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ON BECOMING A COLLEGE TEACHER:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEW FACULTY MEMBERS'
TRANSITIONS INTO FULL-TIME COLLEGE TEACHING

presented by

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of the requirements for

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**ON BECOMING A COLLEGE TEACHER:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEW FACULTY MEMBERS'
TRANSITIONS INTO FULL-TIME COLLEGE TEACHING**

By

Katherine Elizabeth Mezei

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

ON BECOMING A COLLEGE TEACHER: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEW FACULTY MEMBERS' TRANSITIONS INTO FULL-TIME COLLEGE TEACHING

By

Katherine Elizabeth Mezei

New faculty are a precious resource in today's colleges. To assist them to develop their full potential, college educators need to understand more about how new faculty experience their transition into teaching, and the factors that assist them to establish their careers.

The purpose of this study was to identify, through qualitative analysis of interview data, new faculty members' interpretations of their experience of adapting to full-time teaching in a community college.

The study was grounded in a review of pertinent literature in the area of socialization of new faculty, and the related areas of perceptual psychology, life-span personality development, career and life transitions. Literature on societal change, organizational development and faculty development provided an exterior context.

Interviews were conducted with 12 faculty who had been hired into a large urban Canadian college since 1990. An equal number of men and women from a cross section of subject areas and years of previous teaching experience were interviewed, and their responses were transcribed and analyzed through the process of constant comparative analysis. Quotations from the interviews were used to illustrate feelings, perceptions and

interpretations of the new faculty around key aspects of their experience. A number of significant elements in the transition process were derived from the data, and were displayed and discussed with the help of an evolving series of diagrams.

The majority of faculty in the study identified significant life events or insights which precipitated or accompanied their decision to enter a teaching career. All new faculty came into teaching with certain expectations about their new roles and responsibilities, based on past experience and personal assumptions. In most cases, considerable adjustment was required to bring expectations in line with realities. Although most faculty felt that the gains of their new career outweighed the losses, they reported high levels of stress, and many challenges to be overcome. The transition process was marked by several interrelated tasks which described key elements in the journey to becoming a teacher.

As a result of the study, it was recommended that a “culture of support” should be developed within colleges and universities and supported from the highest administrative level to orient new faculty and enable them to realize their full potential.

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DEDICATION

To the teachers who shared their lives and thoughts with me, and to all those, friends, colleagues and family, who have faced disruptive change, and have endured self-doubt, and come through it to discover their own unique and special gifts.

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A doctoral dissertation journey is frequently a lonely and isolating experience. The dismal statistics on students who complete all-but-the-dissertation show that many who attempt to travel alone fail to reach their goal.

Dr. Roy Giroux of Humber College and Dr. Howard Hickey of Michigan State University understood that many adults want and need the support of fellow travellers who can share their experience and provide mutual support. The vision and determination of these two special teachers in developing the cooperative Ph.D. program between Michigan State University and Humber College has provided me with the opportunity to be part of a unique experiment in adult education. Their encouragement and faith in my ability have sustained me through it.

The process brought me back in contact with a scholar who's work I had admired for many years. When Dr. Max Raines agreed to serve as the chairman of my doctoral committee, I acquired an advisor, guide, mentor and friend. Max, you have enriched my life both intellectually and spiritually and I hope we can extend that relationship for years to come.

The composition of my committee I owe primarily to Dr. Howard Hickey, who advised me to "go with my heart." The result was a marriage of complementary strengths: Dr. Raines, who taught me to value and honour my own and others' transitions, Dr. Arden Moon, the gentle philosopher who understood better than anyone why I wanted to do such a "soft" study, Dr. Cas Heilman who helped me to develop the skills and the courage to take my learning into the broader realm of consulting, and of course, Dr.

Hickey whose genius for creating enabling conditions helped me to jump all the hurdles. To all of you, sincere thanks for being on my team.

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With the exception, perhaps, of having my children, I think the decision to go into this program is the best thing I've ever done...so far.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

You know, sometimes you feel almost like an actor who is saying, 'This is all an act. Why do people like me?' Well, you can feel the same way in front of a class. 'This is all an act. Why do you think I'm so smart? Why are you listening to me?'

Certainly, in dealing with the students, I really found it very distressing, in...to see how impotent I was in dealing with certain students that I really cared about. There were some that I felt seriously...seriously needed help, and the help wasn't there.

The workload is very intense at the beginning. People who are not teachers. They don't understand the workload. The workload is very heavy. Your prep time, your marking, and class time, and time spent with students. It's very full.

It's like trying to turn a battleship. It's so large, this machine, and it does not respond quickly. And when I was running my own company, I had no problem with having a decision challenged. I made a decision and that's the way it was, for better or worse.

The voices represented above are those of new full-time faculty in a large, urban Canadian college. All have been hired full-time in the last three to four years. Some had never taught before, and were recruited for their expertise in the business, industry or service sector they represent. Some had taught in other educational settings; university or high-school. Some were already employed by a college on a part-time or sessional basis.

Most new full-time faculty in the college setting experience their first year as exhilarating, but highly stressful. Whether they have had previous teaching experience in the colleges or not, they find full-time teaching to be more demanding than they anticipated. The students are needier and less well-prepared than they believed they

would be. Their workloads are typically unconscionably heavy (it is not uncommon for a new faculty member to have four entirely new, for him or her, courses to prepare in the first semester alone – perhaps an unconscious form of “hazing” on the part of administrators who remember their own introduction to college teaching). Class sizes are large; most teachers can expect to meet upwards of 175-200 students per week. Marking assistance is unknown in the college setting and secretarial support is often insufficient to meet faculty needs.

In addition, the security of a new faculty position is tenuous at a time when financial cutbacks are resulting in faculty lay-offs which tend to operate on a “last in, first out” basis. The reality of the probationary period causes some faculty to perceive that they have less power and autonomy than they may actually need to feel that they can participate in decision-making which affects them. As with all other professionals, personal and family pressures compete with work requirements to add to faculty members’ feelings of never having enough time.

Recent literature on “new and beginning faculty” (Boice, 1990; Sorcinelli and Austin, 1991; Schuster and Wheeler, 1990) tends to focus on teachers who have most often come straight from graduate school to teach in a university setting. Many of their issues – tenure anxiety, establishing a balance between research, publishing and teaching – are somewhat out of focus when seen through the lens of the college teaching experience.

In reality, many college faculty do not fit this “new teacher” profile. Many are not young, not new to teaching, not even new to the college into which they were hired. Many are approaching or have already arrived at mid-life and have come most recently from careers in business, industry or service, where they have established self-concepts and reputations as competent professionals. Only a few represent the typical newly hired

teacher in a university or high-school setting, fresh from teachers' college or graduate studies.

What they have in common, however, is that all are at a point of significant transition in their lives as they enter into a full-time college teaching position. For some, the transition represents a first major career commitment, part of the process of "settling down" and "becoming one's own person" (Levinson 1979). For others, the transition into college teaching represents a major career shift, with all of the accompanying stresses and anxieties that attend risk-taking and change. For some, the change may indicate a response, conscious or unconscious, to a mid-life crisis of "generativity vs. stagnation" (Erikson 1950), expressed as a desire to become involved in a vocation whose mission and values make them feel they are making a difference. For all, the pressures of the new career may be complicated by feelings of loss, self-doubt and fluctuating commitment typical of adults in transition (Raines 1979; Bridges 1980; Schlossberg 1984; Adams, Hayes and Hopson 1976; Aslanian and Bricknell 1980).

In these present times of financial constraint, relatively few new faculty are hired each year, even in the large metropolitan colleges. Competition for jobs is fierce and colleges are in the happy situation of being able to choose from among many highly qualified applicants who bring years of relevant "real world" experience. Many new faculty have already established a track record as competent professionals who have high expectations of themselves, and also of the conditions under which they are expected to make their professional contribution. Colleges face the challenge of finding ways to engage the talent and enthusiasm of new faculty while supporting them through the period of orientation and socialization into the academic culture of the community college.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In an era when government cutbacks in financial support for education are forcing program constraints, and public opinion is negatively disposed toward the outcomes of formal education, many new teachers will experience a considerable gap between their high expectations of themselves, the elevated mission and values of their new vocations, and the reality which faces them each day in the classroom.

Institutions of higher learning which seek to maintain excellence in teaching to meet the diverse student needs and economic demands of the future, must find ways to nurture and support new faculty so that they become vital and productive members of the academic community throughout their professional career. To provide appropriate, growth-inducing supports for new faculty during their period of orientation and socialization to teaching, colleges need to know more about how faculty begin, and then establish, their careers.

A perusal of the literature on new faculty development reveals a number of related questions that have an impact on the adaptation of faculty to their new responsibilities. While it is emphasized that this study does not pretend to address all these questions fully, they are provided as part of a context within which to explore new faculty development.

Background

- What are the life transitions that new faculty have gone through, and are still going through, which have resulted in a decision to pursue an academic career?
- What are the elements in the *assumptive world* (Cantril 1950) of new faculty members that draw them to an academic career? What are their expectations regarding issues such as collegiality, students, workload, personal and professional autonomy, status, rewards, etc.?

- What kinds of personal or professional planning have new faculty engaged in prior to their appointment to prepare them for the transition to full-time teaching?
- What are the developmental issues that affect established mid-life professionals when they find themselves back in the *novice phase* (Levinson 1978) in relationship to learning to teach?

College Environment

- What impact does the college environment (its climate, culture, demands and practices) have on the new faculty member's conscious or unconscious assumptions and expectations?
- Do new faculty experience a dissonance between the *espoused theories* and the *theories in use* (Argyris 1964) of their colleagues in the college environment? If so, what is the impact on their own professional practice and self-esteem?
- What common stressors do new faculty **perceive** in relationship to their new responsibilities? Can they be minimized? What impact do they have on faculty vitality?
- The colleges espouse lifelong learning as a value for faculty and staff that extends beyond the probationary period. Is the expectation that faculty will continue activities that contribute to their ongoing professional growth and development appropriate for new faculty who are in mid-life and beyond?
- New faculty are *marginal* (Schlossberg 1984) in terms of their social relationships with more established colleagues and the institution as a whole. What are the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion (Boleman and Deal) and how are these experienced by new faculty?

Implications

- How do staff orientation and development programs and mentoring relationships help or hinder faculty in becoming integrated into their new setting?

- What would new faculty identify as their most critical unmet needs during their period of orientation into college teaching?
- Tinto (1988) suggests that students who become socially integrated into college life are more likely to persist. Is it logical to speculate that the same may be true for new faculty?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Increased focus on beginning teachers in community colleges is particularly timely in the context of the social, economic and technological changes of the 1990s. With the well-documented “aging of the professoriate,” Bowen and Schuster (1986) estimate that one-half million new faculty members will be needed in higher education in the United States by the year 2000. In the community (junior and two-year) colleges, these teachers will be charged with the responsibility of educating and preparing for employment not only traditional post-secondary students, but adults at all life stages, and representing all ages, racial and ethnic groupings. These adult learners share the need to gain or upgrade skills or retrain in order to contribute to the economy and to their own personal growth and development.

At the turn of the century, new teachers will continue to be outnumbered by their more senior colleagues. The *generativity* needs of older faculty may be partially addressed by the opportunity to form mentoring relationships with less experienced colleagues, despite the fact that mentoring pairs may not conform to the conventional patterns. These relationships can contribute significantly to sustained vitality and productivity for senior faculty as they approach retirement (Lacey 1988).

Although the literature on faculty development programs and practices has increased greatly in the last twenty-five years (Schuster and Wheeler 1990), relatively little attention has been paid until recently to the developmental and transitional issues

affecting beginning teachers, and even less which is specific to teachers in Canadian community colleges. A greater understanding of how new faculty careers evolve can have important implications for orientation, socialization and development programs for new faculty in colleges and universities throughout North America.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to identify, through qualitative analysis of interview data, new faculty members' interpretations of their experience of adapting to full-time teaching in a community college.

This study examined faculty members' perceptions of the factors in the college environment which aided or hindered the kind of collegial, intellectual and supportive environments that best encourage professional socialization.

Environmental factors in the college that help prepare, socialize and support them in their new profession were explored. Variables such as opportunities for collegial interaction and support, the presence or absence of a satisfactory mentor relationship, and strategies to minimize stress during the probationary period were investigated.

The intent of this study was to shed light upon perceptions of the adaptation process — how faculty respond emotionally to and internalize their transition into full-time teaching. It is hoped that this study will identify some patterns of response to the first year experience that predict new faculty members' successful adaptation to college teaching in ways which help them both to gain more fulfillment professionally, and to serve the institution better.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following specific research questions were investigated:

- 1) To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?
- 2) What assumptions and expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?
- 3) What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?
- 4) Are there common and **significant** transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

Although not specifically the focus of this study, it is anticipated that staff development personnel in colleges may learn from listening to faculty perceptions of their own transitional processes, and may come to a greater understanding of the reactions of new faculty to the college milieu. Increased understanding may, in turn, result in further study to refine the provision of programs for new faculty orientation and development.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are defined in the context in which they were used in this study:

Adaptation – “The process of adapting or adjusting to new conditions. A slow modifying of...an individual’s behaviour to adjust to cultural conditions” (Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of the English Language 1966).

Assumptive Form World (or Assumptive World) – Cantril (1950) defined the *assumptive form world* as one which “consists of the total set of assumptions which we build up on the basis of past experience in carrying out our purposes. Many of the assumption which compose it are entirely subconscious; others are intellectual abstractions; others concern the value attributes of experience. Those expectancies which serve as bases for future action are an important part of our assumptive form world” (104).

Critical Incident – This term was used by John Flannagan (1954) who developed an exploratory qualitative technique of using simple interview procedures to collect information from people about their direct observations of incidents of their own and other’s behaviour which significantly affected outcomes.

Catalytic Insight or Event – A circumstance that had meaning and significance for the respondents’ experiences of what was going on in their lives that preceded their decision to enter teaching. This term acknowledges that though the incident may have been critical only in the eyes of the person experiencing it, a process was nevertheless started in motion which culminated in a significant change for that person.

Marking – In this context, all activities associated with assessing, evaluating, commenting on, and/or assigning a grade to students’ work.

Mentoring – A supportive, non-evaluative relationship between two colleagues one of whom is more experienced in the context of the work-setting, though not necessarily older or more current in professional experience, and one of whom is a beginning full-time faculty member in the same institution. Usually, but not always, mentor/mentee teams are in the same discipline area, and are peers, although in some cases the mentor also supervises the mentee.

New (probationary) faculty – Faculty who have been appointed to a full-time teaching position from which it is assumed that after a period of probation (usually two years), and assuming that their progress is satisfactory, they will attain “permanent” status. The concept of formal tenure does not exist in the Ontario colleges’ collective

agreement, and even full-time faculty can be laid-off or trained for another position if demand for teaching in their program area no longer exists.

Perception – "...The process by which the brain constructs an internal representation of the outside world. This internal representation is what we experience as 'reality,' and it allows us to behave in such a way that we survive in the world" (Bourne and Ekstrand 1979). "Any insight or intuitive judgment that implies unusual discernment of fact or truth." "To come to understand or form an idea of..." (Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of the English Language 1966).

Socialization – "The acquisition and acceptance of the ideas, beliefs, behaviours, roles, motives and thought patterns of a particular culture," (Avison and Kundel 1986) – in this context, the culture of teaching in the community college.

Transition – In this context, the term refers to Bridges' (1980) idea of any life change that involves "that difficult process of letting go of old situations, suffering the confusing nowhere of in-betweenness, and launching forth again in a new situation." According to Hopson (1980), it is normal for transitions to include periods of immobilization, denial and self-doubt, letting go of old behaviours and testing out new roles and self-definitions, before arriving at a new state of equilibrium.

Significant Transition – The term "significant" is defined by The Random House Dictionary (1980) as "of important consequence; full of meaning or sense," and by The Living Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language (1971) as "momentous; important." In this context, a significant transitional process is one which is recognized by the person in transition as a "make it or break it" issue which can mean success if they handle a situation well, or threaten failure if they handle it poorly (Raines 1993). The concept is related to Schlossberg's (1984) idea of "impact," as in "assessment of a transition's impact on relationships, routines, assumptions and roles (54)."

Vitality – "...those essential, yet intangible, positive qualities of individuals and institutions that enable purposeful production" (Clark 1985). In college professors, those who are "enthusiastic, curious and regenerative, who enjoy their work, reach out for new challenges, and are not afraid to risk failure" (Baldwin and Krotseng 1986).

ASSUMPTIONS

This study was predicated on the following assumptions:

- that all people go through periods of transition during the progress of their adult lives, and that the degree of success they achieve in resolving these changes has significant implications for their personal and professional development.
- that those who are charged with the responsibility of recruitment, hiring, socialization, training, support, and recognition of new faculty will benefit from understanding more about ways in which the college environment can ease the transition into a full-time teaching career.
- that adult life-span development is marked by many significant milestones and events. It is not the events or specific reported behaviours that are important in themselves, but the significance and the personal interpretations of the participants in the study.

RELATED RESEARCH

In the course of this study, several major conceptual areas were reviewed:

1. Theories of life-span personality development (Erikson, Levinson, Sheehy, Gould, et al) were reviewed to help provide a basis from which to interpret the perceptions of the respondents.
2. Models of life and career transitions were explored to shed light on the significant impact of change on human experience and professional vitality. (Hopson, Bridges, Raines, Baldwin, Schlossberg, Weiss, Fisher and Cooper, Aslanian and Bricknell, Baldwin and Blackburn, Schuster and Wheeler, Chickering, Schein, among others.)
3. Recent works on the socialization of new faculty (Boice, Sorcinelli, Austin, Schuster, Cole) suggest that key factors in faculty success include: 1) collegial support; 2) mentor/mentee relationships; and 3) stress reduction. These elements were explored in relation to faculty members' perceptions of their needs during their first year.

4. Exploration of research on faculty development (Eble and McKeachie, Lindquist, Lacey, Hunt, Menges, Boice), organizational development (Boleman and Deal, Argyris, Deal and Kennedy) and mentoring programs (Daloz, Mathis) constitute “related literature” which, although not explored in detail, increased understanding of faculty perceptions of the probationary phase.

5. Finally, reference was made to a range of literature on qualitative research, grounded theory approaches and interview techniques.

PROCEDURES

Setting of the Study

This study was conducted at one of Ontario’s 23 Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. Programs offered through the colleges cover a wide range of subject areas including technology, nursing and allied health care, business, and applied arts. In addition, all students are required to take courses in English communications and general education. Most programs of study result in a two or three year diploma or a one year certificate. The “traditional” college student is a grade 12 graduate who enters college after high school to prepare for full-time entry into the workforce

In fact, today’s college students present a much more varied profile. Particularly in the large urban college, students vary widely in racial and ethnic background, age and degree of academic preparation. Many are adults returning from the workplace to college for retraining or upgrading. Significant numbers of entering students are university graduates or have some university credits. Large numbers of part-time, evening and extension students access a wide range of credit and non-credit courses.

Faculty in the colleges are drawn from business, industry and service professions. A smaller number come through the more traditional route of post-graduate studies at a

university, or from previous teaching positions at universities or high-schools. The majority of newly hired faculty do not have formal teacher training before entering the colleges. Typically, new full-time faculty undergo a two-year “probationary” period during which they may or may not receive training in instructional skills. At the conclusion of this period, barring any serious incompatibilities between the faculty member and the hiring institution, probationary faculty achieve full status.

Population and sample

The participants in this inquiry were chosen from among about 50 new full-time faculty members who had taken part, during their probationary period, in the two-year “full-time faculty orientation and development program” at a large, metropolitan Ontario college over the last four years. A selected sample of 12 respondents agreed to participate in personal interviews.

Interviewees represented, in approximately equal proportions, faculty who were hired full-time in 1990, 1991 and 1992. Care was taken to choose a sample which was evenly distributed between men and women, represented a range of ages and years of prior teaching experience, and included a cross-section of all academic divisions and subject areas represented in the larger group. It is acknowledged, however, that the resulting sample provided only general representation. No attempt was made to produce an exactly proportional mirror of the new faculty population at large.

Nature of Inquiry

An exploratory, qualitative research methodology was chosen, using a grounded theory approach and interview methodology. New faculty members' perceptions and interpretations of the meanings of their personal transitions into the college environment were gathered through personal interviews. Several open-ended, guiding questions —

informally-stated versions of the four key research questions — were used as probes to explore the personal stories and perceptions of the participants (see Appendix B). Interviews were transcribed in their entirety, coded and analyzed using a *constant comparative* methodology (Glaser and Strauss 1978) to search for emerging themes and patterns of response. Data were reported as a narrative description.

LIMITATIONS

1. This study reflects the impressions and perceptions of new full-time faculty at a large metropolitan college who were hired since 1990 and, at the time of interviewing, had taken part in at least the first year of a faculty development program. Data were collected from only about one-quarter of the total population of new full-time faculty hired during this time span. Perceptions of non-participants in the interview process, or of faculty from other colleges who have undergone different kinds of orientation experiences, may differ from those of the respondents.

2. Because of the relatively small sample size, transferability of the findings must be approached with caution and was not the primary goal. The researcher elected depth of understanding and richness of response over breadth of the sample. However, if the assumption is valid that new faculty everywhere are in a process of significant career transition, and that institutions of higher education have a stake in facilitating these transitions, it is to be hoped that useful insights can be developed.

3. A significant degree of subjectivity was inherent in the chosen methodology. The involvement of the researcher with new faculty throughout their orientation and development program facilitated access to faculty perceptions of their transition process, and permitted triangulation between the subjects' self-reports, their reflections in learning journals, and the researcher's observations of their responses to various aspects of the

program. Both the participants' responses, and the researcher's interpretations are perceptual and interpretive in nature. Careful consideration of the human subjects implications of such a study was undertaken to protect the rights and anonymity of the participants.

Data were collected only from those who chose to participate, and were not shared with anyone else at Humber College, whether administrators, mentors or other faculty. In fact, no one except the primary investigator heard the tapes or saw transcripts of interviews or items from "learning journals." Records of data collected were kept off campus. Participants were assured that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty or recrimination, in which case all data that had been collected from that person would be destroyed. Information collected was held in the strictest confidence. In reporting on research findings, every effort was made to protect the anonymity of the subjects by disguising any information that could be used to identify them.

DELIMITATIONS

1. Though part of the transition into a full-time faculty role inevitably includes the acquisition of specific instructional skills, it was not within the scope of this study to deal with specific skills that new faculty need to be successful teachers.

2. Descriptions of programs for teacher training and development at every educational level abound throughout the literature on teaching and learning. The researcher did not intend to focus on specific elements of faculty development programs, except as the program participated in by the group under study affected their attitudes towards teaching, and their transition into the academic culture.

3. Though it was not the purpose of this study to conduct a program review, the fact that all participants experienced the same orientation program increased the likelihood that at least one variable in the transition process was influenced by similar external conditions. It was recognized however, that the **perceptions** of individual faculty to the various elements of the program would vary widely.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION

This study is organized into six chapters:

Chapter 1 begins with some actual quotations from research participants to provide a focus for the issues of the transition process. The problem statement includes some tentative questions that provide insight into the background, setting and implications of this research. The significance and purpose of the study are outlined, as are major research questions, key terms and assumptions. Related research and methods of inquiry are briefly reviewed, limitations and delimitations are stated and the chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Chapter 2 contains a review of the pertinent literature in the area of socialization of new faculty, combined with references that explore the inner world that impacts on socialization, from the related areas of perceptual psychology, life-span personality development, and career and life transitions. Related literature in the areas of societal change, organizational development and faculty development provide an exterior context.

Chapter 3 contains an elaboration of the research design, participants, methods of information gathering and data analysis employed in this study, with reference to selected readings in qualitative research methods and interviewing techniques.

Chapter 4 includes a presentation of the findings in the form of selected verbatim quotations taken from the responses of the study participants to the research questions. These comments are connected by introductory, bridging and summary remarks designed to establish the context of the faculty members' observations.

Chapter 5 includes interpretation and discussion of the findings. An emergent series of interpretive diagrams is introduced to illustrate key milestones and developmental tasks in the transition to becoming a teacher.

Chapter 6 contains a summary of the study and its key findings, implications and recommendations arising from the study, suggestions for further research and reflections.

SUMMARY

In an era when government cutbacks in financial support for education are forcing program constraints, and public opinion is negatively disposed toward the outcomes of formal education, it is gratifying that so many highly skilled and capable people seek careers in community college teaching.

Whatever their reasons for entering the teaching profession, many new teachers will experience a considerable gap between their high expectations of themselves, the elevated mission and values of their new vocations, and the reality which faces them each day in the classroom. They may quickly come to discover that teaching is the most exhilarating, exasperating, exciting, vexatious, frustrating, stressful and rewarding of all professions.

Institutions of higher learning which seek to maintain excellence in teaching to meet the diverse student needs and economic demands of the future, face the challenge of

finding ways to nurture and support new faculty so that they become vital and productive members of the academic community throughout their professional career.

The purpose of this study was to learn from new teachers:

- what key life events or transitions motivated their desire to be a college teacher,
- what significant transitional processes they experienced as they adjusted to the complex demands of an academic career,
- to what extent the realities of the work role matched, exceeded or fell short of faculty members' expectations before taking up their new responsibilities, and
- what their perceptions were of the key institutional resources they required to support and maintain professional vitality in their first year(s) as new full-time instructors?

CHAPTER 2

RELATED RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the concept of life transition. For this purpose, transition is differentiated from change. Change is seen as an event, a situation. Transition is the psychological process people go through to come to terms with the new situation. Change is external, transition is internal (Bridges 1991, 3).

At the very heart of this study are the transitions that new faculty go through as they adapt to full-time teaching in a community college. The key research questions that frame the study all centre around an exploration of that transitional process:

- 1) To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?
- 2) What assumptions and expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?
- 3) What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?
- 4) Are there common and **significant** transitional processes which college teachers go through during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

To provide a background against which to interpret the responses to these questions, literature on the **socialization of new and junior faculty to college teaching** was reviewed to establish the core of materials that inform the study.

It was recognized, however, that there is no such thing as a non-contextual event or situation, and contexts are both external and internal. The perceptions and interpretations new faculty attach to their transition experiences are influenced from within by the *assumptive world* of each individual: the beliefs, attitudes, values, personality traits, and developmental processes that make life experience meaningful. The literature on **life-span personality development**, combined with selected literature on the development of perception and interpretations which comprise each person's *assumptive form world* (Cantril 1950), acted as a foundation for understanding some of the critical factors that influence the nature of adult development.

A number of models have been advanced to explore and explain the process of adaptation that occurs when people's assumptive worlds are disrupted by change. A study of the literature on **life transition** was combined with various readings in the more specific area of **career development**, particularly as it relates to the field of adult learning.

Although not the main focus of this study, selected references from the related fields of **faculty development** and **organizational responses to forces in the external environment** were chosen to establish a context within which to understand the transition of new faculty into full-time careers in teaching.

Figure 2.1 presents a symbolic representation of the points of intersection of the various bodies of literature mentioned above. This conceptual framework is intended to illustrate the transactive nature of the internal and external forces which combine to influence the meanings new faculty attribute to their transition into teaching.

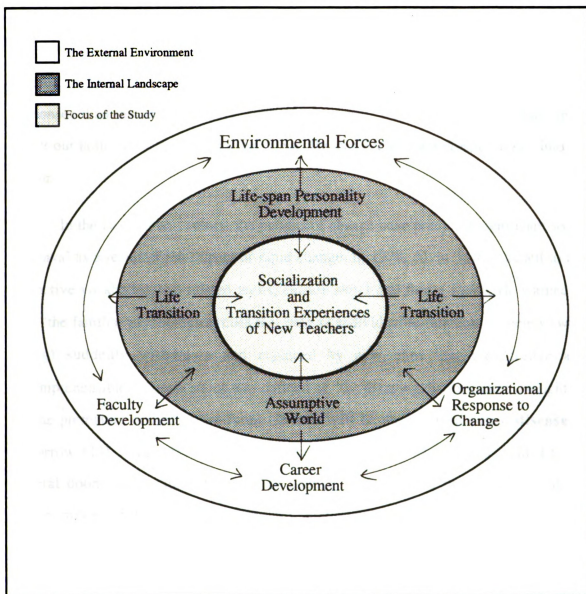


Figure 2.1: A conceptual framework linking related bodies of literature.

THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Societal Context

In a world where the only constant is change, the impact of technological advances, new governmental regulations and economic turmoil have all converged to

make life within organizations complicated, and at times unproductive. Nations, governments, the economic community and educators are engaged in a massive process of looking back and looking forward. All agree that the future will demand different responses than the ones that have worked in the past. New strategies, it is said, must direct our collective efforts to leap energetically, confidently and *competitively* into the future.

In the last quarter century, the pundits of change have predicted significant social upheaval as a result of the impact of rapid change. In 1970, Alvin Toffler added to our collective vocabulary two related terms, *culture shock* and *future shock*. He warned us that “the familiar psychological cues that help an individual to function in society (were being) suddenly withdrawn and replaced by new ones that are strange and incomprehensible.” *Future shock* was defined as “the dizzying disorientation brought on by the premature arrival of the future. It may well be the most important **disease** of tomorrow”(13). A decade later, John Naisbitt, the author of *Megatrends*, added to the general doom-saying about the pace of change. He described the turbulence of the “sometimes painful and uncertain present, ” and quoted the dire predictions of the U.S. Department of Education that “most Americans are moving toward virtual scientific and technological illiteracy” (31).

In Ontario, the Premier’s Council report, “Competing in the New Global Economy” (1988) stated that “success in the high-growth industries of today and the emerging industries of tomorrow will require a set of economic skills we have not yet mastered” (11). The message was not lost on Ontario educators, who responded through the Association of Canadian Community Colleges with a submission entitled *A Future That Works* (1989). It proclaimed the necessity for a comprehensive human resource development strategy to help Canada maintain and develop its competitive edge, and affirmed the intention of the Canadian colleges to “seek a partnership in collaboration

with the federal government, business, industry and labour in the review, development and implementation of policies and programs which address the human resource development needs of our country” (1).

Organizational Responses to Forces in the External Environment

The rate of change in the external environment surrounding the colleges has created much disequilibrium, requiring new vision on the part of college leaders to respond to shifting societal pressures. Over the 25 years spanned by the discussion above, the landscape of post-secondary education has altered dramatically. College educators are currently finding themselves in the position of trying to be all things to all people. Their mandates include:

- preparing recent high-school graduates for their first entry into the labour market by communicating the core of common learning (Boyer 1986) that enables them to appreciate the ethics of citizenship, and to participate responsibly in their society,
- providing current business and technical skills training, to enable students to respond to the impact of society's rapidly changing high-tech environment,
- responding to the needs of the “new students” who include: fully-employed workers who require retraining or upgrading; “under-skilled” high-school drop-outs or others who need a second chance to develop viable work skills; under-serviced adults of all ages who have previously been denied access to equal opportunity, including persons with special needs, native North Americans, and displaced workers; and,
- developing and maintaining a global perspective by assisting people to develop an attitude of personal responsibility for the world beyond their community, and “to transcend their culture-conditioned, ethnocentric perspectives, perceptions and behaviour” (King, et al. 1989).

The fiscal pressures on all levels of government, which left education chronically underfunded over the last decade, have not yet yielded to the long awaited economic recovery. While students are flooding college classrooms in unprecedented numbers, college operating budgets have been slashed to the bone, equipment has become seriously outdated, salaries are frozen and faculty and staff layoffs, which had successfully been avoided until the late '80s, have become an unwelcome reality. As a result, the pressure on college leaders has intensified.

Transitions are frequently painful. Poorly managed, they can result in damaged morale and loss of productivity. In *Managing Transition: Making the Most of Change*, Bridges (1991) advised that organizations should carefully study the impact of proposed change and put in place educational programs to help people accommodate feelings of loss of identity, control, meaning, belonging and optimism for the future (30). However he suggested that few organizations have a transition-sensitive culture, and few leaders have any training in transition management.

In his discussion of *Cultural Dynamics: Guided Evolution and Managed Change*, Schein (1990) outlined a number of strategies that leaders may use in attempting to unfreeze elements of organizational culture that are dysfunctional for survival and growth in a changing environment. He argued that it is vital that organizations zealous for change do not lose sight of the importance of the "internal integration task" of developing consensus, establishing group boundaries and clarifying criteria for inclusion in decision-making (113).

In response to urgent societal pressures, some college leaders have focused their primary energies on attending to the external adaptation tasks of entrepreneurship outlined in Schein's model. Internal integration tasks have sometimes suffered as a result. Cameron (1985) observed that "institutional renewal and the maintenance of excellence in hyperturbulent environments require the perpetuation and management of paradoxes.

Institutions of higher education must develop characteristics that are simultaneously contradictory, even antagonistic, in order to perform effectively in the environments of the future” (40).

The rapid pace of organizational change has prompted an increased focus on how organizations learn, or fail to learn, in response to change. In *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, Senge (1990) issued a daunting challenge to organizations, both in business and in education, to work to build “learning organizations, where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together” (3).

Implications for Faculty and Career Development

The body of literature that comes under the umbrella of “faculty development” is enormous. Whole subsections are devoted to specific aspects of orientation, socialization, development, support, evaluation, promotion and reward of faculty at all stages throughout their professional careers. The issue of faculty vitality is particularly well represented. Bland and Schmitz (1988) compiled a catalogue of writing on the concept and practice of faculty development in higher education between 1965 and 1985. The list contains 288 resources, cross-referenced according to the various faculty development strategies grouped under three major headings: institution, department/college, and individual faculty or administrators.

The faculty development literature which focuses specifically on the socialization of beginning teachers, and the material of career transition, were central to this study, and are dealt with in detail in the sections that follow. The larger body of faculty development literature was deemed to be peripheral to this study. However, the issue of revitalizing

“middle-aged, disillusioned faculty” (Boice, 1986) through the discovery and provision of appropriate incentives and rewards is one that has bearing on the transitions of new faculty, and is touched on briefly.

The college under study is one of the largest and most comprehensive colleges in Canada, located in the largest and most culturally diverse city in the country. It is positioned squarely at the apex of change. Its *assumptive world* (Cantril 1950) is in transition and the process is fast-paced and vigorous, but frequently disruptive and threatening. It is into this environment that new faculty are presently being hired.

Many senior faculty in the Ontario colleges have been in the system since its inception in the late sixties. Those were the heady days when money flowed like wine, the fledgling colleges were small, intimate and family-like and, since everything was new, opportunities for creativity in design and delivery of curriculum were boundless. The huge, comprehensive colleges of the nineties with their enormously diverse student body bear little resemblance to their origins. The challenges are greater and different, but many of the faculty are the same.

Now in mid-life, and in mid-to-late career, many of these faculty are still fifteen years from retirement. They are caught in the personal, family and age-related transitions of their particular life circumstances. In their professional lives, many college teachers are struggling with increasing stress and potential burnout. (Armour, et al. 1987; Baldwin 1983, 1984, 1990; Boice, 1986; Bowen and Schuster 1986; Bumpus 1983; Caffarella 1989; Clark and Corcoran 1989; Golembiewski 1978; Watkins 1986; etc.). Instead of the task of teaching getting easier, as they expected, it is getting harder all the time to feel that they are being effective in the classroom, and making a significant difference in the lives of students. Golembiewski (1986) suggested that “for those in organizations, (mid-life) transition often manifests itself as a mid-career crisis. The two are interactive, but it

often will be the case that an individual will precipitate a mid-career crisis, as a result of a panic reaction to a mid-life transition..." (215).

To add to the discomfiture of mid-career faculty, today's student body is more diverse and less well-prepared than in the past. Old tried-and-true teaching strategies are no longer effective, or even appropriate. Some instructors are beginning to feel overburdened and inadequate. Some rail against the increasing gap between rhetoric and practice, as government tightens the purse strings and programs are cut back. As Liebes (1983) pointed out, "In the past, 'burned-out' teachers could be transferred or could change professions. The economics of the 1980s leaves dissatisfied teachers with no alternative but to remain in teaching" (2).

The colleges of the nineties face an ongoing challenge to put in place staff development policies and practices that will contribute to the revitalization of this group and keep them productive into the next century. Caffarella (1989) observed that from an individual, life-span perspective, mid-life is frequently seen as a time of positive change and growth with many advantages of experience, stability and generativity. If institutions can come to see their mid-career faculty in this light, perhaps the focus can shift from solving problems to creating opportunities and responding to new initiatives in an atmosphere of support and recognition of the contributions of older faculty.

In exploring the issue of incentives and rewards, Clark (1985) discovered in his article, *Listening to the Professoriate*, that college teachers, particularly, felt rewarded by the "psychic gratification" they received from interaction with and feedback from their students. Mitchell and Peters (1988) found that more experienced teachers were also rewarded by being given interesting work assignments in which they could develop an expanded sense of competence, and by participating in management and governance. The research of Frase and Piland (1989) supported these findings. They argued that the intrinsic rewards of desire to help young people, and satisfaction in a stimulating and

challenging work environment greatly outweighed the “hygiene” factor of monetary gain. Baldwin (1983) agreed that variety in professional assignments and flexible workloads carry great weight in providing much needed growth opportunities for faculty at all stages in their careers.

In the area of **career development**, numerous researchers have focused on the transitions of faculty in higher education settings. Career transitions, particularly as they apply to academic careers, were described by Baldwin (1990), Baldwin and Blackburn (1981), Cytrynbaum, Lee and Wander (1982), Duncan and McCombs (1980), Geddie and Strickland (1984), Louis (1980), Menges (1985), Schuster and Wheeler (1990) and others. For this discussion, brief mention will be made of selected resources that refer particularly to faculty at the early stages of their career in academia.

Louis (1980) defined career transition as “the period during which an individual is either changing roles (taking on a different objective role) or changing orientation to a role already held (altering a subjective state)” (57). Of particular relevance for the present study was her discussion of the way in which people in transition create a perceptual map of a new situation based on the relative importance they place on different elements of their personal past experience. Her description of *surprises*, defined as “subjective appreciations of differences between a personally forecasted experiential world, and the individual’s subsequent experience of self and role in the setting,” has clear implications for the exploration of new faculty’s expectations in Research Question 2.

Louis provided a diagram of the process of *sense-making* by which people in transition gradually revise the cognitive maps they use to describe and interpret their experience in a new role or setting. She noted that it is both critical and difficult for people in career transition to adjust to gaps between their anticipation of their new role and the reality that presents itself. She concluded with a recommendation that career

“transitioners” be assisted to develop relationships with others in the new setting with whom they could test their perceptions and share interpretations (70).

The literature on academic career transitions seems to have one pervasive theme – the need for an understanding of adult developmental stages in planning for the support of faculty at all stages of their careers. Baldwin and Blackburn (1981) observed that faculty development programs frequently fail to recognize the clearly defined needs of faculty at different stages of their careers. Their research on faculty development suggested that some career stages are easier than others, and that the times of highest stress are the first few years of teaching, followed by periods of rapid change or added responsibilities. They argued that if institutions can create an atmosphere in which career questioning and evolution are seen as a normal occurrence and supported accordingly, faculty can be helped to make positive and controlled changes and remain strong contributors to their organizations.

In *Enhancing Faculty Careers* (Schuster and Wheeler, eds. 1990), Baldwin
 * reiterated his conviction that colleges and universities frequently fail to acknowledge the developmental nature of faculty careers. As a result, they maintain basically the same expectations and apply the same policies to all professors, regardless of their age and career stage. The author suggested that conventional stage theories are too simplistic to reflect the complexities of faculty careers which vary along every measure, particularly in the age of entering an academic career, degree of previous teaching experience (if any) and academic discipline. Baldwin emphasized that career entry can be a particularly stressful experience and warned that if the early years as a professor are unsatisfying, the resulting diminished enthusiasm could create a negative attitude that could persist throughout the career.

Duncan and McCombs (1980) noted that the stages of adult development can be the basis for creative and productive professional development programming. They

stressed the need to be aware that those who teach in a college are also growing, learning and developing. In periods of transition, “there may be ‘teachable moments’ prompted by the reappraisals of the transition periods or by significant life events...” (26). The authors included a chart describing the characteristics of adult life phases, including those which are career-oriented, with suggested strategies for staff development programs that would integrate individual and organizational development.

Cytrynbaum, Lee and Wander (1982) drew on the adult development literature to examine personal and professional development potentials, tasks and conflicts for five faculty groups: age 30 transition faculty; dual-career couple faculty; mid-life faculty; late entry faculty; and senior retiring faculty. Faculty in the present study spanned at least three of these five groups, yet they all shared the experience of a career entry transition. The authors observed that these groups represent “different intersection points of chronological and organizational age,” and present different challenges to organizations and administrators. For each faculty group these dilemmas were identified and appropriate personal, organizational and policy interventions were proposed.

To conclude this brief review of selected literature on academic career development, Schlossberg (1984) outlined a number of strategies that colleges and universities could put in place that would be particularly supportive to entry-level faculty. She advocated *networking* to enable the mutual voluntary exchange of shared values and resources, *linking* new employees to these resources, and *brokering* on their behalf to help them access information, assessment, and referral services for students. She examined *referent power*, the degree to which mentors are able to influence their protégés to follow through on hard decisions, and promoted *advocacy*, to help guard the rights of employees and guide them through the roadblocks set up by bureaucracies (140-149).

In summary, writers on academic career development appear to agree on the necessity for institutions of higher learning to recognize the developmental issues and

transitions that affect the lives of faculty at every stage in their careers, and to create an atmosphere in which individual growth is acknowledged and supported.

THE INTERNAL LANDSCAPE

The Assumptive World

One of the assumptions on which the present study was based is that it is not the actual events or specific reported behaviours of a person's life that are important in themselves, but the significance and the personal interpretations each person places on his or her experience (Chapter 1, 23). The idea that there could be an inner reality that differs significantly from empirical fact is widely accepted in the field of perceptual psychology. Combs, Richard and Richard (1976) used the terms *perceptual field* and *phenomenal field* to describe the world view of each individual.

The perceptual field is the entire universe, including himself, as it is experienced by an individual at the instant of action...(it) is far richer and more meaningful than that of the objective, physical world. It includes all the universe of which we are aware – not only the physical entities which exist for us, but such other entities as justice, values and public opinion. It also includes love, hate, fear, anger, and human compassion which have no existence outside the experience of people (23).

It was the personal interpretations each faculty member made, and the subjective meanings they created, that are the subject of this study. As the new faculty described their experiences, they revealed the differences in the way they understood their role in relationship to their subject matter, students, colleagues and the college culture. Contrasts and contradictions in perception existed not only from one person to another, but within each individual.

To each of us the perceptual field of another person contains much error and illusion. It seems an interpretation of reality rather than reality itself. But to each individual his phenomenal field *is* reality; it is the only reality

he can know.....To understand a person, the only reality we need to be concerned with is *what seems real to him* (Combs, et al. 1976, 24).

The way people interpret their experience in the present is an aggregate of all of their past perceptions and the self-concept they have developed as a result. Cantril (1950) defined this *assumptive form world* as one which “consists of the total set of assumptions which we build up on the basis of past experience in carrying out our purposes” (104). He contended that a basic human need exists within each of us to discover and enhance the *value attributes* of our experience, which give life its richness and meaning and motivate us to grow and change. The assumptions we form as a result of experience, because they have so far proved to be fairly reliable guides in furthering our goals, continue to guide us unless or until we become frustrated and find we need to reformulate our opinion of ourselves, others, or our situation (77).

Our assumptions influence not only our present actions but our expectations of the future. We make choices based on the *value attributes* we place on some anticipated experience. “The desire to satisfy our needs, to achieve an ambition, to strive for some ideal, to have respect for our fellow men, are all permeated with assumptions of the value to be experienced” (Cantril 1950, 88).

The concept of an assumptive world, built of all the perceptions, feelings, values, beliefs and self-concept accumulated over a lifetime of experience finds an up-dated application in the work of Cole (1990), who explored the “personal theories” of beginning teachers. Her findings have a direct bearing on the present study. She contends that,

Students entering teacher preparation programs bring with them the beliefs, attitudes, ideals and ambitions developed over years of life experience...These personal theories are informal and unvalidated (in the scientific sense) and in most cases remain unarticulated; yet they are the personal foundations on which the individual’s professional practice is built (203).

In the section that follows, various theorists are reviewed who have attempted to describe and explain developmental forces, both internal and external, that contribute to the development of each person's assumptive world.

Life-Span Personality Development

Theories of **life-span personality development** can be categorized in a variety of ways. Stage theories, in which development is seen as a series of sequential steps, can be categorized by age (Levinson 1978; Sheehy 1976), by critical "conflicts" that precipitate new development (Erikson 1950; Gould 1977; Vaillant 1978), by ethical development (Gilligan 1982; Kohlberg 1970), critical life events (Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiriboga 1975), and individual variability (Neugarten 1976). More recently, some authors have also factored in gender as a critical variable in understanding how adults make ethical decisions (Gilligan 1982), learn to reason (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule 1986) and respond to critical life milestones (Sheehy 1976, 1981).

Stage theories are based on the assumption that people pass through similar experiences at similar ages, and that an exploration of age-specific experience can reveal universal patterns of psycho-social development. Levinson, et al. (1978) conducted a longitudinal study of males across a range of socio-economic groups, and concluded that there are relatively universal age-related developmental stages that unfold in an orderly sequence. These stages are characterized by periods of relative stability in which basic life structures are built, alternating with periods of instability and transition, in which structures are redefined.

Since the respondents in the present study ranged in age from mid-thirties to late forties, Levinson's stages from *settling down* (early 30's), *becoming one's own person* (35-39), *mid-life transition* (early 40's) and *restabilization* (mid to late 40's) were considered to be most relevant. It was interesting to note, however, that although

Levinson's theory emphasizes sequentiality and similarity of age-related stages, several of the respondents in this study refused to conform. Some exhibited clear indicators of Levinson's life stages in a similar sequence, but off-time, as if directed by an interaction between socially defined time (Neugarten 1976), *trigger events* (Schlossberg 1984), and the mystery of the internal developmental clock.

Levinson's work has been criticized for generalizing "life experience" on the basis of a study conducted exclusively on men. Sheehy (1976, 1981) developed a variation on the theme of predictable age-related stages of alternating stability and transition which acknowledged the parallel but different experiences of men and women. In *Passages* (1976) she described an unsettled transitional period that most adults experience around age 30 (*catch 30*), followed by a relatively stable period in the early 30's of settling down, putting down roots and testing out new life patterns (*rooting and extending*). Somewhere around age 35, people take stock of the decisions they have made in life up until now (*the age 35 survey*) and enter what Sheehy described as *the deadline decade* of disequilibrium, questioning, self-doubt and eventually, new perspective. Relative stability, for better or for worse, is regained in the years between 45 and 60 (*renewal or resignation*).

Sheehy's work acknowledged that women's life passages may vary significantly from men's, and from each other's, depending on whether the years of the 20's were focused primarily on affiliation (marriage, children, etc.) or on the more typical masculine tasks of achievement and career building. She suggested that women sense the inner crossroads leading to mid-life somewhat earlier than men do, partially as a result of the choices made earlier in life, and partially in response to the ticking of the biological clock.

A second group of stage theorists built their ideas around specific issues or conflicts which mark out an invariable sequence of stages of ego-development. Erikson's

model of psycho-social development (1950) suggested eight stages throughout life in which critical conflicts must be resolved if people are going to be able to make a mature and positive adjustment. His stages of *generativity vs. stagnation* and *ego-integrity vs. despair* are particularly relevant to the life stages of the respondents in this study, and were clearly identifiable in some of their comments. However, it was interesting to note that even among these “successful” well-adapted adults, there was considerable evidence of a need to revisit the crises of *identity vs. role-diffusion* and *intimacy vs. isolation* that Erikson’s model suggests should have been resolved in early adulthood.

Gould’s 1978 work, *Transformations*, built on the work of Erikson with his view of adult development as a struggle to “master the demons” of childhood. According to Gould’s theory, adults spend much of their time tinkering with inadequacies of self in order to avoid becoming “stuck” in childhood patterns of ego constraint. At least two of the respondents in this study related childhood experiences which caused them to struggle in adulthood to “open up to what is inside” (153).

Vaillant’s (1977) longitudinal study of male students at Harvard corroborated the theories put forward by Erikson. The successful resolution of each of Erikson’s developmental stages allowed the men in Vaillant’s study to progress to the next developmental stage. Vaillant suggested an additional stage, *career consolidation*, as one of the outcomes of a successfully resolved crisis of *intimacy*, and the precursor of achieving *generativity* and *ego-integrity*. For several of the men in the present study, the two themes of intimacy and career consolidation were found to be so closely interwoven that it was difficult to distinguish which preceded the other.

Since so many of the respondents in this study discussed concerns relating to values and ethics, a third group of stage theories will be mentioned briefly. The work of Kohlberg (1970) and Gilligan (1982) provided an interesting contrast in understanding the development of moral and ethical decision-making. Kohlberg, who again studied only

men, developed a theory of stages of moral development in which people make ethical decisions initially to avoid punishment. As their moral sense matures, they are motivated by a need to conform to social sanctions and are guided by authority figures. Eventually mature adults become autonomous and are guided by ethical principles.

Although acknowledging that ethical decision-making progresses in developmental stages, Gilligan objected to the generalizing of a theory based on a male-oriented view of development as a process of individuation and achievement. Women, she suggested, respond to their different social conditioning by learning to make decisions based on relationships, cooperation and interdependence. Their moral development, which might be considered “immature” when measured by the male yardstick, is no less legitimate.

Male and female voices typically speak of the importance of different truths, the former of the role of separation as it defines and empowers the self, the latter of the ongoing process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community (155).

Inspired by Gilligan’s work, four female psychologists pursued the question of how women construct their intellectual worlds and draw conclusions about truth, knowledge and reality (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule 1986). In-depth interviews with 135 women ranging from the most privileged to the most socially disadvantaged resulted in a study entitled, *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice and Mind*. The authors’ purpose was to explore what they felt to be a neglected area of adult development.

...we believe that conceptions of knowledge and truth that are accepted and articulated today have been shaped through history by the male-dominated majority culture. Drawing on their own perspectives and visions, men have constructed the prevailing theories, written history, and set values that have become the guiding principles for men and women alike...Relatively little attention has been given to modes of learning, knowing and valuing that may be specific to, or at least common in, women (6).

In this work, the authors described the “quest for self” that begins for some women with a silencing of their own “voices” in deference to received knowledge from others, and gradually matures into finding their own voice, and learning to reason from an integration of their own inner knowing and the inputs they receive from others.

The preceding discussion of how men and women develop the ability to make conscious decisions about values and ethics has many applications in the present study. Throughout the interviews, the respondents measured their values and commitment to teaching against the hopes and expectations which had brought them into education in the first place. Men and women alike revealed their struggle to balance their competing needs to achieve and to nurture their relationships both at home and at work. Perhaps Erikson, Levinson and Kohlberg could not have predicted how many of the men in this study were at least as preoccupied with the “feminine” developmental tasks identified by Gilligan and Belenky, et al., as they were with the classic achievement and individuation patterns ascribed to them.

To conclude this discussion of life-span development theory, two theories have contributed ideas that seem particularly relevant to this study. Lowenthal (Fiske), Thurnher and Chiriboga (1975) conducted a longitudinal study of four groups ranging in age from adolescents to pre-retirement couples, each of whom were on the brink of a significant life transition. The researchers discovered that within each group, the life transition that they shared was more important in understanding each person’s individual behaviour than was chronological age. For example, women having their first child had more in common with each other, whether they were 25, 30 or 35, than they did with mothers of adolescents or childless career women of the same age. This finding was clearly reflected in the community of experience shared by new faculty who were often separated in age by 15 to 20 years.

Neugarten's (1976) idea of *socially defined time* is also useful in understanding the transition experiences of new faculty. Her research described the common tendency of adults to have relatively rigid expectations of the appropriate time for the ordering of major life events, and to feel uncomfortable when their own experience appears to be *off-time* with the social norms. Some respondents in the present study found themselves going through the learning process of "junior" faculty in their forties, after having held positions of seniority and status in their previous professions.

The various theories of life-span development have obvious implications for those interested in facilitating the transition of new teachers into the colleges. Yet, as Christensen (1980) observed, "few teachers, particularly those coming into education from business and industry, have had the opportunity to study adult learning theory and life span development," even their own!

Life Transitions

The process of transition is one that every adult experiences to a greater or lesser degree at various times throughout the life-span. Of late, interest has been devoted to exploring the change process itself, and its impact on human beings as they work their way through the predictable "crises" of adulthood. Some investigators have developed models of the transition process itself (Bridges 1980, Hopson 1981). Others explored specific coping strategies for dealing with change (Raines 1979, Weiss 1976).

Bridges (1980) described all transitions as beginning with an *ending*. As people prepare to let go of an old role or life situation, they experience a loss which must be acknowledged and understood if they are to move beyond it. He outlined four states of mind that characterize endings: disengagement; disidentification; disenchantment; and disorientation.

Bridges coined the term *the neutral zone* to describe the confusing no-man's-land where one can no longer identify with the old, but is not yet fully integrated into the new. He described *the neutral zone*, as a "time between dreams," a necessary, but sometimes disturbing emotional limbo which may contribute to the temporary immobilization of people undergoing significant life changes.

According to Bridges, *the new beginning* comes only at the end of the process, and cannot be accomplished successfully merely by persevering. It requires an understanding of external signs and inner signals that point the way to the future. When individuals or organizations have difficulty activating full energy and commitment in the service of a significant new beginning, it may be that they have neglected or tried to hurry through the disequilibrium of *the neutral zone*.

Some changes are more critical than others, their impact more chaotic and difficult to endure. To make a successful and productive new beginning, new faculty need an understanding of the normality of these seemingly negative experiences. Such self knowledge and acceptance is essential to personal growth, and also to an understanding of and compassion for others who are going through transitions of their own.

Menlo (1984) challenged the conventional assumption that most people have a tendency to resist change. He argued that many adults seek out and welcome variety and challenge. Their daily life is "comprised of a multitude of receptive responses to requests for action and change initiated by self and others." What people resist, the author asserted, is not change itself, but the *perceived losses* that accompany change efforts. Of these real or perceived losses, the most serious loss expected and resisted is "*the fear of losing one's power over oneself to others*" (101). Other personal losses include loss of self-esteem, self-definition and principles or beliefs. Social losses involve the fear of losing quality relationships, reputation, and social effectiveness. The potential for each of

these losses exists within new teachers, as well as within the administrators, senior faculty and students with whom they interact.

Hopson's *Seven Phase Model of Stages Accompanying Transition* (1981) explores the psychological response to critical life events in more detail. Hopson's model outlines the effect of a significant transition on emotional well-being over time. Sometimes, he suggested, the impact of change can immobilize us, frozen in the grip of strong conflicting emotions of elation and despair, just when we most need to summon the energy and commitment to cope with the new demands facing us. The resulting denial launches a predictable process of self-doubt and depression, eventually lightening as the individual gains the confidence to let go of the old familiar life space. Adaptation to change is accomplished as the individual tests out and searches for meaning in the new, and finally, internalizes and integrates new roles and responsibilities.

Raines' (1979) ADAPT model of adaptation to change suggests several key transactions — specific tasks or behaviours that help a person negotiate a fit with his/her environment (Cadieux, 1983) — which attend successful transitions. These tasks: *activating commitment*, *developing support*, *adjusting expectations*, *prioritizing goals*, and *transposing identity*, seems particularly relevant to the processes new faculty need to accomplish during their first year(s) of college teaching.

Raines conceptualized his “adaptive transactions” as encompassing a coping phase and a transformation phase. In the coping phase, *activating commitment* involves acknowledging changes and moving forward while maintaining stability. *Developing support* is the process of finding people, ideas and things that will provide support when the ground is shifting. *Adjusting expectations*, one of the key themes discussed by the new faculty in the present study, is an essential coping strategy requiring people to revise their basic assumptions that are out of phase with emerging realities.

In the transformation phase, the process of *priority revision* requires each individual to decide what is important for building the new life pattern. *Transposing identity* requires the reformulation of roles, relationships, self-definitions, activities and assumptions without guarantees of success. This phase has much in common with Hopson's stages of *testing out*, *searching for meaning* and *integration*. In the present study, it was clear that the processes of activating commitment and transposing identity were not tasks that "stayed done." There were several points at which the commitment to teaching as a career was questioned, and further "transformation" of identity needed to occur before a renewed feeling of commitment to the new profession could be affirmed.

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Socialization and Transition Experiences of New Faculty

A growing body of research is beginning to focus on a previously much neglected group, beginning faculty in higher education institutions. Recent works on the socialization and transition experiences of new faculty (Boice 1991, 1992; Fink 1984; Schuster and Wheeler 1990; Sorcinelli and Austin 1992, Whitt 1991) suggested that key factors in faculty success include: 1) collegial support; 2) mentor/mentee relationships; and 3) stress reduction. These elements, among others, were explored in relation to faculty members' perceptions of their transitions into full-time teaching. Cole (1990, 1991) and Fullan, Connelly and Watson (1990) contributed studies of beginning teachers in the Ontario elementary and secondary school system, which demonstrated many parallels with teachers in colleges and universities.

There seems to be general agreement that the first years of post-secondary teaching are both stressful and critical to a successful transition and later academic success. (Boice 1991, 1992; Fink 1984; Schuster and Wheeler 1990; Sorcinelli and

Austin 1992, Whitt 1991). From his study of “middle-aged, disillusioned faculty” (Boice 1986), the author concluded that “when I look back on an intensive study of faculty who were clearly unsuccessful at mid-career...almost without exception, these individuals traced their failures back to critical incidents in their first few years on campus” (1992, 1).

Until recently, relatively little had been written about the experience of new teachers in post-secondary education. Austin, Brocato and LaFleur (1993) noted that “in higher education...there is a paucity of research that focuses on how faculty learn to fulfill their roles and responsibilities effectively and on specific organizational strategies that affect the socialization process for new and junior faculty” (5). Olsen and Sorcinelli (1992) concurred, observing that, “we know surprisingly little about the specific career tasks that pre-tenure faculty face, the stresses that they experience, and the satisfactions that sustain and motivate them” (15), and pointed to the “mounting evidence of a strong positive relationship between professional socialization and long-term job satisfaction, commitment, motivation and productivity” (Dean 1983; Jones 1983-1986).

What literature does exist on beginning teachers focuses almost exclusively on new faculty in research universities, or on elementary and secondary school teachers. Although college teachers in Ontario’s two-year Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology share many similar concerns, their situation is very different. Only a small proportion of teachers in the colleges come through the conventional route of university teachers (post-graduate degrees and/or teaching assistantships) or K-12 teachers (teacher training programs). Many college teachers do not fit the “new teacher” profiles of their colleagues in other settings. Many are not young, not new to teaching, perhaps not even new to the college into which they were hired. A significant group among the beginning teachers are experienced business, industry or service professionals in their forties and

fifties, who have established self-concepts and reputations as competent professionals but may have had no formal teacher training.

Many of the issues that pre-occupy “junior” university faculty – tenure anxiety, establishing a balance between research, publishing and teaching – are somewhat out of focus when seen through the lens of the college teaching experience. Ironically, the reason the college teachers’ stories have not been told is precisely because their professional focus has traditionally been on teaching rather than on research. However, several recent studies of university faculty have identified themes that are relevant to the experience of college faculty as well.

Boice (1991) conducted a longitudinal study of faculty at two U.S. university campuses between 1985 and 1990. Respondents volunteered to participate in a series of personal interviews conducted over successive semesters. The faculty who participated in this study were “inexperienced newcomers” (with less than two years beyond the doctorate) and “returning newcomers” (returning from careers outside academe and/or teaching). Experienced faculty (including those who had taught full-time at another campus) were used as comparisons (153). Boice discovered that new faculty, as a group, were dismayed at how little help they received from more senior colleagues, and generally unclear as to exactly what the expectations were for performance in their new jobs. He noted that new faculty devoted a disproportionate amount of time and energy to lecture preparation, and found their workloads left them little time for their research pursuits or personal life. Their growth as teachers was hampered by a defensive tendency to stay content-focused in order to avoid criticism from their peers, and as a result they frequently received lower ratings from their students.

In Boice’s opinion, faculty are frequently allowed to “sink or swim” in the service of the much-prized value of professional autonomy, and as a result, “management favours conditions that produce poor morale and tolerates the resulting low productivity.” To

reverse this dreary prospect, Boice advanced the suggestion that premature critical evaluation of new faculty be withheld in favour of more staff development programs that help newcomers make the shift from content to student focus. He suggested that much could be learned from new faculty who develop and excel quickly, and advocated that campuses expend efforts to “provide the kinds of safety, supports and formative feedback that appear essential to early comfort and success at teaching” (173).

Boice’s findings echoed many of the observations resulting from an earlier study (Fink 1984) of 100 beginning college teachers, chosen from among Ph.D. students in a single discipline (geography) from across the U.S. who had received an academic appointment that year and had not previously taught at the college level. Fink affirmed that with so few new faculty being hired in today’s tight job market, new teachers are not being received and nurtured as the valuable resources they potentially could become, to help revitalize aging teaching faculties. Instead, she concluded that “most new teachers were not made quickly to feel a part of the college or university, few felt adequately supported by colleagues, and most were given heavy first-year teaching loads that limited their involvement in college activities outside the classroom” (1).

Her finding that 50% of the new teachers in every type of post-secondary institution had four or more separate courses to prepare and teach during their first year, is consistent with the Ontario college norm for new faculty. Perhaps partly because of the workload, more than half of her respondents were unsure as to whether the reward system at their institution really rewarded good teaching. Like the teachers in Boice’s study, Fink’s respondents reported feeling isolated and alienated from the social networks of their departments and only about one-third were satisfied with the degree of intellectual companionship they found among their colleagues. It was significant to note that those who did find collegial companionship got higher performance ratings from both their chairpersons and their students. (Fink 1984, 48)

Nearly half of Fink's participants reported that they had received little or no information about local resources for teaching and did not understand the criteria by which their performance would be evaluated. What's more, a large proportion of the respondents reported feeling disillusioned about their students' academic readiness and found it necessary to compromise their own academic standards by lowering their expectation of their students. With such a significant degree of cognitive and affective dissonance between expectations and perceived realities, it is not surprising that Fink concluded that "the glimpse of department and college operations offered by this study reveals little in the way of purposeful activities designed to develop teaching competence in beginning teachers" (7).

Whitt (1991) conducted interviews with six newly employed faculty members, six department chairpersons and four administrators in a School of Education at a large midwestern research university in the U.S. She justified her use of qualitative research methods as constituting "excellent tools for probing institutional values, expectations and socialization." The rationale for her choice of research sample was similar to the one that shaped the present study.

The limitations that a small number of respondents from a single setting place on generalization of findings are obvious; however, such an investigation allows for deep, rather than broad, examination and, it is hoped, correspondingly deep understanding. My purpose was to generate a clear, accurate, and trustworthy picture of the perceptions and experiences of one group of individuals in a particular context, not generalizable conclusions (181-2).

Whitt's findings were depressingly similar to the one's cited by Boice and Fink. In addition to expressing their sense of isolation at the lack of collegial support they received, Whitt's respondents struggled with the expectation that they would be able to "hit the ground running" and expressed their frustration about being expected to "just know" what it meant to be a successful faculty member. Evidence of the power of the

assumptive world in shaping faculty behaviour was illustrated by Whitt's speculation that "newcomers (who) are, for the most part, left alone to figure out what they are supposed to do...rely on experiences and interpretations from previous settings to make sense of events and activities in the new setting"(179). (See also Cole and Watson 1991; Lortie 1975; Zeichner and Tabachnick 1985).

An interesting finding from this study was the contribution to the new faculty members' experience made by the attitudes of their department chairpersons. Most chairs saw themselves as acting in ways that were supportive to new faculty, although none of them seemed to think that faculty should have any special consideration in terms of needing time to settle in and find their feet in their new role. From the faculty point of view, "most felt that their chairpersons were not adequately involved with them nor as helpful as they could, or should, have been" (187). New faculty members in Whitt's study described their feelings and experiences as "predominantly negative", "stressful" and "threatening."

The theme of stress among new faculty was addressed by Sorcinelli (1992) as one of the outcomes of a longitudinal study of new faculty career development conducted over a five year period (Olsen and Sorcinelli 1992). This study discovered that even faculty who reported themselves as "highly satisfied" with their new career (as a result of an increased sense of accomplishment, personal autonomy, opportunities for intellectual growth, etc.) — even among these highly satisfied individuals, work stress steadily eroded satisfaction. Among the most stressful conditions was not enough time to get everything done without threat to personal and physical well-being. Another was inadequate feedback, recognition and rewards for the work the institution says it values. Unrealistic expectations and lack of collegiality were the by now familiar third and fourth "stress points" mentioned, while balancing work, personal and family life came fifth.

Mentoring

Most of the studies of new faculty experience came up with very similar conclusions. Faculty need better orientation, support, and formative feedback during their first year(s) in their new role (Cole and Watson 1991; Fink 1992; Whitt 1991); they need “enabling conditions such as workload adjustments, appropriate class assignments, release time, opportunities for classroom observation, reflection, and discussion” (Cole and Watson 1991, 8). In Whitt’s view, “The simplest way of helping new college teachers to develop would be to reduce their teaching loads and to give them fewer different classes to teach during the first year. This is not a costly solution” (5).

Several studies pointed to the need for chairs who are trained and willing to accept the responsibility of providing faculty with the resources and support they need to be successful (Wheeler 1992; Whitt 1991); and particularly, new faculty need to be connected on a regular and systematic basis with mentors who can provide them with guidance, modeling and support (Boice 1992; Cole and Watson 1991; Newberry 1978; Gehrke and Kay 1984; Whitt 1991).

In this regard, Gehrke and Kay (1984) stressed the necessity that mentoring relationships be entered into on the basis of mutual commitment of trainer and trainee, and be comprehensive in their breadth of influence. “Relationships should be open, informal, and have a high frequency of interaction” (21). Boice (in Sorcinelli and Austin 1992) reinforced this statement to the extent of recommending that chairpersons and staff developers should be prepared to monitor the frequency and quality of mentor/mentee relationships to ensure regular contact is being made, and offer support where resistance or conflicts occur. Boice’s findings indicated that mentoring pairs can work as well across departments as within the same department, and non-traditional pairs can be as effective as the traditional ones (where the mentor and mentee choose each other, the mentor is

older, etc.). In short, he concluded, “the process of meeting together in supportive fashion is more important than the personal characteristics of the pair members” (53).

Culture and Reciprocal Socialization

Another aspect of new faculty development that is of particular relevance to the present study is the issue of the reciprocal socialization process that exists between new faculty and the culture of the departments and institutions they enter (Austin, Brocato and LaFleur 1993; Austin 1990; Lawrence 1985; Whitt 1991). Organizational socialization can be defined as the process by which the newcomer learns what is important in the organization, including its norms and values, and the behaviours expected of members of the organization (Schein 1968). Culture is understood as “an interpretive framework for understanding and appreciating events and action” (Kuh and Whitt 1988, in Austin 1991).

As Lawrence (1985) expressed it, “productivity and work satisfaction are functions of the person-environment fit” (59). But clearly, *fit* is at least partly a function of how well expectations and prior assumptions meet emerging realities. College teachers are the product of several cultural influences. These include the teaching they received while they were growing up, their most recent educational experience as an adult, their academic discipline, and the complexity of social and professional expectations that they bring with them from the business or industry setting where they were formerly employed. New faculty who come from recent experience either as a graduate student or instructor in a university may have a rude awakening in the college setting. “...while the values that have been incorporated into the academic profession from the disciplinary culture both guide and validate faculty behaviour in the research university, they can be a source of incongruence and stress for faculty working in institutional settings (such as community colleges) where teaching rather than research is the dominant institutional commitment” (Austin 1990, 63).

How much more incongruity may a person experience who moves from the bottom-line driven, productivity-oriented business world to the slower paced, more collaborative culture of the college, where every decision requires a democratic committee process. To add to the confusion, the culture within the college setting is not one, but several sometimes competing sets of norms and values. The humanistic, student-centred orientation of the staff development facilitator, for example, may be confusingly at odds with a departmental ethos which stresses taking a hard line with students to prepare them for the “real world.”

However, as Austin, Brocato and LaFleur (1993) emphasized, “even though most research or organizational socialization focuses on an individual’s adaptation to the organization, the institution does not remain unaffected by the presence of newcomers. New members to an organization bring their own values, beliefs, assumptions which can alter the culture they are entering” (5). In the college, where faculty are drawn from such a wide variety of backgrounds, this is perhaps more true than in any other institutional setting. One of the most highly valued attributes of new faculty in a college setting is their content currency and immediate business or industry experience. Little research appears to have been conducted so far as to how college teachers’ prior “apprenticeship of observation and experience” in the classroom, and their resulting assumptions about teaching, affect not only what they know, but how they “construct their role” as college teachers, and affect the culture of the colleges they join (18).

SUMMARY

The preceding discussion has reviewed a wide range of studies on the forces, both internal and external, which impinge upon and influence the socialization and transition experiences of new full-time faculty in the colleges. Underlying actual experience are the complex perceptions, values, beliefs and interpretations of life experience which make up

the *assumptive form world* of each individual. Interwoven with these assumptions are the insights that can be gained from the literature on life transitions, and from the various theories of life-span development which combine to explain how adults see, experience and interpret their world.

From the outside looking in, forces of change in the economic, political and social environment were reviewed to describe their impact on organizational transition. Insights gained from the literature on faculty development and career transition were helpful in understanding organizational responses to environmental change.

Finally, several studies of the experience of new teachers on both sides of the border, in colleges and universities as well as in primary and secondary education, were reviewed. Particular emphasis was placed on the self-reports of new faculty about their experience as new teachers. The potential impact of institutional culture on the developing teachers was briefly mentioned, as was the reciprocal impact the teachers may have on the culture of the institutions they enter. Finally, mention was made of the recommendations of several investigators around “enabling conditions” for success in academia, with particular emphasis on reduction of workload, orientation programs and mentoring.

In Chapter 3, the methodology of the present study is outlined. The respondents of the study are described, as is the decision-making which underlay the method used for their selection. A rationale is presented for the use of qualitative research methodology, and for the development of grounded theory through the analysis of data generated from personal interviews.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study was to identify, through analysis of the transcripts of personal interviews, new faculty members' perceptions of the transitions they experienced as they progressed through the first two years of full-time teaching in the community college. The intent was twofold:

- 1) to examine faculty members' perceptions of the changes or life circumstances which precipitated their decision to pursue or continue a career in college teaching, and
- 2) to discover how their actual experience compared with their prior expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the college teacher.

In addition, this study was designed to identify faculty members' perceptions of the kinds of environmental factors in the college that helped prepare, socialize and support them in their new profession.

In Chapter 3, the research design is described and a rationale provided for the choice of the personal interview as the vehicle for recording faculty members' experiences of transition. The interview process is outlined and the use of qualitative data analysis is explained as the methodology for exploring and interpreting the findings. The population and sample chosen for this study are identified. The methods of approaching the research participants and collecting data are set forth, and a list of the informal open-ended questions which guided the interviews is provided in Appendix A. Methods of data analysis are outlined in detail. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of validity and generalizability as they relate to qualitative research.

RESEARCH DESIGN

An exploratory, qualitative research methodology was chosen because it seemed best suited to encouraging faculty to "tell their stories," reflect on and describe their experiences and explore their perceptions of the transition into full-time college teaching. Stories were elicited through a process of personal interviews which were tape-recorded, transcribed verbatim by the researcher, and then returned to the interviewee for comments and additions as part of the analysis process.

The central goal of this study was to enhance understanding and enable interpretation of a complex, sometimes disorienting, life process which has great potential for personal and professional growth. Participants were asked to go back in their memories and trace the decision-making process that led to their coming into full-time college teaching. They were invited to recall and explore not only experiences and "critical-incidents," but feelings, assumptions, expectations, interpretations and perceptions. The decision to conduct personal interviews with a relatively small number of faculty, rather than canvassing a wide range of opinion through a more impersonal survey process, was a decision in favour of meanings and interpretations, rather than facts and verification of pre-determined theories. It was a decision similar to the one described by Vaillant (1977), who found that in following through with his decision to interview his respondents, he "was repeatedly reminded that their lives were too human for science, too beautiful for numbers, too sad for diagnosis, and too immortal for bound journals" (11).

Because of the nature of this investigation, it is important to note that the investigator did not intend to use the results of this inquiry to test hypotheses, make predictions or exert control over policy or behaviour. Neither was the intent to evaluate the professional competence of the new faculty or make recommendations for changes in the orientation program they all experienced.

It was hoped that from the rich and detailed descriptions of the new faculty members' transition experiences, some patterns would emerge that would make possible the formulation of tentative questions and recommendations for further investigation. In the process, faculty would gain the opportunity to reflect on and validate their experience, and create meaning through enhanced understanding of "what is lost and what is gained in the restructuring of a life space" (Egidio 1986). Those whose role it is to support, mentor and plan orientation and development programs on behalf of new faculty might also gain from the increased understanding made possible by this exploration.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The participants in this enquiry were drawn from about 50 new full-time faculty members who have taken part in a two-year orientation and development program at a large metropolitan Canadian college over the last four years. Of the potential participants, a "purposive" sample of approximately one-quarter of the total group was chosen to participate in personal interviews. Interviewees represented, in approximately equal proportions, faculty who were hired full-time in 1990, 1991 and 1992. Care was taken to choose a sample which was evenly distributed between men and women, represented a range of ages and years of prior teaching experience, and included a cross-section of all academic divisions and subject areas represented in the larger group (see Table 3.1). Academic divisions and subject areas are omitted to protect confidentiality.

Some participants had never taught before, and were recruited by the college for their expertise in the business, industry or service sector they represented. A few came to the college through the traditional route of newly recruited university faculty, i.e. they had recently completed post-graduate studies at a university, with or without a teaching assistantship. Prior teaching experience in the group as a whole ranged from none, to

Table 3.1: Participant Profile.

Interview #	Gender	Age range	Yrs on Full-Time Faculty	Yrs of Prior Teaching Experience	Prior Teaching Setting
1A	M	40-44	1	0	N/A
1B	M	40-44	1	0	N/A
1C	F	35-39	1	3	College - Sessional
1D	M	35-39	1	1 5	College - Sessional University - T.A.
2A	F	35-39	2	0	N/A
2B	F	40-44	2	1/2	College - Night-school
2C	M	35-39	2	2	University
2D	F	40-44	2	4 5	College - Sessional Field Supervision
3A	M	40-44	3	2	College - Night-school
3B	F	35-39	3	1 1/2	Private Prof. School
3C	F	35-39	3	6 1/2 3	College - Sessional/PT Private Prof. School
3D	M	45-49	3	5 1	University College - Sessional

some experience teaching in other settings (university or high school), to as much as ten years experience teaching at the college under study, or in other colleges in Ontario or across Canada, on a part-time or sessional (contract) basis.

When the study was conducted, all new faculty had completed at least the first year of an orientation and teacher training program for new full-time faculty. They participated individually or with their peers in the following program components:

- a week-long residential (pre-service) orientation to college teaching,
- pairing with a mentor, usually a more experienced faculty member in their own subject area,
- weekly small group sharing sessions with their peers during the first year, which focused on discussion of problems, issues and success stories,
- a nine week (27 hour) course in the first semester on *College Teaching* (instructional skills) and a course of similar duration during the winter semester on *The Community College* (mission and values, structure, student and faculty services, etc.),
- weekly recording of a “learning journal,” and
- creation, in consultation with divisional supervisors, of a personal development plan which guided the development of a “major educational project” during the second year.

It was recognized that the subjects in this study would vary in their years of teaching experience. They also varied in the time that had elapsed since they experienced their first full-time (probationary) year. About one-third of the group was still “on probation” during the course of the study. The balance had from one to two years of perspective on the experience. Both these variables may have affected how they remembered and perceived their transition experience.

THE PILOT STUDY

A small pilot study was conducted in preparation for the dissertation research. Three faculty members were contacted personally and by letter, explaining the purpose and methods of the study, and assuring them of the procedures that had been adopted to protect their anonymity and confidentiality in accordance with the human subjects regulations of Michigan State University.

Participants were asked to engage in a three-part process:

- To complete a questionnaire made up of 21 questions that adhered closely to the primary research questions of the study, and probed the related issues identified by Boice (1992) and Sorcinelli and Austin (1991) of collegiality, desire for mentoring, and experience of stress during the first year of college teaching. The questionnaire combined open-ended questions (the majority) and restricted response (ratings) questions. It was expected that the questionnaire would take about one hour to complete.
- To take part in an interview of approximately 90 minutes, which was a free flowing, open-ended process in which the respondents were encouraged to explore issues of concern to them within the loose structure of the four guiding research questions (outlined below).
- To review the transcripts of the interview, and make any comments, additions or "corrections" as they saw fit.

All participants agreed to allow the interviews to be tape-recorded, with the understanding that the investigator would be the only one who would have access to the transcripts, and that a coding system would protect the respondents' anonymity.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

An interview process was selected as the most personal and potentially rich way to allow faculty to explore and report "in their own voice" on the meanings they attached

to their transition experience. Bogdan and Bicklen (1982) describe the qualitative research interview as a process by which the investigator can “gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words, so that the researcher can develop insight on how subjects interpret some piece of the world” (135).

Because of the prior relationships that were already established between the investigator and the research participants, it was recognized that the role of the researcher was a highly sensitive one and that the researcher would, in herself, constitute a “treatment” variable, both in her role as the coordinator of the new faculty program, and in the act of interviewing and interpreting the responses of the faculty.

This relationship carried with it both advantages and responsibilities. On the plus side a high degree of rapport and trust had already been established between the investigator and the population under study. The involvement of the researcher with new faculty throughout their orientation and development program facilitated access to faculty members' perceptions of their transition process, and permitted triangulation between the participants' self-reports, their reflections in learning journals, and the researcher's observations of their responses to various aspects of the program.

During the pilot study, the three participants seemed relaxed and willing to respond fully to the questionnaire and engage openly in the interview process. Given their potential vulnerability in agreeing to take part in this study, the depth of self-revelation in which they were willing to engage was surprising and gratifying. People talked freely about some quite sensitive personal issues that affected their decisions to come into, or stay in teaching. One talked at length about the politics of his department and his fears for his own and his co-workers' jobs. In all cases, confidences were shared which attested to the degree of trust the participants were willing to place in the confidentiality of the interview.

It was recognized that with this level of trust goes an equal level of responsibility. Since the faculty who participated in the larger study were interviewed by a faculty development consultant in their own college, it was essential that their participation in this study be voluntary. Every effort was made to present demographic details in ways that did not identify responses with individual participants. Strictest confidentiality was maintained in the conduct of interviews and the recording and storage of interview and questionnaire data. In fact, no one except the primary investigator heard the tapes or saw transcripts of interviews or items from learning journals. Records of data collected were kept off campus.

By guiding and encouraging faculty to reflect on a major time of decision and choice in their lives, it was anticipated that certain themes would emerge. Schlossberg (1984) observed that “the (recurring) themes of adulthood, which most adults are continuously working on throughout the life course, are like the point and counterpoint of a fugue” (20). The personal interview promised to be a significant technique, both in its process and in its outcomes, for unraveling some of those themes.

In reading about qualitative interviewing, the researcher struggled with the question of how the conceptual frameworks on which a study was based could guide interpretation and provide a context for what emerged from the respondents, without distorting the data. In Chapter 3, *Theoretical Sensitivity*, Strauss and Corbin (1990) discussed the relationship between the researcher’s biases and perceptions and his or her interpretations of the data. While acknowledging the reality of “theoretical predispositions” (Merriam and Simpson 1984), Strauss and Corbin warned that “the use of *borrowed* concepts can have a grave disadvantage,” if researchers are not conscious of the tendency to overlay standard meanings on emerging data, “in essence stopping the inquiry in its tracks instead of opening it” (68).

INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

In the light of these considerations, and the experience of the pilot interviews, a **decision** was made to alter the design of the research process to become more fully **emergent** and grounded in the participant's own experience. In the spirit of a truly **inductive** process, it was decided to interview respondents first, without the prior **stimulus** of responding to a questionnaire which might potentially have the effect of **structuring** their responses along the lines of the researcher's conceptual framework.

Fifteen faculty members were approached in all, of whom 12 agreed to participate in **the** study. The study sample consisted of six men and six women ranging in age from **early** 30's to late 40's. People who had joined the college on a full-time "permanent" basis in **1990**, 1991, and 1992 were equally represented. Prior teaching experience in the group **varied** from none, to a total of nearly 10 years experience in a variety of post-secondary **settings**. A detailed display of the demographics of the participants appears in Chapter 4.

All participants were approached initially by the researcher to gauge their general **willingness** to be involved in the study. Only two declined to take part. A third expressed an **interest**, but was unable to participate because of previous time commitments. A letter (**Appendix A**) was sent to the 12 interested faculty, outlining the general purpose and **process** of the research, and describing the voluntary nature of their participation and the **safeguards** which would protect their anonymity. Permission was obtained to tape-record all **interviews**, and it was explained to each participant that taped material would be **transcribed** verbatim by the interviewer, and the transcript returned for additions, **corrections** or "second thoughts."

Interviews were conducted between September and December, 1993. Although **interviews** were held on campus, it was possible to obtain interview space in a private, **windowless** room with no telephone, thereby eliminating interruptions and distractions.

The **expected** length of the interviews (90 minutes) was checked in advance with each **particip**ant to be sure that people were not under pressure to meet competing deadlines. All **interviews** ran a minimum of 90 minutes. As the interview time was drawing to a close, several participants expressed a desire to extend the interview to allow for further **elaboration** of material they felt they particularly wanted to include. In two cases, a **follow-up** interview was scheduled to probe a particular aspect of the individual's story in **greater** depth.

As the interviews progressed, it became clear that the openness and high level of **rappor**t and trust which characterized the pilot interviews was generally present with the **majority** of research participants. Though one or two people displayed some signs of mild **anxiety** at the outset of the interview, visible nervousness nearly always evaporated **withi**n minutes of beginning discussion, and people were willing to share confidences **whic**h indicated a high degree of trust in the confidentiality of the research process. In only **one** case did an interviewee comment, *after* the tape-recorder was turned off and the **particip**ant was ready to leave, that there were "some things that simply could not be said with **a** tape-recorder running."

An open-ended, free-flowing interview process, guided by informally-stated **versi**ons of the four key research questions, allowed the participants to provide as much **inform**ation as possible about their personal stories and perceptions in whatever way was **most** meaningful to them. To guide their responses, the following questions served to **keep** the interviews focused on the research problem under study, while attempting to **provi**de maximum flexibility and minimal restraint on the answers and their expression. The **relationship** of each informal probe to the main research questions of this study is **indica**ted in parentheses.

- What was going on in your life that you feel influenced your decision to come into teaching on a full-time basis? (Research question 1)

- What did you expect when you came into full-time teaching at the college? How has the reality measured up to your expectations? (Research question 2)
- What are some of the factors that have helped you or hindered you during your first year? (Research question 2)
- What has been lost for you, and what has been gained in making the decision to take a full-time teaching position in the college? (Research question 3)
- What has the first year been like for you? Have you found yourself changing in the way you see or experience things; in the way you see yourself, your skills, your content, your students, your colleagues? (Research question 4)

In addition, active (reflective, non-evaluative) listening techniques and numerous sub-probes invited participants to elaborate on their responses and explore their perceptions in greater detail.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of grounded theory, defined as “the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained and analyzed from social research...(which) provides us with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications” (Glaser and Strauss 1967, 1). After the audio-tape of each interview was transcribed, a process was engaged in of developing code words to designate the key ideas expressed in the respondents’ comments, sorting them into categories and searching for emerging themes. (Bogdan and Bicklen 1982; Miles and Huberman 1983; Merriam 1991; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Lincoln and Guba 1985; etc.) The rationale for this slow and painstaking process was clearly articulated in a 1978 work by Barney Glaser entitled *Theoretical Sensitivity*. Glaser explains,

...what the man in the know, knows is empirical, experiential and descriptive; his knowledge is non-theoretical. From the analyst's point of

view what this “know” is are indicators that have yet to be conceptualized. The analyst gives the knowledgeable person categories, which grab many indicators under one idea and denote the underlying pattern. One idea can then handle much diversity in incidents. (13)

As each interview was completed, its data were transcribed and a paper copy of the transcript was sent to the interviewee for comment, corrections or additions. On a second paper copy, the interviewer began a process of assigning code words to significant phrases, sentences or paragraphs in each interview. Some passages received multiple codes, as many as six or eight in some cases, where several threads were referred to in one short comment. The process of encoding proceeded intuitively and cumulatively as each interview transcript became available.

At the same time that interviews were being transcribed and coded, the researcher began an ongoing process of “memoing” to capture intuitions, interpretations, theoretical or conceptual notions, as they were stimulated by working with the data. These were captured in a separate file so they could be retrieved, coded in their turn, and integrated into the process of “creating meaning” from the data.

After each interview was transcribed and coded, all data were entered into a Qualitative Data Analysis software program called *Hyperqual 2*. This program was developed by Raymond V. Padilla for the Macintosh computer, and purchased from Qualitative Research Management, 73-425 Hilltop Road, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92241 (641) 329-7026. *Hyperqual 2* is described as a program “for qualitative analysis and theory development.” It is a *Hypercard* application stack, but does not require separate acquisition of *Hypercard* or the *Hypercard Player*. The program is designed to perform the mechanical functions of qualitative data analysis and to facilitate the thinking process of the researcher in concept development. As the manual describes it:

- a) The mechanical aspect includes the acquisition, recording and storage of data, the manipulation of chunks of data, and the preparation of written outputs.

- b) The conceptual aspect includes the identification of meaningful chunks of data, the development of concepts so that theory construction can occur and the situation under study can be understood within the framework of the investigation.

As the author attests, "There is no computer available today that can do well the conceptual part of the qualitative data analysis. But any computer can be programmed to do very well the mechanical part." (*Hyperqual 2 Manual*, 8)

Once the data were loaded into the program, all codes or "tags" that had been attributed to each meaningful "chunk" of data were entered. Once all codes for all 12 interviews had been entered into the data base, the program permitted the researcher to combine all "exemplars" which had received any given code to search for commonalities and emerging themes. This process, called "filtering," enabled the researcher to establish the criteria, in the form of codes, by which specific data segments were sorted and combined for analysis.

An almost infinite process of cross-referencing and assembling of codes in different combinations was made possible without ever losing the origin of any one chunk of data. The program made it easy to return to the original context of each selection. Each chunk of data was fully identified with information about the source interview from which it was taken, the code which had been used to filter out each example, all additional codes or code combinations which had been attached to each chunk, and a unique identification number for each chunk. Figure 3.1 presents a sample of a chunk of data filtered and identified through the use of the *Hyperqual 2* program.

Some of the themes which emerged as a result of any one interview analysis suggested new probes or areas to be followed up in subsequent interviews. In this way, the process of analyzing data proceeded inductively, allowing the researcher some freedom to "play with metaphors, analogies and concepts" and to exercise the freedom to

speculate on meanings and interpretations, while accepting the discipline of staying firmly rooted in the data (Bogdan and Bicklen 1982, 153).

During the ongoing process of sifting and shifting of data chunks into various classifications and combinations, codes were changed, added to, built upon or deleted. As each interview built on the experiences of coding all others that came before it, a process of constant comparative analysis of data (Glaser and Strauss 1967) eventually identified patterns and themes which were shared from one interview to the next.

STACK: "Exeverything" 04/04/94		
EXEMPLAR: Card ID: 17759		
"...my expectations were that I would have more time for my family. But I still have weekends, and that's much more than I've ever had. And although I can't honestly say that I really had more than 2 or 3 weeks off this summer, because I was in the college a lot."		
Tags:		
expect/lifestyle	family-values	time-pressures
Filter: expect		
From: Site/Interview No.: Interview 1B - Card 2 Researcher: K. Mezei		
Source Card ID: 8390 Source: stack "Interview Data"		

Figure 3.1: Example of data "chunk" filtered, tagged and identified in *Hyperqual 2*.

From the 12 interviews a total of 233 codes were generated (Appendix B), from which a refined set of 25 categories eventually emerged (Appendix C). Glaser and Strauss describe the process:

While coding an incident from a category, (the researcher) compares it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category....This constant comparison of the incidents very soon starts to generate theoretical properties of the category. The analyst starts thinking in terms of the full range of types or continua of the category, its dimensions, the conditions under which it is pronounced or minimized, its

major consequences, its relation to other categories, and its other properties (107).

In the process of analyzing the hundreds of exemplars which fleshed out each category, a series of themes was eventually developed (Appendix D). These themes suggested a collection of pre-existing conditions in the lives of each individual which, combined with life circumstances and the expectations each person brought to his or her new status as a full-time college faculty member, influenced the transition into teaching. With the assumption of full-time responsibilities, a series of “tasks” marked out the path of the study group as they progressed through the first two years in their new profession. An attempt to chart the path suggested by data analysis resulted in a diagram representing the various developmental conditions and tasks which emerged, and the inter-relationships among them. This diagram is displayed and interpreted in Chapter 5 as Figure 5.1 *Elements in the Process of Transition into Full-Time College Teaching*.

VALIDITY

Although the concepts of validity and reliability are understood quite differently in the context of a qualitative research study, which does not make claims to generalizability, interview techniques had the advantage of permitting the researcher to check and recheck perceptions with the respondents during the course of the interview. The use of “member checks” allowed the faculty to reconsider their words after seeing them in print, and clarify their meanings.

The result of the constant comparative method of data analysis was a truly emergent study in which theory was generated inductively, rather than verified deductively. In this study, no attempt was made to remove human behaviour from its context. Recognition was given to the idea of multiple realities and it was accepted that in asking people to reflect on their perceptions of their own reality, and then sifting it

through the interpretive filter of the investigator, the result would inevitably be subjective. That is its strength, rather than its weakness.

In the words of Glaser and Strauss (1967),

...the constant comparative method is designed to aid the analyst...in generating a theory that is integrated, consistent, plausible, close to the data – and at the same time is in a form clear enough to be readily, if only partially, operationalized...The method is not designed (as methods of quantitative analysis are) to guarantee that two analysts working independently with the same data will achieve the same results; it is designed to allow, with discipline, for some of the vagueness and flexibility that aid the creative generation of theory (103).

In thinking about life transitions, interpretation is never closed or final, and the gradual understanding of the significant changes in anyone's life illuminates past as well as future transitions. This study will have met the researcher's intentions if the findings are recognized to be true by those who have lived the experience. If that is the case, the study will also have satisfied Allen and Jensen's (1990) test of validity, "whether experience can be recognized after having read only its description" (251).

SUMMARY

In the preceding discussion, the exploratory, "emergent" nature of this study was discussed, with emphasis on the choice of the personal interview as the method of data collection. The rationale and process of the interviews were detailed. The procedure for obtaining the cooperation of the research participants was identified, the participants were briefly described and the guiding questions for the interviews outlined. A description of the methods of data analysis included an explanation of the *constant comparative method* of coding and analyzing data, and an account of the computer program used to facilitate the process of qualitative analysis and theory development. A brief discussion of validity and generalizability as they relate to qualitative research concluded the discussion of the research methodology.

In Chapter 4, findings from the verbatim transcripts of the interviews with the 12 research participants are arranged thematically to address each of the four research questions of this study:

- 1) To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?
- 2) What assumptions and expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?
- 3) What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?
- 4) Are there common and **significant** transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

Responses to each question are presented in the context of the categories and themes that address each question most directly, allowing the voices of representative members of the group to create meaning and give life and authenticity to the narrative.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to identify, through qualitative analysis of interview data, new faculty members' interpretations of their experience of adapting to full-time teaching in a community college. The study explored perceptions of the adaptation process — how faculty responded emotionally to and internalized their transition into full-time teaching. As described in Chapter 3, interview questions were deliberately open-ended, although closely linked to the research questions below. Numerous probes and invitations to elaborate were employed to encourage the respondents to tell their stories in their own way, placing emphasis and interpreting events according to each person's unique world view.

In the process of analyzing the interview transcripts, the researcher assigned code words to significant phrases, sentences or paragraphs in each interview. From the accumulated data of the 12 interviews, over 230 codes were established (Appendix D) which were eventually grouped into categories (Appendix E) and arranged thematically (Appendix F) to address each of the four research questions. In the following discussion, responses to each question are presented in turn, allowing the voices of representative members of the group to enrich the narrative. Given the length and complexity of this chapter, an advance organizer has been provided (see Figure 4.1) to assist the reader in following the organization of the data.

In selecting the 12 respondents, care was taken to choose a sample which was evenly distributed between men and women, represented a range of ages and years of

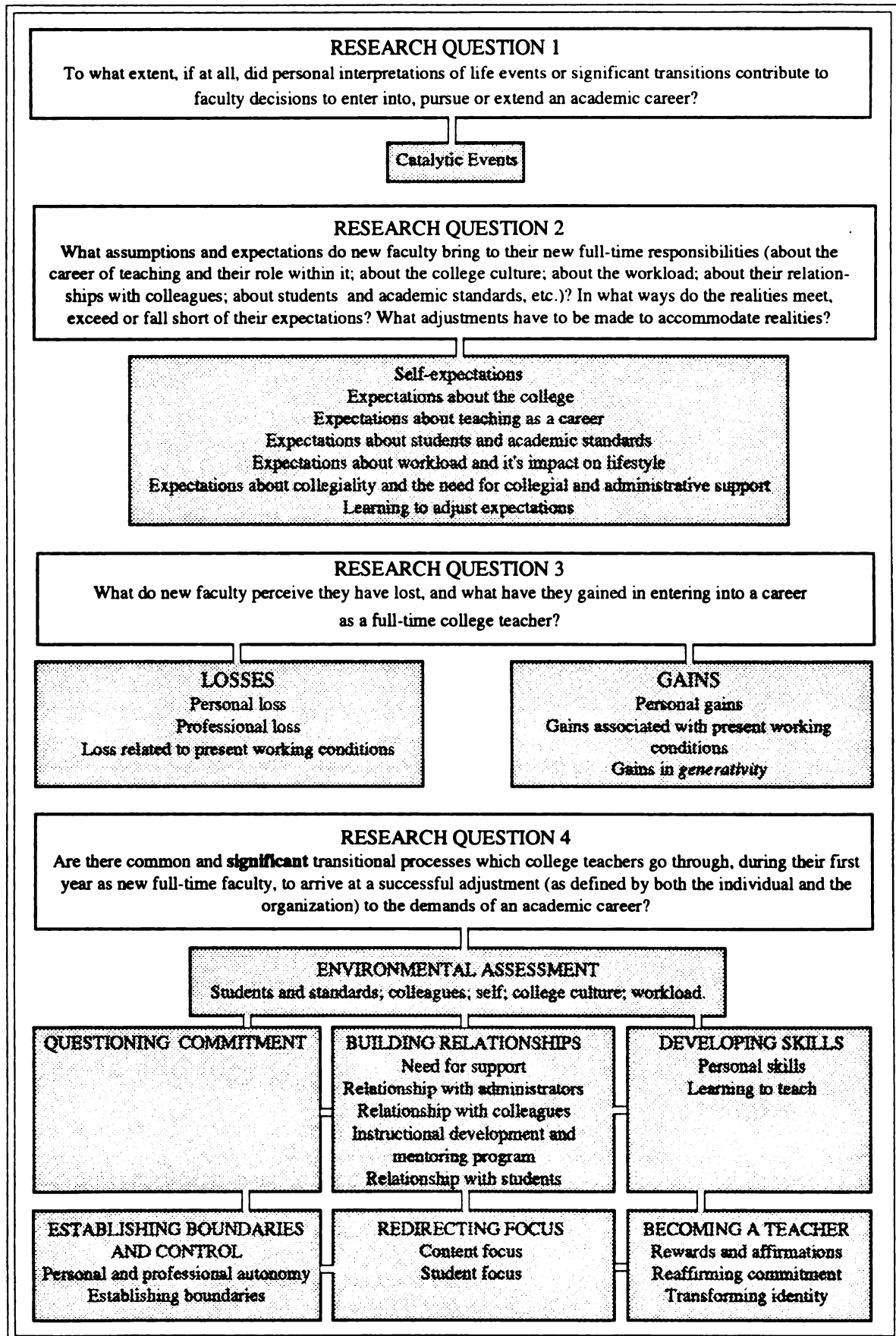


Figure 4.1: Advance organizer

prior teaching experience, and included a cross-section of all academic divisions and subject areas represented in the larger group (see Table 3.1).

Of these variables, age and gender proved to be relatively insignificant. That is, no particular patterns were readily discernible in so small a sample as being more typical of one age group or gender than the other. Life responsibilities, such as the existence and age of children, seemed to be more important in shaping experience than whether the respondent was male or female, in the mid-thirties or mid-forties.

On the other hand, years of prior teaching experience, and the time that had elapsed since new faculty had experienced their first full-time (probationary) year were both mentioned as factors that affected confidence in the classroom, the shift from focusing on presentation and content to focusing on students and their learning styles, and the individual teachers' ability to establish boundaries in negotiating workloads with their supervisors. Previous professional or academic background was mentioned in one way or another by most respondents as a significant influence on their experience as new faculty. In many cases, the teachers' prior professional experience and the culture of their new department within the college were significantly at variance and required them to search their own values and adjust their expectations. These findings are all elaborated in the discussion which follows.

In reporting the words of the respondents, the interviewer struggled with whether to use pseudonyms to identify each example quoted. The advantage would be the greater degree of "personalizing" of the data, and the opportunity for the reader to come to know each individual voice as respondents explored their unique perspectives. The disadvantage, which was judged to be insurmountable, was the risk of breaking confidentiality by making individual voices too easy to identify. The decision was made to leave the pseudonyms out. In places where dialogue is reported, the interviewer was designated as I., and the respondent as R.

In the examples that follow, additions or substitutions in the text to establish context or protect confidentiality were placed within brackets, (____). Pauses and "back-trackings" in the transcript were designated thus, ...

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?

A variety of codes combined to give colour and meaning to respondents' experiences of what was going on in their lives that preceded their decision to enter teaching. Some of these circumstances would undoubtedly be regarded as critical incidents by any measure. Others might more usefully be labeled "catalytic events." This term acknowledges that though the incident may have been critical only in the eyes of the person experiencing it, it nevertheless started a process in motion which culminated in a significant change for that person.

Catalytic Events

The life events or significant transitions reported by each of the respondents followed no particular pattern. What was significant was that almost all respondents reported some circumstance that in their mind led eventually to a decision to move into teaching. Several respondents reported a life transition which thrust them into a period of indecision... that "gap in the continuity of existence" which characterizes Bridges (1980) "neutral -zone."

One respondent was facing a period of transition in employment.

...what really precipitated my thinking in terms of changes, and eventually what led to coming to (this college), was that the work at (my former

employer) dried out. And it also dried out at a time when my free lance work sort of ...ah...another job had ended that I was doing free lance. And I was going “what am I going to do?”

This reality, and the feeling that mid-life was catching up with him, combined to motivate him to modify his free-lance lifestyle and seek “stable” employment.

I started to feel the pressure, not from (my wife), really, but from myself. Because, I mean, I could ...on my own, eat peanut butter for three weeks, and then get a cheque for \$10,000 and spend most of it living the high life, and then go back to peanut butter...you know...that kind of thing. But I felt that I could no longer do that, although (my wife) made a nice salary, but it wasn't really enough for us to think about things like buying a house.

The story of a second respondent mirrored some of the same themes. He described a failed business initiative which coincided with personal changes.

...I decided to step out of the deal. The job here at (the college) became...or was advertised at the same time that the deal was unraveling. So I applied, actually, before the deal was dead....And the other thing was that at precisely this time – talk about lousy timing – but not.....it's wonderful.....my wife and I had our first child...

A third respondent reported a similar motivation.

...and it just came out of need. I needed a job, and I needed to work. I was married, and life was different. You know, there was responsibility now, and children were going to be on their way. I needed to ...I needed to work. And all through my (previous studies), you know, I didn't need to work. I worked, but I didn't need to work in the way that now I needed to blossom into manhood. And...or humanhood, or whatever the hell...

In another instance, a person who had maintained a close and satisfying working relationship with a colleague (a family friend) for 16 years, was cut adrift emotionally by his unexpected suicide.

Where was I before? Well, I'd worked as a (previous profession) for 18 years and for, I guess, 16 of those years I worked for one (professional). And he committed suicide...

You know, it was quite a personal relationship, as well. And I just felt at that point in time, I needed... something...I didn't know what it was. I just knew I would go into work every day and I was no longer happy. You

know, you go through that period where you go in and it's like...I've done this. You know, every day's the same...

Another example of transition precipitated by job loss was illustrated in the following account.

R. I guess I was working for (a previous employer) for almost a year, and one day the bailiff walked in and closed us down. I had no clue. Absolutely no clue. The problem was that my office was generating money, and I did my sales reports, and I did my...everything else and I was putting money into the bank. I didn't realize that the company was just way in...

Luckily no one ever cited me in the bankruptcy process that went through. I think it was fairly clear that I had been completely in the dark, and was just running my office as a separate entity.

I. But you were out of a job, at that point.

R. Oh yeah.

One respondent's "catalytic event" was related to a felt need to relocate and make a new start after a series of family changes.

R. ...my mother had died. My father died a number of years before. (My wife) had accomplished what she wanted to and I wanted to go back to the mainstream.... There was no future there for my kids.

I. It was beginning to feel like a real dead end?

R. Yeah. It just wasn't there. It wasn't...dead end. There was nothing...I used to have nightmares that I would end up in a suburb of (my province) and I would wake up to a cold sweat.

Two respondents cited events in their childhood or adolescence that shaped their entry into teaching. In one case, an early childhood trauma, reinforced in adolescence, created a compelling sense of anxiety surrounding aspects of the respondent's professional responsibilities. She concluded that teaching would be a way to serve her profession by developing learners in an atmosphere that allowed her to reduce exposure to the source of anxiety.

The other respondent felt belittled and lacked encouragement in pursuing her educational goals in adolescence. She concluded that she could be a positive influence in

the lives of other students, and gradually positioned herself for the day when she would become a teacher.

I have always been interested in education, and that happened...well for a long time, but more so when I was working for the government, and I looked at education as an issue. And I used to joke that I was going to become a Minister of Education. I really...a part of it stems back to my bad experience in school and I thought, I am going to make things right. I am going to change things.

The remaining four respondents did not report any specific incident that precipitated their entry into teaching. All had been attracted to the aspects of their previous employment that related to teaching, and all were contemplating extending their careers in that direction.

For various reasons, this group found the timing and expectations of their new career opportunity at variance with some of their already established priorities. They were united by their ambivalence about the move they were contemplating. Three felt that they had "nothing to lose" in taking the opportunity and much, potentially, to lose if they did not.

I wasn't sure, and I wasn't expecting (to be hired). It seemed to me it was both things simultaneously. On the one hand it would be nice. But on the other hand, I'd like to get closure on something I've struggled with for so long, and I've invested so much time...(finishing a degree program).

And yes, you're absolutely right, I wasn't quite sure. But at that point, as I said, my expectation was that this is not a career. This is simply...

I. A stopgap?

R. A stopgap. And I've got nothing to lose.

... if I didn't get the job, fine. If I got it, OK, we'll see what we can do.

And (my partner) wanted so badly for me to like it (the new job), because he knew how difficult it was for me to make a decision (to leave the previous job). And supported that one. And when I said to him...and he's the one who...I said, "I don't know what to do." He said, "How will you feel if you don't take it?" And that was the line that triggered it.

The final respondent commented on his previous work experience as offering a "natural" transition into teaching.

R. I came from a (trades) background, so no, teaching was not focused on as a separate thing. But in our trade, apprenticeship is something that is traditional. You take someone who is brand new to the industry and you bring them along, passing on of knowledge...you know, mouth to ear sort of thing. Show and tell kinds of activities. And I had many apprentices during my time as a tradesman. So teaching came on the job as part of something you did.

I. ...you came in thinking that you were going to have a little more time for family, and kids, and whatnot, in academics?

R. (Shared chuckle) Yeah....

I. ...based, I guess, on your experience as a part time teacher, and...BOY, WAS I WRONG, was I think the way you said it in here.

P. Yeah, as a part-timer.....I sure was. That didn't happen at all.

Summary

The purpose of Research Question 1 was to explore the life experiences and significant transitional events, if any, that led to each person's decision to enter a teaching career. An effort was made in reporting responses to Question 1 to represent the voices of all 12 of the respondents in this study. Eight members of the group described catalytic events in the recent or, in two cases, distant past which they felt were significant influences on their entry into teaching. Of the remaining four, three were persuaded to come into teaching by the feeling that the gains outweighed the risks of turning down the opportunity when it was presented. The final respondent made a decision to extend his experience as a part-time teacher into full-time, despite the discovery that his expectations of the full-time workload did not measure up to the reality.

This gap between expectations and "realities," as perceived by the new full-time faculty, was widely experienced and described by every member of the group. A sample of their perceptions is presented in the responses to Research Question 2.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it, about the college culture, about the workload, about their relationships with colleagues, about students and academic standards)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?

The question about expectations proved to be one of the most fruitful of the inquiry. Ninety-five examples, representing the concerns of all 12 respondents, received codes related to expectations in 10 distinct but interrelated categories. They included self-expectations; expectations about the college, about teaching as a career, and about the degree to which it was necessary to adjust expectations; about students and academic standards; about workload and its impact on lifestyle; about collegiality and the need for collegial and administrative support. In many exemplars, two or more of the above codes were represented.

A further filtering process separated examples which illustrated advance expectations from those that referred to ways in which expectations were later met, exceeded or unrealized. The following sample is intended to give a fair representation of both issues and voices.

Self-expectations

Among the most idealistic of all the new faculty members' expectations were the ones they placed upon themselves and their own performance. The resulting anxiety created considerable stress, as the following examples illustrate:

...what I did to myself, last year, in terms of I've got to prove that I'm the valid...the right candidate. I've got to prove my worth. I've got to show them that, yes!...And I figure I did the opposite, because I was so anxious. I hated it. I just hated what I was doing to myself. I was really unhappy. I thought...and why am I here?

But I think the biggest piece was the expectations that I put on myself to prove my worth, and to make sure they knew that they got what they thought they were getting, and more.

So I was a little anxious about...the other faculty got the second position, but in some ways I was sort of chosen over her the first time. So my expectations...and she'd been teaching for 10 years, but I was trying to be as good as (she was).

I have friends who are teachers and I knew what it would be like, I think. It wasn't... It's just - the stress is different than a stress in my other job. It's different ... A lot of things you can't control.

So I have to look at my expectations. But I don't want to compromise... anyway I'm struggling with that.

Several teachers indicated that they experienced self-doubt when their students did not perform as well as they had expected. They tended to blame themselves, particularly during their first year or two of full-time teaching.

I. Did you have any expectations, for example, of what the students would be like, as opposed to what they had been like at university?

R. I was shocked. I was pretty well shocked by the level of literacy. Yeah, I was really and truly surprised by that. Stunned, to put it mildly. It was a job to learn to teach in this setting. You know, I'm not sure that I learned it. I'm always learning it, but it was kind of a shock.

(Students) are coming at it with no background. So I am looking...I approach it more with a...a little bit of my own fault...like, what could I do to increase the quality of their work?

I know that's my problem, and I know that I overextend myself. So I have to be really careful with that. But I am learning more, so, like now I'm just...I always joke...and say, "put it back in it's holster." And...you know if I can't get those papers back within a week, I can't get them back within a week. That's all there is to it, you know...and quit beating myself up about it.

Some respondents seemed to display a degree of numbness in response to the demands on their time and energy, despite claims that they had anticipated the heavy workload.

...that is the frustrating thing. And that's the transition that...I'm not having a hard time with, quite frankly, but it is the most demanding ...because, I mean, since... from September to December, I've (done) basically nothing (else)...which is OK, and I actually expected that...

I. I'm wondering how your feelings about the college have changed? I'm interested inyour expectations, and how you feel about being in this job, and the reality of how you feel about it now.

R. My expectations have gone away...I don't have time to expect much....I don't...I think you asked how long do (I) expect to stay at the college. I have no idea, I really don't.

Some teachers experienced a resurgence of idealism as they gradually developed strategies to solve some of the challenges presented to them by their own high expectations.

I'd want it to be perfect. You know what I mean? I mean I would want it to be ...and I want to encourage, rather than discourage people. But what makes it easier now is I really work at outlining what, specifically, are my criteria for marking. And that's really helped me. So you know, if the mark is worth 20, I'd write all of those points down that I'm looking for. And that has made life so much easier.

Expectations about the College

Inevitably, new faculty came into the college system with certain expectations about the kind of place it would be to work. Some of those expectations were based on reputation and some on prior experience as a student. Where faculty came previously from other academic settings (usually university), certain adjustments were necessary to arrive at a level of comfort within the college culture. The same was true of teachers who originated in business and industry settings.

The strong positive reputation that the college under study enjoys in the community proved to have both positive and negative impact on teachers' expectations. Two new teachers benefited from optimistic first impressions.

I thought it would be a great place to work at. I like the ambiance. I think the size is good. I mean it's not too small and it's not too big. So I think it's still intimate enough that you can know a lot of your colleagues.

I knew about (the college) in...I had taken _____ courses here. I'd taken two of them actually. (The college) did have a good reputation, actually in the (professional) community. And so when I did put my feelers out for different colleges, (this college) was certainly one of them, because of that external reputation.

However, a third teacher found that her awareness of the college's strong reputation for excellence caused her to place very high and stressful expectations on herself. As a result, she found herself agreeing to excessive demands on her time and energy, and then resenting it.

(The college) has a terrific reputation out there. And that was a part of my stress level, that I was invited into being a part of that reputation, and how do I maintain that? I think maybe that's part of the reason why I didn't resist an awful lot of the things that I was told to do even though I had a colleague who'd say, "No, don't do that. You're not supposed to."...was because of the reputation of the college.

Two people commented on the difference in their ability to get things done and make autonomous decisions in industry and business, in comparison with the pace and process of decision-making in the college.

I. What was it like coming from what you knew of the college, and the connection you'd had with the college, into the position that you're in now?

P. There was a transition for sure, and there was a difference in perception of the college when I came on full-time. It's like trying to turn a battleship. It's so large, this machine, and it does not respond quickly. And when I was running my own company, I had no problem with having a decision challenged. I made a decision and that's the way it was, for better or worse.

...there are specific challenges in the _____ business that ...that do not exist here. And one is...at my level, being the person who takes all the

responsibility. Has all the accountability, and sinks or swims on that which follows. I don't think that exists to the same extent here. I think that I could probably do a crummy job and, you know, find ways to skirt issues.

Finally, two faculty who came to the college from previous teaching positions in the university describe the ways they had to adjust their expectations. The first comments on the shift from an atmosphere of relative academic freedom and autonomy, to one of comparative inflexibility and conformity.

I think it was a big change for me, in terms of making that adjustment to teacher at a community college vs. professor at the university. In terms of, you know, the goals. And we were certainly, at the community college...my teaching area was a lot more rigid than I had been generally exposed to. Like the program was set. Here's the testing. Now, here's the test. Here's the...worry about the input, here's the output. If they passed the test, they got 70, well done. And how they get to (a) and (b), you lecture and you answer questions and what have you. But that's the result that we want at the end of the day. There was a certain standard and you meet that standard.

By contrast, the second instructor found that the college, with its emphasis on teaching and student learning, compared very favourably with the atmosphere he had left behind at the research-oriented university.

I think that's one of the real weaknesses of the university system in contrast to the college system, where we talk about curriculum strategies, and you know, here we are talking about teaching strategies.

Expectations about Teaching as a Career

In talking about their career expectations, new teachers reveal poignantly their optimism and idealism. For some, a full-time job at the college represents the realization of carefully laid plans. Some see it as an expression of an inner drive to enter into a lifelong collegial "conversation." Erikson (1950) observed that people approaching mid-life seek ways to express their *generativity* by making significant contributions to the world outside themselves. Echoes of this idea are clearly recognizable in the words of some respondents.

...I can influence something right here. I think I could. And I certainly want to get involved more in education. I want to be confident in teaching. And I would certainly like to do something to help these students.

I mean...to start with, how did I come to teaching? I came to teach simply because I felt I had something to say that was worthwhile to people who were willing to listen.

(Teaching) was something that I could see. This is positive. I enjoy it. You know, physically, intellectually, it...I can contribute positively to the future of our world, on a very very microscopic level. I think to me that's extremely important.

Although there is an element of risk mixed with the excitement of achievement, the commitment of new faculty is very evident in the way they talk about their career expectations.

(Teaching) was a dream of mine.... I just didn't expect it at this time. I just expected it a few years down the road. I thought I can't live.....with myself knowing I didn't take this challenge. I would rather DO it. If it doesn't work out, at least I tried and I'll...I'll bounce back. Like I'd relied on my past experience. I never had a problem getting a job, so... I'm really glad I made the decision.

Not all of the twelve respondents in this study were as sure as the people quoted above that their new career move was really the right decision. For some, the transition was much more tentative, and entered into with a greater degree of ambivalence. One respondent described her search to find a niche that felt comfortable. The circuitous route that ended in a teaching career could just as easily have taken a very different turn.

How did I get to (the) College? OK. I had been in the _____ profession for about 10 years, off and on. Not always liking it, and sometimes liking it a lot. Had tried other educational avenues. Had tried a commerce program at U. of T and thought, no...that's not where I want to be...

When this respondent finally did accept a teaching position, it was not without considerable personal cost and lingering self-doubt, tempered with cautious optimism.

I found the education system a very painful experience for me as a student, so it wasn't a place that I necessarily thought that I would work. I wouldn't have dismissed it. But I didn't know...I didn't conceive of myself coming into that other role as a teacher so quickly after coming out of it as a student. Not on my own at least. But when it was suggested to me I thought, well yes, I could maybe do that.

Expectations about Students and Academic Standards

It was difficult, in selecting examples of new faculty members' expectations of their students, to separate prior expectations from later assessments of "reality." People tended to frame their comments as, "I thought.....but then I found..." Accordingly, an effort was made to introduce their expectations by looking at the way new teachers described their "first impressions" of the student body. Some of these comments also encompass expectations teachers had of themselves regarding their ability to work with the students.

Later, in recording responses to the "Assessments" section of Research Question 3, comments were chosen to illustrate the moves teachers had made from their original thinking, and the gap between expectations and experience. In the "Building Relationships" part of Question 3, examples illustrate teachers' attempts to develop interpersonal connections with students to bridge those gaps.

As one might logically expect, teachers tended to base their expectations of students on their own previous experience. The comments that follow illustrate the impact of three different clusters of prior experience:

- from two teachers who had previously taught in a university setting,

I remember the first day I came in, they were just throwing things at each other. They were writing things on the board, and they just kind of looked at me with a big smile on their faces. I thought, I must be in the wrong class (laughs). It was very different from the university where everybody's sitting around the table and they've got their text and they've done their readings...

I. Did you have any expectations, for example, of what the students would be like, as opposed to what they had been like at university?

R. I was shocked. I was pretty well shocked by the level of literacy. Yeah, I was really and truly surprised by that. Stunned, to put it mildly. It was a job to learn to teach in this setting. You know, I'm not sure that I learned it. I'm always learning it, but it was kind of a shock.

- from teachers who had come from business and industry backgrounds,

The profile of the staff in most (professional settings) is pretty close to the student profile here at (the college). The average age is about 20-21. A lot of them are not as focused as older people. Very easily motivated. Very difficult to keep them up there. Fun to train. Very gratifying, very enthusiastic. Hot and cold, and require certain skills to keep them happy and productive.

I was a little bit nervous the first day but that ...that didn't last very long. I guess I wasn'texpecting the lack of motivation among students. I really expected them all to be like students that I had (at a private college for adult students).

You know, when you come from industry or business, you're like, "I know so much and I'm going to teach these guys so much" (stage whisper). But you can't, because of the level they're at. I mean, you know, it's a slow process. You don't realize that at the beginning.

- from a teacher who had previously been a student in the program in which she was now teaching,

I haven't been really surprised by (students), I remember. With full-time students, what's different is the amount of pressure on them now, in terms of jobs and more of them have to work. More of them are on O.S.A.P. (financial assistance) or, you know what I mean, than when I was at school. So they're living in a distinct society, a more struggling society than when I was there. So those are the pieces that in terms of...I don't know how some of them do it.

Several comments reflected teachers' awareness of the changing demographics among college students.

It is a pretty broad range, and...I see them as individuals. And so in that sense, there's not a sort of collective personality there. And certainly, there are more students that are older, more mature, than I would have expected. The ethnic diversity didn't take me by surprise that much. I think the only thing that did surprise me about students in general was that for every

student that is always at my door looking for help, there are a number of students that probably need the help even more.

I find the demographics changing. There are a lot more students of colour, if that's the term that we use now, than we had at the beginning.

One of the things that I'm very surprised by is skill level...yeah, that's a good point...There's an awful lot with very poor English skills and learning disabilities. More than I ...would have imagined. So that was pretty gloomy.

By way of summary, the words of a former university professor now teaching in the college illustrated the realization that expectations were frequently unrealistic. He made it clear that, in his view, thoughtful educators engage in a constant process of assessment and adjustment, a process that will be examined further in the responses to Research Question 4.

In terms of expectations, you know, and it takes a few years to formulate an opinion, funny enough. I should do it fast, but I can't. But the thing that really, the expectations...the biggest thing that I had to learn was the student. And s/he was a surprise to me. A surprise, or s/he was an unknown commodity to me.

Expectations about Workload and It's Impact on Lifestyle

As a group, the new teachers interviewed were generally caught by surprise at the relentlessness of the workload in the college setting. In one way or another, most of them had assumed that they would have more leisure time in this job, or more assistance with some of the administrative details. University faculty were surprised to discover that the concept of T.A.s who provide marking assistance was an unknown in the colleges. Further, they discovered that they could be assigned four or five different course preparations in one semester, and class sizes were larger than they had expected.

At university level, I think there's a lot more flexibility in time management. There's sort of greater gaps of time, you can play around with time. You know what needs to be done, but you can put things off.

And here, you don't have as much flexibility. You have 5 courses; you have 180 students.

Well, the workload is very intense when you start. Then when you gain confidence, it simply becomes job-like...task-oriented. And so you just have to sit down and do it. You make time. You sit down and do it. What I don't like about it is, I have no time for my family because I tend to work.

Several faculty who came from business and industry reflected the common expectation that college teaching would mean short work hours and long leisurely summers. People found it particularly difficult to reconcile their new work responsibilities with the time they felt was being taken away from family life. This theme is developed in greater detail in the sections of Research Question 3 that refer to Assessing Workload and its Impact on Lifestyle, and Establishing Boundaries and Control.

...the first semester I taught, I had 23 hours and coming from a 40 hour week I thought, "piece of cake" right? Yeah, I mean, I thought I had it made in the shade. You know, I could not believe that someone was going to pay me all that money just to work 23 hours.

...my expectations were that I would have more time for my family. But I still have weekends, and that's much more than I've ever had. Although I can't honestly say that I really had more than 2 or 3 weeks off this summer, because I was in the college a lot.

R. I was going to be able to be home in the summer time.

I. And have a little bit more flexibility of work hours?

R. Exactly, yeah... a little bit more flexibility and time to...well flexibility, period. Well now, in fact, those two things have not actually held out to be true.

Your life style completely changes. I mean, it's midnight and one o'clock. I've become a night owl. I do my work at night now. I don't go to bed with my husband anymore (in-drawn breath), you know...that type of thing.

One lone voice observed that although the workload was indeed extremely heavy, it was not, in fact, any more than he had been accustomed to in his previous profession. Indeed, he experienced his new-found freedom to work at his own pace and in his own time as a positive advantage of teaching.

...actually it's not as demanding as some other jobs that I had in the past. It's very, very demanding, I know I've made that point. But it's so flexible, in terms of your prep. I mean, I can get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and do it.

Expectations about Collegiality and the Need for Collegial and Administrative Support.

When faculty described their expectations of the kinds of collegial supports that would be available to them in their new profession, their remarks were characterized by a combination of innate optimism and experiences with colleagues and administrators in the early days of their college career. Many of those experiences fed into the new teachers' desire to see their colleagues as a helpful and supportive resource to them in getting oriented.

I was involved with people that had been teaching in the community college system in Ontario. And we started taking a look at the different programs that were being offered by some of the other colleges, and seeing what there was. What was good about them and what was poor about them. What we felt were the minimum standards that someone coming out of a college needed to have to get into the industry.

So I started working with that. And I became quite caught up with it I guess, and interested in it. But I think the real focus on that one - I came into contact with the right people. And I came into contact with a couple of the instructors at that time, a coordinator here at (this college) and (two or three other colleges).

And we (the Chair and I) spoke for an hour over the phone about academic issues...pedagogical issues. And then at the end of the hour, I told him. "You hire me, because I'm going to do a good job for you." I don't think I said "you hire me." I think I said something to the effect of "Hiring me is a good decision. I'll do a good job for you."

I had talked with (my Chair) on the phone. I had called...I must have dropped a resume.....I think (my Chair) is just this fantastic person. She... I think I just called (the college) and spoke to her and said, my name is _____. I've just finished my program. I'd really like to work. If you have anything, you could let me know. And she called me back and she said, "I don't usually do this but I really have really good feelings and I'd like to offer you a job."

And (my coordinator) brought me in, and she decided she was going to carry this one right through. She was the one to tell me how to run the Photostat machine, how to make transparencies. And how to do this and how to do that.

Since most early contacts were with administrators or coordinators who hired and oriented the new faculty, people tended to base their initial impressions of collegiality on the degree to which they felt supported early on. When faculty perceived that they *did* receive the support they needed, they tended to generalize their relief into a "halo" of optimistic assumptions.

So anything from that point was going to be OK. In my previous experiences I did find that...have found that the supervisor one works under does sometimes make or break a job, and I felt that this was so positive that it could go nowhere but just up.

The administrators are good people to work with. I don't feel that I'm working for them, I'm working with them. I think that's...you know and they're interested in ideas. And that's what it should be about.

In some cases, however, positive expectations were not borne out by experience, and optimism turned fairly rapidly to disappointment.

I think in terms of collegiality, when I was here on contract, I had a very positive experience with the people that I had been in immediate contact with. And I...my expectation was that it would be a very inviting faculty. And in fact it's been...my expectations were skewed, for whatever reason. My expectations were not realistic. I don't know if I wanted more coddling (laughs), or what it was, but there's been more distancing among the faculty than I thought I had perceived when I came here on a contract type of basis. And that's been an adjustment.

Some teachers reported that the degree of support they had thought they could expect from more senior teachers was not forthcoming. Their comments reveal a sense of being cut adrift without sail or rudder to find their own way.

I. You didn't really find, I mean, quite apart from the fact that it was (the coordinator), you didn't really find that a supportive relationship?

R. Yeah, I didn't find that it was... I didn't get anything out of it. I got the information and a couple of little things. And an idea of what a simulation was, which I had no idea what it was. Then, you know, that was it. You were on your way.

I think some of them (senior teachers) are a little bit threatened by the new teachers coming in and that can be ...a problem, too.

One teacher's fighting spirit became challenged by the lack of support she experienced at a time when she needed information and resources more than what she perceived as unhelpful platitudes.

...if I didn't get the job, fine. If I got it, OK, we'll see what we can do. But I think if somebody had told me right then and there, instead of "Congratulations, ...I'm so happy that you're here," and whatnot. Don't tell me any of this crap! What do I have to do? OK? Not total direction, but this is how you go about doing it, you know, and that sort of thing. I mean they didn't tell me about (opportunities for new teacher orientation) stuff for a whole year. Unfair to bring it to me at the end. I would have been dedicated. I would have done something, you know. So it bothered me a lot. And made me a little suspicious of who I worked for.

Summary: Learning to Adjust Expectations

In his ADAPT Model (1979), Raines identifies the necessity to adjust one's expectations as a key coping skill in navigating through a major life transition. He defines the process as one of "revising basic assumptions that are out of phase with emerging realities." All the respondents commented on the numerous ways they had to "revise their basic assumptions" about their new job as the realities began to present themselves. For some people, this was a painful process of struggling with disillusionment. Others perceived it as a pragmatic business of scanning the environment and making necessary adjustments. For some, perceived reality exceeded expectations, and they found their new situation gratifying in ways they hadn't anticipated. All but one or two reported that after two or three years of perspective, the positives outweigh the negatives. But all would agree with the succinct statement of one teacher, "...it's a very complex job. Much more than I had anticipated."

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?

This research question was suggested by a phrase used by Rhonda Egidio in her 1986 dissertation. She described people in transition as having “a need to identify what is lost and what is gained in the restructuring of a life space” (4). This concept closely parallels Bridges’ (1980) assertion that before something new can begin, something old has to come to an end, and that endings are frequently accompanied by feelings of loss. The new teachers in this study clearly demonstrated the overlapping nature of endings and new beginnings, and the fact that feelings of loss and appreciation of gain do not cancel each other out and can exist at the same time in each individual.

The respondents’ experiences of loss were eventually grouped into fourteen different categories covering a range of issues relating to work-role, lifestyle, and emotional well-being (see Appendix D). Numerous negative emotions were attached to these feelings of loss by the new faculty, including anger, anxiety, burnout, cynicism, depression, disappointment, discouragement, embarrassment, exhaustion, fatigue, fear of failure, grief, helplessness, isolation, feelings of injustice, loneliness, nervousness, overload, performance anxiety, resentment, self-doubt, stress, uncertainty, unhappiness and pain.

Given such an intimidating list, it was interesting to note that the new teachers’ perception of gains in their new career numerically outweighed those of the losses. Eighteen categories of gains were identified, and exemplars describing gains outnumbered those referring to losses by 107 to 68. New faculty included in their gains feelings of affirmation, anticipation, emotional well-being, empathy, enthusiasm,

eagerness, ego-integrity, feeling valued, generativity, happiness, health, self-confidence, reward, satisfaction, self-esteem, optimism, personal pride and pleasure.

Losses

When all the exemplars relating to loss were examined, several dominant themes emerged. Most of the losses that preoccupied the new faculty could be grouped into three broad themes: personal loss; professional loss; and losses associated with their present working conditions.

Personal loss

Pragmatically speaking, a few new faculty found themselves facing significant financial penalties as a result of taking a teaching job. Although they were in the minority, their financial loss was substantial.

R. I don't think your intention was to hear me talk about standard of living, because that is significant (laughs).

I. If that's significant, yeah, by all means, tell me about it.

R. Well in a way it's significantly less, but it's not of significant importance to me.

I. So you're saying you took a significant cut, in terms of your yearly income?

R. Yeah, it's a little bit less than half what I was earning.

What am I going to do if they offer this (job) to me? And, oh-oh. I knew there would be a problem with the pay because I was making a lot more money where I was. And I had to keep weighing it out and weighing it out. And we did...when it was offered to me, we did a bit of negotiating. And once I made the decision I was very happy. But it was...you know, you do think "what have I done?" Because, two years probation.....it's a recession.

In terms of losses, I'm not Donald Trump. Maybe as a young man I thought maybe I would like to be Donald Trump.

A significant adjustment for new faculty lay in the loss of personal privacy, time to regroup and restore energy, and time for family. Workload was implicated by most people as the number one problem.

(The workload) has an impact on your family life, it has an impact on your personal time. Yup. So that's another thing that I did lose when I came here. But still when I think about it, 16 hours, it really isn't that much to teach, but it's a lot to get ready for.

My husband and I, of course, were not getting along. We were arguing over nothing at all. I think it was probably...I'm trying to think if it was after my first or second year of work, and I was so exhausted. And we hadn't been away.

What I miss is the free time. And that's the most significant thing that...like I used to know I'd come home from work, I'd come home. And I can't do that. Because I have marking to do, have to think about it perhaps. And I just find I work more than I ever have.

(My family) can be very good, and they try to understand what the reality is. You're not with your kids when they're going to the movies, when you'd like to go with your kids to the movies. And they can understand it, but they'd still like you to go with them. I mean, that's a reality. And you can understand it, and yet still...

If I hadn't taken this job full time in September, my younger son, I would have done what I did with (my older boy), and I would have spent about four months with him full-time.

Some people found their stores of personal and spiritual energy to be seriously depleted by the competing demands of work and personal life.

I. So in that sense you feel like there's a sharing (of home responsibilities)?

R. Yes, absolutely. But even at that I can't do it. I mean (laughs) I don't know how some women do that. How they carry the load of everything at home, and plus carrying that full-time...I don't have that kind of energy, it's just non-existent.

So during that time, that would have been a very tired time for me, quite a blur. But I could think rationally, and see the job...they weren't asking any more than any real, normal full-time job would ask for. But for me, full-time, plus with young children...it was too much.

I think I need, I want, more of a personal life on my own. I need to break apart a little. I think I've done enough work that I can now just...not ignore it, but just leave it alone for awhile.

I was dead. And I had friends say to me, as a matter of fact, from my other job, "We're worried about you. You've lost...where's (you), where's (you) in all this?" Because in developing the shadow, I'd forgotten about feeling and guts, all that stuff.

I have a friend of mine who's just got her Ph.D. I haven't gone out and celebrated with her yet. I haven't had time. I haven't contacted her. I knew her mother died. I sent the required stuff. I haven't contacted her.

I was trying to divert my attention away from work and kids to see if I could find renewed energy. But of course there was none to be had (laughs). It was just one more thing we had to do.

Professional loss

Some new faculty talked about professional plans that had to be put aside, at least temporarily, to accommodate the demands of full-time teaching.

I honestly feel that it's a lot of work, more work than I think I could have anticipated. It doesn't leave much time to do my own kind of work, in terms of going back to my thesis and doing my own kind of writing and research, which I thought I would have, as time sort of developed.

As I get older, I don't know what will happen...and also, at an emotional level, you know, I thought, naw, 25 years, or until I'm 65....I had a worry that the projects that are in me wouldn't get out.

Other teachers grieved for aspects of their old job that they found to be missing in their new work roles.

What have I given up? Well, there is a certain lifestyle, being free lance. There is a certain pleasure to...waking up...at six in the morning, working very hard until noon, and then walking the streets....

I enjoy the leadership issues. And here they do exist vis a vis the students, to a certain extent, not to the same degree. I think also that in the _____ business, there is an excitement factor in terms of putting together a pretty complicated piece of machinery, that reflects your abilities as a manager.

Oh.....I've lost the...it's not a heck of a lot that I've lost. I mean it would be easier to talk about the gains right now. But regarding the losses, I mean, I've lost and I miss, and although I do it now and again, I miss my clinical practice. I miss it. I really desperately miss it.

I want those students to have the same feeling about their practice. And I miss not seeing that develop. Because I don't see it. Even the clinical field that we have, I can't go into the (field) setting and watch that. And the only thing that I know might be happening is that I get the odd letter, "Hey, I got this job because of the program I've taken," and that sort of thing. They are very few and far between. But that's OK. I usually get one or two. But I miss that. I miss seeing that.

...there are specific challenges in the _____ business that ...that do not exist here. And one is...at my level, being the person who takes all the responsibility, has all the accountability, and sinks or swims on that which follows. I don't think that exists to the same extent here.

Loss related to present working conditions

Teachers made a wide and varied group of observations about working conditions in the college, which ran the gamut from the relatively trivial but irritating issue of insufficient physical resources, to the anguish of trying to hold a team together that was threatened with layoffs. A small sample of them is represented below.

- On loneliness and isolation in the new work setting:

I. How about the social milieu? Is there any advantage or disadvantage here, or is it any different?

R. Well, I find it's...lonelier here.

What I do miss...in the other job that I worked at, you are with people 8 hours a day. I am not with people 8 hours a day. So... I've, I've adjusted to it now, it was difficult at first because my ...my co-workers were my extended family...

- On the frustration of working within inadequate physical conditions, or trying to teach with machinery that didn't work:

...but I can't work at school, with open concept. So that's stressful, my office space. If I had an office with a door, it doesn't mean that the door would be always closed. You could have an open door. But when I was marking or something I'd close the door and I shut the world out. I would probably spend more time on campus and my home would be my own space.

But because we are an open concept school there is no way. I have TRIED to mark at school and it's impossible. So that was stressful.

They are the realities that we have to deal with and live with in order to teach. One of the realities is you prepare this beautiful lecture, and you go in there and there are two overhead machines and they don't work. And all of a sudden you are going through the other classrooms to find another one because you have 120 students waiting for your lecture. And you CAN lecture without putting anything on an overhead, but then you know that they're going to suffer.

- On the feeling that there wasn't sufficient support, in either time or money, for the professional development opportunities that the college strongly encouraged the new faculty to become engaged in:

Like my Master's studies...like I think the college should pay for it (laughs) and things like that. I find that ironic...you know...you're furthering your education. You work for the college...You're furthering your education but they won't pay for it.

I'm paying most of (my conference fee). The college doesn't invest. There's no money anywhere, so...and that was affecting a part of my...that was a bit frustrating for me last year. Because I couldn't figure out what the whole point of (professional development) was, when in fact there really is no support for it financially. I've been told that we're entitled, that we are supposed to even be taking five days in a row for professional development each year...but that's supported only in terms of whether or not you can work it into your schedule so that no one has to replace you, and that you are...you get yourself to a conference.

It's discouraging sometimes when you find something like that (committee work) outside of your own division, that can be a really...can really light you (up). And it did. I really enjoyed it very much and I thought, well I could really...I could really enjoy (the college) having had...having this kind of diversity, and having that kind of experience...and it just hasn't fit in terms of having time.

Among the most poignant losses felt by a minority of new faculty were stories related to separate critical incidents in which a new faculty member was involved in dealing with a crisis. In one situation, a teacher was threatened by an irate student.

I. What's the primary emotional legacy of that incident?

R. Fear. Vulnerability. Yeah, yeah. Tremendous loss of self-confidence on a personal level and fear for my family.

Another situation involved a new teacher in a months-long struggle to hold a team together that was threatened with layoffs.

I'm sure those events shaped the mood of the department. I know they made everybody a lot more cohesive. I don't know what's happened historically here, but...from what I see of some of the older guys that are around, there's been much hurt. There's been an inequity, or an injustice somewhere along the line, and it takes a long time to recover from that.

There's some people changes that are happening now, that I don't want to abandon. Just...ah...I would hate it if that fell apart. We've come so far. It's hurt me so much (small laugh). And I don't know if I would want that to fall apart. I've committed myself to the group I think...

Gains

The gains experienced by the new faculty in this study were also grouped into certain predominant themes. As with the losses, not all gains were experienced by all members of the group, although most of the positive emotions listed in the introduction above were experienced by everyone some of the time. Gains were categorized into four broad categories: personal gains; gains associated with present working conditions; gains in "generativity" (Erikson 1950); and gains that resulted from personal and supportive relationships.

Personal gains

One category of personal gain that was articulated by several of the men in this study eventually received the code phrase, *becoming one's own man* (Levinson 1978). These men, mostly in the younger age group, acknowledged the "coming of age" that having a full-time, responsible job represented for them in their own personal development.

I think that the whole process for me...of finally coming to a point in my life where I have built something with permanence ...permanence...has been liberating because I never saw anything that I could have as having any permanence or being of a nature that couldn't just fall apart. Right on the ...either my work or my personal life.

And all through my Ph.D., you know, I didn't need to work. I worked, but I didn't need to work in the way that now I needed to blossom into manhood. And...or humanhood, or whatever the hell...

...I guess in some ways you grow up through life and you try a lot of things and you...maturity is great, and you do things for other people. Like a lot of my (previous) moves, I may have done for (myself)...you know what I mean?

So (my wife) was very happy because she saw her life as, now, possible. And with that came a lot of security. And with that came a lot of basic soundness on which to build a family and a home.

Related to the feeling of having grown up was the ability to command a living wage, sometimes for the first time. This issue was articulated by both men and women, and again, tended to be identified by people who were closer to the front-end of their careers than those who took a pay cut to come into teaching.

So when I got the job I was VERY VERY happy. And again... you know...the financial thing was an important element of it.

Obviously I'm making more money, which I didn't make then.

OK, we'll deal with what I got, cause it's really clear and easy. I got a stable salary and...and benefits in the future.

Most teachers expressed great satisfaction in discovering their strengths. Their self-confidence received a significant boost when they found they could do well in their new vocation, without having to lose their connections and currency in the skills they had brought with them.

I. How have you changed, over the years now that you've been here?

R. Oh, I've grown. Developed and come into my own, and confidence...basically ...I feel pretty masterful at what I do. I also feel that I know what I'm doing, not in a cocky way, but I feel like I know what I'm doing.

I think (my specialty) has been more successful than I initially anticipated, and perhaps even (the Chair) initially anticipated.

I can lead people, and I can...I can learn things that I thought I didn't know much about. It's also been a... allowed me to synthesize what I do know and to be...and to try to articulate it. And from the feedback I get, I'm doing a good job of it. You know...it's had all these positive effects, both on my own...ah...how I see myself, and just feeling good about being in the world.

I really believe that in terms of counselling skills and supporting and encouraging ...those things that clients need, that I've developed those a lot further working with students. I think I've probably done more counselling...So I think that I've further developed my skills, to be perfectly honest. And I think that I would...that it's been an advantage. It hasn't been a ...I don't feel I'm out of it.

Gains associated with present working conditions

The majority of the teachers in this study derived considerable pleasure and satisfaction from working within the college. With one or two exceptions, the “psychic income” attached to being part of the college culture provided a good counterbalance to the times of frustration and self-doubt.

What have I gained?...Personal satisfaction, I think, which I had lost...working in the real world. I guess I had done it so long I just wasn't...I wasn't being fulfilled any more. That's ... I have to be happy in what I'm doing.

I got a stable salary, I got the incredible pleasure that I get from the teaching experience, both on a day to day level, and in the broader sense, in seeing the development of other human beings, and my own development in relation to them, and what I learn from it.

Other gains.....Well, not to say the _____ business isn't, but it's fun here, lots of fun. I do...and in spite of the hectic schedule, and, you know, the frustrations and the pressures and things like that, I spend... a great deal of my time with a smile on my face.

I. I'm hearing you say there are these little connections that are satisfying for you?

R. Absolutely. Oh I would say, deeply satisfying. I mean it's not...I mean I shouldn't say this on tape...but when you really enjoy a job, you're just kind of amazed they pay you for it, even though it's very demanding.

Well, everything has been gained. Most of the things have been...teaching is like a high, I mean, a natural high. I like the presentations. That's great.

Excellent yeah. I'm very pleased actually, over all. I mean we talk about the student, but there's no better place than (this college) to work, you know really, don't you find that?

It was simply very nice to have a very full-time job, and a job that I like, and then get rewarded for it.

Gains in *generativity*

Clearly, the new teachers' self-esteem was closely tied to their feelings of being able to exert a positive influence on their students. Making a difference with students was a source of personal fulfillment for many of the new teachers.

That's the biggest thing that I've gained is...you know...feeling good about what I'm doing and being able to help (the students) without feeling, like I say, God-like.

I think I'm helping them (the students) to...learn themselves. You know, like, helping them to diagnose their own problems, and their learning problems,

...it wasn't the best presentation in the class, but he felt good about it. You know, he's a real sort of very sensitive guy. But he's a LUG, a jock type, plays football, and I just know that this guy is so sensitive...a lovely, lovely guy. And I just thought, this is...this is great. And I told him so, you know, and he was SO HAPPY. And that, to me, was a real positive...

So, I feel, "Gee, I kind of made a difference in that person's life." And she was... thankful. And it's funny because you don't get it a lot. You think as a teacher they are just going to say, "Oh, thank you for being so wonderful." And you don't get it (laughs). "How come I only got 87%?"

I mean, I always thank the students at the end of the year for helping me with my learning. That I've enjoyed learning with them together. You know, so I...and I believe it.

Gains associated with personal relationships

This category was one that was conspicuous by the absence of its opposite in the "losses" discussion. New teachers made relatively few blanket statements about their

inability to form positive working relationships. However they were valuable in their appreciation of the people and interpersonal supports that they recognized around themselves in the college.

The biggest positiveness is the people of this institution. And it's a great institution, but I was naive to think that it belonged only to a certain group of people. It belongs to everybody, and if I hadn't gone to (the orientation) I wouldn't have known.

I think we are open with each other, and that's the other important thing when you talk about the culture of the college... is that you actually have colleagues that you get along with. And even though you may not be able to go to the (college restaurant), always to play squash. But you can go maybe sometimes for a cup of coffee. You can at least talk to each other or say hello in the hall. And there's this friendly sort of smile....And that's kind of nice. You don't feel isolated or alienated.

...the work group was excellent. They're...you know you may want to reorient some of these people, like I talked a lot...not everything. But it's a part of the welcoming a new teacher, and assisting new people, and who would be prepared to assist and help out in material, and just be there for...they're very professional. It's nice to be out of those doors now and again. I mean out of the (division). The most positive, positive thing, though, is the people here.

It was gratifying for new faculty to discover that they were not alone with their struggles, and that opportunities presented themselves to spend time with and get support from their peers.

You talk to your colleagues, and I think we're starting to question ourselves. And somehow you get your blows in there, and get your comments in there. And you find out when you do, is that other people have the same concerns as you.

That was actually something that (another new faculty) and I were able to do first semester, get together once a week and go to the (nice restaurant). It's a real treat just to get together and chat, and have a nice meal.

I've recovered...now (from the stresses of course work). I'm feeling much better about life and myself. I'm able to actually...look at daylight and not be at the word processor....Yeah, it's a lot of work, but there too, there's a lot of help there.

At the university...I knew all the professors. I knew a lot of the people there. But now I'm coming in here off the street, and not knowing anybody, and they were perfect.

Achieving Balance

The struggle to maintain a reasonable balance between their personal and professional lives was one that was shared by all members of the group. The roller-coaster of emotions that characterized the first two years of their full-time teaching in the college heightened their awareness of the need to protect their reserves of personal energy, maintain an appropriate distance in their relationships with their students and manage their workload efficiently so that it did not eclipse their family life or private time.

- On relating to their students:

I'd say that I'm closer, like, it's a fine line for me, and I'm probably closer to relating and understanding them, than I am on the other end. I think I have...I believe I have respect, the students respect me. Yet, I don't want to be right in the middle. I want to be there.

I don't want to be seen as somebody they're afraid of, someone who has a tremendous amount of power. I want the hierarchy in the classroom to be more horizontal...horizontal than vertical. I want the...but I'm not...I don't always know when I'm...where I am on that continuum. But I'd say I'm closer toward being friendly, that I might have to work a little bit more at some authority.

I think (students) need to see us model and be a representative of our profession. I think that...and I think it needs to be a blend. I think we need to have skills as a facilitator of learning, and that's most important. But I think we also need to be a model to our profession

I. The students aren't filling you up quite as much ...they're draining, but they aren't filling you back up quite as much as you might have hoped...

R. Right, right. So, I'm trying to...each term, I think, I'm trying to reflect on that and figure out how to...what to do within the relationship so that there's a better balance there. I am aware that I do need to...

- On finding a balance between work, family and personal life:

I have weekends and evenings and stuff, and I try to spend as much time as I can. When I get home, I don't do anything except play with the kids until it's their bedtime. They still go to bed early enough. They're in bed by nine. That gives me the rest of the evening and all night, 'cause I'm usually a mid-night, one o'clock person. No, we try to balance things...and then we do get the summers too. I'm looking forward to that, to kind of slow down a little bit.

I think to be successful in a full-time...in a college career as an instructor, you've got to have your own personal life...in hand, well in hand. Because without it, it's just too much.

... Some of the changes I am going through, there's personal changes at the same time. And I think ...you know ...to me it's one or the other. You have your career ...is a focus, and then your family might be a focus, so I am kind of happy with the career right now, but I am looking at combining, you know ...having at all.

Balancing is very difficult, very difficult, yeah. The people interaction in teaching I'm finding more and more challenging as I go along. It's not at all easier. It's worse, not worse...that's the wrong word. It's more of a challenge.

- On managing the workload:

I think I like to design courses. I like to teach courses. I hope I get to teach (the new course) (laughs). And it's a matter of finding the right balance.

However, I must say that the other workload as a coordinator probably took away from the amount of time I should have been devoting to preparing myself for these lessons.

I just physically, I think, give out too much of myself some times, and don't hold back enough for me, or even for other people that are significant. I have to...I'm always trying to look at myself in that way and prioritizing who gets my energy.

Summary

New teachers' experience of loss in dealing with their endings and new beginnings proved to carry with it a wide range of strong emotions. Of course not every feeling and every experience was shared by all members of the group. Some were

completely individual, while others, like the frustrations over workload, work space and the loss of free time, were fairly widely represented in the group.

Despite the ways in which they missed their old work situation, and found their new circumstances to be lacking, respondents were still able to find many reasons to be glad that they had made the choice to become a full-time teacher. Teachers talked particularly about the gains they had received in friendship and support from their colleagues, and the feelings of generativity they received from making a difference in the lives of their students. Being part of the college culture, and of the teaching profession in general was a source of pride, satisfaction and increased self-esteem.

Achieving balance was a task that was central to making a positive adjustment to college teaching. Teachers needed to be able to juggle competing demands of work, family and personal space in order to feel that the “restructuring of their life space” had, all things considered, been a positive move.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Are there common and significant transitional processes (Raines 1981, Hopson 1980, Bridges 1980) which college teachers go through, during their first two years as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

Transcription of the 14 ninety-minute interviews (a second interview was conducted with two members of the group) that made up the primary source of data for this study produced many hundreds of pages of detailed observations. The open-ended nature of the interviews encouraged respondents to express their thoughts as a stream-of-

consciousness recollection of impressions, feelings, meanings and interpretations. The patterns embedded within these accounts were only gradually discernible as the coding and analysis process proceeded, and many ideas were woven together into a complex and subtle design. As codes were grouped, reworked and reduced, some categories became immediately obvious, particularly when people responded to distinct probes, such as the one about expectations in Research Question 2.

For Question 4, however, individual respondents became caught up in different aspects of the complex and multi-faceted question. Although each person commented on some aspect of most of the parts of this question, there was great variety in the emphasis they chose, and the depth to which they explored the issues. Most evident was the degree of emotional involvement people attached to the views they expressed, as if they were saying, “Out of all the things I could say about this, these are the things that **matter** to me.” As a result, the conversations were frequently impassioned, often very moving, and clearly brought people back in memory to issues of great moment in their shaping as a teacher.

In developing the structure of responses to Question 4, it was relatively easy to search out **common** transitional processes, simply by noting the frequency and complexity with which certain themes recurred. Identifying **significant** processes required a less mechanical, more subjective and interpretive analysis, based on Schlossberg’s (1984) “assessment of a transition’s **impact** on relationships, routines, assumptions and roles (54).” The feeling tone of responses was part of making these decisions, as was the conviction communicated by the respondents that these were, as Raines expressed it, “make it or break it” issues which could influence their ultimate success or failure in academia.

After considerable struggle to make sense of the accumulated data, a structure eventually emerged which is described in greater detail in Chapter 5. In arriving at this

structure, a degree of subjectivity on the part of the researcher is clearly evident. Deciding on which examples to use as illustrations was equally subjective, since far more were left out than were included. As before, an effort was made to give fair representation to the range of issues addressed by the respondents, the frequency with which they were raised, and the positive or negative tone they expressed.

The structure of responses to Research Question 4 was organized as follows:

- **Environmental assessment:** The first task that preoccupied new teachers after they took up their full-time responsibilities was to measure the emerging realities of the job against the conscious or unconscious expectations they had built up about it. Their comments often stated or implied that this process was clear to them only in retrospect.

Of all the categories that emerged from the analysis of interview data, this one had the most examples. Nearly 300 “exemplars” were recorded that carried the prefix “assess.” Assessments clustered around students, colleagues, workload, and the college culture. The most numerous sub-category, “assess-self,” revealed how much the new teachers were preoccupied with their own performance. In well-over 100 separate instances, teachers evaluated their own roles, skills, values and emotional responses to the whole experience.

From their assessments of their situations several “tasks” emerged:

- **Building Relationships** was the label chosen to denote the comments that related to faculty members’ interpersonal relationships with staff and students, their need for collegial and administrative support and their perception of the availability of supports.
- **Developing Skills** included the feelings, thoughts and behaviours, both personal and professional, that accompanied learning to be an effective teacher.
- **Establishing Boundaries** was the term applied to the new teachers’ struggle to discover the degree of autonomy and control they could exercise in their new roles. Although these examples were not particularly numerous, they were widely

distributed among the group, carried great impact, and preoccupied considerable emotional energy.

- **Achieving Balance** was another central task identified by the new teachers in this study. It was addressed in detail in Research Question 3, which explored new teachers' perceptions of what was lost and what was gained in the process of this major life transition.
- **Redirecting Focus** referred to the evolution of the teachers' relative emphasis over time in the classroom, typically beginning with a strong teacher and content focus, and gradually moving to a more student-centred focus as the teacher gained in confidence and experience.
- **Becoming a Teacher** was the term chosen to draw together statements of self-affirmation and "fit," as the new teachers expressed their feelings of having come into their own as college educators. It encompassed Raines' *transformation of identity* (1981), Erikson's *generativity* and *ego-integrity* (1950), Hopson's *integration* (1980), and Bridges' *new beginnings* (1980), to name only a few.

Environmental Assessment

As the new teachers progressed throughout the first weeks and months of full-time teaching in the college, they engaged, without exception, in a continuous process of reassessment of their early assumptions and expectations in the light of the reality they were experiencing. In some cases, and on some subjects, reality exceeded prior expectations. In other cases, teachers expressed a degree of discouragement and disappointment at the gap between what they had hoped for and what they perceived to be true. At the time of interviewing, some teachers had achieved a more advanced degree of adjustment of expectations than others, and developed a more comfortable philosophic stance about the demands and challenges of teaching. Apart from individual personality differences and variations in actual experience, it is worth noting that some respondents were still very new to the college, while others had several years of perspective from which to make their observations.

Assessment of students and standards

Most of the teachers interviewed reported that they found a gap between the level at which their students were functioning, and the expectations they had prior to coming into the college. The degree to which students seemed under-prepared to learn at a college level was a particular shock to teachers who had taught previously at the university level. Almost invariably, dismay at the general level of students' ability and/or motivation was accompanied by self-doubt, and questioning of the teacher's own ability to teach and motivate.

Initially, many teachers reacted to the perceived shortfalls of their students quite negatively. Some expressed their feelings primarily as frustration at the slow pace they had to move in class and exasperation at students' apparent lack of motivation.

I think it was more about the students that I was originally taken aback, in that they were not really committed...to learning. They were more committed to having a good time, seeing how much you can get away with. It was really like high-school.

R. Frustration, frustration, because I was teaching the same ...some of the same material, and even more hours, it was given more hours. So I was pulling this stuff out, and putting stuff in. And they just weren't seeming to get it.

I. You couldn't believe that they weren't picking up more quickly.

R. I couldn't believe...you know, you'd say, "Read this chapter." And then you came back the next day and they hadn't read it. Some of them hadn't even bought the book. And I still ... that sometimes is frustrating.

I had to realize that I have all this experience behind me and they had nothing. And I know one teacher had said to them, "I consider you graduate students." And... I kind of thought, "Actually, they are kindergarten students."

As the new teachers came to know their students better and understood their problems and concerns in a more multi-dimensional way, some teachers reported feeling quite overwhelmed by the enormity of the responsibility they had taken on. They began

to ask themselves hard questions about their own ability to cope with the range of needs the students presented.

Certainly, in dealing with the students, I really found it very distressing, in...to see how impotent I was in dealing with certain students that I really cared about. There were some that I felt seriously...seriously needed help, and the help wasn't there.

But then I come in here, and I start teaching these students, and really teaching them in the dark. You look at them...they all look very intelligent. They talk intelligently. And then you're doing a perfect job, and...but, Jesus, they're failing!

I. So this place has presented you with some surprises in terms of the nature of the roles that you are expected to perform as a teacher?

R. Oh, absolutely. I've had students who came to me and told me they were dying of cancer, had... mental breakdowns, they...were suffering from schizophrenia. I mean, I hear everything. It's amazing.

...that was a big surprise to me. And really what I'm coming to grips with now, that was...you know, I think we're just too quick too...like, I'm being too quick the way I'm slanting that whole analysis of those students. Is that I'm criticizing them, and really, you know, we sort of...I'm not sure where I'm at here... but we're always saying that they're not ready to learn what I had to teach. But I wonder sometimes, you know, that the education system is not that bad. And maybe I'm not...you know, teaching them correctly.

Gradually, with time and experience, a shift was visible in the teachers' reactions to their students. Although the frustrations and anxieties did not entirely go away, teachers began to see their students in a more positive light, and to regard working with them as a challenge to their abilities to teach, motivate and support. The teachers' own optimism, resilience and sense of humour came to their aid and animated their comments.

...more frustration and maybe not being able to get through to some of the students, to help them in terms of motivating them. Frustrating at first...and stressful...when I didn't...when I found that ...the quality of their work wasn't what I thought it should be. But as a teacher, now I see the challenge.

You develop a new set of ground rules and ways to motivate. And unfortunately sometimes it's...sometimes I wonder about corporal punishment (laughing).

Well, what I thought I was getting into was what I had that first year (a very gifted and motivated group). The reality is that they're not all like that. But you know, I find that most of them, they still want to know...learn. You may get the odd one that's a bit strange. But they are eager to learn. All you have to do is be nice to them.

...you know, we're writing these people off too fast. They have an awful time today, this Generation X. And you know, I just...my whole philosophy...I think the saviour for all these people, one of the big saviours it seems to me, is education. And you know, the more you could influence their...them in that area to maybe, instead of failing them, have them experience success, and giving a little confidence, and giving them the big picture. And allow them to set goals, that they can do it.

Assessment of colleagues

One of the more vigorous evidences of the teachers' scanning of their environment showed up in the way they assessed their colleagues, whether peers, administrators or support staff. The new teachers were understandably idealistic, and although they found much to admire in their new colleagues, they also identified a number of areas of shortfall.

Several teachers spoke about the respect they felt for people who were oriented both toward helping their students succeed, and to lending a hand to a new instructor.

I must say I had a very positive exposure, in that the people that I was in contact with...contact with when I first came, were very supportive and very giving of their information and the way that they organized their day and their time, and time for the students.

...there are an awful lot of people on faculty here that really give far, far more value for the money than is recognized by the public. And probably recognized even by some of the people involved with the college itself...you know all the nice pithy statements and speeches notwithstanding...still there are a lot of people that really, really put a lot of heart into their work.

You know, I think around here there's more good teachers. And maybe that's where it's rubbing off on me. There's an awful lot of good teachers. My colleagues are...I mean we may have different orientation, different mind sets, different goals, different priorities, but ...

I. You've found that by and large they are a group you can respect?

R. Respect. They like teaching. And I think they've got the best interest of the student at heart.

I. So you have respect for the people you are meeting here, or a lot of the people...?

R. No two ways about it...no two ways about it. A lot! And it doesn't matter who it is. I mean we're talking right from the support staff, gosh, even one of the housekeepers, that I communicate with now and again, at every level. They are...the resources are there.

Senior teachers who had been around the college system for a number of years came in for very close scrutiny by the new faculty. Some new faculty were capable of harsh judgments of their older colleagues, frequently punctuated with statements of their own resolution to avoid the pitfalls of burnout.

I think a lot is done for new teachers and I don't think a lot is done... I think a lot IS done for teachers that have been here for a while, but they don't take advantage of it.

...a lot of people don't...care, one way or the other, but it's because, I think, of individual personalities, of having figured out the system. I mean it depends on what you hold dear. If you want to just have a job, and keep your nose clean, head low and worry about retiring in another five years, you don't care about (professional development), or advancing yourself...or learning something new...

...it's a nasty thing to say but I don't...I don't have a lot of sympathy for instructors that put a lot of their problems first. I think you...you know...(the college) pays my salary and that's my responsibility and my responsibility is to the students, too. It's not like somebody can go and do it for you. If you cancel class, you know, you are inconveniencing 75 other people.

I think (some faculty) are serving their business, and teaching is the aside, as opposed to the other way around, where teaching is their job and business is on the side. So that bothers me. I don't want to end up like that.

New faculty commented on their perception that the union protected some older faculty from being held accountable for their loss of interest in their work.

I've never been in a unionized environment before and I have a feeling that it sort of lets people get lazy because they don't need to worry about their jobs...you know because they're protected. And you know, they can just go about doing things that maybe they did 20 years ago when...you know they...times have changed.

...if you see someone with 15 or 20 years seniority, who's no longer fresh, who's no longer with it, there's no way to stimulate this person. There's nothing you can do to them. You can't say "listen, shape up or you're out of here," because they have seniority. You also can't say "if you do this, you'll get a bonus."

New faculty clearly had their "antenna" up for the political atmosphere that affected their new colleagues. Several people observed that they had entered into a department or division in which there was evidence of previous conflicts that had not been resolved.

...there's a lot of dead weight. A lot of people carry this old baggage with them. And they refer back to things which happened years ago, which you get caught up in the middle of. And there are a lot of people...

I. What kinds of stuff? You mean personality stuff?...

R. Politically, politically, you know things that happened in the office, or whatever. So and so did this and so and so got laid off because of something this person did. And you know, the grudges, and there's a lot of baggage, old stuff that gets carried forward.

I found that I was a little bit...I had some blinders on at the time. Like I said, I was worried about my exams and my lesson plan and my content and so on...but it didn't take much to see that the people were not happy. There were grievances being filed all the time. There was just squabbling about nothing, it seemed. But there was a lot of dissatisfaction.

In the same way that they did with the students, new teachers became more accepting of their senior colleagues as they came to know them better. They were less likely to characterize them in black-and-white extremes, and more likely to acknowledge the complexity of working within the college culture. Several teachers observed that they had a lot to learn from their peers, and expressed a desire to keep communication lines open to allow that to happen.

...you know I soon learned to change my tune, because I found they (older teachers) could teach, which was very important. You know... it was a big thing. Because they could get the students' attention. They could get them into that learning mode. Whereas I couldn't do that.

There still are some (older teachers) that ...like we have some that are older, but they still continue to go out (into their professional field) and ...and find out what's happening, you know. I mean they may not be as fast as I am, but to teach you don't need to be fast.

I think that people that get started passionately, accommodate themselves to the institution. I think that takes place very much in the college setting, or in the college system.

But I also want to be careful with pigeon-holing those people in my department who are on automatic pilot. Because then I lose. The stigma is a smoke screen between them and me, and I lose access to them. Because they know that's their smoke screen. So I am unable to motivate them, or talk to them.

The words of one teacher provided a very useful bridge to the self-assessment process explored in the next section. This person found his personal philosophy of teaching to be at odds with the general climate within his department. He expressed very poignantly the doubt and ambivalence experienced by teachers whose personal values run up against a very different set of expectations among their colleagues. In the following comment, he described his feelings in a department meeting where he attempted to introduce his views.

It was the survival of the fittest there, you know. And so how can you attack that? If everybody is thinking that way, then you know, I think maybe I...(should) change myself. Maybe that's the job...if it is the job, and that's what you should do.

After a while you started to...over time, question that. But you know, you go into a new place, and you have 12 colleagues, and they're all professional too. And they...and that's what they're...Well, you're going to sit there, and sort of raise trial balloons and ideas. And you could be obnoxious by taking too much of a stand. Who is this guy coming in and trying to change? And you know, I wasn't really certain that ...what was right anyway.

Self-assessment

Making the transition into full-time teaching clearly stimulated a great deal of introspection on the part of the new teachers in this study. One hundred and seven exemplars received the code "assess-self." Teachers explored their perceptions of themselves in relationship to their new roles, their competence or lack thereof, their skills and their career aspirations. They revealed their hopes and dreams, and gave voice to their darkest moments of self-doubt. Throughout their comments, like point and

counterpoint, their professional pride and integrity contrasted with their recognition of the many compromises they were making and the feelings of ambivalence that sometimes shook their confidence in themselves.

It was a difficult task to decide how to represent this complex collation of thoughts and feelings. The task was made easier by cross-referencing several related code groups. Two of the most helpful were the ones labeled “script” and “impostor syndrome.” These two terms were not intended to be used in any formal or technical way. They were simply code devices chosen by the researcher to aid in the process of sorting similar utterances within the assess-self category. For this purpose, “script” comments were those in which the respondent made a statement about him or herself that seemed to imply a stable personality trait, along the lines of, “That’s just the way I am.” “Impostor Syndrome” was used to label comments referring to feeling inadequate, and being sure that someone would “find out that I don’t know what I’m doing.” A third code, “self-doubt,” added breadth to the narrative. The comments chosen to represent the category “assess-self,” encompass these three interrelated ideas.

Personal script

Most of the new teachers in this study showed by their comments that the transition into college teaching caused them to take stock of their own personality traits and coping strategies. Some people discovered, or were reminded of, strengths within themselves that were a source of personal pride and affirmation. Others admitted ruefully that a particular personal style was perhaps not serving them as well as it should. All the examples had in common reference to enduring personality traits that were clearly part of the speaker’s self-image.

The first respondent in this group used a Jungian model to describe her gradual mastery of some of the more theoretical aspects of teaching.

I've been developing my shadow. Which is...I have been an intuitive, feeling kind of person, and that's how I worked. I couldn't always put to it...the theory behind what I was doing. I had a gut reaction. And I would respond to that, and listen to the client, move with the client, and I connected very well.

So I went based on what was a strength of mine. I feel and respond to life that way. So I moved into developing my shadow, which was the other side that was not as well developed, which is the intellectual side. So I have gained from developing my shadow. From developing that area and then feeling, well, maybe I'm not stupid, you know, or whatever the scripts are that I thought of myself.

Two comments referred to a theory put forward independently by three different respondents that it's easier to cope with the demands of classroom teaching if you are something of an extravert.

I got over the terror in fairly good time, I think...Not all instructors are ...outgoing. But I think a lot of them are. You've got to have a little bit of a ham...showmanship, whatever, domineering personality in some instances. You've got to be a little on that end of the scale rather than on the really shy and timid side.

I'm an extravert. So it feeds that. I mean I know that of myself, so although I get nervous and everything...the first presentations were extremely nerve-wracking.

It seemed to be important to the new teachers to review their strengths and affirm **that** their personal philosophies and ways of doing things were useful and valuable in **relating** to the students, in furthering their own educational goals, and in making a **Positive** impact on the field of higher education.

I also know my style. I don't sit and read...I mean, I just have to live it. How I teach is I absorb absorb absorb, so then I can live it when I talk it and I can throw in experiences and I have fun, and things come to me as I'm teaching it. Stories that make it relevant from the field.

Well, actually, I never intended to work at the college level. But there was a lot of changes going on in (my profession). And at the time I did not have my baccalaureate.

But I was always self-educated. I'm the type of individual that I have to do something. I like being in a student mode. I want to know. I'm always the person that won't accept, "This is the way it is." I want to say, "Why?"

So that's how I came to teaching, really. I knew that I wanted the highest degree that I could get, which was a Ph.D. And I knew that I wanted to finish what I started, which was a Ph.D. I ...wanted to get as much as I could, and decided that completion was very important. Sustenance ...sustaining what one begins was very important. And it was particularly important for me because I wanted to finish what I had begun.

I think I'm a people person and a connector person, so I do that with my students. And I don't think that's so bad.

I believe that freedom depends on literacy, and it depends on people being able to think for themselves. And so I'm invested in...I'm invested in all that. I'm invested in the society, the well-being of the society. I've always felt like I was an agent for the well-being of society.

The last two excerpts represent the people who recognized that a strength could also be a weakness, in that it presented them with an additional layer of challenge.

I have life goals... but, but...I do see myself very much ...I don't even see myself, as a renaissance person...I guess I am. And then if I reflect on it, well that's what I am...but...which has been difficult to be. And I find (working with students) EXTREMELY challenging (laughs), and that's great, because I tend to shirk challenges. I really do.

...I guess I'm nuts again...I do that in all aspects of my life. I'm always doing and giving and all that sort of thing, and giving a lot... I just physically, I think, give out too much of myself some times, and don't hold back enough for me, or even for other people that are significant. I have to...I'm always trying to look at myself in that way and prioritizing who gets my energy

Impostor syndrome

Many of the teachers' self-assessments revolved around the feelings of anxiety that were frequently overwhelming in the first weeks and months of their teaching career, and tended still to reassert themselves at times of increased stress or fatigue. They admitted to feeling at times as if they were "impostors," pretending to be competent and self-possessed, but afraid that their students or colleagues would "find them out."

There was a lot of anxiety there. I mean, I recall staying up until one and two in the morning and rehearsing. I felt almost like an entertainer that would be on the stage the next morning, and I had to have my act polished.

I. What was it like for you walking in there? Can you go back in your mind to those first few weeks?

R. I was absolutely terrified. I was sure I was going to blow it, and I was sure that they were all going to very quickly identify the fact that I had no idea what in hell I was doing...

I think I remember the impostor syndrome jumping in an awful lot more than it does now (laughs). Like, pinch me, how'd I get here, you know? Thinking that I'm a graduate of the program too, you know what I mean? It seems like I...

I. "I have no business standing up here pretending I'm some kind of expert?"

R. Yeah

I took it (an evening course) only because again I had this fear that I don't want ever to stand in a room and have to say... have a (professional colleague) or anyone say to me, "You don't know...I want somebody who knows something around here." And that's the reason why I did it.

I know I talk a lot, and I've always liked to talk but I never pictured myself in front of a classroom of people, or anything. You know, I would never, I would never have thought that, you know, I could speak in public.

Sometimes you feel almost like an actor who is going, "This is all an act. Why do people like me?" Well, you can feel the same way in front of a class, "This is all an act. Why do you think I'm so smart? Why are you listening to me?"

Self-doubt

Perhaps it was inevitable that, in taking stock of themselves, teachers would compare their inner realities unfavorably with the very demanding and optimistic expectations they had of themselves when they first came to the college. Hopson's (1980) model of adaptation to life transitions notes that it is common for people in transition to experience self-doubt in reaction to competing feelings of elation and despair. The new teachers wanted to be so excellent, and felt very alone with their fears that they could never measure up.

...what I did to myself in that first year, in terms of the expectations! You've got it, you've got to prove it. And it was a lonely place to be, even

though I could talk about it to others. I just couldn't shake it. It took me a long time to shake that.

But still, well... there's that haunting voice saying well, yeah, but...you know... why can't you be more successful? I didn't feel I could...I didn't feel I could reveal it... I felt I could reveal sort of objectively what was going on with people, but I felt I couldn't reveal how I was feeling. And my sense of ...you know...lack of being enough, and being good, and being capable...which is what I was going through (laughs).

The frequent challenges probably...pushed me to think more, too, in terms of (my profession), and what it means and where I was going and how do I fit in, if in fact I am going to fit in. Those kinds of things...

I felt really floundering with those classes...um...I'm not...I'm not sure I mean I...you...know...people were supporting. I was, quite frankly, a bit reluctant to reveal the magnitude of my sense of floundering.

R. I got the job, yeah. And, funny enough...amazing...I don't think I've ever been so scared in my whole life...(laughs). That's another topic. I still remember the fear ...actual fear.

I. Tell about it.

R. Well, just ...ah, you know, the night before, and I didn't sleep. Really I don't think I slept all night. Just couldn't because I was...I'm sure it was excitement, but I think it was more anxiety...why did I want that...?

Not surprisingly, one of the areas of greatest vulnerability among the new teachers was the conviction that they were failing their students in some way.

R. You know it was quite devastating, the next...in January, when I got this next group of students that weren't able to keep up with me. And you sort of have to go "Is it Me? What am I doing.....what am I doing different?"

I. "What am I doing wrong.....?"

R. Yeah, you know, you start to question what you are doing wrong.

I felt that way about my second year classes. That I had just...my courses were bad...my second year courses, I didn't feel that way about my first and my third year...that in a sense they...were a sham and therefore, I was a sham...um...that they weren't going well, that the students weren't happy AT ALL! It was very depressing for me...very...that's when I got sick. I had a real hard time with that. I just felt that I...I actually felt that I'd let the students down.

I've had some kids that are bombing in my courses. And I'm thinking there's no hope for them. And I find out that in computer class they have honours. Or in something else they're doing marvelously well.

So, well, we have a problem here. Now what is it? Is it me, is it him, or is it...what can we do? And in some instances you can find some easy answers, and in other instances you can't. But you've got to realize in that sort of case, that you've got to work on it. At least be aware of the situation.

I was just...and then, you know, go to bed Monday night and think, I have to get up and face these (students) tomorrow, and they're just so angry and unhappy, and I don't feel that my class is taking them out of that anger and unhappiness, and....uuuhhh, it's just AWFUL. It was just awful.

One theme that pervaded many of the self-assessment comments was that teachers felt a great weight of responsibility in their new role, primarily in relationship to meeting the needs of their students. They found it quite a lonely feeling to realize that the proverbial "buck" stopped with them.

There are students who do need the help, and I try to give them the help. But there are also students who don't have the same kinds of problems. And there are students who have problems that I've never been confronted with. And you just scratch your head and think very quickly on the spot, because they are pressing you to make a decision. What do you do?

I've always found teaching lonely. You know, I mean, maybe because I've never been in management, too. That might be a reason. Like, I've never been...like I've always been (in a staff position). And now all of a sudden, I'm in charge. Whoa! I'm the one making the decisions.

I've had groups of students come in and then we simply have a tutorial. It depends on the class, it depends on the students. It depends on what you're sort of doing, really.

But it's like you're doing therapy. Does it end in 50 minutes, you know? Here the person's telling you they're about to commit suicide, and sort of, time's up. Or in our case, the student's thinking of maybe dropping the course. And are you going to say, well, you know, time's up? I mean you can't say that!

Students were not the only people to whom the new teachers felt accountable. One person, who came into the college as a new faculty member, and found himself in the position of a program coordinator within a few months, felt deeply the potential threat to his largely part-time colleagues who might not have jobs if the program failed.

It's very tough because you weigh one thing against another. I mean, if I know that there are going to be layoffs in our department, I don't go

running around and saying “ha ha, you’re going to get laid off.” I mean that crushes people, that destroys morale. What I try instead to do is I call in as many markers as I can and I try to sell new programs. I try to make more work. And I say, “looks like we’re running low on work. Let’s all pull together and see if we can develop something else.”

Another new teacher agonized about whether her health would hold up to allow her to fulfill her responsibilities to her colleagues and to her students.

I’ve been very lucky, and I don’t know if it’s going to happen, I haven’t been sick yet, really, in any sort of sense that I’ve missed a class because I was sick. I mean I’ve been sick and I’ve been able to come to class and to teach.

...I’ve been very lucky, not being sick. And I don’t know what would happen. Because I mean this is the other thing, because in (the team course) I guess you can get somebody to kind of fill in for you. But if you have a pre-university course where it’s really your course from the design and they cover you, nobody else can just kind of fit in. They can’t take it over like that (snaps fingers).

Without exception, all the teachers in this study engaged in some kind of self-assessment of their performance, roles, skills and areas of perceived competence or inadequacy. Although many of them had very positive “script” messages to shore up their self-confidence, it was nevertheless common for teachers to express the feeling that they were really a bit of a fraud, and would sooner or later get called to account for their lack of experience. In expressing their self-doubts, teachers focused on their feelings of loneliness, their fears that they might fail their students, and the weight of responsibility they attached to their new roles in the college.

Assessment of college culture

New teachers come into the colleges from a variety of different settings, most typically business, industry, service professions, or universities. They often find that the way decisions get made, and the assumptions that govern behaviour in the college are different from the ones they have been accustomed to in their previous setting. Tierney (1988) defines culture in organizations as deriving from “the values, processes and goals

held by those most intimately involved in the organization's workings. An organization's culture is reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it (p. 3)."

By their comments, it is clear that new faculty vary in their response to the college culture. Some feel at home right away and find the atmosphere, for the most part, encouraging and rewarding.

Now, being in the college, I have a lot of reasons why the college can be fulfilling. A lot of reasons why the college is not fulfilling too, but...that where I'm at with regard to (this college). I just didn't...I found a job. I got myself some great colleagues. I have some, you know, some good classes, some good students, I have some good material. I have some of everything. It's a very tolerant, ...and it can be a very nice atmosphere.

I think we are open with each other, and that's the other important thing when you talk about the culture of the college... is that you actually have colleagues that you get along with. And even though you may not be able to go to the (college restaurant), always to play squash. But you can go maybe sometimes for a cup of coffee. You can at least talk to each other or say hello in the hall. And there's this friendly sort of smile....And that's kind of nice. You don't feel isolated or alienated.

One teacher waxed lyrical about all of the aspects of the life of a teacher that made him feel self-actualized.

...it's a good, happy life. You just take that and you internalize that...it's rewarding, absolutely rewarding. And it's great in the sense of other things besides that noble thing. But it's also, teaching is perfect. It's professional, in the sense that you're accountable, time related to yourself. And you have the independence, and you know, that's perfect. I mean anybody who's well-educated like people are, you know that independence and all that, and scope of activity. You couldn't ask for anything more.

Other teachers were less enchanted with what they saw around them. They observed how some teachers were changed after a few years in the college. And they commented on the political toll exacted by colleges, and departments within colleges, struggling to forward their mission in the face of budget constraints.

So what tends to happen in an institution, is that people become institutionalized. Passions get replaced by deals that are cut between and among the members of the institution who are all interested in preserving their own space, whatever they consider to be their space. The deals are, "I

won't bother you; You don't bother me. I won't enter your space, you don't enter mine."

I've heard administration speak and then I've seen them act, and they do not follow the same script. Because there's fiscal reality, there's dollars to be dealt with. And they talk a good game, but you can't...you can't have a car run on good looks. At the same time I'm also aware that there are politically correct things to say, and that, you know...damn well, you can't deliver on what you're saying. I try not to do that, personally, but, sometimes I do. Sometimes admin does.

And I think that the opportunities here could be limitless, if there were...IF, you know, the division didn't have to fight this survival every now and then. The opportunities could really be phenomenal. It could become...we could become a leading institution in the world, in my opinion. And it could attract others to it for its innovation.

Assessment of workload

When teachers were asked about what came as the biggest surprise to them when they came into full-time teaching, they usually responded with some variation on the theme of, "I thought I would have a bit more time to spend with my family. Boy, was I wrong!" Teachers reported that they found the physical act of teaching took more out of them than they expected; that preparation, grading and student advisement absorbed far more of their out-of-class time than they realized; that there were many more aspects of the job than they thought over which they could exercise very little control.

...I think this is the kind of job that is not a nine-to-five job. I think the whole idea of a SWF (standard workload formula) is a bit of a joke, personally. I understand the rationale for it, and history, and why it's necessary to have some kind of reasonable limits. But, I mean, I think I put in, a lot of weeks, over 70 hours easily. And it's not a five or four day job.

I think the expectation was that I would have more time. It was initially going to be a lot, but it would get easier. And I don't think that's true. For a number of reasons. Number one, I never rely on my notes. I always re-read the text, and, two, I don't always re-read the text. I always think there's other things to read in order to improve the lectures, improve the delivery. And that, in part, is the feedback that I've got from the students and also my own reflection about the course and what needs to be done and changed.

I am not working until... I just - because I don't have any energy, it's a different energy, teaching. It's like giving a presentation every day. That's ...so that I don't have the energy to do the 12 hours, five days a week. So I give myself a break and I do it on the weekend or whatever. I try to spread it out over seven days as opposed to trying to crunch it all into five days.

Workload doesn't ...I know what the workload is. I keep on...the only way I can express it is that I tell people ...you know they don't understand. People who are not teachers...they don't understand the workload. The workload is very heavy. Your prep time, your marking, and class time, and time spent with students. It's very full.

I have friends who are teachers and I knew what it would be like, I think. It wasn't... It's just...the stress is different than the stress in my other job. It's different ... A lot of things you can't control. Like I've lost couple of days because of one thing a student did on one placement. And you have to stop...So I don't feel I have as much control as I did in the other job. There's a lot I can't control.

Certainly, many new teachers found that their work responsibilities absorbed more of their discretionary time than they expected, and their family time suffered as a result.

R. I try to spend...we'll have dinner. Spend a little time with (my kids), read them a bed-time story. My son loves to play chess. We'll play some chess. We'll chat a bit. And you put them to bed. And then that's when I do some work. So...

I. And you're pretty fried by that time, I would think.

R. Pretty fried, and...but the work has to be done. When do you do the marking, when do you prepare for classes? So I find that...I'm usually...the earliest I will ever go to bed would be midnight, at the earliest.

The gap between expectations and realities was a bitter pill for some teachers to swallow. One young father telegraphed his ambivalence in a statement rife with contradiction and delivered with a revealing hesitancy.

I don't feel that I...that any of my jobs have really impinged on my ..on my family time. I mean it's hard...you know...A job as demanding as this job, when...especially when it's new...and it's new for me, and...and having young, young children...it's...completely insane...actually (laughs).

Summary

Once they started teaching full-time, all the teachers in this study reported going through a prolonged stage of scanning the educational landscape to see how their expectations measured up to the “emerging realities.” Even teachers who were not new to the college system, who had taught on a part-time or sessional basis in the past, found that they had to examine their assumptions and make adjustments. In this study, teachers’ assessments were grouped in five broad categories: students and standards; colleagues and collegial relationships; self-assessment; culture; and workload.

Questioning Commitment

Given the degree of disenchantment experienced by some of the new teachers in each of the above categories, it is perhaps not surprising that there were times for most of the respondents when they questioned whether they had made the right move in becoming a teacher. This period of self-doubt and questioning of commitment is a well-documented phenomenon (Bridges 1980; Hopson 1981; Raines 1981; Schlossberg 1984; Weiss 1978; et al.). In describing the *neutral-zone* experienced by people who are working through the “confusing nowhere of in-betweenness,” Bridges suggested that such questioning is a normal and necessary part of a well-managed transition process.

The teachers described times when they went through a crisis of confidence about whether they had made the right choice. Sometimes their thoughts were expressed as a general feeling of unsureness.

I guess I worked hard all my life to get to a certain point. And all the sudden I felt I was at that point and it was very confusing because...you...my motivation...I was very driven to move ahead...and all the sudden... it was like, “Now, what do I do?”

And as I say, I wasn’t sure yet myself that I was ready to make the full commitment. So I was still taking it as a learning process.

Others revealed that they weren't at all sure whether to accept the job offer when it came to them, but that when the opportunity presented itself, they allowed their feeling of ambivalence to be overruled.

A post...a full-time post came up. And that's when I actually went jumping through all kinds of hoops, wondering what am I going to do, and...not having identity problems, but transition...problems and thoughts. But ultimately, from a practical point of view it made sense to apply, because here was a job which would...give a stability to our family...financially.

The way that it happened was that...after the Ph.D., I thought I wanted to do something completely different than teaching. I didn't know what. Because I've always been torn between teaching and doing something else. And the only way that I could explore the other alternatives was to try.

I. Teaching was what you wanted to do, obviously, if you were considering a full-time job, or... ?

R. Yeah...yes and no...not purely. It was a full-time job. I had been looking. Wasn't really sure where to go to. Salary was reasonable considering...I felt considering the years of experience that I had. And ...I actually wasn't sure. I wasn't sure that I wanted to get into a...another big institution with all the politicking that was involved. But...and really in some ways I felt, when I took the job full-time, to be the easy way out. I just thought, well, an offer. Take it.

I loved (teaching). I really loved it. But I think that I did not make a commitment to it. It was that in-between there, and what have you. And actually I said no to the commitment. It was offered to me. Good funding was available. Salary was going to be available for me. And I was a (native son) so, you know, they were prepared to fund it. You know, but I just, I didn't have the stomach for it. I didn't have the mind set to go on.

Some people who came into teaching wholeheartedly found their confidence shaken by circumstances that arose as part of their regular duties. One teacher had a shattering experience with an abusive student which caused him to question whether he was in the right career.

So...it's been actually quite a rocky beginning in teaching, once that had happened. You know, everything was very favourable up until that point...But I really hit a brick wall when I came across that incident, and have had a lot of very different introspection, in terms of whether or not I would stay in teaching, and whether or not this is the place to be. So.....difficult.

Three people seriously considered leaving the profession as a result of personality conflicts, or other circumstances which they found to stretch the limits of their tolerance.

I. Did you have a moment of panic or a moment of dismay?

R. Oh...many. Yes, many, and in fact I still do. I still have trouble with that part of teaching, and in being in the (field) environment and waiting for our program to develop the community curriculum so I can get myself out there. If I didn't anticipate that happening, I would leave, actually. I wouldn't stay. It's quite... uncomfortable for me...

The politics are here, and (laughs) I don't know. I haven't figured that one all out yet. I don't feel like I fit in yet. I don't feel ...ah...committed to being here. When people ask what I do, I sort of take a breath and say, well, this is what I do. But I'm not...I don't really, in my soul feel committed to (the college) or to the (departmental) faculty.

R. And at that point in time, I think I'd had...I know for a fact that I didn't want to stay. I didn't want to stay.

I. So you didn't have a lot to lose in making that stand, because if they threw you out, fine...?

R. Yeah. You know, it would save me the trouble of all this aggravation.

As the last statement above illustrated, collegial relationships were one of the factors that could make or break a successful adjustment to teaching, as defined by the teacher himself or herself. In the next section, teachers described their affiliation needs in relationship to administrators, other faculty and students.

Building Relationships

Need for support

Building supportive and collegial relationships was identified by the respondents as one of the most crucial tasks affecting their positive adjustment to teaching in the college. When they first came in, people needed information about systems and resources, and depended heavily on the help they could get from administrators, and whether those administrators were willing and available to guide them to sources of

support. Some of that support was sought from more experienced teachers, with greater or lesser success.

Gradually the need for specific information and resources lessened. As teachers became more comfortable with the basic “how to’s” of working in the college, they talked about how important it was to have reciprocal relationships with their peers, and to be able to share ideas as well as emotional support.

Although teachers did not seek out **support** per se from their students, they made it clear that students often did provide them with feelings of satisfaction and affirmation, and contributed significantly to the relationships that sustain new teachers through difficult times.

Relationships with administrators

As faculty compared their hopes and expectations of administrative support with the realities they experienced, it was clear that some found their early optimism to be well founded, while others experienced disappointment and frustration. As one teacher had commented earlier, the nature of the relationship of the teacher with his or her supervisor, coordinator or Chair had great impact on whether the transition was a smooth one. Consider the study in contrasts provided by the following comments.

...at the moment we have a really wonderful Chair, but prior to that, the Chair we had...I was nervous around. I felt being judged. And so that made life a little more...I didn't look beyond too much, because I got what I needed from my team. But now I feel that I can go to (my Chair) with anything...

...it's just too bad people can't be more down to earth and open. You know, we have (administrators) who don't tell you anything but talk. It's like you come out and “what did they say?” They talk in generalities and vagueness and they talk about the methodologies, and you don't know anything about what they are talking about.

As people described their assessments of their administrators, it was evident that the need for clear and open communication was a major issue for them. They clearly resented situations in which they felt that timely information would have made their orientation to teaching much easier.

I. Did they give you any orientation, or any notion of how to begin?

R. Nothing!

I. You just dived straight in there?

R. Straight in there. Just...and actually, it was even worse, because, you know, having no teaching and just...the class was already in ...up and running.

...you just have to mind your P's and Q's and find out after, or whatever. But I wish either (the Vice-President) or the Dean would come in and talk to us and say, "this is the way it is." They don't, you know.

A teacher who had become a program coordinator within a few months of entering the college described his frustration at having insufficient support to do his job adequately.

I got the coordinator's handbook, which has some information in it, but there is an awful lot of information that isn't in there.

I. There was no secretary that was sort of deputized to make sure that you knew what the systems were?

R. Gosh.....no. Now...I think (my division) is a bit of a special case, in that sense. There was no secretary deputized because there are no secretaries (laughing).

The same teacher expected to have an administrative mentor assigned to him to help ease him into his new responsibilities. The assigned person became busy and the relationship never materialized.

And then I was faced with ...and my notion of it was, there I was, and not to trivialize it, but all of a sudden to find myself friendless in the sand box.....And I was going to say, you know, what am I going to do? It just didn't seem.....it was something that I was prepared to shove off to one side, in favour of all the things that I had on my plate, rather than go off to some one and ask them if they'd be my friend.

Several of the teachers succeeded in developing strong and supportive relationships with their administrators over time. They acknowledged that shortfalls were

frequently the fault of larger system issues, rather than lack of good will. They were particularly appreciative of administrators who were sympathetic with their stress, and showed a willingness to be flexible to accommodate the new faculty member. In the comments below, supportive administrators got a hearty vote of confidence from the new faculty.

In terms of my Chair, she was really supportive. So I felt...I was thankful that she was our Chair at the time, cause I occasionally would go in, and I'd talk to her. So I think that she'd be, in the evenings with me, ...sometimes she'd be in there and I'd... "Can I run something by you?"... and it wasn't like I was pesky with anything, but she...she said some really wonderful things to me. And one of things she said to me was that, when I told her that I was doing a number on myself. And she was saying "You're as good as anybody."

I think (my Chair) has been very very good. I think (the other Chair) has as well. I think the problem is one of ...the institutional limitations, as it were. When you teach five courses, if I'm teaching for instance two (of one course), and I'm teaching right now three (my specialty), I think (my Chair) would love me to teach (the new course).

...my mentors came in all shapes and sizes. Our Chair _____ was my mentor as well. He was ...sort of a father figure. He knew the ropes, he'd been around. He'd been admin, he'd been faculty, everything. He knew who the people were who knew the answers to the questions. The other staff, the other faculty were mentors as well. They knew the equipment, they knew how things worked.

Now on the positive side, what did happen was that I realized that I needed a break and I did start, as of January last year, working a four day work week. And that's continued this year, and that for me felt very supportive, in terms of meeting my needs, and the college did...and (my Chair) did give me that...kind of support where she could. And I was very grateful for that. I probably would have left if...in June, if I hadn't had that.

Relationships with colleagues

Equally important to new faculty were the relationships they forged with their peers. And as before, some people were warmed and gratified by their success in integrating with the colleagues, while others felt lonely and bewildered.

Well, there's some elements of it (collegial relationships, support) that, quite honestly, haven't succeeded for me. And they might if, for instance, I had been here for a year before as a part-time teacher, before moving full-time into a job that has a vast array of responsibilities. When I started on contract, and when I first came in, in the first couple of months, or maybe even the first year, I would have...I was happy here as a new faculty member. I felt (collegial support) was there. But, I ...(?) it doesn't seem to be a function...it doesn't seem to be there so much any more.

I found, I found that other than one teacher that I found as a mentor, um...no one wanted to share their work. But you know I'm like that now too. You tend to get like that. But no one wanted to really, you know, sit down with me and show me how to do things.

I. So that's a big difference from what you expected? You thought people would be more willing to come forth...

R. Yeah, and I can understand it in a certain...to a certain degree, why people don't want to give things away, because it ends up you don't know where, and there's so many part-time sessional people coming in that it ends up in their hands and they're not using it the way it was meant to.

The sentiments expressed above were far from universal. Several teachers found their colleagues to be open and helpful right from the beginning. Some people attributed their good fortune to the sensitivity of their co-workers, while others acknowledged that their own assertiveness was an element in their success.

I. Did you find it easy to get people to cooperate with you in terms of getting in to observe their classes?

P. It was just a natural thing to do....it was no problem at all. I was just ...accepted. I was just the stray cat they took in I guess...

Everyone had open note books. They showed me the way they prepared lessons and they said, "This is the way I do it. It works for me." If I asked if I could sit and listen, it was "definitely yes, come on in." It was a really good experience as far as the team went, in our department.

I. Did people share with you what they knew about teaching, and how to deal with the content? Did you get that kind of support early on?

R. Yeah, very early on. Now, to be perfectly honest, I can't remember whether it was offered, or I sought it out. Because I seek out. So, but I never ever felt, if I asked a question, that people didn't have time, or weren't willing to share.

So she handed me her things, and she said "Here's the way I'm organized. Here's my student list. Here's how I keep track of what they...who are the (clients) they've had in the (field setting), the type of skills that they've had. Who needs experience still in these areas. These are the kinds of assignments that they're having to do for me. You'll be seeing these

presentations, and this is what I look for.” She laid it all out...and certainly from that time, I’ve had that...the skeleton of that to use in the rest of my... in all the time.

Where teachers did find supportive collegial relationships, they identified closely with their work group and their sense of belonging and being part of a team was a source of considerable pride.

...being recognized...I don’t know...being valued.....It feels good to have things working out. To have everybody smiling and happy. I think that’s probably a.....a sense of value in itself. Like, we’re not doing grievances anymore. Things seem to be pretty smooth. Everybody’s civil, and they smile to one another. And they help.

I’m in a very unique program. I hear this from other people, and sort of got a real sense of that with ...all the people from our (new teacher training) course. That we have a very open team and a very close team. I mean we have a weekly team meeting in which we chat all the time, and we’re running ideas by each other all the time, and we’re really quite close.

We are in the college a lot. These other programs, I don’t see anybody. They come in and teach, pick up their mail and leave. Our program is not like that. We’re around a lot.

R. It would hurt me if (our team spirit) all fell apart, and we went back to the previous way. Iron fist regime would crush us, it would just destroy everything we’ve built. There’s actual trust now, where people aren’t afraid to say things, where there is no...they don’t get punished if they screw up. Like it’s OK to make a mistake?

I. Sounds like you feel that that’s a contrast from the way it was when you came in.

R. I believe so.

The last comment was made by a teacher who came into a department which had recently lost it’s leadership, and was waiting for the appointment of a new administrator. The experience resulted in a very cohesive and interdependent working group.

...you have to understand too, with nobody else around, with no administration to turn to....desperation forms strong bonds, you know. You hang...you cling to each other and you develop a strength and a support system there.

Instructional development and mentoring program

Some teachers commented on the support they received from being part of a cohort of other new faculty from across the college who shared the same orientation and instructional skills program.

Some people I met at (orientation) had already taught part time or a year, so they were a nice resource for me. So that...that I liked a lot. So I could say, "Gee I'm having this problem," and they'd say "so are we".....and the very supportive staff that I worked with...

I did talk about it with (another new teacher), which was really helpful because he was going through a similar thing with one or two of his classes, and that probably was most helpful. Just being able to share it. It didn't solve it. But getting it off my chest. And getting a pat on the back and a shoulder to cry on, and all that stuff.

And then there was (the new faculty program)...but in some ways that was good, because...you know...we would...sometimes chat about those issues, you know in the 5 to 6 o'clock time. And I felt that I was with comrades...who were probably going through the same thing but we didn't really even have time to talk about it. (laugh).

I still had to face the first class, and do that, or the first few. I did sit in on...one of the things the (new faculty program) suggested which was brilliant, actually, was sitting in on certain people's classes so you see how they were. And that was fabulous because I really felt I could see how other people were doing things and be a little less critical, self-critical of myself, if things weren't going extremely well.

All of the new faculty in the study group were assigned a mentor when they began their new faculty orientation program. New teachers found mentor relationships, when they worked, to be extremely supportive. However not all the assigned mentors had the time and motivation to meet regularly with their mentees, while in some cases, informal (non-assigned) mentors provided all the support the new faculty required.

The first time I had to teach that...I just...I couldn't believe it. But (my mentor) was very good. And no matter what it is, she'd been around the educational system and she could go into some of the theories and the methodologies with me and help me to understand that a little bit more.

In the (professional) faculty I had a mentor, a woman who I could ask questions of and connect with in terms of classroom teaching or critical

teaching, organizing students, and all that type of thing. And she was helpful. Not always as helpful as I felt I wanted...or as much information as I needed, or whatever. But because I had been in here sessionally, I did know other people, and I would just tap into all those other people until everything all made sense, and...I could go on.

But for me, I view all my colleagues in the _____ faculty as mentors. And they have all, in many ways, proven to be just that. They are very ...they're very open with advice. And it's worth significantly more than I pay for it (laughs).

One teacher felt strongly that the mentor program was so important that it was worth expending more effort to make sure it worked for everyone.

If we can have a mentoring program, but really try to, ahead of time, even...like, now (in the Spring) go through the different departments and find out if there's anyone interested in a mentoring program, and being a mentor.

And screening them, like beforehand, and giving them some guides or leads, or developing the mentors, so that when the new kids are coming in, be they full-time or part-time or whatever, they've got somebody that is willing to share, that is willing to go show the ropes, that is willing to spend a lunch hour once every couple of weeks, and sit down and hash things through. And is willing to tell somebody that, just because half of the class failed a test, it's not because they are a lousy teacher.

Relationships with students

The relationship between new teachers and their students was a complex one. Some teachers were very open about how important it was to them that their students liked and respected them, and learned from them. They discussed the blossoming of their self esteem, the pleasure and pride, that resulted from feeling that they were really getting through to their students. Teachers also recognized how much they were learning from their students. Dealing with discipline and power issues in the classroom was an ongoing challenge and an important learning process in becoming an effective teacher.

One respondent showed how vulnerable new teachers can be when their conscious or unconscious hopes for affirmation from the students are not realized.

I thought that there would be a warmer relationship between the...myself as a teacher and the students. I thought that I would be able to break some barrier, some wall that exists within that dynamic...the student/teacher relationship. And I realize that I might whittle away at it a little bit, but it always feels like a bit of a...always, always feels...And I expect that with the students. And I try to... I get their feedback about that.

R. I think probably in terms of the student/teacher relationship, I think that I thought I would see an impact on my relationship with the students while I was with the students. And I don't see that (laughs). I think I thought I would be rewarded in some way, in the job.

I. ...that they would show you how much of an impact you are making on them...?

R. Yeah...yeah, and I don't.

Teachers explored the unequal power relationship that exists between student and teacher, and acknowledged that attempting to find a balance that protects trust would be an ongoing struggle.

I guess I'm looking for sometimes...as open a relationship as I can with the students, but there are parameters that can't change. And one of them is that I have to be the evaluator. Another is that they come, a lot of them, from a lot of pedagogy, where they've been told what to do. And I do try to facilitate them into being more adult learners.

I'd say that I'm closer, like, it's a fine line for me, and I'm probably closer to relating and understanding them, than I am on the other end. I think I have...I believe I have respect, the students respect me. Yet, I don't want to be right in the middle. I want to be there.

I don't want to be seen as somebody they're afraid of, someone who has a tremendous amount of power. I want the hierarchy in the classroom to be more horizontal...horizontal than vertical. I want the...but I'm not...I don't always know when I'm...where I am on that continuum. But I'd say I'm closer toward being friendly, that I might have to work a little bit more at some authority.

Some teachers discovered that some of the "adult learners" in their classrooms required far more "discipline" than the teachers had expected. They struggled with the impact this had on their attitudes towards their students, and took pride in the methods they achieved to draw out more responsible behaviour from their students.

What also surprised me is ...some of the expectations (or lack of) that they got in high school in terms of classroom behaviour. And that really surprised me last year, when I was struggling with it in one course, and so I stopped and said... "Let's talk about this. I mean I'm having trouble.

People are having trouble hearing. I've heard from some people who say they don't want to take any responsibility." So I try to facilitate.

I can see...it's easy to get cynical. I am not as kind towards my students as I was when I came in. You do get old, you do get cynical. I think in the right areas, I think I've become cynical in the right areas. I think I was more accommodating, and now... "No, this is the expectation."

I. Have you changed in your practice as a teacher? Or have you changed in the way you see your students, or relate to your students?

R. Um...yeah, that's really...um...I walk a fine line, I think in some ways, in terms of the continuum that faculty can fall under, in terms of, on one end, being the authoritarian, the boss, the arm of control, and the other being over involved and...buddies with the students, you know?

Oh yes, it was great fun. If you are able to win over a really rowdy class, and they're able to see the relevance, then you've got them.

And I had some real trouble-makers who wanted to make my life hell, but I...you see, if you're not intimidated by them, if they try to intimidate you, if you're simply saying you're really trying to understand what they're trying to say...hear them out, they respond.

Some teachers were humbled by the degree to which feedback from their students helped them to improve their teaching skills.

The students were teaching me. The students were teaching me what I needed to know. They were...the response was heard from them, but it wasn't perfect by any stretch of the imagination. I think they were telling me where I was rambling and where I was clear. They were telling me what they thought was relevant and what they thought was irrelevant.

The only feedback I got was from the students. Like when I did the act, I knew when I bombed. I knew when I died. They'd go to the bathroom a lot, and you'd get the "looking out the window syndrome." You know, I knew when things weren't working.

I think at that point, if I recall, I used to just "get real." I realized that who I was, wasn't me. I was trying to be some kind of a professor who knew all things, pretending to spew knowledge, you know, and it just wasn't happening. I just let my guard down and said..."Hey guys, this is not working".....you know, and I'd ask the students to bail me out. I'd ask them to set me back on course.

Success in working with students was evidently very important to the self-esteem of new faculty. They needed to feel they had achieved the right balance in working with their students, and had made a significant contribution to students' reaching their goals.

I am pretty well trying to treat them (the students) as, "I am the supervisor ...you're the employees." And I've worked in organizations where the supervisor is not always this unapproachable nasty person. I could go out for lunch and go out for drinks. Now, I don't do that with my students, but I probably a little more... I think I am quite approachable and I think I relate well to them.

I like the interaction. I love people and I love some of my interaction with the students, most of it. I think...you know... 99% of my students are great. They've got some BIG BIG problems, some of which I can help them with, some of which I simply cannot, and wish them well as they leave here, sometimes before they graduate. So it gives me really a lot of pleasure.

I want to keep them well balanced. That's really important to me. Because that's what they're there to be. I think I model that. I mean I love it when a graduate comes in and says well, I want your job. And I say, good for you. Go for it (laughs).

Even the teacher quoted at the beginning of this section, who felt discouraged by the lack of responsiveness of some of her students, was able to realize that her students did show her the positive benefits of her influence over them.

...I have to remind myself. As I said, I do get very positive feedback from the students, and there is some sense of relief when they are with me in the (field placement) setting. They feel that the atmosphere that they're learning in is more calm, and more reasonable, and they can learn. Actually, and that's true for some of them.

Several studies of new faculty in universities (Boice 1984; Austin, Brocato and LaFleur 1993) have noted how important it is for new faculty to gain the acceptance of their colleagues. Boice states, "I came to realize that success or failure in professional careers begins with social supports...The most salient experience of new faculty during their first few years on campus, the ones they most want corrected, are loneliness and under stimulation (19)." The comments above show that faculty in the colleges share the same wants and needs, and that their desire for social affirmation and support includes administrators and students, as well as their teaching colleagues.

Developing Skills

Personal skills

Throughout the discussion of their developing skills as teachers, respondents identified strengths in themselves that bolstered their self esteem and enhanced their ability to be effective. Among the personal skills that rated their own code descriptors were assertiveness, conflict-management ability, flexibility, initiative, task orientation, leadership skills and career planning knowledge. Some faculty identified themselves as skilled negotiators and problem-solvers and valued their ability to find and communicate to their students the practical applications of what they were learning. They recognized that their perspective as professionals in their business or industry provided their students with a valuable resource.

Other teachers valued their ability to form good relationships with their students, and to communicate dedication, sensitivity, enthusiasm, interest and understanding. They also acknowledged their own survival skills in learning to manage their stress level, keep their pressures in perspective, and roll with the punches.

R. I am on an even keel. I can take a couple of dips. And we can have a couple of ups and a couple of downs. But I can't be consistently up and down. Because I'm still having my ups and downs...I'm not completely trans...

I. Transitioned?

R. Transitioned.

Learning to teach

The sheer mechanics of how you learn to teach was of great concern to the new faculty. They explored their memories of challenges they had faced, and resources and solutions that they found to help them overcome the roadblocks. They told their "war stories" and recounted with pride the systems they had developed to become more

efficient in classroom and curriculum management. They shared what they had learned about teaching, and about students, and mostly about themselves. They exulted in their strengths, and exclaimed ruefully over the hard lessons learned. In this representative sample of the many exemplars that related to skill development, the voices of all 12 respondents are heard.

Looking back on their first year or two, teachers were able to see how far they had come, and what they have gained in learning their role, and finding ways to tap into the expertise of their peers.

I had to quickly learn about how these things are done. How do you get new programs, how do you sell these things? How do you set them up? How is funding arranged, and how do these accounts appear from somewhere? And how do you manage a budget, and stuff like that? They were not unfamiliar concepts in the _____ industry, 'cause that's what I'd done for the 15 years previous. But very new to me in this framework...

I guess other gains are...well, the justification, and the learning experience for me. I'm picking up a whole new lingo. I'm definitely...although my learning strategies are different from many, I'm so task oriented that an awful lot of it is...and I'm learning either after the fact...I'm learning from my mistakes, which... you know, very little of it is formal.

I never even thought about visiting somebody else's class before then, to see different styles and to see what sort of works and what doesn't work. And even if it does work for somebody else, seeing whether or not you think you could handle...you could try that out. Cause some things I can't do. I don't think I can do, and I'm not ready to take the risk.

Other things I can see happening...jeez, I should try that out. Maybe I can do that.

We're talking about people that were Ph.D. prepared, you know, that were very standoffish. But as soon as you said to them, "Excuse me, but can you tell me how you did that? And would you have any objection to me using your style or using your material, or doing this.....?" So those are the type of people that I took a look at, and said, "I can put their methods into the classroom, and it'll work."

Some teachers remarked on the challenges presented by each new class, and each new group of students. They learned that every group, and every individual, has their own

unique needs. They learned that they could develop efficient and effective, but at the same time compassionate, ways to address those needs.

Every semester that I went through was a case of a different perspective. I think that probably was the...the facet that gave it the most frustration. But then again...the most personal satisfaction, I think, is every new class that's coming in is a completely different mixture, and you got to try to figure where they're coming from.

I found that every class is different...since then...and what works for one doesn't work for the other. What takes an hour for one, might take three hours for another. So I've become a lot more flexible. My lesson plan is now on a 3 x 5 card, rather than pages of notes.

(The students) are very often afraid of making a mistake. And I say to them, you know, ask me. Try and answer the question. You may not know, we'll all laugh at you together. You know, it's not a big deal if you make a mistake, nothing's going to turn on it. We're all learning here.

Learning to deal efficiently with the "administrivia" of teaching was a source of considerable satisfaction for some members of the group. They felt gratified at their developing ability to get the preparation and marking aspects of the job under control so that they were no longer exhausting themselves.

As time goes on, I think I'll become more efficient, perhaps, with the amounts of time that I have. I think the marking will be the same but perhaps I'll become more efficient and quicker in terms of marking papers. That if you can save five minutes on a paper, because now you know what you're expectations are. They're sort of clearer, and you can get better. And as the courses settle down.

And there isn't as much marking now as there was, or as much prep. I mean I may do an hour or two depending on what I've got now. Whereas before, I was like until 11 or 12 o'clock at night, I'd be just sitting there grading and grading, marking and marking and marking. So that's improved.

If a student wants to know their grade because they missed the test, then I whip it out. They want to make an appointment, I've got everything with me. So I think in terms of the organization, I've got all my files differentiated. So I think that's very good.

I think that part gets easier. Certainly I have, I think, a filing system now that is pretty good. I have a colour coding system which is pretty good. I think I've figured out a system which works very well, in terms of being able to differentiate between (my separate courses). I think that...I think

I'm at really where I want to be. And it's very efficient. I think it works very well.

Learning to deal with the vexatious issues of evaluating students fairly was another challenge to be overcome.

One of the things was that I set the hurdles too high on the initial test, and I was sort of working from my knowledge base. And I was basing the tests on my knowledge base, which is based on 25 years of work in the business.

I'm uncomfortable with thinking I have to tell the student that they are failing or that they have failed. And I'm learning to be more realistic with that. If they haven't been able to meet the objectives for whatever variety of reasons are there, it's very realistic that they should fail, and that learning go from there.

Teaching techniques, content mastery, timing and pacing were issues that many a more experienced teacher would recognize as on-going matters of concern. These new teachers were open about their struggles to get it right.

Even if I would fumble on a small thing in presentation, you know, my knowledge...they knew I had the content. They knew...I think they felt comfortable that I...even though I was young, I was academically pretty wise about (my specialty) theory and what have you. I had some business experience.

So content wasn't the prime thing. I think the prime thing was just confidence in my presentation. Whether I was articulating properly or I'd showed the graph correctly on the blackboard, you know. Was I talking too fast, you know, or I didn't...sometimes you've really got to take your dead time to make your points...

It didn't take long to brush up where I was rusty. But delivering it and making sense of it to the students, to connect all the dots for them, to show that we will start here, and end there, and make all the steps easy and manageable. It was tough. It was tough to gauge time. I remember preparing lectures, and I'd have pages and pages of notes and an hour later they were all gone. There was nothing left, and it was a three hour segment. I felt...Oh oh, now what? So timing....

When it all came together, and everything was working, the teachers claimed their expertise and power with joyful exuberance.

I was having a great, great, great time. It was a great time...it was a great time teaching. I was whipping up 100 people into a learning experience. I was using all kinds of props, and I was very free. And I was bringing in Big Bird and I was bringing in sewing machines to explain things. And I was using magic.

Most of the teachers were able to take pride and pleasure in the strengths that had sustained them through their first year, and the new confidence they were gaining from sharing their experiences with other learning teachers.

I've learned to listen a hell of a lot more. I was always excited, like, "I've got this idea, right..." and I'd cut in, and that sort of thing. I have learned to listen. And who has taught me that was the (new teacher training) group.

An enthusiasm, a compassion and a sense of fun are great things to start out with. They won't get you...as I'm certainly learning in professional development, they don't get you by on their own, but they're...they're great to have. And they're certainly good to have initially. And since then, I've developed the organization, ...and...you know...just the...I've learned a lot about what goes on in the classroom, so I can use it to my...to my advantage.

Developing mastery of their art, or even just surviving the first year and living to tell the tale, gave the new faculty a degree of confidence to sustain them over the difficult times. They expressed an increasing degree of comfort with their role and their skills.

R. Quite frankly, this semester has been a breeze, not in the sense that I'm working less, but it's just all that emotional...

I. You're not dreading it...

P. Yeah, and the sense that, "Gee, that lack of confidence, it's all gone...or almost all gone (laughs)."

My first semester certainly gave me a degree of comfort in preparing lesson plans and standing in front of a group of people and talking either from notes or even extemporaneously.

I. I was asking you what you think made the change? Why do you feel so much more comfortable this year?

R. Well, some of it, I think is the passing of time. I think the other one is that the year's behind me. Do you know what I mean?

The last word goes to the teacher who observed ruefully, "And you do have a couple of comeuppances along the way."

Establishing Boundaries and Control

Part of what attracted a number of the teachers in this study to a career in education was the feeling that teaching was one profession that afforded a higher than average degree of professional autonomy. They looked forward to having more say about how they managed their time, their material and their style than one usually expects in the business world. Most teachers expected that they would be able to influence the decisions that affected them, and negotiate terms that were acceptable to them regarding the management of their workload. In some cases, their expectations were met or exceeded. In others, reality fell far short of what they had hoped for.

Most of the teachers in this study made reference to numerous situations in which they had to "hold the line" in terms of the expectations that were made of them during their first two years at the college. Many found themselves to be the recipients of extremely heavy teaching loads, with more new preparations than were the norm for more experienced teachers. Often they were asked to take on roles and responsibilities for which they felt under-prepared or unsupported. Some teachers felt that their position as probationary faculty made it very difficult for them to establish limits or refuse assignments.

In addition, some new teachers found that it was necessary to establish boundaries in their relationships with their students, and protect their personal privacy and family time from the insatiable demands of the job of learning to be a college faculty member. In the following section, these two interrelated issues are discussed.

Personal and professional autonomy

Some teachers were pleasantly affirmed in their expectations of professional autonomy. They found that they could exercise a high degree of individual freedom and influence in their relationships with their course material and with other instructors.

We really do have a good program, where I am. It certainly makes me think twice about going to another college. I think I have a fair amount of freedom. I've done course outlines, and we share it with all the other instructors. So I have a say even in the course I don't teach. I have a say in it. And I've already changed a few things in the course I'm teaching now. So when we revise them in May and June, as long as I can argue it out...

...they had the confidence after a year and a half of me teaching part-time that I would create new courses that were really exciting. Which excited me. It meant I...I could do that. And it gave me a lot of confidence. I mean, the teaching here has been a tremendous confidence booster.

Other teachers observed a gap between what seemed to be and what really was and arrived at somewhat different conclusions.

I think it makes sense to separate.... what I call real authority and artificial power (laughs). We have artificial power at our levels. We can pretend to make differences, you know, and move and shake. And we do make real differences, don't get me wrong, in terms of our students, in terms of our affect there. But in terms of the entire structure and major policies, we don't have a whole lot of say.

Frankly, I thought just having a full-time teaching position here would be fascinating. It'd be a lot of fun. I do enjoy some of the cut and thrust, although I recognize, in a way, I'm sort of a lobster without claws.

I. Was it really scary for you to find that you had as much carte blanche as you did, when it came to curriculum?

P. No, I was really glad actually, because I'm used to free-lance work. You create your own parameters. So it was great to be able to create my own parameters. The problem, sometimes, was I didn't know the variables I was dealing with. I just didn't know... I wasn't introduced to (the) college and the program sufficiently to really know what I was dealing with. It was really trial by fire.

One of the teachers-turned-coordinators shared a familiar lament with another faculty member. Their comments accentuate the demotivating effects of having too little

information, too few resources, and a lack of incentives that are attached to competence and achievement rather than seniority.

You don't know how much money you have, because the budget is only accessible to higher ups...who do whatever they do, you know....so you never really know. There's no reward for extra hard work. I find that particularly demoralizing to veteran faculty, here. They bust their butts and what have they got? Nothing. They do nothing and what have they got...the same.

I didn't have access to typewriters. I didn't have the computer at home. I didn't have a Photostat machine or anything else, which necessitated coming in to the college... And down at (my campus) we never had a secretary or anything. So I developed...I'd got into the habit of doing my own typing, and doing my own thing...

Despite the frustrations of maintaining professional autonomy, one of the most beleaguered faculty members was still able to find encouragement in having reached her goal of becoming a college teacher.

...in three years time, I think it ...it'd probably be OK to say, yeah, I'll be starting my Masters.

I. Will you still be at (this college)?

R. Yeah. Yeah, because they are allowing me to teach...

I. We aren't going to...we aren't going to bump the ginger out of you?

R. No, because you are allowing me to teach what I like. You are allowing ME, to do as...how I like it as well. There's nothing here that says, "You must do this, this and this."

Establishing boundaries

Several teachers recounted times during their first year or two of teaching when they had to fight to "hold the line" when it came to work assignments and the impact on their energy level. Some teachers found that they had to exercise all of their assertive skills to avoid being overwhelmed. Two people described their efforts to resist additional assignments, while still maintaining their integrity and self-esteem as committed employees.

I felt, it wasn't something that I liked to do, frankly. And it wasn't my expectation. I was giving all sorts above and beyond what a partial load

was doing. I wasn't getting paid for taking on extra things, for participating in supervisor's workshops. I mean anything that was going on, I'd participate. I'd be a part of. I'd be there above and beyond.

R. You kind of look around and think, "How come I am doing this? How come... just because I am organized, I get to do this? Gee, maybe I shouldn't be so organized."

I. Yeah, yeah, there's a price tag on that...

R. I know. That I find stressful. I find it stressful NOT to do a good job. So it's Catch 22. So you do a good job, so they give you more work.

Another teacher described an on-going effort to establish her limits in the face of pressure from an administrator to do more.

Whenever there's something to be discussed, (the Chair) will say, "Well, ask (respondent's name)," because she knows my varied background. But, at the same token, I've gotten a little bit stronger and said, "No, I won't take this on. This is my thoughts on this. Take it or leave it, but I am not doing it." And she knows. So she knows how far she can now push me.

The issue of boundaries arose in a different context as one teacher explored what was the right distance for her to establish in her relationship with her students.

I still have fun with the students and I like to laugh and I share stories about my own life as related to the material. And I think that's OK. I know a boundary where I won't share what's not appropriate, I think. I'm pretty good at establishing that in my gut, in my sense of what I'm comfortable with, knowing the group.

For some faculty members, the battle was fought on the home front, and the struggle was to protect personal and family time and space from being taken over by work responsibilities.

The down side of it is that the job...that you like the job.....that it's very hard to define the boundaries between the job and your personal life and space. So, in any kind of traditional model, you know, you've got a job which gives you all those things...self-esteem, discipline, structure...and then you've got the family. And there's the work space and there's the personal space.

I. And the trick is to make sure that the work doesn't wind up making you feel alienated from the other important things in your life.

R. Exactly, exactly. That you're alienated from your family. And then to try...you know it demands this kind of boundaries. But there's sort of ups

and downs. I mean this weekend is going to be one of those weekends from hell, because all the essays are due in and you're marking. But then after a couple of weeks and you've got that...lull...

What I miss is the free time (laughs). And that's the most significant thing that ...like I used to know I'd come home from work, I'd come home. And I can't do that. Because I have marking to do, have to think about it perhaps. And I just find I work more than I ever have.

R. I found it stressful, initially, to work at home. And I had never done that. I always worked at the office. My home was my space...

I. You could just leave everything behind?

R. I could leave everything behind. And now, see, I can't leave everything behind. I mean, this week, I'm on March break, and I'm dreaming about my students.

What happens when those boundaries and barriers begin to sort of slide? Right? And it's very hard to talk about, then, what is the work space, when you're working at home, you mark at home, and it's on the weekends. And there's something kind of strange happening there, in terms of those kinds of spaces. And I think that's really sort of the down side to it. Because then it creates, it seems to me sometimes, tensions and conflicts. Andit's very hard to really say.....I can't leave my work at work, you know. I've got to bring my work home.

After a year or more experience, and particularly as faculty were nearing the end of their probationary period, they showed that their confidence was increasing. They had a clearer sense of what they could legitimately refuse, and the risks they were willing to take to draw a clear "bottom line," or establish their own autonomy.

Everybody does things differently, and I think now I am more apt to just.....like, "O.K. this is...I am doing it my way," as opposed to when I first came here. I was a little more, "I wonder how they do it? Maybe I should do it that way." Whereas now my confidence is greater and it's, "This is how I am doing it."

I had some power. I had some power and I knew that ...and also too yes, there was a financial aspect too. Is it fine...we were fine. And this was now...we were in the gravy, and we were OK. And I could afford to say what I wanted to say and do a bit more what I wanted to do.

(In my area), you teach what you like. You teach what you know you're good in, and that sort of thing. And if that ever was to change, somewhat like it did in the (field setting) where I knew I was no longer (professionally) focused, I would walk out. I wouldn't stay around.

So now I can afford to rock the boat a little more...(laughing). But I also...you see, I built on little successes....and it was well received, so now I am more apt to take a risk.

I think the most important thing...the benefit of coming on full-time is that you're...(laughs) you're no longer scared of what you say or what you do. Even when I was on probationary period, I felt I belonged and I felt I now had the right to make my thoughts known about the curriculum, about my class, about the fact that they'd been giving me all the leftovers before, and that I would like to develop a course, and teach it more than two semesters, thank you very much.

Redirecting Focus

A significant theme that emerged from the voices of the teachers in this study was their awareness of the transitional shift that they saw taking place in the focus of their teaching, from an early emphasis on content and presentation skills, to a gradual shift to focus on the needs and learning styles of the students. Of the twelve respondents, five specifically alluded to this shift without any prompting from the interviewer. Interestingly, all five were more experienced teachers. Four were in their fourth year as full-time faculty members at the time of interviewing. The fifth was in her third year, but had considerable part-time teaching experience behind her.

The other seven respondents acknowledged the shift from content- and self- to student-focus when the question was probed by the interviewer, although they may not have raised it spontaneously.

Content focus

I think the (Master's degree program) experience also helped me look at the college differently. Previously, my focus was all content, and the novelty of the teaching experience. Am I doing a good job in the classroom? What kinds of questions should I ask on quizzes?...things like that.

Once you start (teaching), you know, the problem becomes whether you're prepared to do it, if you've thought everything through and your presentation is ready to go, and it's polished. Then if you make mistakes

and you can't think fast enough on your feet, you get flustered and stuff like that. But...and that sort of makes you nervous.

I. Was there a difference in your level of readiness to hear some of (the students) than there might have been if you'd had (the teacher training program) right in the first semester you were ever in the college?

R. Um...maybe, maybe not the first semester. OK, maybe not the very first semester. Because I think at that time, still, unless you had maybe an educational background, at that time it was still a case of you were so wrapped up in getting your content. You can't teach if you don't know it. You can't sell something unless you know what you're selling. You can't teach unless you know what you're teaching.

But you don't really...I don't know if you're interested, but...initially, I think, you know, you're sort of worried, and your first thing is to...for me, is to conquer the material. Even though it's only Introduction to _____. I mean that month, I think I would have spent my time concentrating on just...knowledge of the material, even though it was introduction. But to teach it, you really have to master it.

Student focus

The same voices that described their original concern for content mastery and presentation skills later acknowledged that the focus of their attention in the classroom had shifted.

I'm getting away from content orientation and I'm focusing more on the faces in the crowd. I'm not looking at my notes anymore, and staring at my overheads, and so on. I'm looking at the people, and waiting for their reaction. So I've changed.

In the first while the teacher wants the students to like them. That's the goal. And then you get past...or you move through that stage to being able to look at the students for what their learning needs are, and it doesn't really matter whether they like you or not, but how are they progressing and learning, with the substance of what they're here for.

And I see that a little...I see that more in myself, that I'm actually being able to stop being so self-focused, and "what will I say next that will help" vs. "What's this student really saying, and what direction is she going in?" And mentally I'm thinking in terms that I notice that difference in myself, that apparently I'm not as self-focused any more. That I am able to look at them and say, "What kind of learner are they?"

I was probably lecturing more than I should be. And the frustration was not just associated with the ...my lack of teaching training, but it was like...Who are these people in my audience? I didn't have an awareness

that...I didn't have the focus, the orientation to.....really the problem was, you know, I wasn't...I was more worried about myself, as opposed to...I should be more worried about my students.

When I was first starting...in the beginning sessionally, and in the first couple of years when I was full time, I think I was very self-focused, in trying to make sure that I did a good job, whatever that meant to me. And now when I am sitting with my students and they're discussing a problem or a situation or they're struggling with learning, I am mentally in my mind looking at them in terms of, "I wonder how (the students) learn? What will work better for them? Where is their real problem?"

And I didn't have that...I couldn't do that until this year. I could not perceive, or would not...just wasn't doing it. Was not even aware that should have been there. I must have been too engrossed in my own... the thought of being able to be open to the students, and whatnot, that I wasn't able to take a step back from myself, in my own performance, and look at them and see how they...what their needs were.

One teacher came to her student-focus out of a realization that the learners in Continuing Education classes were just like her – responsible adults with many complex and stressful demands competing for their time and attention.

One of the things that's really changed a lot is that I think I have a little bit more control than I thought I did. And that's been helpful because I see the students more as not down there, but being on the same level, especially the type of students we get. Because they have vested their time.

I read a book on...I forget what the name of it is. But it was very interesting for Continuing Education. "What have you left...What do you leave behind to do this?" I forget what the list was. And I thought, "Oh my God, they've done that just to come and see me?" So I ...I have to...it's changed some of my teaching styles.

Becoming a Teacher

Despite the frequent set-backs and crises of confidence that accompanied the new faculty on their journey to becoming a teacher, most agreed that, on balance, the positives outweighed the negatives. Where this was true, the courage to persist seemed to come as much from intrinsic as from extrinsic sources. Most of the encouragement in the teachers' new surroundings came from supportive interpersonal relationships – with administrators and other faculty – and from the expressed appreciation and affirmation of their students.

An equally important source of strength was each teacher's own personal store of confidence, flexibility and resilience. Personality variables, combined with the aggregate of positive and negative experiences, determined how well each individual was able to reactivate and reaffirm their commitment to teaching.

This section concludes with a series of statements made by the various respondents in this study which indicate where they see themselves on the continuum of their personal transition into teaching.

Rewards and affirmations

The most successful adjustments (by each person's own measure) were made by people who felt that they had received the rewards of positive affirmation from their colleagues and from their students. Some affirmations took the form of specific compliments or expressions of thanks and appreciation. Others were more subtle – responses which conferred status, acknowledged influence, or recognized success.

Administrators, course coordinators and staff developers all had a significant level of influence over the new faculty members' emotional well-being, particularly early on after they joined the full-time faculty.

...they appear to listen to what I say.....And I mean, I don't have to run around and put down a position paper in front of everybody.....you know, all I have to do is present the facts and talk about it in a rational manner to the right people, and it's accepted as, you know it's either accepted, or not. But more often than not, it seems that people do ...do listen to what I say, and.....do more than just listen to what I say. Which is gratifying.

I need instant feedback. I've got to know how this is going. And I GOT it. And it was excellent. You know, not so much that they didn't have suggestions, but just the fact...because (my Chair) read through (the student evaluations) and she said, "well, they're great suggestions, they're great criticisms, they're great compliments..."

(The coordinator) has found that my course really has helped with what students have learned. So they're able to transfer and apply the material.

And that's something very satisfying. And that really shows. The course is working in conjunction with other courses, which is really the way it should be. A good program should be doing that. The courses help each other out.

I felt really comfortable.....I liked that one week training...that really helped a lot. It just, I don't know...made me feel...it was like, "A NEW TEACHER! We WANT you!" (laughs). It was interesting. I felt...you know, this is my area of expertise in terms of employees...that I really was a valued part of this organization.

And I guess it suddenly dawned on me, they need me. They really need me. Because they are doing this and this, and they've got these plans and whatnot. They haven't got anybody else that's going to do it.

I feel valued. I feel valued as a person and I feel valued as a teacher.

Other faculty also had great power over the new teacher's feelings of fitting in and being accepted. New teachers took pride in gaining recognition from their peers of their own special contributions. Those who were received with openness and given assistance wanted to give back to others some of the support they had enjoyed.

Now the advantage...one of them, was that I also knew what I was getting into a little bit, and liked what I...what existed. I liked the supports, and I liked the people. So that my first impression from those few months coming in once a week was really supportive and felt warm.

I think my colleagues... I had met these fabulous people. I was being given the opportunity to design some courses and to teach them. I was being asked to teach (a course) which I really liked, and I saw potential to develop things. I could write articles. And there were a lot of nice things that were happening here. And to be a part of it, and to have a full-time job.....

I had power in my little unit. I had power both with the staff, and I had power with the (related professionals). The (related professionals) no longer started going to managers. They would come to me and say, "What do you think? Can we do this? Would this be feasible?"

I was helped out a couple of times. And so now I don't think that...there's still a couple of individuals that do it their own way. And that's fine. But anybody new coming in knows that my filing cabinet is always open. If they want something, they are welcome to go through it.

The students were another significant source of reward for the new teachers. Sometimes the affirmations were concrete and spoken aloud. More often they came in the

satisfaction the teachers received when their students were successful, or the warmth and support they felt in the classroom.

I think what was always important to me was to be doing something that I really like. And so to be doing something that I really like, and I feel good at it, and I get sort of a reward, and my reward is to see my students improve, to see that they're being turned on to teaching. And I'm doing something right. There's that kind of connection, and you can feel that kind of connection. And they also let you know, which is another nice thing about it. They let you know. That's been, I think, extremely valuable and rewarding.

I found...out...I mean the students...loved me, and were really appreciative of the work I was putting in and what I was trying to do.

I had to bring back this equipment, and...two students offered to help me, and we were wheeling it back. And one of them says, "You know, that's the first time anyone's ever talked about creativity or content with us. Thank you" (sighs). And you know, I'll always remember that.

I am not...I AM emotional, but not in my job. And some of the (students') reports brought me close to tears. One was just, "Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. I didn't think an instructor could know me so well."

The reality is, I do know something. I can give that information to you. I can help you shape it, I can help you grow with it, etcetera, etcetera. And affirming that is really, for me, an extremely positive experience, and I think that affirmation that I'm getting, here at (this college) will translate again to the work I do outside of (this college), and...and it becomes a cycle. One leads to the next.

Reaffirming commitment

When teachers received the external affirmation and encouragement they needed, and when it fit with their own assessment of their developing competence, they most often expressed their satisfaction in a statement of commitment to their new profession. Of the twelve, only two teachers were still unsure at the time of these interviews that they had made the right career choice. In both cases, these teachers had experienced traumatic and ongoing conflict with significant individuals in their work environment. Both were

committed to “hanging in” a little longer until they could see whether their situation would improve.

I was able to think that through during the month of August just before coming back, and then came back feeling a little bit better about being here, or a lot better actually. And I felt better focused. If I could see a change ahead, then I could...then I could...ah...hang on.

I. Is this (college) now where you want to be, or this profession is where you want to be?

R. Yeah, that's right, and I want to contribute and get all the rewards from it, you know, satisfactions.

Some people pondered the question of how long and under what circumstances they would stay in teaching.

I see myself being here for almost 25 years, and also, I see some people around me who, I don't know if they didn't care to begin with, but they don't care now. And I don't want to be like that. I just DON'T want to be like that. I couldn't live with myself...like that.

I felt a full time job at (this college) would...You know, when I at the time...I guess I had turned forty or something like that...I was turning forty or forty-one ... whatever ... plus (teaching) was something I found after a year and a half doing it, that I loved doing it. It wasn't something...it wasn't like a compromise...

And I certainly don't want to...leave until I've accomplished something significant, both in terms of my own development, and also in terms of the program here. I certainly ...I would be very unhappy if I weren't to see a batch of students that I have started out with, see them get out and face the world.

Sometimes I wish I didn't give a damn about (my previous work) and just... 'cause I LOVE teaching...SO MUCH that ...ah...it would be liberating to do nothing but teaching. To focus all my energy on teaching, and whatever research I had to do to do the teaching. But the reality of it is, the research I do for the teaching, and what I bring to the classroom has come from the richness of my experience, and the breadth of my experience.

Several teachers indicated that a commitment to teaching was an expression of their values and their sense of their central purpose in life. Their comments revealed their optimism and a quality which Erikson (1950) would have called *ego-integrity*.

I also feel like my students are getting a good education from me. I feel that if they are not getting a good education from me, then they're seeing a good example of a commitment, which I think is valuable.

I guess I've always been concerned about what is said and thought of me after I've been in a place. And for that, you have to make a contribution that is real...

I came to teaching just because I thought I had something to say. And I learned that I was kind of at home, in spite of my better judgment, as a teacher, by the times that I didn't do it. And I felt like I had lost.....half of a conversation. And so it was a bit lonely. So that's how I came to teach, really, because I felt that it would fit.

I mean, I want to get to Heaven. And you know, I'm not a religious person, but that brings the idea to mind. I think where I've...money was never that important to me. But I think in business, talking about power...you know I wouldn't really want power over people, to control people. I don't like that. I hate people that control anybody. I think we're all individuals, and that's very important to me.

But I think if I was a business man I would like to be able to have an influence in society, that way I'm driven in a sense to empower, and maybe not to...I don't know, end poverty or something, but to make that better world.

Something is coming. And when it comes it'll be...good. And I'll be ready. And.....and I think it will be valuable, and valued. I try to do things that are valued and valuable.

Transforming identity

Transition is not a straight-line process. The start and finish lines are not in the same place for each person, and the passage is neither a competition nor a race. It was not surprising then that the respondents in this study were at different places along the continuum to becoming a teacher, and experienced their "progress" with greater or lesser degrees of optimism.

Factors other than the atmosphere at work also affected the degree of comfort or discomfort of these people in transition. Personality factors and changes in their personal lives complicated the adjustment process. One grateful faculty member acknowledged

that her stable family life had gone a long way to insulating her against the chaos of change.

I think that transitions...the only thing is that, as far as the transitions go, and the successfulness of the transition, is that you can't have too many transitions in your life.

And I've been lucky. Because my personal life has been fairly stable. And I really...and I can't say that enough. Because, with the changes...and the changes from either part-time status into full-time, or just from nothing into full-time, here, your life style completely changes.

The two teachers who had fought to overcome conflict in their relationships in the college expressed their ambivalence about teaching, and located themselves as still going through Bridges' (1980) "neutral zone" of in-betweenness.

I've grown...with (learning to teach). It's something that I grew with. I don't know whether it's because I'm from a large family of 12 that one had to teach the other, because Mom and Dad were busy. And not being the youngest and not being the oldest. Receiving teaching and teaching. You know, I don't know. It's something that I've always...in fact it took me a good year before I said to people, "I'm teaching at (this college)." I'd say, "I work at (this college)."

I'm not sure that I feel the label of "I'm a teacher" yet. I felt very much in the last year, which would have been sort of the second or third year...that was the beginning of the third year that I would have been here full time. During that time, I think I was really feeling that I wanted, or felt I needed a lot of...(professional development), in terms of...conferencing and teaching (my professional) conferences, which were very specific. Because I felt I needed material.

It was clear that in the new beginnings of a teaching career were many still unresolved endings for this group of 12 new faculty. Several people mentioned how important it was to maintain their connection with their profession of origin. Professional currency was only part of the reason for fostering these links. People also needed to continue to define themselves in roles and relationships that had been satisfying to them in the past and might continue to be vital connections in the future.

I. How would you define yourself now? If someone was to say to you, what do you do?

R. (laughs) ...I teach in the _____ program. So I would say I'm...and I'm a graduate of the program, that's my background, (my profession).

I. The answer seems to imply that you would still define yourself as a _____ professional first, and a teacher second?

R. Well, if...yeah...maybe not as strongly as I would have, because I ...I think they're blended. I think they're more blended than they were before. I'd say they're more blended. But I don't want to lose that. I want to keep them well balanced. That's really important to me.

I always used to say right at the beginning, "What am I? A (professional) or a teacher working at (this college)?" And, "No, I'm not a teacher. I'm a (professional)." Yeah, and that has changed, but it's changed to the point where...it was funny, this woman said the other day, "You got to have more than...in your lifetime you're going to have more than one career." And I sat back and chuckled because I said, "Oh great. You know, I have both of them now."

I try to...um...I do try to continue the work outside of (this college), because it's so very important to me and my identity – this transition of identities – I do identify with myself as being still a _____. I don't do as much of it...although I actually think in a couple of years, I might actually do more...than I have done, simply because...um...I'll have the financial freedom to do it.

I was new at it and thought, "Oh dear, I'm not a teacher yet." But now I think I'm a teacher, a _____ teacher. So that's how it goes (laughs) you know?

A teacher of business courses showed that he was still firmly rooted in the language of his discipline, but very much involved at the same time in the process of transforming his identity.

We are starting to think a lot more customer-oriented. An elitist model says, here's the product. Now you've got to consume that product. If you can't consume it, you know, too bad.

But really what we have to do today, as I'm thinking more and more about education, and more becoming a professional educator myself, as opposed to however you are going to describe me...it's starting to look more like curriculum development and more in terms of product design...

I. The product being whom, or what?

R. The student, in terms of the customer, and the product design in terms of the outcomes that you establish.

A significant group of the new faculty had already re-established themselves in their new identity. Their words carried pride and conviction, as befitted teachers who had

received the internal and external affirmations they needed to make a full commitment to the “restructuring of their life space” (Egidio 1986).

The people that I worked for (during a brief return to a previous job in the May/June period) said, “How much is it going to take to make you stay with us, and not go back to teaching?” I said, “There isn’t enough money. I really like what I’m doing.”

I. So this was really becoming an ambition of yours?

R. Yes, I had no want, need or desire to get back into the _____ industry as a full-time position.

I. So if I were to ask you now, what are you, what do you do?

R. I’m a full-time instructor at the college.

I. I teach...

R. I teach.....I don’t get any (previous professional) benefits! (laughs).

I. Oh rats! So it has its down side too!

R. Sure does! But I wouldn’t do anything other now than teach.

I’m actually not thinking of the political response (to the question, how long will you stay at the college?) But, intellectually, well, if I need the money, I’ll stay until I’m 65. If I don’t need the money, I’d like to teach less hours until I’m 65. I would like to...to be part time, or you know, instead of...to be 10 hours, or 8 hours a week. Because, and this is where I’ve started to realize how I’ve integrated my self image as “I am a Teacher,” because if I won the lottery tomorrow, I would still want to teach.

I. If I asked you now, how do you define yourself? What kind...who are you? What do you do for a living?

R. Teacher. And that’s coming strong, and I want to be a teacher now, and I...my dream now is to have my students say good things about me. You know that’s a change. And I really want to ...

I. You’re becoming more student-oriented it seems, like less content-oriented?

R. Yeah, quality, name-oriented, talking to them, and you know, relaxed. More slower in my presentation. I’m becoming a teacher.

Summary of Question 4

This research question proved to be very complex and multifaceted. Analysis of the data eventually led to grouping responses into a variety of “tasks” which were deemed to be “common and significant transitional processes” both by the frequency with which they were raised, and the degree of intensity with which the faculty described them. The first task, “environmental assessment” was an ongoing process of measuring their

previous expectations against emerging realities. As a result, faculty frequently experienced some loss of confidence in their choice and questioned their commitment to their new career. Other tasks included: “building relationships” with administrators, colleagues and students; “developing skills” in teaching and classroom management, and also in assertiveness, negotiation skills and time and stress management; “establishing boundaries and control” over workload and professional autonomy; “redirecting focus” from a preoccupation with content and presentation skills, to students and their learning needs; and “becoming a teacher,” a label given to issues of reward and affirmation, reaffirming commitment to teaching, and transforming identity.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to identify new faculty members’ perceptions of the transitions they experienced as they progressed through the first two years of full-time teaching in the community college. The study explored perceptions of the adaptation process — how faculty responded emotionally to and internalized their transition into full-time teaching.

In Chapter 4, responses to the four main research questions of the study were presented in sequence. Within each research question, efforts were made to report the data in such a way as to allow a fair representation of “voices,” opinion, meanings and interpretations. In response to Question 1:

To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?

faculty described some of the “catalytic events or insights” that had preceded or accompanied their decision to take up a full-time teaching career.

In Question 2, faculty were asked:

What expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?

Responses were grouped in six separate but interrelated categories:

- Self-Expectations
- Expectations about the college
- Expectations about teaching as a career
- Expectations about students and academic standards
- Expectations about workload and its impact on lifestyle
- Expectations about collegiality and the need for collegial and administrative support.

A brief summary of respondents' thoughts on learning to adjust their expectations concluded this section.

In response to Question 3:

What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?,

the new faculty discussed their perceptions of "what was lost and what was gained in the restructuring of a life space" (Egidio 1986). Their responses revealed many conflicting positive and negative emotions that resulted from their experiences during their first two years as new teachers. The section concluded with their comments on the difficult process of achieving balance between the competing demands of work, family and personal time.

Question 4:

Are there common and significant transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?,

proved to be the most complex of the study, and generated numerous responses which eventually yielded to organization into a number of interrelated “tasks.” A large number of the responses indicated that faculty members were engaged in an ongoing process of environmental assessment, in which they compared their prior expectations with the emerging realities of their new circumstances. Other key tasks included building relationships, developing skills, establishing boundaries and redirecting the focus of their teaching from an emphasis on self and content, to a student focus. Throughout this whole process, faculty questioned and in most cases reaffirmed their commitment to teaching as their chosen profession. The final responses to this research question were entitled “Becoming a Teacher,” and drew together the respondents’ feelings of positive affirmation and declarations of their transforming identities.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATIONS — THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

THE PROCESS OF CREATING MEANING

Everyone has a life story which makes them unique, and everyone has goals, aspirations and directions which are essential to understanding them as teachers. All of us, not only teachers, are what we are because of where we have been and where we are going. We cannot ask ourselves “what does it mean to be a teacher” without asking where we are headed and where we have been (Fullan, Connelly and Watson 1990).

The purpose of this study was to identify, through qualitative analysis of interview data, new faculty members' interpretations of their experience of adapting to full-time teaching in a community college.

During the series of conversations which make up the data of this study, new faculty told their “life stories,” talking, for the most part, with openness and candour about where they had been, where they are now, and where they are going. Most people seemed to accept my reassurances of confidentiality, and freely shared their triumphs and moments of despair, their disappointments and frustrations as well as their satisfactions. They were not hesitant to name names and cite specific situations in which they felt people within the college had fallen short of their expectations. Only one respondent indicated overtly that “there were things that simply could not be said with the tape recorder running.”

My own role as the researcher in this study was multifaceted. I am a social worker (individual, small group and family counselling) by training, and after years of teaching Psychology and Human Relations in the post-secondary classroom, have spent the last nearly ten years engaged in a variety of staff development activities. My connection with

these respondents is as a staff developer, colleague and friend. I was involved with most of them from the time they were hired full-time, through the orientation and development program of their first two years. We interacted in the classroom during their instructional skills courses; they submitted their personal journal writings to me for review and comment; and many one-on-one conversations were held in my office, when there were issues that required privacy, and informally in the lunch room. I wondered if the complexity of the established relationship would interfere with the participants' ability to speak candidly, but since in many cases that hurdle had already been tested and surmounted, it seemed to be relatively unimportant. I was careful to reassure them that the research was not intended to act as a program review and I would not be placing them in the awkward position of having to feel they were giving me a "report card" as their staff developer.

In Chapter 4, I tried to let the faculty speak for themselves, and their words wove a rich and complex tapestry of feelings, observations and interpretations of their reality. However, I was keenly aware that in the act of selecting "meaningful" chunks of data, and coding, categorizing and organizing them into patterns of response, I was already interpreting their words through my own filter. Since it was impossible to discount the impact of my own *assumptive world* on the interpretations which follow, it seemed appropriate to shift into the "first person" voice.

It needs to be emphasized once again that, in this study, the views of only 12 people are represented, all of whom teach in one setting. Although these faculty undoubtedly share elements of experience in common with beginning teachers in other settings, transferability and generalizability of the findings must be approached with caution and was not my primary goal. Perceptions of new faculty members at the college who did not take part in the interview process, or of faculty from other colleges who have undergone different kinds of orientation experiences, may differ from those of my

respondents. Even in this study, I was less concerned with reporting only on majority views, than with exploring issues and insights that seemed to help in understanding what it is like to be in transition into full-time college teaching.

An Interpretive Diagram

I found the process of coding and categorizing responses to be an intense, fascinating and very intuitive process. I wallowed happily in my data, finding points of recognition and “ah hahs” time and time again as the analysis of each interview built on the ones that preceded it. When it came time to start reducing “the mess” to some kind of orderly set of observations, I found myself overwhelmed by the complexity and temporarily stalled. Late one night, when it seemed as if nothing further could productively be achieved that day, I tried to give the material some shape, graphically, just to hold my ideas until the morning. The result appears in Figure 5.1: Elements in the Process of Transition into Full-Time College Teaching.

This diagram helped to organize my thinking and provided a structure around which to arrange the findings in Chapter 4. It emerged from and was grounded in the data which, in turn, were generated from the participants’ responses to the four main research questions. The grayed-in areas represent elements which specifically relate to the research questions. The following explanation is intended to assist the reader in using the diagram as an organizing tool, as my interpretations of responses to the four research questions are explored in the balance of this chapter.



The cell labeled “life experiences” represented the data collected in response to Research Question 1:

To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?

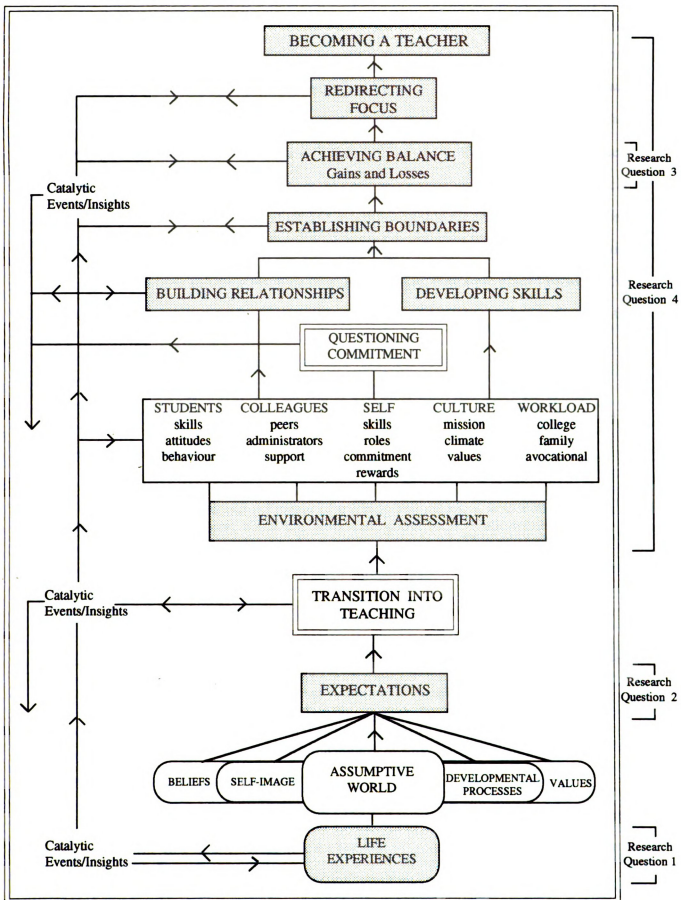


Figure 5.1: Elements in the Process of Transition into Full-Time College Teaching

ASSUMPTIVE WORLD

The multiple cells that cluster around the term *assumptive world* represent the many and varied reminders I had, as I scanned the data, that it was not so much what happened to people, but how they perceived and reacted to it that determined the degree of “significance” they attributed to any event. This awareness raised many questions in my mind about the personality variables, stages of psycho-social development, beliefs, attitudes, values and assumptions that may combine to influence a “successful” transition into teaching. Certainly they affected these teachers’ expectations as they entered their full-time teaching role. Accordingly, they were placed between “life experiences” and “expectations” and will be discussed as a vital contributing factor to the whole transitional picture.

EXPECTATIONS

The cell labeled “Expectations” represented the data collected in response to Research Question 2.

What expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?

**ACHIEVING BALANCE
Gains and Losses**

The cell labeled “Achieving Balance: Gains and Losses” represented the data collected in response to Research Question 3.

What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

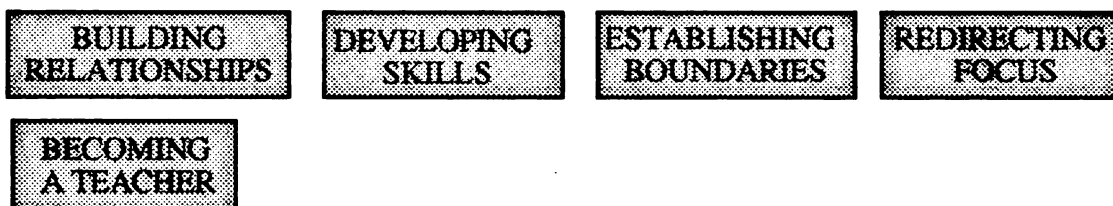
The cell labeled “Environmental Assessment” represented the first of several significant transitional processes recorded in response to Research Question 4.

Are there common and significant transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

The large cell above it contained an elaboration of the primary areas of concern identified by the respondents, and the sub-sets under each heading testify to the far-ranging breadth of the new teachers' scanning and evaluation of the emerging realities of their professional milieu.

**QUESTIONING
COMMITMENT**

The small box called "Questioning Commitment" could have been placed anywhere in the diagram, but seemed particularly appropriate as an outcome of the process of measuring reality against the expectations that had been held prior to the transition.



The cells labeled "Building Relationships," "Developing Skills," "Establishing Boundaries," "Redirecting Focus," and "Becoming a Teacher" represented other significant transitional tasks that the new teachers identified in response to Research Question 4. The subheadings I chose to help organize the responses under each of these headings were displayed and elaborated in Chapter 4.

The connecting arrows on the left hand side of the diagram were intended to convey the two-way flow of influence between people's life-experiences and their perceptions of catalytic events or insights that contributed to their decision to enter the teaching profession. At various points along the transitional process, the arrows indicate

the dynamic interaction between feelings, insights and experience. The arrows at the extreme left symbolize the potential for negative events or unrealized expectations to create such aversive conditions for new faculty that they might elect to leave teaching. Similarly, if teachers were unable to establish a satisfactory degree of competency and comfort with the tasks represented in the top third of the diagram, they might not realize enough of a balance between gains and losses to constitute a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career.

Limitations of the diagram

Although this structure was useful in organizing and shaping the data in Chapter 4, it presented some serious limitations. It was too linear, and not sufficiently dynamic to represent the interactive nature of the inner world of assumptions, expectations, perceptions and interpretations that each faculty member brought to their experiences in the college. It implied a one-way directional flow upward, in an invariable progression of stages and tasks that a person need only work through systematically, and the result would be a successful and fully “transformed” teacher. This was very far from the experience most teachers described.

During the interviews, I discovered that the degree of commitment to teaching that new teachers felt when they first took up their new job responsibilities varied widely, all the way from, “this is what I’ve been working toward all my life,” to “I didn’t know what I wanted to do, and this happened along.” By the same token, people’s expectations varied enormously, as did their reactions to the process of assessing reality. Some people responded to the gap between expectations and reality with disillusionment, others with purpose and vigour. Some experienced a serious “crisis of confidence” about whether they had made the right decision; others resolved to meet the challenges head on. Several

people exhibited both reactions at the same time. In fact, one aspect of the whole process that the diagram could not represent was the frequency of contrasts, contradictions, and evidences of ambivalence in the stories the new faculty told.

I tried to represent some of the inner influences that I could feel interacting with the sequence of external events that affected each person. Cantril's (1950) term *assumptive world* was a useful construct to try to capture these inner contexts. But again, the diagram couldn't illustrate the continual dynamic interaction of the inner and external realities that added such richness to each person's story and raised so many questions that seemed worth pursuing. Finally, I wasn't content to leave the impression that there was only one "desirable" outcome to this transition process, i.e. that a successful teacher is one who has resolved all ambivalence, made a full and unwavering commitment to all of the aspects of teaching, and has completed, once and for all, the transformation of identity to "I am a teacher."

However, the diagram served its initial purpose in helping me to organize the mass of data I had accumulated and orient it to the four research questions which guided this study. Interpretations of the key issues raised by the new faculty, and the questions they raised in my mind, will now be described in relationship to each of the research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTION 1

To what extent, if at all, did life events or significant transitions precipitate faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?

As the stories unfolded, it was clear that the majority of the group experienced some significant life event or insight, in advance of making the decision to come into teaching, which contributed to their decision, or acted as a catalyst in influencing them to

seek a teaching job. In some cases an external event, such as the ending of a previous career or significant relationship, was the salient factor. In other cases, the “event” was more an internal insight, or a developmental urgency of the sort Levinson (1978) described in his task of *becoming one’s own person*.

The majority of the group reported some part of their lives that was ending or had ended at the point they came into teaching. Sometimes it was a concrete ending – a previous job, for example – but more often it was the ending of a stage or state of being (e.g. unencumbered bachelorhood). Bridges’ (1980) model of life transition suggests that every new beginning starts with an ending. As people can no longer go back to the way it was, but are not yet clearly integrated into the new, they experience a “limbo” period that Bridges labeled as the *neutral zone*. This can typically be a time of confusion or indecision, and many people react to it by trying to put something else in place of that which was lost to help them regain their equilibrium.

Most of the faculty in this study identified feelings similar to Bridges’ *neutral zone*, although one person suggested that her reactions were far from neutral. For most, the *neutral zone* experience was resolved, at least initially, by working determinedly toward a clearly identified and long-awaited goal of being hired at the college. For a significant number (4 out of 12), however, the in-between time of indecision had no clear-cut goal at the end of it or, for whatever reason, the timing was not right. However, it seemed that a combination of opportunity and discomfort with being in limbo was too unsettling for some to endure without action. For this group of “risk-takers,” the decision to accept a teaching job was at least partially motivated by the desire to end a time of discomfort and indecision. As one respondent put it, “I can’t remember exactly what it was that made me send out those letters (of application). I...just a flash one day, you know, oh well, we’ll try this and see what happens.”

Several people said they were happy with what they were doing prior to coming to the college. The decision to leave their previous work was a difficult wrench. However, opportunity was knocking, the decision was upon them, and as one person said, "I felt I'd never know how it would have worked out if I didn't try. I felt if I didn't take it, I would be sorry."

To summarize, most faculty felt that some "precipitating factor," internal, external or both, acted as a catalyst in moving them toward a teaching career. However, their clarity of purpose and commitment at the time of entry varied widely. I found three groups of motivations to predominate. However, people did not neatly fit into only one of three groups. In a few cases, external factors combined with internal urgencies to produce complementary or conflicting motives.

Table 5.1 Motives for entering teaching

Predominant motive	Typical expression of feelings
Clear vocation to teach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is what I've worked toward. • Finally my life work is beginning
Desire to reduce the discomfort of the neutral zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the best possibility that seems to present itself. • If I don't like it, I can always leave. • "I've fallen into a lot of things."
Competing interests and loyalties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timing isn't great, but if I don't take the chance, I may regret it.

It would be a mistake to assume that people who fit into the "clear vocation" category necessarily or automatically make the best teachers. Perhaps, because they are

so sure this is what they want, they have a more difficult time adjusting to the inevitable gap between expectations and realities. However, these findings have clear implications for those hiring committees and staff developers who may be inclined to assume that all new faculty are grateful for the opportunity to follow their heart's desire. Every hiring decision is an expression of hope that the candidate chosen will make a positive contribution and enhance the reputation of the hiring institution. If this potential is to be realized, it is essential that new faculty find sufficient incentives and opportunities in their new profession to nurture their optimism and give them reasons to work toward a full commitment to teaching.

Exploration of the *Assumptive World*

The concept of an *assumptive world*, built of the perceptions, feelings, values, beliefs, and self-concept accumulated over a lifetime of experience, was very helpful in understanding the state of mind of the new faculty as they described their transitions into full-time teaching. It shed a great deal of light on their struggle to measure their expectations against the reality they found, and to make the adjustments necessary to develop or maintain commitment to the teaching profession.

Since it was the personal perceptions and interpretations of new teachers' adaptation into teaching that was the subject of this study, I was particularly attuned to comments that indicated the existence of personality traits and inner realities that acted as filters of experience. Offered this opportunity for reflection and introspection, the new teachers explored their feelings and shared their personal theories in an attempt to create meaning out of their experience. From their comments the following themes emerged.

Personality type

In the 1920s, Carl Jung developed a theory of personality structure which has become familiar to most educators through its practical application, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers 1980). One of Jung's dimensions of personality, extraversion-introversion, has advanced so far into the popular consciousness and language that I was interested to note that most of the teachers in the study spontaneously used one term or the other in referring to themselves at some point during the interview. The majority labeled themselves as extraverts. However, four people in particular elaborated on their view that personality type was an important variable in determining how easy or difficult it was to be a teacher.

In brief, three teachers mentioned that they felt their extraverted nature made it easier for them to draw and replenish energy from their interaction with their students. They felt that teachers who were "shyer" or more reflective by nature, must find the need to attend to so many competing stimuli in the classroom very draining. Indeed, the teacher who labeled herself an introvert mentioned that interaction with the students was very physically and emotionally exhausting for her, although deeply satisfying. She worried aloud that by the Spring of each year her reserves of energy were running so low that the students didn't really get all of the output from her that they deserved. Another teacher, who characterized herself as an intuitive, feeling extravert felt that learning to exercise her thinking/judging faculties, particularly around the process of fairly evaluating students' achievements (as opposed to their "effort"), was one of the greatest challenges she faced as a learning teacher.

Since such a large proportion of this small sample of teachers mentioned this aspect of their self-image, I feel that the implications for designers of staff development programs are worth pursuing.

Developmental stage/state

The interplay of inner developmental milestones with external circumstance was another contributing factor in forming the assumptive world of these new teachers. Many of the age-related or psycho-social stage theories presented earlier were observable as the teachers told their stories, although not all developmental events were happening right on time. Out of the six men in the group, three identified family concerns (the birth of a child or the decision to have a child) as a significant factor in making a choice in favour of more stability in their career. Their comments indicated that they felt it was time to settle down, begin to earn a dependable income, and get on with the process of *becoming one's own man* (Levinson 1978). Two of these people were in their mid-thirties, and this job represented their first major career milestone. The third was in his mid-forties, off-time in terms of theory and social expectations, but right on time for his own personal life history.

For the group in their early forties, the crisis of *generativity* (Erikson 1950) was right on schedule, represented by a career shift toward work that was more meaningful, less money or status driven than their former work. They expressed themselves variously as wanting to “make a significant difference in some person’s life,” to “contribute positively to the future of our world,” to “help out.” As one man put it, “I want to get to Heaven.....and maybe not to...I don’t know, end poverty or something, but to make a better world.” Several of the women, and some of the men too, were dealing with their generativity issues by struggling with the divided loyalties of a demanding job and families or close friends that they felt needed more of their time. One woman in her late thirties, typically “sensing the inner crossroads leading to mid-life somewhat earlier than men do” (Sheehy 1981), pronounced herself as having an early mid-life crisis around the now-or-never decision to marry and start a family.

As a group, these faculty illustrated the findings of Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiribogda (1975) that the life transition they shared during their first two years as full-time faculty overshadowed the variance in their chronological ages, and gave them a community of experience against which to measure their personal perceptions.

Self-concept and self-esteem

Despite their shared experience, and the many similarities in developmental stages, it was still evident that different people had very individual perceptions of a shared reality. Over the three years that I interacted with members of this group during their orientation and instructional skills sessions, read their learning journals and talked with them personally, as well as during the research interviews, they showed me time and time again their own unique world views. The same event could sometimes make one person angry, another wryly amused, and a third anxious and defensive. The same administrator who was characterized as “absolutely impossible to work with” by the “tough-battler” in the group, was seen as “friendly, very cooperative” by an easy going, affiliative type.

Self-concept has been defined by Raimy (In Combs, Richards and Richards 1976) as “the more or less organized perceptual object resulting from present and past self-observations...[It is] what a person believes about himself. The self-concept is the map which each person consults in order to understand himself, especially during moments of crisis or choice” (161). The views these teachers held of themselves were clearly important in terms of the constructions each person placed on the events of their past as well as the predictions and expectations they held for their future. Self-concept showed itself most clearly when the teachers discussed their personal perceptions of their strengths and self-doubts as teachers, and more generally as human beings.

In the process of data analysis, numerous codes were established to try to capture some of the evidences of self-esteem and self-concept. Terms like “values,” “personal and professional integrity,” “inventory of strengths,” “self-doubt,” as well as the numerous expressions of positive and negative emotions (see Appendix F) were all part of this complex picture. Together they contained many references that, it seemed to me, were at the core of the new faculty members’ personal and professional vitality.

The category “inventory of strengths,” though necessarily individual in content, was universal in its importance as an organizing structure for each participant’s self-esteem. The traits that emerged from each person’s words most often appeared in the context of a reminder to themselves of what they came into academia to do, or an encouragement at a time when morale was low. Frequently, positive traits were articulated in the context of consciously attempting to provide positive role models for students and co-workers. As such, they represented a vital element in the process of *activating commitment* (Raines 1979) and the creating of Self in the new identity as a teacher.

I was reminded that the relationships that develop between new faculty and the administrators who evaluate them, the staff developers who work with them, and their fellow travellers among the faculty, can work to support, maintain and strengthen these positive affirmations. However, it must equally be recognized that each new teacher’s inner strengths and motivation exist within the external context of their vulnerable probationary status. Sometimes, new faculty feel that they must take on, and excel, at any and all tasks assigned to them, and don’t feel safe to say no to requests from administrators.

How to harness the energy and commitment of new faculty without contributing to early burnout and cynicism is a constant challenge for principled administrators and staff developers.

Summary of Research Question 1

In interpreting the participants' responses to the first research question, I have tried to represent the constant dynamic interplay between the actual events that led up to or accompanied their decision to take up college teaching, and their inner perceptions of those events. Their words revealed a range of motivation and commitment. As they discussed their actual experiences, the respondents made constant reference, directly or indirectly, to aspects of their personality type, developmental stage, or self-concept, as ways of trying to make sense of their transition experience. Cantril's (1950) conceptual framework of an *assumptive form world*, built on the basis of past experiences and serving as a springboard for future action, was useful in understanding these interrelated processes (104).

I tried to capture the interplay between inner and outer contexts in the simple diagram in Figure 5.2. The inner circle represents each person's *assumptive world* of values, beliefs, attitudes, self-image and identity which have emerged over a lifetime of experience. The shaded ring represents the outer context of the educational environment, with its multitude of tasks, processes, and rewards. In a more general sense, this outer ring also contains all of the other external contexts that shape a person's experience, the social contexts such as family, friendships, other work settings, etc., which comprise the external "universe".

The label "transitional transformations" symbolizes an individuals's responses to significant life changes which are affected by, and in turn affect, both inner and outer experience. The boundaries between the rings in the diagram were left intentionally permeable. The two-directional arrows penetrate through the layers to symbolize the free flow of influence between our *assumptive world*, "the only world we know," the

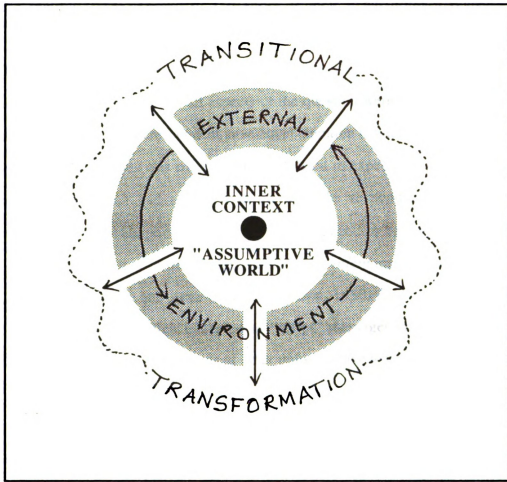


Figure 5.2: A conceptual diagram of dynamic interaction between inner and external worlds.

external environment with all its purposes, processes and tasks, and the transformations we undergo whenever we are in a state of transition. Our personal experience of change continually impacts upon and alters the landscape of both inner and outer contexts.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2

What expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do

the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?

This was a very complex, multifaceted question. Given the informal and open-ended nature of the interviews, not all aspects of the question were necessarily raised in each interview, and not every respondent gave equal attention to each element. However, a large number of responses was collected which related to expectations, and it became clear that many of them had as much to do with the respondents' previous life experiences and their assumptions about "the way it *spo*zed to be" as they did to the present reality. As before, I noticed a large number of references to feelings, values, beliefs, issues of *identity* and *generativity* (Erikson 1950) and indicators of the participant's self-concept, which I labeled as "script" messages (Harris 1969; Berne 1964). It was clear that these perceptions of inner traits ("I have what it takes to be a good teacher") combined with people's expectations of their new role and environment created the optimism they needed to activate or affirm commitment to teaching. Cantril (1950) explained the connection between expectations and purposeful action.

...Another aspect of the total assumptive form world refers to the quality of the value sensed in different experiences and the expectancies we have that certain experiences will have certain value overtones. The desire to satisfy our needs, to achieve an ambition, to strive for some ideal, to have the respect of our fellow men, all are permeated with assumptions of the value to be experienced.

Every experience of the present involves the future as well as the past. Our purposive activity in any immediate occasion of life is related so indissolubly to our expectancies, that we could hardly have one without the other (88-89).

Most people would recognize the human tendency within themselves to encircle a new challenge with a halo of optimistic hopes and predictions. How else would we overcome our misgivings, and make the leap of faith necessary to initiate the change? The majority of faculty in this study were no exception. Either they revealed a full range of positive expectations (some of which only became clear to them once the disappointing reality emerged) or they (the minority) defended themselves against

disillusionment in advance by statements such as, “Well, if it doesn’t work out I can always quit.”

Faculty described their **expectations about the college** as having both positive and negative elements. Several people expressed pride in having been hired by a college with a strong reputation, both locally and internationally. One person went so far as to say that this was the only college he was interested in working for. This expectation was a source of anxiety too, as people wondered whether they would be able to “live up to” what they perceived as a high standard of excellence. Naturally, as faculty gradually became “insiders,” they became more aware of ways in which this college, like all others, sometimes fell short of its espoused values. Their resulting “loss of innocence” tended to make them hyper-critical.

Particularly, teachers reported their expectations that the college would support them in their own professional growth. Whether or not this expectation was realized depended largely on the “culture” of the particular department, and the attitudes of the dean or chairperson with whom each individual was associated. New faculty rapidly discovered that, given the present economic climate, the best they could hope for was support of a non-financial nature.

In talking about the **expectations of teaching as a career**, the majority of the group talked excitedly and idealistically (and somewhat wryly, in retrospect) about their expectations that teaching would help them to grow personally and professionally, and make a meaningful contribution to students and to society at large. Again, there was a clear difference in expression between the majority who chose teaching as the realization of a desired goal, and those who “fell into it.” The latter group had more specific conditions in mind about what it would take to keep them committed, articulated by one teacher as “If I’m not given the opportunity to work in the area where I feel I can be most effective, I won’t stay.”

In balance, however, the majority of the new faculty felt, by the time of interviewing, that they had made the right choice. Most expressed a conviction that they were learning and growing in positive ways, and finding ways to make a difference despite frequent frustrations and roadblocks. When asked, "How long do you expect to stay in teaching?" eight of the twelve answered along the lines of "indefinitely; as long as they'll have me." One expressed regret that it would not be financially viable for him to enjoy the "luxury" of teaching indefinitely. For the remaining three, the struggle to deal with campus politics, or conflicts with administrators or students caused them to question their commitment. No one was ready to give up yet, and most mentioned the "psychic income" of their relationships with their students as the positive factor that outweighed all other considerations. The general consensus seemed to be summarized in the old adage, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

The largest gap existed between the new teachers' **expectations of their students** and the reality of their classroom experience. They thought students as a group would be better prepared, more highly motivated to succeed, more "adult" and disciplined in their behaviour in class, more inner-directed in terms of taking responsibility for their own learning. That these expectations were almost universally disappointed did not interfere in the majority of cases with the pleasure and affirmation the new faculty received when a class went well, a light went on in the students' minds, or students showed appreciation. One teacher revealed with great honesty that she had hoped her students would affirm her more as a teacher, and she concluded, mournfully, that "she must need an awful lot of stroking."

Teachers who had previously come from university settings were most shocked at the level of many of the students' reading, writing and math skills. They thought they would be able to teach more rapidly, and at a higher level, and that they could assume a higher "core of common learning" than was generally evident. Teachers who came from

business and industry settings tended to be more surprised at students who did not seem goal oriented or did not accept responsibility for their own success. Like their university colleagues, these teachers expected to be able to launch straight into teaching their area of expertise, without having to “back-fill” as much to bring many students up to the starting point.

Expectancies around workload were the most universal surprise that most teachers reported. Everyone felt that the workload was extremely heavy. Only two suggested that, heavy as it was, it was not greater than they had come to expect in their former job. People tended to have bought in to the popular conception that teachers have short work weeks, long holidays, and a whole summer to do nothing but rest – as one person expressed it, “a piece of cake.” Most reported a continued struggle to get the management of marking and course preparation under control. Everyone expected to have a better balance between work, personal and family time than they were able to manage. No one in the group, even those in the fifth or sixth semester had yet been able to achieve the desired balance, and everyone identified that as an urgent ongoing need.

One inner expectation that may have interfered with the management of workload was the assumption of most of the probationary faculty that they could not refuse excessive numbers of preparations, suggestions that they should take on graduate studies, or requests to serve on committees, because they were “on probation” and felt vulnerable. Several of them also felt that they should be very careful when, and to whom, they expressed negative opinions. Whether these expectations were realistic or not, they affected some teachers’ behaviour and led to attempts to take on extra assignments and excel at everything at once.

Expectations of collegiality tended to be very optimistic when new faculty first came on full-time. They hoped and believed that colleagues would welcome them, and share their knowledge, experience and teaching materials with them. They thought their

administrators would give them guidance as to their roles and responsibilities, how to get things done, and what resources would be available to them. Several new faculty had enjoyed positive experiences as part-timers with experienced faculty who had given them a helping hand and showed them some of the ropes. They tended to generalize this experience into a halo of optimistic assumptions that when they came on full-time this support would intensify. Those who had a less welcoming previous experience rationalized that when they achieved full-time status, they would become integrated into the group and acceptance would carry with it information, resources and support. Several teachers who came from business and industry settings were dismayed to discover that the responsibilities were more complex and the supports much less evident than they expected. One teacher described himself as feeling “friendless in the sandbox” when left to sink or swim on his own in his first few months in the college.

In reality, individual experiences varied widely and were affected, like everything else, by both inner and external variables. A few faculty were “taken under someone’s wing,” either by a more experienced teacher or by a program coordinator or chairperson who recognized the need and moved in to fill a void. Some developed supportive mentor relationships, either spontaneously or through a pairing arranged through the orientation program. More than half the group felt they needed more support than they got, and a few felt that their smooth integration into their department had been actively combated by demanding or inaccessible administrators. Most people mentioned the bonds they had formed with other new faculty in the orientation program as an ongoing source of friendship and support.

From the inner perspective, several faculty expressed themselves as hesitant to push for more support from reluctant colleagues for fear of being seen as too needy or insecure. By the same token, some also accepted the lack of support of their administrators as an inevitability that they could not risk fighting. One teacher, however,

stated that she really didn't remember whether help was offered or not, because she didn't wait, but actively went out to seek what she needed, "...because I seek out. That's the way I operate."

One of the most problematic areas relating to teachers' expectations was the demands they placed on themselves. Most of the group indicated that the focus of their **self-expectations** during the first two years centred around proving their worth. In the words of one teacher, "I had to prove that they got what they thought they were getting, and more." The accompanying stress and anxiety experienced at one time or another by all members of the group undermined energy, balance in terms of family and personal time, and in some cases, health and emotional well-being.

The work of Peterson and Seligman (1984) on *explanatory style* is helpful in understanding which teachers were most vulnerable. The three parts of a person's explanatory style include: (1) internal/external ("This situation is all my fault." versus "Outside forces have caused this situation."); (2) stable/unstable ("I always fall short of my goals." versus "Things are not working out this time."); and (3) specific/global ("I get flustered when I have to confront my chairperson." versus "I can't do anything right.") (548). The teachers who clustered somewhere on the moderate side of attributing their situation to external, unstable and specific circumstances did best. Those whose explanatory style was internal, stable or global were most vulnerable to depression or feelings of helplessness. The exception to this expected outcome was that some teachers who found that their frustrations were due to "forces beyond their control" were unwilling to accept that, and tended to try harder, with all the accompanying stress.

Summary

Teachers came into their new full-time positions in the college with a wide range of expectations of themselves, their students, colleagues, workload, the college

environment and the teaching profession in general. They discovered many discrepancies between expectations and emerging realities, and began a process of assessment and adjustment which is documented further in Research Question 4.

In some cases, their expectations were exceeded, and people discovered satisfactions and received the boost to their self-esteem that they needed to withstand the disappointments and necessary adjustments to expectations which were not realized.

About half the group had previously taught in a college setting (part-time or sessional) before being hired full-time. One might assume that they would have had more realistic expectations than the group that came from outside the college, and in some cases this was true. But some of this group revealed that they had felt that coming on full-time would somehow “magically” remove many of the roadblocks that they had previously experienced and attributed to their part-time status. As a result, they may actually have had a more difficult time dealing with the discrepancies.

Louis (1980) observed that, “Coping with the differences represents an important issue during the transitioner’s early experiences in a new setting. There are a number of reasons why it is both crucial and difficult for transitioners to appreciate and adjust to the differences, especially differences that represent gaps between anticipations of and experiences in the role” (67). This statement implies that all of the hard work has to be accomplished internally. I think however, that there is also an institutional responsibility to consider ways in which it may be in the organization’s best interest to attend to new faculty members’ legitimate expectations. According to Cantril (1950), the adequacy of any institutional structure can be judged on a range of criteria, one of which is that it creates an atmosphere which supports “the possibility of achieving your expectancies or sensing that you are on the way to achievement; the replacement of achieved expectancies by new expectancies” (149).

RESEARCH QUESTION 3

What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?

The responses to this question eventually were grouped under the heading “Achieving Balance” and became one of the significant transitional processes explored in Question 4. However, since the question was asked separately in the interviews, thereby directing responses specifically to this issue, the results were displayed on their own. Responses to this question covered all the major areas discussed in Chapter 4 and a number of others as well. It was interesting to note that the gains and losses the new faculty spoke of were at least as often in the realm of personal issues that contributed to emotional well-being as they were to professional concerns.

In Whitt’s (1991) study, “When asked, ‘What is it like to be a new faculty member?’ new faculty described their feelings and experiences as being predominantly negative.” Whitt’s respondents described their confusion, isolation and high stress levels in such colourful metaphors as, “I feel I’ve been thrown into a big pool without knowing how to swim” (189). As a group, the participants in this study fared better, probably due to their participation in the structured orientation and development program. Their statements of gains outnumbered losses both in the number of comments they made, and in the breadth of categories of gains that were identified in comparison with losses. However, I think it is safe to say that this group of faculty would have recognized and empathized with every one of the stressors described by the teachers in Whitt’s study.

Although most participants in this study found their transition experience to be weighted more heavily towards gains than toward losses, all showed evidence of riding what Schlossberg (1984) calls the seesaw of “belonging vs. marginality.” She points out that, “Every time an individual moves from one role to another or experiences a

transition, the balance of the seesaw changes. The larger the difference in role and the less knowledge beforehand about this role, the more marginal that individual will feel...People who belonged in one situation may feel marginal in another. Those who migrate to a new culture represent the extreme case” (38). Although Schlossberg was using the term “culture” here in the literal sense, in some ways the gains and losses felt by some of these new faculty represented a cultural shift as well, from the expectations and values of the previous workplace, to the norms of the college environment.

Probationary faculty are, by definition, marginal. They are on the threshold of full membership in the privileges of the organization, yet they have one more major hurdle to cross. They need to learn their way around in every sense of the term. They may have to endure the experience of being neophyte teachers in the college, whereas they were senior and secure practitioners in their previous setting. They don’t yet know the politics, the people and channels that can help them to get what they need. Their whole experience is one of ambiguity.

During the process of initial coding, I became increasingly aware of this ambiguity through the codes that emerged from my analysis of the interview data. I noticed that many of the “tags” acted as foils, or mirror images for each other. When placed in juxtaposition, these codes might imply a contradiction or conflict in perception, and it might be supposed that one polarity would be expressed by one respondent, and its opposite by another. In reality, most often these contrasts were readily observable within the comments of any one person. Examples of contrasting codes included:

- inclusion, feeling valued and supported vs. loneliness, isolation and marginality
- administrative support vs. lack of professional support
- positive emotions vs. negative emotions
- self-esteem and inventory of strengths vs. self-doubt and professional inadequacy
- values and optimism vs. cynicism and discouragement

- cognitive and affective dissonance
- professional reward and recognition vs. lack of professional rewards
- professional integrity and commitment vs. feelings of fatigue and burnout
- achieving balance, which is a study in contrasts all by itself

In some cases, contradictions appeared so consistently, even within the same utterance, that I developed a code early on which I called “quick disclaimers,” almost always examples of an expression of negativity or discouragement, quickly discounted by a follow-up statement of optimism or at least neutrality. I decided to label this as a form of “affective dissonance.” There was, however, a cognitive element to this phenomenon too, almost as if the respondents did not entirely realize the depth of their feelings until they heard what they said aloud, and then they beat a hasty retreat, to reassure themselves and to soften the impact of their negative feelings on me (or an imaginary audience).

In Chapter 4, the long list of losses and gains identified by the new faculty were outlined, as were the strong positive and negative emotions attached to them. The numerous references to emotional well-being collected under this theme were a compelling reminder of the vulnerability of new faculty to the stresses and demands of their new profession. Some comments could be attributed to elements in the exterior environment, such as heavy workload, lack of collegial support, or insufficient material resources to support the teaching effort. Others were clearly connected to the inner subjective experience of the transition itself, the state identified by Bridges (1980) as “that difficult process of letting go of old situations, suffering the confusing nowhere of in-betweenness, and launching forth again in a new situation...”. This same phenomenon is acknowledged by the task of *adjusting expectations* in Raines’ ADAPT Model (1979), by Hopson’s Stages of *self-doubt*, *letting go* and *testing out* in his “Seven Phase Model of Stages Accompanying Transition” (1977), and by Schlossberg’s description of *role gain* vs. *role loss* in her “Model for Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition” (1981).

It was interesting to note how often the same circumstance that was labeled a loss by one person was seen as a gain by another. The literature strongly supports the existence of external *enabling conditions* (Cole and Watson, 1991), such as mentoring, opportunities for collegial support, and reduced workload which predict greater levels of success among teachers in transition. I found myself wondering if there were internal factors that would also correlate with higher levels of satisfaction, and if so, whether they could be identified in ways that could influence recruitment and hiring of new faculty in the college system.

Summary

When new faculty reviewed their perceptions of “what was lost and what was gained in the restructuring of their life space” (Egidio 1986), I was again struck by the interweaving of external conditions with their internal perceptions and interpretations. Although they identified their gains as outweighing their losses, the experience was not cost-free, and undoubtedly had an impact on the way new faculty chose to modify behaviours that had not gained for them the anticipated advantages.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Are there common and significant transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

Environmental Assessments

Responses grouped in the category “**environmental assessment**” were the most numerous of the study. From the moment of their entry (or reentry) into the college in their new status as a full-time faculty member, faculty showed that they were engaged in

a never-ending process of taking signals from their environment, assessing them against the backdrop of their internal perceptions, and modifying their expectations and behaviour as a result. Details of the discrepancies which were identified by faculty between expectations and reality were outlined in response to Research Question 2 earlier in this chapter. However the significance of the process, and its impact on their general state of optimism, their commitment to teaching, and their ongoing behaviour as a teacher cannot be underestimated.

Louis outlines three differences associated with career transitions. The first is objective reality, “publicly noticeable and knowable,” which she calls *changes*. Other differences she calls *contrasts*. These are the subjective perceptual products of the individual’s experience in the new setting and role. “They represent the transitioner’s definition or map of the new setting, and are person-specific rather than inherent in the organization transition.” The third group, dubbed *surprises* are the ones being considered in this first section of responses to Question 4. Louis distinguished *surprises* from *contrasts* as follows:

Surprises differ from contrasts in several ways. Contrasts are subjective appreciations of differences between features of two objective or external worlds, i.e., the old and the new roles and setting. Surprises, on the other hand, are subjective appreciations of differences between a personally forecasted experiential world and the individual’s subsequent experiences of self in the role or setting (59-60).

I found Hopson’s (1977) model of the emotional impact of transitional *surprises* to be very helpful in understanding the wide range of positive and negative emotions reported by this group of faculty. He suggested that people are frequently caught in an emotional seesaw swinging from elation (“Everything is fantastic and I’ve realized my hearts desire.”) to despair (“What if I can’t cope? What if they find out that I’m an impostor?”) The conflict that results can cause people to become immobilized and they defend themselves through denial of the impact of their internal turmoil. They are likely

to go through a period of self-doubt before they are able to let go of the securities of the past sufficiently to test out new roles and rebuild their self-concept in light of the new reality.

For some of these new teachers, this self-doubt took the form of **“questioning commitment”** to their choice of teaching as a career. For most, it was not the first time, nor for most would it be the last. For the majority, the process, though difficult, was ultimately an affirming one, as positive incidents built up to the point where they counter-balanced the crises. For a few, the questioning continues to preoccupy their thoughts and threatens to interfere with their desire and ability to channel their energy in more satisfying ways. Cantril explains:

[People] have the capacity to “integrate” a number of these experiences into a sort of weighted average...that is used as a standard in determining the significance of the environment in the next experience. This “average” is not, of course, a mere summation of experiences of equal significance: an intense or traumatic experience may be given more weight than hundreds of routine experiences...” (66)

It was very clear, in listening to the stories of the new faculty, that many of the significant life events or critical insights that affected their transitions occurred **after** they arrived and contributed to the *weighted average* that added up to satisfaction or unhappiness. When faculty received affirmations, and experienced successes which they could attribute to their own developing competence, or when they saw themselves successfully overcoming adversity through their own persistence and ingenuity, the average would swing in their favour. It was the minority who experienced major trauma, or found themselves caught in a spiral of conflict from which it seemed that they could do nothing to escape, who were at risk.

Most investigators (Bridges 1980; Erikson 1950; Hopson and Adams 1977; Menlo 1984; Raines 1979; Schlossberg 1984; and others) are philosophical in their views that these times of emotional confusion are not only normal and inevitable, but necessary

processes in accomplishing the “journey through the wilderness,” and making positive adaptation to a new life circumstance. However, the organization can do much that is positive to provide faculty in transition with needed supports, and remove some of the unnecessary roadblocks from their path, so that they can get on with dealing with the necessary disequilibrium and arrive as soon as possible at a state of integration.

Additional Tasks Identified in Question 4

The cells labeled **“Building Relationships,” “Establishing Boundaries,” “Redirecting Focus,”** and **“Becoming a Teacher”** represented other significant transitional tasks that the new teachers identified in response to Research Question 4.

These processes were deemed to be “common” and “significant” by the frequency with which they were raised, and the degree of intensity with which the new faculty addressed each issue. Each of them seemed to represent a pivot point around which revolved each person’s feelings of satisfaction and “fit” in their new profession, as well as the likelihood of their continuing to find teaching a field in which they could grow personally and professionally.

In the section on **“building relationships,”** faculty responses grouped into five sub-sections:

- New faculty discussed their **need for support**, not only in terms of the people who were potential sources of support, but in terms of the information and resources they were in a position to share or withhold.
- They identified three critical groups with whom it was important to them to establish satisfying and productive relationships:
 - **administrators** (including support staff);
 - **faculty peers**; and
 - **students**.

- Faculty also identified the role of the **orientation, development and mentoring program** in which they participated over the first two years of full-time teaching, in creating a supportive network of peer relationships with other new faculty across the college.

Their comments reflected the findings of numerous studies (Austin, Brocato and LaFleur 1993; Boice 1991; Cole and Watson 1991; Fink 1984; Gehrke and Kay 1984; Lortie 1975; Newberry 1978; Olsen and Sorcinelli 1992; Sorcinelli and Austin 1992; Whitt (1991) Zeichner and Tabachnick 1985) that the degree to which new faculty are successful in forming positive and supportive relationships during their early years profoundly affects their success, satisfaction and productivity as teachers.

These faculty clearly signaled their desire for collegial relationships, not only for help with the how-to's of teaching, but to have someone to share ideas and feelings with, to go to lunch with or play the occasional game of squash. In other words, they wanted to overcome their feelings of marginality by feeling part of a circle of friendly people who also shared their values and were working in the service of the same overall mission.

Several in the group told stories that affirmed the contention of one teacher that "your relationship with your chair(person) can really make or break your experience here." Two or three were fortunate enough to find themselves in the hands of someone who answered Whitt's (1991) criteria. "A good chair will provide a meaningful annual review, serve as a mentor to new faculty or make sure that mentoring is taking place — good chairs assign mentors — and can tell you who is being mentored by whom" (186). Others did not feel as fortunate. For whatever combination of reasons, they perceived, as did a number of the faculty in Whitt's study, "that their chairs were not adequately involved with them nor as helpful as they could, or should, have been"(187). And like Whitt's respondents, some of these teachers wondered if it was something in their personality or approach that had failed to draw the hoped for response.

Most significantly, for the future of these individuals, I found without surprise that new faculty were strongly influenced by the way they were treated, and resolved to help create a more positive atmosphere for their own junior colleagues. If they were helped along in their transitional journey by teachers and administrators who were willing to share their knowledge and expertise, they affirmed their desire to be helpful to others. Three or four people stated that they wanted to make sure that newer teachers and part-timers found them as accessible as they had found the best of their colleagues. And by implication, they wanted to be more accessible than some of the senior faculty whom they had found to be very protective of their materials and territorial about their courses, and therefore reluctant to share. One teacher who felt she had to fight tooth and nail for every bit of “help” she received, actually volunteered herself as a mentor for another new teacher during her second probationary year, in the hopes of preventing that person from going through a similar experience. The implications of these findings for the importance of positive role modeling and mentoring on the part of administrators and senior faculty is obvious.

In the section on **“developing skills,”** new faculty revealed that learning the art and craft of teaching was closely linked to their self-esteem. When new teachers were asked to respond to the question, “What are your primary goals during your probationary period?”, almost without exception they replied that they wanted to develop or improve classroom teaching skills and techniques.

Their remarks identified two key areas of skill development. Predictably, they were concerned with the mechanics of classroom management, the most effective ways of putting across their material, dealing with difficult students, mastering techniques of evaluation and the like. As one teacher expressed it in his learning journal, “I wanted to discover the secrets of teaching with a minimum of jargon.”

Interestingly, the other cluster of skills that the new teachers identified were the personal strengths that they thought of as “survival skills”: learning to be a skilled and assertive negotiator in dealing with their coordinators and chairpersons; organization and time management in learning to handle the out-of-class preparation and marking tasks efficiently; problem-solving and communication skills in dealing with students; stress management in dealing with the competing pressures. I was interested to note that their self-esteem seemed to be at least as closely linked to affective issues (forming positive collegial relationships; being effective role-models for their students; maintaining their values with regard to the balance between work and family) as it was to mastering the conventional skills required of a college teacher.

The task of **“establishing boundaries”** was a surprise finding. As several faculty described their struggle to discover their own “bottom line” in relation to their work, I realized that this task was more than simply an extension of the process of achieving balance between gains and losses as described in Research Question 3. I used this tag to denote the gradual development of the confidence and “presence” necessary for the faculty to stand up to the demands being made of them and decide what their own priorities were.

This confidence manifested itself in a variety of ways and at different times. For most people, it was related to the ending of the probationary period, as faculty perceived that they now had more “rights” in establishing limits and asking for what they needed, even if it meant risking a conflict with their chairperson. One teacher took the risk of asking for a reduced workload when the competing pressures of work and home became overwhelming. Another gave herself permission to say no to extra committee work where she did not feel that the limited contribution she could make warranted the use of her time in that way. A third teacher discovered that the courage to establish her own boundaries came with the move from part-time to full-time status. Despite being on probation, she

overrode resistance to her presence on a student assessment and promotion committee, stating emphatically, “these are my students too!”

For some teachers, the boundary that needed to be drawn was on the home front. They needed to learn where it was possible to cut back on family demands without undue guilt, and how and when to ask for help and cooperation. For one or two others, the boundary was a personal one: for example, one teacher came to a decision to seek out the positive people among his peers, and limit the amount of time he spent engaged in demotivating “gripe sessions” with other teachers in the lunch room.

Whatever arena it was played out in, the process of establishing personal and professional boundaries seemed to be an important building block in the construction of the new teachers’ self-esteem and identity as competent professionals. It occurred to me that this is an area of development that should be made explicit, and discussed as part of the agenda of the professional development process for new teachers.

The label “**redirecting focus**” evolved out of observations made by several respondents that they had changed in the classroom from their early preoccupation with content and presentation, to a much greater awareness of and focus on student learning. This transitional shift was most clearly enunciated by the more experienced teachers (those who were in at least their fifth or sixth semester at the time of interviewing). Once the theme was established, I put the question to any respondents who didn’t raise it spontaneously. Most acknowledged the shift from focusing on content, self-image and presentation, to a greater focus on students, and expressed great satisfaction in gradually being able to relax sufficiently to become aware of who was out there, and what their needs were.

The teachers attributed this shift to a variety of causes. In one case, a critical incident with a hostile student jolted one teacher into wondering what drives and

motivations lie just beneath the surface of each individual, and how students could be reached and helped to attain their goals. Another teacher credited the instructional skills sessions he attended with raising his awareness of varying student needs and learning styles. Others acknowledged that they could not attend to the needs of their students until they got over their own feelings of vulnerability in their new role, and the conviction that they would be found out as an “impostor.” One teacher looked into the eyes of her mature female students and suddenly connected with how much they were sacrificing to be there in her classroom, working to meet their goals. Her feelings of empathy were the catalyst she needed to make the shift from content to student focus.

Boice (1992) noticed a similar shift in his comparison of novice and veteran teachers. He found that “most faculty new to campus...were lecturing in facts-and-principles style. All but a few newcomers obviously focused on presenting lots of content organized in terms of concepts and lists. All but a few lectured in rapid-fire fashion with limited opportunities for student involvement beyond occasional pauses for clarification” (74). Boice attributed the new teachers’ behaviour largely to a defensive attempt to avoid the criticism of peers, or complaints by students to administrators. Ironically, partly because they were unable to allow much classroom interaction, these teachers tended to receive rather low ratings from students.

The majority of Boice’s inexperienced faculty clung to their content focus well beyond year two. By contrast, many of the teachers in this study were not only feeling more relaxed, but were able to identify and rationalize the shift. They more closely resembled some of the “quick starters” in Boice’s study who “mastered usually untaught skills (such as achieving classroom comfort first) and attitudes (such as deciding to see things from the perspective of students and to like students) and (as a result) were better rated and happier as teachers” (80). This evolution among college teachers may be related to the greater emphasis and rewards attached to teaching in the community colleges as

compared with research universities, the greater frequency of teacher orientation and development programs, and the relative absence of pressure on college teachers to research and write.

The final cell in the diagram, **“becoming a teacher,”** referred to comments made by the respondents that indicated a reaffirmation of their commitment to teaching, and a shift in the way they identified themselves professionally. As one person expressed it. “I used to think of myself as a writer who teaches. Now I am a teacher who writes.” The teachers in the study talked about the various sources of intrinsic rewards and affirmations they had received, in terms of their own self-confidence and self-esteem, in terms of recognition from their peers, and most importantly, from their students. Not everyone felt equally at home with their new profession, and for some the shift in identity was far from complete. Two people actively rejected the notion that they would compromise their identification with their former profession. At least one teacher expressed strong doubts that she would continue in teaching unless her feelings changed significantly in the foreseeable future.

Out of the twelve people who took part in this study, one-quarter to one-third were showing signs of vulnerability sufficiently grave to affect their emotional well-being, and potentially, their future as a college teacher. Eble (1984) observed this loss of innocence in the teachers he studied and issued a rather sharp warning.

This shift can be interpreted as the effect of the ordinary transition from the optimistic hopes that teachers entertain before a class begins to the pessimistic actualities they soon encounter. However, at the extreme, a kind of destructive cynicism can take root in beginning teachers and be perpetuated throughout their career.

However, in Fink’s (1984) study, as well as in my own, the majority of the teachers said that they received psychic satisfaction from teaching, liked being part of the college community, and intended to stay in teaching indefinitely.

Summary

Research Question 4 generated a huge amount of data. I tried to organize it around the “common and significant transitional processes” which this group of teachers identified through their perceptions and interpretations of their experience. I found that I did not have to make value judgments about whether faculty were arriving at a “successful” adjustment to the demands of an academic career. For the most part faculty were willing and able to make these assessments themselves. Most of them shared openly whatever self-assessments their introspection had allowed them to arrive at thus far. From their comments a number of related themes, or developmental “tasks” emerged. These I labeled,

- environmental assessment (the process of measuring perception of present realities against prior expectations)
- questioning commitment
- building relationships
- developing skills
- establishing boundaries
- achieving balance (addressed in Research Question 3)
- redirecting focus, and
- becoming a teacher.

I conceptualized these as a collection of interrelated tasks, existing in the external environment but influenced at all times by the inner subjective perceptions that make up the assumptive world of each individual. These tasks are not seen as a linear sequence, in which one stage leads inevitably to the next. The boundaries between each task, and between the inner and outer contexts were always permeable, always fluid. I saw that there was no end point, at which a “successfully adapted” teacher would arrive. Instead the whole process was, and continues to be, a process of becoming. Buckminster Fuller said of himself, “I seem to be a verb,” and so it seemed to me that these teachers who

shared their stories with me were verbs, establishing and questioning, achieving, affirming and then questioning again.

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING CONTINUED

Louis describes the process of *sense-making* by which career transitioners “revise the cognitive maps they use to interpret and describe experiences in the new role and setting”(68). In an exercise in *sense-making* of my own, I tried again to create a cognitive map of what is, in reality, an intensely subjective process. The diagram presented in Figure 5.3 is a sort of synthesis of the very static and linear organizing diagram presented at the beginning of this chapter, and the simple circular representation of the relationships between inner and outer worlds presented in conjunction with the discussion of the *assumptive world*.

In this diagram, no hard lines separate any elements in the transition experience from any other. The *assumptive world* is represented at the core of experience, shaping the expectations the new teachers held of the various elements of the external environments of teaching. These contexts are placed on the border between expectations and assessment of emerging realities to symbolize the continual process by which they influence and are influenced by subjective perceptions, and are changing all the time. The “tasks” encircle the core, and the balance between them, and between the inner assumptive world and the subjective experience of transition is always changing. All these external, teaching-related tasks are fully accessible to the influence of assumptions, expectations and assessments. Finally, but not as an ending point, the “transitional transformations” of the earlier diagram have been operationalized as a circular and ongoing process of affirming and questioning commitment, transforming or deferring the transformation of identity.

BECOMING A TEACHER

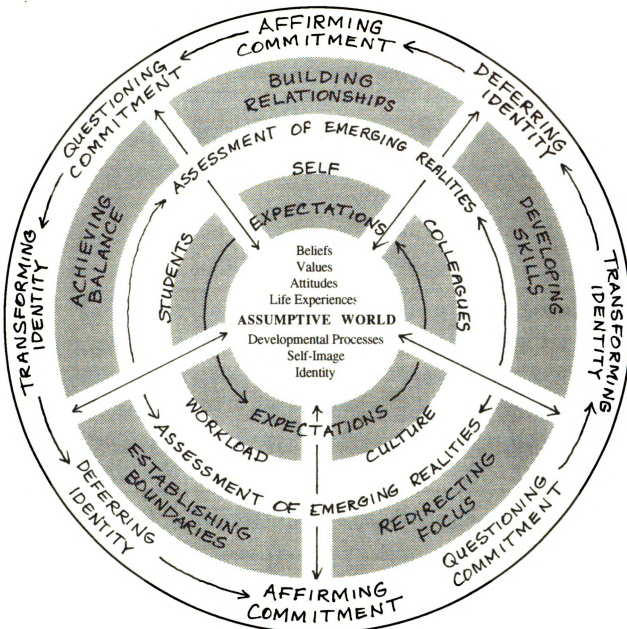


Figure 5.3: A conceptual diagram of key interactive processes in the transition to becoming a teacher.

This diagram is offered as a summary of the interpretations that make up Chapter 5. But it is not “fixed” and will continue to evolve. It, like the process the new teachers are going through, is still “becoming.”

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND REFLECTIONS

In this chapter, a brief outline of the study is presented, and some implications for college administrators and staff developers as well as new and experienced faculty are discussed. Recommendations are advanced with regard to programs and practices that affect new faculty. The chapter ends with suggestions for further research and reflections on the process.

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

New faculty are a precious resource in community colleges. They bring subject currency and professional expertise, as well as enthusiasm and commitment, and inject new energy into the institutions which hire them. However, crowded classrooms, cutbacks in financial support for education, heavy workloads and students with a wide range of needs and abilities all combine to create a gap for new teachers between their expectations when they enter the colleges, and the realities they face.

It is essential, if new faculty are to realize their potential as college educators, that colleges attend to creating the conditions that nurture and support the growth of new faculty as they progress through the transition into college teaching. To accomplish this, administrators, staff developers and senior faculty need to understand more about how new faculty experience their transitions, and the factors that assist them to establish their careers.

The purpose of this study was to identify, through qualitative analysis of interview data, new faculty members' interpretations of their experience of adapting to full-time teaching in a community college.

Several interrelated fields of literature were explored to provide a basis for this study. From the outside looking in, forces of change in the economic, political and social environment were reviewed to describe their impact on organizational transition. Insights gained from the literature on faculty development and career transition were helpful in understanding organizational responses to environmental change. From the inside looking out, the conceptual framework of an *assumptive world*, made up of all of the subjective perceptions resulting from a lifetime of experience, was interwoven with insights from the literature on life transitions, and from the various theories of life-span development, to explain how adults see, experience and interpret their world.

Tape recorded interviews were conducted with 12 faculty who had been hired into a large urban Canadian college since 1990. Faculty were chosen to represent an equal number of men and women who were hired in each of the three years from 1990 to 1993. Care was taken to ensure a cross section of subject areas and years of previous teaching experience, if any. Informal versions of the four main research questions were used to structure the interviews, and faculty were encouraged to share their perceptions and interpretations freely.

The interviews were transcribed and the data were analyzed with the assistance of *Hyperqual 2*, a qualitative data analysis software tool for use with the Macintosh computer, which assisted in establishing codes, categories and themes through the process of constant comparative analysis. In Chapter 4, verbatim quotations from the interviews were used to link together the feelings, perceptions and interpretations of the new faculty around key aspects of their experience. A number of significant elements in

the transition process were derived from the data, and were eventually displayed and discussed in Chapter 5 with the help of an evolving series of diagrams.

The first diagram (Figure 5.1) provided a linear and directional representation of the various elements identified by the new faculty as significant aspects of their transition experience. Although it was useful as an organizer, it failed to represent the dynamic interplay of the elements, and the constant influence of each person's inner perceptual world upon his or her expectations and assessments of reality. A second, more generic diagram (Figure 5.2), attempted to symbolize the interrelationships between people's inner and external worlds, within the contexts of the transformations they go through in response to change. Finally, a third diagram (Figure 5.3) evolved to try to integrate the elements of the first attempt with the dynamic and transactive nature of the second.

Given the parameters of this study, and its limited generalizability, more work would need to be done with a larger number of faculty in other institutional settings, and indeed with career "transitioners" in a variety of settings, before the diagram would achieve the status of a "model." For the time being, it is simply a graphical representation of the experience of a small group of faculty in one Canadian college. To develop it further presents a challenge to this researcher, and to other investigators who are interested in how people respond to change.

Summary of Findings

A brief summary is provided of responses to the four research questions:

- 1) To what extent, if at all, did personal interpretations of life events or significant transitions contribute to faculty decisions to enter into, pursue or extend an academic career?

Most faculty attributed their decision to come into a career in college teaching to a significant life event or insight which acted as a catalyst to start the process of transition.

In some cases the trigger event was concrete and external, such as the ending of a previous job, financial necessity, or the abrupt breakdown of a significant relationship. In other cases, the process was more internal and developmental in nature, such as the resolution of a “crisis of identity” or a response to social expectations to “become one’s own person” by launching a career. A minority of the group seemed to “fall into” teaching to fill a void at a time when they were unsure what path they wanted to take. As the teachers told their stories, their comments revealed many references to their inner world of subjective interpretation, which consists of feelings, beliefs, values and perceptions based on a lifetime of experience. This inner context was called by Cantril (1950) the *assumptive form world*.

- 2) What assumptions and expectations do new faculty bring to their new full-time responsibilities (about the career of teaching and their role within it; about the college culture; about the workload; about their relationships with colleagues; about students and academic standards, etc.)? In what ways do the realities meet, exceed or fall short of their expectations? What adjustments have to be made to accommodate realities?

New faculty had many expectations about what it would be like to teach at a community college. It was clear that their expectations were based on all their past experience, and the inner subjective perceptions and interpretations they placed on that experience, which now governed their present perceptions and behaviour. Most of their expectations were optimistic, but many proved to be unrealistic when measured against the reality of their actual experience. Their comments focused on expectations of themselves in their new role, of teaching as a career, of their students, their colleagues, the college, and the workload and its impact on their lifestyle. In some cases, reality met or exceeded expectations. In many more, teachers were caught by surprise, and discovered the workload was heavier, the students needier, and the college culture less supportive than they expected.

- 3) What do new faculty perceive they have lost, and what have they gained in entering into a career as a full-time college teacher?

In balance, most teachers felt that they had gained more than they had lost in the transition into college teaching. Most mentioned self-esteem, confidence and “making a positive contribution to the students and to society” as major gains. They expressed great personal satisfaction in discovering their strengths, and enjoyed the stimulation of interacting with students in the classroom. Several people spoke of the benefits of working within the college environment, “You know, really, there’s no better place than (this college) to work.”

Losses were grouped in three major areas. The first, personal loss, attested to the financial sacrifices of coming into teaching from business or industry, to the weight of the workload and the toll it takes on family time, and to the drain on personal energy of being always tired and pressured. Professional losses included plans (writing, research) that had to be put on hold to accommodate the demands of full-time teaching. In addition, some faculty missed aspects of the former work setting that they found to be absent in the new environment. Finally, faculty spoke of losses in the present work place: frustrations with working with broken or missing equipment in inadequate physical conditions; isolation and lack of support from administrators or other colleagues; or loss of confidence related to specific incidents in their first two years of teaching.

- 4) Are there common and **significant** transitional processes which college teachers go through, during their first year as new full-time faculty, to arrive at a successful adjustment (as defined by both the individual and the organization) to the demands of an academic career?

This research question yielded the most complex and multifaceted data. Analysis of the data eventually led to grouping responses into a variety of “tasks” which were deemed to be “common and significant transitional processes” both by the frequency with which they were raised, and the degree of intensity with which the faculty described

them. The first task, “environmental assessment” was an ongoing process of measuring their previous expectations against emerging realities. As a result, faculty frequently experienced some loss of confidence in their choice and questioned their commitment to their new career. Other tasks included: “building relationships” with administrators, colleagues and students; “developing skills” in teaching and classroom management, and also in assertiveness, negotiation skills and time and stress management; “establishing boundaries and control” over workload and professional autonomy; “redirecting focus” from a preoccupation with content and presentation skills, to students and their learning needs; and “becoming a teacher,” a label given to issues of reward and affirmation, reaffirming commitment to teaching, and transforming identity.

IMPLICATIONS

From the findings of this study, several observations will be put forward which have implications for college administrators, academic support personnel, staff developers, experienced faculty and newly hired, full-time faculty.

Most colleges and universities affirm somewhere in their institutional mission statement the value they place on supporting and providing growth opportunities for all members of the organization. Most senior administrators emphasize that faculty are the “heart” of the organization and new faculty represent a fresh blood supply to keep that heart beating strongly. Yet, the atmosphere that surrounds new faculty when they take up their new responsibilities frequently does not support those values. In addition, organizations often send mixed messages about what is valued. New faculty may discover that, though lip service is given to currency and excellence, the reward system (particularly in unionized environments) is primarily oriented toward longevity. New faculty are astute observers of the political realities of their surroundings, and find it very

demotivating if “burned out” senior faculty who are making a diminished contribution have access to rewards that are not available to more junior faculty members.

Internal cultures vary widely from one department in an institution to another. Faculty may find that the expectations that govern their peers in other departments vary widely from the ones upheld by their particular dean or chairperson. Efforts should be made across the institution to develop clear evaluation and reward systems, so that faculty understand the criteria on which they will be evaluated, and what they have to do to receive institutional recognition and rewards.

In this regard, the importance of senior administrators and experienced faculty providing positive role-models for new faculty cannot be over-estimated. Preparation programs for college educators should be concerned with developing affective as well as cognitive competencies, with an understanding that both are essential to success as an education leader. An understanding of the academic career as a developmental process, and the impact of life transitions on new faculty members’ effectiveness, would help deans and chairpersons to identify individuals and groups that require special attention. Programs could then be mounted, with the assistance of the staff development office, to enlist, encourage and support new faculty to expand their horizons and take on special assignments or projects when the time is right.

The following suggestions arise from the findings of this study, and affirm the work of numerous investigators which preceded it. They focus on creating conditions in colleges and universities to ease the transition of new faculty into the institution, and to support them to maintain a high level of motivation, and become successful and contributing members of the academic community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

“Enabling conditions” should be created and enforced to assure that new faculty have the opportunity to develop as effective and successful teachers during their probationary period.

The first priority among these conditions should be to reduce teaching loads and place limits on the number of new course preparations a new teacher is assigned. No new teacher should have to teach more than two different courses in any one semester. Faculty require some leisure to integrate what they are learning about good teaching and develop their skills during their beginning years, in an atmosphere that provides them with encouragement and formative feedback.

Recommendation 2

A “culture of support” should be developed within colleges and universities, and supported from the highest administrative level, to orient and support new faculty from the time of their first contact with the college, so that they can realize their full potential.

It takes the cooperation and commitment of people at every level in the organization to create a coherent structure of cultural support. A coordinated effort would include at least the following elements:

(a) All newly hired full-time faculty (including those that have previously taught in the college on a part-time basis) should participate in an orientation program.

Such a program would include introducing faculty to the mission and values of the institution, as well as the systems and services which are available to serve students and staff. The orientation would also introduce new faculty to each other and form a cohort of mutual support which would transcend divisional and disciplinary boundaries. For this reason, time and administrative support should be made available to make it possible for all new faculty to attend.

(b) Newly hired college faculty should take part in an instructional skills/ issues course which would include opportunities to learn (or reinforce) and practice preparing, delivering and evaluating instruction.

Part of the purpose of this program would be to bring new faculty together on a regular basis to share experiences and learn from each other. Emphasis in the early part of an instructional development program should be on providing explicit information to help teachers to establish comfortable and efficient methods of classroom and curriculum management. In addition to assistance with classroom presentation skills, teachers would be assisted to become more student-centred in their orientation, in an atmosphere which would help to reduce their anxiety about being critically evaluated. In addition, faculty would be introduced to specific instruction-related issues such as multiculturalism, working with students with special needs, curriculum design and development, general education, etc.

(c) A session or course introducing models of life transition and allowing faculty to explore, understand and honour their own transitional processes should be part of every new faculty orientation and training program.

Learning that their experience is understood and shared by others, and that their feelings are normal and predictable, can be both motivating and supportive to new faculty and contribute to their making a smooth and productive transition into full-time teaching.

(d) Opportunities should be created to allow faculty to explore and express their feelings with regard to the teaching role. For faculty as well as administrators, developing affective as well as cognitive competencies should be regarded as an essential component of success as an educational leader. This study showed that establishing personal and professional boundaries seemed to be an important building block in the construction of the new teachers' self-esteem and identity as competent professionals. This is an area of development that should be made explicit, and discussed as part of the agenda of the professional development program.

(e) Time should be set aside each week for new faculty members to meet together as a group without a designated program, specifically to share challenges, successes and unresolved issues in an atmosphere of mutual sharing and support.

This time should be designated and respected when faculty timetables are being prepared, but it need not be structured or attended by any administrative personnel, or by the staff developer, except at the groups' explicit request. The focus should be on giving faculty time and opportunity to problem-solve and think together about teaching.

(f) Teachers among the senior faculty who are interested in mentoring a new faculty member should be identified and trained in advance of the arrival of each intake of new faculty, so that someone can be assigned to each new hire promptly.

The mentor need not necessarily be someone in the new faculty member's instructional area, although if the right person is available and willing to make the commitment there may be an added advantage in also having shared content knowledge. Faculty who have already formed a supportive relationship with a more experienced peer may prefer to continue that relationship. However Boice (In Sorcinelli and Austin, 1992) found that mentors from another department, or arbitrarily paired mentors and mentees worked as well as "traditional" pairs. The main issue should be the willingness of the

mentor to make time to meet regularly in a supportive fashion. The mentor should be available to connect with the new faculty member **immediately that he or she arrives on campus** when the need for support is most acutely felt.

It should be the business of the faculty developer or department chairperson to monitor to see that mentor pairs are indeed meeting on a regular basis and to intervene when necessary to ensure that both members of the pair are receiving needed support. Opportunities should be created for all mentoring pairs to meet together on a monthly or bi-monthly basis to share issues of concern and expand their range of ideas about ways that pairs can work together.

(g) A willing member of the support staff should be specifically designated to orient the new staff member to departmental as well as college-wide systems, services and timelines.

Support staff should be enlisted as key contributors to a smooth transition for new faculty. Faculty need to know how to access printing services, where to have instructional materials produced, etc. They also required specific information such as critical dates on which marks are due, beginning and ending dates in the semester, expectations regarding record keeping and submission of grades. These and other issues should not be left to chance or “discovery” as a result of costly mistakes. As part of this effort, each department should designate a support person to prepare and regularly update departmental and college-wide regulations into a handbook for new teachers.

(h) Chairs should be trained, given time and resources, and rewarded to regard support and development of new faculty as a key aspect of their job description.

Chairs should accept responsibility for providing faculty with regular, supportive *formative* feedback during their first two years, or assign and monitor a mentor for that

purpose. Contact between new faculty and their chairpersons should not be limited to infrequent summative evaluation related to job retention, but should include opportunities for encouragement of faculty projects and positive recognition and praise for successes. Chairs should assure that no faculty member is isolated during their probationary period. Faculty need clear guidelines to understand the criteria by which their performance will be evaluated.

Many good chairs are already performing according to the above recommendations. However, a greater degree of institutional support and recognition of this difficult role would help ensure an increase in their numbers.

(i) As part of their probationary period, new faculty should be encouraged to make visits to the classrooms of willing colleagues, and to receive visitors to their classrooms for the purposes of formative feedback and encouragement.

Again, it should be the responsibility of the staff developer or chairperson to assist faculty in overcoming any roadblocks that threaten this opportunity.

(j) Once the pattern has been established of a cross-divisional group of faculty meeting together regularly for mutual support, specific opportunities should be created on an ongoing basis, after the two year probationary period is over, to bring faculty together. Meetings could be arranged around a shared project, an issue to which the group could address itself and provide feedback to administrators, or simply as an informal way to share ideas. The key point is that **faculty vitality is easier to support and maintain than it is to try to recapture after it has been extinguished.**

(k) Faculty who are not already comfortable with the use of computers to aid in all aspects of course management should be given the time, resources and necessary instruction to develop a functional level of expertise.

Today's students and classrooms demand a working knowledge of a variety of technologies to be able to provide and facilitate enhanced learning experiences. In addition, expertise with word processing and data management programs can help faculty to become more efficient and get the mechanics of their workload under control more rapidly.

Recommendation 3

In the light of these findings related to the impact of life transition on career success, it makes sense to **educate people to be effective citizens and workers** both within and outside the college, by explaining the transition process and helping them to use periods of change in their lives to make creative decisions and enhance their personal growth and productivity. Within educational settings, material on coping with transition should be incorporated into general education and career planning courses as an essential life-skill.

Summary of Recommendations

Of course, the success of any programs such as the ones outlined above depends on support from the highest administrative levels. Unless the college president and vice-presidents of academic affairs and human resources are committed to the nurturing of new faculty, they will be unsuccessful at getting the necessary buy-in and commitment at the level of deans and chairpersons to really make it work.

New faculty being hired into the colleges of the 1990s are a highly skilled and impressive group of professionals. The preceding suggestions are in no way intended to imply that they need to be "coddled" as if they were starting from a position of weakness. On the other hand, the Darwinian notion that only those best equipped to counter adversity deserve to survive is a philosophy that has fallen into disrepute with regard to

students, and so it should with new faculty as well. In pointing out that good teaching is at the core of the academic enterprise, Boice (1992) provides a compelling summation of the rationale for attending to the needs of new faculty.

I came to realize that success or failure in professorial careers begins with social supports. As new faculty reflect on their experience, they agree on one thing: no matter how much they value their autonomy as professors, they still rely most on colleagues for success as teachers, as productive researchers, and as contented professionals (19).

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. This study was limited to a small number of faculty, all of whom were participants in a faculty orientation and development program at one Ontario college. However, little study has previously been conducted on the transition experiences of college faculty, who typically come from a much wider range of previous employment than do faculty in the universities and high-schools. One possibility for further study would be to explore the transitional experiences of new faculty from a cross-section of different colleges, some of whom may have little or no formal orientation and development process in place.

2. At the time of the interviews, all the new faculty in this study continued to occupy full-time positions in their various departments. It would be interesting to conduct interviews with people who have left their new teaching position during the first three years to find out what the precipitating factors were that influenced their decision to leave and how their transition experiences may have differed from those who stayed.

3. A study could be conducted to explore the perceptions of faculty who remain in the college, but by their own assessment (as well as the evaluation of their students and administrators) are not happy and have not so far made a "successful" adjustment to college teaching.

4. Further study could profitably be done to better understand the concept of “establishing boundaries” as an important survival skill for new faculty as they develop confidence, and feel safe to exercise their autonomy. The process of establishing personal and professional boundaries seemed to be an important building block in the construction of the new teachers’ self-esteem and identity as competent professionals.

5. Are there useful lessons to be learned from personality type scales such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator? Could expanded awareness on the part of administrators and new faculty themselves enable them to work together to plan appropriate supports for people whose personality profile places them under extra stress? How can this awareness help teachers to develop strategies and seek out opportunities that will strengthen some aspects of their personality, and let them contribute to the organization from the area of their greatest strengths?

6. An attempt has been made to develop a visual representation of life and career transition which may have applications for faculty in other colleges, in universities, and in a variety of other career settings. With minimal modification of the “tasks” that are specific to teachers, further study could profitably be conducted with career “transitioners” in other settings to allow for further development and validation of the diagram in Figure 5.3: “A conceptual diagram of key interactive processes in the transition to becoming a teacher.”

REFLECTIONS

This research represents the extension of a privileged relationship with a special group of people that began more than four years ago when I followed my first group of new faculty through the entire two years of their development program. Many of the very special people whom I have come to value as colleagues and friends are not part of the

research group. The obvious limitations of one individual working alone made it impractical for me to interview everyone.

Recognizing that my biases would undoubtedly intrude upon the interpretations recorded here, I worried about whether I would do justice to these people's experience; whether I would fairly represent their views without trivializing or sentimentalizing, without over-identification or undue projection, or any other distortion of their truth.

In Chapter 4, I accepted the discipline of staying very closely to a systematic presentation of the data in the faculty members' own words. Before the writing of Chapter 5, my thesis director advised me to "take the risk of saying more than I should, so that people can react." I took that risk, and in Chapter 5 explored several abstract ideas, raising questions based on the respondents' stories, concepts from the literature, and my own "legitimate speculations" based on my experience as a staff developer and a student of human nature. In the process, I have broadened my own perceptual field, and experienced a degree of personal and professional growth that leads me to recommend a similar project to anyone who cares about teachers and wants to gain an in-depth appreciation of transition processes.

The key message that I wanted to get through to the my respondents and to any other new teachers who may eventually read this material is this. The process of transition that you are going through is an important and legitimate one. The feelings of ambivalence, excitement, frustration, optimism, self-doubt and despair that make up the daily life of any committed teacher are normal and healthy ones, unique to you as an individual and yet shared by all of us. I hope you can take time out occasionally to reflect on and honour the process you are going through and to seek out guides and fellow travelers along the way who will encourage you, and to whom you can offer your insights and encouragement.

To the teachers who helped me with this study, and all the others whose voices are not directly represented here, but who have taught me a great deal over the last few years, I hope I have been able to satisfy the ultimate test of validity in a study of this nature — whether the experiences recorded here can be recognized, and ring true for you, after having read only their description.

APPENDIX A

Approach Letter to New Faculty

May, 1993

Dear Colleague,

As you may know, I am presently studying toward a doctorate in Adult Education at Michigan State University. In my study, I am combining two major areas of interest - Faculty Development and Life Transitions. I am interesting in understanding more about the transitions that faculty experience as they progress through the first year or two of full-time teaching in the community college. I feel that to provide appropriate supports for new faculty during their period of orientation and socialization to teaching, colleges and staff developers need to know more about how faculty begin, and then establish, their careers.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. I'll be asking you to share your perceptions in a taped interview of about one hour to 90 minutes in length. I will be asking you what kinds of changes were going on in your life that motivated you to seek or extend your career as a college teacher. I'll be interested in finding out your perceptions and feelings about the changes you have gone through during your first years of full time teaching at Humber, and I'll be interested in knowing what, in your view, are some of the factors in the college environment that have aided or hindered your transition. I'll also be interested in knowing how your experiences as a full-time teacher at Humber compare with the expectations you had before you came.

Once I have transcribed and analyzed each of the interviews, I may request a second session with you in which I will ask you to comment on the transcript and change anything you would like. I am interesting only in YOUR perceptions of YOUR unique experience as a new full-time teacher. As you know, I am a faculty member like yourself. It is NOT the intention of this research to evaluate your performance in any way, NOR is this project intended to result in a review or evaluation of the new faculty program. Data collected from this study will not be shared with anyone else at Humber, whether administrators, mentors or other faculty. Codes will be used in place of your name. Records will be kept in locked files, or off campus.

I recognize that in the course of talking about personal change and decision-making, we will undoubtedly discuss some issues of a personal or sensitive nature. If you agree to participate with me in this study, you will of course be free to withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty or recrimination, in which case all data I have collected from you will be destroyed. Meanwhile, any information that you choose to share will be held in the strictest confidence. In reporting my findings, every safeguard will be taken to protect your anonymity by disguising your name and any information that could be used to identify you.

I am excited about this project and hope that the findings from it will be helpful in understanding more about the pressures and satisfactions of the role of new faculty. I hope you will be willing to take part with me in this enquiry. If you agree to participate, please read and sign both copies of the attached letter of consent, and return one copy to me as soon as possible. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katherine E.Mezei

Dear Kathy,

I have read the above letter describing the research you plan to do and have kept a signed copy for my records.

I understand that my involvement with this study is entirely voluntary. I will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or recrimination, in which case all data you have collected from me would be destroyed. Meanwhile, I understand that any information I share with you will be held in the strictest confidence and that, in reporting your findings, you will take steps to protect my anonymity by disguising my name and any information that could be used to identify me.

With this understanding, I agree to participate.

Date _____

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____

Office _____ Extension _____

Date _____

Katherine E. Mezei

APPENDIX B

NEW FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE* (Pilot Study Only)

code _____

Please respond to this questionnaire as fully and as candidly as possible. Feel free to write on the back or attach extra sheets of paper as needed. All information you share will be held in strict confidence. When you have returned the questionnaire to me, I will call you to set up a convenient time for a personal interview. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

Note: 1 -----> 10 scale
 low high

If you are not teaching this semester, or were not teaching during your first year at the college, please respond to these questions from the point of view of your primary responsibilities, e.g. program coordinator, counsellor, chair, etc.

-
1. **Briefly describe your career before you took a full-time position at this college.**
 2. **Describe any significant life events, changes or situations that may have influenced your decision to take a full-time position at this college.**
 - personal concerns
 - career transitions
 - financial issues
 - other

With regard to your **expectations** (re: students, workload, scholarship, collegial support, etc.), before you took up your full-time responsibilities at the college:

3. **Rate your degree of “preparedness” (1 to 10 scale) for the realities of college teaching as you now find them.** _____

Please comment:

4. **Rate on a scale of 1 to 10 the extent to which this job is meeting your career expectations.** _____

What aspects are exceeding your expectations?

What aspects are not living up to your expectations?

5. **Estimate, in years, how long you plan to stay at this college.** _____

Please comment:

* Adapted from Boice, Robert. 1992. *The New Faculty Member*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- 6. Describe your experience of the demands placed on you to adjust or change during your first year.**

- professional change
- personal change

- 7. Rate your response to changes indicated above (1 to 10 scale, where 1 indicates that change is disruptive, negative, extremely uncomfortable, and 10 indicates that change is stimulating, enjoyable, highly positive).**

Please comment:

- 8. Rate (1 to 10 scale),**
- the quality of collegial support you received in your first year at this college.
 - the quality of intellectual stimulation.

Please comment:

- 9. Rate your own need (1 to 10 scale) for collegiality.**

Rate yourself re your friendliness toward your colleagues

Rate yourself re giving support to colleagues.

- 10. Rate your interest (1 to 10 scale) in having colleagues**

- with whom you have at least weekly interactions that are more than small talk
- with whom you pursue off-campus friendships
- with whom you share teaching ideas or collaborate on projects

- 11. Rate (1 to 10 scale) the supportiveness, during your first full-time year at the College**

- of your chairperson/supervisor.
- of other administrators with whom you are/were associated.

Please comment:

- 12. Describe your experience at this college with a mentor, or as a mentor to another faculty member.**

13. **Rate your desire (1 to 10 scale) for a mentoring relationship**

Please comment:

14. **Rate your perceptions (1 to 10 scale) of the degree of commitment among experienced college faculty:**

- to their students.
- to the college.
- to their profession.

Please comment:

15. **Rate your degree of identification (1 to 10 scale) with this college.**

What keeps you from giving it a higher rating?

16. **In thinking of your first full-time year at the college, rate yourself (1 to 10 scale)**

- in terms of busyness (where 10 would be the busiest you have ever been)
- in terms of stress

17. **Rate yourself (1 to 10 scale) in terms of your resilience in coping with pressures, disappointments or set backs.**

Please comment:

18. **Describe your primary source(s) of satisfaction and reward in your work at the college.**

19. **Rate (1 to 10) the extent to which the college “culture” facilitates your professional/personal growth and development.**

Please comment.

20. **What would be the greatest source(s) of help to you in advancing your teaching/learning/professional goals?**

21. **Can you think of any questions I should have asked you, or do you have any questions for me?**

APPENDIX C

Open-Ended Questionnaire Used to Interview New Faculty

- **What was going on in your life that you feel influenced your decision to come into teaching on a full-time basis? (Research Question 1)**
- **What did you expect when you came into full-time teaching at the college? How has the reality measured up to your expectations? What adjustments have you had to make? (Research Question 2)**
- **What are some of the factors that have helped you or hindered you during your first year? (Research Question 2)**
- **What have you lost and what have you gained in entering into a career as a full-time teacher? (Research Question 3)**
- **What has this first year been like for you? Have you found yourself changing in the way you see or experience things; in the way you see yourself, your content, your students, your colleagues, the college as a whole? (Research Question 4)**

APPENDIX D

"Tag list" of 233 Codes

adult/students	disappointment	gain/skills
affirmation	discouragement	gain/status
ambition	disillusion	gain/support
ambivalence	diversity	gain/trust
anger	eagerness	gain/workload
anxiety	ego-integrity	generativity
assertiveness	embarrassment	goals
assessadmin	emot-wb	grief
assesscareer	empathy	group-identity
assesscolleagues	enthusiasm	happiness
assesscollege	exhaustion	health
assessculture	expect	help
assessinterview	expect/adjust	helplessness
assessrole	expect/career	hindrance
assessself	expect/colleagues	HRM
assessskills	expect/college	identity
assessstudents	expect/lifestyle	impostor-syndrome
become-your-own-man	expect/self	inexperience
balance	expect/standards	initiative
boundaries	expect/students	injustice
burnout	expect/support	integrity
calling	expect/workload	isolation
career-planning	family-planning	job-fit
censored	family-values	job-insecurity
climate-setting	fatigue	justice
college-agenda	fear-failure	lack-adminsupport
college-climate	feeling-valued	lack-clarity
college-culture	finance-constraint	lack-confidence
commit/interview	finance-freedom	lack-currency
commit/teach	finance-insecurity	lack-info
commit/teach-	flexibility	lack-persupport
commitment	frustration	lack-prep
compromise	gain	lack-privacy
conflict-management	gain/career	lack-resources
connect/field	gain/confidence	lack-respect
connect/teach	gain/culture	lack-skill
content-focus	gain/enjoy	lack-support
contradiction	gain/experience	leadership
control	gain/finance	loneliness
critical-incident	gain/freedom	loss/confidence
critical-issue/decision	gain/fulfillment	loss/family
currency	gain/lifestyle	loss/finance
curriculum	gain/opportunity	loss/hurt
cynicism	gain/persgrowth	loss/isolation
depression	gain/relate	loss/lifestyle
develop-expertise	gain/respect	loss/privacy
	gain/satisfaction	loss/prof

loss/relate	relateadmin
loss/self	relateauthority
loss/support	relatecolleagues
loss/trust	related-work-experience
loss/vocation	relatefamily
loss/workload	relatestudents
management/faculty	resentment
mentors	reward
midlife-crisis	risk-taker
morale	satisfaction
need-change	script
need-info	self-confidence
need-resources	self-doubt
need-support	self-esteem
need-variety	self-focus
nerves	skill-develop
neutral-zone	strengths
noseekhelp	stress
opinion	student-focus
optimism	support-admin
orientation	teach/coord
overload	teach/entry
p-t-t	teach/eval
pacing	teach/experience
pain	teamwork
parenting	territory
PD	threat-safety
peer-support	time-pressures
percep-college	timing
Percep-teaching	transition
perform-anx	uncertainty
pers-growth	unhappiness
pers-needs	union
pers-pride	values
pers-support	w-vs-c-c
pers-type	weight-of-resp
philosophy	work/family
pleasure/anticipation	workload
politics	workrole/challenges
priorities	
prof-autonomy	
prof-expertise	
prof-growth	
prof-inadequacy	
prof-integrity	
prof-opportunities	
prof-pride	
prof-resources	
prof-responsib	
prof-role	
prof-standards	
prof-support	
quick-disclaimer	
race/culture	

APPENDIX E

First Reduction of Codes into 25 Categories

Positive feelings

affirmation
emot-wb
empathy
enthusiasm
eagerness
ego-integrity
feeling-valued
happiness
health
self-confidence
reward
satisfaction
self-esteem
optimism
pers-pride
pleasure/anticipation

Negative Feelings

anger
anxiety
burnout
cynicism
depression
disappointment
discouragement
disillusion
embarrassment
exhaustion
fatigue
fear-failure
grief
helplessness
isolation
injustice
loneliness
hindrance
nerves
overload
perform-anx
resentment
self-doubt
stress
uncertainty
unhappiness
pain

Assessments

assessadmin
assesscareer
assesscolleagues
assesscollege
assessculture
assessinterview
assessrole
assessself
assessskills
assessstudents

Development Tasks

b-y-o-m
generativity
identity
ego-integrity
integrity
midlife-crisis
pers-growth

Pers. Traits

ambition
assertiveness
script
strengths
risk-taker
opinion
goals
priorities
pers-type
philosophy
values

Boundaries and Balance

balance
boundaries
contradiction
control
ambivalence
quick-disclaimer
territory
compromise
threat-safety

College Climate

climate-setting
college-agenda
college-climate
college-culture
morale
job-fit
job-insecurity
justice
censored
percep-college
Percep-teaching
politics

Commitment

commit/interview
commit/teach+
commit/teach-
commitment

Skills

assertiveness
conflict-management
flexibility
initiative
leadership
career-planning

Critical-incident

critical-issue/decision

LearningTeaching

develop-expertise
currency
curriculum
impostor-syndrome
inexperience
skill-develop
noseekhelp
orientation
PD
p-t-t
pacing
timing
teach/coord
teach/eval
teach/experience

Focus

content-focus
self-focus
student-focus

Student**Characteristics**

diversity
adult/students
race/culture

Expectations

expect
expect/adjust
expect/career
expect/colleagues
expect/college
expect/lifestyle
expect/self
expect/standards
expect/students
expect/support
expect/workload

Family Issues

family-planning
family-values
parenting

Financial Issues

finance-constraint
finance-freedom
finance-insecurity

Gains

gain/career
gain/confidence
gain/culture
gain/enjoy
gain/experience
gain/finance
gain/freedom
gain/fulfillment
gain/lifestyle
gain/opportunity
gain/persgrowth
gain/relate
gain/respect
gain/satisfaction
gain/skills
gain/status
gain/support
gain/trust
gain/workload

Supports

group-identity
help
HRM
management/faculty
mentors
support-admin
teamwork
union
peer-support
pers-support

Lacks

lack-adminsupport
lack-clarity
lack-confidence
lack-currency
lack-info
lack-persupport
lack-prep
lack-privacy
lack-resources
lack-respect
lack-skill
lack-support

Losses

loss/confidence
loss/family
loss/finance
loss/hurt
loss/isolation
loss/lifestyle
loss/privacy
loss/prof
loss/relate
loss/self
loss/support
loss/trust
loss/vocation
loss/workload

Needs

need-change
need-info
need-resources
need-support
need-variety
pers-needs

Professional Issues

prof-autonomy
prof-expertise
prof-growth
prof-inadequacy
prof-integrity
prof-opportunities
prof-pride
prof-resources
prof-responsib
prof-role
prof-standards
prof-support

Relationships

relateadmin
relateauthority
relatecolleagues
relatefamily
relatestudents

Transition

Pre-transition
At-transition
Post-Transition
connect/field
connect/teach
neutral-zone
related-work-experience
teach/entry

Workload

work/family
workload
workrole/challenges
time-pressures
w-vs-c-c
weight-of-resp

THEMATIC ORGANIZATION OF CODE CATEGORIES

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

CATALYTIC EVENTS/INSIGHTS	TRANSITIONS	ADAPT MODEL
Critical-incident Critical-issue/decision	<u>Endings</u> pre-transition connect/field connect/teach related-work-experience <u>Neutral Zone</u> neutral-zone at-transition <u>New Beginnings</u> teach/entry post-transition	Activating commitment Developing support Adjusting expectations Priority revision Transforming identity

ASSUMPTIVE WORLD

<u>Positive Feelings</u> affirmation emotional-well-being empathy enthusiasm eagerness ego-integrity feeling-valued happiness health self-confidence reward satisfaction self-esteem optimism pers-pride pleasure/anticipation	<u>Negative Feelings</u> anger anxiety burnout cynicism depression disappointment discouragement disillusion embarrassment exhaustion fatigue fear-failure grief helplessness isolation injustice loneliness nerves overload perform-anx resentment self-doubt stress uncertainty unhappiness pain	<u>Development Tasks</u> becoming-your-own-person generativity identity ego-integrity mid-life-crisis pers-growth <u>Personality Traits</u> ambition assertiveness integrity script strengths risk-taker opinion goals priorities pers-type philosophy values
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EXPECTATIONS

expect
 expect/adjust
 expect/career
 expect/colleagues
 expect/college
 expect/lifestyle
 expect/self
 expect/standards
 expect/students
 expect/support
 expect/workload

TRANSITION INTO TEACHING

pre-transition
 at-transition
 post-transition
 connect/field
 connect/teach
 neutral-zone
 related-work-experience
 teach/entry

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENTS**Students**

assessstudents
 diversity
 adult/students
 race/culture

Colleagues

assessadmin
 assesscolleagues
 prof-support
 lack-adminsupport
 lack-resources
 lack-support

Self

assessself
 assessrole
 assessskills
 assesscareer
 job-fit
 prof-autonomy
 prof-expertise
 prof-growth
 prof-inadequacy
 prof-integrity
 prof-pride
 prof-responsib
 prof-role
 prof-standards
 lack-clarity
 lack-confidence
 lack-currency
 lack-info
 lack-persupport
 lack-prep
 lack-privacy
 lack-skill
 lack-respect

College Culture

assesscollege
 assessculture
 college-agenda
 college-climate
 college-culture
 morale
 job-insecurity
 justice
 censored
 percep-college
 percep-teaching
 finance-constraint
 politics
 prof-opportunities
 prof-resources

Workload

work/family
 workload
 workrole/challenges
 time-pressures
 work-vs-college-
 culture
 weight-of-resp

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS**Needs**

need-change
 need-info
 need-resources
 need-support
 need-variety
 pers-needs

Supports

group-identity
 help
 human-resource-mgmt
 management/faculty
 mentors
 support-admin
 teamwork
 union
 peer-support
 pers-support

Relationships

relateadmin
 relateauthority
 relatecolleagues
 relatefamily
 relatestudents

ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES**Boundaries**

balance
 boundaries
 contradiction
 control
 ambivalence
 quick-disclaimer
 territory
 compromise
 threat-safety

Family Issues

family-planning
 family-values
 parenting

Financial Issues

finance-freedom
 finance-insecurity

DEVELOPING SKILLS**Personal Skills**

assertiveness
 conflict-management
 flexibility
 initiative
 leadership
 career-planning

Learning Teaching

develop-expertise
 currency
 curriculum
 impostor-syndrome
 inexperience
 skill-develop
 no-seek-help
 orientation
 professional-development
 part-time-teaching
 pacing
 timing
 teach/coordinate
 teach/eval
 teach/experience
 climate-setting

ACHIEVING BALANCE**Gains**

gain/career
 gain/confidence
 gain/culture
 gain/enjoy
 gain/experience
 gain/finance
 gain/freedom
 gain/fulfillment
 gain/lifestyle
 gain/opportunity
 gain/persgrowth
 gain/relate
 gain/respect
 gain/satisfaction
 gain/skills
 gain/status
 gain/support
 gain/trust
 gain/workload

Losses

loss/confidence
loss/family
loss/finance
loss/hurt
loss/isolation
loss/lifestyle
loss/privacy

loss/prof
loss/relate
loss/self
loss/support
loss/trust
loss/vocation
loss/workload

REDIRECTING FOCUS

content-focus
self-focus
student-focus

BECOMING A TEACHER

rewards and affirmation
reaffirming commitment
transforming identity

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