of last night:

I go to class from the depths of chapter six where I seek to find ways to articulate meaning and to offer possible alternative ways of being in the world of nursing education. I have heard and relished the magic and song of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship through the first five chapters. And yet, here in the final Saying, when I step away and stand next to evaluation plans, outcome measures, target dates, behavioral objectives, division standards for testing, and standardized materials for teaching, I face anxiety. (Journal Reflections, 2004)

I co-create and enter *soul space* in the classroom. The students and I prepare the table with simple offerings of sandwiches, chips, and soda. I come to know that in pedagogical relationships of ‘being-with’ there is a call to *prepare a place of proximity, to ‘stay there’ as in opening an inn-between, and to sit in the center of the stones—cradled in the center of listening*. So rich and full is the preparation time—beginning in my own passion for teaching and caring for the students as persons. I reflect on ways to prepare proximity and delight in the many ways intimacy is experienced. I fully engage with my students in our last class—and my anxiety dissipates. The work of this last evening is to share in their scholarly papers, celebrate our experience of being together in teaching, and to say goodbye. I include an excerpt of the paper guidelines here:

The focus of this scholarly paper is on the lived experience of persons with a selected psychiatric-mental health illness, i.e. depression,

schizophrenia, substance abuse, etc... You may want to think of pondering such questions as: What is it like to live with bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia, or depression? What are the side effects of medications that are experienced? What is it like to live the experience of the side effects? In what ways has the illness contributed to struggles in human living—in the ability to continue with work, loving and meaningful relationships with others, etc.? What is the experience of hope for persons with chronic mental illness? In what ways are anxiety, grief, loneliness, and changes in self-esteem experienced? Raise many questions so as to deepen your understanding of patients. Also of importance is what each person with this illness finds helpful and what caring nursing practices are of priority. Finally, provide a rich account of what it is like for you as a nursing student to be with patients who experience the illness you have chosen to research. What have you learned about yourself through your experience in psychiatric nursing? In what ways have you changed through 'being-with' your patients? (NURS 307- Psychiatric Nursing Syllabus)

I do not include a point system for evaluation. I spend time talking about the scholarly nature of the paper and the opportunity for personal transformation through a paper taken seriously and treated with great care and depth. I open conversation about being passionate in the care of patients. Tension is created all along the way with a language that initially may be unfamiliar to the students in an educational setting. My hope is that I offer freedom along with my expressed desire to show the students the world (van Manen, 1991) I know—the world of nursing.

About an hour into the class meeting on the last day of class, Shannon asks if she can go next. Her topic is major depression. She includes in her paper a letter to her grandfather who suffered with major depression until his death four years ago.

From this side of knowing more about depression she writes:

Dear Grandpop,

I love you Grandpop, and I am not ready for you to go...I am getting married soon and I want you to be there...Do you remember how you used to love working outdoors planting trees, feeding the birds, and cutting the grass? I remember when I would come to visit you and

Grandma when I was growing up, you would always be outside doing something...Do you remember all the little trips we would take each summer? I remember how we would go pick peaches and blueberries and come home with a whole trunk full of fruit. Do you remember when I took this picture Grandpop? We had just gotten home from our peach pickin' outing. You took such pleasure in doing those simple little things, it didn't matter how much you owned or how much money you had in your pocket—as long as you had a window to look out and see the birds and feel the warmth of the sun on your face, you were content. How I wish I could be just like you. Everything about me, my values and my beliefs come from you Grandpop. I hope you realize that you have inspired me in so many ways. So much so, that I want to be a nurse because of you.

Do you remember how we used to sit together and just talk...Do you remember helping me with my history homework? I was so amazed by the depth of your mind.

You used to say your grandchildren were your life. What is wrong, Grandpop, you act like you don't even care...The happiness that I once saw in your eyes is gone. You appear so cold and indifferent now, not full of love and compassion...Oh, how I want my grandfather back. (Class paper, 2004)

Her tears of deep connection bring forth rich learning and transformation for her as well as her classmates. The students have the opportunity to hear a reflective rendering of being a loved one of someone with mental illness; the students are *in the well of Being, together in grief* and loss— a central dimension for coming to understand and care in the practice of psychiatric nursing.

Through her rendering, Shannon shows the essence of a person who happens to have depression—one who picks peaches and helps with history homework. Shannon brings forward in a lived way what it means when anhedonia covers over the joy of holding grandchildren. Through her story, she teaches what treatment resistant depression means for the suffering person and his loved ones. In the telling of the story, Shannon shares her deep love for her grandfather and the depth of her personal

search and meaning making for one who suffers with another. Her letter ends with these words:

I feel so honored to have been able to take care of you during those last few weeks of your life. You continue to show me so much about human strength and courage. (Class paper, 2004)

Tears are shared in the room as students find themselves listening and *entering into the stories* of one another.

Toya initiates that she never talks about her mother who died—that she does not even want to remember the good things because the stress of the loss will also be remembered. The room is silent. Toya enters the silence and keeps going—spontaneously telling of how much she loves going to the mall with her mother—“you know, just walking around, hanging out together.” She tells of how difficult it is to see other young women together with their mothers. The class enters her lived time and I hear echoes of *‘being-with’ as a precious living of moments*. The classroom reveals *eternal echoes* from an earlier Listening Space. Experiencing comfort in the midst of anxiety, stories are shared, and new understandings are possible.

Now, in the stillness of my home study—in the shadows and glow of the last class—through the openings between lacey sprays—I find this reflection at the end of Toya’s paper:

After hearing Shannon tell her story of her grandfather, I knew that I could not follow her with my presentation. Her heart filled story made me realize that I never wrote my mother a letter. If I write the words down now, then maybe I will feel better. I write to her:

Dear Ma,

I know I haven’t seen you or talked to you in a while. I miss hearing your voice, seeing your smile, and spending time with you. Don’t you understand that I miss you? Don’t you miss me? I ask myself this all

the time, but I can't figure it out. Why would you leave me and not say goodbye? Did you leave because you wanted to or because you were destined to go? Who gave you the right to just leave? You never asked me how I felt about it. You never asked me if I wanted you to leave—but even if you would have, the answer still would have been “no.” Am I selfish for wanting you stay when I know you deserved better? Am I bitter because I don't like to talk about your memories? Tell me something—tell me what to do—tell me how to feel—tell me what is right and wrong.

I just wanted to tell you that I am sorry for all the times when I was not there. Sorry for all the times that I made you cry, when you just wanted my affection. I'm sorry for never asking how you felt. You never asked me how I would go on without you. I never asked you how you would go on without me. There are so many unanswered questions that need to be answered. So, I'll wait for you in my dreams tonight—and tell you how I feel. (Class paper addendum, 2004)

Tears trickle down my face as I am joined with my students in the outpouring. *Mother presence* finds its place in a pedagogy of 'being-with.' Giving receives—and gives back again.

The song that lies silent in the heart of a mother
Sings upon the lips of her child. (Gibran, 1967, p. 25)

Perhaps Toya will hear her mother's heart song eventually as space is opened in the writing of the letter. Here is perhaps a joining with “invisible stitches” (de Dillmont, 1986, p. 26).

I hope that in this new Listening Space a pedagogy of 'being-with' offers possibilities to address the concerns of Warren—in a 'being' rather than 'doing' way:

Nursing education could be doing some specific things to increase the likelihood of nurses practicing in ways that result in cared-for-ness. Since the best way to identify areas that need caring attention is to get to know the patient's story and get more, not less involved, we must find ways of teaching this ability to “get involved.” We certainly need to stress the importance of careful listening, careful attending to the “other.” But we owe it our students and ourselves to take the time to see or read or hear as many human examples of lived experience of whatever phenomenon we are studying as possible.

(Warren, as cited in Munhall, 1994, p. 251)

Another student, upon leaving at the end of the evening says, “I never thought it would be like THIS.” Perhaps he is responding to Warren’s imperative. So much there is to explore in the meaning of “like this.” Perhaps a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ is one of LIKE THIS! Shannon writes, “This experience has enabled me to look deep within myself and find true meaning in life” (Class paper, 2004).

Living as Curriculum—Beings Inn-Between

Live as if your life were a curriculum for others, and balance that principle by realizing that every life you meet could be a curriculum for you if you perceive with sufficient perspective.
(Schubert, 1986, p. 423)

These words shine with radiance in the center of the labyrinth—offering transforming possibilities. Reflections around these words break through to a place of palpitation. Imagine. As I dwell in the challenge these words bring forward I once again “sink into stillness” (Bollnow, 1982, p. 46). Joining me in my stillness is the lived presence of my students in this phenomenological exploration of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. The themes that were uncovered blend together as if to offer this moral imperative—“Live your life as if you were a curriculum for others.” Imagine. Responding to curriculum development of this nature is not about development of goals, identification of behavioral objectives, learning activities and evaluation measures (Tyler, 1949). Curriculum understanding of this nature calls for reflective work from the depths of our beings. A curriculum and a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ necessarily moves us toward a profound place of connected-ness with others who engage in the work of curriculum—for “every life you meet may be a curriculum for you.”

Colleagues, Companions, and Friends

*The honour of your presence is
requested at a series of soul meetings in the
Listening Space
where we might meander through conversations about what
matters in the world of nursing education.*

The favour of your heart's response is humbly awaited.

Dear Nursing Colleagues and All Who are Concerned with the Future
of Human Caring in the Health Care World,

Enclosed please find an invitation to gather together at my home—at the hearth of my soul. I am delighted to be at this place of invitation of opening the private into the public arena. I have had a chance now to hear the promise of Spring once again while still enjoying the warmth that the hearth provides. When you arrive the candle will be lit, the fire kindling, and the Irish soda bread will call us together as one. We have quite an agenda—which I propose we meander through and co-create.

My research has led to significant namings (Heidegger, 1959/1971a) or discoveries about the nature of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship. Such namings urgently incline me to opening conversation toward a pedagogy of 'being-with.' I have offerings to make and as Huebner writes, I have "no choice:"

We have no choice but to risk ourselves. The choice is whether to risk privately, or to build a community that accepts vulnerability and shares the risk. Vulnerability can be endured in a community of care and support, one in which members take time for telling and listening to the stories of each other's journeys. To teach because we are called is to feel a need for colleagues, companions, and friends with whom we can communicate and search for new values and meanings. (as cited in Hillis, 1999, p. 385)

I certainly feel called by a "pedagogic Good" (van Manen, 1990, p. 6) to risk publicly, and would cherish a "community of care," or what Greene calls an "alternative community." So, I breathe deeply—and take the plunge.

I have learned through my students that as a nurse educator I am called to engage with certain necessary dimensions of pedagogy and curriculum—dimensions that are not typically topics of conversation in nursing department meetings or in the “everyday-ness” of faculty-to-faculty encounters. The dimensions of which I speak are those that emerged as themes in my research: a hand of comfort in the midst of anxiety and vulnerability, soul friendship, flowing and blending in community, creating soul space, and opening an Inn-between. These dimensions blend with eternal echoes and lead us toward a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’

In preparation for the first meeting I hope that we will prepare a place of proximity (Irigary, 2002) for ourselves through some shared reading. I offer up several passages to you with the suggestion that we each bring several pages of written reflections to the meeting. You might ask yourself as you engage the text such questions as: In what ways do the passages connect with your experience and longings? In what ways are you inspired toward other connecting points in your own experiences and favorite reading? Here are a few offerings—perhaps you will bring others along. I look forward to a dialog with you through the following:

In addition to the call of [students] we are called by the traditions we serve and which serve us. Traditions are the communal recollections and hopes which give structure, meaning, and value to individual and collective life. These traditions have become identified as content, that which is to be taught. But the habits of schooling have intruded here, too. The limits on what to teach, the domination of technical language, of behavioral objectives and evaluation cloud the understanding: understanding of self, of our work, of [students], and of the traditions themselves. (Huebner, as cited in Hillis, 1999, p. 381)

Teachers and students who learn from and with one another take with them an attitude that all life’s encounters have a pedagogic or curricular quality. This does not mean that there is an absence of fun and enjoyment. On the contrary, the curricular quality to which I refer

*is the drive to encounter increased meaning and growth...He or she approaches life guided by a pedagogic imperative that says **Live as if your life were curriculum for others, and balance that principle by realizing that every life you meet could be a curriculum for you if you perceive with sufficient perspective.** (Schubert, 1986, p. 423)*

Curriculum is the presence of an absence...Present is the curriculum, the course of study, the current compliance, general education, computer literacy, master teachers...and time on task. Present is the window. Absent is the ground from which these figures are drawn. (Grumet, 1988, p. xiii)

Being informed by Watson's caring theory allows us to return to our deep professional roots and values; it represents the archetype of an ideal nurse. Caring endorses our professional identity within a context where humanistic values are constantly questioned and challenged (Duquete & Cara, as cited in Cara, 2003, p. 51)...Upholding Watson's caring theory not only allows the nurse to practice the art of caring, to provide compassion to ease patients' and families' suffering, and to promote their healing and dignity but it can also contribute the nurse's own self-actualization. In fact, Watson is one of the few nursing theorists who consider not only the cared-for but also the caregiver. (Cara, 2003, p. 51)

As we work together through what matters as nursing educators—as persons who are preparing the way for future nurses—we bring our own stories forward. As such we begin to enter each other's lives—perhaps returning to the table of care and hospitality with a sense of mutual desire for wholeness in our world. As we gather together here, Wenger's (1998) words connect:

In the life-giving power of mutuality lies the miracle of parenthood, the essence of apprenticeship, the secret to the generating encounter, the key to connectedness across boundaries of practice...It is almost a theorem of love that we can open our practices and communities to others...[and] invite them into our own. (p. 277)

Let us invite one another into our own presence, break bread, and share in this communion. Please make yourselves at home here. Find your way to the kitchen—for surely stories are passed on in that place (Remen, 1996). Together we sip wisdom.

More Listening in Circles

For those who have had a chance to glance through my writing, you know I have been fortunate enough to have the *bon secours* to write myself to a place of stillness and at times centered presence. My journey through my research—the journey through my life—takes on labyrinthine qualities. The journey opens possibilities for listening; listening opens possibilities along the journey.

The journey like listening, is circular in nature—one of gathering in and sending forth. Let us engage together in this way. We gather our hopes, dreams, and hidden thoughts and send forth as authentic persons responding to the genuine nature of our centers of being. One day we might even walk together, prophetically along the circle of stones—the labyrinth at a place I have come to love as connected to my research, Bon Secours Spiritual Center.

I have experienced some significant insights as the voices of my students joined me in sacred space (Palmer, 1993). If I were to come to a point of pause and bequeath a summary it would be that the students bring forward their experience of ‘being-with’ through gestures of love and care in curriculum and pedagogy. I hear this from intense listening spaces—both from our actual classroom where the students and I meet, as well from the listening space of ‘being-with.’

What might nursing education be like if we committed ourselves to listening in circles? In her book *Circle of Stones*, Duerk (1993) raises the question, “How might your life have been different? In many ways she suggests that life might have been different were a listening person present in one’s life. I offer the following

question for our reflection as we ponder the experience of ‘being-with’ nursing students:

How might your life have been different, if as a young woman, there had been a place for you, a place where you could go to be among women...a place for you when you had feelings of darkness? And if there had been another woman, somewhat older, to be with you in your darkness, to be with you until you spoke...spoke out your pain and sorrow...And what if every time you had feelings of darkness, you knew that the woman would come to be with you? And would sit quietly by as you went into your darkness to listen to your feelings and bring them to birth, so that over the years, companioned by the woman, you learned to no longer fear your darkness, but to trust it...to trust it as the place where you could meet your own deepest nature and give it voice. How might your life have been different if you could trust your darkness? (Duerk, 1993, p. 74)

A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ offers companionship to allow for such coming into Being. What a privilege for us as nurse educators to be this “somewhat older woman” for our students—one who is able to “listen fluently” (Hughes, 1961, p. 33) to the inner worlds. How might our lives be different as faculty if we were this woman—listening in darkness with each other?

Community of Care

Let us open to the flow of the work together among faculty. I will partake, before too long, in another phenomenological exploration of the lived experiences of ‘being-with’ in the faculty community—teacher to teacher. I have learned that ‘being-with’ opens to ‘being-with’ as we think of students together with their teachers eventually to be-with their patients. ‘Being-with’ among faculty offers further possibilities for *mitda-sein* (Heidegger, 1953/1996). We might seriously ask: “How might your life have been different, if there had been a place for you...a place where

you could be received as you strove to order your moments and your days? (Duerk, 1993, p. 97).

Meanwhile, let us respond to the thought of Jean Watson, nurse theorist and author of the caring theory. We can join around one of the significant dimensions of the theory and examine what such a conceptualization might mean for the practice of teaching and nursing. As with Irish filet crochet, we need not be compelled to respond in order. I present a sampling of Watson's carative factors for our interpretation:

~ Practice of loving kindness and equanimity within a context of caring consciousness.

~ Being authentically present, and enabling and sustaining the deep belief system and subjective life world of self and the one-being-cared-for.

~ Developing and sustaining a helping-trusting, authentic caring relationship.

~ Engaging in genuine teaching-learning experience that attends to unity of being and meaning, attempting to stay within others' frames of reference.

~ Assisting with basic needs, with an intentional caring consciousness, administering "human care essentials," which potentiate alignment of mindbodyspirit, wholeness, and unity of being in all aspects of care.

~ Opening and attending to spiritual-mysterious and existential dimensions of one's own life-death, soul-care for self and the one-being-cared-for. (Watson, 2001, p. 347)

You may have other nurse leaders for us to consider. I do not offer Watson's theory as a philosophy or conceptual framework with intentions to build or re-model a linear curriculum plan as with the Tyler alternative (Tyler, 1949). I do not look to line up philosophy and behavioral objectives. I do urge us, though, to imagine what might be possible by our mere study of such thought on human caring. The language of love,

care, cared-for, wholeness, and attending to mystery offers up a relation of ‘being-with’ that is absent in technical language. I wonder what curriculum might look like were nurse educators engaging in transformative experiences with each other? What might it be like for nursing faculty to be a circle—“drawing upon the wisdom and experience, commitment, and courage of each one in it?” (Bolen, 1999, p. 15).

Shall We Teach Caring or Nursing?

I have been in conversations over the years with nursing faculty who say, “This is all well and good—but the students do need to learn to give injections, know their ABG’s and so on. AND they must be ready to pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX).” I have not done a good job of responding to this thinking in the past in a way that opens up conversation—and brings us to new places of understanding. I have tended to feel internal defensiveness and naturally close off further possibilities to comments such as, “Caring, caring, caring—when will the student learn nursing?” I have learned in a deeper way through this gracious act of phenomenological research what it means to live in tension—and what is possible in the experiencing of vulnerability. I dare take this “ontological risk” (Lashley, 1994, p. 44) in a way that previously I would not. It is one thing to sit in Stone Mill Bakery, Starbuck’s or the sanctuary of the curriculum theory and phenomenology classroom at the University of Maryland and dialog about these questions. It is quite yet another matter, sitting in a departmental faculty meeting with universal concerns about NCLEX pass rates, college/university strategic plan priorities, and external accreditation visits—to name a few.

I step back again—or perhaps I stay in the center, scared to go forth. I, too, believe that nursing students have a moral obligation to develop technical competence. I also believe that we, as nursing faculty, have a moral obligation to safeguard the public through this very teaching. I accept this obligation. Kathleen Reilly says this about her teacher, Maxine Greene: “[She] has the most natural way of easing you into her intellectual jet stream as if you belonged” (Ernst, Miletta, & Reilly, 1998, p. 39). I love this image—I have experienced this with my teacher, Francine; I cherish such engagement with my own students.

I believe it is essential for the student to explore the meaning schizophrenia holds in one’s life. It is also essential for the student to discern extrapyramidal symptoms and to engage in appropriate treatment, in the hope that an acute dystonic reaction may be prevented. I remember one clinical day last semester a student showed nonchalance about knowing how much milk a patient had consumed for breakfast. Her patient was an elderly man with major depression who was not eating or drinking in adequate amounts. In a very difficult “med room conversation” I told her I needed to see her “go to the ends of the earth” for her patients. She replied, “You are very serious.” Yes, so very serious, I am. Of course, our concern is probably not so much the technical aspects of nursing as much as it is our relationship with the technical (Heidegger, 1953/1996). How wonderful it will be to have conversations about the many ways in which we may “ease our students into our intellectual jet streams.”

Radical Stillness

The stillness of my reflective research along with my writing to you leads me to a place of even deeper passion. Eliot (1909-1950/1976) is right about the still point being only the dance! I have been drawn to the following passage about Daniel Berrigan for years. It surfaces here in my radical stillness. Colman McCarthy writes of this great teacher:

What undergraduates wouldn't be joyful to have Dan as their teacher: in the classroom regularly and faithfully, to nudge a couple of students to the writings of Dorothy Day...to suggest that they read Merton...and at the end of the course see them awaken to the possibilities of peacemaking in their own lives and communities...On the last day of the semester, Dan took his students on a field trip that twinned as the final exam...They went to the Hale Boggs Federal Building to demonstrate against the war in El Salvador...What the AP didn't report was Dan calling out to his students as they were packed in the police wagon: "Everybody gets an A!" Has Catholic higher education ever had as stirring an academic moment?
(as cited in Dear, 1996, pp. 175-176)

I delight in us sharing "stirring academic moments" and to the possibilities that our students, too, may "awaken to the possibilities of [caring] in their own lives and communities." Imagine—just imagine beyond the technocratic model of nursing education! Imagine what it might be like were we to affirm deep questioning and creativity. Asking students to "think outside of the box" and then to evaluate them with points in boxes is likely a confusing proposition. I am called to wonder together. I wonder about the discovery of the little pewter heart in the center of the labyrinth, and Freire enters here with words from *Pedagogy of the Heart*:

The important thing is to educate the curiosity through which knowledge is constituted as it grows and refines itself though the very exercise of knowing...An education of answers does not at all help the curiosity that is indispensable in the cognitive process. On the contrary, this form of education emphasizes the mechanical

memorization of contents. Only an education of question can trigger, motivate, and reinforce curiosity. (2000, p. 31)

Engaging with Freire certainly calls us into question as nurse educators in our traditional nursing education paradigm. My resonance with Greene's words startles me to embrace further my work with passion:

I believe that it is only when you have a vision of a better social order that you find an existing set of deficiencies "unendurable." Finding them "unendurable," you may then act to heal, repair. It is a matter of recognizing the space between what is and what could be; and it is in that space that I choose to work. (Ayers & Miller, 1998, p. 157)

Echoes reverberate through every fiber of my being. As the title of a CD of poetry reflects, "I Want Burning!" (Barks, 2001a). My work in the space "between what is and what could be" began through the floating orange peels in Grace's living room and took formal shape in the Listening Space with my pilgrim companions in this research project. I need you now to join with me in the compassionate, "burning" work here in this Inn-between—this new listening space.

Before continuing our meandering together through conversation in the Inn-between, I offer a plan of sorts that may be useful as guidelines for enacting a pedagogy of 'being-with.' The plan that lies deepest within my soul is one that includes living a life from the heart's core that reflects the essential structure of 'being-with' as given by my students. The intimate dimensions of 'being-with' as revealed, named, and therefore brimming with the delight of discovery are:

- soul friendship;
- offering a hand of comfort in the midst of anxiety;
- opening an Inn-between;

- mother presence;
- blending and flowing in community; and
- dwelling in eternal echoes.

Each of these dimensions unfolds as a gesture of love expressed through a language and experience of ‘being-with.’ A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ is a thoughtful attunement in listening and language in the moment of student and teacher engagement. The blueprint for such engagement is imagined as a meditative method. As I remove the parts from the whole for a temporary examination of the elements of a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ I emphasize that each teacher’s journey is an authentic way of being—‘being-with’ is deeply personal. With a tremendous sense of moral obligation to be true to the nature of this hermeneutic inquiry and with reverence for each of our experiences of everydayness I bring to light several signposts. I do not provide directions that give an illusion that a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ lies outside of the persons of teacher and student. To participate at this level would be for me to partake in a standardization process that may take care away as Heidegger suggests—a “leaping in” (1953/1996, p. 122). Instead, I “leap ahead” (p. 122) and humbly show you where I have been. In my discoveries, a pedagogy of ‘being-with’ means:

- opening self as teacher to a place of vulnerability as well as to being a master teacher—where possibilities for authentic living are opened. Enter the world of the students and invite them in to your world;
- embracing the teaching and learning atmosphere with questions that provide clearing for students and teacher to inspire one another. Learning flows in teaching together in wholeness. Keep spaces open and sacred so that possibilities for deep learning are not squeezed out to make way for simply keeping a schedule;
- tending care-fully to the ongoing existential practice of Self (Levin, 1989). Be up to date in the knowledge of your field of study. Take care

of yourself that your pedagogical presence may be “immediate and unmistakable” Marcel, 1981, p. 26);

–allowing oneself to use language and gestures that reflect the intimate dimensions of ‘being-with.’ Imagine the classroom and clinical areas as woven with compassion, listening, invitation, and hospitality;

–showing what it means to risk, stay in discomfort, and name what is being experienced. Explore students’ lived experiences through reflections, classroom conversations, clinical work, and selected readings;

–dwelling together in the Inn-between world of teaching and nursing—between the world we have inherited and the world we hope to create (Fine, 1998);

–unfolding a blanket of understanding where the consequences of risking vulnerability are experienced as deepening growth of a person. Share with delight the beauty of your own pedagogical longing;

–engaging the students in passionate ways about the work of nursing—insistent upon the teaching and learning together as preparing for compassionate, competent, and humane caring. Teaching together is a meaning making endeavor as the world of nursing is experienced;

–providing a listening space where students may experience a gathering in and a sense of belonging—a place from which to take courage and send forth with deeper capacity for ‘being-with’ others;

–gracing doing with being. Consider what it means to enter into relationship with technology and technical thinking in a care- full way. Offer the technical necessities though your hand of comfort; embrace your students with gestures of love;

–knowing that you may enter this sacred space alone—outside the norm of the planned curriculum. There may be a reluctance to stay. Know that finding yourself in a different place does not mean it is the wrong place. Open the Inn-between—with hospitality—inviting the students and others into your presence even when it may feel like a place of not knowing;

–confronting *Da-sein* in the moment of anxiety (Heidegger, 1953/1996). A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ requires no “shrinking back” (Mountain Dreamer, 1999, p. 2) into the shell of standard protective rules. Imagine, instead, the face of those whom you deeply love.

Prepare the students to be persons whose capacity for care calls them to skillful doing inspired passionately with loving being; and

—entering a radical stillness of what it means to ‘be-with.’

With these guidelines in hand let us continue to uncover other signposts along the way—along the way of living our lives as a curriculum for others.

Called to Be Trustees of the Way of Life

I have been searching within my own soul about what it is that allows for a pedagogy of ‘being-with.’ I have come to know that nurturing of the person who is nurse educator is necessary in order to enact such a pedagogy. A pedagogy of ‘being-with’ comes into being with thoughtful attention to being. Such tension there is, then, when the *being* focus meets the *doing* focus (Hultgren, 1987) in nursing education.

I believe that many individual faculty members enact a ‘being-with’ pedagogy in the privacy of their own classrooms and clinical situations. But what gets in the way of offering in undergraduate nursing programs what I believe is the center of nursing itself—a caring presence? Imagine, hearing at a meeting, “We are not going to have time to talk about evaluation or policies today—we have such a full agenda about being in teaching and learning together.”

I would like to pose questions in search of genuine discovery and a place of clearing in which to find ourselves together: While owning care as the heart of nursing, what keeps the larger context of nursing education distant from its core? What is it that allows us to be dominated by accrediting bodies, NCLEX, and mission and goal statements of parent institutions? How often we all probably have heard, “Well that sounds good but...”

What allows us to nod in agreement with presidents, board of trustee members, various persons in authority, NLNAC or CCNE criteria—before turning what is professed inside out for the viewing? Perhaps, strengthened by the hand of comfort of shared vision and passion experienced in a community of support, we may begin to offer ourselves in transformed ways to the Board Rooms. Here is yet another inn-between place—a place in which to lay out blankets of understanding—comforters. Opening up this space with questions and comfort may lead us to deeper understanding of the gap left between plans and living and allow possibilities for living together (Aoki, 1991) in authentic ways. We could offer ourselves, as Huebner suggests, as teachers with a vocation:

Teachers are called to be trustees of the ways of life that would decay and be forgotten were it not for them...If teaching becomes routinized and we do not help to maintain the life-enhancing qualities of tradition—sources of truth, beauty, and freedom then we are no longer partaking in the unfolding and making of human history. (as cited in Hillis, 1999, p. 381)

What a privilege it is to “partake” in the unfolding and making of human history in the nursing world.

From Irreverence to Truth

Maxine Greene joins my community of support as she says, “My goal is to challenge the taken-for-granted, the frozen, the bound and the restricted” (as cited in Ayers & Miller, 1998, p. 8). Her words inspire me and move me toward continuing action—not for a personal agenda in academia—rather for the future of the health of humankind. How liberating it is to act out of authenticity, led by the students. My adrenaline is pumping as when the private becomes public—a bodily announcement of entering the Inn-between. I stay—after all, I am led by the students. Heidegger

(1953/1996) connects here beautifully with the notions of freedom, anxiety and authenticity:

Angst reveals in Da-sein its being toward its ownmost potentiality of being, that is, being free for the freedom of choosing and grasping itself. Angst brings Da-sein before its *being free for* ...the authenticity of its being as possibility which it always already is. But at the same time, it is this being to which Da-sein as being-in-the-world is entrusted. (p. 176)

My hope here in convening these soul-meetings is not that we all think the same—but rather that we stay together in open tension. A lovely soft breeze flows through the delicate lace—breathing in hope—inspiration. We are being prepared for continued genuine questioning. We plunge even further into our life work—into the depths of being curriculum for each other, our students, and all who are involved in any way in the education for nursing (Schubert, 1986).

It is time for us together as faculty and other concerned friends of nursing to tell our stories, our beliefs, our understandings of the conventions and sacred cows of our profession and academic cultures. I return to Walter Burghardt's sermon and to the invitation to "Question Authority." All are welcome here—let us lay down our personae and come together as persons who desire a more humane nursing world. Perhaps the most caring process we might be involved in is to become as Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) call "critical students of curriculum" ourselves. They open this up for further conversation and action:

Critical students of curriculum must refuse to take such conventions seriously; rather students must subject them constantly to the analysis of what could be. When the conventions, the codes, the shibboleths of a field are approached with a deferential reverence, no truth is to be uncovered. (p. 20)

As we engage in turning our standards inside out to bring their essence into nearness, we most likely will discover both “treasures and ghosts” (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991, pp. 134, 145). And so a commitment at this moment is required to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar (Gadamer, 1960/2000).

The rising bread about to be broken, indeed, reminds us of our wholeness and shared call to being in truth. Through our dialogic work here there are possibilities for “communion” as Gadamer writes:

To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were. (1996/2000, p. 379)

Kiss the Ground

I continue walking the labyrinth—in my writing place of *Bon Secours*.

Labyrinths are usually in the form of a circle with a meandering but purposeful path, from the edge to the center and back out again, large enough to be walked out into. Each has only one path, and once we make the choice to enter it, the path becomes a metaphor for our journey through life, sending us to the center of the labyrinth, and then back out to the edge on the same path...In surrendering to the winding path, the soul finds healing and wholeness. (Artress, 1995, p. xii)

I continue along the journey of this ongoing project—researching life. I need to travel alone at times in order to renew my self, find my center, and “heal my soul.” I need also the company of colleagues, companions, and friends. At this moment, I re-turn to the center, invited by the hearth to what is deep and natural. I am grateful for this life work which brings into nearness the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. And now, I believe it is time for fare-well—for a “gathering of what endures” and “stays the same as the message” (Heidegger, 1959/1971a, p. 54). This ending is the “coming of what has been” (p. 54)—and there

are “hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground” (Rumi, as cited in Barks, 1995, p. 36). I lift my voice and from the ground of my soul I pray:

i thank You God for most this amazing
day: for the leaping greenly spirits of trees
and a blue true dream of sky; and for everything
which is natural, which is infinite which is yes

(i who have died am alive again today,
and this is the sun’s birthday; this is the birth
day of life and of love and wings: and of the gay
great happening illimitably earth)

how should tasting touching hearing seeing
breathing any—lifted from the no
of all nothing—human merely being
doubt unimaginable You?

(now the ears of my ears awake and
now the eyes of my eyes are opened)
(e.e. cummings, as cited in Firmage, 1994, p. 662)

My “ears are awake, my eyes are opened” and my soul spills over. THIS is the “birth-day of life and love.” And so—I light a candle, turn music on for background and I wait for the students to arrive. I reflect on the possibilities that lay in listening, dwelling, and ‘being-with’ my students in teaching and learning. With each new group I imagine the creation of community, the risk of becoming vulnerable, entering into silence, being listener, hospitable companion, and co-creating a more humane place of being.

APPENDIX A

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY— CLASS PARTICIPATION

I invite you to engage in a research study with me that explores the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. I am a doctoral student in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland at College Park, MD.

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand what ‘being-with’ means for students involved with me in the teaching and learning of nursing. As I seek to uncover the nature of ‘being-with,’ I engage in a phenomenological research study.

Your participation with me will entail sharing lived experiences through taped class conversations with me during each class meeting as well as written journal reflections which are part of the course requirements. The tape-recorded conversations will be transcribed into written text in order that the underlying themes might be identified, explored, and understood. The tape recorded copy of our class conversation preserves the integrity and completeness of your experiences as they are shared with me and the class. All conversations, tape recordings, and written transcripts will be cared for with strictest confidence. Your identity, and that of any persons you mention, will remain anonymous. Written assignments, which are part of the course, Mental Health Nursing: Practice, will be used as narrative text as well. I will not use assignments or text from classroom conversation with students who do not wish to participate in the study. During the last class session, one hour will be devoted to conversation as a group about your lived experiences of being in this class with me in teaching and learning.

In turn, I will share with each conversant my interpretations of understandings that emerge through this study together. This sharing will offer possibilities for deeper exploration of the phenomenon that I am studying—that of ‘being-with.’

Each student’s experience is, indeed, unique and personal; there are perhaps some similarities as well. By sharing your experiences through this research study, you will be contributing to a deeper understanding of the relationship between student nurse and teacher, and perhaps to the possibility of offering new insights in nursing education and practice. There are no known risks, and no intended benefit to students participating in this research project with me. If you wish to participate in this study, please sign the required consent form on the following page. If you have any questions at any time, please contact me or my advisor at the following numbers. Thank you.

Mary T. Packard
410-922-2886
jhelie@bcpl.net

Dr. Francine Hultgren, Advisor
University of Maryland
301-405-4562

APPENDIX A**CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY—
CLASS PARTICIPATION**

1. I have discussed the nature of this research study with the researcher, Mary T. Packard.
2. I agree to using my written assignments in Mental Health Nursing: Practice as narrative text for the purposes of the study.
3. I agree to having each class session tape-recorded for purposes of the study.
4. I agree to participate in a taped group conversation during the last class meeting to share experiences of being in teaching and learning in this class.
5. I understand that my identity, and that of persons named by me, will remain anonymous.
6. I understand that I will be permitted and encouraged to read the researcher's interpretation of themes and to engage in further conversation after that time.
7. I understand that my participation is purely voluntary and that I may ask questions and/or withdraw from this study at any time.
8. I understand that my agreement to participate or not to participate in this study will have no effect on my grade or status as a student.

Conversant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX B

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY— INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

I invite you to engage in a research study with me that explores the lived experience of ‘being-with’ in the nursing student-teacher relationship. I am a doctoral student in the Department of Education Policy and Leadership at the University of Maryland at College Park, MD.

The purpose of this study is to explore and understand what ‘being-with’ means for students involved with me in the teaching and learning of nursing. As I seek to uncover the nature of ‘being-with,’ I engage in a phenomenological research study.

Your participation with me will entail sharing your lived experiences of the relationship between student and teacher through taped conversations with me. The tape recorded copy of our conversation preserves the integrity and completeness of your experiences as they are shared with me. All conversations, tape recordings, and written transcripts will be cared for with strictest confidence. Your identity, and that of any persons you mention, will remain anonymous.

As a conversant in this study, you agree to meet with me on two separate occasions during the first half of the semester. Each meeting will be approximately one hour in length. Convenient meeting times will be scheduled at school and will be held in my office.

During this study I will ask you to reflect on your experience of ‘being-with’ in relationship with me in the teaching and learning of psychiatric nursing. I may also ask you to write a story or description about your experience. In turn, I will share with each conversant my interpretations of understandings that emerge through this study together. This sharing will offer possibilities for deeper exploration of the phenomenon that I am studying—that of ‘being-with.’

Each student’s experience is, indeed, unique and personal; there are perhaps some similarities as well. By sharing your experiences through this research study, you will be contributing to a deeper understanding of the relationship between student nurse and teacher, and perhaps to the possibility of offering new insights in nursing education and practice. There are no known risks to your participation in this study and there are no intended benefits. Your agreement to participate or not to participate will have no effect on your grade or status as a student in this program. If you wish to participate in this study, please sign the required consent form on the following page. If you have any questions at any time, please contact me or my advisor at the following numbers. Thank you.

Mary T. Packard
410-922-2886
[jheli@bcpl.net](mailto:jhelie@bcpl.net)

Dr. Francine Hultgren, Advisor
University of Maryland
301-405-4562

APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY— INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

1. I have discussed the nature of this research study with the researcher, Mary T. Packard, and I understand that I will be having conversations about my experience of 'being-with' in the nursing student-teacher relationship.
2. I agree to have my conversations with Mary T. Packard tape-recorded and transcribed for purposes of the study.
3. I understand that the time demands of the study will require meeting with the researcher on two separate occasions during the first half of the spring semester, 2003. Each meeting will be approximately one hour in length.
4. I agree to write a story or account of my lived experience of 'being-with' in the teaching and learning situation with the researcher.
5. I understand that my identity, and that of persons named by me, will remain anonymous.
6. I understand that I will be permitted and encouraged to read the researcher's interpretation of themes and to engage in further conversation after that time.
7. I understand that my participation is purely voluntary and that I may ask questions and/or withdraw from this study at any time.
8. I understand that my agreement to participate or not to participate in this study will have no effect on my grade or status as a student.

Conversant's Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX D**N 426. 52 – Mental Health Nursing: Practice
Group Process Clinical Experience
Spring 2003**

Instructor: Mary T. Packard, MSN, RN, CS-P Time: M – 12 N- 4:30 PM
Office: MKN 133 T – 7:30 AM- 12 N
Phone: xxx-xxx-xxxx (office)
 410-922-2886 (home)
Room: MKN 139—Listening Space
Email: jhelie@bcpl.net

Description of Clinical Meetings

This part of N 426 spanning a 6 week period is designed to provide senior nursing students with experiences for personal and professional growth in ways of being with self, colleagues, and ‘patients as persons’ who struggle with mental health concerns. In the Listening Space we will focus on group process with each student as member-leader of the group and the teacher as leader-member. Through the group, students will intensively address therapeutic helping relationships and selected issues related to mental health and wellness. Our emphasis is on understanding self as a way of being available to deepen understanding and caring with patients.

Group Process is an opportunity to experience being a member of a group. Though not a therapy group, issues will be brought forward that influence our way of being with person with mental health concerns. Many issues are sensitive and may touch individual students as deeply personal. Strengths and areas for growth are identified and interpreted with group members. Group process is illuminated through participation in this group as well as through reflection on experiences of 12 step meetings and the support group meetings at the shelter for domestic violence.

Anxiety, loneliness, changes in self-esteem and grief are areas of patient responses to which nurses are called to be at home. I have selected readings that will often serve as departure points for caring for persons with mental health problems, including persons with substance use disorders. Reading, reflection on your experiences, and engaging in thoughtful responses are all valuable parts of this clinical experience.

Valued Ends

My hope is that this experience in the Listening Space will serve as an integral part of the curriculum in psychiatric-mental health nursing. In seminar or group style, students have the opportunity to integrate material from N 425 – Mental Health Nursing: Concepts, reflect on and respond to new material from N 426 in general, and to critically look at self as being in caring relationships with others. The following areas are emphasized in the six week time together. Experiences are provided where you will have the opportunity to:

- Explore personal values and beliefs related to caring for holistic person
- Examine strengths and areas for growth of self as a person who is group member and group leader
- Experience therapeutic factors of a group such as instillation of hope, universality, cohesiveness, existential factors, and others.
- Engage in self interpretation of interpersonal ways of relating
- Reflect on meaning of being a student nurse caring for persons with mental illness
- Experience listening as a way of being with others
- Explore therapeutic possibilities in caring with persons involved in domestic violence and with persons with aggressive behavior
- Attend thoughtfully to sociocultural aspects of caring for persons with mental health concerns, including a focus on complementary ways of healing, sexuality, and spirituality
- Deepen understanding, sensitivity, insights, and ability to engage in caring relationships with persons with substance use disorders

Each encounter with another invites reflections on the way one responds to the call to care. 'Reflecting upon' involves consideration of one's humanity, one's response to the other, and one's ways of envisioning fresh possibilities...as I reflect upon my experiences with others, I may obtain new insights about myself, thus enabling me to see others with fresh understanding (Berman, 1994, p. 14)

February 3	<p>Introduction to clinical experience and to each other</p> <p>Introduction to group work: A way of being in a group -components of a group -development of groups</p> <p>Experience of self as member and leader of group/Valued qualities of leader</p>	<p><i>Activity:</i> Autobiographical renderings—a personal nursing <i>currere</i></p> <p>*Read Stuart & Laria Chapter 33 on “Therapeutic Groups”</p> <p>Film: Group Work</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Norms and rules of groups; Leadership qualities</p>
February 4	<p>Self caring and awareness as foundational for caring for others</p> <p>Understanding stressors and what works</p> <p>Mind-body overview -review of general adaptation syndrome -relaxation response</p>	<p><i>Activity:</i> Personal strengths and problems inventory</p> <p>*Read Kivisto –“Stress Management for Nurses” pp. 25-33</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> The Juggler Stress Signals</p> <p>Film: Stress and the Immune System</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Guided relaxation exercise</p>
February 10	<p>Understanding and caring for persons with depression, loss, and loneliness -theoretical understanding of cognitive work</p> <p>Understanding and caring for persons in situations of violence -philosophical underpinnings -domestic cycle of violence -assault recovery cycle of persons with aggressive behavior</p>	<p>*Read Stuart & Laria Chapter 41 on “Care of Survivors of Abuse and Violence”</p> <p>*Read Stuart & Laria Chapter 31 on “Preventing and Managing Aggressive Behavior”</p> <p>*Read Yonge on the “Experience of giving constant care to a psychiatric patient”</p> <p>*Read article of choice from a nursing journal on domestic abuse. Be prepared to lead conversation.</p> <p>Film: Controlling Violence in Health Care</p> <p>Due: Journal reflections from week one</p>

February 24	Substance Abuse Project Refer to guidelines for in-depth clinical project	<i>Activity:</i> Small group work 12 step meeting Due: Journal reflections from week three
February 25	Substance Abuse Project	<i>Activity:</i> Small group work 12 step meeting
March 3	Substance Abuse Project	<i>Activity:</i> Small group work 12 step meeting
March 4	Understanding and caring with persons with substance use disorders	Project presentations

March 10	Sociocultural aspects of healing and complementary strategies	<p>*Read article of choice from a nursing journal on a complementary strategy of interest to you. Be ready to lead conversation and integrate ways of using your strategy in clinical practice with persons with mental illness.</p> <p>*Read Stuart & Laria—Chapter 8 on “Sociocultural Context of Psychiatric Nursing Care”</p> <p>*Read Stuart & Laria—Chapter 30 on “Complementary and Alternative Strategies”</p> <p>Film: Quantum Healing</p> <p>Due: Journal reflections from week five</p>
March 11	<p>Understanding and caring for holistic person: Sexual and spiritual dimensions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -values, attitudes, history of personal understanding -sexuality and sexual concerns -implications related to illness and its treatment <p>Coming full circle—lived experience of being in a group and phases of group development and dynamics</p> <p>Experience of ‘being-with’ in the teaching and learning of nursing in this group</p>	<p>*Read article of choice from a nursing journal on sexuality</p> <p>*Read Carr and Rehorick on “In search of the spirit: Unpackaging the meaning of spiritual care in nursing practice”</p> <p>*Read Stuart & Laria—Chapter 27 on “Sexual Responses and Sexual Disorders”</p> <p><i>Activity:</i> Group conversation on the experience of ‘being-with’ in the teaching and learning nursing in this class.</p> <p>Due: Submit final journal reflections on March 17. Final reflections are interpretive in nature. 10-12 pages, APA format.</p>

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