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Training Yoga Therapists in Loving Presence**
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Candance Lee Kokinakis

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TEACHING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:
TRAINING YOGA THERAPISTS IN LOVING PRESENCE

By

Candance Lee Kokinakis

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
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ABSTRACT

TEACHING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: TRAINING YOGA THERAPISTS IN LOVING PRESENCE

By

Candance Lee Kokinakis

A naturalistic study of yoga therapist training was undertaken to learn about core professional standards and how they are taught in Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy. Primary data collection methods were participant observation and interviewing. Qualitative data analysis methods followed the rationale and guidelines of Erickson (1985)¹ for the conduct of qualitative research in education.

Findings suggest that a guiding principle named loving presence is an essential professional standard, and that teaching therapists to be a loving presence is an important training goal. Initial attempts to define loving presence suggest that multi-cultural and/or multi-disciplinary conceptual frameworks are needed. A working definition of loving presence is proposed as: a) knowledge of the self (knowing the self as dual and non-dual), b) the skill of conscious awareness, and c) an attitude of non-attachment.

Findings also suggest that the principle and practice of loving presence is taught to therapists-in-training by creating many opportunities to directly experience loving presence: a) through practicing the work with each other,

b) through receiving sessions from certified therapists, and
c) through relationships with their mentor and other
training staff. A second important way therapists are
taught to be a loving presence is to increase their capacity
to be present to their own life experiences--to self-
presence.

Study findings imply that: a) the construct of loving
presence is closely associated with yoga philosophy and
psychology and may have utility in other professional
training programs when similar goals are present; b)
attempts to define and teach loving presence may contribute
to theory evolution; c) the process of teaching loving
presence may be generalizable to other professional training
programs, particularly the importance placed on therapists
applying this principle in their own lives, and the
congruent theory and practice of loving presence across all
levels of the training organization.

1. Erickson, F. (1985). Qualitative methods in research on
teaching. In M. C. Wittrock, (Ed), *Handbook of research on
teaching*, 3rd edition. New York: Macmillan.

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Of course, for any errors or misunderstandings that may be present in my research and interpretations, I accept full responsibility.

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CHAPTER 1
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND TRAINING:
THE CASE OF LOVING PRESENCE

This authenticity, however, does not consist in collecting knowledge and ordering things in a rational manner, little as it can do without these processes, but is a feature of the ethical personality, of the heart's courage, and the dauntless and indefatigable nature of mind.

(Richard Blunck, cited in Miller, 1990, pp.88-89)

INTRODUCTION

The study I have conducted was undertaken as a qualitative investigation of Phoenix Rising (PR) yoga therapist training. My goal was to learn about professional standards and the training of professionals in this particular setting, through the words and actions of those who developed and deliver this program. I collected participant observation and interview data, in addition to reviewing training materials and collecting survey data, during a nine-month period that spanned the two phases of the training program.

The study focus evolved over time to a particular professional standard that insiders identified and named "loving presence." My research questions were modified to focus on the meaning of this construct in this setting, and

on the training goals and practices designed to prepare yoga therapists to be a loving presence. I continued to look at the words and actions of yoga therapist trainers and training designers as the source of information about the principle of loving presence.

Before describing a more general problem in professional education, and explaining this study in greater detail, I want to acknowledge several things about my research findings.

Study Limitations

First, it is important to understand that Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy is not defined exclusively by the professional standard of loving presence, nor is the training program focused only on teaching this principle and practice. Other professional criteria include standards related to physical and dialogue techniques, ethical practice, yoga principles, and therapist mastery of yoga asanas.

I chose to focus on loving presence because training staff identified it as an essential principle and practice in PR yoga therapy. I wanted to learn how insiders described this principle relative to their profession, and to learn how they thought about, designed, and delivered a training program to prepare yoga therapists to be a loving presence. I also wanted to consider the relevance of this construct to professional education generally.

Second, I did not believe at the beginning of my study, and do not believe now, that loving presence is an entirely unique construct -- found only in PR Yoga Therapy and therapist training. What is called loving presence in this setting has similar forms in a variety of helping professions, including nursing, teaching, and some psychotherapies. In addition to constructs and practices similar to loving presence being found in some professions, this principle seems closely related to the heart of many spiritual and mystical traditions. I will return to a discussion of similarities and differences between loving presence and other constructs in my final chapter.

Third, I have come to believe that the construct of loving presence as used in PR yoga therapy is in some ways a synthesis of eastern and western world views. From the early conceptualization of this study through the last days of writing, I have been challenged to define concepts and support assertions in ways that maintain the integrity of a yoga world view while using the forms and rules that guide the preparation and defense of a dissertation.

One way to understand this challenge is to see it as the result of my commingling different views of a) what is real, b) how one experiences what is real, and c) how one communicates what is real. Finding common ground and language across these different philosophical traditions, or perhaps creating new ground, is very important to a continuing dialog on the construct of loving presence. I

have barely touched the surface of this task, yet find it to be the most interesting avenue for future study.

Fourth, I was a participant observer of the PR yoga therapist training program from November, 1993 through July, 1994, and my primary data collection occurred during that period. Since then I have been in communication with training staff and training designers to ask them to critique and clarify my understanding of their work. From these more recent contacts it is clear to me that the training program continues to evolve, and that the construct of loving presence is being examined and clarified within the organization. The concept of *authentic self* as a component of loving presence is one of these more recent developments.

And last, an important fact related to this study is that at the time I began my research I had been a yoga teacher for 10 years and a Phoenix Rising yoga therapist for one year. The perspective I brought to this study was, therefore, the perspective of an experienced yoga teacher and a new yoga therapist. This is important to remember because it is reasonable to question how my personal values and beliefs may have influenced my findings, given that I was not an impartial bystander.

When it was originally suggested to me that I consider a study related to yoga for my doctoral research, I resisted the idea. I believed it would be too difficult to undertake a piece of research that was out of the ordinary --

particularly since it was a field I was so closely involved in. As well, I felt the concepts and language of yoga would be very difficult to articulate. I feared that if I undertook a conceptually difficult study, on the fringe of traditional educational concerns, I would face an uphill battle to establish my legitimacy in the education research community.

After thinking about the possibility of designing a study related to yoga, I decided to do so for a particular reason. Parallel to the academic requirements of the dissertation I attached my own personal goal: To explore how my love of scholarship and my love of yoga might combine in useful professional and ways. I therefore undertook this study of PR yoga therapist training despite my close affiliation with yoga - not because of these ties.

Yet it is valid to ask if my background and experience have biased the conduct of my study and my study findings. I believe that all research is undertaken out of the interests and perceptions of the scientist. To guard against the undue influence of my personal values and beliefs I followed qualitative research guidelines, which I have described in Chapter 2. While this topic was of interest to me, I chose to look at it from the perspective of those inside the training program. My goal was to record the voices and actions of these insiders, as accurately as possible.

In the narrowing and focusing of my study many

interesting and fruitful questions could not be explored. My focus on loving presence grew out of the frequent mention of loving presence that I found in my data. But my field and interview notes also include the candid observations and comments of informants regarding areas of the program that could be improved. While my goal has been to use the voices and actions of yoga therapist trainers to describe one principle of this work, loving presence, future studies of yoga therapist training programs may unfold as useful evaluations of therapist training programs.

A General Problem

I believe that my study of this unique training program is, more generally speaking, a response to the call to reconsider assumptions embedded in the development and conduct of professional education programs. Professional standards, those rules of conduct by which a profession both defines itself and regulates the behaviors of its members, are transmitted via professional training programs. When dissatisfaction with professional conduct arises, as is increasingly the case, both the public and the professional community may question the professional standards that shape conduct and the professional education programs that prepare practitioners.

Schon (1987) has called the loss of faith in professional competence and education a "crisis of confidence." Questions that arise during such crises may

include:

- What are the particular standards of a profession, and why are these central?
- How are these professional standards operationalized by practitioners?
- What professional training goals and strategies are necessary to develop and sustain professional conduct in line with such standards?

Schon has proposed that the call to re-think professional standards and the conduct of professional training comes in part from dissatisfaction with current models and assumptions of professional education. He argues that professional standards and education programs have developed based upon a model of technical rationality that does not adequately deal with uncertainty in the real world (Schon, 1987, p. 3).

Chapter Organization

Thus, my research questions flowed out of a wider concern with professional education and professional standards. In the first section of this chapter I offer definitions of profession and professional education, and consider issues in professional education that may be related to my study. In the second section of this chapter I describe the evolution of study goals and research questions, followed by a description of the research setting and the study design.

NEW VISIONS OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND EDUCATION

Technical rationality is an epistemology of practice derived from positivist philosophy, built into the very foundations of the modern research university (Shils, 1978). ... Rigorous professional practitioners solve well-formed instrumental problems by applying theory and technique derived from systematic, preferably scientific knowledge. Medicine, law, and business - Nathan Glazer's 'major professions' (Glazer, 1974) - figure in this view as exemplars of professional practice.

(Schon, 1987, p.3)

Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapists and Authentic Identity

My study evolved over time to a focus on the training of yoga therapists in a professional standard that was named loving presence by those inside the profession and training program. During the period of time after I left the field and was analyzing data, and writing and rewriting the dissertation, I talked again with key individuals inside the training program about the principle of loving presence. I asked them whether I was accurate in my understanding of loving presence, and to talk with me specifically about training goals and methods related to this essential professional standard.

During these June 1995 conversations with an experienced trainer and training developer, she used "authentic self" as alternative language to the phrase "loving presence." I began to think about the relationship of the construct of loving presence as a professional standard to the construct of professional authenticity as a

professional standard. More generally, I began to wonder how these conceptions of the professional could contribute to new ways of thinking about professional standards and professional education, to the extent that these ideas were not already present.

As a prelude to considering how the findings of my study may suggest new ways of conceptualizing, designing, and delivering professional education programs--particularly in the helping professions--the next section provides some background definitions and introduces some current issues in professional education and development.

Defining Profession and Professional

The concept of profession has been defined and described in a number of ways, with much of the discussion of the concept found in the field of sociology. Jarvis (1983) notes that four words, related to the concept of profession, are used by different writers: profession, professionalisation, professional, and professionalism.

Jarvis suggests that profession and professionalisation are frequently used in relation to an occupation, while professional and professionalism are used in relation to the practitioner. Looking at the meaning of each of these terms helps to clarify the historical use of the concept of profession.

Several common uses of the word "profession" illustrate differences and similarities in how the concept is used.

Sometimes the word is used to refer to the characteristics of a certain class of occupations, while other times it is used to describe the role of a class of occupations in society. The common theme across definitions of profession is the reference to a profession's specialized knowledge or learning. For example, profession has been defined as:

1. an occupation based on specialized intellectual study and training, the purpose of which is to supply skilled service or advice to others for a definite fee or salary (Carr-Saunders, 1928);
2. a vocation whose practice is founded upon an understanding of a theoretical structure of some department of learning or science (Cogan, 1953, p. 49);
3. a professional group that controls a body of expert knowledge which is applied to special tasks (Elliot, 1972, p. 11).

For the purpose of this study, the following definition of profession was adopted. A profession is an "occupation which seeks in some ways both the mastery of an identifiable body of knowledge and the control of its application in practice" (Jarvis, 1983, p. 22).

The term "professionalisation" is the dynamic counterpart of the noun "profession." It refers to the process engaged in by people within an occupation as they develop the mastery of an identifiable body of knowledge and the control of its application in practice. Professionalisation has been used by a number of writers to describe stages that occupations aspiring to the label of profession pass through.

Wilensky (1964) suggested that the process of professionalisation requires changes in the structure of the occupation to include the following:

1. Doing full-time that which needs doing;
2. Establishing a training school which, if not at the outset, later seeks to integrate with universities;
3. Forming a professional association which seeks:
 - a) self-conscious definition of the core tasks of the occupation;
 - b) a cosmopolitan perspective to the practice of the occupation; and
 - c) to compete with neighboring occupations in order to establish the area of exclusive competence.
4. Seeking legal support for the protection of the job territory and to publish a code of ethics to indicate the commitment of the practitioner. This results in control of licensing and certification;
5. Publishing a formal code of ethics, eliminating the unqualified, and reducing internal competition while assuring the public that the profession will serve its needs.

The word "professional" is commonly used: a) to describe someone who is not an amateur, or b) to refer to someone who practices a profession and is therefore an expert in that field. What these common definitions of professional do not include is reference to ongoing learning, or an over-time commitment to stay abreast of one's field, as a component of expertise. Someone who practices a profession is not automatically a master of "whatever branch of learning the profession claims to

control" (Jarvis, p. 27) without such commitment. For this reason I have adopted the following definition of a professional: Someone who practices a profession and maintains a long-term commitment to whatever branch of learning the profession claims to control.

The concept of professionalism has both an ideological and a proficiency component, although the historical use of the word has often emphasized the ideological piece (Jarvis, 1983). For example, professionalism has been frequently defined as "commitment to professional ideals and career ... expressed in attitudes, ideas and beliefs" (Freidson, 1970, p. 151) and commitment "to a particular occupation's view of correct knowledge and ethicality" (p. 153).

Certain problems have resulted from this over-emphasis on professional peers as the significant reference group and the exclusion of the client or other occupations as valid sources of knowledge and ethical conduct. For example the "crisis of confidence" in professionalism, of which Schon speaks, appears to be partially the result of exclusive reliance on correct knowledge and practice as defined within the profession, regardless of inadequate problem solutions.

But there is another piece to professionalism that is not ideological and that connects with the definition of professional that I have adopted. Professionalism also relates to the current level of proficiency of the practitioner and to the provision of effective service to his/her client. As mentioned in the above definition of

professional, professionalism requires an attitude of recognition toward recent developments in knowledge and practice in the profession, and a commitment to remain a lifelong learner.

Defining Education, Andragogy & Training

Traditionally the word "education" has been associated with childhood and the Latin root word "educare," meaning to train or bring up a child. However, the etymology of education can also be traced to the Latin root "educere," meaning to draw out (Jarvis, 1983). The first definition of education evokes an image of action coming from outside the learner, intended to mold, guide or pass on an external body of knowledge. The second meaning elicits a different image: the sense of focusing on the learner's innate capacity, a respect for the student's prior experience and humanity, and an intention to support and encourage its expression.

In my study of PR yoga therapist training I was referred by its founder to a particular theory of education, andragogy, as a background set of assumptions for understanding how the training program had been developed. The theory of andragogy initially arose in response to the desire to distinguish the education of children from the education of adults (Knowles, 1980), though more recently the theory has moved toward a common set of beliefs about conditions that promote education regardless of age. The tenets of andragogy include:

1. The self-concept. The adult self-concept requires that they be perceived by others as self-directing. When they find themselves in a position where this is not possible, a tension is created between that situation and the self-concept of the learners.
2. Experience. Adults bring to their learning the wide resources of their own experience, and if that experience is devalued in the learning situation, the learners feel that it is not merely their experience but themselves who are being rejected.
3. Readiness to learn. Adults are ready to learn those things that they perceive to be relevant to their situation.
4. Orientation to learning. Adults have a problem-centered orientation to learning.

Knowles, 1980, p. 55-59

The theory of andragogy and the second definition of education have implications for the development and conduct of professional education. In contrast to a traditional and stereotypical image of the teacher as one who fills the empty cup of the student, or in the words of Freire (1972, p.46), one who "bestows knowledge upon those whom they consider to know nothing," the interdependence of teacher and learner is emphasized. In education research, the focus on studying teacher behaviors as they affect student achievement (i.e., process-product studies) reflects some of these uni-directional assumptions about learning.

The concept of "training" has historically been associated with the learning of mindless psycho-motor skills, and was often considered a lower status process than education. Training was viewed as a learning event that did not include the "body of professional knowledge" which

becomes available with the professionalisation of the occupation. Jarvis notes that "as occupations have professionalised, they have tended to substitute the term 'education' for 'training'" (1983, p.86).

However, modern training methods are more akin to the teaching found in educational settings, where the trainer is aware of the individuality of the learner, and respects his or her humanity. For the purpose of my study I have defined training as, "A process that uses a body of professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the specific accomplishment of professional competence in an applied field, while maintaining awareness of the learner's individuality and humanity."

New Visions of Professional Standards and Education

How will professional standards be defined in the 21st century, and what will professional education look like? Changing definitions and standards of professionalism may come, in part, as a result of a "crisis of confidence" in professional practice, as mentioned earlier (Schon, 1987). From this perspective, the crisis of confidence in professional knowledge and in the education programs that prepare professionals, has resulted from over-reliance on a linear problem-solution model of professional action.

Schon argues that professional standards and professional education have often been defined in relation to the assumptions of "technical rationality" that are at

the heart of the modern research university. However, real world situations encountered by professionals often do not present themselves as the well-formed instrumental problems assumed in this model. Professionals who operate from assumptions of technical rationality have no choice but to take the "messy, indeterminate situations" they are presented with and construct a problem consistent with the theory and techniques of their framework (p.4). Much non-conforming information may be lost or ignored, resulting in ineffective--or damaging--problem solutions.

While this professional approach may be more or less effective depending on the amount of uncertainty in the situation, it is increasingly likely to break down as the individual encounters unique situations or conflicts of value--situations where there are no well formed instrumental cases. These "indeterminate zones of practice --uncertainty, uniqueness, and value conflict--escape the canons of technical rationality" (Schon, p.6) and prompt new conceptualizations of professional knowledge and education.

Authentic Professional Practice. Thus, an alternative vision of professional excellence, one not grounded in the assumptions of technical rationality, is put forth by Schon. He notes that professionals who exemplify excellence in a field frequently do not differ from their professional colleagues because they possess "more knowledge." Excellence is frequently defined, in this perspective, as professional "wisdom," "intuition," and "artistry" (p. 13).

Schon argues for professional education programs to legitimize these elements of professional practice (pp. 12-13). In particular he proposes professional education conditions similar to those found in studios and conservatories:

Freedom to learn by doing in a setting relatively low in risk, with access to coaches who initiate students into the 'traditions of the calling' and help them, by 'the right kind of telling,' to see on their own behalf and in their own way what they need most to see.
(p.17)

The capacity to "see on their own behalf, in their own way, what they most need to see" emphasizes a vision of professionals who are empowered to legitimize their own experience and act from their own knowing. It implies, I believe, a professional meta-standard that focuses on the personal-professional interface.

Teachers and Authenticity. Grimmett & Neufeld (1994) introduce the notion of authenticity in their discussion of teacher development and the struggle for professional identity. While they are writing specifically about the process of teacher professional development and not about professional standards, I believe they imply a professional meta-standard that focuses on the personal-professional interface and amplifies the legitimacy of learning from one's own experience.

They acknowledge "a struggle for authenticity" (p.4) as a significant factor in teacher professionalism:

It is a struggle over assigned meaning, a struggle over discourse as the expression of both form and content, a struggle over interpretation of experience, and a struggle over "self."

... It is a struggle that makes possible new knowledge that expands beyond individual experience and hence redefines our identities and the real possibilities we see in the daily conditions of our lives. ... It is the struggle through which new knowledge, identities, and possibilities are introduced that may lead to the alteration simultaneously of circumstances and selves.
(Lewis & Simon, 1986, p.469)

STUDY OF PHOENIX RISING YOGA THERAPIST TRAINING

We ought, then, to study the experience of learning by doing and the artistry of good coaching. We should base our study on the working assumption that both processes are intelligent and - within limits to be discovered - intelligible. And we ought to search for examples wherever we can find them - in the dual curricula of the schools, the apprenticeships and practicums that aspiring practitioners find or create for themselves, and the deviant traditions of studio and conservatory.

(Schon, 1987, p.17)

The call to consider professional knowledge and education in new ways, particularly Schon's concept of professional artistry and Grimmett and Neufeld's discussion of authentic professional identity, serves as the background for my study of the Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapist Training Program (PR yoga therapist training).

I believe that study findings may contribute to conversations in education, particularly professional education, concerned with the issue of professional authenticity and the training of wise, talented, and intuitive practitioners. In Chapters 4 and 5 I describe the

professional preparation of yoga therapists and the central role of experiential learning, coaching, and mentoring during training. As mentioned earlier, PR therapist training was designed with the principles of andragogy in mind. The training program builds on the student's readiness to learn that which is related to their immediate and previous experience and which is problem centered.

Study Goals

This research began as a naturalistic, descriptive study of PR therapist training. My original general study goal was twofold: To describe PR yoga therapy and to describe the training program that prepared PR yoga therapists, using the words and actions of those who do this work and who train others to do it. Because this is a fairly new field and training program, my early conceptualization of this study was to explore the meaning of professionalism in this particular setting and then to look at how this particular profession teaches people its professional standards.

As I defined it earlier in this chapter, professionalism has historically had both an ideological and proficiency component. I believe that the professional standard of loving presence encompasses a commitment to this occupation's view of correct knowledge and ethicality. However I do not believe that it is a simple matter to articulate the knowledge and ethics of loving presence, as I

discuss in Chapter 3 and Chapter 6. To establish a minimum level and type of proficiency in the practice of loving presence is also challenging. These difficulties stem, in part I believe, from the synthesis of world views and conceptual frameworks that have given birth to the construct of loving presence.

While not a specific study goal, the challenge of clearly defining loving presence professionalism as knowledge, ethics, and proficiency is a re-occurring theme.

Original Study Questions

Three broad categories of research questions and multiple sub-questions provided a framework for my observations and conversations over the early months of data collection and analysis. These questions were useful starting points as I entered the field; they provided a loosely held perceptual agenda, enabling me to begin to look systematically across the words and actions of those who know this work well.

Original General and Specific Research Questions

1. How is professionalism defined in PR yoga therapy?
 - A. What are examples of good work in this tradition?
 - B. What does the exemplary PR yoga therapy session look like and what does the therapist do? What therapist attitudes, beliefs and values can we assume based on their actions?
 - C. Are there implicit and explicit rules of professional conduct?

- D. What actions, attitudes, beliefs and values are considered to be errors in PR yoga therapy? Are these errors of different types? Are some errors acceptable while other errors are not acceptable?
- 2. How is professionalism taught to individuals in the PR yoga therapist training program?
 - A. What are the general and specific teaching and learning goals and strategies used in the training program?
 - B. Are there other methods for the transmission of the rules of professional conduct that have been observed? Are standards codified? Do theories exist and if so, how are they communicated?
 - C. How does the training process incorporate error making? How are trainees taught to distinguish between types of errors?
 - D. How are trainees evaluated during training?
 - E. Is continuing education a component of the certification process?
 - 3. Is PR therapist certification ever revoked, and under what conditions does this or might this occur?

Evolved Study Goal

The original study goal, to describe the profession of Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy and the teaching of professional standards in the therapist training program, evolved over time to a particular focus on something people inside the training program called loving presence. While I did not know how to define loving presence initially, its reappearance in my observational and interview notes attracted my attention. As I paid attention to what trainers were saying about loving presence I began to watch

their actions, and eventually to search their documents, for additional evidence of loving presence.

Thus, the voices and actions of trainers directed my attention back to data I had already collected, to a search of my field and interview notes for the meaning of "loving presence" and its role in the training program. I began to believe that the construct of loving presence was a guiding principle for the professional conduct of PR yoga therapy and for the professional training of therapists. My study goal narrowed to a focus on this particular professional standard. I wanted to know what those inside the training program said loving presence was, what it looked like to them, and how they trained others to be a loving presence.

Final Set of Study Questions

A second set of research questions emerged from the narrowed study focus on loving presence.

Focused General and Specific Research Questions

1. How is loving presence defined in PR yoga therapy?
 - A. What do experienced practitioners and therapist trainers say about loving presence?
 - B. When the principle of loving presence is in operation, what does the yoga therapist do?
 - C. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes appear to be attributes of loving presence?
2. How is the principle of loving presence taught to students in the yoga therapist training program?
 - A. What are the training goals related to loving presence?

B. What are the training strategies related to loving presence?

Summary of Study Goals. What began as a broad study of professionalism in a specific context evolved into a study of a particular professional construct known as loving presence. This evolution occurred as the natural outcome of a study design and methodology that value the perceptions, language, and socially constructed meanings of people inside the actual setting of interest. In this case, loving presence was consistently pointed to as central to professional PR yoga therapy by those who train individuals to be PR yoga therapists.

Research Setting

Phoenix Rising yoga therapist training is a formal training program developed to teach individuals how to assist others (i.e., clients) with classical yoga postures in order to facilitate greater client self-awareness, body-mind unity, and personal freedom. Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy evolved, in part, from the Kripalu Yoga approach of combining meditation techniques with the long holding of hatha yoga postures, though Phoenix Rising was itself born of the personal experience of its founders.

In 1987 the founders of PR yoga therapy began a program to train others to work with clients as they had been doing effectively for several years. At the time of my study the

original training program had developed to include several full time training staff and a multi-part training program and curriculum. There are two distinct phases of training: eight days of initial residential training (i.e., Level 1 and 2), and a six-month home-study practicum that includes a six-day residential midterm exam and numerous requirements (i.e., Level 3). There are currently over 300 certified Phoenix Rising yoga therapists internationally.

As mentioned earlier, I collected the primary data for this study from November, 1993 through mid-summer of 1994. In May and June of 1995 I had several follow-up phone conversations with key informants to obtain their feedback on my study findings. The substance of these conversations indicated that in the year since I had left the field training staff and developers had begun to discuss the construct of loving presence and to consider how to more effectively communicate and teach it.

Yoga Context. PRYTherapy is an outgrowth of adapting and applying ancient yoga teachings to the conditions of modern western life. The word "yoga" is typically translated to mean "union," or non-duality. While it is most frequently thought of as a type of exercise in the United States, yoga is actually an ancient system that includes many different types of practices, all designed to lead the practitioner to an experience of non-duality or transcendent consciousness.

The various forms of yoga practice are often described

as different paths leading toward the same ultimate goal of experiencing union. These types of yoga practice include:

- hatha yoga (purifying and strengthening the physical body through physical practices called asanas--or postures, and through breathing exercises);
- raja yoga (steadying and quieting the mind and developing the capacity for non-attached observation via disciplined concentration and meditation practices);
- karma yoga (compassionate, non-attached service to others undertaken as an act of coming closer to God);
- bhakti yoga (devotional practices and rituals);
- jnana yoga (study and disciplined use of mind to realize non-duality).

PR yoga therapy has adapted and combined several of these yoga traditions in an approach suited to the conditions of modern life. As one of the founders stated:

We have learned from the yogis' practice of yoga for over 6,000 years. And what we have learned in the last 50 to 100 years are valid additions to the practice to yoga. I don't believe, for example, that the way yoga was practiced in India for thousands of years is necessarily appropriate to the issues we face today in the modern world and in our transformational opportunities. I think we need to adapt and gear for that.

Basically what I have tried to do is to develop a system or way of working and bringing in all the elements of yoga but doing it in a way that in some ways dispenses of the esoteric and makes it more focused and applicable to a person and what's happening in their life today--but in no way minimizing the sanctity or sacredness or deep spiritual aspects of it.
(Michael Lee, 1995, Unity in Yoga Conference)

As mentioned, one source of influence in the early development of PR yoga therapy was Kripalu Yoga. Kripalu Yoga highlights and combines the "limbs" of classical Ashtang yoga--eight limbed yoga--in language and practices that emphasize certain yoga principles. The eight limbs of Ashtang yoga constitute a framework, or series of steps, for moving toward union or transcendent consciousness, and they are embedded in many yoga approaches.

The eight limbs are:

1. Ethical guidelines in the form of things to avoid;
2. Ethical guidelines in the form of things to practice;
3. Asana--yoga postures;
4. Pranayama--breathing exercises and regulation of life force;
5. Pratyahara--inward focusing of attention;
6. Dharana--concentration;
7. Meditation; and
8. Samadhi--transcendental consciousness.

In Kripalu Yoga the "limbs" are differentiated for instructional purposes, but in this approach there is particular emphasis on the integration of asana, pranayama, pratyahara, and dharana, resulting in an experience of "meditation in motion."

The ethical and moral observances, the first and second limbs of Ashtang yoga, are the core values and principles that guide serious followers of Ashtang and Kripalu Yoga. In Kripalu Yoga each of the ethical/moral observances is understood as having several developmental stages through which the aspirant passes. From a developmental perspective, the moral framework provided by the yamas

(restraints, avoidances) and niyamas (observances, practices) provides guidelines for choice-making in life while also giving yoga aspirants a sense of where their personal progress fits in the system.

The yamas are:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Ahimsa - | non-violence |
| 2. Satya - | truthfulness |
| 3. Asteya - | non-stealing |
| 4. Brahmacharya - | moderation |
| 5. Aparigraha - | non-possiveness |

The niyamas are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| 6. Saucha - | purity |
| 7. Santosha - | contentment |
| 8. Tapas - | austerity |
| 9. Swadhyaya- | spiritual study |
| 10. Ishvara Pranidhana - | surrender to God |

The Role of Compassion. Compassion is a core value in Kripalu Yoga. The name Kripalu, a shortened version of Kripalvanand, is commonly translated as "compassionate one." Kripalvanand is the name of the Indian saint for whom Kripalu Yoga is named, and the longer version of the name is a Sanskrit word that translates as "blissful giver of grace" (Kripalvanand, 1977).

The concept of compassion, clearly very old as indicated by its presence in Sanskrit, is found in many languages. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1993) traces the etymology of "compassion" to the Latin "com" + "pati", which translates as "to bear, suffer." The modern dictionary definition of the word compassion is given as "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with

a desire to alleviate it" (p. 234).

Compassion also plays a primary role in Judaism. The nobility of *rakhmones*, which in Yiddish usage means "pity" or "compassion," lies at the heart of Jewish thought. Rosten (1972) notes that "the writings of the ancient prophets are permeated with appeals for *rachamim*, which is considered a divine attribute... and that God is often called the God of Mercy and Compassion" (p. 153).

Buddhist traditions emphasize the importance of the compassion as well. The 2,500-year-old practice of repeating simple phrases in order to develop the quality of loving kindness in the student, is a type of meditation practice taught to promote opening the compassionate heart (Kornfield, 1993, p.19).

In the Kripalu Yoga tradition compassion is associated with the "bringing of grace," emphasizing--perhaps--a slightly different aspect of this concept than is found in the Latin derivation, "to bear, suffer." In particular the notion of shouldering another's pain seems absent, replaced by a proactive posture of grace.

In yoga traditions, as in other spiritual practices, the concept of grace is sometimes given as an explanation of the circumstances that both permit and explain an experience of union, or transcendent consciousness. So it seems that compassion in this setting does not necessarily translate as seeking to alleviate suffering, as much as it may translate to being fully present to another's experience as an

experience of union--or grace--for both parties.

Summarizing this discussion of the concept of compassion, PR yoga therapy has evolved from a yoga approach that recognizes the capacity for compassion as a capacity for experiencing and extending non-duality or union. The concept of grace is interwoven with the concept of compassion in this tradition.

Naturalistic Study Design

Naturalism proposes that, as far as possible, the social world should be studied in its 'natural' state, undisturbed by the researcher.

Furthermore, the research must be carried out in ways that are sensitive to the nature of the setting. A key element of naturalism is the demand that the social researcher adopt an attitude of 'respect' or 'appreciation' toward the social world.

(Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983, p. 6)

As described in the previous section, yoga and yoga therapy developed out of a system of values, beliefs, and practices that are identified with another culture. This system developed in India and surrounding regions four to six thousand years ago. While the yoga therapist training program I studied is geographically located in the United States, it is grounded in attitudes, beliefs, practices, and principles that are part of an ancient, non-western, philosophical tradition.

In order to understand the professional standards embedded in this tradition, and to learn how therapists were

trained, it was particularly important to study the training program in its natural setting. My goal was to record accurately and communicate the goals and methods of training, and in order to do this I wanted to observe a training program in action. I wanted to record the words and actions of trainers as they went about the business of training therapists.

My primary data collection methods were participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and review of training materials and reports. I also collected demographic information on participants, mentors, and staff via a mailed survey. Over the course of nine months of data collection I was a participant observer in the eight-day Level 1 and 2 training program, and I served as the mentor of four students during the Level 3 certification training program. In Chapter 2 I describe my immersion in the training program in greater detail, and I also describe a theoretic framework for naturalism and qualitative research methods.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND ORGANIZATION OF DISSERTATION

In this chapter I provided an overview of the evolution of my study and study goals, and I have placed the research in a wider educational context that acknowledges teachers' struggles for authenticity. I also described the training program I studied and the yoga context, including the prominence of the concepts of compassion and grace in this

tradition.

In Chapter 2 I describe symbolic interactionism as a useful theoretic framework for naturalistic research generally and this study in particular. I also describe the study setting in greater detail and include demographic information on one student cohort. Chapter 2 concludes with a detailed description of the qualitative data collection and analysis methods I used.

In Chapter 3 I describe PRYTherapy by providing a composite description of a complete therapy session and giving examples of how the work may be incorrectly delivered. I define the construct of loving presence as conscious awareness, an attitude of non-attachment, and self-knowledge.

In Chapter 4 I describe the basic content and approach of the PR yoga therapist Level 1 and 2 training program and emphasize how conscious awareness, non-attachment, and self-knowledge are fostered in the training program.

In Chapter 5 I describe the six-month practicum phase of yoga therapist training and provide a micro-analysis of one mentor's comments to her student as an example of how written coaching occurs during Level 3 training.

In Chapter 6 I summarize these findings, discuss some implications of my findings for educational psychology, and suggest possible future research agendas.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY AND METHOD

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I described the evolution of my study goal from an initial general interest in Phoenix Rising (PR) Yoga Therapy professional standards and training, to a particular interest in how a professional standard known as loving presence is taught to students. Recalling my research questions, they are:

1. How is loving presence defined in PR yoga therapy?
 - A. What do experienced practitioners and therapist trainers say about loving presence?
 - B. When the principle of loving presence is in operation, what does the yoga therapist do?
 - C. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes appear to be attributes of loving presence?
2. How is the principle of loving presence taught to students in the PR yoga therapist training program?
 - A. What are the training goals related to loving presence?
 - B. What are the training strategies related to loving presence?

Chapter Overview and Organization

In this chapter I provide a theoretical framework and rationale for the naturalistic study of PR yoga therapist training I have conducted. I also establish criteria for the conduct of qualitative research, and illustrate my use of these standards to collect and analyze data on the PR yoga therapist training program.

Specifically, in the first section of this chapter I describe two ways that symbolic interaction is a useful framework for this study. Second I describe criteria for the collection and analysis of qualitative data as these standards have been described by Erickson (1986). In the third section of the chapter I provide illustrations of how I used Erickson's guidelines in my study of PR yoga therapist training during the a) Level 1 and 2 program, and b) Level 3 program.

THEORY

Many traditions have argued that the study of human action must take into account the influence of perception, socially derived meaning, and individual interpretation. Hammersley & Atkinson (1983) comment on the wide range of philosophical, sociological, and psychological influences that have contributed to the use of naturalistic study designs and qualitative research methods developed in order to incorporate these perspectives in social science research.

As one of these traditions, symbolic interactionism is frequently viewed as a theoretical perspective supportive of naturalism and interpretive research methods. During its development at the University of Chicago in the early part of this century, what is now called symbolic interactionism existed as an oral tradition in the classroom of George Herbert Mead. While Mead was not the only source of the ideas that underlie symbolic interactionism--others being William James, Charles Cooley, John Dewey, and I.A. Thomas--Mead is considered the most influential early proponent and contributor to symbolic interaction theory (Littlejohn, 1983, p. 46).

Mead and other early symbolic interactionists brought attention to the role of shared symbol systems in the development of society. In addition to this focus, Mead furthered Cooley's concept of the "looking glass self" with his discussion of the "I" and "me" components of the self. In Mead's conceptualization the "I" is the active self, the actor who initiates the subject in a subject-object world. The "me" in Mead's conceptualization is the part of the self that can be the object of one's own attention; that is, the "I" perceives the "me." Communication theorists Woelfel and Fink (1980) write:

In Cooley's model, the self is viewed (through the reaction of the other) as an object of itself which may be defined as is any other object. The self as object Mead calls the "me."

The self has an important duality in contemporary social psychological theory, since it can be at once the object of attention and the attender. (Woelfel & Fink, p.122)

Woelfel notes that the I-me duality embedded in Mead's early work has likely contributed to the difficulty of precisely defining the self in this century, even though self-concept plays a central role in social psychology.

The term 'symbolic interactionism' was coined by one of Mead's foremost students, Herbert Blumer, though never used by Mead. Blumer is well known for his focus on meaning as a product of social life, and on the role of individual interpretation in the making and taking of meaning. Blumer began his writing on symbolic interactionism with three premises:

1. Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.
2. The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows.
3. These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters.
(1969, p. 1)

Blumer and his students have been strong proponents of naturalism and qualitative research methodologies that focus on the interaction of individuals. Embedded in Blumer's conception of the individual and interaction is an active image of human beings--the "I" component of the self that Mead proposed. This active or empowered self is described

by Charon (1979):

In focusing on the interaction itself as the unit of study, the symbolic interactionist creates a more active image of the human being and rejects the image of the passive, determined organism. Individuals interact; societies are made up of interacting individuals.

People are constantly undergoing change in interaction and society is changing through interaction. Interaction implies human beings acting in relation to each other, taking each other into account, acting, perceiving, interpreting, acting again. Hence, a more dynamic and active human being emerges, rather than an actor merely responding to others. (p. 23)

However, not all symbolic interactionists have extended the early thinking of Mead and his colleagues with the same set of methodological preferences that Blumer is known for. Some symbolic interactionists have incorporated the concepts of "me," or self-as-object, and the "I," or active self, in research agendas that use quantitative methods--for example, Manfred Kuhn and his students. Kuhn is credited with developing the "twenty-statements" self-attitude test, based upon the rationale that:

If, as we suppose, human behavior is organized and directed, and if, as we further suppose, the organization and direction are supplied by the individual's attitudes toward himself, it ought to be of crucial significance to social psychology to be able to identify and measure self-attitudes. (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954, p.68)

Whereas Blumer is known as a strong critic of trends in the social sciences to operationalize symbolic interaction concepts, preferring to focus on description and issues of

meaning, Kuhn's studies have taken symbolic interactionist thinking in the direction of quantification and micro analysis.

In the field of communication, Woelfel's Galileo Theory (Woelfel & Fink, 1980) and psychometric research draw upon the "I"/"me" duality proposed by Mead in order to elaborate a dynamic model of the self. At the center of Woelfel's precision model of the communication process is a definition of the self "as the set of interrelationships among a set of objects as described by their interpoint distances in cognitive space" (p.145). In this instance symbolic interaction theory has guided a very precise, mathematical model of communication process and self definition which uses a metric, multi-dimensional scaling procedure and mathematical algorithms to map aggregate attitudes.

I have mentioned the role of symbolic interaction theory in quantitative research programs for two reasons. First, I believe in the value and utility of both qualitative and quantitative methods, depending upon the particular research goal. And second, I have mentioned these research programs to illustrate possible (quantitative) approaches to the further study of loving presence that would build on the study I have conducted while remaining consistent with symbolic interaction theory.

Self-Presencing

Up to this point I have used the theory of symbolic interaction to justify my research approach and methodology. A second reason for adopting this framework is that it may provide a conceptual foundation to further define and understand the construct of loving presence.

In Chapters 3 and 4 I provide evidence that loving presence is a professional standard in PR yoga therapy and that therapists are taught loving presence by being taught to become a loving presence to themselves. The "I"/"me" conception of self in symbolic interactionism may offer an explanation as to how a student is able to take themselves as an object in their perceptual field, how they increase their capacity to notice their immediate experience.

The active "I" and the object "me" may be useful conceptual distinctions to make to explain one of the first steps--learning to notice--that is necessary for becoming a loving self-presence. In order to notice one's immediate feelings and sensations, an individual must be able to take their own experience and feelings as objects in their perceptual field. Implied in the process of self-noticing is the separation of the "I" and "me" parts of the self that symbolic interactionism has delineated. For example, I can only notice feelings (the "me") I am having if I can perceive of these feelings as separate from a part of the self that notices (the "I").

In order to learn to be a loving presence to myself I

must be able to notice not only the immediate physical sensation that I experience (in a yoga pose or in life), but I need to be able to notice the socially conditioned meanings that I attach to the physical feeling. In yoga therapy the goal is to become aware of life patterns in order to be able to choose other courses of action if one desires. This goal of greater freedom in life can only be attained if I can perceive the patterned meanings and responses of my social conditioning. Symbolic interactionism helps to explain how social meaning perspectives are internalized in the dynamics of self definition.

While symbolic interaction theory may help explain, through the concepts of "I" and "me", how the dynamic of self-noticing works, it does not suffice as a total theory of loving presence. Symbolic interactionism developed as a theory of social psychology in a western society and it is grounded in western philosophical traditions. It may provide a starting point to consider how society and language influences self-perception but I have not found it adequate to completely explain what loving presence--or loving self-presence--is.

Over the course of this study of PR yoga therapist training, and particularly training practitioners to be a loving presence, I believe that I have only begun a much longer process of finding conceptual language, and philosophical foundations, to explain loving presence. In

the Chapter 6 I return to this topic when I discuss implications of my study findings for theory and practice in educational psychology.

Summary

It was appropriate to design a naturalistic study of PR yoga therapist training, and to use qualitative data collection and analysis methods, because my goal has been to describe a training program from the perspective of those who deliver it. The theory and practice of loving presence, and related training goals and methods, were most visible by studying the program in its natural setting. Symbolic interaction provides a theoretic framework that endorses the search for local meaning-perspectives, language, and socially prescribed actions. It also provides a conceptual framework to help understand how being a loving presence to oneself may be possible. Further, symbolic interaction is a multi-faceted framework and lends itself to both qualitative and quantitative research, should either type of research approach seem most appropriate.

METHOD: CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

A number of researchers have described the characteristics and criteria for qualitative research. I have been most influenced by Bogdan and Biklen (1982), Erickson (1986), Firestone (1993), Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), Peacock (1989) and Sanjek (1990). In this section

of the chapter I describe the guidelines for qualitative research put forth by Erickson. In the first part of this section I describe guidelines related to four aspects of qualitative data collection; in the next part I describe Erickson's criteria for the analysis of qualitative data and for writing field reports. In the third section of this chapter I describe my study of PR yoga therapist training in relation to these guidelines, noting the challenges and concerns I experienced.

Data Collection Guidelines

When we consider fieldwork as a process of deliberate inquiry in a setting we can see the participant observer's conduct of data collection as progressive problem solving, in which issues of sampling, hypothesis generation, and hypothesis testing go hand in hand. Fieldworkers' daily presence in the setting is guided by deliberate decisions about sampling and by intuitive reactions as well. (Erickson, 1986, p. 140)

Erickson's guidelines for qualitative data collection include four categories of qualitative research activities:

- site entry and research ethics,
- the development of a collaborative relationship with focal informants,
- data collection as a process of inquiry, and
- data collection as a process of problem solving.

Issues of Site Entry and of Research Ethics. Proper negotiation of entry in the field setting is an important first step in qualitative research in order to avoid later

problems with data quality and research ethics. While the researcher is interested "in the broadest possible kinds and amounts of access" (p. 141), this may or may not be in the best interest of those in the research setting. Two basic principles apply to ethical site entry:

1. informing focal research subjects of the research purpose and activities, and any burden or risks they may experience; and
2. protecting research subjects, as much as possible, from risks.

Researchers who work in the field need to be sensitive to any psychological or social harm to study participants that may exist, and need to inform participants of any risks that may exist. For example, the researcher should have an understanding of organizations, and anticipate in advance the range of different kinds of harm people might experience as a result of study participation.

Aside from the ethical responsibility of the researcher, their goal is to minimize the "faking, deception, and passive resistance" (p. 142) that can result when focal informants fear that the study data will be used to evaluate them in some way. For all of these reasons, negotiation of site entry is a complex process of building rapport and trust that begins with the first contact made with a possible site. Without mutual trust the researcher risks lack of cooperation among study participants or distorted information.

Developing a Collaborative Relationship. The issue of trust is also central to the development of a collaborative relationship with focal informants. One barrier to trust may be a belief on the part of study participants that the research is intended to evaluate them in some way. To counter this misconception, the researcher may need to explain the purpose of the study multiple times to the same individuals and should take care to explain the study purpose to each new participant who becomes involved. Included in this standard explanation should be the procedures that have been taken to maximize confidentiality and minimize risk. A potentially powerful way to build trust is for the researcher and the focal informants to jointly develop research questions and collect the data.

Data Collection as an Inquiry Process. Data collection in fieldwork begins at a comprehensive level, seeking to observe and interview across the levels of the system of interest. While "preconceptions and guiding questions are present from the outset the researcher does not presume to know where these initial questions will lead" (p.143). The researcher is intentional about spending time in a wide variety of places, at different times, to maximize the variation of the initial data collected. Over time the focus narrows as the research questions and grounded hypotheses become more specific.

Data Collection as Problem Solving. It is not possible for the researcher to comprehend immediately the complex

social world she observes during fieldwork. In order to deal with this challenge she positions herself in the field setting at multiple and different times and locations, and intentionally alters the focus of her analytic attention based upon apparent patterns.

As part of this process of coming to understand the social world she views, during data collection in qualitative studies the researcher is simultaneously re-reading fieldnotes and refining her research focus. An important activity in this multi-state process is writing fieldnotes in expanded form. This reflective process stimulates recall, enables the researcher to add detail, and importantly stimulates analytic induction. The researcher then re-enters the field setting with loosely held hypotheses about what is occurring, and alters her focus to specifically attend to the meanings she has begun to perceive.

The problem of premature typification, or leaping to conclusions inductively early in the fieldwork and focusing subsequently on data that confirm the induced theory, necessitates deliberate searches for disconfirming evidence in the form of discrepant cases. Audio or audiovisual recordings can be useful to this end. Bias in sampling and observation are corrected for in fieldwork through the procedural decisions the researcher makes, particularly:

1. *the decisions the observer makes about where to be in space and in time in the field setting, and*

2. *the decisions the observer makes about the foci of their attention in any one occasion of observation. The former decisions affect the overall sampling of events that the participant observer makes. The latter decisions affect the completeness and analytic adequacy of observations made cumulatively across a set of trials.*
(Erickson, 1986, p.144)

Data Analysis and Reporting Guidelines

I also followed the guidelines suggested by Erickson (1986) for the qualitative analysis of study data and the preparation of field study reports. I have collapsed the components of data analysis and reporting he describes into the following five categories:

1. Empirical assertions
2. Particular description
 - analytic narrative vignettes
 - quotes from fieldnotes
 - quotes from interviews
3. General description
 - synoptic data reports (maps, frequency tables, figures)
4. Interpretive commentary
 - introducing and following particular description
 - as theoretical discussion
 - as change in author's point of view
5. Natural history of inquiry in the study

Empirical Assertions. Empirical assertions are statements made by the researcher about the research setting, based upon reviewing the full set of fieldnotes, interview notes, and site documents. During the assertion forming process the researcher looks for key linkages among

various items of data, linking analogous instances of the same phenomenon and looking for generalizations within the case at hand. Particular description, such as analytic narrative vignettes and quotes, instantiate the assertion-, while general description gives evidence of the relative frequency of the phenomenon.

Along with stating an assertion, the researcher must test the assertion by systematically searching the data corpus again for disconfirming as well as confirming evidence. Should more discrepant evidence be found than supporting evidence, the assertion is not warranted by the data, though it may be reframed and subsequently supported by the evidence.

Disconfirming evidence may appear as discrepant cases , instances where the case would be anticipated to adhere to the pattern but does not. Discrepant cases are particularly noteworthy in qualitative research and are noted for further analysis. Such analysis may be especially useful in uncovering subtleties of meaning-perspectives in the research site.

Particular Description. Three types of particular description are noted by Erickson as useful when writing fieldwork reports: narrative vignettes, direct quotes and quotes from fieldnotes. Narrative vignettes serve rhetorical, analytic, and evidentiary functions. Erickson notes that

both the author and the critical reader should pay close attention to the details of the narrative and to features of its construction. The narrative vignette is based on fieldnotes taken as the events happened and then written up shortly thereafter. The vignette is a more elaborated, literarily polished version of the account found in the fieldnotes. By the time the vignette is written up the author has developed an interpretive perspective, implicitly or explicitly. The way the vignette is written should match the author's interpretive purposes and should communicate that perspective clearly to the reader. (p. 150)

Direct quotes and quotes from fieldnotes are another way to support an assertion with particular description. Quotes are useful to convey the point of view of those who were studied, as well as to show changes in the fieldworkers perspective across time.

General Description. General description is used to demonstrate how typical or generalizable the particular descriptions captured in narrative vignettes or direct quotes are. Its purpose is to show in summary fashion how frequently a particular phenomenon occurred in the data corpus. General descriptive data is reported synoptically, such as in frequency tables.

Interpretive Commentary. Interpretive commentary is perhaps the most difficult challenge for the novice fieldworker because it requires preparing the reader for the analytic interpretation intended by the researchers. Effective interpretive commentary is an advance organizer that leads the reader into a narrative vignette or direct quote and brings them back out, highlighting the points the researcher wishes to make. It is also an important analytic

step for the author whose "reflective awareness" (p. 152) serves both the analytic and writing function.

Natural History of Inquiry. This first person account provides a way to describe the evolution of study goals and research questions over the life of the fieldwork. It is expected that a naturalistic study designed to discover the meaning-perspectives of people inside the research setting will re-shape itself based on its discoveries. As the researcher records her changing interpretive perspective via dated analytic memos written "to the file," this evidence can be combined with other field and interview notes to demonstrate the specific ways in which the changes took place.

METHOD: APPLYING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH GUIDELINES

Data Collection: PR Level 1 and 2 Training

I adopted Erickson's guidelines for qualitative data collection for my study of PR therapist training. To illustrate how these guidelines have been applied I have described data collection, first, by considering site entry and relationship building, and second, by describing inquiry and problem solving processes.

Site Entry and Building Relationships. The primary stipulation the founder of PR yoga therapy made, when I asked if I could observe a Level 1 and 2 training program as part of a study of therapist training, was that nothing could occur as part of the study that would bring up fear in

training participants, or in any way interfere with the program emphasis. The founder described this emphasis as "getting people out of their minds and into direct experience of their bodies."

I explained that my study was designed to collect the words and experiences of those inside the training program through a process of unobtrusive observation, and that I would only record data in situations where individuals involved were aware of my presence and had given their written permission. However he felt that the presence of an outsider, watching people or visibly taking notes, could be a potential serious intrusion in this type of training program.

I was aware of the level of personal disclosure that occurs in this program, and was also concerned about the effect of my presence on students. But I persisted in my explanation that it was the PR yoga therapist training staff that I was interested in watching and talking with, not students. During our conversation it was clear that the founder did understand my study goal and he agreed to my presence at an upcoming Level 1 and 2 training.

After I received the founder's approval, he requested that I talk with the trainer who was to be the Program Director for the training sessions I wanted to attend. In our first phone conversation she was very skeptical about my presence during training, since she felt I could negatively influence participants' feelings of safety in the program.

She explained how important it was for students to feel comfortable in order for them to begin the process of self-exploration that is central to training.

She also wondered aloud about the effect my presence could have on the training staff, mentioning that staff process and professional growth were secondary goals in all training programs. But she agreed to my presence and asked me to meet her in the city where the training was to occur on the day before the program would begin.

Several days later I traveled a number of hours to the training site. When I arrived at the hotel, I found the Program Director, Assistant Director, and a program assistant in the restaurant having lunch. As I joined the group I immediately felt the skepticism about my presence that I had experienced on the phone, from not only the Program Director but also the other two training staff present.

As I tried to explain that my research was a qualitative study to learn from *them* what professional PR yoga therapy was, and how therapists-in-training were taught to do this work, a joke was made about "would I be watching to see how people were dressed or wore their hair?" I left that meeting feeling fear about my ability to carry out my research and annoyance over what I perceived to be their lack of trust.

I later recorded these feelings in my personal reflection journal and realized that I had approached my

entry into the research site assuming that I would be trusted and welcomed. This assumption was based partially on the fact that I knew both the Program Director and Assistant Director, and more importantly, I thought they knew me. But the assumption that I would find easy acceptance in this site was also the result of professional myopia on my part. I had not even considered that training staff might have negative feelings and attitudes about research generally--and little knowledge of the goals of qualitative research in particular.

The outcome of the first face-to-face meeting was an agreement that the best way for trainees to feel safe with my presence, and perhaps staff as well, was to assign me a role in the training. Thus, I was introduced to the training participants on the first day of the program as a member of the staff--who was also conducting a study of PR yoga therapist training--and I was assigned the job of maintaining the tea table. In theory this job was a low demand role, though over the course of the eight-day training program I was increasingly active in supporting student learning in other ways.

My dual role as researcher and member of the PR yoga therapy training team was an important vehicle for finding acceptance and gaining the trust of the training team--but it brought unexpected challenges. My staff status meant that I was expected to attend and authentically participate in the daily staff check-ins and de-briefings.

Staff check-ins are held at least twice a day and are times for training staff to talk about what is happening in the program as well as talk about issues coming up for them personally. End of the day check-ins often last for an hour and may include candid personal sharing as well as frank interactions between staff members. During my eight days of participation a variety of feelings were expressed.

The common practice during staff check-in is for each person to take a turn to talk about what is up for them while the others in the group listen. From the content of these sharings it seemed that norms of trust and honesty guided the interactions. It was also clear that there were differences of opinion on topics related to instructional content and teaching style, and that some other issues that were only tangentially related to this training were surfacing.

Throughout all of these dynamics a striking feature of staff check-in was the consistent respect individuals showed for each other and for their own personal process. Repeatedly I saw staff speak frankly about their own experiences related to training and staff dynamics.

This was in contrast to what I had experienced upon my arrival at training, before I became a training staff member. It helped me to understand why my perception that there was some fear about my presence as an outsider may have been accurate; my presence could influenced others' feelings of safety. One program assistant told me that the

reason he chose to assist with programs was because of the opportunity to be in community with others who value awareness, acceptance, and personal growth, and to experience these things as part of the staff development that occurs during training.

I, like other staff, experienced and shared some strong feelings during staff check-ins. In this way I became an active participant observer in the staff process that occurs behind the scenes during training events, as well as an active participant observer in the training program itself. These multiple participant observer roles were demanding of my time, emotions, and researcher skills.

Discussion. My personal reflection journal was a very important tool during the eight days that I was a participant observer of the Level 1 and 2 training program. At times I was overwhelmed by my multiple responsibilities. At other times I was emotionally overwhelmed by personal issues that surfaced.

I had no "down" time since my meal time, and evenings were used to interview staff or talk informally about training. Early mornings, between 4:30 and 6:00 a.m., were used to re-read the previous days fieldnotes, write analytic memos to myself, and write in my personal reflection journal. It was a total immersion experience that was both a wonderful opportunity and draining.

My entry into the site and the group process through which I came to be an accepted member of the training team

were powerful lessons. I learned what it feels like to have study participants mistrust my purpose, and how ultimately it was not my words but my actions that won their trust. I learned, first hand, how the value placed on self-awareness and acceptance during the formal training program guided the individual and collective experiences of the training staff as well.

I felt staff beginning to accept me on the first day of training, during the staff's opportunity to introduce themselves to training participants. Introductions included an opportunity for a very brief personal statement about why the individual had come to this event. In my personal statement I began by saying that I was a yoga teacher, PRYTherapist, and also completing my doctorate in education. I said that I was conducting a qualitative study of PR yoga therapist training in order to be able to describe the program from the perspective of trainers.

I expressed my respect for the PR yoga therapy process as I had experienced it and as I had observed my clients' experiences. I also explained that I would not be recording in my notes the comments of participants; but was rather focused on the words and actions of training staff who agreed to participate in my study. Within the next day or so each of the staff members who had either joked or been openly hesitant about my presence remarked that they were glad I was there, or apologized for their previous comments.

My experience, verified by the comments of all training

leaders at the end of training, was that I had played a valuable role in delivering the training program, and as a member of the training staff process. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, my increasing involvement in delivering the Level 1 and 2 training program was an outcome of training staff's request that students' experience not be altered by the presence of an outsider. My active participation meant that the my participant observer role in the training program was genuine. It also means that I inevitably influenced what I observed and recorded in my fieldnotes, even though I followed the guidelines for data collection put forth by Erickson.

Because of the presence of interview, observational, and documentary evidence regarding the importance of the construct of loving presence in PR yoga therapy and therapist training, I do not believe that my presence influenced my findings substantially. This does not negate the fact that my presence did influence the course of the training program in some other kinds of ways.

I also believe that my own perceptual framework influenced what I observed and recorded, though I attempted to control for this by following the qualitative research guidelines I have described. In particular, the narrowing of my research focus on the construct of loving presence is consistent with my own opinion, as a yoga therapist, yoga teacher, and student of yoga, that a type of consciousness--an ephemeral presence--characterizes gifted spiritual

teachers. If I had begun this study as a critic of yoga, or skeptical of something as intangible as "presence" or spirit, I could have focused my questions in ways that resulted in a very different story of PR professional standards and training.

The point I wish to make is that the interests and paradigm a researcher brings to their investigation can definitely influence study findings. As I pointed out earlier, this is no less true in positivistic models of science--though it may be more difficult to discern. The challenge for the skillful researcher is to consider how their biases may influence outcomes, be explicit about these possibilities, and follow standards that minimize the risk. I believe that the repeated mentioning by insiders of the importance of loving presence, as well as their actions during training and the curriculum generally, provide strong evidence that my own bias was a deciding factor in my study focus. However as a yoga therapist I am also an insider, and as a member of this profession it may be that I am more able to discern core professional standards than someone completely outside of this field.

Inquiry and Problem Solving Processes. As put forth by Erickson, inquiry and problem solving are important elements of the data collection in qualitative research. With regard to inquiry and problem solving approaches in my study of yoga therapist training, one method I used was a scanning process similar to an instructional design approach

described by Reigeluth and Stein (1983). This approach combines two levels of observation.

At times I observed the training program as though from a wide angle camera lens, noting and recording the general structural features of training and how certain training routines were repeated over the eight days. At other times I used a "close-up" lens approach and zoomed in on particular details and nuances of the field setting. Here I recorded the specific words and actions of trainers and how they responded to student questions--including subtleties like facial expressions, tone of voice, the "feeling" of sessions. At the more micro level I also recorded the specific instructional approaches and content that make up the training curriculum, though some of this was recorded as macro-level routines.

The alternation between these two viewing postures was influenced by what I had noticed in earlier sessions--the problem solving process. I started broadly, but as I began to get a sense of the overall structure and emerging patterns of actions, I would focus more closely on the details of the pattern or aspect of training being emphasized. These alternating processes of inquiry and problem solving occurred not only during the collection of observational data, but also as I followed informants' leads during loosely structured interviews and as I collected general and specific information via a demographic survey I developed.

Participant observation was the primary method of collecting data during my study. To address the need for adequate amounts and variety of evidence, I was present at all training events including the early morning yoga classes that students are required to attend. My participation observation during the Level 1 and 2 training resulted in 9-10 hours of training program observation each day of the eight-day program. In addition I participated in 1-2 hours of staff meetings each day. Participant observation of the training program and staff de-briefings over the course of Level 1 and 2 training totaled approximately 80 hours. I missed one afternoon training session due to a personal commitment. However, I later talked with training staff about the teaching that had gone on and made notes based on our conversation.

During participant observation I wrote down what trainers said, did, and the structure and timing of sessions. I sketched diagrams of the room during different kinds of training activities. Music is used to create mood, so I wrote down the music used. Inspirational readings are used to introduce the spiritual component of the work, so I wrote down the inspirational readings. Most of the time I was in the training room, seated or standing back or in a corner, and infrequently I went outside the room and talked into a tape recorder about something I had just observed.

My strategy to avoid the problem that Erickson refers to as "premature typification" (1986, p. 144) was to take

detailed notes and to review these notes early the next morning, looking for themes or patterns in the data. For example, an outcome of writing and re-writing fieldnotes and making marginal notes to myself, I began to think of the training program as three identifiable "curricula"--a physical component, a cognitive component, and a spiritual component. I began to use a color system in my notes to mark where the training content seemed to be focused on one area or another.

This tentative assertion about the training program's structure influenced subsequent data collection because I began to notice whether trainers talked about three distinct curricula. In subsequent sessions, and in reviewing notes, I did not find evidence that therapist trainers talked or thought about this program in this way.

I also wrote commentary in the margins of fieldnotes while in the field, when a remark, action, or event in the setting was emphasized by the trainers in some way. For example, changes in voice tone or facial expression were noted when they accompanied verbal descriptions of the work or were present during non-verbal demonstrations of the work. In this way I attempted to capture not only the words and actions of trainers, but also the subtle nuances that emphasized certain principles.

I also took fieldnotes on the setting and the feeling of the training program. There were definite features of the environment and the structure of daily activities that

began to emerge over my days of participant observation, and these environmental and structural factors were recorded. As with my reflective notes and analytic memos on the words and actions of the trainers, my daily search of fieldnotes began to yield patterns of setting quality and feel, descriptions of the ways of being that trainers exhibited during the program. Frequently these notes had to do with aspects of the non-verbal communication going on.

I considered making audio recordings of the training in order to have access to the original data after leaving the field and to maximize the opportunity to discover discrepant cases that might confirm or disconfirm assertions being considered. This was not an acceptable method of collecting data to the training staff who were worried that students would not participate fully in training if they were being audio taped.

I did use a tape recorder to record my observations and comments to myself at different points during training. I would either quietly speak into the recorder from a corner of the room where I would not disturb the training program, or I would go into the hallway and record observations and reflective commentary.

Before entering the field as a participant observer of Level 1 and 2 training, I prepared two types of daily schedules to assist me in keeping track of events, conversations, important notes and insights, and my own personal experience. These were useful as personal

reflection devices and as ways to keep my thinking organized around many different activities and competing demands.

I conducted interviews as an important source of data for this study. Prior to the training event I developed a three-page interview protocol to structure conversations I hoped to have with training staff over the eight-day training period. During the formative development of the interview questions, the founder of PR yoga therapy requested that I provide a copy of the protocol to an individual who works occasionally with PR yoga therapy programs and who is a professor of sociology. After faxing her a copy of the protocol and talking with her about it, several small corrections were made. This protocol is found in Appendix A.

During the eight days of Level 1 and 2, I met with each of the six staff to talk about PR yoga therapy and the therapist training program. Interviews lasted approximately an hour and occurred in a variety of places: over dinner, breakfast, lunch, in the car while doing errands, and in one instance in a sauna (where it was very difficult to keep the paper dry). Because staff were so busy with the training program and related activities, I talked with them whenever and wherever they were willing.

My interviewing style was to ask a question and to attend to non-verbal indicators that the question made sense or was understood by the informant. For example, the concept of a professional PR yoga therapist, or the

professionalism of PR yoga therapy, was a difficult one for a number of individuals. Some asked what I meant and several just looked unsure about what I was asking. It became standard practice on my part to elaborate on "professional" by saying: "What does the work look like when it is done well? What do therapists do or say when they are doing the work correctly? What is a really positive example of this work?" My note taking style was to write down everything that the informant said, feeding back what I thought they had said, asking for clarification when I didn't understand, and asking them to repeat themselves if I missed what they said.

I also collected demographic survey data from the cohort of trainees enrolled in the program while I was a participant observer. This data was collected by developing a short questionnaire that was mailed to all participants and training staff in the Level 3 training program in January 1994 (APPENDIX B & C). It was also distributed to those students who agreed to participate in the Level 1 and 2 training program I observed. Individuals were told that it was not necessary for them participate to in the survey, but should they choose to, they were asked to return the completed questionnaire with their signed participant consent form.

The survey was designed to collect information about the age, sex, educational background, yoga teacher background, and how one trainee cohort defined

professionalism and PR yoga therapist professionalism. I collected more information than I have subsequently analyzed because I was unsure at that point how the trainees' opinions of professionalism might be useful in my study. In the following section on data analysis I briefly discuss how analyzing the survey data contributed to my development of preliminary assertions.

Discussion. I collected four types of data during the eight-day Level 1 and 2 training in which I was a participant observer: observational data, interview data, survey data, and training materials provided to both the staff and the students. Thus I sought initially to comprehend the training program at the broadest possible level, while maintaining my focus on the training staff. I did not systematically explore the training program from the perspective of students except for asking them to complete a short survey questionnaire.

The variety of types of data collected during Level 1 and 2 training allowed me to look across observational, interview, and documentary evidence for patterns or themes. During the process of developing preliminary assertions, and as I wrote analytic memos to myself, I looked across the types of data I was collecting for both disconfirming and confirming evidence. The process of looking broadly, narrowing the focus, then again looking broadly across the variety of data sources, led to preliminary assertions about the training program goals and training techniques.

My immersion in all aspects of training, including the daily yoga classes required of students and staff check-ins, gave me the widest possible view of training. While my view of the training program remained broad throughout Level 1 and 2, I also began to make notes to myself about my perceptions of the form and essence of training. The reflective process of writing analytic memos to myself, writing personal commentary during observations, and re-reading memos and notes resulted in my focusing attention on different structural and content elements of training at different times.

For example, it was clear after a short period that very short lectures were used to introduce content and that these were followed by in-depth demonstration and practice periods. This routine repeated itself day after day. Another pattern was to begin and end the day with group "check-ins" and an invitation for students to talk about what was going on for themselves personally as they experienced training. This observational evidence of certain instructional principles and professional values (e.g., self-disclosure) was corroborated in my interview data. Further evidence for these patterns was found in the daily schedule given to staff and in the staff check-ins.

The biggest challenge and potential problem I faced, relative to the inquiry and problem solving processes in fieldwork, was that I had no down time while I was in the field. I was totally immersed in the training program as a

participant observer--sometimes more participant, sometimes more observer--and only while I slept was I relieved of this role. I had only about one hour in the early morning for the review of notes and for writing analytic memos to myself. While I continued to review and re-think my participant observation notes and memos after leaving the field, it is possible that more elaboration of notes while in the field would have led me to "see" other patterns and themes. In that case I might have scanned the environment for other types of confirming and disconfirming evidence.

Data Analysis and Reporting: PR Level 1 and 2 Training

In order to illustrate how I followed Erickson's guidelines for the analysis and reporting of field data, I have collapsed the criteria into two categories: a) empirical assertions and b) description and commentary. The last component of data analysis Erickson mentions, study evolution, is described generally in Chapter 1. Many details of the study's evolution also appear in this chapter.

The assertions I make about PR yoga therapy and PR yoga therapist training are based on analysis of data across Level 1 and 2 and Level 3 training, even though I have separated these two phases of the training program and data collection for convenience. The findings I present in Chapter 3, where I describe the PR yoga therapy guiding principle of loving presence, are warranted by evidence

found in my fieldnotes of Level 1 and 2 and in the interview data I collected during Level 1 and 2, Level 3, and from follow-up interviews I have conducted since.

In Chapter 4 I describe how therapists are trained in loving presence. In that case the assertions are warranted by evidence derived primarily through an analysis of data collected during the Level 1 and 2 training program, as well as an analysis of the field data collected during several group training sessions that occurred at the midterm exam in Level 3 training.

In Chapter 5 I present findings from an analysis of written coaching one mentor provided to her student during the Level 3 training. I conducted a content analysis of the coaching provided on 10 client reports, to investigate the type and frequency of written comments and whether the kinds and amounts of comments supported my assertion about loving presence as a guiding principle of PRYTherapy.

Empirical Assertions. The assertions I make about PR yoga therapy and the therapist training program are primarily based on my analysis of data collected during the Level 1 and 2 training program, as well as interviews and conversations I had with focal informants over the nine months that I was in the field.

I began the development of preliminary assertions while in the field, as described in the previous section. However, it was in the months after leaving the field completely, with the exception of continued communication

with key insiders in the training program, that I began the analysis of data that resulted in my focusing this study on the professional standard of loving presence.

In my first re-reading of fieldnotes, I continued to focus on the challenges I perceived to exist for training staff as they balanced the "body-mind-spirit" three-fold content of the training program. Based upon my conversations with experienced Level 3 mentors--in addition to my experience with my own students while I was a mentor--I believed I had evidence that one of the challenges in the training program was confusion over body-mind-spirit choices. I began to form sub-assertions about PR yoga therapy and the training program consistent with that theme.

However, as I turned to other primary sources of data, e.g., interviews with training staff during Level 1 and 2, my talks with the founders of PR yoga therapy, and my participant observation fieldnotes during Level 1 and 2 and Level 3, I did not continue to find confirmatory evidence that this was a significant training goal from the perspective of insiders.

In fact I found a great deal of disconfirming evidence. None of these trainers, nor the founders, mentioned that PR yoga therapy was essentially about the body, mind, and spirit, though these were content areas. While I continued to believe that the three-part curriculum was a challenge for students, I recalled that my research goal was to focus was on the meaning-perspectives, words and actions of

trainers and training designers.

When I asked these insiders what it was that students had the most trouble mastering in the training, none had remarked that students had a hard time deciding to focus on the physical, mental or spiritual pieces of the work.

As Erickson notes, disconfirming evidence has particular significance in qualitative data analysis, since it may point out subtleties and nuances in the data or the setting. Through a process of expanding and narrowing my focus on the various sorts of data I had, and attempting to understand how the theme of body-mind-spirit could be so pervasive yet so absent from important data sources, I began to notice something else.

Trainers repeatedly mentioned that a primary obstacle that therapists-in-training face is letting go of their own value system regarding the "right" client outcome in any particular case. Students frequently have a hard time being unattached to the client's experience because their personal values and experiences suggest that other outcomes would be "better" for the client. While therapists are responsible for the session process, their attachment to specific types of client experiences introduces self- and other-judgments that interfere with their ability to be present to what is actually happening for the client. I began to turn this idea around and to look at it in relation the previous body-mind-spirit theme I had pursued.

To those insiders whose voices and actions define PR

yoga therapy and the training program, it is not so much an issue of students choosing which part of the work to focus on, as it is an issue of students' not judging certain specific client experiences as better than other experiences. Insiders said that the essence of this type of yoga therapy was a way of being present to clients that permitted all client experiences to be acceptable.

The over-time result of searching for confirming and disconfirming data led to the discovery of a more central and abstract finding that made sense out of both the confirming and disconfirming evidence of the first assertion. Discrepant case analysis yielded consistent patterns in the data that accounted for the body-mind-spirit theme I had noted. The centrality of the principle of loving presence was supported by all of the data I collected, and one of its attributes--non-attachment--explained why students could get sidetracked over the body-mind-spirit content of the work.

Description and Interpretive Commentary. I rely heavily on particular description, e.g., narrative vignettes, direct quotes, and interpretive commentary, in my report of findings in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. My research goal has been to describe PR yoga therapy and the therapist training program from the perspectives of those closest to training: the founder and core training program staff. I frequently quote them directly in my report of findings because the actual words used and the meaning-perspectives

they convey are a critical feature in the accurate reporting of their perspectives.

Narrative vignettes also play an important part in my description of findings. In this chapter I have used narrative vignettes to describe my entry into the research site and the process of building relationships with focal informants. I also use vignettes to illustrate how the principle of loving presence is enacted during training in the words and actions of trainers (e.g., partner ice-breaker) and to illustrate misunderstanding of the work (i.e., negative examples of PRYTherapy).

In Chapter 3 I provide a lengthy description of a PR yoga therapy session to give the reader an idea of what this type of yoga therapy looks like. This is a composite description of a session, based on fieldnotes and interview data collected over time rather than during one observation. This composite session is intended to convey a presence, or way of being, on the part of the therapist, as well as to illustrate how session components are linked together.

While it is one representation of a session and includes the standard session components, PR yoga therapy is client centered and as such the actual content of a session--what the client experiences and the therapist's responses based upon client experience--are not standard across sessions. On the other hand, certain attributes of the therapist's behavior and way of being present to clients have been included in this scenario because they were

consistently mentioned and described by insiders, e.g., therapist self-awareness, non-attachment to specific client outcomes, and belief in yoga as life transformation tool.

The session scenario is also based on fieldnotes collected during my nine months of observing trainers demonstrating segments of sessions to students, and talking out loud with trainees about what they were doing. In addition, during my participant observation as a mentor in the Level 3 program I talked weekly with a senior trainer. She coached me to notice and respond to certain features of my students' practice of the work, and these notes were an additional source of information for the development of the session scenario.

With regard to synoptic reports, I have used this form of general description extensively in my analysis of mentor comments to a student during Level 3 training. I was, however, looking at only one mentor-student dyad as I categorized and counted coaching comments provided by the mentor. Thus, I have provided general description of data in one case study, rather than looking generally across case studies. In the following section on Level 3 data collection and data analysis I provide a rationale for this approach.

I have also used general analytic description and synoptic reports in the process of analyzing the thematic content of interview data I collected during the Level 1 and 2 and Level 3 trainings, and during follow-up phone calls to

focal informants. To do this I entered each respondent's answer to the interview questions under that specific question. Then using colored markers I highlighted similar content across respondents answers. While not all of the data I collected and analyzed is provided here, I have included some of the data collected in this chapter in order to illustrate the analytic method.

For example, during one stage of data analysis I highlighted the phrase "loving presence" and other concepts I thought might be related to loving presence when they appeared as responses to the question, "Describe a very professional PR yoga therapist" in the survey training staff completed during Level 1 and 2 training. (See Table 1.)

Table 1 Staff Description of Professional PRYTherapist

Case	Description of PR Professional
#1	A PR professional is someone who is also on a spiritual path and who practices a daily sadhana.
#2	A loving presence; compassionate without judgment; accepting; interested in their own personal growth.
#3	One that exemplifies integrity, appearance, presence, confidence, leadership, love and warmth.
#4	Daily yoga practice and meditation; accomplished yoga practitioner; someone committed to their own growth and healing of body-mind-spirit; someone I feel safe with - nurtured, supported; someone I can learn from.
#5	Loving, non-judgmental (clear about who they are and where their 'stuff' is coming from) - which is an explanation of what PR models (also knowledgeable, self-assured, carries self with dignity, is a role model of the profession they represent).
#6	I think integrity is the most important aspect of professionalism. My one desire in terms of professional behavior is that a person be able to deliver the work with integrity.

In cases 2, 3, 4, and 5 the staff members described PR yoga therapist professionalism with the words a) loving presence, b) presence, love, warmth, c) feel safe with, nurtured, supported, and d) loving, non-judgmental. What TABLE 1 illustrates is that one person used the phrase "loving presence", one person used the words "love" and "presence" in the same sentence, one person used the word "loving", while one person linked "feel safe", "nurtured," and "supported" in their description. The relative

frequency of loving presence and/or similar concepts is visible. In addition, by showing each person's entire answer the larger context in which the phrase or concept appeared is visible and the gestalt of the response can be taken into account.

I noticed that one of the threads in these responses had to do with a way of being present and a concept of love. Based on a preliminary assertion that this was a pattern, I began to search field notes for other evidence of the importance of such a construct--as I described earlier in this chapter. In Chapter 3 I present other synoptic reports that suggest the frequency of others themes in the interview data.

I will not repeat Table 1 in Chapter 3, however, so I would like to note another pattern in this data now. In Cases 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 the definition of a PR yoga therapist professional includes the following language: "someone who is also on a spiritual path and who practices a daily sadhana," "interested in their own personal growth," "one that exemplifies integrity," "daily yoga practice and meditation; accomplished yoga practitioner; someone committed to their own growth and healing of body-mind-spirit," "clear about who they are and where their 'stuff' is coming from," and "integrity is the most important aspect of professionalism."

Each PR training staff member noted the importance of either a yoga practice, or the outcome of such practice--

integrity. The connection between yoga practice and integrity may not be clear to those who are unfamiliar with yoga, but realization of union--the beliefs, attitudes, values, and direct experience of one's integration--is akin to personal integrity.

This pattern, the centrality of integrity and/or yoga practice, gives a particular twist to the comments related to loving presence that I pointed out previously. Based on this pattern I began to wonder about linkages trainers were making between a way of being present, love, integrity, and the importance of spiritual practice. As illustrated in Table 1, synoptic reports are very central to the process of stepping back from qualitative data and getting an idea of how frequently certain ideas appear across cases.

Student Demographic Data. Demographic data collected from students in the training program was background information in this study. Because it was used during the general data analysis and assertion formulation stages of research, but not as a study finding, I now provide a description of this student cohort and how I used the information to think more generally about loving presence.

I found that the demographic information provided by those who responded to the survey was a useful way to understand some general facts about the individuals who participate in this program. The survey was designed to collect some basic demographic information from students early in the research process when I was beginning to

familiarize myself with the setting. As I looked over the tables I prepared, I was struck by the potential implications of some of these demographic facts for the training of PR yoga therapists.

Many PR yoga therapist trainees are female yoga teachers, college graduates, and between 41 to 50 years old. Of 34 survey respondents (N=101) who began the Level 3 training in January, 1994, 71% were women (n=24); of these female participants, 75% (n=19) were yoga teachers while 63% (n=15) were between 41 and 50 years old (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 2 PR Yoga Therapist Trainees: Sex and Teach Yoga (n=34)

YOGA TEACHER/SEX	Female	Male	Total
Yes	19 (col.=75%)	5	24
no	5	5	10
Total	24 71%	10 29%	34 100%

Table 3 PR Yoga Therapist Trainees: Sex and Age (n=34)

SEX/AGE	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+
Female	3	5	15 63%	1		
Male		2	6 60%	2		
Total	3	7	21 62%	3		

The educational background and occupational status of men and women trainees who responded to the survey indicate that within this cohort of students many PRYTherapists-in-training were highly educated (Table 4).

Table 4 Sex and Highest Level of Education Completed

EDUC/MAJOR/SEX	Female	Male
HS Diploma		1
Some college	6	3
Bachelors	5	1
Some graduate	2	3
Graduate degree	11	2

Among women, 58% (n=11) had graduate degrees; among men and women, 71% (n=24) had Bachelor or graduate degrees. Educational backgrounds vary: among male and female trainees with Bachelor or graduate degrees, 25% (n=6) had graduate degrees in psychology or clinical social work; 25% (n=6) had degrees in business with 1/2 of the business majors (n=3) holding MBAs; four college-educated trainees (17%) were education majors. Other Bachelor degrees were held in communication, physical education, and American studies, while Master and Doctorate degrees were held in nursing, history, holistic studies, engineering, and architecture.

Overall, 71% (n=24) of the trainees in the Level 3 class that participated in this study were yoga teachers of some kind: 50% (n=5) of the male participants taught yoga

and 75% (n=19) of the female participants were yoga teachers (Table 5). Among the five male students who taught yoga, five different types of yoga were represented with no one approach more predominant than any other. The pattern in this cohort was different among females where 47% (n=9) were Kripalu yoga teachers, 21% (n=4) taught "hatha" yoga, 11% (n=2) called their teaching style "eclectic", and 11% (n=2) referred to themselves as Iyengar yoga teachers.

Across the male trainees who are yoga teachers, 40% (n=2) of the respondents to the survey reported teaching hatha or Iyengar yoga, and 60% (n=3) taught Kripalu, gentle, or a mixture of types of yoga.

Table 5 Sex, Teaching Status, and Teaching Style

SEX/YOGA TCH/TYPE	Yes	No	Type
Female	19	5	Kripalu -9 Eclectic -2 Hatha -5 Iyengar -1 Hitech -1 Gentle Yoga -1
Male	5	5	Kripalu -1 Eclectic -1 Hatha -1 Iyengar -1 Gentle Yoga -1
Total	24	10	34 (row total)

It is not surprising that the most prominent teaching style reported is Kripalu yoga, given that Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy has its roots in the Kripalu approach and many Kripalu teachers are aware of it. Compassionate self- and

other-awareness is a value and practice within the Kripalu tradition and there is a great deal of similarity between this compassionate stance and loving presence. The common value framework of Kripalu Yoga and PR yoga therapy might suggest that therapist-trainees who have a Kripalu background will have a different experiential and conceptual referent for loving presence than students with other types of yoga backgrounds.

However, looking at the female trainees in this cohort we notice that hatha yoga, a generic label for yoga that emphasizes the physical body, and Iyengar yoga--a teaching tradition with strong emphasis on correct alignment--comprise 32% of female teachers' instructional approach. Teachers who refer to their teaching style as "eclectic" are likely to incorporate breathing practices and meditation in their instruction, along with instruction on the physical postures.

Thus, while a background in Kripalu yoga--compatible with the key principle of loving presence in PR yoga therapy--is found in nearly 1/2 of female trainees who teach yoga, approximately 1/3 of the women teachers in this sample report teaching styles that may not be familiar with--or value--the essence of Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy. No data is available on the yoga style preferences of non-teachers in this sample (29%; n=10), nor if they practice any form of yoga at all.

Discussion. Analysis of Level 1 and 2 data was fairly straight forward until I began to grapple with the role Level 3 training data would, or should, play in this process. I played different participant observer roles during these two phases of training. My records and fieldnotes of these two experiences were also different and could not simply be pooled in order to search the whole of my study data for confirming and disconfirming evidence.

My Level 1 and 2 data, detailed fieldnotes, interview notes, and journal entries, had been neatly bounded by an eight-day time period. This data was collected while I observed the whole of this phase of training; I did not observe just one trainer but watched all trainers. I was in a very different position during my participant observation of Level 3 training.

The first problem I encountered in applying Erickson's guidelines to my analysis of Level 1 and 2 field data was my assumption that I needed to search systematically the whole data corpus for evidence, description, and commentary in support of my assertions. In fact, what I did was to apply Erickson's criteria for the analyses of field data to my analysis of Level 1 and 2 data, and for Level 3 I undertook a content analysis of one mentor's coaching of her student to see if the content of that coaching confirmed or disconfirmed my assertion about the goal and strategy of training.

If I were to design this study knowing what I know now,

I would limit the scope of my participant observation to Level 1 and 2, and I would narrowly define what my data collection purpose and method would be for Level 3. Thus, as Erickson notes, data collection has direct bearing on data analysis in fieldwork. I collected too much data from too many perspectives, which resulted in my having difficulty circumscribing the analytic process.

I turn now to a description of data collection during Level 3. I discuss "entering the site" and building relationships with the four students I mentored, followed by a description of the inquiry and problem solving processes that I engaged in during the six months I served in this role. Following the description of data collection I provide a rationale for my analytic approach. The method of analyzing this data is described in detail in Chapter 5.

Data Collection and Problem Solving: PR Level 3 Training

Site Entry and Building Relationships. I was contacted by the Level 3 program manager and invited to be a mentor of four students in recognition of my ongoing study of the training program. Typically, previous graduates who are currently practicing PR yoga therapists are recruited to be mentors for Level 3 students. Because I was a practicing PR yoga therapist I met the minimum qualifications.

Mentors are often recommended by someone within the training organization, such as their own mentor, because of

the important role they play in the training program. Yet it is sometimes difficult to recruit desirable candidates because of the time demands associated with mentoring. At the time I was a mentor, my expenses were covered but there was no payment for the service I provided to students. More experienced mentors received stipends, though I do not believe these were large.

I was glad to accept the invitation to be a mentor because I felt it would benefit me as a PR yoga therapist and be an excellent way to observe training. The program manager mentioned that if I were a mentor, I would have my expenses paid to attend the midterm, something I had planned on doing for my study of the training program. However, this was also a change of events from the way I originally designed the study. I would realize, in hindsight, the great value of this participant observation opportunity, and also the ways it complicated my data analysis.

Being a mentor was informally referred to as Level 4 training at the time I participated because it provides several avenues of continuing professional development. First, new mentors have weekly phone conversations with the Level 3 program manager who is one of the most experienced and respected trainers. This weekly contact provides ample opportunity to ask and receive guidance on all aspects of PR yoga therapy and professional conduct. Also, the weekly phone call is a time to explore personal issues with this seasoned therapist, and for mentors to further develop their

capacity to be a loving presence to themselves as a vehicle to their being a loving presence to the students they supervise.

Professional development is also available to mentors through their attendance at the midterm exam, a week long event midway through the six months of Level 3. During the midterm week mentors meet regularly to talk about the curriculum and student progress, ask questions and receive guidance. We attended a training session to prepare us to supervise our students' playing of a videotape they had prepared for group viewing and discussion. Mentors are also invited to attend the practice days that either precede or follow the midterm, and these are times to review particular techniques and skills of PR yoga therapy.

There were 23 mentors, four senior TYT staff, and 92 trainees in the Level 3 practicum I observed, which began 1/8/94 and concluded 7/15/94.

Each mentor is assigned four students with whom he or she speaks weekly on the telephone (mentors and students come from across the United States). My role as mentor was to provide the trainee with supervision, particularly to provide written feedback on all the client session reports that the trainee is required to complete, and to document the students' progress through the program. The mentor is also available to support the trainee in his or her personal growth process.

During the six-month period I supervised my students'

completion of four packets of assignments. Each packet had a general thematic focus related to self and professional growth as well as specific requirements to focus students on certain details of the principles, techniques, and processes they were learning. Assignments included readings, journaling, study topics, regular yoga practice, exchanges of PRYT sessions with others in training, receipt of PR yoga therapy sessions by certified PR yoga therapists, attendance at practice days, five written reports of therapy sessions the trainee had given to individuals whom they recruited to practice on, and a self evaluation.

Inquiry and Problem Solving During Level 3. I collected several types of data during the Level 3 practicum. First, I was a participant-observer of the practicum while serving as the mentor for four students; second, detailed fieldnotes were compiled during the week-long midterm exam and the two-day graduation event; third, four mentor-student pairs were recruited and agreed to provide me with copies of all student assignments over the course of the six months, including the comments written by the supervising mentor; and last, all Level 3 training and staff materials were collected.

My students' completed packets were mailed to me for feedback, coaching, and record keeping purposes. Frequently our weekly phone conversations addressed some aspect of their written work. After I read all the assignments in each packet and had provided comments as well as recorded

their progress, I returned the packet by mail to the students. Trainees may not graduate until all packets are completed.

To keep track of the notes I made to my students and to record my participant observation process, I made copies of all assignments I received, commented on and sent back to my students. My fieldnotes of my immersion in the practicum are therefore in the form of the comments and coaching I provided to my four students over the course of receiving their 16 packets (i.e., 4 students x 4 packets = 16 packets), and the 80 client-session reports they were required to submit for feedback (i.e., 4 students x 5 client reports each packet x 4 packets = 80 client session reports). These notes were re-read as part of my search for instructional themes and content and used to construct preliminary assertions about the teaching of principles, techniques and processes and the existence of three curricula, form, and essence.

All candidates for certification must attend the midterm exam. It was a five-day residential program at which time the trainee presented a video taped client session to others in their mentor group, received feedback from the group and myself, participated in large group teaching sessions around the experience of preparing and presenting their work, and received additional instruction on details of the modality that were not presented as part of their Level 1 and 2 training.

As a mentor, I arrived one day early for mentor training that included viewing a videotape of a client session and having the chance to discuss how to give feedback during the videotape viewing that I would lead as a mentor. I kept fieldnotes of both this training and the five days of the program while also directing the video previews of my four students, evaluating each of them as they delivered a "live" session in my presence, and serving as a staff member during the large teaching sessions. In addition to this I attended the daily staff check-ins.

Each candidate for certification must be observed by their mentor while giving an actual session and then write up the feedback they receive from their mentor and submit it as part of their next packet. I observed all of my students delivering a session, and in the case of one of my students, I observed her work twice. For this student I decided to ask for a second evaluation based upon some confusion she displayed in the use of one of the dialogue techniques used during the session.

At the completion of each Level 3 program a two-day graduation event is held in Pennsylvania. Graduation is also a time for former graduates to return for additional training opportunities. My attendance at the graduation of my students was optional, however, by this time the relationships that had developed and the personal growth shared was a compelling reason to travel to Pennsylvania and participate in their accomplishment. It is also a time for

mentors to acknowledge their own time and energy investment in the training program.

As part of the activities offered at graduation I attended a workshop on using PR yoga therapy with abuse victims. My fieldnotes thus include the general structure of graduation and how students and mentors reach closure after their training time together; the amplification of core PR yoga therapy principles that occurred during the actual graduation; and the one-day training that exemplified additional professional development opportunities offered to graduates.

Discussion. As a new mentor in the program, while a participant observer, I struggled with time demands. Talking weekly with four students and the program manager took 3-4 hours per week. When my four students packets arrived (four different times over the six months) I spent about two days reading, commenting, completing the paperwork required, and mailing them back to students. Being a mentor took a lot of time.

Being a mentor was about more than time, however. It brought me face to face with personal issues in ways that were not always comfortable. I saw how I took on more activities than I could manage and remain balanced; I saw how some students triggered anger and judgment and fear as well as compassion and love. I felt stuck at times with how to be honest and set clear boundaries of what was acceptable and what was not acceptable. I recalled family dynamics and

sorrows and saw them connected to how I experienced being a mentor and the challenges I had with some students.

As a mentor I had support to be with these personal challenges in new ways. Several times the program manager led me through an integration over the telephone, to assist me in exploring feelings related to my mentoring experience. This use of the integration component of a session for my own processing demonstrated how I could use it with my students, which I did.

Many other times, as she asked me "what's happening now?" I was called back into my own feelings, into the moment, and able to be present to my experience in ways that had not been there before that telephone call. Her knowledge, skill, and compassion in modeling loving presence over the telephone are my most vivid memory of my mentoring experience.

Data Analysis and Reporting: PR Level 3 Training

Case-to-Case Transfer. In Chapter 5 I report on the sorting and counting of words and phrases used by an experienced mentor to coach her student's practice. As described previously, during the Level 3 training program students work closely with a personal mentor who supervises their progress and coaches them in the finer points of the work. In order to include data I collected from this phase of training, and also to manage the quantity of data available for analysis, I analyzed the written coaching that

one experienced mentor provided her student over the course of ten client reports submitted by the student.

I was interested if and how the mentor coached her student on the topic of loving presence. While there are a number of types of written assignments, I chose to examine this mentor's written coaching of her student in response to client session reports submitted by the student, because these reports are the mentor's "window" into actual student practice.

In order for this type of analysis to have generalizability beyond the specific situation in which it occurs, it is necessary to provide sufficient description of the setting, participants, and other relative factors so that others can compare and contrast this particular situation with their own. Firestone (1993) argues that the burden of proof resides with those who may choose to generalize findings in that they must carefully weigh the similarities and differences between settings. In situations where case-to-case transfer is appropriate, readers of the original case need to have been provided with sufficiently detailed information about that case to be able to recognize essential similarities to cases that interest them. It is the responsibility of the original researcher to provide these details.

Therefore, any transfer of findings in Chapter 5 to other training settings or beyond this particular mentor-student pair requires a close reading of my description of

the PR yoga therapist training program, and my description of this pair, to determine if these characteristics, values and goals, and training processes match other cases of interest to them. I provide these descriptions in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. In Chapter 5 I also describe in detail the procedure I used to analyze one mentor's written coaching.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I have described symbolic interaction theory and provided a rationale for conducting a naturalistic study of PR yoga therapist training. I have outlined guidelines for the conduct of qualitative research and have related these guidelines to my study experience and findings.

In Chapter 3 I begin to answer research questions about loving presence. I describe PR yoga therapy in detail and identify the construct of loving presence as self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment. In Chapter 4 I describe the Level 1 and 2 PR Yoga Therapist Training program and how loving presence as self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment is taught. In Chapter 5 I look at one mentor's written comments to her student during Level 3 training. In Chapter 6 I return to the more general issues of professional standards and professional education and possible connections between my study findings and these topics.

CHAPTER 3

LOVING PRESENCE, THE HEART OF PHOENIX RISING YOGA THERAPY

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2 I described symbolic interaction theory as a framework for my study of PR yoga therapist training. I described the "self" duality, conceptualized in symbolic interactionism, as having an active component (i.e., "I") that can take a socially influenced, passive, component (i.e., "me") as an object in its perceptual field. This theory emphasizes the importance of qualitative research methods to discover local meaning-perspectives, as well as serving as the foundation for sophisticated mathematical models of attitude change. In Chapter 2 I also described qualitative research guidelines and described my data collection and analysis methods.

In Chapter 3 I begin to describe my study findings. The research questions I respond to in this chapter are:

1. How is loving presence defined in PR yoga therapy?
 - A. What do experienced practitioners and therapist trainers say about loving presence?
 - B. When the principle of loving presence is in operation, what does the yoga therapist do?
 - C. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes appear to be attributes of loving presence?

These questions guided my initial interviews with PR yoga therapist training staff and the founder of PR yoga therapy and formed the observational framework I brought to my participant observation of the Level 1 and 2 training program. As I described in the previous chapter, through talking with training staff, observing them in action, and reading training materials I came to believe that at the heart of Phoenix Rising was something called "loving presence."

In this chapter I describe loving presence as the primary characteristic of this work, using the words and actions of people inside the training. First I present interview data in the form of frequency tables and synoptic commentary, collected from training staff in my earliest interviews with them. Second, I distinguish loving presence from other professional principles and practices in PR yoga therapy, using the language of "form and essence." The distinction between form and essence was made several times in training, by one of the founders of PR yoga therapy.

In the third section of this chapter I adopt the concepts of knowledge, skill, and attitude as an initial framework for the task of defining loving presence. In this section I propose a definition of loving presence that includes self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment--based upon my interview and participant observation data.

In the fourth section of the chapter I provide an

example of what PRYTherapy looks like by taking readers through an entire session. Several negative examples that illustrate what loving presence is not are also provided. Data for these examples came from my nine months of field observations of PR yoga therapy, and my many conversations with experienced practitioners and trainers.

DEFINING PROFESSIONALISM IN PHOENIX RISING YOGA THERAPY

As described in Chapter 2, frequency tables and synoptic reports are useful tools for qualitative data analysis and representation. In this section I present findings from interviews with training staff over the course of my study. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the interview protocol used to guide these conversations is found in APPENDIX A. In order to illustrate the use of frequency tables and synoptic reports in my methods section, I included in Chapter 2 a discussion of findings from these interviews (Table 1, pp. 72-75), which I have not repeated in this chapter.

One of the questions I asked training staff member during the interview was to think of a PR yoga therapist that they thought was really good at the work, and to talk to me about what made that person stand out. I specifically asked study participants to think about the exemplary therapist's a) attitudes/beliefs, b) behavior, c) appearance, d) presence or being, e) values, and f) the session environment.

Five trainers had comments about the behaviors (Table 6) of the exemplary PRYTherapist, and all six participants had responses concerning attitudes/beliefs (Table 7), presence (Table 8), and values (Table 9). Their responses to these questions revealed patterns and themes in support of the assertion that loving presence is a guiding principle of PR yoga therapy and therapist training.

With regard to the behaviors of exemplary PR yoga therapists that training staff mentioned, it is noteworthy that there is not a great emphasis on specific physical techniques or discrete actions. One pattern that appears in these trainers' words may be that "behavior" is interpreted in a number of ways by this particular group. The quality of the therapist's touch, the way they move their client's body, is mentioned by three trainers--though they emphasize different attributes of touch and movement. Two people mention being careful or not being intrusive with touch, and recognizing that touch can be intimate. Another trainer mentions the importance of smooth and easy movements while a second emphasizes the confidence and support touch should convey.

Two people mention that the therapist's pace should be slow--the importance of taking time. These same two trainers mention the importance of listening skills, with one of them emphasizing a type of listening that "keeps shifting" and that responds to the client. Another trainer focused exclusively on the spiritual dimension of the

therapist's behavior in a session, saying that they "channel the energy of union" and that maintaining a personal spiritual practice to include asanas and meditation is a key behavior of the expert therapist (Table 6).

Table 6 Behaviors of Exemplary PR Yoga Therapist

Case	Behaviors
#1	Is careful with touch because touch is/can be intimate; maintains client's privacy since confidentiality is important.
#2	Has physical strength, groundedness--is solid in her body and connected to the earth. Uses smooth and easy movements as she takes clients through postures. Takes time. She has a deep breath (doesn't smoke!).
#3	Is skilled with body techniques and is comfortable and confident in touching bodies. Firm supportive touch, not tentative. Direct without being intrusive--hands convey confidence. Takes opportunities if sees openings, uses active listening skills.
#4	Does daily sadhana of one kind or another--meditation, asana. Channels the energy and experience of union/ yoga.
#5	----
#6	Exemplary therapist begins the session the minute the client arrives. It begins with a level of communication--with a listening that "keeps shifting". Uses different language, pitch, rhythm that the client uses. Feeds back to the client their language, is a mirror, a clear reflection. May not use dialogue at all in first session. A lot of awareness happens around silence. Does not hurry. No hurry to complement the pose. Pacing is really important. Uses dialogue after the release--lots often occurs for the client at that time.

During the majority of interviews with these trainers it was necessary to clarify that I was interested in learning from them what professional behavior meant in PR yoga therapy. From these conversations I began to believe that the concept of professionalism was a new way of thinking about their work, and that it triggered images of mainstream professions (e.g. medicine and law) and was therefore hard to apply to work that had a spiritual focus.

It was easiest for these trainers to talk about what excellent PR yoga therapy looked like, or did not look like. As a result their descriptions did not always come in response to the actual probe used (e.g. what is exemplary behavior) and descriptions were repeated in response to different questions. That is someone may have described the exemplary therapist's values in the same way they described their behavior.

I felt it was important to look over all of the questions, as I analyzed data, to get both the specific responses to particular questions and the more general tone and emphasis of the interviews. I also attempted to sort respondents answers so that I could analyze data that was provided about behavior separately from data provided about attitudes or values. This was very difficult, and in trying to sort through these difficulties it is possible that I have imposed an artificial order on the responses provided by trainers.

I believe that there is significant overlap in the

informants descriptions of an exemplary PR yoga therapist's attitudes/beliefs (Table 7), values (Table 8), and presence (Table 9). I present their responses in on all three of these dimensions of professional practice before discussion them in greater detail. I have also repeated comments in more than one table, if the trainer was not clear in their remarks whether they were talking about a behavior, attitude, value, or type of presence.

PR yoga therapy training staff used similar kinds of words and images in response to the questions about exemplary therapist attitudes/beliefs and values. There are also references to a way of being present sprinkled throughout their comments on attitudes, beliefs and values (Table 7).

Table 7 Attitudes and Beliefs of Exemplary PR Yoga Therapist

Case	Attitudes and Beliefs
#1	Someone who is really there in life. The best therapists are working on themselves--honestly facing their barriers to love--not know-it-alls. They are not making someone better or fixing them; they accept what's happening and where the person is at now. They believe in yogic principles of non-duality, love, acceptance; that each one of us is God and that we are all divine beings in human form--their faith and trust in the truth of this is very important, it is very yogic.
#2	Explains in training program how to do assists; is there as a leader and mentor

#3	Won't try and fix me, change me, tell me what to do; is comfortable in handling my body--hands are confident; conveys a sense of integrity; believes in work she's doing yet can be light about it too
#4	They do this work simply as an extension of their sadhana--their own spiritual practice.
#5	No agenda; unconditional love; belief in body-mind-spirit wholeness, growth, evolution; accepting; belief in God space and that nothing needs to happen
#6	She or he is always working at the level of the client's awareness, not therapist's awareness. For example I recently saw a client who, to me, had a very obvious caved in chest. During the client's body scan, their experience of their body did not include "my chest feels caved in" - so it was not a factor in directing the session. I chose a posture, the cobra, based on the feeling the person expressed--not what her body looked like to me. There is an attitude about dialogue that expert therapist's have: dialogue is about the therapist getting out of the way, not having their own agendas drive the session. The therapist does have an agenda in terms of the session structure and the process, and they may notice their own personal agenda arising, but the expert therapist reminds themselves that they don't know what's up for their client. The need to really listen to the client, not listen to their personal agenda.

Four of the staff members mention that the expert therapist does not have a "fix-it" attitude but recognizes the client's level of awareness as the key factor in a particular session focus. Three trainers mention that the professional therapist believes in this work as an extension of their spiritual beliefs or practices, with two of these

individuals talking of the belief in body-mind-spirit wholeness and God space. Three other trainers do not mention the importance of spiritual beliefs or attitudes in this profession.

However two of these trainers do mention the importance of spiritual presence, divinity, or inner light in response to the question of professional values and/or presence (Tables 8 & 9).

Table 8 Values of the Exemplary PR Yoga Therapist

Case	Values
#1	Trustworthy, not evaluating or judging what is being said or done, compassionate, follows teachings of Kripalu Yoga
#2	Supports and encourages one to go farther; all of the therapist is there
#3	She respects my body as a sacred instrument; patience; not pushing me to a place that doesn't ring true for me. Knowledge of the body is important so the client won't have fear about her causing injury. Effectively facilitates a process in which the client can touch upon her own divinity - or even better, be able to acknowledge her divinity.
#4	Has been on a spiritual path for sometime; is loving; centered
#5	Values wholeness; non-judgement; acceptance; divine presence; intention
#6	Values the client-centered approach and letting the client direct the session

Table 9 Presence of the Exemplary PR Yoga Therapist

Case	Presence
#1	The expert therapist has a particular feel or energetic presence, what we call loving presence. It has to do with the therapist's intention to facilitate and not be intrusive of boundaries.
#2	Nurturing; he or she creates a feeling of safety; they are totally present in the here and now (emotionally, physically, spiritually)
#3	Brings an unconditional, loving, non-judgmental presence to the work; conveys a sense of joy and lightness--inner light
#4	The exemplary therapist is conscious; he spends time in witness consciousness; can center himself pretty fast; is present.
#5	Unconditional loving presence, in touch with my divine presence. In order for this type of presence to occur, he or she gets into God space.
#6	Personality is in the background; there are - different "flavors" of presence with different people.

The strongest pattern across trainer interview data is that the exemplary PR yoga therapist does not push or fix their client, nor do they evaluate the client's progress in relation to some criteria of success. Rather they have a belief, or faith, in the process they use with their clients. Almost as strong as this attitude is the importance the professional PR therapist places on self-growth, wholeness or non-duality, and/or spiritual practice.

Trainers had little to say about appearance of environment. With regard to the appearance of the exemplary PR yoga therapist, two of those interviewed mentioned the

importance of a healthy, clean appearance while the other four training staff had no comment about this. In terms of the session setting or environment, three individuals mentioned that what was important about session environment was not so much a quality of physical space as it was a "feeling of sanctuary" that could be created in many types of clean and light settings. Three staff members had no comment about environment.

The data that I have just summarized was collected primarily during the eight-day Level 1 and 2 training program. It, along with my participant observation fieldnotes, was a major source of preliminary assertions about the nature of PR yoga therapy. The phrase "loving presence" first appeared in these early interviews, though it was many months later that I identified this construct as a guiding principle for this work and the focus of this study.

In the next section of this chapter I provide more data from Level 1, 2 and 3 of PR training which illustrates why my research focus narrowed, and how I have come to think about the construct of loving presence as self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment.

THE FORM AND ESSENCE OF PR YOGA THERAPY

PR yoga therapy has both form and essence. The form of the work is an important component, and I describe my observations of the form in the next section. My study

focus, however, is on an aspect of PR essence--loving presence--as a guiding principle and unique professional standard.

Form

There are several ways that the concept of form is used, either explicitly or implicitly, by those who train people to be PR yoga therapists. There are very concrete forms, such as session structure, and much subtler levels of philosophical form. Students are taught these forms, directly and indirectly, as part of their PR yoga therapist training.

First, PR yoga therapy sessions have a structure that students are taught. This form is a set of activities and a predictable sequence of these activities, much like a session template. The structure of the session was visible to me as the following, sequenced activities.

The first step in a session is to verbally guide the client in a centering exercise that includes focusing on their breath, noticing any questions or issues that are current for them, and a short meditation. Second, the client is verbally guided in a body scanning process so that they can begin to notice what is current for them at a physical level. Third, the therapist supports the client in selected hatha yoga postures and a simple breathing technique, while verbally prompting the client to notice their experience (e.g., sensation at the physical,

emotional, or thought level; visual images; auditory recall). Fourth, the therapist guides the client in a five-part integration process to conclude the session.

The therapist is also taught technical forms that they use with clients during sessions. For example, there are particular ways for the therapist to stand and move while supporting clients, and certain ways to move a client's body. Students learn these forms during Level 1 and 2 training, with many opportunities for reviewing and refining technical form during Level 3. Dialogue techniques have a standard form too, that therapists-in-training are required to use, especially in the early stages of practice.

Students are also taught some subtler forms in the way of decision making guidelines to use with the posture assist and dialogue forms, particularly during the one-on-one coaching they receive from their mentor during Level 3 training. While there is not as much direct teaching around decision making rules, these forms are frequently modeled by training staff during Level 1 and 2 training, and are often implied in phone conversations between mentor and student. From my conversations with training designers, I learned there may be interest in making decision making a more formal part of the training program.

There is also a philosophical form to PR yoga therapy. This form is much less visible and, I believe, much more difficult to understand and communicate. Over the time of this study I have come to appreciate the complexity of the

values, assumptions, and beliefs--about self, ways of knowing, the process of change--that inform the theory and practice of PR yoga therapy. This type of yoga therapy exists in a western culture, has clearly been influenced by western philosophical traditions, yet is also an outgrowth of ancient eastern teachings and beliefs.

The issues related to different cultural and language forms coming together in the practice of PR yoga therapy have many communication implications. In addition, there are issues related to accurate over-time translation and the relevance of ancient yoga teachings to modern life. While it has not been my goal to study these philosophical forms, the absence of such discussion does not reflect its unimportance. In fact, I have come to believe that the hybrid philosophy of PR yoga therapy is a very important feature of this work and one of the most difficult training challenges.

These subtle philosophical forms are in some ways a bridge to understanding the difference between form and essence. What I noticed in my study of PR yoga therapy, and what I heard trainers say, is that someone can demonstrate mastery of the form of the work, yet not be doing the work correctly. It is even possible that a practitioner can have the correct philosophical form but not the correct philosophical essence. That is, someone can intellectually comprehend the values, attitudes, and beliefs that inform PR yoga therapy, yet miss the core essence of the work: a way

of being authentically present.

One senior trainer phrased the goal of training yoga therapists as the goal of movement toward the authentic self:

The authentic self is the concept of the witness. One way I can talk about the authentic self is how it works. It works responsively instead of reactively. The shadow part of ourselves, the emotional baggage we carry around, the buttons that get pushed--these are reactions, not responses. The authentic self doesn't have buttons, it side steps projection.

Yoga has been practiced for thousands of years and the Sanskrit teachings have been translated by uncountable numbers into numerous languages. For many, east and west, yoga has been a topic of intellectual interest, even a set of practices, yet void of the experience of union. It appears quite easy to confuse the form of yoga with yoga.

One of the founders of PR yoga therapy expressed it this way:

Now in our particular modality we use the body as the key vehicle because it is such an accurate mirror of our beingness and there's also such a wealth of information we can be aware of - we can use for deeper awareness. So the body component is a real important element in the process. But it's not about the body really, it's almost like the body is beside the point. That's not really the "what it's all about". The what it is all about is much deeper than that.

What is the "deeper than that" part of PR yoga therapy? During the 1995 Unity in Yoga Conference, Michael Lee, who with his partner Lori Bashour founded PR yoga therapy, explained it this way:

I ask the question - what really is yoga to me - and I approach yoga therapy from that place. For me it has been an important element in what I would call my personal growth, my transformation, and it keeps me right at the edge of that even today.

So to me the essence of yoga therapy is to be able to offer an individual the potential to use all that's available in yoga ... to facilitate a process of transformation, facilitate their using life as a vehicle for change. That might be at a physical level, might be at an emotional level, at a mental level - but ultimately at a spiritual level.

The spiritual piece is the essence of yoga to me. If I ask myself "why did the yogis practice yoga for 6,000 years, the answer for me to that is that it was a vehicle for transformation, it was a tool through which they could move from one state of being in life to another state of being....

In PR yoga therapy the essence of the work is to assist others to "move from one state of being to another state of being" using the particular forms that yoga offers. Some training staff use the word "transformation" to explain the process of moving from one a state of being to another, while other trainers prefer different language, or struggle to find any western concept that explains this process of change.

In summary, form plays a role in PRYTherapy. It is present as structure, technique, guidelines, and a hybrid philosophy. Form is necessary in PRYTherapy, but it is not sufficient. There is something else that distinguishes this work in the minds and hearts of those who teach others to do it. The something else, the "deeper than that," includes the theory and practice of loving presence.

Essence

One way of thinking of the essence of PR yoga therapy is that it is a tool individuals may use to move from one state of being in life to another state of being; it is a vehicle for spiritual transformation based upon a synthesis of different cultural values and beliefs. The presence of the PR yoga therapist as an unobtrusive observer in the session is an important piece in this work. One essential characteristic of a PR yoga therapist is named "loving presence."

Where did the phrase "loving presence" come from? Mr. Lee responded to my question in this way:

Loving presence was a phrase I first used in a demonstration workshop when I was trying to explain to a participant what it was, specifically, that I was doing during the demonstration. The phrase 'loving presence' came from synthesizing into words the participant's observation about the duality of my presence and non-presence during the demonstration. The participant observed that presence and non-presence--at the same time--had a powerful effect in supporting the client to enter more deeply and fully into what his moment to moment experience was, and to then describe that.

The people who do this work link the ability of the client to enter "more deeply and fully into their moment to moment experience" with the transformational goals of this work, and with the ability of the therapist to be a loving presence. "The duality of my presence and non-presence" is language that is understood by many yoga therapist professionals. It seems to refer to being present-in-the-

moment to guide the client's process, using the forms described above, with a spacious and compassionate heart that flows out of belief in the oneness of self-and-other (i.e., self-knowledge) and an attitude of non-attachment to specific outcomes.

Beginning To Define Loving Presence. I believe that the expert trainers and practitioners I spoke with and observed understand loving presence as both a theory and as a practice. Loving presence as a guiding principle is an ideal that therapists aspire to; loving presence as practice is visceral and immediate. This way of being with clients is not always present during a session and it is not always present to the same degree when it is present.

In order to understand the idea of loving presence as a professional standard in PR yoga therapy, I tried to look at it as knowledge, skill, and attitude, concepts I was familiar with from my instructional design background. At first these categories seemed inadequate to explain what training staff had told me, and what I had observed, about loving presence. But as I considered knowledge, skill, and attitude from the perspective of my understanding of yoga, I began to see these categories in different ways.

As a beginning step in defining loving presence, in order to talk about how therapists are trained to be a loving presence, I have borrowed the concepts of "knowledge," "skill," and "attitude" as a way to think comprehensively about what loving presence is. In this

chapter I describe loving presence as at least self-knowledge, the skill of conscious awareness, and an attitude of non-attachment. I use the words and actions of experienced therapists, and my observations of trainers and the training program, as evidence that loving presence includes these components.

But I believe using this conceptual scheme is only beginning a process of defining the construct of loving presence. I have found it very difficult to impose a rule of mutual exclusivity to these categories; often the concept boundaries were not clear and one idea or example seemed to go in more than one place. I deliberated over whether such an abstract and subtle practice as conscious awareness could be considered a skill. I struggled with non-attachment as a guiding principle itself, and therefore not subsumed by loving presence but parallel to it. In the end I began to wonder about the role of culture and language as significant factors--although beyond the scope of this study to investigate--influencing my attempt to define loving presence.

While these ways of thinking and talking about loving presence are not completely satisfactory to me, they have been useful. I offer them as a starting point for wider discussions about this construct in those fields where loving presence may be a helpful professional principle and standard. In the final chapter, Chapter 6, I return to the challenge of defining the construct of loving presence.

Self-knowledge. I have come to use the phrase "self-knowledge" to describe a knowledge component of the principle of loving presence. In a yoga context, knowledge often refers to the experience of oneness, to a knowing of union. This type of self-knowledge recognizes the individual self as part of (or the same as) a larger whole. In this paradigm, the self and the other are one; that is, there is no separation between oneself and others.

As a person practices yoga techniques, particularly meditation, she begins to recognize a part of the self that is separate from her thoughts, feelings, and actions. This larger self, sometimes called the transcendent self, is like the sky through which the clouds of thought, action, and emotion pass. This self-knowledge, the knowing of the unified self behind the disparate physical, mental, and emotional selves, is the fundamental goal of yoga. It includes a belief in the oneness of self and other.

Developing self-knowledge is sometimes called a process of unlearning in yoga; it is about letting go of identifying one's self with concepts and stepping into direct experience. A primary goal of a PR yoga therapy session is to facilitate the client's moment-to-moment experience of sensations of thought and feelings, and their experience of the connection between what is typically labeled body-mind-spirit. While self-knowledge is a goal of the work, it is also a feature of therapist presence because therapists' self-knowledge is a belief that they are not separate from

their client. A master PRYTherapist and trainer used the image "of a person having a profound conversation with the self" to describe how this type of yoga therapy serves the goal of self-knowledge:

It is to create space for people to get deeply in touch with themselves. It is less about what the therapist does and more about the space the therapist creates so the client can do their own work. It is working with people to communicate with themselves on a deeper level than they normally do. The person has a profound conversation with the self.

Mr. Lee has talked about what the therapist does to facilitate this deeper level of communication with the self:

It appears as though the therapist is "doing" loving presence, but the client is actually doing a shift in awareness. It's like a beam of light on the wall--we can rotate the lens and create a bigger spot. We see more, our vision is expanded, we are aware of more, accept more.

All the therapist needs to do is to create a state of comfortability. The essence of loving presence is like sitting back into a soft armchair; it is like the consciousness Ram Dass mentions--the "Ahhh". The degree of comfortability is critical.

It is my understanding, from these words, that the therapist is instrumental in "rotating the lens" and expanding the client's range of vision; yet the therapist is not 'doing' it. The image here is, I believe, one of the therapist coaching the client to adjust the client's "lens" to a wider angle. The therapist's loving presence in the session is linked to the client's experience of "comfortability", an important prerequisite to the widening

and narrowing of client focus on their sensations and feelings. "The space they (therapists) create" is a critical element in clients' ability to "do their own work."

This way of being on the part of PR yoga therapists includes a commitment to their own growth and transformation, a commitment to their own process of self-knowledge that includes experiencing "self as other." When I asked the five staff members at the Level 1 and 2 training I observed in 1993 to describe a very professional PR yoga therapist, many of the words and images they used referred to the professional's commitment to personal growth. In their words, a professional yoga therapist is:

- someone who is on a spiritual path and practices a daily sadhana (spiritual practice);
- a loving presence; compassionate without judgment; accepting; interested in their own growth;
- one that exemplifies integrity; appearance; presence; confidence; leadership; love and warmth;
- someone who has a daily yoga and meditation practice; an accomplished yoga practitioner; someone committed to their own growth and healing of body, mind and spirit; someone I can feel safe with, nurtured, supported; someone I can learn from;
- loving, non-judgmental (clear about who they are and where their 'stuff' is coming from) - which is an explanation of what PR models; also knowledgeable, self-assured, carries self with dignity, is a role model of the profession they represent.

While the commitment to personal growth may be less clear in the comments of the third and fifth informants

above, words such as "integrity" and the phrase "clear about who they are and where their 'stuff' is coming from" imply at least a positive attitude toward to self-growth. Since yoga practice is a requirement for therapists-in-training, and because Phoenix Rising is yoga therapy, it is assumed and implicitly required that training staff have a yoga practice. Yoga is fundamentally a path of personal transformation (and growth) and thus any reference in the above comments to yoga practice implies a commitment to own's personal growth. The level of commitment and how it is enacted varies across individuals, but in principle it is one of the most important values a trainer and PR therapist has.

Most, if not all, expert practitioners and trainers I talked with specifically mentioned the importance of PRYTherapists' commitment to self-growth. In a yoga context this means more than a commitment to develop a healthy self-concept, or healthy individual ego, but also a commitment to know the self as spirit or soul or whatever language one prefers to use in reference to a level of reality where the connection between all things is perceived.

The Skill of Conscious Awareness. A key figure in the training program gave an example of how self-awareness is connected with an individual's professional competence as a PR yoga therapist. Conscious self-awareness, as a part of loving presence, is both a practice of recognizing barriers to being a loving presence, and a method by which therapists

can approach their own growth process, their "next steps," in non-threatening ways. A very significant barrier to a therapist's capacity to be a loving presence during a client session may arise if the client's experience triggers an unresolved memory or feeling for the therapist. Through becoming acquainted with parts of the self that may have been shut of--through self-awareness--the therapist develops the capacity to be present to their client's shadow side. The training staff member phrased it this way:

This personal work is very important to professional competence because if a huge part of the therapist is cut off and kept in darkness - the shadow side - how can she be present to her client if it comes up for them?

For example, if I have put anger in the closet emotionally, what if someone goes into a rage during their session? I'll be scared out of my wits because my emotional boundary has been crossed, I cannot handle that emotion, and as a PRYTherapist I will probably do something to stop it.

I can only be present to another person to the extent I can be present to myself--that is the self-awareness piece.

In my adoption of the knowledge-skill-attitude framework to begin to define loving presence I propose that "conscious self-awareness" is a skill because it is a choice a therapist can make to take a particular action. The conscious self-aware act that the PR therapist seems to take, at many different points of the PR process and for different reasons, is to turn into the moment rather than away from it. This skill is called *conscious self-awareness*

because it is one-step removed from being self-aware.

Referring back to symbolic interactionism helps to make this point. In the theory of symbolic interactionism the self is composed of two parts ("I" and "me"), which explains how social meaning and perspective are internalized, made real, and have power over individual lives. I can be aware of that aspect of myself that directs my actions ("I") and aware of how I believe others will judge/evaluate/label that part of me that I direct and that is visible in social life ("me"). These combined awarenesses can be called self-awareness.

But who, or what aspect of the self, is witnessing both the "I" and the "me?" There is a self-conscious self-awareness process going on, and it is the ability to be consciously self-aware that I am proposing as the skill of conscious awareness. I envision this as the choice to evoke a larger reference frame than that associated with symbolic interactionism--to the extent that I fully understand the complexity of this theory. The possibility that symbolic interactionism cannot fully explain conscious awareness, or loving presence--yet is useful to a certain point--will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Months later I asked the senior trainer that I have quoted above if she believed that loving presence was the essence of PRYTherapy. In her response she talked about her concern that the phrase "loving presence" may have become jargon in PR yoga therapy and that she and others were now

thinking more actively about how to clarify its meaning. She linked loving presence with witness consciousness, love as non-attachment, and a safe container of permission that therapists create so that the client can stop self-censoring and be fully aware of themselves. I quote her at length:

My inclination is to say yes, loving presence is the essence of PR yoga therapy, but I am increasingly aware that "loving presence" has become jargon. It is not so much that the words aren't right but we need more words.

Part of what loving presence involves is witness consciousness, another huge concept. And the "love" in loving presence is used in another way not common in this culture; here we mean love as non-attachment.

Loving presence also has a quality of permission, a permission that we don't give ourselves but that is given by an other. The therapist is there with that quality and brings the permission of the "other" into the setting. The therapist creates a container of permission that both they and the client step into, whatever happens.

The image I have is that loving presence takes filters away. There are the filters we always have around our behavior, but we also have filters on what to think or feel. On the yoga mat the possibility for things to be revealed arises.

Carl Johnson, a student of Jung, has written about the process of owning your own shadow, and he describes an approach and vision similar to PR yoga therapy. When I read this I said "this is what we do". PRYT can create a place for that to be seen and accepted.

In PRYT we give the shadow side room to express. We all walk around with stuff that feels so unacceptable or confusing. The therapist sitting there in loving presence--their sitting there being O.K. with it--makes it O.K. for the client.

This experienced PR yoga therapist and therapist trainer pointed out in her comments that the word "love" in

loving presence is used in a way that is not common in this culture. The love in loving presence includes an attitude of non-attachment toward the object of one's love.

Attitude of Non-attachment. Non-attachment is a central value in yoga. Non-attachment may be a difficult attitude to understand, or perhaps endorse, in this culture or in secular life. To the extent that I understand non-attachment, it is (at least) a principle guiding action and an attitude taken toward action.

In a yoga context, with the ultimate goal being the realization of union, non-attachment means letting go of the inner struggle that may arise when we want things to be different than they are. This inner struggle "splits off" or separates some aspect of self that is not congruent with how we want things to be. In the language of symbolic interactionism if my socially internalized image of self ("me") is not congruent with how ("I") want to be, I (and "I") can direct "me" in different ways. The idea of social conditioning strongly supports the possibility of inner struggle and the separation of self.

An attitude of non-attachment is related to the goal of union in yoga. If there is not an attachment to a particular outcome there is not dynamic of separating (from the moment) should something else occur. In some ways an attitude of non-attachment is an energy conservation strategy: in fact energy is sometimes equated with God in yoga traditions. But my understanding is that, in this

system, to the extent that I push away any experience of immediate reality, I have enacted a separation from that experience, thus experiencing separation rather than union. Similarly, if I am attached to a particular outcome occurring and it does not happen, my attachment to the one outcome may preclude my accepting the actual outcome, with the result again being my separation from the immediate experience.

The "loving" component of loving presence is, I believe from what those inside the training said and did, very much connected to the attitude of non-attachment to outcome. The experience of love, in the context of yoga (union), includes at least knowing the other-as-self, non-possessiveness, non-violence, truthfulness, and contentment. It is a very high ideal, with energy, love, and God sometimes used interchangeably to mean the same state of being.

Practicing Non-attachment. With regard to PR yoga therapy, the therapist practices non-attachment to specific client outcomes, even while taking full responsibility for the process and structure of sessions. To the extent that therapists are not attached to their client having a particular insight, learning, understanding, and so on, they are able to accept that whatever happens for the client, as long as the client is safe, may be useful to that client in some way. When they judge the client's experience, they have moved away from the loving-as-non-attachment posture and other yogic beliefs related to union.

This is not to say that PR yoga therapists are always able to maintain an attitude of non-attachment. Here, I believe, western notions of self-awareness, self-acceptance, authenticity, and integrity influence the actual practice of loving presence. PR yoga therapy is not intended to be a vehicle for therapists or clients to pretend, deny, or conceal what their actual experience is. Authentic non-attachment is the goal; when that doesn't happen it just doesn't happen and therapists are encouraged to look at their own personal issues to see how they may have influenced having a personal agenda for their client.

Non-attachment to outcome is sometimes equated with the therapist not having an agenda. Therapists do have an agenda regarding the safe container of permission they attempt to create (i.e., loving presence); they do have an agenda regarding the process of widening and narrowing the client's "lens"; they do have an agenda related to the form and structure of sessions; and there are most likely other agendas I did not perceive in my study. But PR yoga therapists believe in and practice yoga, and part of this practice is attempting to let go of their personal agenda for their clients.

PR Yoga Therapy and Other Models. The significance of "no agenda" in PR yoga therapy was emphasized by Mr. Lee in a panel discussion, mentioned previously, on yoga therapy during the 1995 Unity in Yoga Conference. One yoga therapist on the panel, from another yoga therapy tradition,

made the point that yoga therapists need to be accepted by the medical community and work more with health care professionals. As they do this they need to understand and use the same language those in medical practice use in order to legitimize yoga therapy in those settings.

However, the founder of PR yoga therapy stated clearly that he did not feel it was a good idea for PR yoga therapy, so strongly grounded in the philosophy of non-attachment, to attempt to fit in with a medical model that is premised on "something happening." PR yoga therapists do not try to fix something in their clients and they must not negotiate that element of the work in order to find a wider audience. In this instance a defining characteristic of PR yoga therapy--non-attachment to particular client outcome--could be lost or watered down in order to mesh with a different model of health.

The acceptance of the client's experience, which the exemplary PR yoga therapist provides, is facilitated by the therapist's personal experience with the process. During training there is strong emphasis on teaching the student how to be a loving presence, by creating many opportunities for them to use PR yoga therapy as a tool for their personal growth. In Chapters 4 and 5 I describe some of the ways students are taught loving presence, including how to be a loving presence to themselves.

A COMPOSITE ILLUSTRATION OF A PR YOGA THERAPY SESSION

I turn now to a narrative description of an entire session based upon interview and observational data collected during the nine months I was a participant observer of PR yoga therapy. To insure the privacy of individuals in the training program, these narrative examples of therapists working and practicing are composite pictures. To develop these examples I took many specific details of behaviors I observed during my fieldwork and specific descriptions of the work provided by informants, and combined these. Thus this composite session is not one particular session I witnessed but a combination of many of my observations of trainers demonstrating the work to students, and talking about the work. My purpose is to illustrate the structure and forms of a session, as well as how loving presence appears as self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment in a yoga therapy session.

This description of a session is divided into four main parts: centering and check-in; body scan; posture assists; and integration. Yoga therapists-in-training are required to follow this session structure initially. Over time they are given different assignments that emphasize one component more than the others, and eventually they may chose other formats for particular sessions. For example, a client session may be an extended body scan and not include any posture assists, or it may comprise a very short scan and one extended posture assist. However, the front end and

final pieces of sessions (i.e., centering/check-in and integration) are always included in a session.

I have used italics throughout the description of this composite session to highlight instances where loving presence is being demonstrated.

Centering and Check-in

The session occurs in a bright, airy studio. A thick 7-foot by 4-foot mat surrounded with small throw pillows is in the center of the room. At the beginning of the session the client is asked if she would like pillows or a back support in order to sit comfortably on the floor. Often clients are assisted in finding a comfortable sitting position by showing them how to use pillows to sit without strain. In cases of special need the client is offered a straight back chair.

A first session begins with the client completing an information form that includes medical history and therapy experience, reason for interest in PRYT, and a question regarding the client's preferred label for her inner voice. The therapist uses the information provided to talk with the new client about her history, needs, and expectations, and to explain the modality. Typically this preliminary information gathering period flows easily into the start of the session. Infrequently, previously unknown information may be provided at this time that suggests that PRYT is not a good choice for this person. For example, individuals who

are not functioning on a daily basis or have mental disorders resulting in space/time distortions usually would not benefit from PRYT. Persons who have experienced major life traumas may find PRYT helpful in some phases of their recovery, and not helpful in other phases of recovery. There are also situations where the client may benefit from PRYT sessions while also seeing a psychotherapist regularly.

Key aspects of the work are explained at this time as well. For example, the therapist explains that PRYT is a tool for growth and that during the session he or she will support the client in yoga postures and a way of breathing that are intended to bring up sensation in the client's bodymind. The premise is that life experiences that have not been integrated have been stored in the body as tensions, and that moving the body in certain ways can facilitate the re-surfacing of such experience. PRYT is designed to support greater freedom and clarity in life now, by releasing patterns of belief and physical tension that may have been stored in the bodymind. The client is told that the therapist's role is to create a safe environment for the client to notice and experience the feelings that arise during the session, to witness what shows up for the client, and to provide a way of thinking about integrating session experiences into daily life.

It is important for the client to know that she has control over how intense the sensations become. Phrases the therapist may use to explain this are: "the idea is that you

experience just enough, but not too much, sensation while I assist you in the postures"; "it's up to you how much sensation is just enough; more is not necessarily better"; "on a 1 to 10 scale, with 1 being no sensation and 10 being too much, you would like to stay in the 7 to 8 range; I may ask you during the session where the sensation is on this scale"; and "please let me know if you experience discomfort at any time during the session."

With clients who have a history of physical or sexual abuse, there are other considerations related to keeping the client comfortable. In these cases the therapist will ask clients if they feel any discomfort about the therapist touching them. PR yoga therapists move the client's body throughout a session, so physical touch is integral to the process. It is important that safe boundaries exist for both client and therapist around touch. If there is a history of abuse, therapists may ask clients if they would prefer that before they touch them they tell them where they will be placing their hands (since the client's eyes are usually closed).

The therapist also checks with abuse survivors to find out if they have difficulty deciding when something is "too much" or in being able to verbalize this to others. If this is the case the therapist and client talk about how the client can let the therapist know when something is too much, such as lifting a hand or using another word for stop.

It is also important that clients understand that PRYT

is not about figuring out what the sensations mean in a mental way. While the therapist will ask the client "What's happening now?" at different points in the session, the purpose of the question is for the client to notice and be present to what is happening in body, mind, and emotions, not to figure it out or explain it to the therapist. It may take several sessions or longer for a client to understand this aspect of PRYT.

The client is also told about the general structure of a session and that the last part of each session is set aside for integration.

Preliminaries typically take much longer during a first session with a new client than they do in subsequent sessions. However, even though the information exchange is much briefer in following sessions, it is always used by the therapist to begin to assess the client's needs for that day and to establish a comfortable and safe setting for the session to unfold. The next step is to guide the client in a centering activity.

For the therapist, the centering, guided meditation, and the body scan provide information used to decide what postures to assist the client with that day. Three types of client reports are elicited as part of information gathering: The client's report of what is noticed at a thought level (check-in during centering); at a heart level (check-in during guided meditation); and at a physical level (check-in during body scan).

During the centering activity the client is guided to notice her inhalations and exhalations, and to relax her body. The therapist teaches the client how to breath more deeply and release the exhalation, called "falling out breaths." An example of the language the therapist may use to teach the client is, "Take in a comfortable full breath through the nose and let it fall out of the open mouth." The therapist also models the breath for the client.

After spending several minutes on breath awareness, the therapist invites the client to notice if there are any issues, questions, or concerns present in life for her now. If the client responds that there are many issues of concern, or many questions, the therapist may invite her to recognize that there are many issues but to notice if there is something on top. For example the language might be "imagine that you are going to physically stack up these issues, like they are blocks. Which issue or question or concern is at the top?"

The therapist asks the client to tell what she notices. The therapist feeds back to the client what the client says she has noticed, as a way of amplifying what was noticed. Sometimes clients don't notice anything during this check-in and that is fine. If there seems to be some discomfort around not having anything "up," the therapist may ask the client "what's happening now?" as a way to focus the client on her experience.

A key piece in the therapist's effectively posing

questions such as "what's happening now?" during a PR yoga therapy session is the posture of loving presence the therapist holds. One of the most challenging steps for the beginning therapist is to develop trust that supportive presence is not only enough, but is the essence of PR.

If the therapist decides that there is a natural opening to try again to facilitate the client's noticing what is up at a mental level, they may do so. The pivotal point is not to make the client feel "performance anxiety" or to engender a misunderstanding about the purpose of the check-in by over-emphasizing its importance.

Guided Meditation. Typically the next step in the session is to bring the client's awareness back to her breathing and to guide her in moving her attention inward. For clients who meditate, this is relatively easy; for those who do not, the therapist uses language and imagery to assist the client. The goal is to support the client in shifting focus from the mental/thought level just encountered when identifying an issue, to a quieter, softer focus.

For example, the client is invited to notice her inhalations and to begin to feel that her focus is moving inward. Typical language may be:

Notice your in-breath and sense your awareness moving inward as you breathe. Allow your focus to move past the world of the mind and into a spacious and peaceful place inside yourself. One way for you to connect to this inner sanctuary is to recall a place, person or experience when you have felt completely at peace.

Recall the details of that time. Now let your attention soften even more to how you felt, the feeling of wholeness, safety,

The therapist may ask the client to nod, lift a hand, or in some way signal that focus has shifted inward. Once the client feels an inner connection, the therapist asks her to notice if there is a wish or a heart's intention for this session.

In this guided meditation the client is led to come inward, to an inner sanctuary, and if there is no connection with that inner voice, there may be disappointment or self-judgment. This lack of achieving "inner connection" may be especially troublesome to experienced meditators, an instance of performance anxiety in spiritual context. It is also the case that if the client does not report a wish or heart intention, it might be that she is unfamiliar with this process and/or feels uncomfortable telling the therapist what she notices. It may also be that nothing shows up for her.

In any case, this can be a time when the therapist speaks directly to the fact that in PR yoga therapy there is no premium placed on something "being there," and that the inner voice can be very quiet or silent. The emphasis is placed on the act of noticing, the act of conscious awareness, and not on the sharing of what is noticed. The purpose of speaking the wish out loud is to amplify its volume through speaking it and having the therapist feed it

back.

Body Scan. The therapist then invites the client to come to a standing position. The next step in the sequence of a first PR yoga therapy session is to guide the client in a full body scan. The purpose of a body scan is twofold: the client is guided to pay close attention to the physical sensations in the body and continues the awareness process that began with the verbal check-ins; second, the therapist is provided with another source of client-generated information to help make choices of postures with which to assist the client.

Guided body scans may be quite detailed or more general. The therapist begins by standing opposite the client and guides the client in resuming the falling-out breaths learned earlier. The therapist may say to the client:

Imagine that you are going on a journey to a country that you have never been to before. Everywhere you go there are new vistas, new people, new experiences. You notice different feelings arising in yourself as you travel through this country. As I guide you to notice different areas of your body, imagine that you are going on such a journey.

Bring your awareness inside each body part. Avoid judging what you notice, simply become this traveler. You can notice the feelings that arise without saying anything to me.

Come now to the bottom of your feet. Notice where your weight seems to rest. Do you seem to be standing with the weight to the outside of your feet, or to the inside, or perhaps you can't tell. How do your feet connect you to the floor? Do they feel strong, weak, perhaps not even there? Become aware of your breathing and explore how your feet feel from the inside...

The therapist guides the client's awareness from the feet to the ankles, calves, knees, thighs, pelvis, torso front, torso back, shoulders, arms and hands, neck, skull, and face. The intention is to cue the client to notice sensations without coloring what they notice. For example, if the client is asked if her calves feel tight or loose, a constraint on what she notices may inadvertently be placed. It is preferable to say "Do you notice tightness, looseness, or other feelings such as...in your calves?" or to simply say "How do the calves feel, is there any sensation there?" or "If your calves could talk to you, what would they report?"

Some clients find it harder to experience the feelings in their body than do other clients. The typical person's experience of his or her body has much more to do with how it looks from the outside, for example, how it looks in a mirror. Often socially conditioned judgments about one's body surface quickly when a person is asked to focus on it. So it becomes important that a clear explanation of the purpose of the body scan be given, i.e., "The body scan is not a mental experience of the body. It is designed to guide you to notice feelings in the body, the physical sensations. If you notice judgments of your body come up, just notice them and then bring your awareness back to sensations."

Sometimes a client has difficulty with the body scan, and the therapist reassures her that whatever she notices is all right, including noticing very little. Many clients

will find that some areas of their body seem void of sensation while others are full of feelings. It is all right if the client does not experience much in the body, because the absence of awareness of sensation is information in and of itself.

After guiding the client through the body scan the therapist often invites the client to thank her body for sharing this information in the best way it knew how. This kind of invitation encourages a sense of relationship with and compassion for one's body that may be new to the client.

The next step is to ask the client what she remembers about the body scan. The question might be posed this way: "Tell me what the highlights of the body scan are for you." The therapist usually feeds back what the client reports as a way of acknowledging the feelings, and sometimes to check that he or she has heard correctly. The information shared with the therapist after the body scan also contributes to a decision about what postures to assist the client with.

Assisted Postures

To illustrate how a session would continue to unfold, I will use a fictitious client named Julie. While this description is not from a specific session, the client's experience is not unusual in light of my field observations, training staff interviews, and the approximately 100 client reports written by students that I read.

In this composite description Julie is already

experienced with PR yoga therapy. This is her fourth session with the therapist. Julie's experiences are presented in order to illustrate the actions and presence of an experienced, skillful therapist in response to a continuing client. The therapists actions and presence are representative of how I saw the work consistently demonstrated by trainers and how the work is described in the training manual and other training materials.

Julie's Check-in. During the first check-in Julie noticed that she was concerned about balancing work and family demands in life. During the guided meditation she noticed that she wished she could trust more in herself. After the body scan she reported that the left leg felt very heavy and the right leg felt very light; that she felt some discomfort in her low back, and that her chest felt tight.

After the body scan the therapist used all these sources of information, including information obtained from the information sheet and during the preliminary greeting, to make decisions about the postures to assist the client in. In this hypothetical case the therapist, named Susan, decides on cobra, knee-down twist, child, and phoenix rising as postures she will support the client in.

Susan asks Julie if she has done any yoga or exercise that day to determine if a series of warmup exercises would be appropriate for this client. Because Susan has decided on the postures she will support Julie in, she knows that the spine, shoulders, and hips will be involved. Julie is a

yoga student and responds that she did some postures that morning, so the yoga posture assists begin.

The Therapist as Loving Presence. Susan asks Julie to lie on her back on the mat, and kneels beside her. She invites Julie to close her eyes, to begin to relax into the support of the floor beneath her, and to resume the falling-out breath. The language here may be:

Let your eyes close and begin to feel your body relax. Feel the support of the floor beneath you and allow yourself to let the weight of your body go. Become aware of your in-breath and your out-breath, and begin to take in full and steady inhalations and let them fall out of your open mouth.

Susan models this breath and *synchronizes her own breathing rhythm to that of her client*. She tells Julie that she will begin the session by placing her left hand on Julie's upper chest and her right hand on her abdomen. She does this and as Julie exhales she gently rocks the abdomen - further encouraging her client's relaxation with the presence of her hands. She continues to synchronize her breath with Julie's.

She invites Julie to "*let go of any agenda you may have for the session, and to notice the sensations that come into your awareness.*" She also tells her client, "*Please let me know if I support your body in a way that causes you discomfort,*" and reminds her that "*the purpose of the assisted postures is to experience an edge of sensation that is enough but not too much for you.*"

Susan recognizes that some clients have a hard time determining when a sensation is too much. She knows that her own judgment is important and to watch Julie for facial and physical cues that indicate too much or too little sensation. She also knows that some clients habitually strive for the edge of sensation in life, and that hanging back from the edge is actually more of "an edge" for these clients than is the physical edge. *At no time, however, will she take a client past an edge that the client determines to be enough.*

Susan tells her client that before moving into postures she is going to move Julie's legs and arms in some preliminary stretches, to support the body in relaxing even more. She goes to her client's feet, and stretches each leg and foot, and then rolls the leg side-to-side using gentle but firm movement. She moves to her client's arms and extends and relaxes each in a similar way. During Susan's training she learned a particular sequence of extensions alternated with shaking or rolling the limbs, but over time she has incorporated techniques from other body work modalities.

During this time Susan verbally coaches Julie to practice the steady, full inhalations and falling-out exhalations learned at the beginning of the session. She may model the breathing technique herself, as *she synchronizes her breath to her client's breath.* The language of this coaching may be "Begin to take steady,

comfortable, full inhalations and to let them fall out of your open mouth." (Susan begins to model this for Julie to copy.) She might also say, "Let each exhalation be an opportunity to relax and let go a little more."

The therapist synchronizes his or her inhalations and exhalations with the client's as a way of establishing an energetic link with the client. The belief in self-as-other, the yoga concept of union, is operationalized by synchronizing breath. Throughout the session Susan will also pay attention to her own breathing process and remind herself to breath fully and steadily. Similarly she will be paying attention to her client's breathing as both an important cue about Julie's experience in that moment and to coach her client in the breathing technique used in PR yoga therapy.

About five to seven minutes may be spent in these opening movements. The therapist may also extend and stretch the neck at this time. Completing this, Susan asks Julie to roll onto her stomach, or alternately tells Julie that she will roll her onto her stomach. In PR yoga therapy the therapist does almost all of the moving of the client's body, inviting the client to give up the physical work to the therapist and to focus on noticing the physical, mental, and emotional experiences instead. This is in keeping with the role of the therapist to support the client's process of focusing on her inner (versus outer) experience. When it does not intrude into the client's experience, or when the

therapist is much smaller than the client, it may be more efficient to just ask the client to roll over.

Susan then comes to Julie's feet and picks up one leg, allowing it to bend, and begins to swing it gently side to side, and then to press the foot toward the buttock. She asks Julie to let her know, as she presses the foot toward the buttock, when the sensation (probably in the front of the thigh) is just enough but not too much. The press is done slowly to permit Julie to notice when the sensation is just enough. She coaches her to breath in steadily and to let the exhalation fall out. This sequence, preliminary to the cobra pose, is repeated with the opposite leg.

To assist her client with the cobra position, Susan selects one of several possible assists based upon her own physical size, her client's size, any restrictions the client (or she) may have, and the client's previous experience with yoga. She verbally guides the client to come into the start position and then positions herself to hold Julie's arms while standing over Julie's legs, bending her own legs to keep her back straight. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 1

Photos Provided Courtesy of Michael Lee and Phoenix Rising

After a short period of holding, Susan asks Julie, "Where is the sensation, on a scale of one to ten?" Julie responds that the sensation is "maybe at four." Susan asks her client if she would like to be lifted a little higher and Julie says yes. Susan begins to slowly lift her client, maintaining correct alignment in her body by following the body dynamics she was taught in training. In this assist the angle of her body and the use of her legs instead of her back are important to insure she does not injure herself.

She says next, "Please tell me when you feel that the sensation you are experiencing is about a 7 or 8 on a 1 to 10 scale." Susan lifts her client slowly and steadily so that Julie can notice the sensation that arises and can communicate to Susan when it is enough. When Julie determines that the sensation is enough but not too much, the period of holding in the pose begins.

The intention at this point is that Susan hold Julie in this pose in a way that does not strain her own body while permitting her client to hold as long as she wishes. PR yoga therapists learn correct positioning of their own body and practice strengthening their body throughout their training program so they do not put themselves at risk of injury while assisting their client with postures. Because the therapist has positioned herself to physically support the client in the pose, the client is invited to let go of using her own muscles to hold herself in the posture, and to let the therapist do the work.

Susan reminds her client to breath in full comfortable breaths and to let them fall out on the exhalation, letting go of holding herself in the pose and relaxing as best as she can. After a short period of breathing and silence, perhaps 15 seconds, Susan asks Julie, "What's happening now?" Julie says that she feels "some discomfort in my back" and Susan feeds back to her "you feel some discomfort in your back... tell me more about 'discomfort in your back'."

Julie is silent for a few moments, then says "do you mean why do I think it is there?" At this point Susan realizes that her client is not clear on the purpose of the dialogue in PR yoga therapy, so she responds to clarify the purpose of dialogue. She says, "I will be asking you 'What's happening now' at points in your session as a way for you to notice what is going on for you at that moment. It is a prompt for you to notice if there is physical or emotional feeling happening and to focus on what you notice. For example, does the 'discomfort in your back' have any other characteristics you notice?" Julie replies that it "feels hot" and that she wants to come down from the pose. Susan responds by slowly lowering her client toward the floor.

Susan knows that in a first session, sometimes for the first several sessions, the client is learning about the process, and learning to feel safe with the process and the therapist. She knows that the sense of safety, physical and

emotional, in a PR session is an essential ingredient in the client's ability to notice sensations that arise. She also knows that PRYTherapy is client directed; the client is given the power to decide when sensation is too much.

With Julie again resting on the floor, Susan adjusts her own position to be kneeling at one side of her. She invites Julie to use the falling-out breaths and to notice the sensations of the release of the posture. She decides to ask her client, "What's happening now?" to which Julie responds, "I feel warmth spreading over my back." Susan decides not to feed back what her client has just said and remains silent. *She understands that silence is a powerful tool to assist her client in remaining in touch with her experience, that she does not have to do anything other than remain present.*

After a minute or two Susan says to Julie, "I am going to assist you into child pose, a position that will complement the cobra you were just in. I will bring my hands to the front of your hips, and you can begin to push your hands into the mat and lift your hips back toward your heels as I assist you with the lift". Julie, because of her status as a yoga student, is knowledgeable about the child pose and comfortable in it. For some clients, props such as blankets and pillows are used to permit the client to rest comfortably in child pose, a position that has the client sitting on her heels and knees and folding forward so that the head is toward the floor.

With Julie in the child pose, Susan reminds her to breath comfortable full breaths and to let her shoulders drop toward the floor as she exhales. She then steps behind her client and begins to press down, along the ileac crest just below the waist, providing firm pressure and support for the back to release. She says, "Tell me if you would like less press or more press." She also provides a diagonal press toward each shoulder from the opposite hip, to help Julie relax the shoulders. (See Figure 2.)



Figure 2

Photos Provided Courtesy of Michael Lee and Phoenix Rising

Next she comes around to the side of her client and *pauses to focus on her own breathing and check in with herself.* She then asks, "What's happening now?" Julie is very quiet after Susan asks her this question.

As Susan again connects with her own breathing *she notices that she is uncertain about her timing in asking her client "what's happening now."* As she briefly witnesses her own feelings and thoughts *she notices some anxiety that she hasn't done it "right," that perhaps she has interrupted her client's experience with her query.* As she becomes aware of the thoughts, and the feelings accompanying the thoughts, *she takes a steady breath in and out.*

Later she may choose to revisit these feelings, but her intention now is to be present for her client. In a period of a few moments she has focused inward, scanned her own experience, noticed thoughts and feelings, chosen to let the feelings go for the time being, and returned to be present to her client. She has practiced *being a loving presence to her own experience.*

Susan also knows, from her own experience of the modality, that clients may be silent when attuning to sensations and images within themselves. The simple prompt "What's happening now?" invites Julie to notice what is happening inwardly and is primarily a focusing and deepening device rather than a way of providing the therapist with information. In this way the silence is one sign that the client understands the use of the verbal cue to deepen her

focus.

Susan becomes aware, from the movement of her client's body, that Julie is crying softly. *She notices her own breathing, steadying it, and understands this moment as an important connection for Julie. As an experienced PR yoga therapist, she knows that her presence as a witness to her client's experience and the safe space she holds for her client to feel, are the heart of this work. She knows that the safety of this moment is connected to her ability to witness her client's experience without intruding in it. She stays focused on her breathing, moment to moment, as the pivotal tool to support Julie in staying with her experience as it occurs.*

As the crying continues, Susan asks, "What's happening now, Julie?" Julie replies "I feel so lonely, like there is no one to take care of me." Susan says, "Tell me more about 'no one to take care of you'." There is silence and then the crying seems to stop. Julie responds, "I feel how tight my stomach is, like it is in knots." Susan feeds back to her client, "You feel like your stomach is in knots. Tell me more..." Julie says, "I feel like my insides are all tied up in knots, like I can't move on the inside."

Julie's voice has become louder as she says this, and Susan feeds back, "like you can't move on the inside." Susan coaches her client to take full falling out breaths. Eventually she asks, "What's happening now, Julie?" After some time Julie says, "I feel like it's hard to breathe,

like I want out of this position." Susan asks, "would you like to come out?" and her client replies, "Yes."

Susan asks Julie if she would like to proceed with one final posture. While Susan had started out the posture assist part of the session thinking she would assist her client with two additional postures, she modifies this plan based upon her client's experience. She judges that at this point it would be helpful to Julie to support her in the Phoenix Rising pose and then to come directly to the integration portion of the session. She knows that the Phoenix Rising will open the chest and stomach areas and will balance the folding over quality of the Child pose.

Susan positions her client's arms above her head and asks Julie to clasp each of her own elbows with her opposite hand. She gives a simple explanation of this pose and where she will be moving the client, then comes into position standing in front of her client. She bends her legs, keeping her back straight, and clasps each of Julie's elbows with one of her hands. She invites Julie to stay focused on full, falling-out breaths, and to let her (Susan) do all the work associated with the movement.

In this assist Susan lifts Julie from the forward folded position to an upright position sitting on her heels. Susan moves very slowly, creating traction on Julie's back as she lifts. This is strenuous for Susan, and she stays focused on steadying her own breathing and keeping her back straight, using her legs to do the work. (See Figure 3.)



Figure 3

Photos Provided Courtesy of Michael Lee and Phoenix Rising

Mid-way up Susan asks Julie, "What's happening now?" A few moments of silence follow, and then Julie says, "I am just noticing my breathing." Susan remains silent and lifts Julie a little higher. Continuing to support her client as she slowly lifts her, Susan steps to Julie's side as she reaches the conclusion of the assist and moves behind her. This transition is challenging for the therapist-in-training, and, depending upon the size of the client, it may be difficult for the experienced therapist as well. Standing behind Julie, Susan extends her client's arms above her head, then lowers them slowly down.

She invites Julie to lean back and turns her own body sideways so that she can support her client's weight with the side of her leg. To conclude the posture *she brings one of her hands to Julie's forehead and puts the other hand on her client's upper chest, holding the hands here as she steadily breathes.* This hand position is a polarity move and stems from the belief that the energy flowing between the therapist's hands helps to balance the client's energy.

After a short while she slowly removes her hands, brings one hand to her client's back, and invites Julie to take her weight back as Susan moves her hand up her back and steps away. Susan comes to sit in front of Julie and invites her client to move or stretch in any way that she would like.

Integration

The integration component of the session begins with Julie again seated. Susan guides her client to resume the falling out breathing practice. Then she says, "Julie, let your experiences of this session come back into your awareness. Recall those aspects of the session that stand out for you, that are the headlines, so to speak. Please tell me what you remember."

After a minute or so Julie begins to speak:

I remember how relaxing it felt to have you move my arms and legs at the beginning of the session.. I didn't have to do anything... and I remember how strong and hot the sensation was in my back during the cobra pose... I was glad you didn't force me to stay there...

But what really stands out for me are the images and feelings I had while being in the child pose. I had an image of myself when I was a child... I was alone in my room... I was so lonely... I felt knots in my stomach..."

Julie becomes silent and Susan says, "is there anything else you remember?" Julie replies, "I remember in the last pose when you were lifting me up, I thought 'I wonder if she can hold me.. what if she drops me?' then I remembered to breathe and I started to relax and let you hold me... then I felt this sense of peace."

Susan feeds back to Julie the experiences of the session that her client has reported. Next she says, "Julie, please reflect for a few moments on what you have noticed about your session, what the big pieces were for

you, and ask yourself if these experiences or feelings ever show up for you in daily life. Ask if there are any connections between what you have just noticed and how life shows up for you day to day."

Julie laughs, seemingly seeing connections right away. Susan asks, "what's happening?" Julie says, "Well, it always seems like I have to do everything for my family, my children and husband, and I frequently wish I could get away from that. That comes up for me but I don't really know why... And then there is also that feeling of loneliness. Sometimes I feel that way. What do you think it means?"

Susan replies, "*What do you think it connects to?*" Julie is silent. After a minute or so Susan continues by leading her client in a meditation with these words, "Julie, as you notice your breathing, let your focus come to each inhalation. Feel your awareness drop even deeper inside of yourself...into a place of safety and peace. *As you come home to this inner sanctuary you are coming home to your inner voice, a voice of wisdom and love for all that you are.* When you feel yourself established in this place, ask if there is any counsel or guidance for you at this moment in you life." Susan then waits.

Julie says, "I am in a garden, a garden that was in our backyard in the house I lived in as a child. There is a swing set there and I go over and start to swing, swinging really high, and there is this strong feeling that I can swing all the way around, and the words 'you are safe'."

Susan repeats the inner counsel she has heard Julie report, "you are safe." Julie nods.

Next Susan says, "Julie, see if there is an affirmation that comes from this counsel, a simple positive statement that begins with 'I am' and if one comes to you, when you feel ready, tell me what it is." Silence follows and then Julie speaks very softly, "I am safe with my feelings." Susan waits and then softly asks, "Would you like repeat your affirmation?" Julie says, "I am safe, and I have feelings." rephrasing her affirmation slightly. A short period of silence follows.

The last step in the integration is to invite Julie to consider if there is some action she might take over the next day or so to support herself in this affirmation. Susan says, "Julie, ask yourself if there is something simple you might do in the next day or so, some practical action you might take to support yourself in life and to remind you of this guidance. If something comes up for you, please tell me what it is." Julie says, "I get a clear picture of me swinging on the swing that is in the backyard, our children's swing set." Susan asks, "Is there a time in the next day or so that you can take to go out there and swing?" Julie replies, "Yes, I think so." to which Susan says, "When do you see that being?" Julie says, "This evening, I have time tonight."

Julie has kept her eyes closed throughout the integration, so Susan now invites her to slowly open her

eyes. Susan says, "I affirm your ability to be with the feelings that came up for you during your session, and the safety I felt in you to be with those feelings. Do you have any questions, Julie?" Julie answers, "Not right now."

"If you have questions that come up and it would be helpful to talk with me about them, please call. I have paper here for you to write down the guidance that came to you, and your affirmation. Would you like to do that?" Julie responds, "Yes" and the session ends on that note.

Examples of Loving Presence

In this description of a PR session Susan stayed connected to her own and her client's breathing as one way of putting the *self-knowledge* component of loving presence into practice. Focusing on breath is an effective tool to be present in the moment, and being fully present in the moment is sometimes likened to an experience of union-oneness—in yoga systems. Synchronizing her breath with Julie's is a tool to establish connection with her client, to put the self-as-other piece of loving presence into practice.

Susan's skill in practicing *conscious awareness* was most dramatically illustrated at the point in the narrative when she realized she was anxious about having asked Julie a question that may have taken her client out of her experience. Two aspects of conscious awareness show up here, which help to clarify why the phrase is *conscious*

awareness. Conscious awareness includes the exercise of choice. First Susan became aware of what she was feeling, then she chose to take a deep breath and go on without setting up a spiral of self-judgment or rationalization. She knew that she could return to the experience after her client was gone, if she wanted to explore her anxiety relative to her own personal issues.

The attitude of *non-attachment* was illustrated at those points in the session when Susan chose to be present to Julie in silence, when she turned Julie's questions back to Julie for answer, when she changed the course of the session to accommodate Julie's experience in the child pose, when she used integration correctly to encourage Julie's reflection and personal insight, and when she did not dwell upon her own anxiety at that point in the session when it arose.

SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT LOVING PRESENCE IS NOT

Based on interviews with experienced training staff and on my participant observation of training, I began to develop some an idea of what PR yoga therapy may look like when loving presence is lacking. The following vignettes illustrate several things: 1) How form and essence are intertwined, and the ultimate importance of loving presence; 2) what therapists' agenda may look like and why it doesn't work; 3) how therapists' conscious awareness and commitment to their own growth can influence their professional

performance; and 4) how trainers and mentors work with students around their errors.

In each of the two composite cases that follow I have combined observational data and interview data to illustrate what training staff told me PR yoga therapy was not. I have also incorporated various types of errors I or others observed in the performance of students.

Case 1 - Therapist Agenda

During a practice session in Level 1 and 2 training two practice partners, R. and D., worked together. As R. began to assist D. in the pose, he decided it would help D. to bring him to his edge in this position and hold him there so that he could encounter his physical edge and "break through" it. He provided clear and explicit instructions for D. to move into the pose, emphasizing physical safety, which D. did. R. then reminded him to let him (R.) support his weight and to relax. As he felt D. relax, he lifted him higher in the pose.

Right after doing this D. said, "I feel pain in my neck." R. fed back to D., "You feel pain in your neck, tell me more about pain in your neck." D. said, "It hurts, I need to come down a bit." R. said, "It hurts and you need to come down a bit. Tell me more about 'It hurts'." D. responded, "No, I really need to come down some." R. said, "Tell me more about 'need to come down'."

At this point, D. said, "I don't feel like you are

hearing me. I really need to be lowered down some." In response to this information, R. lowered D. to the floor.

Discussion. D. had become aware that he did not trust R. to honor physical and emotional boundaries. He later expressed a personal annoyance and a professional concern that R. did not understand the importance of clients' setting the limits, did not seem to hear him, and did not recognize that his personal agenda to make something happen for him (D.) was operating.

While the misunderstanding of the use of edge is in some ways a technical issue, i.e., the correction is about the form of the work and changing the form can occur fairly easily by giving R. more information to understand the use of edge in this modality, D. experienced the bigger problem as the therapist having an agenda and allowing that agenda to direct the session. R. wanted D. to "break through" the pain.

Trainers say that a very frequent error on the part of beginning PRYTherapists is trying to make something happen. They report that over time, particularly in Level 3, therapists begin to uncover the personal issues that contribute to their having an agenda for their client.

Case 2 - Lack of Self-awareness

T. is the owner of a successful design company who in recent years had begun to focus more time on learning about a variety of mind-body-spirit practices. She is a

long-time meditator and has completed training as a polarity therapist. T. decided to train as a PRYTherapist and during her Level 3 practicum she offered a practice session to her husband K.

During the centering and check-in, K. reported he was feeling overwhelmed with the some things at work. T. replied that she was sorry about that and offered to take care of the children that evening so K. could work. K. said that he had already promised their son some special time together, and T. responded that he "always did that, complained and then wouldn't take help." Upon this, K. stood up and said "Forget it. I don't want this session." T. then apologized and asked her husband to please go through with the session because she needed it to write up as a report to her mentor. The session proceeded, though with some tension between them.

T. assisted K. with legs-to-side pose and twice said to him, "Just relax. Let me hold your leg." At one point she asked, "What is happening now?" to which K. replied, "I feel a burning sensation in my calf." T. immediately brought her free hand to his calf and held it there lightly. She then asked, "What's happening now?" and K. said, "It feels more relaxed." At another point in the session, during knee-down-twist, K. said that he was feeling some sadness. T. brought her hand to his upper chest, above his heart, rested it there and asked, "Does that feel better?" K. replied, "No, you interfered with my feeling."

During the integration at the end of his session, K. did not notice a positive affirmation for himself. T. offered him one. He said okay, and they concluded the session.

Discussion. PR yoga therapists-in-training recruit friends and family members to "practice on." The kinds of challenges that come up in these sessions often appear to have more to do with what is going on in that relationship than they have to do with practicing PRYTherapy. Frequently, however, these sessions are the clearest mirrors in which the trainees may notice how their beliefs and personal agenda can negatively affect their client's experience of PR.

In this case T. wrote up this session report very candidly and with a lot of detail. Her mentor asked her what was going on for her during this session. This occurred in a phone conversation they had after her mentor, P., had looked over the written report of the session T. gave to K.

P. had been practicing PRYTherapy for four years and had been a mentor for three years. Over the several months that she had been working with T., P.--like most mentors--had been inviting T. to notice what was going on for herself when she made decisions to do certain things in practice sessions with clients. Sometimes these questions were asked during the weekly phone conversation they had; many other times this question showed up in the comments P. wrote back

to T. on the session reports T. prepared as part of her Level 3 training.

In reviewing the report of the T.-K. session, P. noticed that T. had stepped out of her therapist role and into her wife role at the beginning of the session. When she asked T. about this, T. said, "I wanted to help him." Her mentor said, "Tell me more about wanting to help him."

This mentor-student conversation highlights how the therapist's issues show up in sessions as impediments to being present to the client, and how the training program uses these opportunities to develop therapist awareness. For therapists-in-training, an important change happens as they begin to "get" that the PR yoga therapy process is about supporting clients in being exactly where they are. This shift frequently occurs simultaneously with the trainees' increased awareness and acceptance of their own life issues.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy occurs within a framework of yogic values, assumptions, attitudes, beliefs and skills. Both the history and modern popularity of yoga practices have evolved from a world view that sees the purpose of life to be the rediscovery of the unity of body, mind, and spirit. "Loving presence" is one way to language a way of being on the part of therapists which facilitates the client's process in this direction.

Therapists' commitment to their own process of growth and transformation is inseparable from the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that comprise loving presence. Through their own yoga practice they experience self-as-other (i.e, self knowledge), develop skill at conscious awareness, and adopt an attitude of non-attachment, which they practice in sessions. PR therapists are not perfect in these ways, but the theory and practice of loving presence is spacious. The same spacious heart of compassion that they aspire to provide professionally is being developed at an intra-personal level to the extent that the therapist values becoming a loving presence to him- or herself.

The theory of symbolic interactionism provides a useful conceptual framework and language to begin to understand and define loving presence. It may not, however, account for those dimensions of loving presence that move beyond social psychological principles and into the realm of yoga.

In the next two chapters I describe the training program with the primary focus on how therapists are trained to be a loving presence to themselves. In my final chapter I summarize my study findings and discuss their implications for educational psychology theory and practice.

CHAPTER 4

TEACHING LOVING PRESENCE IN AN EIGHT-DAY TRAINING PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present study findings to answer my second research question:

2. How is the principle of loving presence taught to students in the PR yoga therapist training program?
 - A. What are the training goals related to loving presence?
 - B. What are the training strategies related to loving presence?

Loving presence, defined in the previous chapter as self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment, is taught to students in the Level 1 and 2 eight-day training program in several ways. Therapist trainers consistently said, and I observed, that a primary way of teaching loving presence is to create many opportunities for students to experience it. The most important experience of loving presence, these insiders say, is students' learning to be a loving presence to themselves at the same time they are learning about the professional practice of loving presence.

This is an over-time learning that begins immediately with Level 1 and 2 training, and becomes a major focus of

the mentor-student relationship in the Level 3 practicum. Self-presencing is an important theme that appears in every training session I observed. During training the students experienced many guided practice and debriefing sessions. During these repeated practice opportunities the teaching faculty coached the students to be consciously aware of breathing, to be in the moment, and to experience their connection with their client and themselves (self-knowledge), as well as to be consciously aware of any personal agendas that interfere with their acceptance of their practice partner's experience.

Though the conceptual framework I have adopted to communicate my study findings (i.e., self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment) was not presented as a definition of loving presence during training, in fact I did not hear an attempt to define the construct although it is used during training. The concepts are individually used at many times during training. These concepts are also implicit in the reading assignments, and are widely modeled by training staff.

I begin this chapter with a description of Level 1 and 2 training and the research site, followed by a description of the structure and goals of the training program. In the third section of the chapter the teaching of loving presence is described in several ways: a) through the actions and words of training staff, b) by describing an exercise used at the beginning of training, c) in a section that details a

routine used to teach students the use of posture assists, d) by describing the teaching of dialogue, e) through a description of group check-in, and f) as a component of the training materials.

TRAINING AND RESEARCH SETTING

At the time of this study Phoenix Rising Level 1 and 2 training programs were offered in each region of the United States (northeast, eastern seaboard, southeast, Midwest, Rocky Mountain states, southwest, west coast, and northwest) at least once a year. Training teams, typically including the founder of PR yoga therapy, a program manager, and an assistant manager, traveled to each of these locations.

Training occurred in a wide variety of settings ranging from up-scale hotels and quaint inn, to state forest preserves and spiritual retreat centers. While inexpensive accommodations were preferred, as were peaceful surroundings, the training team adapted to a range of physical settings. The training program I observed for this study occurred at a large hotel in a major mid-western city.

In each Level 1 and 2 location the program manager contacts several local PR yoga therapy graduates in advance and asks them to be program assistants. There may be two, three, or more program assistants, depending upon the size of the trainee group, which has ranged from 10 to 40. Sometimes these practicing therapists travel long distances in order to be a program assistant, which is considered to

be a good review of program basics and an opportunity for professional development, as described in Chapter 2. A two-day assistant training program is offered several times a year and is required prior to assisting in a program, though at times this requirement is waived. Program assistants are not paid for assisting, and they pay for their own room and board.

It is typical for the training staff to arrive at the training location the day before a program begins in order to meet each other and to prepare the setting. While the founder, program manager, and assistant manager had worked together before, during the training program I participated in several staff had not met. The first of many staff meetings, called check-ins, occurred the day before the program began. All staff were asked to tell the others what brought them to this training, what they hoped to get from it, and what might stand in their way of being present to themselves and to training participants.

Staff members shared a commitment to support training participants in their experience of PRYTherapist training, yet each person also had a personal reason for being there. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, during the first check-in I began to understand that others viewed me as a participant in the behind-the-scenes staff processing that goes on in staff meetings. While to me my researcher role was primary, other staff seemed to quickly consider me part of the training team, to the extent that the program manager told

me she had forgotten that I had another reason for being there.

TRAINING STRUCTURE AND GOAL

This phase of training is designed to give students enough initial information and skill early in the program to enable them to begin to practice the work with other trainees and others at home. The general training approach was explained to me by the founder as "getting students out of their minds and into direct experience of their bodies."

In keeping with the goal of yoga therapy to facilitate the release of tensions that have been stored in the body, students are immediately immersed in experiential learning activities designed to promote their own release of stored tensions. I was asked not to explain my study to the participants at the very beginning of the first day of training since it "could take people into their minds" and make it harder for them to fully engage in the activities as they were designed.

Simultaneous with the program's focus on experiential learning via their body, therapist-trainees are reminded immediately of the yoga context and the importance of self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment in a system of yoga values and beliefs. Loving presence is modeled and coached from the onset of training, setting the stage for the personal growth of trainees as an integral component of training.

The founder of PR yoga therapy explained the structure and primary training approach this way:

The approach we believe in is to give students the experience of trying the work on, very early in training, and thus giving them experiential awareness of how PR works. They reinforce their own learning process by trying the work on for themselves, experiencing many posture assists and dialogue techniques as both the client and the therapist.

We have structured training in a way that's like learning to swim. You get in the water and splash around and do a lot of little funny things before you actually put your face in the water and start to head off down the swimming pool. People get progressively more and more experience of the work until they are putting all the pieces together.

Over the course of the eight-day initial training program and the six-month certification program, the training curriculum re-visits the same components of the work, adding more details in addition to personal coaching in order to increase the therapists' capacity to be loving presence and use correct professional form.

This description of the training goal and approach was reinforced during interviews with core training staff that I conducted during my observation of Level 1 and 2 training and during the six months that I was a mentor in the Level 3 program. Students were encouraged to take in what they could, practice, ask questions, and reflect on their own experience.

TEACHING LOVING PRESENCEThe Voices of Training Staff

The training staff I worked with during Level 1 and 2 training shared some common beliefs about the structure of training and the primary training goal. When I asked them about the specific training goal of teaching therapists to be a loving presence, their responses seemed to support the way I was defining loving presence. There was a great deal of agreement that the ability to be a loving presence for another requires practicing on the self. One person said it this way:

The biggest teaching--the pathway for knowing loving presence--is for the student to come to self awareness. The real fullness of this kind of presence is something we learn by practicing on ourselves, getting in touch with all of our wants.

Another person talked about the attitude of non-attachment to particular client outcomes and how this is modeled during training:

This kind of attitude is modeled for everyone by those delivering the training. For example, during training the group comes together a couple times a day, at least, and people who want to share what is going on for them have a chance to do this.

All of the experiences students share are received with equanimity and repeatedly the group sees the staff model an attitude of 'that's your experience and it is fine that way'--there is no judgment. This is modeling loving presence.

Staff also mentioned that the conscious awareness one practices during meditation is similar to loving presence:

To teach how to be a loving presence is very similar to teaching a meditation practice. The key element is to disengage the preconditioned mind and be open moment-to-moment to what happens.

Training staff were also comfortable expressing their concerns or doubts about assumptions they felt guided training design, including teaching loving presence. For example, the yoga values and beliefs that underlie self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment may lead to the assumption that everyone has the capacity to be a loving presence. This assumption may make it difficult to set standards and prerequisites for admittance to training and for certification.

I think there is somewhat of a common belief that we are training yogis and yoginis and that we just need to give them a little push to make them excellent yoga therapists. There's a notion that we are "not teaching you anything--that you already have it inside of you." I have my doubts about those in training who aren't yoga practitioners.

A veteran trainer expressed a similar point of view with these words:

I see huge differences between those who come into the program having done lots of work on themselves and those who are just beginning this process in their attainment of that compassionate self-awareness that is a goal of training.

What Training Looks Like

To illustrate the actions of trainers regarding the teaching of loving presence during Level 1 and 2 training I have selected several different training activities to

describe. These activities occurred at different points over the eight days and are: a) an opening exercise on the first morning of training and the group discussion that follows; b) morning yoga and an instructional routine used to teach posture assists; c) a training session on the use of dialogue techniques; d) the teaching that occurs during group check-ins; and e) the instructional materials provided to training participants.

The First Morning. I describe the first morning of training to illustrate how self-knowledge, conscious awareness and the ability to re-direct focus, and an attitude acceptance are introduced as a bodymind experience.

Every morning and afternoon session begins with a centering and meditation. For most sessions that I observed, the founder of PR yoga therapy guided the students in these experiences. The opening meditations are inspirational in tone and frequently foretell the spiritual focus for that session. On the first morning of the program, he led the group as follows:

Please sit comfortably and let your back be straight. Begin to notice your breathing and allow it to become steady and easy. Think for a moment about the life events that have brought you to this point in time, to this training program. Notice the questions; make space for them....

Now notice your body. How it feels, where the sensations appear to be.... Open the door to hear the voice of your body..... respecting the body, what it has to teach you.

Come to the feet of your body, like a revered master, with respect, reverence, love.

After a short period of silence participants were welcomed and the program schedule and logistics were explained, the staff was introduced and a few general announcements were made. What followed next was an ice-breaking activity, called Partner Playtime, designed to get students "into their bodies and out of their minds." Because Partner Playtime illustrates the experiential, bodymind training approach and the principle and practice of loving presence in PR yoga therapist training, it is described in some detail.

Partner Playtime. Students were asked to pair up with someone for the first of five different partner exchanges that occurred over the next 45 minutes. Throughout this activity the program director (PD) and assistant director (AD) gave instructions to the paired trainees on what to do, interspersed with key questions that focused the participants on their experience.

In the first partner exchange, all of which are done standing up, one person was guided to come slowly into a forward hanging position while the other person was asked to form soft fists with their hands and begin to tap down their partners back - on either side of the spine but not on the spine- and down the backs and sides of the legs, and then to make sweeping motions and brush off the back and legs. (See Figure 4)

At a physical level the person hanging forward was likely to feel stretch in the hamstrings, and the partner's

tapping and brushing was apt to relieve the intensity of the sensation.

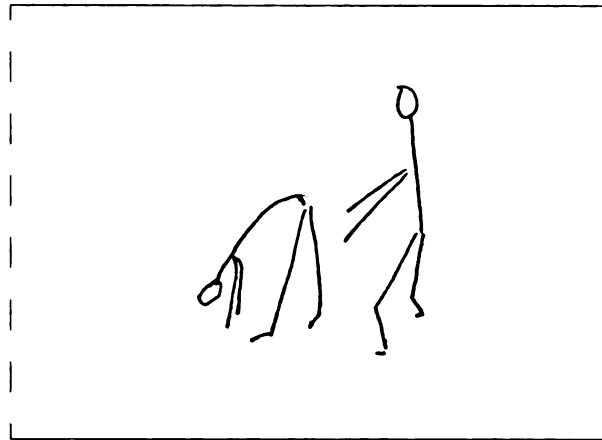


Figure 4

After the initial directions and while the partner work was going on, the PD and AD alternately lead the group with these words, spoken slowly and with many pauses:

Notice if anything is getting in the way of giving or receiving.....

Receivers, how do you receive in your life? Ask, how do I allow myself to receive, how fully do I receive?

Givers, how do you give in your life? Ask, how do I allow myself to give?

How much more can I let go with my breath and body?

Givers and receivers... surrendering...

Notice if the mind comes in... and come back to the body.

After both partners have been givers and receivers,

they are asked to share with each other what it was like to be a giver and a receiver. Each then found a new partner for the second partner exchange.

The second activity has the partners standing face-to-face, extending their arms in front of themselves and clasping their partners' forearms. They are instructed to hold on tightly to their partners' forearms as they begin to lean back away from the other. (See Figure 5.)

At a physical level there is a stretch to the front body caused by leaning backward, and an awareness that holding onto their partner keeps them from falling backward.

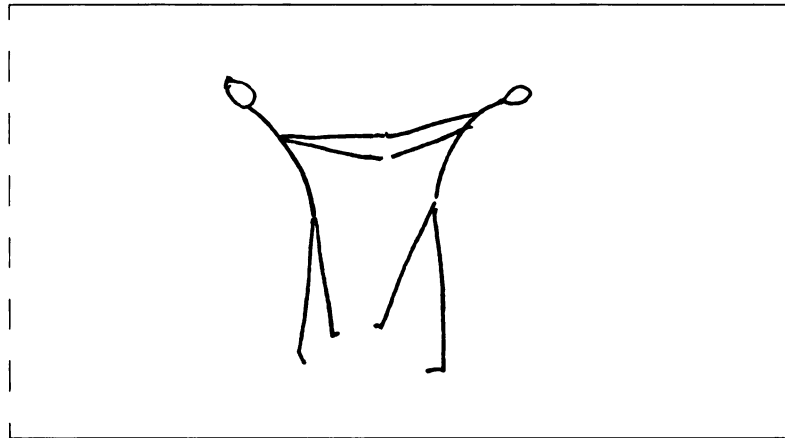


Figure 5

The PD then begins to speak:

Being supported and supporting.... Breath... the feeling of vulnerability... Feel your edge... Notice what you think, feel as you come to your edge...

What's standing in your way of trusting here?... Take more deep breaths... Are you keeping back 15%?

...Notice what's going on...Notice if you are holding on with your mind...

Hanging out... deep breaths... How is it in there in vulnerability... in support?

As the students are guided to come back to stand upright, the PD says:

Stay with your eyes closed, release you partners' arms in silence.. Notice where you are.. coming off the edge.. how it feels.. the thoughts running through your mind... the beliefs, concepts about being supported... What's there?

The pairs are then asked to share with each other what it was like for them. Was there trust there? What was in the way of trusting? They thank this partner and then move on to a new partner for the third activity.

The next partner pose is introduced with, "We are going to get silly here." Partners stand back to back, legs separated wide apart; they stretch their arms up then swing them down as they bend forward and clasp their partners hands between their legs. (See Figure 6.)



Figure 6

The physical sensation is another stretch to the back of the legs and the image of adults in this position brings up lots of laughter. The instruction is to "become an oil rig, pumping oil."

The AD leads:

Find your own rhythm... Are you a slow, silent oil rig or a noisy one?... Is there a part of you that's afraid to be a child?... What do you have to let go of to be a playful child?

Take 60 seconds to create the silliest, most absurd yoga posture you can imagine.

Now look around...

This verbal leading is followed by more laughter, and then new partners are found for the fourth exercise.

The next pose is a partner version of a yoga asana (posture) known commonly as the Warrior. Students are guided to stand facing each other, a couple of feet between them, and to bring their right foot forward and place the inside of their right foot to the inside of their partner's right foot. They are asked to bend the right leg bringing the knee over the ankle and to let their knees touch, to extend the left leg straight back, raise their arms and press their hands into their partners raised hands. (See Figure 7.)

This pose requires quite a bit of physical strength, stamina, flexibility and balance, and is challenging for some participants to maintain.

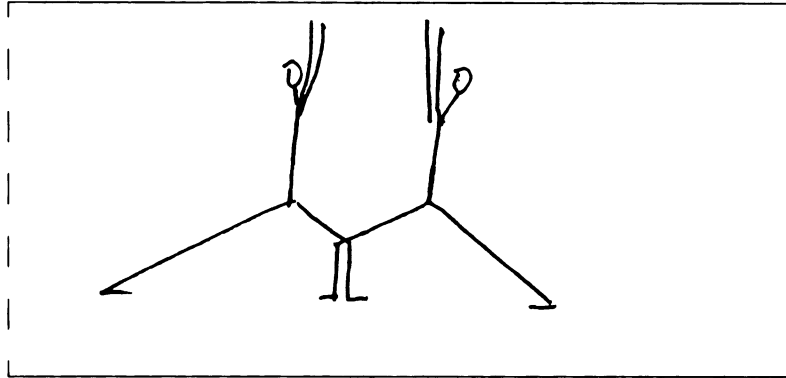


Figure 7

Once the directions are complete and pairs are in the pose the PD continues:

Breathe into the Warrior. Breathe into the spiritual warrior... diving deep... hanging out here... Notice how far you can go... Notice your edge...

Has the mind gone?... Is it taking a trip?... Come back to the body... Who is in there?... What are sensations?... Go deep... Get into it...

One more deep breath... Feel the power... the lack of power... whatever is in there for you...

Now press your hands into your partner's hands, and your right foot down... Stay with your body... power, strength... What does body say about it?... What do you see, sense about strength...

Perhaps there's another way...

The PD then asks them to change sides. Quite of bit of talking is going on during the second side. She asks:

How much does talking have to be there?... What allows you to stay here, with muscles shaking...

Notice that if it gets to be too much you might go away... Who is in there when there's strength?

She then asks them to talk with each other about what stood in their way of strength and what supported them in this pose.

The final partner work during this activity begins with changing partners one last time. People stand at the left side of their partner, facing them, and are instructed to slowly bring their left hand to their partner's heart center (upper chest) and their right hand to the upper back, so that both hands are in the same location on the front and back body. Both partners are asked to close their eyes. The AD asks the "givers" to synchronize their breathing with their partner's breath, breathing in when they do and out when they do. (See Figure 8.)

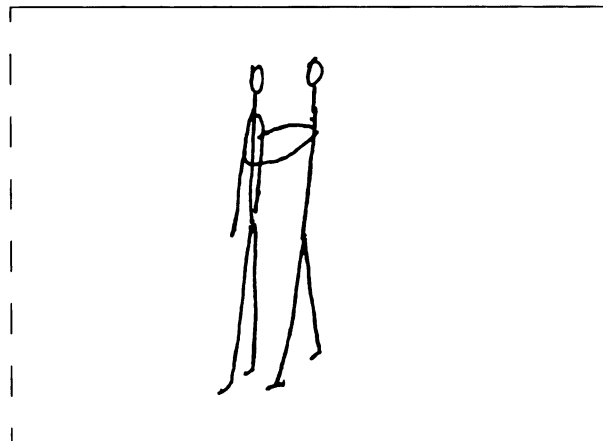


Figure 8

She continues:

Imagine a flow of energy between your hands... energy that holds the universe together... energy expressing the love and safety of the universe... If hands could speak what would they say?... Welcoming this being

before you... welcoming them home... Stand in the presence of your partner...

(addressing receivers)

What brought you here?... What is your heart's desire in being here?... What is your heart seeking?... What is the longing... the desire?...

What drew you here?... Go back to the time you made the decision to be here... What's underneath that decision?... Who made that decision?...

On behalf of all of us here... welcome, welcome home.

The AD guides the givers to very slowly lift their hands and to change roles, whereupon the pair is again led through the experience. Partners were then asked to share with each other why they decided to train as PRYTherapists, what their intention was, and if there was anything that could get in the way.

Teaching Strategies

The Partner Playtime exercise illustrates the experiential learning emphasis in the Level 1 and 2 training program. Throughout the next eight days participants will be repeatedly guided to "be in their bodies," to be aware of sensations and to focus on them even more, to notice beliefs and thought patterns that arise while staying present to the body, to use deep breathing to let go, and to cultivate a sense of inner safety and union.

Senior training staff lead the many partner practice sessions that occur during Level 1 and 2 training in the very same way: by a) giving explicit instructions on how to

get into the physical position or assist, b) coaching participants to breath during practice sessions, c) coaching the focusing and amplifying process so as to be keenly aware of sensation and thought patterns, d) inviting students to release what keeps them separate from their inner knowing, e) modeling loving presence and the premium placed on safety, and f) teaching through direct experience.

Self-Awareness and Focusing. The verbal guidance of the program director and assistant director during this exercise encourages trainees to be aware of and focus on their own experience and to develop conscious awareness in this noticing process. As mentioned earlier, training staff believe that these capacities are an essential prerequisite to students being able to be present to their clients. The staff who lead this activity are also modeling for trainees a way of being with clients, a way that emphasizes the learners' experience and the role of spaciousness and compassion in PRYTherapy.

The self-awareness skills being fostered here are: a) awareness of physical sensation and breathing, b) awareness of thought patterns, and c) awareness of the heart, union, or spiritual experience. Trainees are primarily being taught to notice how the physical experience is connected to the mental experience, how to keep returning to the physical sensation, and how knowledge of the spiritual self is the foundation of it all. There are many messages that it is safe to feel. For example:

Being supported and supporting.... Breathe... the feeling of vulnerability... Feel your edge... Notice what you think, feel as you come to your edge...

Stay with your eyes closed, release your partners' arms in silence.. Notice where you are.. coming off the edge.. how it feels.. the thoughts running through your mind... the beliefs, concepts about being supported... What's there?

One more deep breath... Feel the power... the lack of power... whatever is in there for you...

Group Debriefing. The large group reconvenes after the last partner playtime exercise, and each person is asked to tell the rest of the group what their preferred name is, what called them to be there, what could get in their way of what they would like to get from the training program, and what their commitment is. The program leader invites these introductions by acknowledging that "this might be an edge for you, introducing yourself in this way; we talk a lot about edges here. If the answers to some of these questions are not clear to you, it's okay. We just want to hear your preferred name and what brought you here."

Three aspects of this first group sharing are noteworthy: 1) trainees are asked to share information that has resulted from self-reflection; 2) they are invited to notice if it is difficult to share this information and why, while being given permission not to share with the group if they wish, and 3) after each sharing, the program leader "teaches" by drawing some links from the individual's response to PRYTherapy.

For example, the following type of comment was offered

by program leaders several times over the course of the eight days: "That's good to notice about yourself. It's true for many of us, but see if you can let go of the judgment, just see how that information is calling you to a higher game, to greater freedom to chose." These three components of group sharing illustrate the emphasis placed on student experience as the catalyst to teaching core principles and modeling professional behavior.

Yoga Practice and Teaching Posture Assists

Morning Yoga. Each day of Level 1 and 2 training, students participated in a 6:00 a.m. yoga class that included an hour and fifteen minutes of led, vigorous yoga postures. They learned a sequence of asanas specifically designed to develop the strength and endurance they need to assist clients with postures. This time is also used to foster the students' awareness of their physical edges, thoughts, and emotions connected to these edges, and to develop their capacity to be present to their own experience without judgment. It is an integral part of training, and students are required to attend.

The session begins with a staff member leading a centering and inviting students to be lovingly present to their bodies during the class and to let go of judgments if they arise. Throughout the class the instructors remind participants to relax into the poses, encountering the "gift" that the edge brings, experiencing the moment fully

and "letting go" with the breath.

Training staff notice when a student has trouble with a yoga posture and provide instruction as they teach.

Personal yoga practice five times a week is a required part of the Level 3 program, and these morning yoga classes are used to instruct trainees in the correct execution of poses that they are asked to practice daily during Level 3 training. For the many yoga teachers in this group, the morning yoga class is challenging but manageable. For those who do not teach, and particularly the few who do not have a regular hatha yoga practice, the class appears to be very demanding.

Teaching Posture Assists. In the afternoon of the same day students were taught how to assist a client in a pose commonly known as the forward bend. The students have been taught and have practiced a number of client assists by this time and all of these instructional routines have been the same: Demonstration with verbal explanation, guided practice, debriefing with practice partner or group, and large group reconvening for questions and additional instruction. For this assist there is a slight deviation from the routine by first teaching students how to assess client flexibility and physical capacity for this posture.

Posture assists are adapted, and props may be used in order to support a client in a pose if the client's level of physical flexibility or another physical condition limits movement. Props include such things as straight back

chairs, folded blankets, firm pillows, wooden blocks, dowels, and ties. The therapist has talked with the client about his or her physical condition at the beginning of the session, and this information is used to decide if the client has need of props. By this time in the training program students have seen several demonstrations of posture assists with props, or of a posture assist adapted for special needs, and they have practiced using a few props.

The session leader invites the class to come together in the center of the room and asks for a volunteer so that she can demonstrate how to assess the need for props in this pose. She asks the volunteer to extend his arms up toward the ceiling and then to flex at the hip joint and begin to extend forward, keeping his back straight, and to move in the direction of bringing his hands to the floor. She asks the other students to make a close circle around this person and to notice when the volunteer begins to lose the flat back position. When the individual's back begins to round she notes that the lumbar vertebrae are visible along the center of the person's back. (See Figure 9.)

She explains that for many people tight hamstrings or stiffness in the hip joints prevent them from bringing their hands to the ground with straight legs and straight back. However when the lumbar spine begins to round in a forward bend, there is the potential for pressure to be placed on the anterior intervertebral discs. It is desirable to keep the natural curve of the spine in order to avoid this

possibility; keeping the natural curve is accomplished by rotating the pelvis in the hip joints instead of bending the spine.

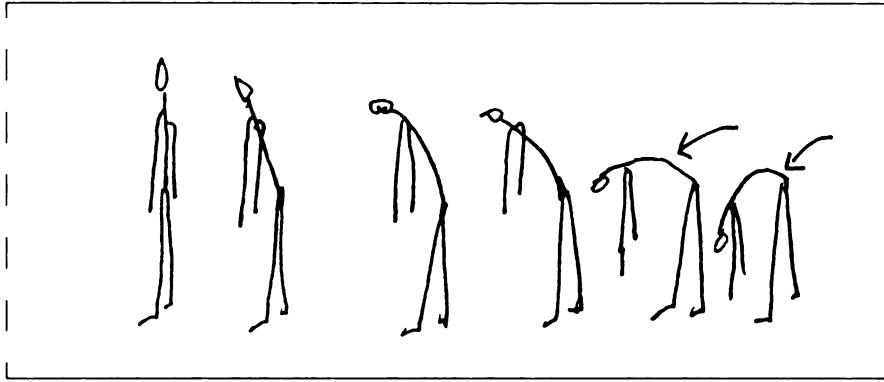


Figure 9

The instructor then folds some blankets and asks the volunteer to sit on these. Because this pose can be very difficult for clients, another prop option is demonstrated. The instructor asks for a chair to be brought to the center of the room, and places the chair facing the volunteer so that his legs go underneath the chair, with the front edge of the chair about one foot in front of him.

She asks the volunteer to move forward from the hip joints, with his back straight, and she stops him as soon as his back begins to round. As soon as she notices the his back beginning to round, she slides the chair even closer and has him cross his forearms on the chair seat. She then folds a blanket and places it under his chin so he can rest his head there. The volunteer is now able to maintain a straight back, feel the stretch in the back of the legs, and

avoid straining with the support of the chair. (See Figure 10.)

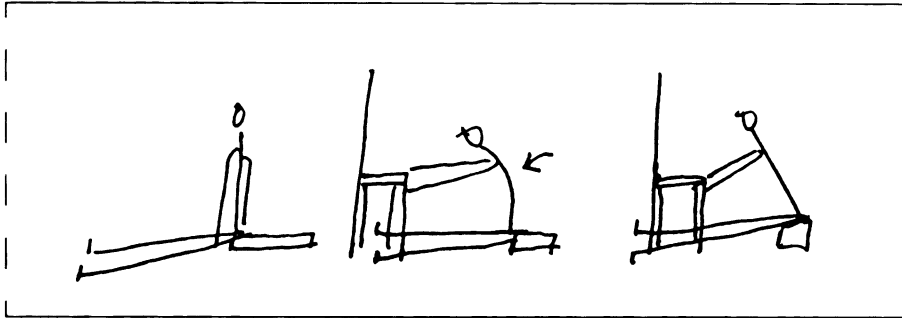


Figure 10

A more detailed visual demonstration and verbal explanation, without the chair, follows right after this. As the PD demonstrates how to assist a client in this pose, the AD narrates the demonstration and gives an explanation for why certain things are happening. The demonstration of the forward bend assist is sequenced with a demonstration and explanation of a second pose, one which frequently follows the forward bend.

Thirty minutes have been spent demonstrating these two poses and the variation of the forward bend that uses props. Throughout this demonstration phase of instruction some students have been taking notes in their own notebooks or on the posture assist handouts provided as part of the training materials. Other students have just watched.

For the next 1-1/2 hours students practice the two-posture sequence with each other, incorporating what they

have learned about client mobility assessment and prop use. Several common features of guided practice periods that occur throughout the training program are described in the following section.

Loving Presence in Action. For the first partner practice of the forward bend, the program director leads, and for the second practice the assistant director leads. Each instructor intersperses instruction with readings from Rodegast's Emmanuel - Book 1, a book of inspirational teachings used frequently in this training program. They also intersperse technical directions with encouragement for the giver to be lovingly present to the receiver and for both to notice what is arising for themselves.

Their instructions include specific directions on how to move the client's arms and accomplish a full extension of the spine as well as where the therapists position their own body and how they take the client more deeply into the stretch of the pose.

This can be an intense stretch for some receivers, and the instructions are slow, the leader's voice gentle, and there are lots of reminders to both givers and receivers to notice their breathing, and to take falling out breaths. Therapists are coached to notice if they have a tendency to bring the client out of the pose before they have reached their edge, to notice their own agenda as it may show up. Receivers are coached to notice the sensation in their body, to focus on it and "breathe into it" and to bring a

compassionate presence to their experience.

The quality of the room is very peaceful, supported by the choice of music, the quality of the instructors' voices, and the spiritual readings from Emmanuel. Program assistants, including me, circulate quietly in the room, occasionally bending down to whisper support in the "therapist's" ear or to suggest a modification. Therapists receive coaching and correction on their own body posture as well as how they are assisting their partner.

At one point one of the students who was a "therapist" during this exchange began to show signs of distress. This person had been the victim of a crime and had limited use of one of his limbs. He was unable to support both himself and his client at one point in the practice and his inability to accomplish the assist physically as it had been taught seemed to bring his physical condition to the foreground of his experience. The Program Director went quietly to the man's side as he began to cry softly in frustration saying, "I can't do it". She whispered, "it's okay" in his ear and placed her body and hands in such a way that he could follow her example and continue to support his practice partner. In less than one minute she had noticed his need, given him space to feel what was up for himself, and then empowered him to continue by showing him how to modify the assist.

Elsewhere in the room a student who was the "client" began to breathe very loudly and inaudible "no"s soon became very loud "NO"s. She began to pound the floor with her

fists and immediately a program assistant placed pillows under her hands to cushion her blows. The trainee who was practicing with this person looked unsure as her partner's "no" became a scream. The assistant knelt beside her and quietly whispered a suggestion to coach her partner in full falling-out breaths, placing her hand briefly on the therapist's back to acknowledge the intensity of the moment for the therapist and the good job she was doing in holding space for her client to feel.

For several days now the training staff had moved among the students, supporting them in these ways and modeling loving presence. By this time in the program each trainee had received the equivalent of eight PRYTherapy sessions as part of training. The direct experience of so much of the work, designed to take therapist-trainees into their own bodymind experience in such a short time frame, can result in a great deal of catharsis during the training program. The staff modeled a way of being present to catharsis in how they were present to trainees' experience of their own or their partners' intense experiences.

Training staff consistently report that the capacity to be present without personal agenda is critical for trainees to develop during training. It is demonstrated by program assistants as they circulate slowly among the practicing pairs, offering quiet comments and suggestions, answering questions, and sometimes modeling for students how to be present to emotional catharsis.

One of the things I noticed is that the training staff does not convey, in either word or manner, that a cathartic experience is "better than" a subtler experience of the work. Nor, from my conversations with them, do staff believe that any particular client experience represents a higher quality session than any other experience. This is one of the most difficult things for therapists-in-training to get, as a very experienced trainer mentioned:

Trying to make something happen is common because trainees have had Level 1 and 2 training and they have experienced and seen lots of catharsis, so they try to make this happen for their clients.

As the founder of PRYT noted during the 1995 Unity in Yoga Conference:

One of the most difficult problems we have in our yoga therapy training program is actually teaching the therapist to get out of the way--to allow the client to do their own healing--but it is really an important piece.

Therapists-in-training frequently bring their personal agendas and life stories with them to training and into their work with clients. One training staff member commented on how personal issues come up for therapists and how the goal of being a loving presence works in real life for her:

Loving presence keeps changing. I am human and sometimes my clients say things that bring up my own issues; I have a reaction. What's important is my awareness of it, what I do in that moment. That's about consciousness, about coming to a place where we

are conscious of the choices we are making. Conscious awareness--I am aware that I am paying attention. I am thus empowered to choose in that moment.

Form or Essence: Training Staff Choices

It is impossible to teach everything there is to know about PR yoga therapy in eight days. Staff know this, and to a certain extent agonize over it, as I observed when the topic of time and how to use it would come up during staff check-ins. At this level of training there seems to be general agreement among training staff that too much emphasis on physical techniques, adaptations, and variations will dilute the important emphasis on loving presence.

Because the posture assists are a structural aspect of the work--the vehicle but not the essence of PR yoga therapy--there is some tension as to how much detail should be included in Level 1 and 2 training. For example, the question of how much instruction should occur around the use of props and posture assist variations comes up in training.

During the period of my study I saw several ways that the this tension between form and essence played out. For example, during the training I observed that the founder of PR had chosen a program director and an assistant director with different points of view on the relative importance of form and essence. These two skillful practitioners and teachers had to find ways to work together, yet each believed in the importance of their own perspective. As they processed their feelings about the importance of form

versus essence during staff check-ins, the whole group became more aware of the tradeoffs involved.

While PRYTherapy is essentially about being present to an other's process of self-discovery, the training program has been designed by a very practical group of people. During all training programs the training experiences are tightly scheduled and time is closely monitored. Staff have a day-by-day outline of the training program that is timed to five minute intervals. When anything happens that is not planned for during training, and many things do, the already tight schedule has to be further tightened by eliminating an activity or decreasing the time allowed for it.

Teaching Dialogue Techniques

PRYTherapy dialogue techniques are simple and non-intrusive. The goal of dialogue is active listening to facilitate the client's awareness of and focus on their experience. The first dialogue technique students learn is how to ask a client what is happening (now) and to feed back what the client says without changing it in any way.

On the third day of the training program I observed how "What's happening now" (WHN) and "Feed-it-back" (FIB) techniques were introduced to the group. A fifteen-minute presentation was made on the main points of the technique and the rationale for its use, and key points were written on newsprint in the front of the room. This type of short lecture with newsprint highlights was used several times

during the first two days of training. Also as part of the introduction to WHN and FIB two staff members demonstrated the techniques, followed by a short explanation of what was demonstrated.

What followed next was a practice exercise called "Triad Exchange" where groups of three students practiced the active listening technique. During this exercise, conducted three times, each person played three roles: speaker, listener, and observer. The listener began by asking the speaker, "What's happening now?" to which the speaker responded. The listener then fed back to the speaker what he or she had heard the speaker say. The observer's role was to listen to the exchange and make notes on what he or she observed about the active listening process. A prototypical illustration of the exercise follows, though the specific content varied widely.

listener: What's happening now?

speaker: I notice that I am feeling self conscious about someone listening to this.

listener: You notice that you don't like having someone listen to this... What's happening now?

speaker: I don't see the point of this dialogue technique; it's so artificial that I can't see how it can help.

listener: You think this exercise is artificial. So do I. Well, I guess we should keep doing it. What's happening now?

speaker: I'm wondering how long we are going to be doing this.

At this point in the exercise the instructor asked everyone to stop, and asked the observer to take one minute to tell the speaker and listener what he or she had observed.

observer: First I noticed that you didn't feed back what the speaker said the first time; you changed it. Then I noticed that the second time you fed back you added your opinion. Is the point of the exercise to feed back exactly what is said without changing it in any way?

The instructor next asked everyone to change roles and the practice continued.

In the de-briefing after this exercise students asked about how often to ask a client WHN, and when to ask it. The instructor's response helped clarify some important issues. First, as a general principle, she mentioned that "less is more" in this work. She explained that too many verbal queries will distract a client from the experience of sensation in the body. If in doubt about using WHN at a particular time, the student can choose to remain silent.

This principle ties in with the purpose of the query: to assist the client in focusing and to provide content for the therapist to mirror back. It is not designed to collect information, figure out what is going on, or hear the whole story.

Second, trainees were told that a tool to use when they are in doubt about the use and timing of the technique is to come back to notice their own breathing and to notice their

client's breathing. Synchronizing their breath with their client's is another way to center and reflect on whether there is a personal agenda underneath the uncertainty about when and how often to WHN. They were invited to notice thoughts they may be having, like, "It's about time... Something must be happening... I better use WHN," as well as to notice if they were responding to a client cue.

Client Cues

Training staff model the importance of watching clients carefully as they demonstrate posture assists and dialogue techniques over the eight days of training. They highlight this watching with verbal pointers during demonstrations and by calling attention to what they had done during question periods. During one-on-one feedback given as program assistants circulate in the room during practice, students are coached to notice their partner's breathing and to pay attention to tension or changes in the person's facial expression.

During the training I observed, more emphasis was placed on noticing one's own breath than was placed on how to decide when and how often to ask WHN. In keeping with the training model of providing beginning therapists with enough but not too much, and time constraints, dialogue techniques are only introduced during Level 1 and 2. Not much time was spent talking about how to decide when to use the technique. The invitation to students was to begin to

practice with timing, pay attention to outcomes, stay connected to breathing, and learn to trust their intuitive sense of right timing. As a highly skilled PR yoga therapist and trainer put it:

Dialogue is about getting out of the way, not having one's own agendas drive the session. I have an agenda ... but I don't. I remind myself that I don't know what's up--really listening to them, not listening to my personal agenda. Often in first sessions I don't dialogue at all. A lot of awareness happens in silence.
(emphasis added)

However, "What's happening now?" is a very important component of PR and its use is not negotiable. I learned this first hand during my training as a PR yoga therapist in 1992. During my Level 1 and 2 training program I practiced this technique with a person who would not use WHN and FIB in their pure form. Throughout the posture assist that accompanied the practice of using WHN and FIB, this person consistently rephrased my words when she fed back what I had said, and she sometimes added questions like, "Why do you feel that way?" During group discussion time she criticized WHN and FIB as strained and artificial.

The program leader responded to the criticism by contrasting the purpose of dialogue in PRYTherapy with the purpose of dialogue in psychotherapy. During still another exchange over WHN, the program director told the student that this was the way it was done in PRYTherapy and that adding psychotherapeutic dialogue was not acceptable. The

person persisted and she was eventually asked to reconsider her enrollment in training.

Tell Me More

WHN and FIB are not the only dialogue techniques used in PR yoga therapy, but they are the foundation for branching out to others. "Tell me more (TMM)" is the next technique that trainees' added to their dialogue repertoire. During this training session TMM was described to students as a technique that lets the client's focus broaden a bit, in contrast to WHN which draws the client's focus right back in.

Students were given some general guidelines for using TMM such as: a) it is not a device for eliciting the client's "whole story"; b) it can be used to amplify a specific part of what the client reports, e.g., "Tell me more about the feeling in your leg" or more generally to encourage the client to go on, e.g., "Tell me more"; c) TMM is always current and comes from a "what's happening now" response just provided; d) if a client uses the phrase "I think ... " it is not a good one to follow because it is mental. They were encouraged not to worry about picking the wrong thing to ask the client to TMM about, since if it is not something meaningful to the client, it will become apparent.

The program leader reminded the group that they were being given PR yoga therapy dialogue techniques in "tiny

pieces" and that the next day they would learn the integration dialogue that brings the pieces together. However, the program assistant demonstrated the integration at that time as a way of illustrating how WHN and TMM work together.

After the demonstration the program leader led a general discussion of what was observed that illustrates the use of reflective dialogue in the training program.

Staff 1: So what did you notice?

Student: I noticed that you were paying close attention to the client; I noticed a lot of presence. The presence was more important than the questions you asked the client.

Staff 1: Did you feel that the questions were unobtrusive? Did you notice that I didn't add words or try to change what the client said in any way? Anything else? Did you see how the dialogue could help?

Student: Do you wait for a pause to feed it back?

Staff 1: No hard and fast rule. I may not remember everything the person said and may feed back only the tail end of what they said.

Student: How do you know how long to continue with TMM?

Staff 1: If something is really happening, stay with it. I would have probably stayed with what was coming up in this session longer, if it hadn't been a demonstration.

Staff 2: Notice how she used WHN to bring the client back to her body. She was not trying to solve anything or make a complete event out of what the client was saying; there is no linear assumption in this work.

Staff 3: Notice how the integration picked up the big piece, the piece that was big for the client. The client recalls what is most significant about the session.

Student: Do you tell a new client that they should hold the posture and not to move - and how do you use dialogue with them?

Staff 3: There are different levels of the work. For people with no body experience it may take four or five general sessions with no long holding. By the time they get to the fourth or fifth session you will know their body and what brings up their edge. You still might not do much with dialogue. The building of sensation may first lead to catharsis, a purely physical release. Over time you will get to know the difference between resistance and the need to take the client out.

Staff 2: Your level of listening and their level of awareness will deepen. As your skill at listening develops with practice, you will be able to take the client to deeper levels of their own awareness.

Staff 3: Don't forget to Feed It Back - no matter what. The biggest thing is not to get you in there. Don't try to make a nice happy ending, don't try to wrap it up nicely. Guide the process; stay out of the work.

Integration

Another important dialogue introduced during Level 1 and 2 training is the integration dialogue. There are several important steps in integration, but perhaps the most important aspect of this component of PR yoga therapy is that it combines a spiritual framework with practical application. In an earlier chapter the steps of the integration were described as a) recalling the most significant pieces or highlights of the session; b) reflecting on how these experiences show up in or connect to life; c) going to a place of wisdom inside and asking for the next step in the process of transformation; d) putting

the guidance into the form of an affirmation; and e) putting the guidance into action.

The third step in the integration, called the higher self meditation, is a key component of PRYTherapy. The specific words of the higher self meditation can depend upon the client and their belief systems. Some neutral languaging offered to trainees may be: "Go to a place that is deep inside, to the part of you who loves you no matter what, to the part of you that has only your best interests at heart." Once the client feels connected to that source or other person, signaled by a lift of the hand or some other sign, the therapist invites the client to ask, "What is this advice--this next step?"

Summary. Dialogue instruction, like technical training in posture assists, is linked to therapist self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and acceptance of the client's process. PR yoga therapy dialogue is designed to assist the client in noticing what is happening physically, mentally-emotionally, and ultimately spiritually, and to amplify those feelings. In this work, doubt about the appropriateness of dialogue at a particular moment is often met with the choice of silence, with silence a powerful way to be lovingly present. WHN and FIB, when used, are used in their pure form by students at this level of training, and ongoing violation of their use may be cause to ask a student to withdraw from training.

Teaching During Group Check-in

The structure of Level 1 and 2 training includes a group check-in and group integration format used one or more times a day. A typical student check-in occurred on the fourth day of training. The morning begins with a greeting and the question "How be we this morning?!" One of the students has a question about sexuality, having noticed that he is attracted toward women that he is paired with during practice sessions. As has happened many times over the previous three days, the response to this question is phrased both to address the student's concern and to address related professional issues. The response to this question was:

The reality is that as human beings we are going to have attractions to others--we are real. However, it is one thing to be consciously aware that attraction is coming up and quite another thing to act on the attraction.

Notice it quickly, then let it go and come back to loving presence--come back to being a pure channel. It is tricky for human beings to be pure channels for any length of time, so notice it but do not dwell upon it.

This is a high touch modality. If you don't notice and accept your attraction to someone, and drop it quickly, your agenda has come into play. Agendas cannot be part of this work.

If the attraction to someone is so strong that you cannot let it go, then you cannot have this person as a client. That is not to say that the attraction is wrong, you just cannot have that person as a client.

If you do this work with someone you already have an established relationship with, it is a different story --you are already in an intimate relationship with that person. Be aware that in a relationship that is ongoing you probably already have some stake in that

person's transformation. If you can keep your own agenda out of the way--O.K.. If your agenda comes up, your stake in their transformation, notice it--then drop it.

Be ready for change. If you can be the pure channel, your relationship with that person will change.

While addressing a specific student concern, this answer amplifies the role of conscious awareness and choice making, self as pure channel, and non-attachment in yoga therapy. The program leader went on to give an example of a student who had videotaped a session he had given his spouse for the midterm video presentation. The videotape was presented to a group of students during the midterm, and during the showing the student received a lot of feedback about how their agenda was showing up during the session, basically about the marital dynamics going on in the video. The student had never seen their marriage in that way before; and while it was a real shock to them, it was also an opening in the relationship.

Another student then asked a question about the challenge of maintaining a witness posture when using dialogue techniques. In the following response the founder emphasized that PR is about becoming comfortable with one's incompleteness as a starting point for finding completion in the self, and the link between the person and professional:

In a lot of relationships we buy into each other's stuff, we almost set up a game. What I am talking about here is a whole theory of relationships that you can buy into if you like, though it isn't essential for PR. Following such a theory, we subconsciously believe that we are not whole, and as a result of this belief

we look for someone to fill the gap, the hole, in ourselves. Two people come together with the same agenda of filling in their gaps with the other person. As long as this works the relationship works.

But if another piece of who I am, from my core being, calls me to fill the hole myself, then a new journey begins. *PR yoga therapy encourages moment-to-moment comfort with myself, with my incompleteness*, that starts me on the journey of turning to my self as the source of completion.

The PRYTherapy dialogue techniques are designed to put you in the role of mirror for your client. As you use these dialogue techniques, you mirror or witness the belief systems clients bring to the session with them. They begin to see the beliefs about themselves that stand in their way to wholeness. They begin the journey.

In PR yoga therapy the personal growth of the therapists, and the therapists's commitment to the principle of loving presence to guide their ongoing growth process, are professional standards. Whereas in other professions status, or ego gratification, may be familiar features of professional practice, loving presence is both a professional standard and a source of professional gratification in PR. In the following comments ego gratification and loving presence are described as mutually exclusive:

What's the need that I have to fill the hole in the other--that's the key. If I keep propping up the other they are never going to empower themselves to heal themselves.

You inevitably learn about your own unfilled places in the process, but you must keep your issues out of the way in order to do this work. This requires a lot of maturity.

You can't do this work and be in your ego. You can't

have a personal agenda and also be a loving presence. This is not work for someone looking for ego-gratification. You get a great deal back from being a loving presence with others again and again and again, but it is not ego gratification.

The above comments illustrate that the principle of loving presence is connected to many topics that come up during the group check-ins. Staff are not surprised when certain types of questions come up during these sessions or during debriefings (e.g., sexuality), and these opportunities are used to teach about the principle of loving presence and how to use it in professional and personal life.

Training Materials

Trainees receive a folder with training materials at the beginning of Level 1 and 2. This folder contains:

- Description of Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy
- The Purpose of Yoga
- Applications of Yoga Therapy
- The Purpose of Holding Poses
- Teaching Note on Client Trust and Therapist Patience
- Overview of Sixteen Yoga Therapy Poses
- Format for Taking Notes on Assisted Postures

Additional handouts are provided over the eight days of training, including all of the materials on dialogue techniques. The "Overview of Yoga Poses" covers all the

assisted postures that trainees learn during this phase of training. It does not include the detailed information provided in the sample "Format for Taking Notes on Assisted Postures" but a Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy textbook is available for purchase once the student has completed Level 1 and 2 training.

Students are provided with handouts on all the techniques they learn in Level 1 and 2 training for use in practicing at home. Upon completing this phase of training, students may purchase the PR Yoga Therapy training manual, which includes directions on the use of posture assists and dialogue techniques.

During my observation of this period of training, the focus was on direct experience, with very little mention of formal study or the use of training materials. A number of times during the training a flip-chart was used during verbal presentations along with short lectures to record or highlight the topics being presented. Some students made notes of these, but it was not required. During Level 3 training, to which I turn shortly, students are given many materials to support their study, and they are required to read a number of books and articles related to their own self-exploration process and to PR.

CHAPTER SUMMARY: LOVING PRESENCE IN LEVEL 1 AND 2 TRAININGTeaching Loving Presence

In this chapter I have provided research findings to answer the question, "How is the principle of loving presence taught in PR yoga therapist training?" The words and actions of yoga therapist trainers are evidence, I believe, that therapists are taught to be a loving presence to their client as they learn to be a loving presence to themselves. The yoga beliefs in a) knowledge as knowledge of the self, b) the practice of conscious awareness and the capacity to re-direct focus, and c) an attitude and practice of compassionate non-attachment, are ingrained in the content and technology of the training program. Staff model this knowledge, awareness, and non-attachment to specific outcome as a core teaching strategy and as an organizational norm.

Whereas in many professions professional standards are kept separate from one's personal life, this, in theory, is not the case in PR yoga therapy. Loving presence was consistently modeled during training and during staff meetings by the staff I observed. There is much evidence in the data I collected over the nine months I was in the field, that the principle of loving presence continues to guide professional development and organization behavior beyond the scope of formal training. My experience as a participant observer staff member during the Level 1 and 2 training program was strongly influenced by the consistency

with which staff taught and practiced loving presence.

While the goal of this phase of training is to give students an in-depth experience of PR yoga therapy and to engage them in the process of self-knowledge that lies at the heart of this work, a parallel goal for staff is to engage themselves in the same process. Technical instruction in posture assists and dialogue techniques are vehicles for trainees, and staff, to encounter their "edges" in life just as they are tools the therapist will use with clients for the client's process of self-discovery.

The Loving Presence Construct

I believe it is important, in terms of the conceptual framework (i.e., knowledge, skill, and attitude) I have adopted to define loving presence, to note that many times staff spoke and acted out of--and about-- knowing the self-as-one, awareness and conscious choice making, and non-attachment as love. In Chapter 2 I described symbolic interactionism as an appropriate theoretic backdrop for qualitative research, and suggested that the distinction of "I" and "me" may be useful to understanding the construct of loving presence. In Chapter 3 I suggested that using the knowledge, skill, attitude language--from the perspective of yoga philosophy and psychology--may limit the utility of symbolic interactionism as an explanatory theory.

In this chapter additional evidence is provided that the construct of loving presence has evolved out of the

commingling of yoga beliefs, attitudes and values with western philosophical and psychological traditions. As such it is understandable that a particular (western) social psychological theory, while useful to a point, may not entirely suffice to explain this construct.

I believe symbolic interactionism may be quite useful to identify a disjunction between theories that flow out of assumptions of duality and theories that flow out of assumption of non-duality. In my research I have struggled to find language and explanation by which I could speak of the act of noticing the self as "I" and "me", while at the same time evoking a non-dual reality as supremely important. This is one of the paradoxes I have encountered in trying to define loving presence.

In trying to reconcile the presence of duality and duality, I have assumed a necessity to do so: this may not be the case. It is just as possible that two legitimate world views, each addressing a different dimension of social and spiritual life, come together in this construct and may simply co-exist without reconciliation. My bias, which is the attempt to frame such a paradox in an overarching model of complementarity (versus mutual exclusivity), is a example of the type of fairly unnoticed researcher bias that pervades both positivistic and social psychological research paradigms.

CHAPTER 5

USING WRITTEN COACHING TO TEACH LOVING PRESENCE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I continue to answer the research question, "How is the guiding principle of loving presence taught in the PR yoga therapist training program?" My research focus is, however, quite different than it was in the previous chapter, where I reported study findings about the training of therapists in loving presence during their Level 1 and 2 training.

In this chapter I report research findings related to how one mentor coached her student during Level 3 training. I look at the written comments of an experienced and respected mentor responding to her student's client session reports to see if and how written coaching was used to teach loving presence. I take a micro-analytic approach by searching for themes in her comments, and by considering how the quantity and quality of thematic comments may be consistent with training therapists to be a loving presence to themselves and their clients.

In this chapter I first describe Level 3 training generally and then describe a sample of the written comments one mentor provided her student during this phase of

training.

LEVEL 3 TRAINING

During the Level 3 PR yoga therapist training program, students are provided with a mentor. The relationship with the mentor is intended to support the student's personal and professional growth process. For six months students study and practice at home, completing a wide variety of assignments that include placing a weekly call to their mentor. During the one-on-one coaching between mentors and students, the mentor provides information and feedback pertaining to PRYTherapy techniques, as well as coaches the student in a process of compassionate self discovery.

While Level 1 and 2 training was designed to provide students with basic techniques, principles, and introductory materials sufficient to begin to practice PRYTherapy, the purpose of Level 3 as described in PRYTherapist Training materials is to:

- Deepen their understanding of body-centered therapy and Phoenix Rising in particular.
- Help them acquire experience as a Phoenix Rising yoga therapist.
- Give them training supervision, as well as feedback from other Phoenix Rising staff and fellow participants.
- Support them in developing the understanding and confidence required to establish a career as a Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapist.

The Level 3 practicum includes a variety of assignments

and requirements:

1. weekly phone contact with a mentor
2. twenty supervised client session reports
3. a week-long residential mid-term exam during which a videotaped client session is peer-reviewed
4. a five-day per week hatha yoga practice
5. two Practice Days--regional day-long practice times during which technical material is reviewed and supervised practice with other students occurs
6. four assignment packets that include readings and commentaries, personal journal entries, hatha yoga practice journal entries, anatomy assignments, reports of exchange sessions with other students, and reports of PRYTherapy sessions they have received from a certified PRYTherapist

Level 3 training incorporates a variety of teaching/learning approaches. Practice Days, the mid-term, and the required client sessions give the student more hands-on practice of the techniques, processes, and principles of PRYTherapy. A variety of required books on anatomy, yoga and psychotherapy, meditation and mindfulness, yoga philosophy, and spiritual unfoldment provide specific information or challenge the student to think more deeply about the work.

Students prepare written commentaries on reading assignments that give mentors a chance to monitor student reflection. The required hatha yoga practice keeps students mindful of their client's experience during sessions and assures that students continue to use yoga as a framework for self-knowledge. Journaling requirements and the six-month relationship with their mentor develop the self-awareness, reflection, and acceptance practices that define

loving presence. The many opportunities for coaching, and feedback from their mentor on session reports, give them the chance to learn from their practice, make adjustments, and receive additional feedback.

Time and Level 3 Training

The program is described to students as requiring 15 hours of work per week. None of the students I spoke with said that the program required more than 15 hours per week, but many students experience personal struggles around the issue of completing packets on time. In informal conversations with students, mentors, and training staff, I often heard that how a person feels about and uses time is a frequent personal issue that comes up during this training program. Infrequently students request and are given an extension beyond six months in order to complete the requirements.

Mentor Coaching

Each thread of the practicum is intended to deepen the understanding and skills that students began to develop in their basic training in Level 1 and 2. The heart of Level 3 is often reported to be the relationship that a student has with the mentor.

The over-time feedback provided by mentors to students on their practice sessions with clients has been the defining element of the Level 3 practicum since the training

program's inception. In light of the practice and supervision goals of the practicum, I narrowed the analysis of data I collected during Level 3 training to a focus on how one experienced mentor coached her student using the client session reports written by the student over the six months of the practicum.

Before turning to a description of these coaching comments, I provide a demographic profile of the individuals who served as mentors during the Level 3 program I observed and participated in. This data was collected via a demographic survey that I distributed at the same time I surveyed the cohort of therapist-trainees described in Chapter 2. This survey is found in APPENDIX C.

Mentor Characteristics. The 23 mentors of the Level 3 students surveyed in 1994 were asked to complete a similar survey. Two additional questions were asked of the mentor group: how long had each been a PRYTherapist, and how many clients did each see per week, on average. Seventeen mentors (74%) from across the United States completed the survey.

Similar to therapists-in-training who returned the survey, many mentors were highly educated women between 41 and 50 years old (Tables 10 & 11). The vast majority of female mentors were college graduates (87%, n=13), with more than one-half of the female mentors holding graduate degrees. There were two male mentors in this mentor group, both holding graduate degrees, for a total of 59% (n=10) of

these mentors holding advanced degrees. Graduate degrees had been completed in Counseling and Psychology (n=5), English (n=2), Education (n=1), Medical Biology (n=1), and Nursing (n=1). Of the five (29% of total) mentors with Bachelor degrees, five fields were represented: Early Childhood Education, Health Education, Political Science, English, and Journalism. Overall, 88% (n=15) of this mentor sample had completed at least a four year college degree (Table 11).

Table 10 Mentor Sex and Age (n=17)

SEX/AGE	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+
Female	1	4	7	3		
Male		1	1			
Total	1	5	8	3		

Table 11 Mentor Educational Background and Major (n=17)

EDUC/MAJOR/SEX	Major	Female	Male
Some college		2	
Bachelor degree	1 English 1 journalism 1 early childhood ed. 1 communication 1 political science	5	
Some grad school		1	
Graduate degree	3 MAs in counseling 2 MAs in English 1 MA education 1 MS medical biology 1 MA applied psych 1 MA psych 1 MS nursing	8	2

All the mentors who completed the survey were yoga teachers, though not all listed yoga teaching as an occupation (Table 12). Similar to their students, many mentors teach Kripalu yoga, with a variety of other kinds of yoga represented as well. Two mentors do not mention yoga teaching or PR yoga therapy as one of their occupations, though trained as yoga teachers; they reported their occupations to be health educator and psychotherapist.

Table 12 **Yoga Teacher, Type of Yoga, Sex (n=17)**

Yoga Teacher	Type	Femal e	Male	Total
Yes	Kripalu	9	1	10
	Eclectic	3	1	4
	Hatha	2		2
	Iyengar	1		1
				17
No				

Many mentors report more than one occupation, and 71% (n=12) are both yoga teachers and PR yoga therapists. Among yoga teachers and yoga therapists, 50% (n=6) report a third occupation. Other occupations reported across all mentors were health educator, psychotherapist, business owner, massage therapist, holistic therapist, nurse practitioner, and director of therapy training institute.

With regard to amount of prior experience with PR yoga therapy, 35% (n=6) of the mentors who responded to the survey had practiced PR for one year or less (Table 13).

Table 13 Mentor Years of Practice and Number of Weekly Clients

Years in Practice by Average Number of Clients Weekly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Less than 1 year		1					2	3
1 year		1	1		1			3
2 years				2	2		2	6
3 years				1				1
4 years	1	1		1				3
5 years								
6 years			1					1
Total	1	3	2	4	3		4	17

Within the group of less-experienced therapists three mentors (50%) were seeing five to seven clients per week and three other mentors were seeing two to three clients per week. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents to this survey may be considered senior practitioners having been PR yoga therapists for three or more years. The most experienced therapists are not necessarily those seeing the largest number of clients; a number of the most experienced mentors combine their yoga therapy practice with other occupations.

LEVEL 3 COACHING: THE MENTOR'S VOICE

A Word of Caution

My study goal has been to gather and use the perspectives of insiders to describe a training program. In this chapter I look at another level of training from the

perspective of a particular mentor-student relationship, and how written feedback is used to help a student deepen her understanding of PRYTherapy. My intention is not to generalize my findings to other types of training or mentoring relationships, though these findings may be generalizable to training with similar goals, similar actors, and other similar features, as mentioned in Chapter 2.

One Mentor-Student Pair

I asked one of the most experienced and well respected mentors and yoga therapists, whom I will call Terry, to participate in this phase of my study. She is recognized by her peers for her mentoring skill and her commitment to high standards. I intentionally selected one of the most skillful coaches in order to maximize the quantity and quality of data that would result. In selecting such an experienced mentor as Terry, I have not selected an individual who represents the average mentor as described in the preceding mentor profile. It is not my intention, however, to generalize these findings across other mentors. My goal is to examine one case of mentor written coaching to see if and how written comments may teach and illustrate loving presence.

The student, Jane, who agreed to participate with her mentor in this analysis of written coaching, was coincidentally representative of the typical trainee in three

ways; she was female, a yoga teacher, and college educated.

Terry and Jane met for the first time at the Level 3 Orientation that begins the six-month practicum. They both live on the west coast and were close enough to attend the optional orientation session. The two women were similar in that each is a yoga teacher with a long teaching history, is married, is approximately the same age, and is a college graduate.

After this short initial meeting, they each returned to their own communities which were several hours away from each other. Like all other mentor-student pairs, they talked each week on the telephone about questions Jane had as she went through the program. Over the six-month period they had approximately 30 telephone conversations which usually lasted 30 to 60 minutes, and got together twice in addition to the five days they spent at the mid-term exam with the other Level 3 mentors and students.

Each six weeks Jane sent her mentor a packet of assignments. Included with a number of other requirements were five written reports of PR yoga therapy sessions she had given to clients. Clients in this phase of training are frequently friends and family members whom the trainee can easily recruit to practice on. In Jane's case she also had yoga students who became PRYtherapy clients during this phase of training. Terry, who had three students in addition to Jane, would set aside several days to go over her students' reports and various assignments. She took her

responsibility seriously, expressing during one of several talks we had that she really believed in this work and in high practice standards.

Categories and Frequencies of Comments

I undertook the analysis of Terry's written comments to Jane by developing an initial categorical scheme based on a reading of all Jane's session reports and Terry's comments. Then I sorted and counted comments by theme, followed by revising the categorical scheme and again counting comments by category. I was curious about the frequency of types of comments, so I computed simple frequencies. In this section of the chapter I describe these findings and illustrate the types of comments that I sorted into categories.

Length of Reports. Level 3 students were provided with a sample session report in their first packet and asked to use it as a model for their own report writing. The sample was seven pages long. In Jane's case her reports ranged from 8 to 16 typed, double-spaced pages in length. After the first 16-page session report that Jane sent to Terry, Terry set a limit on the number of pages she would read and comment on, which Jane occasionally exceeded.

Trying to Quantify Coaching. Terry's coaching comments per report ranged from 46 to 122; the length of her comments ranged from one word affirmations such as "great" to multiple sentence paragraphs. Her style of coaching included lots of underlining and check marks, as well as

abbreviations such as TMM - meaning "Tell me more here," or TMM? - meaning "Did you ask 'Tell me more' of the client?" I did not include underlining and checks as I categorized comments and tallied their frequency.

The average number of comments per report was approximately 60. An exact numeric average in this case is difficult because comments were written in margins as well as written in the body of the text, and it was sometimes difficult to tell if a single word affirmation was a separate comment or related to a more lengthy comment. I realized during this process that these tallies helped me to a general understanding of the magnitude of various types of coaching comments Terry provided.

After reading through the comments on the twenty session reports and recalling the Level 1 and 2 training program, I generated an initial coding scheme that seemed to make sense based on my overview. The first coding scheme had eight categories. I identified comments on:

1. physical techniques,
2. dialogue techniques,
3. PRYTherapy principles,
4. client check-ins,
5. therapist self-discovery and self-acceptance,
6. body-mind-spirit integration,
7. miscellaneous (session structure and elements, managing time, teaching client the work, client process), and
8. writing up the report/meeting the requirements.

I used this coding scheme as I went through the first packet (five reports, approximately 50 pages of reporting

and 250 mentor comments) again and found that the miscellaneous category was large and the body-mind-spirit integration and client check-in categories were small. I adjusted the coding scheme to as follows:

1. PRYTherapy principles (i.e., safety, presence, no agenda, client-centered, trust, intuition)
2. dialogue techniques
3. physical techniques including the use of props, warm-ups, and selecting postures
4. therapist self-discovery and self-acceptance
5. client process
6. teaching client the work (e.g., what the edge means, how to breathe)
7. session structure and elements
8. report write up
9. role and time management.

I then coded the first and second packets (approximately 100 pages of reporting, 500 mentor comments) and found that only a small percent (less than 5%) of comments fell in the miscellaneous category. The categorical scheme was not mutually exclusive in all cases; in a number of occurrences a comment fell into more than one category and was recorded as an occurrence of both.

Mentor comments were sorted based on the category they related to, regardless of whether the comment was a question, a suggestion, a remark about an error, an affirmation of good work, etc.. For example, a mentor observational comment that the student was leading her client at a certain point in the session was recorded in the "principle" category since it related to the therapist having an agenda, a violation of a principle. Also recorded

in the principle category were comments where the mentor praised the student for the way she fostered client-empowerment, as well as questions, such as, "What's happening here?" where the mentor is pointing out that the student is bringing her own issues into the process.

Simple Frequencies. I tallied comments over the first 10 session reports in order to get an idea of what the most frequently commented upon aspect of practice sessions was in this case (Table 14). I did not tally comments over the last ten reports (the second half of training) since the most intensive coaching occurred in the first ten reports, with the numbers of comments diminishing some in the second half of the training. Also, no new themes appeared in the last ten reports.

Table 14 **Categorical Frequency of Mentor Written Comments Over First 10 Session Reports (N=533)**

Category of Comment	Frequency of Comment	Percent of Total Comments
PR yoga therapy principles	129	24%
PR yoga therapy dialogue techniques	94	18%
PR yoga therapy physical techniques	83	16%
Self-discovery and self awareness	77	14%
Client process, check-in, and bodymind integration	46	9%
Teaching client	40	8%
Session structure and elements	34	6%
Other--role/time issues, report writing	30	5%

Of the 533 tallied comments, approximately 129 fell in the principle category, 94 in the dialogue technique category, 83 in the physical technique category, and 77 in the self-discovery and self-awareness category. These categories total 383 responses, or 72% of the total coded responses.

The next cluster of comments were found in the categories of client process, check-in, or body-mind integration (n=46), teaching the client aspects of the work (n=40) and session structure and elements (n=34). These

categories total 23%. The remaining 5% of comments are distributed roughly evenly between role/time issues and report writing comments.

Terry's Words

The comments I use to illustrate how Terry coached her student's sessions come from the first 16-page report that Jane sent in. The first session report is sent in before the rest of the first packet to give the mentor a chance to see if the student is following the correct form and has the right idea about writing up client sessions.

By using comments that were provided to Jane in this report, we get a picture of how coaching looked at the very beginning of their relationship. There was little difference in the average number of per-page comments between the first report and the next nine reports, though during the last ten session reports Terry's written feedback to Jane did decrease some.

Principles. In the largest category of coaching comments, having to do with what I am calling principles of PRYTherapy (i.e., safety, presence, no agenda, client-centered, trust, intuition), Terry often pointed out how Jane was bringing an agenda to the session, or affirmed her work when she remained present to what was happening to her client. Terry frequently drew hearts, both when offering a suggestion and when affirming work well done. The following comments were spread out through the report. Terry wrote:

When you're doing a session let go of everything you already know about his person. Be in beginner's mind. Be present to the moment.

I like the way you were willing to let go of the way it was "supposed " to be and stayed present to what is. (heart drawn here). Yeah! Good for you! (smile) Be cautious with your wording. This sets up expectations. This is her session, not yours (a heart is drawn here).

Terry often highlighted how she saw her student's professional growth occurring as Jane practiced the work. A repeated pattern was the provision of straightforward critical feedback and coaching linked with affirmation of work well done.

(heart drawn) I am delighted to see that it was all fine with the client. However, from a professional standpoint, this work is client-centered and your job continues to be getting out of the way as much as possible. We're human; we're not perfect. This was a great opportunity for you to grow. I like the way you noticed there may be some impact and were open to exploring with the client specifically what happened for her at that time. Good job! (smile drawn)

Many times her comments were simple and direct:

- Let go of expectations.
- I like the way you stayed with her on this
- Yeah! (a drawn heart and smile here) You're in the moment! (another heart)
- This is all client-dependent and session-dependent. There is not a "rule of thumb" here. (heart drawn)

Other times her comments illustrated how she drew her student into the intricacies of the work and created space for the inevitable uncertainties:

Thanx for sharing how you thought through which postures to use. Remember that the affirmations are simply suggestions for potential work with these postures. Life does not go by the "book." I like the way you choose a "game plan" or "framework" for the session and then hold it loosely!

Occasionally she was quite blunt:

Ouch... Let go of expectations! There are no "expected results."

Additional comments and questions from this report that I placed in the principle category are:

- Is this what she'd like to work with?
- We're looking to explore with this work rather than create battles. (A smile and heart are drawn in.)
- By the "book" is a suggestion for practice. What really develops is your own personal style. What works for one client may not work for another.
- Once again, try staying with the stuff that has the most energy right now...
- Good support!
- Nice... lets the client feel support.
- Nice "staying-with" here. Very little needed to happen other than hearing her story and being present.
- You've got it! Right on! There's no agenda in this work!
- Trust these hunches!
- Remember this work is client-centered...
- You don't know with a first session. Trust the client's truth in the moment. After you work with her a while you may sense that there's something else underneath. Trust your INSTINCT.

- Clients will be more likely to do "homework" and take this into their life if it comes from them. It's ok if they do some work on their own after the session is over. Sessions do not need to be "neat & tidy" and packaged.

Dialogue. In this report a smaller percentage of dialogue coaching occurs than is the case over the first ten sessions. This may be because the theme of the first packet, of which this session is one, is a review of the basics, while a later packet focuses on dialogue techniques as its theme. These comments can be viewed in the context of what Jane would be expected to know on the basis of her completing Level 1 and 2 training.

For example, in Level 1 and 2 training, "feed-it-back" (FIB) is the basic follow-up to "what's happening now" (WHN). In the following comment Terry amplifies what Jane learned earlier about FIB but emphasizes that it's not necessary to feed back everything.

The intention to "feed it back (FIB)" is to help the client focus and clarify. If you feed back "Everything" and everything is confusing, then the client continues to be confused. KISS - keep it simple sweetie! Try feeding back less.

Terry also used "?WHN?" at three points in her coaching, drawing Jane's attention to places where she might have used this query to help her client focus, and at one point she affirmed a piece of her dialogue work as excellent. She also provided examples of what Jane might actually say in certain situations. For example: "Try,

'And how is this important to our work today?'"

Other comments on Jane's use of dialogue clarified the purpose of techniques and provided further instruction on details of the work. For example:

- The intention of integration is to simplify and clarify and come to completion. Be wary of following new tangents that could turn into a "talk" therapy session.
- Once a client has created an affirmation, help them clarify and "edit." Leave out the qualifiers and the uncertain parts. Let the statement become stronger and clearer.
- This is an excellent and very skilled piece of dialogue! Try staying with one question. That first question by itself "hit home" and got her attention.
- In general, I would summarize less and less often. Your client will still get what they need from a session without all the small details.

Physical Techniques. In this category of coaching themes, Terry's comments relate to Jane's use of warm-up exercises, her selection of which postures to assist her client with, how she executed these assists, and whether or not props were used. There were a lot of comments in this report about warm-ups because Jane led her client in an unusually long series of them. For example:

- Warm-ups are designed to be just that. Five to ten minutes max. of gentle stretching. This sounds like a whole session by itself!
- Warm-ups are simply warm-ups.
- Has she already done some yoga today?
- Try something simple, e.g. shoulder rolls, yoga mudra, cow's head, cat stretch if you are working

with cobra.

- Personally this is one of the LAST postures I would dream of using to warm up shoulders. See my suggestion in the session report.

Terry affirmed Jane's description of how she had selected the postures she used with her client, and called attention to a piece of information Jane provided in the report and how she could ??? what was going on for the client with posture choice.

- This is important info to me. I like to get a sense of how you chose the postures to work with. Thanx.
- Seems as though there's a lot to do with the heart center for this client. Which postures best support working with this area? This is really important stuff!

Some of Terry's comments about physical technique were accompanied by illustrations of how she would have positioned herself or the client, and a strong note of caution is rendered with regard to client physical safety at one point.

- Note: With the cobra it's better to let the client come into the posture themselves first and then the therapist takes over for support. Remember to give the client appropriate instructions to enter the posture in order to maintain proper alignment.
- Is she still in alignment?
- Lower back discomfort is a signal to stop and re-assess or re-align!
- Observe her hips.

But overall, many comments affirmed Jane's expertise in working at the physical level with her client. Terry amplified Jane's mastery at one point, noting, "I am impressed with the details and the command that you have handling the postures and working with the client." At other points she used this language: "I like the way you used stages." "Nice flow of postures here." "Good job! (heart drawn)"

At one point in the report Terry noticed that Jane's client was taking a more active part in holding herself in the posture than is intended in PRYTherapy. In this work the client is fully supported by either the therapist and/or props so that her muscles do not have to engage. When Terry noted this with the question, "Why is she working at all?" Jane's attention was focused on this piece of the work and what she might explain differently, or arrange differently, so that the client was not working to hold herself up.

Therapist Self-discovery and Self-acceptance. I was very interested in the written coaching Terry provided to Jane regarding self-awareness and self-acceptance. As I described in previous chapters, PR yoga therapist training is designed to develop self-knowledge and conscious awareness because of the relationship among this knowledge and skill and loving presence. I knew that much of the mentor support for developing these personal and professional capacities occurred during weekly phone conversations between mentor and student. But in my

experience writing comments to the students I mentored, I had also used written coaching to encourage this development.

Some of the coaching Jane received from Terry in this category illustrated how mentors work with students by asking them questions that require reflection. For example, Terry coached Jane to notice if she was uncomfortable with her client's feelings:

Your client is apparently in a very emotional/releasing place right here. Stay with her experience. Avoid distracting away from her emotions (which are very hard) and stay with the client's process. Was there something about her crying that was uncomfortable for you? Did you need to share your experience to comfort yourself? How did it serve the client?

Sometimes Terry encouraged Jane to notice if she had a personal agenda in a particular session. For example, she asked, "How would you have felt if there hadn't been a release?" and "What was your intention for doing this?"

But the vast majority of comments Terry offered Jane in this category had to do with self-acceptance and empowerment as she encouraged Jane to take a non-judgmental, compassionate posture toward herself. With her words she coached Jane to be present to her own experience in the same way that Jane would be present to the experiences of her clients during sessions.

- (heart, smile) Let it go.
- How could you better support yourself during the holding?

- It's great that you were open enough to share that you were tired and needed to come out!
- Be gentle with yourself! You did fine. I admire your self-awareness!
- Give yourself permission to be a beginner! Let this be a fun adventure. It's ALL practice!
- Yeah, you're in the moment! (several hearts drawn here)
- Try "practicing new modifications." There are no errors, we simply create learning experiences for ourselves. (smile drawn)
- If this happens again in a session, let it go. Try not to get "attached."
- Good work! I'm inspired by your commitment and enthusiasm.
- (smile drawn) You did good! I could tell from your report how immersed and present you were in this session.
- Develop you own style. Do what you need to support yourself (heart drawn).
- Thank you. It has been a pleasure to read your first session report. Excellent work - I can tell you're going to be a very fine therapist. love & hugs

Again, these comments illustrate how Terry noticed places in sessions where Jane may have had an attachment to a particular client outcome. These remarks also show how therapists may judge themselves for perceived inadequacies and how mentors may turn these occasions into opportunities to model loving presence for their students.

Client Process, Check-in, Body-Mind-Spirit Integration.

Therapists-in-training are responsible for guiding the client in the process of awareness, focusing, acceptance,

and self-knowledge, and Terry's following comments suggest how she coaches her student in these areas. They also reveal the dynamic tension between empowering a beginning therapist to act by inviting them to "do nothing." For example, the following comments encourage Jane to take control in a particular moment, or affirm her when she has done this:

- This might be a good place to play with her resistance! Encourage the client to be in beginner's mind and try it your way! Emphasize that your way of alignment is important for the health and safety of her back. The way we assist postures may not be the same way they do in their personal practice.
- This is "juicy." Looking back on this session, is there something you might have done differently?
- How is this important to this session today?
- Important insight! Bravo!
- This piece that you reported about her "difficulty" is important. I like the way you responded to her.

Other comments encourage Jane to elicit more active participation and ownership from the client.

- How is she concerned about her physical health?
- What does she need?
- Good that she's communicating her needs.
- How is this hard for her? I'd be curious here, myself...
- Is this something she works with on her own?
- So, was that a problem for your client?

Session Structure and Elements. In the beginning stages of practice, therapists-in-training are putting into practice the session structure they have been taught. During Level 3 training mentors offer advice and feedback on how to stick with the structure as well as encourage their students to develop their own style. Terry coaches experimentation with structure in response to Jane's question on the body scan and filling out the body map:

- Good job! Personally, I prefer to have my clients respond after each part. This gives me a chance to take notes and there's less to actually remember. Try it both ways with different clients and see what you feel is more useful and comfortable for you.
- This is up to you. We usually have the client fill it out before anything happens. In my own practice, I'll take a 2nd body map & make notes on it directly as we do the body scan. This is more for my own use rather than the client's. We can talk about this more if you need to.

It is not uncommon for beginning therapists to spend too much time with warm-ups, and this issue came up for Jane during this session. Terry asks Jane for clarification around the warm-up portion of the session, since it was so lengthy:

- Are you doing warm-ups or a session?
- From your reporting, it seemed to be in excess. I couldn't tell if you were doing warm-ups or a session!

Teaching the Client the Work. It is important for a PRYTherapy client to understand a number of concepts and

actions related to session experiences. The idea of "edge" as an emotional and physical sensation, the role and experience of breathing, and the importance of setting limits are examples of what PRYTherapists teach their clients in the early stages of their work together. While these coaching comments are, in some ways, similar to comments related to professional role, they differ in that they focus on client understanding rather than therapist action.

In this session report Terry coached Jane in the following ways relative to teaching her clients about PRYTherapy:

- Not especially useful to the client to describe something you're really not using. Adds to the confusion.
- This might be confusing to a new client...
- Very good explanation!
- Try being persistent here. "What's happening (for your client) now?"
- Excellent! Good communication happening. (heart drawn)
- Why is this very hard work for your client? You might want to do a teaching piece about the nature of the PRYT assists. Client relaxes, therapist works!

Report Write-up. Client session report write-ups can be a real challenge for the therapist-in-training. Many different kinds of issues can show up for students as they communicate what they did, felt, and thought during sessions

with their practice clients. In Terry's coaching of Jane's first client session report she instructs Jane on the importance of being more concise. As the comments that follow illustrate, she also affirms the work of her student and affirms Jane for asking questions:

- Nicely done.
- Go back to the Packet One instructions and read carefully the questions asked with "session flows" focus. Can you see how you could dramatically edit this report?
- Some editing "hints" here. "Preliminaries" is not your focus. Be concise. I don't need "I asked," "she said." This isn't about dialoguing. KISS (keep it simple, sweetie). Example: Client filled out info sheet. I explained a bit about the program & confidentiality.
- Once again, in terms of editing: Let go of the "I asked," "She said," kinds of conversation. Be concise. Tell me what I need to know. I'd like to see specific quotation only when reporting dialogue within the postures - such as when you ask WHN & TMM.
- Edit Alert! If these "warm-ups" are not your "working poses," then all I need to see is: For warm-ups we did _____. _____. _____. We then transitioned into the _____. _____.
- Nicely prepped but much more detail than I need to see. (heart drawn)
- This is the magic page # from now on. 8 pages maximum for the report! (2 hearts drawn)
- I love having my students ask specific questions. Feels so much more personal. Thank you! (hearts drawn)

Professional Role and Time Management. New therapists are developing a sense of professional identity, and this often brings up issues around time spent with clients,

communication, and record keeping. In these comments Terry coaches Jane on the principle that "less is more" in PRYTherapy:

- What did she want? I would have begun integration at this point. You've done so much already with this session. This would be an appropriate place to stop. Were you watching the time?
- The explanation of the integration here doesn't add any value to the session. Just DO IT. The client has had release & emotion ... Stay with the energy and avoid a heady intellectual discussion of what will happen next.
- This is an important piece to keep in your personal notes about working with this client. "File" it for later... it might be useful for future sessions.
- This is valuable material for future reference!
- My big question is, how long this session was from start to finish!

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter I have described the teaching of loving presence to PR yoga therapists-in-training through the written coaching provided during Level 3 training by an exemplary mentor. While Level 3 training consists of much more than the completion of twenty client session reports and the mentor's written coaching, this component of training has been a central piece of the program since its inception.

Developing a categorical scheme and counting the comments in each category was a tool to help describe the

content of one mentor's coaching and feedback to her client. It allowed me to see that several categories were larger than other categories and to consider the consistency of this finding with other findings regarding the teaching of loving presence. In general, the quantity of coaching directed to elements of loving presence, as I have defined it, offer support that teaching students to be a loving presence to themselves, and their clients, is a theme in at least one mentor's written comments.

However, the purpose of this analysis has been to illustrate how one very experienced and respected mentor used written comments to coach her student. Insufficient data was collected on mentor student pairs in this study to be able to compare and contrast this particular pair with other mentor student pairs. This fact prevents generalizing from this mentor's coaching to all mentor coaching. Instead, based on the perceptions of other training staff, Terry's coaching may be an example of excellent or model coaching. During my study she was sometimes referred to as the mentor's mentor.

It is also important to recognize that the needs of students vary considerably and that a mentor's comments will be influenced by many factors including student need, student writing skills, mentor's perceptions, and, of course, the nature of the relationship between the mentor and her student.

Rather than stress the significance of how many

comments I found in the different categories of the work that I have proposed exist, I would like to draw attention to Terry's "presence" as it comes through in the sheer quantity of comments. Across all categories of comments, this mentor feedback great amounts of detail that demonstrate her thorough reading of her student's work. The frequency and detail of her comments make it seem like she is right there, coaching her student on. In each of the nine categories of comments the student is given very specific guidance on how to work with that issue, including examples of what she might actually say to her client.

In addition to noticing what was going on in session reports, Terry often encouraged Jane to think about her behavior and feelings and to consider any personal agenda she might have brought to sessions. Thus Jane was invited many times to reflect on how "what was up" for her affected her choices during the session. The way these questions were asked permitted Jane to be with her own experience as she understood it, versus being with an interpretation that someone else was offering. She was encouraged to be a compassionate observer of her own process and issues as they showed up in her work with clients. She was being instructed, I believe, in the skill of conscious awareness.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY FINDINGS: THE RELATIONSHIP OF LOVING PRESENCE AND THE TEACHING OF LOVING PRESENCE TO THEORY AND PRACTICE

*Before we can play with the angels of our compassion,
we need to take tea with the 'demons' of our holding.
Levine, 1987, "Taking Tea by the Fire", p. 228*

INTRODUCTION

In this study I have attempted to answer two research questions:

1. How do PR yoga therapy professionals understand and practice the principle of loving presence as a professional standard in yoga therapy?
2. How do PR training professionals teach the professional standard of loving presence in the therapist training program?

My goal has been to answer these questions from the perspective of training staff, using their words and actions during a yoga therapist training program. This construct and its importance emerged during the data collection and analysis process as I learned about one of the ways that therapist training staff defined professionalism in their

field. My exploration of these insiders' perspectives began without knowing the specific direction my research would take. As the focus on loving presence evolved, so too has my thinking about possible connections between my study and the field of educational psychology.

Chapter Organization

In this chapter I consider several ways this and future research on yoga therapist training may contribute to ongoing discussions and concerns in education. Based upon my study findings, I do not believe that loving presence is entirely unique to yoga therapy; there may be, however, components of this construct as understood by this particular community that can illuminate discussions of similar concepts in education and elsewhere. Likewise, yoga therapist training may be informed by the work of others who have sought to understand and teach similar professional standards.

This chapter is organized into four sections. First, I revisit study limitations. Second, I provide a summary of study findings and possible conclusions related to the research questions I posed.

Third, I consider some possible implications of my study for the practice of educational psychology. To accomplish this I compare and contrast loving presence to: a) the thoughtful discussion of caring-for put forth by Noddings (1984) as she has explored the role of caring in

education; and b) the concept of unconditional positive regard that informs the client-centered therapy approach of Rogers (1957). Also part of this third section, I consider the process of teaching loving presence and how it may be similar and different from teaching interpersonal communication skills, particularly listening skills, to practitioners.

And fourth, I offer suggestions for future research, including possible theoretic implications of my research. I consider possible ways that the construct of loving presence and the process of teaching loving presence may extend or elaborate current theory.

REVISITING STUDY LIMITATIONS

Before summarizing my findings and considering some links between loving presence and other topics in educational psychology, I want to elaborate on two study limitations mentioned in Chapter 1. The first factor has to do with the difficulty of conducting "objective" research, while the second limiting factor is related to the imprecision of my current definition of loving presence.

Being a Participant Observer

Regarding the challenge of objectivity, there are two study limitations I would like to mention. First, I do not believe it is possible to completely understand or communicate the meaning-perspectives of others because the

perceptions of the researcher are always affected by social forces, value perspectives, and an imperfect human communication process. Second, I believe that what I observed in this training program--even were objective observation possible--has been influenced by my presence as an observer in the research setting. While I have followed guidelines for qualitative research, I believe I have been a factor influencing others' behaviors in the research setting and that this is inevitable.

During the eight-day training it is possible that my increasing involvement on the "participant" side of my participant observer role influenced events that I recorded in my field notes. For example, as my role evolved I began to coach students during their practice sessions and I answered questions they asked of me. Since I had been introduced as a member of the training staff, who was also conducting a study of PR therapist training, staff and students knew from the beginning of training that I would be observing training staff. My role, as well as my actions in the service of my training staff assignment, may have affected how this particular training program unfolded.

I also may have influenced training staff dynamics, and any effect I may have had could have indirectly affected the conduct of the training program. While I have no data to suggest that my interactions with staff influenced the training program, one incident suggests that staff dynamics were at least minimally affected by my participation in

staff check-ins.

As described in Chapter 3, therapist training staff meet for an in-depth staff check-in at the end of each of the eight program days. These daily meetings are times to talk about how the training is going and make any needed adjustments. It is also a time for each person to talk about his or her own feelings and issues, if any are coming up. In many ways it is a group sanctioned and supported call to be lovingly present to one's personal process.

During these meetings I was always invited to share "What was up" for me. About mid-way through the program I realized that I was wondering if the staff check-ins were always this open and supportive, or if people were changing their behavior because I was present. I was very afraid to bring this up, yet it was a perfect opportunity to use the staff check-in process for my own growth by speaking up about something that I felt might offend others.

I decided to voice my concern at the end of one day. When I asked the group if my presence was influencing how they were conducting themselves, I felt a great deal of my own emotion surface immediately. I began to cry. I had visual flashes of being afraid to speak up about my perception of injustice - an old, though to that point relatively unconscious, fear. It felt like a lifetime of being afraid to question others' motivations or behaviors was being encountered.

The response to my question was that, no, the person I

had asked the question of did not believe he was behaving any differently because I was there. He also affirmed me for asking the question and for speaking up. I had a previous commitment and had to leave the meeting soon after, but I learned the next day that it went on for some time. The discussion continued around the theme of functional and dysfunctional families, and the importance in PR of maintaining functional group dynamics.

The point I wish to make here is that my question may have initiated discussion, clarification, and perhaps recommitment to an organization norm that may affect how the training staff work together and how they model loving presence. I have no data that suggests my question and experience caused any significant change in staff behavior, yet it was an event that would not have happened if I had not voiced my fear.

Multicultural and Interdisciplinary Influence

A second factor that has seemed to be a study limitation may also be considered a study finding. I have come to believe that the theory and practice of loving presence may be a synthesis of values, beliefs, and practices that bring together at least two rather different cultural traditions. I say this with caution since there may be a tendency to stereotype "eastern" and "western" cultures as very different, at a point in time when there is a great deal of cultural exchange. Perhaps it is more the

case that the construct of loving presence combines social and psychological assumptions and beliefs with spiritual values and practices.

Nonetheless, this synthetic construct is messy and the messiness has bothered me a good bit. At this time I have come to view it as a necessary messiness, motivating continued thinking and discussion about what loving presence is and how it can be taught. Out of the conceptual confusion I have experienced in trying to define and communicate loving presence has come an appreciation of new ways of thinking about professional standards and behavior. Therefore my study has been limited--and benefited--by my inability to provide a completely satisfactory definition of loving presence.

I revisit the challenge of defining loving presence at other points in this chapter: when I review the symbolic interaction distinctions between "I" and "me"; when I offer a preliminary concept map to illustrate possible linkages between concepts that may inform the construct of loving presence; and when I suggest possible future research agendas.

Summary

My presence as a participant observer of the training program, during the time that I collected data for this study, was an important way to build relationships with informants and earn their trust. During the Level 1 and 2

training I was required to assume an active participant observer role in order to gain entry to the site. My genuine participant observation role was demanding of my time, provided excellent opportunities to learn about the training program, and inevitably influenced the program and staff dynamics to some extent.

My study evolved into a focus on the professional standard of loving presence, the definition of this construct, and the importance of teaching self-presence to therapists as a method for teaching them how to be a loving presence with clients. My study of loving presence has been limited by my inability to find language and conceptualization of this construct that accomodate the philosophical tensions I believe may be present. Particularly challenging has been the commingling of dual and non-dual conceptions of self. I revisit this challenge later in the chapter, in the section on study implications for theory.

SUMMARY OF STUDY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Research Questions

Two general research questions guided initial data collection: "What professional standards are central to Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy?" and "How are PRYTherapists trained in these standards?" As I discovered the reactions of insiders to the concept of "professional," and as I listened to what they said and watched what they did, a

specific aspect of professionalism emerged from the data.

This standard of professional practice, a guiding principle named "loving presence" by those inside the training program, became the focus of my study. The research questions were reframed in terms of this construct:

1. What was "loving presence?"
2. How was loving presence taught to therapists-in-training?

The Challenge of Defining Loving Presence

I have concluded that loving presence is a guiding principle and a professional standard in PR yoga therapy. However, a specific and complete definition of this construct has eluded me. As I examined my data and compared and contrasted the language and actions of informants, I began to believe that loving presence was a principle that blended two different world views. As a hybrid, neither the language and philosophy of yoga nor the language and philosophy of modern western social science could, in isolation, adequately define loving presence.

The Self Concept. In particular, eastern and western theories about the self are, stereotypically, very different, yet features of each seemed present in the assumptions about "self" that were part of this work and training program. In this type of yoga therapy, the "Self" of the east and the "selves" of the west seemed to combine.

For example, the social psychological theory of

symbolic interactionism, described in Chapter 2, defines the self as having both a socially derived, passive component (i.e., "me") and an active agent (i.e., "I") capable of directing "me." This theory is useful in understanding social learning, education, and communication processes in many contexts.

On the other hand, yoga psychology talks of levels of consciousness and proposes that the evolutionary stage and needs of the individual determine the definition of "self" or "Self" that is operational at a particular point in time. In this system there are multiple levels of "self" definition, suggesting that as a theory it is more comprehensive than symbolic interactionism.

Both the principles of symbolic interactionism and yoga psychology seem to be embedded in the construct of loving presence and in the process of teaching loving presence. The theory of andragogy that informed the early development of PR yoga therapist training acknowledges the significance of learner self-concept in the learning process. To design effective learning opportunities following this theory, the student's capacities and experience are recognized; there is an attempt to merge how they see themselves with how they are viewed by training staff.

Implicit in the theory of andragogy is the student's attachment to a socially validated self-image. There is at least some, if not a great deal of, similarity between these implicit assumptions and the "I"/"me" distinction of

symbolic interactionism. Further, the many practice and feedback opportunities in PR training build and reinforce self-perception via symbolic interactions (i.e., communication) with others.

Within the theory and practice of loving presence there are times when the active "I" directs the passive "me." But there are other times when yoga psychology more accurately explains the dynamic of loving presence. These are times when both the "I" and the "me" components of self are objects in the therapist's perceptual field, and something else is directing the show. This "something else" is known by various names in various traditions, including conscious awareness, transcendent consciousness, and the collective unconscious.

Loving Presence as Knowledge, Skill, and Attitude

As a first step in thinking about how to define loving presence, I looked for evidence in my data that this construct was a particular constellation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Initially I found this categorical scheme too limiting because I did not see how I could define loving presence as facts or skills. The way informants talked about loving presence suggested it was a way of *being in the moment*, and so to conceive of it as knowledge, skill, and attitude seemed contrived.

At one point it occurred to me that the "knowledge, skills, attitude" definition of loving presence would make

more sense if I thought about what the concepts of knowledge, skill, and attitude mean in a yoga context. I again examined my data to see if thinking about loving presence as a matrix that blended western training language (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes) with yoga values and beliefs was warranted.

Not only did this seem to work, but I found that trying to use these concepts in a yoga framework was an effective clarification strategy. By imposing what seemed initially to be an artificial framework, I began to understand how I could communicate a definition of loving presence using the words and actions of those I observed. However, I also began to feel that knowledge, skill, and attitude are not mutually exclusive categories in the case of loving presence. There is a great emphasis on practice in yoga, which occurs as an outcome of various types of yoga practices.

Loving Presence as Knowledge. In Chapter 3 I described the finding that loving presence in PR yoga therapy includes a belief in the self-as-other, or the union of all things. I illustrated how focusing on breathing is a practice associated with self-knowledge, because conscious breathing brings the individual into the current moment, and in this belief system it is in the current moment that union is experienced.

Based upon this finding I suggest a related conclusion. The knowledge component of loving presence is not the mental

comprehension of consensually validated fact, as it is in other models of knowing, but rather, is knowledge as it is understood in a yoga context. In this type of knowing an individual apprehends his or her union with others and with something larger than their self. This type of knowing involves an unlearning of exclusive identification of self with one's thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations, through an experience of something beyond these.

The word "apprehend" is useful to describe how self-knowledge occurs because it points to a difference between how the concept of knowledge is typically used in this culture and how I am using it in the definition of loving presence. "Apprehend" refers to perception by the senses, including the intellect, in contrast to "comprehension," which is exclusively a mental understanding. In the common use of the word "knowledge" it refers to something comprehended with the mind, and has nothing to do with learning through the senses.

While self-knowledge cannot be taught directly in any training program, but must be apprehended by the practitioner, this type of knowledge is encouraged in PR yoga therapist training through the required yoga practice and readings in yoga philosophy. As I spoke with many trainers over the course of my study, they frequently mentioned that yoga therapy requires a belief in the existence of a non-dual self.

Loving Presence as Skill. In Chapter 3 I also

described the data I collected that points to a skill component of loving presence, what I have called the skill of conscious awareness. This skill was described as the ability of yoga therapist professionals to focus their awareness, while being conscious of the awareness and not identifying with the object of awareness. Thus, conscious awareness supports the individuals' ability to make choices in situations, because they are not exclusively identified with thoughts or feelings in their perceptual field.

In Chapter 4 I illustrated how trainers speak and act in ways to encourage the development of the skill of conscious awareness in students. One primary method used to foster conscious awareness during the Level 1 and 2 eight-day training is the use of guided practice. During guided practice the trainer coaches the students to notice what is going on for themselves, as well as their practice partner, and encourages them to chose non-judgmental ways of being present to what they notice.

A number of required readings also emphasize the development of conscious awareness, especially readings related to meditation practices. In addition, trainers and mentors often engage their students in reflective dialogue and coach them to be aware of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, as well as behavior patterns in life.

The concept of conscious awareness is not new in yoga circles. I see possible theoretic implications, perhaps of interest to educational psychologists, related to how

conscious awareness is understood in yoga, and how the conception of self as both dual and non-dual may be joined. To the extent that these ideas are not already present in the literature, I propose that a link between these seemingly contradictory definitions of self may be the concept of reflexivity.

The ability to engage in reflexive action seems to imply the ability to take the self simultaneously as subject, object, and union of subject-object. For example, when I am consciously aware of my social conditioning (i.e., I notice that I am feeling embarrassment based upon my assumption of someone else's evaluation of my behavior), that part of me that notices both my embarrassment and my assumption must be separate from both the embarrassment and the assumption. It is another part of the self. It may be possible to consider this other part, at a higher level of abstraction, as transcending the separatist consciousness of the subject-object duality. Union is the observational framework that explains or permits this perspective.

While this conclusion is far removed from the goal of my study to understand loving presence and how it is taught, I believe that an apprehension of self that includes both the duality of the "me" and "I" that underlies symbolic interactionism, as well as the non-dual self that underlies yoga philosophy and yoga psychology, might be an aspect of loving presence that I am calling conscious awareness. The dynamic of practicing conscious awareness as a component of

loving self-presence is a process that may have theoretic implications for educational psychologists.

Loving Presence as Attitude. Based on data collected during my study, I believe that an attitude of non-attachment is an important component of loving presence. The attitude of non-attachment as it is used in PRYTherapy is taken from yoga philosophy, and may be difficult to understand or accept in this culture.

As a part of loving presence, non-attachment to outcomes does not mean an absence of caring about outcome, or disregard for professional responsibility. It is, in fact, quite the opposite, though on the surface it may be difficult to perceive this. An attitude of non-attachment is an extension of several yoga *yamas* and *niyamas* (restraints and practices) that parallel the practice of karma yoga (selfless service to others). In the tradition of karma yoga all deeds are done in the service of god/goddess. Giving one's best, consistently and without regard for praise, is viewed as non-possession of the fruits of one's labor.

In PR yoga therapy this attitude also takes the shape of believing that striving for particular client outcomes is a form of attachment to outcome which can interfere in the client's personal growth path. In the therapy setting, an attitude of non-attachment promotes therapists' accepting their client's experience in a session, versus therapists judging themselves or the client for whatever particular

experience the client has.

PR yoga therapists do direct the yoga therapy process, however. While they are trained not to direct the content of their client's experience, they do have an agenda with regard to the underlying process of noticing sensation, focusing, deepening the focus, and guiding clients in the integration process. The principle of non-attachment is not used to justify therapist error in directing the process, or any other type of professional misconduct. But while therapists guide the process, they do not try to shape the content of their client's experience. This is one of the hardest things for therapist trainees to learn and practice.

Non-attachment to specific outcome is an attitude that is modeled in all parts of the training program. It shows up repeatedly in training staff demonstrations of PRYTherapy, in group check-ins and discussion times, and in the themes of the reading requirement. The language that trainers often use when teaching students about non-attachment is that the work is "client-centered" and that "the therapist does not have a personal agenda" for the client's transformation.

Based on the data I have collected that suggests that an attitude of acceptance is a part of loving presence, and on the evidence that students are taught an attitude of non-attachment during training, one conclusion might be that yoga therapists must accept anything that happens. I do not believe that this conclusion is correct.

Rather, I conclude from my study of loving presence that an attitude of non-attachment is an ideal form, and that the practice of conscious awareness is a critical key in developing this capacity and mitigating the effects of imperfect practice. The concept of non-attachment appears to have several levels of operation in PR yoga therapy. Clearly yoga therapists have a goal of being a loving presence to their client. Is this an "attachment"? Probably. Do skillful therapists judge themselves if they perceive that they did not bring the self-knowledge, conscious awareness, or proper attitude to a client session? Sometimes. But if they do attach to an outcome, and they recognize this--either with or without self-judgment for having an agenda--the presence of their conscious awareness of this permits them to choose to let go of the attachment. They can move into an attitude of non-attachment as a result of becoming aware of their agenda.

Concept Map

To help sort through the many concepts that seem related to loving presence, I developed a concept map. (See Figure 11.) I consider this map a "work-in-progress" that suggests how a variety of concepts may relate to each other, and to the overarching construct of loving presence. The map does not necessarily represent what insiders said about PR yoga therapy or loving presence; rather, it is my attempt to begin to relate the various language and actions I

recorded in my field observations and interviews.

In the map loving presence appears as a PR yoga therapy professional standard as well as a PR training goal. The construct of loving presence is portrayed as central to training, yet it appears that it is developed by developing the trainees' capacity for loving self-presence--with the goal of authenticity (i.e., authentic self) a somewhat newer link.

One of the features of this map that I have wondered about is that those concepts along the left side, under self knowledge, have fewer links to other concepts than do the concepts under conscious awareness and non-attachment. A possible question that arises from this is whether we have a more elaborated cognitive map for concepts related to duality than we have for concepts related non-duality. Upon reflection, these concepts seem similar to the idea of transcendent self in yoga psychology are perhaps less commonly understood and articulated in general.

INITIAL MAPPING OF THE CONSTRUCT OF LOVING PRESENCE

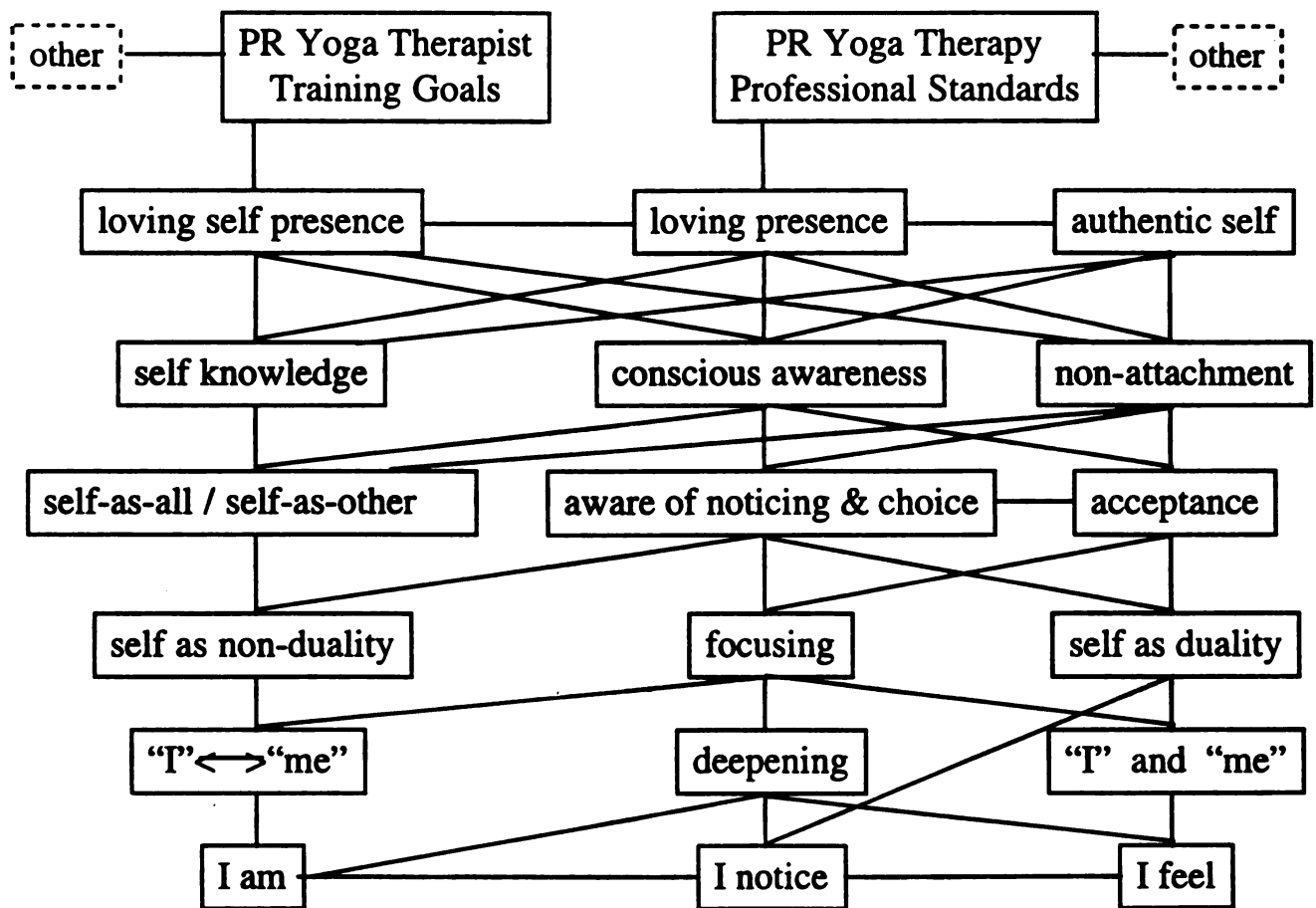


Figure 11

Teaching Loving Presence: Loving Self-Presence

The most important healing strategy is being present. For all of us, but especially for therapists, giving a person space to feel whatever he or she is feeling is the fundamental healing technique.

Everything we do either enhances or interferes with our ability to be with what is going on in ourselves. The act that initiates healing is a moment of nonjudgmental attention.

*Our term for this moment is a verb that is not yet in the dictionary: **to presence**. Hendricks and Hendricks, 1993, p. 103*

The primary way that therapists-in-training are taught to be a loving presence to their clients is through teaching them to be a loving presence to themselves. From the outset, students are encouraged to notice feelings, and to understand and experience these feelings without judging them or trying to change them into something else.

During training events, and throughout their six-month practicum, students are coached to notice "what is happening now" (WHN). The student has many experiences of WHN during training, and because it is the central dialogue technique in actual sessions with clients, they continue to hear it often. One conclusion that may be offered is that WHN becomes an internal query that arises in the daily life of the professional. WHN as self-query may connect therapist trainees to their immediate feelings and become a useful tool in their personal life.

The therapists' capacity to be a loving presence for their clients grows out of their ability to bring the

"healing moment of non-judgmental attention" (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1993, p. 103) into their own intra-personal process. The skill dimension of loving presence, i.e., conscious awareness, thus flows inward as well in the direction of the client. Simply speaking, therapists are taught how to be present to others by being taught how to be present to themselves.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

I have described the construct of loving presence as a blend of different cultural traditions and theories, and I have used the knowledge-skill-attitude framework as a starting point to develop a definition. In order to consider the implications of my study findings for educational psychology, it is useful to next compare the construct of loving presence to other similar concepts in the field. Following the comparison of loving presence to caring-for (Noddings, 1984) and unconditional positive regard (Standahl, 1954) I describe loving presence as a PR yoga therapy organization norm. I then consider the implications of meta-principles for other training organizations.

An Ethic of Caring in Education and Loving Presence

Noddings (1984) writes, with exquisite sensitivity and detail, on the topic of caring and on an ethic of caring in education. In her discussion she uses the term "caring-for"

to refer to the dynamic of caring, and the term "one-caring" to refer to the individual who cares. By following her thoughtful discussion, it becomes clear that the concept and dynamics of caring-for are more subtle and complex than is commonly understood. For the purpose of considering how loving presence may be related to an ethic of caring in education, I will next discuss some of the similarities and differences that I believe are noteworthy.

Noddings states that morality as an "active virtue" requires two feelings: one of these feelings is a "sentiment of natural caring" and a feeling of reaching for that memory of natural caring at those times when we feel the "conflicting desire to serve our own best interest" (i.e., the second feeling) (p. 79-80). She talks of the two feelings that constitute an ethic of caring as: a) one that feels for the other, and b) one that feels for the "best self"--the memory of the sentiment of natural caring. Further Noddings discerns that the sentiment for one's best self arises, even in situations when there are conflicting "wants", when there is value placed on the relatedness that is inherent in caring-for.

The positive value placed on relation, built on the memory and fact of caring-for and inspired by one's positive sentiment toward one's best self, leads to an ethic of caring that is tough, practical. The shift away from viewing caring as self-sacrificing, toward viewing caring as ultimately self-serving, comes from a perceptual shift in

reference frame. When a larger, more encompassing, perspective is brought to bear, caring-for is seen as ultimately a factor favoring survival of the community and species, and not as self-sacrifice.

Yet such an ethic of caring also advocates a "deep and steady caring for self" (p. 99). Noddings uses the phrase "one-caring" to refer to the individual who cares for another.

The one-caring ... needs no special justification to care for herself for, if she is not supported and cared for she may be entirely lost as one-caring. If caring is to be maintained, clearly the one-caring must be maintained. (p. 100)

The practicality of this vision of caring extends to the honest acceptance of all of the one-caring's emotions (i.e., loves, hates, ferocities) so that such information can be used to build the "safeguards and alarms that must be part of the ideal" (p. 100).

There are a number of similarities, I believe, between this vision of caring and loving presence. Loving presence has been described in my study as a construct that includes self knowledge, conscious awareness, and an attitude of non-attachment. These aspects of loving presence are made visible in different ways in light of Noddings work.

First, I believe there is a similarity between Noddings' description of the positive sentiment toward one's best self that leads to caring-for, and the centrality of self knowledge in the definition of loving presence. To the

extent that I understand the distinctions Noddings has made, I believe that the focus of these positive sentiments is different, though the processes seem similar. In both cases--the therapist as loving presence and the teacher as one-caring--positive feelings exist for a particular ideal and promote movement toward that ideal.

While similar positive sentiments may promote certain choices and actions, the difference between caring-for and loving presence may possibly lie in the form of the ideal. In the positive sentiment that the one-caring has for his or her best self, we get a sense of the "I"/"me" distinction found in symbolic interaction theory and social psychology. The positive sentiment toward the self that is part of loving presence, however, refers to the non-dual or transcendent self found in yoga philosophy and yoga psychology. Thus, a yearning toward an ideal form is an essential part of both the ethic of caring that Noddings describes and my initial attempt to define loving presence, yet these ideals are different.

The positive sentiment toward these ideals is, in both cases, a tough form of caring. Rather than a romantic notion, or form of agapism, loving presence and caring-for require self-honesty and self-care as tools to manage those obstacles that could erode the authenticity of the ideal.

In Noddings' description of the one-caring as teacher, the relationship of the teacher to student bears some significant similarities to the relationship of yoga

therapist to client. For example, Noddings describes the teacher as, first and foremost, one-caring in her relationships with her students. Though the teacher has other goals and roles to play with her students, her primary presence is as one-caring. Very similar to this, the yoga therapist has other goals and roles with her client, but her primary purpose is to be a loving presence.

The one-caring is engrossed in the cared-for and undergoes a motivational displacement toward the projects of the cared-for. This does not ... imply romantic love or the sort of pervasive and compulsive "thinking of the other" that characterizes infatuation. It means, rather, that one-caring receives the other, for the interval of caring, completely and nonselectively. She is present to the other and places her motive power in his service. (p. 176)

The PR yoga therapist holds a posture of non-attachment toward specific client outcomes much as the one-caring seems to receive the other nonselectively.

A very important similarity seems to exist in the techniques, and certain goals of the techniques, used by teacher and therapist to manifest their primary relationship with student or client. The teacher, as one-caring, receives the student rather than the student's response, and seeks not the right answer but the involvement of her student. Similarly, the "What's happening now?" query is not intended to elicit a correct response, but to involve the student in an immediate relationship with his or her own experience.

While the teacher invites the student into a caring

relationship with herself, the therapist invites the client into a caring relationship with the client's own body, mind, or emotions. This is one obvious difference between the caring ethic described by Noddings and the loving presence principle described in this study, though it may also be a difference of focus and not process or principle.

Other similarities and differences between loving presence and an ethic of caring may also revolve around the issue of relatedness. For Noddings, the establishment of relatedness is an essential facet of caring. The theory and practice of loving presence may also be very closely associated with relatedness, though perhaps the recovery of relatedness rather than its discovery.

Yoga philosophy and yoga psychology assert that we are related to all things and that yoga practices assist in dissolving the illusion of separation. In a yoga framework the goal is to realize our union with all things. It appears that both an ethic of caring and loving presence begin from quite different sets of assumptions. These initial differences in philosophy and beliefs may result in a number of other differences between the two constructs.

I believe the most significant differences between an ethic of caring in education and the loving presence construct in yoga therapy stem from different goals. Yoga therapy has as its goal facilitating the client's experience of union. It is union therapy. However, it has little to do with facilitating the union (or relatedness) of client

and therapist, other than to inspire client self-discovery.

Generally speaking, I do not think it is appropriate to transplant the construct of loving presence to other educational settings. In PR yoga therapist training the professional standard of loving presence is intimately tied to the goal of facilitating client self-realization of union, but this is not a goal of most other educational programs. Where such self-realization is a training goal, the construct of loving presence may have relevance. While it is quite possible that the construct of loving presence overlaps in some ways with other constructs, such as caring-for in education, I believe their distinctive features reflect the different settings and different goals they serve.

Unconditional Positive Regard and Loving Presence

Client-centered therapy (Rogers, 1957) may also share some similarity with the theory and practice of PR yoga therapy and the construct of loving presence. In particular, the notion of "unconditional positive regard" (Standal, 1954)--an idea that is central in Rogerian psychology and that informs educational practices aimed at constructive personality change--has elements similar to loving presence.

Unconditional positive regard, much like an ethic of caring and loving presence, is an ideal. "To the extent that the therapist finds himself experiencing a warm

acceptance of each aspect of the client's experience as being a part of that client, he is experiencing unconditional positive regard" (Rogers, 1957, in Kirschenbaum, p. 219, 1989). In Rogerian psychology this type of acceptance is hypothesized as being essential if personality change is to occur.

There are at least two elements of unconditional positive regard that resonate with loving presence. First is the permission that the therapist extends the client to prize and own his or her own experience through the therapist's non-attachment to the content of the client's experience. That is, the therapist is equally accepting of those emotions and experiences commonly viewed as negative, as she is accepting of those experiences commonly viewed as positive.

The second feature of positive regard that is similar to loving presence is connected to this.

It means a caring for the client as a separate person, with permission to have his own feelings, his own experiences. One client describes the therapist as 'fostering my possession of my own experience ... that (this) is my experience and that I am actually having it: thinking what I think, feeling what I feel, wanting what I want, fearing what I fear: no ifs, buts, or not reallys.' (Rogers, 1957, in Kirschenbaum, 1989, p.219)

The theory and practice of loving presence are described as having similar outcomes. The skill of conscious awareness that PR yoga therapists bring to their work, as an element of loving presence, encourages their

recognition of the client's immediate experience. By staying present in the moment, being consciously aware of the client's experience and remaining attentive to it, PR yoga therapists foster a similar immediate recognition on the part of the client. Through the presence of the therapist, clients access their own presencing capacity.

While the importance of remaining present to the client seems similar in both Rogerian psychology and PR yoga therapy, these traditions have different types of goals. Unconditional positive regard is seen as necessary for personality change, a goal of this type of psychotherapy. The goal of loving presence is different than this, though the outcomes of PR yoga therapy may include personality change. The ultimate goal of this type of yoga therapy is to facilitate the client's realization of body-mind-spirit union.

The construct of loving presence may have utility in Rogerian psychology to the extent that the goal of positive regard is to create and hold the space for fully experiencing the present moment. The elements of self-knowledge, conscious awareness, and non-attachment may provide language and additional conceptualization of positive regard for being fully present to the moment. It is noteworthy that Rogerian psychology already has a number of concepts that highlight the importance and nature of the relationship between therapist and client (e.g. listening, empathy, authenticity).

Implications from the Teaching of Loving Presence

While the construct of loving presence may have limited utility in non-yoga settings, the method of teaching loving presence that has been described in the PR training program may be quite useful to inculcating an ethic of caring, the capacity for unconditional positive regard, and other professional standards. Data from this study suggests that loving presence is taught to therapist-trainees primarily through developing their capacity to be a loving self-presence. There is also strong evidence of the importance and practice of this principle across the levels of the training organization.

Self-presencing. One implication of these study findings is that in professions where the ability "to presence" is believed to be a professional skill, professional standards might be set and training goals established to develop individuals' ability to self-presence. For example, Harry Aponte (1994) has developed an approach to family therapist training that is based on the belief that unresolved personal life issues impinge on the professional capacity of the therapist.

In this training program therapists are supervised during actual family counseling sessions with clients. During these supervised sessions a two-therapist team works with client families so that the therapist in the training program can leave the room to discuss his or her personal issues if they are triggered during professional work.

To illustrate how an instructional principle of *internalization* may work more generally, I will refer to teaching interpersonal communication skills, specifically listening skills.

Teaching Listening. The PR yoga therapist training program incorporates a number of known and well-used teaching strategies to achieve their training goals. Loving presence is taught during guided practice opportunities, group sharing, and debriefing; and through a variety of written assignments and required yoga practice assignments. It is modeled by training staff and individual mentors.

Communication skills, and in particular listening skills, are thought to be essential in numerous professional education programs. Interpersonal communication skills are traditionally taught using many of the same teaching strategies found in yoga therapist training. Instructors model listening skills, they provide games and group activities to encourage practice and reflection of practice, and they make reading and writing assignments. These teaching strategies heighten students' awareness of the importance of good listening skills and are frequently effective motivators of behavior change.

One implication of this study for the teaching of listening skills may be to encourage students to be better listeners to themselves. How might this work?

One way to develop self-listening skill may be to heighten students' awareness of how their interpersonal

communication skills may be related to their own internal communication process. For example, it may be that my ability to listen to and hear another's point of view is related to my ability to listen to and respect my own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. In PR yoga therapy there is a belief that therapists' ability to be a loving presence during client sessions is closely associated with their level of self-awareness and self-acceptance. Perhaps there is a similar relationship between one's ability to listen to self and to listen to others.

An implication of this internalization principle for educational psychology may be to explicitly consider the internal-external interface with certain types of educational goals. For example, if the goal is to develop an ethic of caring in education, the method of teaching such an ethic might include a strong component designed to awaken and foster a relationship with the "best self" (Noddings, 1984). If the goal is to develop the capacity for unconditional positive regard, the training program might do well to include elements designed to foster unconditional positive *self*-regard.

Principle Congruence in Training Organizations

Loving presence is valued as a theory and practice at all levels of the PR yoga therapy organization. Learning to be a loving presence to oneself is a lifelong goal for mentors, trainers, administrative staff, as well as

graduates of the program. Because the training program is embedded in an organization that encourages "moments of nonjudgmental attention," how the organization operates and what it promotes through training are ideally congruent.

I recorded many instances of this congruent practice over the nine months I was in the field. The principle of loving presence appears to be a professional norm that is understood, valued, and practiced by master practitioners, trainers, and elders in this community. In fact membership in this professional community is in many way conditioned upon minimal understanding of loving presence, its importance and use with clients, and the ability to self-presence.

Other professional training programs may benefit from considering how principle congruence across the professional community may affect training outcomes. It may be that training outcomes are more successful in organizations that consistently value and attempt to practice core professional standards. If a profession values certain types of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and these are authentically present in the actions and words of members of the professional training program, the students of such professions get a consistent message regarding the values and practices of the profession.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND FUTURE RESEARCH

I began my study of yoga therapist training by drawing upon the theory of symbolic interactionism to legitimize my qualitative research approach. Initially I thought that symbolic interactionism might be a useful theoretic framework because it included a proactive agent, "I," directing a more socially derived and passive "me." Early on I thought that these parts of the self might be related to the ability to be aware of something, and to be aware of that awareness. While I didn't have a name for this interest of mine at that time, I see it now as an interest in meta-awareness.

Over the course of many months of data collection and writing I did not think much about symbolic interactionism. My study focus was emerging at that time, and my struggle to find language to define loving presence led to the adaptation of the knowledge, skill, attitude categorical scheme. As I have described in this and previous chapters, I have proposed an initial definition of loving presence as self-knowledge, the skill of conscious awareness, and an attitude of non-attachment.

Eventually I returned to the original theoretic framework I had selected, and began to wonder about the implications of my findings for symbolic interactionism. Was it useful to keep my discussion of this theory, and why?

Symbolic Interactionism and Loving Presence

I have come to believe that symbolic interaction theory may provide useful language to begin to describe the principle of loving presence, and the relationship between the ability to self-presence and to be a loving presence to another. The ability to be a loving presence to oneself implies that therapists can take their own feelings, thoughts, experiences and socially internalized meanings as objects in their perceptual field. They experience these aspects of the self--i.e., the "me"--through the capacity of the "I" in the language of symbolic interactionism.

However, I believe that the theory and language of symbolic interactionism may only go so far in the task of describing the theory and practice of loving presence. Yet the implications of my study findings for theory development in educational psychology may come in part from noticing the limitations of this theory.

Loving presence, as I have begun to define it, includes a perspective that transcends the dual self. It is necessary to include concepts like "I" and "me" to understand how social forces influence the choice to be a loving presence and to understand training methods used to develop the capacity to be a loving presence. But these concepts are not sufficient to explain the many yoga principles and beliefs that inform the theory and practice of loving presence.

Future Theory Development

The implications of my study findings for theory development may suggest the need to explore multiple theories from different philosophical traditions. An example of this type of approach is the Competing Values Framework (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983) that emerged from a study of the leadership literature and evolved into a framework for organizational analysis. This framework recognizes multiple theoretic and philosophical traditions as potentially complementary forces influencing such things as leadership style, and organization behavior and change.

Future Research Possibilities

Yoga Therapist Training. At the level of yoga therapist training, research could build on this study by considering how therapist trainees could be further instructed on the theory and practice of the "self-presencing" principle. Such research might follow a sample of master practitioners and attempt to learn from their self-presencing process more about the discreet steps of this process and how to communicate these steps to others.

The research of Hendricks and Hendricks (1993) and Aponte (1994) could be helpful to this research agenda, as could the literature and practice of Insight Meditation (i.e., Vipassana) and other yoga methods. This type of research program will, I believe, need to continue the task of developing ways of viewing and understanding yoga-based

programs found in western cultures.

Professional Education Generally

Models of professional education that include training the person of the professional may be useful in some helping professions. Research that could contribute to this type of professional training might include: a) additional qualitative studies that describe the goals and methods of existing programs in other professional fields; b) studies that compare and contrast instructional strategies and methods in order to develop effective training approaches; and c) systematic explorations of instructional design principles and concepts in pilot programs in order to extend current theory.

The impact of professional standard congruence across levels of training organizations could also be an avenue for further study. Research questions might be: a) Is there evidence for the hypothesis that consistent adherence to professional standards within a training organization supports positive training outcomes? b) Are different professional training program outcomes more or less likely to be affected by principle congruence at different levels of the organization? c) What do professionals say and do about the importance, or lack of importance, of training-practice professional standard congruence?

The concept of authenticity as a professional standard suggests other types of questions and research agendas.

Investigations into authentic practice could seek to describe the construct in professions where there is interest or reason to believe that authenticity contributes to professional success. Studies could be undertaken to learn what practicing professionals need in the way of professional development geared to support authenticity. Perhaps one of the most powerful studies would be an investigation into professional satisfaction and health in settings where authenticity is valued and practiced.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This study was designed to learn about the meaning, definition of, and training in professional standards within the context of a particular yoga therapist training program. The challenge to understand a training agenda that blends eastern and western views of self, and other core values, has been only partially met, I believe. Alternative language is now being developed by training staff to explain and teach loving presence, yet the essence of this principle is experiential.

My bias is that the use of language to explain this construct is necessary, but not sufficient, for understanding. To fully apprehend the verb "to presence," it must be experienced. I don't believe that loving presence or presencing is new, however. This experience is ancient and has been written and talked about in many languages.

In closing, it is my hope that this study contribute to the understanding and furthered use of moments of nonjudgmental attention.

APPENDIX A

1. Interviewee:
 - a. PRYT Senior Staff _____
 - b. yrs _____
 - c. PRYT Junior Staff _____
 - d. yrs _____
 - e. Program Assistants _____
 - f. # programs _____
 - g. Mentors _____
 - h. # times _____
 - i. # mentees _____
 - j. Administrative Staff _____
 - k. Trainee _____
2. A. General goals and desired outcomes of PRY Therapy
3. Think of an actual session that really worked: what did it look like
4. Think now of a PRY Therapist that you think is really good at this work. You may have received a session from them or watched them teach or demonstrate PRYT. What was it about them that made them stand out in your mind as really good?
 - a. attitudes/beliefs
 - b. behavior/doing- center, warmups, postures, dialogue, center
 - c. dress/appearance
 - d. environment (advertising, fee, space, props)
 - e. presence/being
 - f. PRYT
 - g. values indicators
5. What does a person generally look like before they reach that level of professionalism?

6. Think of a session that just didn't work: what did it look like
7. Think about someone you have known who just wasn't quite getting it, a trainee, or if you haven't come across someone like this, imagine the someone not getting the important parts of the work. What is it about them that makes them stand out in your mind in this way?
 - a. attitudes/beliefs
 - b. behavior/doing- center, warmups, postures, dialogue, center
 - c. dress/appearance
 - d. environment (advertising, fee, space, props)
 - e. presence/being
 - g. values indicators
8. What are some common stages people pass through in their development as a professional PRY Therapist? The well known barriers and obstacles that allow them to break through? Please give illustrations.
9. Talk with me about teaching and learning in the PRYT program. How does teaching happen - How does learning happen?

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Training - Participant Survey

This survey is designed to help me learn what participants in Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Training think about when they think about professionalism and professional Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapists. The concept of professionalism can mean many things and I am interested in whatever you would like to say about it. Thank you for taking time to respond to these questions.

1. Sex female ____ male ____
2. Age 20-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____
 51-60 ____ 61-70 ____ 70+ ____
3. Education Some High School ____ Major(s) ____
 High School Diploma ____ ____
 Some College ____ ____
 Associates Degree ____ ____
 Bachelors Degree ____ ____
 Some Graduate School ____ ____
 Graduate Degree ____ ____
4. If you have a professional certification or license of any type, please
 l i s t i t / t h e m

5. Occupation(s) _____
6. Are you a yoga teacher? yes ____ no ____
7. If so, what type(s) of yoga do you each? _____
8. What does the word "professional" mean to you? For example, please recall someone you think is a real professional, then describe that person. You might think of how they act, think, look, etc. - any words that **you** have to describe them are just what I am looking for. (there are no right or wrong answers here!)
- _____
- _____
- _____
9. Now think about someone who is a very professional Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapist. Please describe that person to me. You might think of how they act think, look, etc., - again using **your own words** to describe them (and remembering that there are no right or wrong answers here either).
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Training - Staff Survey

This survey is designed to help me learn what Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy Training staff think about when they think about professionalism and professional Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapists. The concept of professionalism can mean many things and I am interested in whatever you would like to say about it. Thank you for taking time to respond to these questions.

1. Sex female ____ male ____
2. Age 20-30 ____ 31-40 ____ 41-50 ____
 51-60 ____ 61-70 ____ 70+ ____
3. Education Some High School ____ Major(s) ____
 High School Diploma ____
 Some College ____
 Associates Degree ____
 Bachelors Degree ____
 Some Graduate School ____
 Graduate Degree ____
4. If you have a professional certification or license of any type, please
 l i s t i t / t h e m

5. Occupation(s) _____
6. Are you a yoga teacher? yes ____ no ____
7. If so, what type(s) of yoga do you teach? _____
8. How long have you been a PRYTherapist _____
9. On average, how many clients per week do you see? _____
10. What does the word "professional" mean to you? For example, please recall someone you think is a real professional, then describe that person. You might think of how they act, think, look, etc. - any words that **you** have to describe them are just what I am looking for. (there are no right or wrong answers here!)
- _____
- _____
- _____
11. Now think about someone who is a very professional Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapist. Please describe that person to me. You might think of how they act think, look, etc., - again using **your own words** to describe them (and remembering that there are no right or wrong answers here either).
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE

LIST OF REFERENCES

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