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**ENTER THE WATER CARRIERS: EMBRACING PARENTING EXPERIENCE
IN WORK TEAMS**

by

Christine Cecil

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education**

-

University of San Diego

1997

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ABSTRACT

University of San Diego

ENTER THE WATER CARRIERS: EMBRACING PARENTING EXPERIENCE IN WORK TEAMS

by: Christine Cecil

Dissertation Director: Mary Abascal-Hildebrand, Ed.D.

Parenting experience is rarely valued or integrated with the work of a competitive society such as that of the United States. Despite the implementation of family-friendly workplace policies, institutional structures and practices continue to preclude the substantive acknowledgment of how parenting experience might contribute to the American workplace (Borrill & Kidd, 1994; Jenner, 1994; Rodgers, 1993).

The dynamic complexity of parenting and the concomitant necessity to make constant response shifts and navigate incessant uncertainty, is not acknowledged as collateral for the responsiveness required by complex organizations. Familial commitments are often viewed as antithetical to productivity and profit (Bailyn, 1993): babies and boardrooms don't mix. Hence, the leadership potential of parents in the workplace is typically deemed inconsequential.

The preponderance of work/family literature, rather than exploring how parenting experience might influence work (Piotrkowski, 1978; Voydanoff, 1988), addresses the effects of work on family interactions. And, the potential

insights of parents within the emergent organizational structure of collaborative work in teams have been little explored. Nevertheless, some organizational theorists propose that both parent and team relationships (Manz & Sims, 1993; Mohrman, Cohen & Mohrman, 1995) may serve as collaborative models for embracing organizational complexity despite the individualistic, hierarchical tradition of the American workplace (Bergquist, 1993; Senge, 1990).

Consistent with the emergent trend toward collaboration in the workplace, the researcher enjoined with participants to explore potential linkages between the dynamic complexity of parenting experience and the complexities of team-based interactions within post-modern organizations. Through a collaborative, qualitative research method known as naturalistic inquiry, the researcher observed and analyzed the interactions of nineteen students, both parents and non-parents, as they engaged in work teams at the University of Phoenix. The researcher then conducted a focus group with those participants who were also parents to elicit reflection and insight regarding their leadership experience, as parents and as team members.

The study revealed a series of paradoxical relationships and competing tensions experienced by both parents and non-parents. The researcher discusses lessons learned as well as implications of these paradoxes for parents, teams, and leadership in organizations.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Darren, whose generous spirit and giving nature have sustained me, and for our precious daughter, Tinsley Amber, who will teach her parents infinitely more than she could ever possibly learn from them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully acknowledge the support, encouragement, and wisdom of my colleagues Johanna Hunsaker, Phillip Hwang, and Ines Kraft. I am further indebted to Mary Abascal-Hildebrand for her relentless standards of excellence and commitment to student learning.

I am deeply appreciative of the students and staff of the University of Phoenix for revealing of themselves. Without their willingness to engage with me in the process of discovery, this study might never have come to fruition.

I wish to thank my parents, Bill and Debbie Tinsley, two people who have always believed that there's nothing I could not do. My father engaged with me in hours of conversation and debate, and my mother "tucked me in" each night and made certain that I knew I was special. Their love gives me courage.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

In India, the water carriers on trains are among the lowest ranking members of the Caste system, yet they provide the essence of life -- sustenance for thirsty travelers. Under the leadership of Mohandas Ghandi, the water carriers staged a labor strike to further India's understanding of the abiding value of a water carrier and to underscore the importance of persons from all stations of society. Similar to the water carriers of India, this researcher suggests that, due to an American "culture of separation" (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985, p.277), parents are often de-valued in the workplace.

Parents' insights within leadership contexts, and the workplace specifically, are generally unacknowledged. In fact, an American tradition of individualism precludes the substantive acknowledgment of parenting experience through institutional policies and practices that are often hierarchical and competitive.

Workers are pitted against one another in order to survive and succeed, a practice clearly eschewed by inclusive, collaborative entities and clearly, such competition is a dysfunctional practice within the context of family and community. Furthermore, societal institutions may continue to erode as parents

and non-parents are forced to conform to such oppressive systems (Willard & Fields, 1991).

Background of the Problem

Some authors suggest that models of interaction based upon individualism and competition dominate all major arenas of life in American society (Bellah et al., 1985; Bergquist, 1993, p.165; Tocqueville, 1840\1990). If institutions mirror society (Abascal-Hildebrand, 1995, p.4), then surely American organizations are similarly governed by individualistic practices. Hence, any recent concern for collaborative relationships, as central to the humanity of workers, is often superseded by the quest for owner or managerial power.

For example, corporate practices of mechanization and routinization are designed to increase productivity and profitability. This mechanization of work both controls and limits the opportunity for persons performing the work to contribute their insights and experience to the task. Such a quest for profit maximization may alienate employees from their own experience and thereby inhibit participation of the American worker (Rock, 1991).

Recently, however, the American workplace has begun to experience a variety of environmental pressures to foster increased participation in organizational life.

Because of international competition in many of our most basic industries, because of de-regulation of many others, and because of a new breed of worker with greater financial independence, more education, and a

penchant for self-fulfillment, the world of work is changing. (D'Aprix, 1988, p. 266)

These pressures, among others, have challenged American industry to explore creative and innovative opportunities for less authoritarian, more responsive organizational structures and processes, not unlike the responsiveness required of parents as they engage around the complexities of contemporary family life.

One such vehicle for promoting creativity and embracing complexity is work in teams. Teams may enhance worker participation and perhaps even increase productivity, in a rapidly changing, increasingly complex global business climate.

Despite the impetus to increase worker participation, the interplay between individual power and corporate profitability may continue to render parents' experience inconsequential at best, or a liability, at worst. The energies of parents are often conceptualized as a fixed-bank account, with the demands of work and family relentlessly in competition.

Most research efforts, by very design, support this perception of work and family demands as if they are in conflict. Despite the fact that, in the progression of growth and development in the human person, "Few aspects stands as impactful as those of the parenting process" (Summers, 1995, p.125), research pertaining to parents focused primarily on the effect of parenting practices on the developmental processes of children. Only recently, as the study of adult development emerged as a field in its own right, and the work/family connection

was supposed, investigations began to explore the implications of work on the family unit, including role conflict and stress (Voydanoff, 1988). The much less voluminous examination of the influence of family on work included such studies as absenteeism and declining participation in the workforce due to childbirth (Northcott, 1983; Salkever, 1982; Waite, 1980). The leadership potential, or even the equality issues for parents in the workplace, have been little explored.

Purpose and Importance of the Study

Similar to the water carriers in India, parents are the carriers (Miller, 1976) of the human experience. As givers of life, parents are the bearers of a society's hopes and dreams for the future. According to Hill, the family is central to the process of socialization; "the situation of authority in the family (is) the key to the structure of authority in society at large, and hence also as the key to leadership" (1984, p.29). Similarly, Etzioni suggests that to encourage social responsibility, "ideally, you should start with the family..." (Willard & Fields, 1991, p.36).

At the same time, with the changing nature of business, the input of employees is increasingly cultivated in the workplace. Specifically, family-friendly workplace practices are beginning to promote the participation of parents.

This study may support such employee cultivation as mutually beneficial for companies and workers through the realization that experience garnered in one context might be readily transferable to another setting. That is, parenting

experience may include constructs that are readily transferable to the workplace, and learning garnered in organizations might also apply to home and community life. Parents, then, may generalize constructs learned while negotiating the dynamic complexity of post-modern family life, and contribute to many changes already deemed necessary in the American workplace, especially within the context of teams.

The researcher is concerned with those aspects of the parenting experience that might be responsive to the complexities of organizational life as well as the complexities of team-based interactions. (For an explanation of the researcher's use of the third person, please refer to page number 107 in Chapter 5). While there may exist a vast constellation of influences that might shape and mold parents, the researcher cautions against any qualification of parenting styles that "concentrates on individuals, a concentration not yet in keeping with the emerging recognition that we need to think also in terms of people as embedded in relationships and of families as containing people whose goals and paths of development influence and intersect with one another" (Goodnow & Collins, 1990, p.39). Rather than attempting to compare so-called "good" or "poor" parenting experience, it is the idea of embracing complexity that the researcher examined in the context of work teams.

Furthermore, the researcher recognizes that non-parents may also possess the same capacities for embracing a complex, ambiguous world and may engender collaborative relationships. However, it is the researcher's

suggestion that, unlike non-parents who may eschew the added chaos and disorder of responding to the needs of a child, and strive to maintain a semblance of control over their lives in their choice not to raise children, parents are enmeshed in a dynamic web of relationships and a complexity that may be a natural, growth-fostering aspect of parenting experience which might be readily applied to life in organizations.

To be sure, the interconnectedness and complexity of organizations as well as parenting experience, much like the quality of persons' experiences working in teams, is largely subjective. Thus, the emerging value of qualitative research is in the opportunity to explore subjective experience. As such, the researcher analyzed the participation of University students who are parents and garnered their insights pertaining to the relationship between their conceptions of parenting experience and their sense of participation.

Through participant observation and a focus group approach, the researcher explored the potential richness and subtleties contributed by virtue of the team-based interaction that was the context for this study, one context where there may be a conceptual shift in the study of the work\family connection. While an analysis of this case is not intended to generalize to other contexts, the researcher attempted to forge new lines of thinking about parenting and the American workplace. It is this conceptual integration of family and organizational life that may have applications beyond this particular context and study.

Research participants were drawn from among volunteer undergraduate students at the University of Phoenix (UOP), a private, publicly traded post-secondary institution located in San Diego, California. Three primary factors influenced the researchers decision to utilize UOP as an appropriate context from which to inform the potential linkages between parenting experience and team-based interactions posited by the researcher.

First, the institution's compilation of student demographic information suggested that participants drawn from UOP were likely to be employed and many were likely to be parents based upon the average student age and typical marital status. The demographics of the student body are as follows (Palmer-Noone, 1995): the majority of students are in their mid-thirties; the average household income is \$53,000 annually; 70 percent of the students are White, 10 percent Hispanic, eight percent African American, five percent Asian, three percent Native American, and four percent of the students are in the self-report category of other; 80 percent of the students receive tuition remission from their employers to attend the institution; 70 percent are full-time students.

The research participants for this study did, in fact, reflect this institutional diversity: ten participants were Caucasian, four were African American, three participants were Asian, and the study included two Hispanic participants. Eight of the participants were men. Eleven participants were women. All students were employed. Sixteen participants were parents.

Second, the researcher surmised that many students might choose UOP programs because of prior experience with teams and a desire to continue to work in a team-based environment. Hence, the researcher surmised that many students would have a solid mental representation of teams from which to draw parallels between their own parenting experience and experience within the context of teams. This was not, in fact, the case. Only three of the nineteen participants indicated they had any substantive prior experience working in teams, and the researcher had not assessed the quality or nature of that experience. For the most part, the research participants drawn from UOP were interested in acquiring team knowledge and experience. They were novices.

The curriculum of the GEN 300 course, Skills for Professional Transition, is structured to ensure that students acquire the essential information to function effectively in teams. The researcher surmised that this curriculum would serve to orchestrate an ideal environment in which participants might be able to draw connections and infer linkages between parenting and team-based interaction.

Unfortunately, as team novices, the participants were unable to apply and integrate this curriculum. The participants experienced the paradox of expertise in that "If you start out with scanty and shallow knowledge, what is there to connect new knowledge to?" (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1986, p.12).

Limitations of the Study

This sample may have been unique in that individuals who elected to pursue an accelerated academic program in their middle years of life may differ

significantly from individuals who do not. Also, the fact that Gen 300 is the first course students attended at the institution most certainly influenced the findings.

Additionally, University of Phoenix offers year-round accelerated academic programs (i.e., students typically attend one three-unit course at a time, one night a week, for a five week duration), primarily in the business fields. The cornerstone of these programs is a distinctly collaborative approach to learning through work in teams; in fact, the entire array of University services are also organized in teams, to better meet the needs of the student population while providing University employees with opportunities for connection and closer affiliation. Consequently, participants, both parents and non-parents, who chose such a vehicle for their academic growth may have already viewed themselves as innovative, responsive and open to complexity simply by virtue of their choice to pursue education within this highly responsive, complex environment.

Specific Terminology

Due to the inherent complexity and ambiguity of language, the researcher was compelled to clarify specific terminology conveyed in this study. While the researcher acknowledges that ambiguities are most often resolved through discourse and not through the proffering of definitions, the researcher intended to infuse terms with a meaning that can be shared sufficiently for dialogue to ensue (Mishler, 1986, p.46). The following is a definition of terms to illuminate the problem of study.

Collaboration

Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (as cited in Weisbord, 1992) suggest that collaboration is "the cooperative or joint efforts by disparate groups or systems directed to achieving an agreed upon common goal, outcome, or objective" (p. 42).

Inclusive

Inclusiveness is an appreciation of individual differences, recognition of power relations, and the capacity to create a learning environment.

Inclusiveness means that diverse experiences are valued (Prior, 1994).

Individualism

Bellah's explains that individualism is the belief that individuals are responsible only for themselves. This belief is extended into nearly all of life's concerns such that "human life is an effort by individuals to maximize their self-interest" (Bellah et al., 1985, p. 336). Using this definition, individualism is constituted by the staunch belief that "anything that would violate our right to think for ourselves, judges for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious" (Bellah et al., 1985, p.142).

Interdependence

First introduced by Harold Kelley in Interpersonal Relations: A Theory of Interdependence (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978), the term connotes the notion that no one person is truly independent. Each individual is part of a larger community.

Paradox

Paradox typically refers to a set of statements that are self-referential and apparently contradictory. In that contradiction, the statements trigger a vicious circle (Hughes & Brecht, 1975).

The essence of paradox "is a struggle with opposites, especially the attempt to create meaning and coherence out of what seems to lack them" (Smith & Berg, 1987, p.9).

In referring to the inherently paradoxical nature of group life, we mean that individual members experience the group as being filled with contradictory and opposing emotions, thoughts, and actions that coexist inside the group. As group members struggle to manage the tensions generated by these contradictory and opposing forces, the essential process of group dynamics are created. (Smith & Berg, 1987, p.15).

Parents

"Except in the legal sense, we do not 'become' parents overnight. It is a developmental process, inevitably influenced by experiences with children..." (Goodnow & Collins, 1990, p.153). Some authors suggest that it is essential to understand a parent as "a partner in a close relationship" (Vondra & Belsky, p.1), however, parenting is not the exclusive realm of the so-called nuclear family. Single-parents, parents raising adopted children, grandparents and other non-traditional definitions of family have long co-existed with the idea of two biological parents raising a child. Hence, for the purpose of this study, the

essential factor in the identification of participants as parents will be the choice of participants to identify themselves as such.

Participation

Participation is defined by Rock as "any arrangement in which workers are given a voice in the decision-making in a company" (Rock, 1991, p.43).

Positivistic

According to Friedman (1969), positivistic thinking claims that human values are unverifiable and subsequently irrelevant. Positivism is the reliance on quantity, number -- those facts that are concrete and controllable.

Essentially, "Human relations are observed from without and reduced to interrelated units of a deterministic structure in which the objective description of 'values' replaces valuing seen from within" (p.44).

Post-Modern

Unlike positivistic thinking, post-modernism more readily embraces subjectivity and a socially constructed reality rather than an attempt to objectify social constructs with the use of facts and figures, as did thinkers of the modern world. According to Bergquist (1993), post-modernism embraces reality as embedded in language rather than universal truths that reside outside of the self. The nature of reality, therefore, is open to interpretation in as much as post-modernism supposes that there are many unique ways of knowing and those ways of knowing must be subject to critique. Post-modern theory suggests that scientific method, increasing efficiency, and systems approaches

"are only part of the solution to the economic and social work that organizations are formed to do" (p.35). Further, post-modernism calls for a scrutiny of the effects of systems and hierarchies on the human condition, and seeks to explore the implications of efficiency and objectivity on those aspects of the world that require a subjective response, such as workplace relationships.

System

"A system is a set of objects together with relationships between the objects and their attributes" (Hall & Fagen, 1975 p.52). Systems-thinking suggests that "The coevolving coherence of the individuals and the larger (context) are a complementarity that can neither be separated into its components nor reduced to one or the other" (Dell, 1982, p. 32).

Work Team

"The word team can be traced back to the Indo-European word *deuk* (to pull); it has always included a meaning of pulling together" (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994, p. 354). In the present day, Manion, Lorimer, and Leander (1996) suggest that a team is a small number of consistent people who have a shared purpose. These people possess both complimentary and overlapping skills, share a common approach to their work, and hold themselves mutually accountable for reaching their goals.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The relationship between work and family has been examined from a variety of perspectives and disciplines. This review of the literature by no means represented an exhaustive treatment of all applicable realms of study. Rather, the literature review was intended to provide readers with a historical context for the research investigation, to forge potential linkages between parenting and the workplace, and to provide a foundation for exploring the conceptual integration of work and family life.

Therefore, the researcher drew from readings in leadership, management, sociology, philosophy, and several branches of psychology. Incorporating ideas from these varied fields of study, the researcher attempted to illustrate the emerging trend toward team work and collaboration in the American workplace and explore the implications of acknowledging parents' potential insights pertaining to contemporary organizational and societal change, in what is now described as the post-modern era, despite the individualistic underpinnings of American society and the competitive nature of the American workplace.

Organizations and Individualism

Hall (1976) outlines the crises in the world of contemporary life -- the disconnected relationships among persons, their institutions, and their social world. He suggests that "We in the West live fragmented, compartmentalized lives in which contradictions are carefully sealed off from each other"(p.9). This compartmentalization of experience hinders our growth, as well as the advancement of our society, in as much as "Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed only by the reciprocal influence of men [sic] upon one another" (de Tocqueville, 1840\1990, p. 108).

Robert Bellah and his colleagues (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985, p.150) explore the ways in which the compartmentalization of experience and "classic polarities of American individualism" influence persons' "deep desire for autonomy and self-reliance combined with an equally deep conviction that life has no meaning unless shared with others in the context of community". They are concerned with the significant problems individualism creates in American institutions.

According to Abascal-Hildebrand (1995, p.4) "institutions and organizations generally mirror the societal structure out of which they originate", and a historical view indicates that many work settings were indeed founded on the scientific management axioms of Frederick Taylor (Taylor, 1911) and the hierarchical models of Max Weber's bureaucracies (Weber, 1947). The implementation of these models incorporates the industrialization and

compartmentalization of work, and often causes employees to become increasingly specialized, less able to conceptualize. Ultimately, people may experience themselves as cogs within the workplace machine (Morgan, 1986) – churning in the relentless pursuit of profit. Further, in sacrificing the humanity of workers to the quest for profitability, "Organizations create a situation that is fundamentally in conflict with the needs of healthy human beings" (Argyris as cited in Bolman and Deal, 1991, p.128).

Bergquist, in his work pertaining to post-modern organizations, calls for the essence of parenting to stave off the "permanent subordination of workers before owner and managerial prerogatives" (Rock, 1991, p.38). Bergquist suggests that corporate leaders have forgotten the mutual benefits of love and sacrifice.

It is in the role of lover and servant that a parent first creates the lifelong bond of commitment to – and commitment from – his or her children.

Without this bond, leadership by means of paternalism...must ultimately rely on coercive control, whether overt or covert. (1993, p.251)

One such vehicle for fostering participation and overcoming the individualism and paternalism of the American corporation, is work in teams.

Organizations and Teams

"The seeds for transformation to a new and better level of human existence are already planted in the organizational world. Humanistic values, holistic approaches, and participative" (Allen & Kraft, 1984, p.36) structures are

unfolding in the United States, to overcome destructive, individualistic workplace practices. These emerging structures afford workers greater participation in organizational life via the implementation of systems that promote collaboration, and a nurturing organizational climate. According to Rose (1990),

... Creativity and intuition (are) joining numerical analysis as aids to decision-making; love and caring (are) being recognized as motivators in the workplace; even the primacy of the profit motive (is) being questioned by those who argue that the real goal of enterprise is the mental and spiritual enrichment of those who take part in it. (p. 157)

Max DePree (1992) echoes this sentiment and cites the workplace as an emerging center of belonging, healing, and life support. He invokes the symbol of the water carrier to underscore the interdependence of each person in an organization.

The need for interdependence in the workplace is echoed by others such as Galbraith (as cited in Mohrman et al., 1995, p.9) who suggest that "Hierarchically determined decisions, goals, rules, programs, and job descriptions are insufficient in the dynamic, complex, and demanding world now faced by many companies". Work teams have emerged as one vehicle that affords employees greater connection with fellow workers. Interestingly and historically, "when worker power peaked, democratic group-oriented methods were advocated; when worker power declined, individualistic, authoritative approaches prevailed" (Bettenhausen, 1991, p.370).

Within a context of declining human interaction and increasing mechanization, sociotechnical theory and the concept of work in teams was originated by Eric Trist (Trist & Bamforth, 1951). The sociotechnical approach to work assumes that corporations cannot "conceptually separate the task and technical elements from the human and organizational elements" (Schein, 1994, p.126). This idea challenged the assumptions of scientific management and extolled the power of teams for promoting experience-based learning. Teams emerged as an ideal structure for integrating the requirements of a task with the needs of humans in relationship, a structure "capable of self-modification, of adapting to change, and of making the most of the creative capacities of the individual" (Cherns, 1976, p.785).

Since their inception, teams have been incorporated into what is referred to by some as the quality movement. The Association for Quality and Participation defines a team as "a group of employees who have day-to-day responsibility for managing themselves and the work they do with a minimum of direct supervision" (Fisher, 1993, p.15). The essence of a team is that "people take direction from the work itself rather than from management" (p.16). It is individuals "working together and managing their processes without any need for supervision" (Manz & Sims, 1993, p.164).

This shared accountability makes a team distinct from a typical work group. A work group involves a collection of individuals who coordinate and cooperate in a joint effort, but focus on individual roles and responsibilities.

Work groups spend little time becoming a team, such as establishing purpose and building collaborative relationships. The group does not assume responsibility for the achievement of goals or outcomes. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) also delineate a clear distinction between teams and groups in that leadership roles are shared, accountability is mutual, and the team's final product is a collective effort.

While the idea of team-based work is not inherently positivistic, the quality movement which has overarched the implementation of team-based work structures (Deming, 1996) implies that "Each process is carefully described; problems identified; the root causes of problems determined through careful research. Variation is studied, understood, and reduced well beyond specifications, then it is reduced some more" (Scholtes, 1988, p. 1-9). Some authors assert that such reductionist control and mechanization depicts scientific management in its purest form. In Deming, "Taylor's philosophy of scientific management is alive and well. It masquerades under pseudonyms such as supplies management, total quality management, and business process re-engineering" (Richardson & Goodenough, 1995, p.4).

Under the auspices of quality enhancement, attempts to control and quantify human aspects of the workplace "damages peoples' aspirations" (p.4) and represents a threat to worker participation. Ciulla (1996, p.56), also suggests that the efforts to control workers through principles of scientific management are simply veiled by new "quality" terminology.

The twentieth century began with scientific management with its physical control over production. It will end with TQM and its social control over production. They are two sides of the same coin. Scientific management separated the mind from the body of the worker to mass produce goods. TQM puts workers together in teams to produce quality goods and services.

Despite the objectivist and positivistic connotations of the quality movement, the spirit of team learning implies shared communication, trust, commitment, respect, collaboration, and the embrace of complexity and diversity of thought. Conflict is viewed as opportunity. Leadership is rotated. "Team goals are as important as individual goals" (Harrington-Mackin, 1994, p.21). "Moving to a team-based organization entails a shift away from the logic of a hierarchical breakdown to a logic of lateral distribution and integration of work" (Mohrman et al., 1995, p.80). Team-based structures and processes are designed to embrace the idea that "In the workplace, employees can only take responsibility if they have the power and access to resources to influence outcomes" (Ciella, 1996, p. 62). Rather than retaining the power to effect change in the hands of one individual, within teams, the capacity to effect change is shared among team members.

Hence, the use of teams is becoming pervasive (Manz & Sims, 1993, p.164). Teams may represent an ideal vehicle to promote employee involvement and potentially increase productivity (Ittner & MacDuffie, 1994, p.31;

Mavrinac, Jones, & Meyer, 1995; Willins, 1991). With the use of teams, "Costs frequently go down and productivity goes up... Conflict is reduced." (Manz & Sims, 1993, p. 198). Because teams encompass diverse inputs and broader perspective (Manion et al., 1996, p. 14), they "enable organizations to execute faster, learn better, and change more easily" (Mohrman et al., 1995, p.7).

According to Weisbord, team dialogues are the key to a new way of doing business (1992, p.5). Despite the fact that collective inquiry can be inherently threatening (Argyris, 1990), to survive turbulent times "we must develop a new sense of community within post-modern organizations. We must establish strong commitments and partnerships among those working in these organizations" (Bergquist, 1993, p.230). Parenting experience may serve as a model for such commitment and partnering in the workplace.

Organizations and Parents

The modern workplace has typically been characterized by a separation of the worker from the work.

Social thought in the twentieth century has emphasized the contrast between the traditional, communal society and the modern, industrial society. In the small, intimate, traditional community, the member's participation is as a total individual; in the mass society, his [sic] participation is in large impersonal organizations and is limited to specific functions. (Verba, 1961, p.17)

Hence, modern "social scientists have traditionally studied family and work as separate, independent unrelated spheres" (Izraeli, 1988, p. 329). However, research undertakings have now shifted to conceptualize the world of work and the family realm as interconnected. In fact, some authors assert that the connections between work and family are "undeniably significant and extensive" (Kingston, 1988, p.58; Senge, 1990). "Multiple levels of interdependence make it impossible to consider the sphere of family and the sphere of employment as separate worlds" (Baca-Zinn & Eitzen as cited in Ferber, O'Farrell, & Allen, 1991, p.43). Insights garnered through family and community might be readily applied to work situations and vice versa. We can apply "critical skills that we learn in our jobs to our family processes and procedures" and "blend work and family life" (Hammond, 1997, p.2).

Despite this interdependence, the influence of the family on work has been largely neglected with a few notable exceptions (Crouter, 1984; Kanter, 1977); typical studies include investigations into absenteeism (Northcott, 1983; Salkever, 1982) or childbearing implications on productivity (Waite, 1980). The preponderance of "research on the work family interface has tended to focus on effects of work on family life" (Voydanoff, 1988, p.6; Voydanoff & Kelly, 1984).

Furthermore, a relentlessly individualistic society inculcates the preponderance of research pertaining to the work/family interface. Hence, "Much of the research on the relationship between work and family roles has been somewhat negative in that it emphasized the dysfunctional consequences

of work-family interactions" (Greenhaus, 1988, p.30). Studies of role conflict, strain, and stress permeate the work\family literature (Barnett & Marshall, 1992; Berman, Sacks & Lief, 1975; Cooke & Rousseau, 1984; Duxbury & Higgins, 1991; Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hall, 1972; Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992; Loerch, Russell, & Rush, 1989; Rice, Frone, & McFarlin, 1992; Williams & Alger, 1994; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). A juggling metaphor is often used to describe the competing demands of family and work roles, which implies that some priority is ultimately dropped (Clinton, 1996; Crosby, 1991, p.7; Williams, Suls, Alliger, Learner, & Wan, 1991).

Nevertheless, many organizations have begun to recognize "...the sense of fit between the work organization and oneself is fundamental to job commitment" (Pittman & Orthner, 1988, p. 242). And, "some form of worker participation (now) exists in hundreds of thousands of American businesses" (Rock, 1991, p.45). Examples of programs that encourage participation of workers and parents specifically, include: parental leave, child and dependent care, alternative work schedules and work sites, employee assistance and relocation programs (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990).

Unfortunately, such innovative programs may be under-utilized due to fear of recrimination and manager resistance (Jenner, 1994). For example, in one company, a formal Quality of Work Life Program (QWLP) was perceived as pampering lazy employees and dubbed the "Quit Work and Loaf Program" (D'Aprix, 1988). It appears "There is a subtle social stigma attached to those

who depend on others. These people are (viewed as) weak, unable to stand on their own two feet" (Hwang, 1995, p.10).

Likewise, in a survey of vanguard organizations (Rodgers, 1993) that implemented flexible programs at a rate considerably higher than that demonstrated by similar companies in benchmarking studies, a variety of flexible programs were offered, including: family leave, compressed workweek, part-time hours, flex time, job sharing, telecommuting, and work sharing. Except for those programs promoting the use of flex-time, however, very few employees participated in these programs. Rodgers suggests that workplace flexibility is not yet accessible to most workers as a means of integrating work and family life.

Similarly, a U. S. Department of Labor study cited in a recent edition of the San Diego Union Tribune (Stewart-Hand, 1994) indicates that in a survey of 250,000 working women, their number one problem was integrating family and work. Most women find the integration of career and family life elusive (Barciauskas & Hull, 1989).

Furthermore, according to the work of Borrill & Kidd (1994), almost all women surveyed reported difficulties in taking maternity leave after the birth of a child. Most women had changed to part-time work and reported this had not been easy. Some women found it difficult to come to terms with what was often a loss of status. In the same study, new fathers reported reservations about discussing their new role and responsibilities as a parent with their managers. It

seems unlikely that mutually beneficial expectations could be determined without changes in organizational culture despite "family-friendly" policies.

There essentially remains an absence of societal and institutional support for the substantive acknowledgment of the dynamic complexity of parenting experience. Nor is there the realization, that insights gleaned through parents' process of navigating this dynamic complexity, might be readily transferable to participation in American organizational life. And, Bailyn (1993) argues that unless the American workplace is radically re-defined in terms of career paths, management strategies, and the time clock, both employee and employer will face increasing work force problems in the upcoming century.

Institutions, as well as society, need to embrace a future equally committed to the long fought-for domain of individual rights, as well as dedicated to the common good. Such integration will promote care for one another in the workplace and fulfill two of the most basic adult needs for loving, family relationships and humane, productive work (Hale, 1980).

Parents and Individualism

The study of adult needs and development emerged simply as an extension of the study of child development; parents were considered merely in terms of their ability to foster or inhibit potential in their children (Goodnow & Collins, 1990). When adult development emerged as a field of study in its own right, the preponderance of theory focused on individuation and separation of the self, from others, as the essence of growth and development.

This notion of separateness is clearly elucidated in the work of Erikson (1963) who states that the irony of identity formation is that it seems to support an individual's ego as long as he can preserve a certain element of deliberate tentativeness of autonomous choice. The individual must be able to convince himself that the next step is up to him and that no matter where he is staying or going he always has the choice of leaving or turning in the opposite direction if he chooses to do so. (p. 286)

Certainly parents, who typically make a lifelong commitment to the raising of a child, forever relinquish such expectations of autonomy (Dahl, 1989), and according to this view, forfeit the fullest formation of identity and fail to become fully actualized human beings.

Some theorists reject the ideal of a "separate self" (Surrey, 1985, p.9) that permeates the work of Erikson and others (Erikson, 1963; Mahler, Pine & Berman, 1975; Levinson, 1978). These researchers explore connection and inclusion as a source of adult development, and contrast preservation of the individual with the growthful potential of an ethic of care.

Early underpinnings for an ethic of care can be identified in the philosophical literature, or as Fromm (1986) suggests, pre-modern psychology which existed from approximately 500 B.C. until the seventeenth century. "Pre-modern psychology sought to understand the human soul in the interest of making people better" (Fromm, 1986, p. 67) and addressed the meaning of life and the processes of being and becoming through connection.

The post-modern psychological literature also reflects the importance of the relational, connected, caring self as crucial to adult developmental processes. In 1982, Carol Gilligan offered In a Different Voice, her alternative to Kohlberg's hierarchical ethic of justice, fairness, and rights (1958, 1969, 1973, 1976, 1981) which places his work squarely in the modernist genre. In contrast to his emphasis on separation and individuation, Gilligan suggests that development proceeds through connection, affiliation, and relationship.

Nel Noddings, a philosopher, incorporates Gilligan's thinking into her own work and suggests that "... (W)omen not only define themselves in a context of human relationships, but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care" (1984, p. 96). Caring is both self-serving and other serving.

Surrey, drawing from her work as a psychiatrist, also explores the "inherent energizing force of real relationship" (1985, p. 5). Surrey asserts that reciprocity, giving and sharing of oneself in relationship, is a source of mutual self-esteem, pride in the competence of both self and other, learning, and overall self-enhancement. Further, Surrey views reciprocity as essential for growth and as a resource to address increasing levels of life complexity.

Paul Ricoeur, a contemporary philosopher and theologian, writes of reciprocity and its corollary, responsibility in institutional life (1992). He proposes we not only understand ourselves through caring for others, but we understand our own goodness through actions toward others. In fact, "an action could not be held to be good unless it were done on behalf of others, out of

regard for others" (p.189). Ricoeur further posits that the capacity to act is derived and enlarged only through concern for others.

His work suggests that a diminution in the significance of human connection, in turn, diminishes that which is good in each of us. Institutions and individuals that de-value caring persons such as parents, induce much suffering and limit the capacity of parents to act.

Jean Baker Miller, a psychiatrist, also discusses the importance of those who care for others (1976). She suggests that seemingly unimportant people, those who bear the human necessities, such as passion, emotion, and the raising of children for the social group as a whole, are in fact the "carriers" of the human experience (p.24). Often these persons are women, yet her thoughts apply to parents in general.

In the course of projecting into woman's domain some of its most troublesome and problematic exigencies, male-led society may also have simultaneously, and unwittingly, delegated to women not humanity's 'lowest needs', but its 'highest necessities' -- that is, the intense, emotionally connected cooperation and creativity necessary for human life and growth. (p.25)

Despite such insights into the possibilities for growth through caring at its origin, the family continues to be assailed by an individualistic culture. Smelser (1980) theorizes that the parenting process, like organizational processes which attempt to separate the emotional from the functional, will become increasingly

formalized and instrumental. In order to bolster the American family and reflexively infuse a sense of community and connection into the workplace, an understanding of the potential contributions of parents within the context of teams may be warranted.

Parents and Teams

There exists little literature that addresses the correlation between the complexities of the parenting experience and the dynamic, complex nature of organizational life, and team-based interaction, specifically. However, the metaphor of two parents united as a team in the nurturance and rearing of a child is not unfamiliar and such nurturance may serve as a strength when conceptualizing both family and work. "Women and men can be better managers (and possibly team members) because they have children" (Stone, 1994, p.110).

Furthermore, Kelley (1988, p.6) states that "Undoubtedly many of our basic interpersonal skills, needs, and dispositions derive in part from the broad biological mandate to transmit one's genes and promote their further transmission." "...the individual who possesses psychological resources that can be used to enhance relationship functioning -- for example, a basic sense of security, self-worth, the ability to be nurturant and to regulate one's emotions, feelings of efficacy, and enjoyment of intimacy -- is likely to establish close and supportive relations with others" (Vondra & Belsky, 1993, p.10).

Not every parent may possess or even develop these resources.

However, the complexities of contemporary family life increase the likelihood that parents might develop a reservoir of experience and insights which would enable parents to address ongoing challenges and ambiguity. This reservoir of experience ought to be at least acknowledged and ideally, integrated into the work of American society.

In addition to the two-parent model, American families consist of single-parents, grandparents, blended families, or other forms of "non-traditional" child-rearing relationships. Under such circumstances, the idea of teamwork in the parenting process becomes even more relevant. Hillary Clinton's recent work It Takes a Village (1996) reflects the inherent interdependence of the parenting process. She suggests that a host of adults collaborate to share in the raising of a child -- "grandparents, neighbors, teachers, ministers, employers, political leaders, and untold others..." (p.11). She further posits that "Parenthood has the power to redefine every aspect of life -- marriage, work, relationships with family and friends" (Clinton, 1996, p.9).

This researcher suggests that "interdependence, cooperation, and communication, and so on are essential elements of teamwork regardless of the team task or context" (Rentsch, Heffner, & Duffy, 1994, p.453), and parents, people who experience interconnected relationships and an array of uncertainties in the process of caring for children, may generalize and apply that experience to their work in organizational teams.

It's ironic that we spend so much time and money trying to devise clever programs for developing leadership in our organizations and ignore a structure that already exists, and which is ideal for the job. The more I understand the real skills of leadership in a learning organization, the more I become convinced these are the skills of effective parenting.

(O'Brien as cited in Senge, 1990, p. 310)

Summary

In what are considered post-modern times, there are predominantly two schools of thought (i.e., mental models) in American society and in the workplace. There is the more prevalent model based upon individualized notions of what is just and what is fair and then, there is a model which stresses connections between people and an ethic of care – the concern for other as a way to fulfill the self (Hwang, 1995). An ethic of care may be contrasted with those views that revere individuation and separation – individualistic views furthered by the preponderance of social and organizational structures. “We preach teamwork, but we idolize individualism” (Lippman-Blumen, 1996, p.71), yet a deeper understanding of how “individualism ...limits the ways in which people think” (Bellah et al., 1985, p.290) appears to be lacking.

The individualistic model offers a simplified view of life that may be inadequate to address the challenges of an American society typified by diversity and increasing complexity. The need for new learning is crucial to integrate the conflicts between the personal and the social, and to embrace the

challenges and opportunities of a changing world. It is vital that institutions and individuals encourage the contributions of each person as an "opportunity for new and divergent thinking" (Hwang, 1995, p.115).

Ironically, conflicts between work and family may be one of the primary ways through which traditional organizations limit their effectiveness and ability to learn. By fostering such conflict, they distract and un-empower their members -- often to a far greater degree than they realize.

Moreover, they fail to exploit a potential synergy that can exist between learning organizations, learning individuals, and learning families.

(Senge, 1990, p.310)

American organizations may be awakening to new ideas of leadership and returning to pre-modern ideas of community and human connection. Out of the chaos and the crisis that converge with necessity and awareness, it may be that the American workplace is uniquely poised to embrace the insights of parents -- the true carriers of the human experience.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter contains a methodological overview, details of the research design, including data collection methods, selection and protection of the research participants, data analysis, and a summary. The background of the researcher was included to provide the reader with insight regarding the researcher's interest and approach to the problem.

This study concerned the dynamic complexity of parenting experience and was intended to engender a value for the insights of parents as a renewed approach and means of expanding knowledge about workplace interaction. Hence, the researcher employed a qualitative research methodology to yield a depth of understanding typically prohibited by the implementation of quantitative instrumentation.

Methodological Overview

This study explored the complexities of parenting experience and team-based interaction. An understanding of parents' insights within the context of collaborative work in teams unfolded through the use of a qualitative research approach known as naturalistic inquiry.

The selection of this qualitative research approach was based upon the dearth of research pertaining to the potential, perhaps natural, linkages between parenting experience and team-based interaction. Moreover, the research question incorporates numerous complex concepts. Concepts such as individualism, collaboration, and inclusion are elusive in definition and evolving in nature. As such, these ideas are more readily understood through a methodology that explores the nuances in the quality of interaction rather than any quantity.

qualitative inquiry is valuable when attempting to understand complex natural phenomenon that are not amenable to experimental control, when the goal of inquiry is to understand subjective experience, or as an initial stage of inquiry when studying a previously un-researched area. (Searight as cited in Searight & Young, 1994, p. 117)

Similarly, since most leadership contexts, particularly work settings, are typified by rapid change and complexity (Drucker, 1994) a qualitative methodology is most appropriate.

Furthermore, there is an important tradition for using settings natural to the research purpose to explore ideas (Saxe & Fine, 1972). Participant observation involves the direct observation by the researcher of an activity or process in a naturalistic setting, as one of the participants in the setting.

Participant observation has the advantage of enabling the researcher to observe phenomena that are usually inaccessible through other modes of

inquiry and to achieve an experiential understanding of a particular social setting. (Tebes & Kraemer, 1991, p.749)

Interestingly, participant observation is routinely utilized in many work settings that employ teams, to enhance communication processes (Scholtes, 1988) and to allow team members to observe interaction from varied perspectives.

The focus group is another methodology used to understand "participants' perspectives and allow the researcher to explore the nuances and complexities of participants' attitudes and experiences" (Hughes & DuMont, 1993, p.776).

Used widely in business and marketing, the focus group has emerged as a powerful validation tool and a "useful ally" in elucidating concepts generated by prior methods (Agar and MacDonald, 1995, p. 85). Unlike other qualitative methods such as individual interviews, a synergistic dynamic unique to focus groups, resembles the collaborative group process that occurs in teams.

Furthermore, Basch (1987) suggests that

Focus groups could be used to present findings to the research subjects from which the findings were derived and to query them about how they would interpret or explain the data. Findings may have different meanings to different people. Obtaining feedback from participants and considering this feedback along with other input can contribute to the validity of interpretations. The point of view of research subjects in interpreting results appears to be considered infrequently. But these individuals are in a unique and relevant position to help clarify the

meaning and implications of observed findings. (p.437)

Both focus groups and participant observation offered the researcher and participants multiple vantage points from which to understand their experience in the research process.

Research Design

Qualitative research incorporates multiple vantage points and includes both emic and etic perspectives. The emic approach encompasses "those accounts descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the native members of a culture..." (Lett, 1990, p.130) and the etic perspective represents the researcher's beliefs and values (Headland, Pike, & Harris, 1990).

Patton (1991) suggests that the decision regarding the use of a particular research design is predicated on the nature of the research question and the "researcher's own belief about the origin and nature of human behavior and the appropriate way to study behavior" (p. 392). It is the researcher's belief, that for studies to embrace life's complexities, "they must be able to capture both emic and etic perspectives" (Smith, Sells, & Clevenger, 1994, p.268). Employing participant observation as well as focus group methodologies, the researcher integrated both emic and etic views.

Selection of Participants

The emic view was obtained from an opportunistic sample of adult students pursuing an undergraduate degree at the University of Phoenix (UOP).

"Opportunistic sampling is similar to convenience sampling and requires the researcher to select available participants who have information relevant to the topic of inquiry" (Honigman as cited in Smith, Sells, & Clevenger, 1994, p.271). Sample selection was based on potential for extending the emergent ideas of this study (Eisenhardt, 1989) rather than representativeness (O'Brien, 1993).

Participants were garnered and appreciated for their uniqueness in as much as "The social nature of human beings does not permit us to accept the assumption of interchangeability, the assumption of independence, and neutrality of each subject unit, that the logic of experimentation and statistical inferences requires" (Levine, 1974, p. 664). "While every case is a case of something" (Eisner, 1991, p.207), the goal of generalizability was superseded by the desire to generate vivid description.

Such description was generated with research participants drawn from UOP. UOP specializes in adult education. Courses are conducted at an accelerated pace with each undergraduate course consisting of five class meetings, one night weekly, for a total of 20 classroom hours.

Business programs are offered in administration, information systems, and management. UOP also offers programs in Nursing and Counseling. The majority of entering students are required to attend an introductory course entitled "Skills for Professional Transition", GEN 300.

GEN 300 is a three credit course designed to help students develop strategies for professionalism in the workplace. During the course, students

analyze their strengths in interpersonal relations and group interactions. Course content includes an introduction to small group theory and process, including stages of group development, communication patterns in groups, and characteristics of effective teams.

GEN 300 is typically the first class students take at the University. It is also typically their first introduction to the formation of study group work teams.

The work teams at UOP are specifically designed to reflect the workplace environment. In these work teams, approximately five students work to complete course assignments which include an executive project and final presentation. All members of the team are required to contribute to the project.

Work teams were drawn from UOP for a variety of reasons. First, the average student age is 35 years, and many of the students have families and children. The majority of students are employed and have significant work experience. This extensive experience in the workplace was essential to the connection between work and family life posited by the researcher. Most students reside within San Diego County which facilitated coordinating and conducting participant observation during team meetings.

Entry to the Population

The researcher gained access to the population by virtue of her facilitator (i.e., instructor) standing with the University of Phoenix. The researcher had the opportunity, on previous occasions, to facilitate and observe the in-class dynamics of the GEN 300 course, including the interactions of the student work

teams during class sessions.

Furthermore, the researcher also had the opportunity to discuss with previous members of GEN 300 courses, their personal challenges in gaining appreciation in the working world for their insights and experience as parents. Hence, the researcher suspected the GEN 300 courses would serve as an ideal setting for soliciting volunteers to contribute to an understanding of the evolving connections between work and family life posited in this study.

Protection of Participants

The researcher endeavored to preserve the rights and sensitivities of individual participants in that all research practices were conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the United States Government and the University of San Diego's Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects. All participants were volunteers who signed an informed consent document (Appendix D), were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from participation in the study at any time without jeopardy to their University or course standing. To further ensure confidentiality, all transcripts were labeled with fictitious names and field notes were coded and locked with the audio recordings in the researcher's home to prevent theft or tampering.

Once the proposal was officially approved by the dissertation committee, the specific steps in the research process included the following:

1. The researcher submitted a proposal to the University of San Diego (USD) Protection of Human Subjects Committee to ensure that all aspects of the

research process were conducted in a legal and ethical manner.

2. The researcher generated a letter of inquiry to the Director of Academic

Affairs at the University of Phoenix (UOP) to outline the research process and gain written permission to undertake the investigation (Appendix A).

3. Once approval was obtained from the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at USD and the administration at UOP, the researcher obtained a list of upcoming GEN 300, "Skills for Professional Transition", course offerings.

4. A letter was then directed to individual GEN 300 course facilitators to explain the study, receive permission to introduce the research design within the class setting, and subsequently, to observe work team activities associated with that course (Appendix B).

5. The researcher contacted each of the course facilitators by telephone to clarify any questions and confirm their willingness to afford the researcher access to the classroom.

6. Once the participation of individual GEN 300 course facilitators was secured, the researcher announced to the students, the intent of the study during the first session of several GEN 300 course offerings (Appendix C). Students were invited to participate in the study. The researcher conducted similar overviews of the study within GEN 300 courses until approximately five work teams, each comprised of three to four members, agreed to participate.

7. Once agreement to participate was secured from an entire work team, the researcher provided all team members with informed consent forms to complete

(Appendix D). At this time, each team member also completed an individual demographic\contact form (Appendix E) and returned it to the researcher. This form provided the initial opportunity to identify participants who were parents and those who were not.

8. The researcher then observed the work team meetings, which were held outside of the regular class sessions of the five week GEN 300 course, during three, approximately one-hour sessions for each team. The interaction was recorded by the researcher in the form of field notes and audio recordings.

9. At the conclusion of each work team meeting and after all team sessions concluded, the researcher formatively analyzed the data.

10. After all GEN 300 courses and associated work team meetings concluded, the researcher conducted a two-hour focus group. All participants were invited to attend the session. One parent from Team Three and two parents from Team One attended. During the focus group, the researcher explored with participants their perceptions of parenting experience and team-based interactions, and the researcher engaged with participants around their reflections, insights, and elaboration of the researcher's preliminary findings.

12. The researcher then analyzed the results of the focus group sessions.

Data Collection

"Conducting research means entering into relationship with people, and these relationships significantly affect the outcome of the research...a tripartite knowledge – about the subject, about the researcher, and about the knowledge

itself." (Gadlin & Ingle, 1975, p. 1008). The tripartite knowledge for this study was garnered from participant observation of team meetings that occurred from August through November, 1996, as well as from views elicited in a focus group session held in December of 1996.

The data were collected in the form of field notes and audio recordings. Field notes captured the researcher's immediate reactions. Audio tape recordings served as the basis for the development of a transcript of the conversation. The researcher had intended the use of visual recordings, as well, but this tool was precluded by complications such as lack of space and inadequate lighting at participants' meeting places of choice.

Participant Observation

Nineteen undergraduate students were observed during work team meetings associated with their first course at the University of Phoenix, GEN 300 -- approximately three one-hour sessions. Participant observation allowed the researcher to share the social relations of a specified team of people.

"The belief is that by the means of such sharing, a rich, concrete, complex ... account of the social world being studied is possible" (Van Maanen, 1988, p.3). Using this methodology, the researcher sought to generate rich description, rather than engage in prediction and reductionism (Searight & Young, 1994).

Focus Group Session

One means of generating rich description, is the focus group session.

"The focus group method is not new. It was developed in the 1930s by social scientists who were convinced of the limitations of interviews" (Hellman & Baker, 1996, p. 297).

Krueger (1988) defines a focus group as "a planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions or explore an area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (p.12). Morgan suggests that a focus group is designed to resemble a "lively conversation among friends or neighbors" (1988, p. 22).

In this study, the purpose of the focus group was twofold. First, the researcher afforded participants the opportunity to share their reflections and to expand upon the researcher's formative analysis of the team interactions.

Second, the researcher attempted to facilitate a lively, open-ended conversation regarding the linkages between parenting experience and team-based interaction. Both objectives of the focus group session were designed to embrace the emic perspective and "respect the fact that conceptualization is not a one-way process" (Calder, 1977, p.354). Further, Abascal-Hildebrand (1993) indicates that "conversations are different from straight-forward, question-and-answer sessions because they encourage critical interpretation for both researchers and participants" (p. 127). She posits that conversations can foster commitment to solving problems participants and researchers uncover. The

focus group represents a unique conversation in that "lively group interaction is obviously something that can't happen in an (question and answer) interview" (Agar & MacDonald, 1995, p.80).

Data Analysis

Fetterman (1989, p.136) states that rigor is the vigilance with which a researcher pursues the task at hand. "The researcher must pursue each interview, observation, and analytical task with diligence. A lack of rigor or energy at any stage will diminish the quality and accuracy of the final product".

The researcher approached the analytical process with a willingness to accommodate the research design to the way in which the research context unfolds, knowing that "Our academic notions about human behavior, when put to the real-world test, will inevitably be modified to accommodate the complexities of social problems" (Saxe & Fine, 1972, p.74).

Analysis of Observational Data

When analyzing such complex phenomenon as team interactions, the researcher had intended to group observed behaviors according to four categories that seemed to be indicative of collaborative behavior within groups: sharing feelings (e.g., participant shares personal feelings with the team or encourages others to express their feelings); demonstrating approval and acceptance (e.g., non-verbal or verbal approval of another member's participation); harmonizing/compromising (e.g., reduces tension, works out disagreements, admits error, changes proposals to help the group, looks for the

middle ground); and encouraging (e.g., the participant is friendly, warm and responsive, uses eye contact and "uh-huhs") (Scholtes, 1988). After the first team meeting, however, the researcher realized that these categories included only overt behaviors, and

Every behavior (contrary to what the behaviorists would have us believe) is not an independent atom of an individual's functioning but rather is embedded in his or her systemic coherence. Not only do all behaviors issue from the coherence but they recursively affect the coherence. (Dell, 1982, p. 31)

The researcher became aware that such a behavioral focus was reductionistic. Participants contributions might be reduced to a mere frequency indicator, and that these categories, in truth, represented an attempt to demonstrate a "difference" between parents and non-parents, rather than capturing the totality of the team and parenting experience.

At that juncture, the researcher resolved to remain open, not only to overt behaviors of participants, but additional dimensions of relationship, including interpersonal, intrapersonal, and contextual dimensions. This approach is supported in the literature by Steckler and Fondas (1995), who emphasize the importance of relationships within a team context. These authors suggest a framework for conceptualizing team interactions that includes organizational, behavioral, and psychological factors.

As the study evolved, the researcher came to view the teams as dynamic relational systems and she endeavored to see four levels of these systems operating simultaneously: events, patterns of behavior, systemic structure (i.e., context), and mental models" (Senge et al., 1994, p. 97). Hence, the researcher examined relationships and grouped observations according to these four categories.

In coding behaviors according to these recursive, interrelated phenomena and "With qualitative methods, such as participant observation, it is impossible on a practical level to separate the gathering of the data from their interpretation...In participant observation, the observer becomes the instrument" (Stafford & Stafford, 1993, p.65). "There are no external frames of reference available (of culture, of morals) that are any more compelling or shared than the author's own" (Van Maanen, 1988, p.133).

In formulating this analysis with observer as instrument, both reliability and validity (Kirk & Miller, 1986) of observational findings were enhanced through the use of focus groups. "Reliability is a weak element in qualitative research; it is a trade-off for the richness of data obtained" (Stafford & Stafford, 1993, p.65). The focus groups allowed participants to confirm the researcher's punctuation and interpretation of their team experience.

While striving to foster interpretative validity, understanding in this study was intended to be "grounded in the language of the people studied and rely as much as possible on their own words and concepts" (Maxwell, 1992, p. 289).

"Interpretive validity is inherently in a matter of inference from the words and actions of participants in the situations studied" (Maxwell, 1992, p. 290).

Analysis of Focus Group Data

Zemke and Kramlinger (as cited in Basch, 1987) recommend the following analysis of focus group data:

generating a list of key ideas, words, phrases, and verbatim quotes that capture sentiments; using the ideas to formulate categories of concerns and placing the ideas and quotes in the most appropriate categories; examining the contents of each category to search for sub-topics and to select the most useful quotes and substantiation for the various ideas; and attempting to cluster the categories containing the various ideas into themes. (p.417)

The researcher ensured descriptive validity during analysis of the focus group through the use of audio recordings. The recordings ensured no distortion of that which was actually spoken by the participants.

Summary

Qualitative research has a long and noble history, including the contributions of Herodotus, Darwin, Malinowski, Mead, and Bateson (Searight & Young, 1994). Consistent with this tradition, this study focused "on understanding particulars rather than generalizing to universals" (Erikson as cited in Maxwell, 1992, p. 297).

The use of participant observation and focus groups captured specific emic and etic perspectives in as much as "We as inquirers likewise cannot be separated from the process of inquiry. Neither can we separate participants from the data they generate. Such separation limits social inquiry to a form of individual action one person performs on another and thereby ignores the relational enterprise" (Abascal-Hildebrand, 1993, p.130-131) which the researcher embraces.

Background of the Researcher

She had displayed all of her medals, ribbons, trophies, and trinkets across the spread of her canopy bed – Girl Scout ribbons, a prize from a costume contest, a citizenship award – whatever accolades a five year-old can collect. She had begged him to take her with him. Although years later she had forgotten, and her mother had to remind her of the event. She couldn't understand why a father would give up a daughter. If only she had more ribbons. If only she had been good enough, he might have stayed.

A father gave up a daughter in an attempt to preserve his own sense of self. In trying to be who he thought he was, he lost so much more that he could be. He sought himself. He lost the relationship. He lost a part of himself that he will never know.

The background of this researcher has relational validity in that the researcher, now a grown woman, is the child of divorced parents and is, herself, a new parent, who brings her own parents' experience together with what she

herself creates as the mother of an infant daughter. The researcher now considers herself part of a dynamic parenting team with her own husband -- devoted to the most noble endeavor of raising a child.

In conjunction with her parenting experience, the researcher has extensive counseling experience, with individuals and groups, including work with survivors of sexual assault, individuals with traumatic brain injuries, and persons with substance abuse disorders. The researcher has taught graduate courses in educational psychology and group dynamics at the University of La Verne, an undergraduate leadership course at the University of San Diego, and a graduate seminar in Organizational Leadership at the University of San Francisco, and is a facilitator with the University of Phoenix where she instructs courses in organizational communication. The researcher also serves as the Leadership Development Specialist with Children's Hospital, San Diego where she is supporting the hospital's reengineering process and move to team-based health care. As an academician and in her place of work, the researcher routinely utilizes the power of teams, participant observation, and focused group dialogue to encourage collaborative interaction and collective learning for the transformation of personal and organizational life.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE ANALYSIS

Introduction

“(I)ndividual experience is complicated by the multiplicity of interpretations available in the form of competing social discourses. Because the basic building blocks of communication are themselves unstable, it follows that every discursive formation itself rests on precarious foundations” (Holmer-Nadesan, 1996, p.52). In the revelation of her own experience as a participant observer and the experiences of nineteen team members as study participants, the researcher acknowledges that her analysis is tempered by the possibility of multiple alternative interpretations and that “the concept of causation is an epistemological error” (Dell, 1982, p.21).

Despite the limitations of a bounded-rationality that precludes definitive attributions of action, motivation, and resolution, faithful to the complexities of both family and organizational life, the researcher offers her interpretation of parenting experience and teams. Hence, chapter four contains the findings associated with team observations as well as the focus group session.

Team Observations

For the study participants, the Gen 300 course was their first introduction to the University of Phoenix and for most participants, their first introduction to

team-based course work, since GEN 300, Skills for Professional Transitions, is a three credit course designed to help students develop strategies for professionalism in the workplace.

During the course, students analyzed their strengths in interpersonal relations and group interactions. Course content included an introduction to small group theory and process, including stages of group development, communication patterns in groups, characteristics of effective teams, and preservation of an optimal learning environment.

The participants attended class from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., on a week night, for five weeks. During the first class meeting, students formed into study group teams and arranged to meet outside of the class session to complete course assignments as a team, per the intent of the course.

The central responsibility of the work teams was to produce and present a group presentation on the final night of the Gen 300 course. The members of each team were commissioned to choose, research, and present a topic.

Typically, students met as a team three times to address these tasks. Generally, students met during week two of the five week course to choose a topic for the presentation and paper. They met again in week three to compile their individual research efforts pertaining to that topic, and they met once more in week four to polish the group presentation to be delivered in class during week five (see Figure 1).

As indicated in chapter three, the researcher analyzed each team as a four level system, with each level of the system operating simultaneously. These levels are the events that transpire, contextually relevant influences pertaining to those events, patterns of behavior exhibited by participants in the research process, and the mental models held by participants. While the categorization of team interactions into four realms offers an illusion of separateness, these levels are inextricably intertwined and reciprocally causal.

Events Unfold.

During the course of this research undertaking, five study group teams were observed by the researcher. Many of the participants were returning students with previous college experience. All participants were over the age of 20 and most participants were in their mid-thirties. All participants were married except for three of the eight males. All but four of the participants identified themselves as parents (See Appendix F).

Team One was comprised of four members: Fred, a middle-age Caucasian male with limited team experience and three step-children; Inga, an older African-American female with no team experience and two teenage children; Phan, an Asian-American woman in her early thirties, with total quality management experience and one child; and Elle, a youthful Asian-American woman with three children under the age of five. Elle had no prior experience with teams.

The team members met twice at a Denny's restaurant on two Saturday mornings and once on a week night at a public library. All members were present for the first two meetings, only Fred was absent for the last; Fred, a parent, subsequently dropped-out of the program and it was unclear why he chose to do so.

As the team members began to come together around their task of choosing a research and presentation topic, members attempted to establish a basic group norm that all members be present prior to any deliberations. No other explicit norms were established.

The team members chose to formulate a presentation pertaining to the influences of stress on the returning adult student. Decision-making processes varied according to individual group members. For example, Fred suggested that the group "pick a subject that we would be able to have more information rather than less." Throughout the deliberations, Fred remained focused on abundance of literary references as a rationale for choosing a topic. "There's an abundance of information on stress, literally hundreds and hundreds of articles."

Conversely, Inga suggested to the group that "if we choose stress, then some of the things we're covering in class will be in the paper. I don't want them to think that we're stealing things." Fred persuaded Inga that there would be so many articles available that the materials offered in class would be irrelevant.

The other two group members said little to discourage or encourage either Inga or Fred. No one openly acknowledged Inga's apparent ethical conflict with the choice. Team One's ultimate decision to choose the topic due to plethora of resources, was in contrast to Team Two, who invoked authority as their pivotal decision-making criteria.

Team Two was comprised of three members: Winnie an older Asian American woman with one teenage child and no team experience; Mark, a Caucasian male in his twenties with no team experience and a ten month-old child; and Ulma, a youthful Hispanic female with no children and limited team experience.

The team members held only two meetings. All three members were present for both sessions. The first meeting was held at another local institution of higher education, the United States International University library; the location was dark and poorly lit. The second meeting was held on-campus at UOP, in a conference room.

Members of Team Two had discovered during the first class meeting that they shared a common love for animals, and all three group members were dog owners. Hence, they chose to pursue a paper and presentation topic that incorporated proper care for a pet.

In their exploration of this topic, group members established no explicit norms or ground-rules. Decision-making centered around the authority of the instructor. Ulma frequently queried the group as to what the course instructor

would think of an idea. For example, Mark referred to a document he had typed and formatted and wanted the group to approve, "I know you're going to shoot this down because you're not the multi-media types." Ulma replied, "Do you think he (referring to the instructor) will have a problem with us doing it this way. Personally, I would." Ulma repeatedly tried to invoke the image of the course instructor as supporting her ideas.

Team Three was comprised of four members: Gay, a Caucasian female in her twenties with limited team experience and a two year-old child; Paul, an African-American male in his thirties with limited team experience and two small children under the age of five; Gloria an older Caucasian nurse with extensive team experience and no children; and Mary, an African-American woman in her late twenties with extensive team experience and two children under the age of three.

The team members met twice at a public library and once at a bustling, local barbecue grill, in an African-American neighborhood. They chose their presentation topic, "Relocating to San Diego", prior to the first team meeting, based on the fact that all group members had previously lived in a city other than San Diego, California.

Similar to Team One, their discussion of norms also centered around missing group members. When Paul and Gail were absent for the first session, both Mary and Gloria commented that if someone is absent "shouldn't they call".

Neither Mary nor Gloria shared this “norm” with the missing group members at subsequent meetings.

There was little negotiation within the group regarding task decisions; Gloria and Mary had formulated the approach to the class assignment during the first meeting when the other two members were not present, and the other two group members acquiesced to Mary and Gloria’s approach.

Other decisions centered on support for the group. For example, when queried about how to best deliver the group presentation, Gail said “I think we should all stand. It will give us moral support and make it more enjoyable.” When trying to decide what time and when to meet to practice their presentation, Gail suggested “We can eat dinner if people want.”

Team Four was comprised of four members: Nate, a Caucasian male in his early thirties with some team experience and a two year-old child; Alice, a Caucasian female in her mid-thirties with two children and no team experience; George, an African-American male in his twenties with no team experience and two children; and Paula, a Caucasian female in her thirties with no team experience and two children.

Group members met three times on-campus at UOP. The first session took place in the computer lab. The session lasted over three hours as the group attempted to access the internet as a research tool.

Except for Alice, the entire group was visibly frustrated and struggled with the use of technology. Alice was supportive of Nate, who appeared more

proficient than the other two group members, who were left to struggle for themselves.

The group members established no explicit norms during this, or future, sessions. Discussion was primarily devoted to clarifying the ambiguity concerning class assignments.

In attempting to decide what topic to present and research, members of Team Four based their initial decisions on the ability of each member to contribute to the subject matter. Nate queried the group as to whether or not they were sports fans. Alice was the only other sports fan besides Nate. Nate said, "Well, it should be something we all know something about." Then, Alice suggested "What about how to buy a car?" Nate asked "Have we all experienced shopping for a car?" The group agreed that it was a good idea because they all had some knowledge of the car buying process.

As the team members continued to work together, decision-making processes were not so inclusive. Alice and Nate simply dominated the conversation. Paula was virtually silent, and George never attended another study group meeting.

Team Five consisted of four members: Harry, a young Hispanic male with limited team experience and no children; Fran, a Caucasian female in her late thirties with limited team experience and two teenage children by marriage; Ford, a Caucasian male in his thirties with extensive team experience and two

children under age five; and Matt, a Caucasian male in his early twenties with limited team experience and no children.

The group members met only twice. They met at a local coffee shop for their first meeting and a Sizzler restaurant, for their second session. On both occasions, they met during the crowded dinner hours.

This group also chose, as their paper and presentation topic, the influences of stress on returning adult students. Their decision-making processes consisted of accepting the first suggestion thrown out. Although, in one instance, Fran weighed the relative point values of different assignments as a suggested means of choosing which assignment to first complete. The group members disregarded this approach.

The researcher's analysis of the events that transpired within these teams revealed that team members did not evaluate meeting locations as to whether or not chosen locales might be conducive to team interaction and group dialogue. Bustling restaurants, traversing through dimly lit trails to reach a lonely library surrounded by darkness, a crowded computer laboratory – these were the meeting places of choice.

It seemed evident to the researcher that these locations might not necessarily have been conducive to team-based interaction. Participants must feel safe (Maslow, 1943, 1954) and be able to hear and see one another. Minimal distractions, sufficient lighting, and comfortable seating might increase

the likelihood that visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners (Bandler & Grinder, 1975, 1976, 1979) have the fullest opportunities to engage with the group.

Comfortable surroundings might be a fairly basic premise to the generation of productive meetings. Nevertheless, this researcher continues to observe knowledgeable team leaders, who host less than productive eight-hour meetings in small cramped rooms with no windows, no refreshments, and poor lighting.

In addition to creating difficulties with physical meeting space, the teams were largely unsuccessful in establishing explicit norms or ground rules. In each team, members discussed the more elemental of norms of timeliness and attendance, yet they failed to fully institute and reinforce these standards.

All groups chose presentation topics based upon common interests or shared concerns of group members. Decisions-making processes, however, varied across the teams.

It would appear that such differences may be a function of diversity of the teams, including age, gender, life experiences, and so on. These differences in decision making may also be attributed to varied interpretations of course and instructor expectations, unfamiliarity with team-based work, and the ambiguities of induction into an unfamiliar organizational culture.

The Challenges of Context

Given the novelty of the UOP institution and organizational structure for the participants, apprehension and confusion were pervasive during team

observations. The members of each team seemed to wrestle with ambiguity and attempted to clarify instructions and facilitator expectations associated with new course work.

While the standard Gen 300 course module (i.e., instructor guide and student material) is a thorough mechanism for explaining course expectations to students, instructors may vary from the standard curriculum. And, there may be a number of variations in facilitator experience. Because the curriculum seemed clear, explicit, and informative to the researcher, it was surprising how little the groups seemed to know and apply with respect to team-based interactions or the expectations of the instructors.

Mark from Team Three put it simply, "I know nothing about what's going on". Likewise, the preponderance of Team Four's first session was spent clarifying ambiguities in assignments and expectations. George asked, "What are we supposed to do together?". "Hell, I don't know," responded Nate. "We are all confused," observed George. "I'd like to know what we are to accomplish as a group," sighed Nate. All the teams engaged in similar dialogues of confusion.

The researcher's observation is that these adult students were confused and unclear with respect to direction and did not seek clarification from their instructors. This may be partly attributed to their unfamiliarity with team-based work. The team members seemed uncertain as to how the teams would work together. The pervasive climate of apprehension, and sometimes frustration,

observed by the researcher, may also be indicative of the socialization process into a new organization.

Mary, from Team Two, who had previously and unsuccessfully attempted to complete an undergraduate degree, alluded to these factors in her conversation with Gloria. Mary questioned the efficacy of working in groups and wondered about the amount of time it would take, in future courses, to generate assignments within a group context. She also expressed concerns about variations in individual instructor expectations. "I think every facilitator will be difficult." She expressed concern about group members not being present and if the instructor might penalize the group as a whole.

Exploring Mental Models

For most participants, this was their first introduction to team-based work. Only three of the nineteen participants considered their prior team experience to be extensive, and the nature of that experience could not be determined by the researcher. Furthermore, participant demographic forms (See Appendix F) revealed that individuals equated experience in a sports or work team with team efforts undertaken at the university.

For example, Fred drew a parallel between work and school teams when he tried to establish an explicit norm for participation and suggested that "This happens to be a study group, but if this were a work group, we (would) need all of our members, right?" This example is significant in that no other participant

explicitly verbalized a specific approach or generated a recommendation based upon prior experience with teams.

Additionally, no specific reference, was made by a participant with respect to information newly acquired in the Gen 300 course. The researcher had anticipated many verbal references to the curriculum, such as typical stages of team development or common barriers to effective team dynamics. Furthermore, no participants explicitly referenced parenting in their comments related to team experience.

Balancing work and personal life arose as a concern in all but one of the teams. Based upon the researcher's prior experience with the Gen 300 courses, it is fairly common for groups to chose a topic that incorporates balancing work and personal life as they develop the group presentation and research paper. The researcher surmised that this theme of seeking balance in work and personal life had arisen because these students were concerned with their own inability to commit to the time consuming pursuit of higher education in conjunction with other existing demands.

The members of Team One chose stress as their research topic, and they listed balancing work and personal life as a source of stress. Inga stated, "The first item, balancing work and personal life, that's also good." Elle retorted, "That doesn't happen easily really". Fred chimed in, "I think work and family can both provide a lot of stress." "So balancing, I don't know how to phrase it, the effects of work and family?" Then Inga decided how they would incorporate

balancing work and family into their paper on stress, "well, that comes under causes, so under causes we put work and family."

Fred supported her idea and elaborated, "personal relationships, I'm going to put it along side work because I know if I come irritable and I don't mean to, but if I'm sharp with my wife, She's had a rough day with the kids, she'll come off sharp with me and that's causing stress in the relationship a lot."

In their second session, however, the group discussed techniques to relieve stress. Elle said, "Regarding techniques for relieving stress, I have quality time with family..." Fred cut Elle off and stated, "I would just like to say something about the causes of stress...stress has no causes, but stress is a bodily, physiological response to situations, it's vague to talk about causes of stress because they are un-measurable. There are relating factors that vary according to the responses of individuals. If someone in your family falls down and cuts themselves and bleeds, right, is that a cause of stress?"

"Would be for me." Elle said flatly.

But Fred was not put-off, " One person might see that as extremely stressful but another person might take care of that situation very calmly, control it, handle it. Our response, our adaptability and attitude, it's a skill to be able to handle a vast quantity of things."

Elle inquired if Fred was referring to family as a stress release. Fred then relayed his vision of a stress release with family, "When I think of a healthy family it's a mother and a father all there together with the kids on the weekend.

They all look so healthy because they've managed their lifestyle in such a way that they have that quality time."

Fred then relayed a poignant example of family conflicting with school and work.

Fred: "I didn't get anything done. Last few days I've been taking care of my wife."

Elle: "What's wrong?"

Fred: "I got called at work, she was mopping the kitchen floor and she broke her tailbone. We stayed at the hospital for four hours. She can't do anything. That's been my last two days."

Inga: "Fred, I have a suggestion (joking) while your wife is laid up you can read to her."(laughs)

Fred also laughed and agreed that Inga's suggestion that Fred read to his wife, was a workable solution to his specific work family friction. It became apparent to the researcher that for some participants, family could be, at once, a source of conflict and a source of resiliency.

In Team Two, the only specific reference to family was that Mark found it challenging to study with a small baby in the house. Mark expressed relief when his wife "shared the load" and cared for their child so he could study.

Similarly, in Team Three, Mary's children had been ill and her eight month old had not been sleeping well. She shared with her team "My daughter is sick". No one commented.

Members of Team Four didn't share such difficulties in balancing work and family. However, George, who had two small children and was not married, missed two of the sessions. Perhaps that was because work, school, and family presented too many demands for George to manage. Team Five simply cited family as a source of stress.

The researcher's analysis of the mental models held by team members revealed that most participants seem to view the parenting experience as a juggling act. While some members of Team One acknowledged that family could be a source of rejuvenation, as well as a source of conflict, the preponderance of participants seemed to hold a deficit model wherein a fixed quantity of time is available and one must make choices about how to invest that time.

With respect to verbalizations pertaining to the participants' prior team experience as well as references made by the participants regarding newly acquired information about teams and small group process, the team members engaged in precious few references to either previous team experience or their new expectations of team work based upon the curriculum of the GEN 300 course. The researcher inferred from the participants' words, behaviors, and self-report regarding team experience, that most team members possessed only the most rudimentary of mental schema and conceptualization of teams. Furthermore, this lack of prior team knowledge may have inhibited the assimilation of new information regarding team-based work, and may have even

prohibited participants from inferring connections between their parenting experience and team interactions.

Patterns of Behavior

Unlike the research participants, the researcher possessed a fairly extensive knowledge base pertaining to team and small group processes. Nevertheless, the researcher was unprepared for her own behaviors as a participant researcher in the context of the teams.

The “helpful researcher” was a curious phenomenon exhibited by the researcher throughout the team meetings. The behavior was surprising and curious because the researcher never anticipated that she would find herself compelled to offer information, assistance, and to generally engage with the groups.

The researcher interpreted her own overtures of assistance as a means of connecting and sharing with the group. It was an opportunity for the researcher to offer resources, rather than being a burden and a source of anxiety. These overtures occurred despite the researcher’s own conviction that participant-observation, as a research methodology, included presence but not interjection.

In the first meeting of Team One, the researcher offered unsolicited advice on how to download research articles from on-line sources rather than locating hard copy in the library. When the group brainstormed a list of experiences that might induce stress, the researcher interjected “researchers

with tape recorders”, and the group laughed. At the end of that first meeting, the researcher shared her feelings with the team:

I have all these articles on stress management that I want to offer to the group. It's very interesting as a researcher to realize that the boundaries seem false. I very much want to feel like a part of the group and not feel like I am taking from you but giving back. If there is anything I can do to assist you, please let me know.

Similar instances of the researcher sharing both personal information, as well as helpful hints, transpired with all the groups.

With Team Four and Team Two , the researcher served as an audience for the groups to practice presentations. The researcher even assisted two members of Team Four in trouble-shooting difficulties with research on the internet.

It seemed apparent that the researcher was trying to connect with the research participants. Yet, “All attributions of purpose are made by an observer who is interpreting the behavior in question. That is true even when the observer/interpreter is describing him or herself. Even the self-observer is never sure why he or she behaved in a particular way” (Dell, 1982, p.26). Another behavior that served to foster connection among participants and seemed to alleviate anxiety, was the formation of powerful dyads.

Powerful Dyads emerged as a recurring behavior across the teams. After the researcher observed the interaction between Elle and Inga within the context

of the focus group session, it became apparent to the researcher that a powerful dyad, a one-to-one interdependence (Yammarino, 1995), had formed between these two women, and that similar relationships had evolved in the other teams as well.

Team One was somewhat unique in terms of the amount of personal information shared very early in their interactions. During the first few minutes of the initial study group meeting, Elle, who had arrived late, revealed to the group that she had cancer.

Elle: (Apologetic and rushing because she was late) "My cold got the best of me."

Inga: "This is a bad time to have a cold."

Elle: "It hit me last weekend and I'm still trying to recover."

Inga: "Are you taking anything for it, Elle?"

Elle: "No because I just had, I don't mean to take up study time, I also have cancer and just got out of the hospital for that so I have to watch what I eat."

Fred: "You have to, every time you can, eat less calorie, less fat foods, you have to take it easy. I have high cholesterol." (Both Inga and Elle were physically large women, significantly overweight, and may have taken offense to such a comment)

Inga: "I am a diabetic."

Elle: "Where are we at? What are we doing?" (Frustrated and curt)

It was unclear if Elle's attempt to share her deeply personal health history was a means to deflect the group's attention from the fact that she was late, to invoke a sympathetic response, or simply to reveal and share herself with this new group. It was also unclear if Fred's cholesterol and Inga's diabetes were reciprocal attempts to build rapport or a way to minimize the fact that Elle was sharing that she had a potentially terminal illness with people she barely knew. It may also be that these newly acquainted persons were uncomfortable in their own inability to generate an empathetic response to the pain of another.

It is noteworthy that even at this very early stage, Elle was supported and encouraged by Inga. And, this support served as the foundation for a strong dyad, perhaps even a friendship, such that when the researcher met with these women several months later they were still taking classes together and still working very closely in study group teams.

Team Two also evidenced the formation of a dyad, although not as a source of support, rather through conflict and confrontation. This dyad seemed to be defined more by the tension between Mark and Ulma than the reciprocity generated between Mark and Winnie.

For example, Ulma gave Mark an unsolicited critique of his work which visibly disturbed Mark. Winnie then served to support Mark and bolster him after the confrontation.

Ulma: (To Mark after he performed his presentation) "Actually, I wanted to give you a couple of little pointers

Mark: Yes! (sounded more like no.)

Ulma: If you don't mind. Did you know you spoke close to like, eight minutes? (duration was intended for five minutes).

Mark: Well... (resistant body posture and facial expressions)

Ulma: You did good...(hesitant, might be interpreted as sarcasm or an attempt to soften her critique). Your tone was interesting, you went up and down, it was good (not convincing). You're a funny guy. Aren't I just a good judge. (nervous laughter)

Mark: Okay, your turn (Openly hostile).

Mark then solicited Winnie for constructive criticism. She replied with an affirmation of Mark's presentation and said "I like the way...". But, Ulma cut Winnie's words short and said to Mark, "Do you feel like what you talked about matches our title?" "Yes!", snipped Mark, almost shouting.

Ulma continued to offer apparently unwanted critiques and Winnie offered praise. Needless to say, Mark's eye contact, body language, and overall rapport was subsequently much more positively directed toward Winnie.

Team Three also contained a pair of individuals embroiled in conflict.

Gloria focused a great deal of negative energy on Paul. She was somewhat demeaning when briefing him about events that had transpired when he and Gail were absent for the first session. Gail treated Paul like a naughty child.

Gloria disregarded simple suggestions offered by Paul. For example, Gloria offered to bring refreshments to augment the group presentation. Paul said, "We're going to pitch-in for that, right?" Gloria disregarded his offer and Paul probed again. Again, Gloria declined.

These type of exchanges continued throughout their meetings. In session three, for example, Paul, who worked as a firefighter, shared a most difficult dilemma. He spoke of the forced choice between saving one person's home rather than another, during a raging fire. This was clearly a very personal topic, fraught with conflicting emotions. When he finished sharing the dilemma, Gloria quickly diverted the group to instructions on how to pack for an evacuation. She left Paul's feelings dangling in unacknowledged group space.

It was unclear if Gloria was fearful that Paul would subvert Gloria's initial leadership of the group or if she simply didn't care for Paul. Perhaps this was Gloria's means of expressing her unspoken hurt or anger that Paul had damaged their relationship when he had not called the group to indicate his absence for the first session.

Paul, who was himself, a parent, seemed to have engaged in an action that de-valued the other group members. Gloria's behavior suggested to the researcher that she possessed values for caring and reciprocity in relationship and may have defined herself within the context of relationship.

Team Four also included a powerful dyad that seemed to develop instantaneously. Nate and Alice seemed to be fast-friends from the moment they began trouble-shooting internet difficulties during the first session.

They always sat next to one another. They dominated the conversation, and their body language and non-verbal behaviors indicated a great rapport. They sat in close proximity and leaned towards one another. Their heads frequently nodded in unison, and they gave each other many positive affirmations. On one instance, Nate even drew parallels between Alice and his wife.

Team Five included a similar pair. From their first meeting, Fran actively sought the support and encouragement of Matt. When sharing her thoughts, she focused only on Matt. At one point, Matt was sitting to Fran's left and she turned in such a way as to completely obscure Harry and Ford from the conversation, even though the content of her message was intended for the group as a whole.

Matt responded quickly to her attention and he too, began to focus much of his eye contact on her. At one point, Harry offered to time the duration of Fran's presentation and Matt proceeded to time her as well, in an apparent gesture of territoriality. Throughout their sessions, Matt and Fran enjoyed friendly banter, much eye contact, and clear rapport and support.

The researcher's analysis of the patterns of behavior within the teams evolved as themes of generative caring and stabilizing connection.

The researcher's overtures of assistance seemed to fill the researcher's desire to be known and to belong. Similarly, both positive and negative communication within powerful team dyads served as a source of stability, comfort, and perhaps added a "known" quality for the participants as they navigated the many unknowns within the UOP context.

Team Insights

The researcher garnered several insights through her observation of study group teams within the UOP context. These insights might be beneficial to organizations and team members as they attempt to foster participatory, inclusive team-based interactions.

To establish a participatory environment and encourage collective decision-making, team members and leaders might evaluate if the physical environment is conducive to learning. Adequate lighting, minimal extraneous noise, and comfortable seating may increase the capacity of team members for open communication.

Beyond the physical setting, it would appear that establishing a team environment that engenders participation includes the generation of explicit norms. These norms might include what it means to be a part of a team, what are the shared expectations and values held by team members, and basic guidelines regarding timeliness, attendance, and standards of participation.

Explicit norms may serve as boundaries and guidelines to reduce the ambiguity associated with joining a group. Norms may preserve relationships.

Furthermore, it did not appear to the researcher that these groups had worked together for a sufficient length of time to become teams rather than simply work groups. Despite the fact that few definitions of a team include a specific duration of existence and cooperative work, it seemed that five weeks was simply not enough time for these groups to develop cohesion and to traverse necessary stages of development (Tuckman, 1965).

Team members seemed to engage in participation without exploring their own tacit assumptions and failed to reveal the mental models that accompany and underpin those assumptions. Such underlying assumptions may be inconsistent with the values of the team, and may lead to conflict and tension.

In anticipation of the potential conflict that occurs when working in a group, team members might also express the explicit expectation that diversity of opinions and approaches will emerge, and reinforce that the diversity of the group will be respected and encouraged. This respect for diversity might embrace the varied levels of team experience possessed by individual team members. Team members might be informed that less experienced, less knowledgeable team members may take longer to assimilate new team-related insights. Persons who have less experience working in teams may also be less likely to generalize from prior experiences. They may be less likely to incorporate transferable skills from other relevant life experiences, such as parenting, into their basic teamwork knowledge, or schema. Knowledge of these

potential barriers to the assimilation of new learning may hasten group development.

Moreover, it seemed apparent to the researcher that without opportunities to engage in, practice, and experience a wide range of opportunities for participation, the complexities of parenting might not readily be applied to other venues. Even though, much of the richness of parenting experience might be transferable and have broad applications in other settings, including organizations and teams.

In order to enhance the existing opportunities for participation at UOP, the researcher proffers the following suggestions. UOP currently offers non-credit Saturday workshops. These workshops, related to math and writing, allow students who need remediation in these skills to obtain instruction at no cost, with no threat of receiving a poor grade. Similarly, UOP might offer Saturday workshops pertaining to group process and team building, to orient students to the essential skills of collective life, without the threat of receiving a poor course grade.

Likewise, UOP might formulate a list of willing "mentors". Students who have successfully navigated the team-based learning at UOP, would serve as guides and consultants to their less experienced counterparts.

Furthermore, it appears that UOP, while conducting extensive quantitative assessment pertaining to study group teams, might re-think the appropriateness of qualitative inquiry as well. Students' successful application and incorporation

of GEN 300 curriculum might only be ascertained via such methods as participant observation, as opposed to an assessment of the number of hours spent in the context of study group teams.

Focus Group Session

The focus group session represented an opportunity for participants to explore the linkages between parenting experience and team-based interactions. The focus group also afforded participants the opportunity to expand upon the researcher's findings from the team observations.

The session was held on a Saturday morning, in a UOP classroom. Three parents were present for the session. Unfortunately, only Team One and Team Three were represented in this dialogue, in as much as no parents from Teams Two, Four, or Five were in attendance.

The first participant, Inga, has two children, a son graduating from high school and daughter enrolled in a community college. The second participant, Elle, was a member of Inga's original team and the two women continued to take courses together. Elle has three "babies". The third participant, Gail, 22 years old, has a two year old daughter.

After the researcher shared the formative analysis of the team observations, the three women engaged in a dialogue with the researcher. The researcher analyzed their comments using the following approach; she generated a list of key ideas woven throughout participants' comments, formulated categories, or themes, that seemed to represent these key ideas, and

clustered substantiating quotes around these themes (Zemke and Kramlinger as cited in Basch, 1987). The researcher was also mindful of the four levels of systems relationships which she had incorporated as her conceptual framework for interpreting the team observations.

The themes that emerged from the comments of these women included embracing change, negotiation and learning from competing demands, serving as a role model for family members, and a sense of self worth that evolved through their experiences as parents. These emergent themes are the researcher's interpretation of the participants' experience, however, so the researcher attempted to "rely as much as possible on their own words and concepts" (Maxwell, 1992, p. 289) to support her analysis.

Embracing Change

The three women validated the pervasive sense of apprehension and confusion that the researcher had witnessed in all the teams. They indicated it was associated with embarking on a new educational undertaking.

Gail, who had always considered herself to be bright, had dropped out of a traditional high school and finished in a continuation program. She said that "overcoming the fear" was a motivation for returning to school and attributed her ability to embrace change to the process of rearing her daughter.

I think the fact that I can change and adapt to situations has so much to do with the fact that I have child. She's two years old and I've gone

through more change with her than I have ever gone before. I never know what's going to come next, but I look to it as a new challenge.

Elle also agreed that she had been apprehensive about returning to school at UOP, but suggested that the process of child rearing had matured her and compelled her to seek new growth.

If anything whether you are an 18 year old mother or a mother who is 40, I think they're more mature as far as handling difficult situations. I know in my workplace I have people that are within my age group that I would consider my peers but if you look at our maturity level our desire for promotion and growth and expansion, I feel that I truly strive harder for that than they do whereas their attitude is more laid back. It's like there is no urgency and yet we're the same age, but I guess for me it's because of my children and being a parent. I can't wait five years down the road to finally decide what do I want to be when I grow up. I need to start to thinking now because my family is involved and it will impact them.

It seemed that Elle's children had increased her readiness for change because inaction and indecisiveness might negatively impact her family. The choice of all three women to pursue an educational growth opportunity also had an impact on their families, however, as these parents reported struggles with negotiating competing demands.

Learning Through Negotiating Competing Demands

These women relayed that personal choices have broader implications; parents have more lives to consider than just their own. Because of this awareness, these three women keenly articulated the challenges of negotiating competing demands.

Elle relayed the heartache of devoting time to school and to her husband when her children needed time as well.

One night my daughter said “Mommy is going to come lay with us.” and I said “No sweetheart, mommy has homework and then I’m going to spend time with Daddy.” “When are you going to spend time with me and my brother?” That tore my heart out.

Elle’s pain at not being able to spend time with her little ones, suggested the importance of balancing family commitments with the demands of work and school. “It brought to my attention that I still need to balance the school with family, work. I can’t let one overwhelm the other and take control.”

Gail also spoke of the challenge of responding to competing demands and trying to have time for herself.

If you’re a parent of even just one child, you have to be able to satisfy that child, your husband and any of your external demands. When you have children, I believe that your body is pulled in several different directions. You work on your marriage, your child, your job and whatever is left for you.

Gail elaborated that this idea of parents satisfying many demands represented an opportunity to learn negotiation and compromise. "I believe people who are not parents could get negotiation types of experiences but whether or not they've actively sought them out is a different question." She further asserted that as a parent, you're just forced to manage complexity. "Once you have a child, you're just thrown into it and here you go."

Elle also implied that parenting demanded a learned balance between self and other.

When you're an individual and single, you pretty much just have to look out for yourself, so that's your focus. Whereas when you're a parent you know that you are important, but in addition to yourself, the people around you are just as important. So, in that way, you're more willing to kind of give-in and see it their way. I know with my children, it's constant compromise. They're babies still, but it's not "mommy says this" and that's it, period. They're little people and have feelings to consider.

Elle made the connection between this learned responsiveness to the needs of others as well as self, negotiation and compromise while parenting, to the responsiveness required within the context of teams.

That's the way it works in our study groups. Say we're meeting at this time and this place and too bad everyone has to be there, it's "what is your schedule, what is your schedule", and even, I'll be honest, there are

times on our projects where we don't necessarily agree on how things should be done. We kinda of have to meet half way and it works out well.

Elle suggested that learning to compromise with her children and in her study groups also applied to negotiating in the spousal relationship. "Even with your spouse – my husband has learned to compromise quite a bit."

Role Models

While they talked of learning from competing demands, these women were also clearly role models, paving a future for their families. In fact, both Inga's husband and Gail's husband also decided to pursue higher education as a result of their wives' affiliation with UOP.

Inga spoke of herself as a role model in this way.

I feel I have grown a lot, the way my children look at me being a student and their perception and the way they feel now about going to school and continuing, you know. I am in a better position to help my children because I've gone through it myself.

Elle echoed the idea that her children would learn from the behavior of their mother.

With my daughter she sits down with me while I do my homework so she sees that it is a priority. There are times where honestly I get frustrated "Oh my god, what have I gotten myself into". But I try to make it so she sees this is my choice rather than someone making me... really for me it's

more of a personal goal, a personal achievement and that's how I want her to feel about education.

This ability to serve as a role model seemed particularly important because these women relayed experiences concerning their own parents' inability to assist and support them in their own education. Gail shared her disappointment.

I grew up in a family where my mother dropped out as a junior in high school and got married, divorced, you know, re-married, and nobody in my family understood what I was doing and they didn't stand behind me. And, Elle shared her resolve not to place her children in a similar predicament.

I know, growing up, one of my frustrations was when I had homework. I could never go to my parents to ask because they didn't have the education, they didn't have the skill level and I know for myself, that will be different with my children. I may not have all the answers but at least I'll know the resources, where to go.

As these women pursued post-secondary education and worked to be a resource for their families, a reciprocity occurred. While they were serving as role models for their children, their own self-concept was reflexively transformed as well.

Parental Worth

These women were strong in their resolve as parents and as persons of

worth. Inga said, "I think I am more valuable because I have children, also I know that as old as I am, I have grown even more, and I feel I am still growing".

Gail echoed this sentiment.

I think that parents feel "you're a parent now, you can do anything". You raised this beautiful child. That's the way I feel at least. I feel that nothing in the world is going to stand in my way any longer. I just believe when you have kids, it makes everything worthwhile. It gives you a sense of worth when you've completed something such as raising a beautiful child. You're on the right step and, "Wow", I can do anything I want to. It's totally a pride thing.

It seemed that, for these women, caring about their families and working on behalf of their children, in return, became a source of strength for themselves.

About That Researcher

Another example within the research process that suggested that caring was both self-serving and other-serving (Noddings, 1984) involved the researcher's interjections in the team meetings. The focus group participants referenced the researcher's overtures of assistance within the team context. Specifically, the researcher had given Team One a suggestion regarding a creative beginning to their presentation wherein the team could dramatize their subject matter.

The two women from Team One were appreciative and thanked the researcher. Inga said, "You told us, remember, at Denny's, of course, when we

were getting ready to do our presentation ...the group loved it. It turned out real good." Perhaps the participants from Team One had attended the focus group session as a means of reciprocating the researcher's assistance which might further illustrate how relationship fosters relationship.

Focus Group Insights

While it may not have been the case for all participants, the focus group session members revealed the reflexivity of the parent and child relationship; as a parent works to improve the future for the child, the parent simultaneously experiences new growth within themselves. It seemed that these three parents, while striving to be role models for their families, at the same time experienced a maturation process that incorporated openness to growth and a concern for others.

While these growth experiences were not necessarily sought out by the parents, the growth seemed to be a natural, perhaps, inevitable unfolding of the parenting experience. Furthermore, non-parents might actively seek similar growth-fostering experiences, but parents, as Gail suggested, were just "thrown into it".

This growth was not without difficulty, however. Family seemed to be a motivating force for these parents and enhanced their willingness to grapple with the anxiety of change. Yet, participants seemed torn by mutually compelling desires for growth and the need to be physically present with their loved ones. It seemed, to the researcher, a paradoxical celebration of new beginnings,

coalesced with mourning for time lost with little ones and loved ones, while seeking that growth.

Summary

The researcher's analysis of the team observations and focus group session suggests that participatory experiences such as team-based interactions, may mirror the reflexivity and reciprocity, the inherent mutuality of growth within caring relationships and parenting experience, specifically. For example, non-parents, who may have not actively sought opportunities to engage in negotiation, collaboration, and other collective endeavors which embrace diversity of thought and experience, may find participation in teams to be a source of learning.

Furthermore, parents, who may have had life's complexities thrust upon them in the form of navigating competing demands, may broaden their mental models when participating in teams. Parents may learn to more readily connect the complexities and demands of life in teams with the complexities and demands of family life, and subsequently apply their insights garnered via parenting experience to the complex work of teams and post-modern organizations. Similarly, insights garnered at work might readily be applied to life at home and in the community.

As the researcher attempted to describe the team observations and focus group session, there existed

an infinity of apparent 'features of the system', and each is one is defined by way of describing the system. Such descriptions are not of the system, they are something that we bring to it. In other words, one cannot say what the system "is". One can only choose a particular punctuation and take what consequences come with it. (Dell, 1982, p.26)

The researcher has offered her punctuation, one interpretation, of parenting experience and teams. This interpretation may provide a beginning for understanding the ways in which parenting experience, team-based interactions, and leadership in organizations interrelate.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

“All knowledge is tentative” (Rapoport, 1975, p.35). The value of such tentative understanding is in the heuristic aspect of theory-building, the ability to provide intellectual points of leverage which “is of special importance where we are still groping for paths toward new knowledge” (p.37).

This study was intended to forge new lines of thinking for the researcher and the participants about parents’ relevant experiences for teams and leadership in organizations. The research approach to generating these new intellectual connections was participant-observation combined with a focus group session. The study was conducted with nineteen working adults who were embarking upon an undergraduate degree.

The researcher interpreted the findings from team observations and the focus group session as a web of competing tensions generated by a series of paradoxical relationships. Both parents and non-parents seemed to experience these tensions.

If we can perceive a pattern in the way these conflicts play themselves out, we will be in a position to find ways to make wise judgments and

choices, and to handle constructively the values conflicts which are inherently a part of many leadership initiatives. (Wren, 1996, p. 23)

Hence, this chapter is an exploration of struggling with opposites, and an attempt to understand the patterns interwoven throughout seeming polarities; it is an exploration of the paradox of parenting experience, of team interaction, organizational life, and leadership relationships.

The Paradox of the Parenting Experience

In both the team observations and the focus group session, it became evident that some parents experienced their families as a source of growth as well as a source of stress. They were torn.

Making a life for themselves and their children was a rationale for striving and learning, but the same family members that motivated and inspired participants who were parents, were also seen as time consuming. Parents seemed to have “two minds” (Dilts, 1990, p.101) about their families, and the mental model of juggling “either/or” propositions seemed to prevail.

Steps to ameliorate this double-bind (Bateson, 1979) include alleviating the artificial compartmentalization of experience. “The distinction between the work person and the family person is unhealthy and artificial” (Fisher, 1993, p.109). In fact, such a distinction may decrease parents’ energy and potential for work (Argyris, 1964, p.112).

“Work is not something detached from the rest of human life” (Gini, 1996, p.5) and the value of that work is “not about the number of hours of work one

does" (Ciulla, 1996, p.50). Positivistic thinking coalesced with efficiency measures such as calculating a person's worth through the number of hours worked, denies that workplace contributions and relationships are inherently subjective. As organizations and individuals come to eschew the compartmentalization of experience and find new ways to qualitatively understand the contributions of team members, the paradox of the parenting experience may be more readily reconciled.

Furthermore, future directions for bolstering parents as vital contributors, across many realms, are more likely to occur through dialogue and the sharing of common experiences.

One manner in which individuals become part of a stronger unit is through common experiences. When those shared experiences are structured toward gaining skills or knowledge necessary for determining, articulating, developing, or amplifying the common purpose, the effect is multiplied. It is of further benefit for those experiences to be the focus of dialogue for the purpose of uncovering and understanding meanings. Beyond the benefit of developmental experiences, naturally occurring human experiences such as deaths, births, losses, or life changes, can be translated into shared experiences through dialogue and conscious examination. (Guzman, 1995, p.157)

"Parents are important and they need to hear that." (Parents' Voices, 1997). A dialogue that encourages parents to renounce a deficit model and

engages them around their strengths and insights by virtue of being parents, may ensure a self-fulfilling prophecy; “it is evident that how we, as humans, think about our experiences in collective life is as important to us as the actual experiences themselves” (Smith & Berg, 1987, p.1). In other words, “If men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas & Thomas, 1928). Such a transformation may be mutually beneficial for both individuals as well as organizations, and may lead to a fuller appreciation for parents’ insights within the context of teams.

The Paradox of Team Interaction

One phenomenon the researcher observed within the study group teams was the formation of powerful dyads. Despite the fact that the teams were relatively small – no more than five members and in some instances, only three members – patterns of one-on-one, exclusive interaction became apparent.

Because the one-on-one interfaces included both positive and negative behaviors, the researcher presumed that these dyads were not simply a vehicle for support and encouragement. Similar to collaborative parenting relationships, these dyads may have served as a holding environment (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997) and an effective means of navigating the ambiguity and complexity of novel circumstances.

Furthermore, if “Models of self and others are based largely on past experiences with relational partners” (Guerrero & Burgoon, 1996, p. 337), the phenomenon of powerful dyads may have been an effort to re-create prior

relational interactions. Moreover, these dyads may have been a comfort – predictability and security (Bennis & Schein, 1966) in the face of unknown and ambiguity, such as the comfort experienced within the context of a parenting partnership.

It seems that “reciprocity also leads to predictability and stability in relationships which can keep both relationships and negotiations from breaking down” (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p.157). Splitting into sub-groups was a viable and typical means of managing internal tension (Schermer, 1975, as cited in Smith & Berg, 1987). Powerful dyads may have represented an acceptable alternative for those participants who desired the growth opportunity of working in teams and embarking upon new intellectual study, but were also fearful and anxious about those undertakings.

Clearly, collective action is rife with potential conflict, complexity, and ambiguity. As stated in chapter one, group life is inherently paradoxical.

individual members experience the group as being filled with contradictory and opposing emotions, thoughts, and actions that coexist inside the group. As group members struggle to manage the tensions generated by these contradictory and opposing forces, the essential process of group dynamics are created. (Smith & Berg, 1987, p.15). Hence, it was not surprising that multiple decision-making models were evidenced across the teams.

One likely explanation for this variation may reside in the diversity of the participants themselves. Dimensions of individual diversity “exert an important impact on our early socialization and (have) an ongoing impact throughout our lives” (Loden & Rosener, 1991, p. 18). There was no indication that parenting, specifically, influenced participants’ decisions within the teams. However, life experiences, in general, and personal characteristics such as “language, religion, ideology, region, ethnic group, national identification, race” (Dahl, 1982, p.38) appear to have manifested themselves as conflicting ideas and opinions.

Differing ideas displayed throughout this research project point to the richness inherent in any collective group process, while simultaneously underscoring much of the conflict and misunderstanding experienced by teams (Tuckman, 1965). Paradoxically, the richness of group diversity can be a barrier to team synergy. A multiplicity of unique and differing perspectives become the foundation for synergistic group process, yet those same unique qualities which constitute individuality are also potential sources of group conflict.

In addition to the seeming polarities of conflict and rich input, decision-making processes also indicate the competing tensions between individual identity and group belonging.

diversity is otherness or those human qualities that are different from our own...Others, they are people who are different from us along several dimensions such as age, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual affectional orientation, and so on. (Loden & Rosener, 1991, p. 18)

It would appear that collective endeavors engender a desire to maintain a sense of self and personal agency, while at the same time invoking a desire to belong and contribute to the good of the group.

These conflicting desires between belonging and maintaining individuality, underscore the need to balance individual and group concerns. We must protect individuality in team settings. "Teamwork without tolerance of difference in opinion, gender, racial, or cultural background is unacceptable" (Ciulla, 1996, p. 63).

Further, co-evolution hinges upon the ability to engage in cooperation across diverse communities (Moore, 1996). In as much as diversity of thought is one of the great strengths of collective action, "We seek to hear and appreciate differences, not reconcile them" (Weisbord, 1992, p.7).

Consequently, team development processes and education must explicitly address the competing tensions between individual identity and group belonging. First, team members must have an awareness of the opposing forces of group and individual life. Second, team members may learn to appreciate that these conflicts are natural, inevitable products of collective interactions. Then, apparent opposites can be woven into a framework that brings meaning and understanding (Smith & Berg, 1987, p.45) such as the realization that "conflicts are both a blessing and a burden...Indeed we can trace the richness, creativity, and complexity of our cultures and organizations to our ability" to carry on a debate among a variety of voices (Hefietz, 1994, p.62).

Similarly, parents who find meaning within the apparent polarities of parenting, may move beyond “juggling” (Crosby, 1991) to a blending of work and family life and an appreciation for the complexity of the parenting experience as a source of growth and learning. Subsequently, parents might apply that learning to the complexity and turbulence of post-modern organizational life.

The Paradox of Organizational Life

In the struggle to survive in an increasingly turbulent and uncertain world, many organizations attempt to foster stability and consistency through the maintenance of tight controls over their workers. This is the inherent paradoxical nature of organizational life, the competing tension between the imagined need for organizational control and the expressed need for the participation of individuals who live and work in those organizations.

The researcher perceived this tension in the struggle of research participants to embrace team-based interaction. These working adults were apprehensive and confused, yet they did not appear to seek clarity from their instructors to resolve that confusion. Nor, did they appear to integrate the curriculum of the Gen 300 course, which might also have lessened their confusion.

It appeared that this group of nineteen people, largely inexperienced with work in teams, essentially lacked the knowledge base or mental schema to incorporate new ideas about team-based interactions. The researcher suspects that these individuals lacked substantive prior opportunities to practice

participatory, group processes and were, therefore, ill prepared to embrace the UOP context and collaborative work in teams.

While the confusion of participants may have been predicated on the novelty of team-based interaction and induction into an unfamiliar UOP institutional context, the researcher believes the confusion of participants was compounded by the incongruity between what participants were experiencing at UOP and what they experienced in their daily lives.

For many of the research participants, this was their first introduction into a predominantly congruent environment. At UOP, students are taught by persons who are intentionally trained as facilitators; they are not lecturers, professors or even instructors. Students are encouraged to actively co-create the learning. The students learn in teams. They submit their work as teams. They are rewarded as a team. The curriculum is highly experiential, designed by facilitators who collaborate in teams. Even university employees, such as counselors and admissions staff work in teams.

Most organizations are not so congruent, however. In the struggle between institutional control and worker participation, despite efforts to increase worker input, most organizations mirror a society that is steeped in competitive, individualistic practices (Abascal-Hildebrand, 1995; Bellah et al., 1985; de Tocqueville, 1840/1990; Rock, 1991). These types of individualistic and potentially oppressive organizations are where most participants, and most Americans, live and work.

In such organizations, participation may be sacrificed for organizational consistency. Teams become a mechanism for making people fungible.

Reengineering may be a veiled vehicle to exercise managerial control, to fire people and make the survivors work harder (Hammer & Champy, 1993).

In this interplay between the ever-increasing desire for productivity in a global economy and the desire to maintain organizational stability, disparate voices may be marginalized. Then, not only do organizations become incongruent, they are no longer inclusive.

So begins the vicious cycle. Organizations fail to incorporate disparate voices. The less credence that is given to those voices, the less those voices speak-out. The less those voices speak out to be heard, the less they have to say. The less those voices have to say, the less credence the voices are given. Then, the voices speak no more. The voices are silenced.

Interestingly and paradoxically, in the disparate voice, resides the creativity and the potential for new and divergent ways of looking at the world. The disparate voice houses the innovations that will sustain organizations through the complexities of post-modern times.

It seemed apparent to the researcher that without opportunities to engage in, practice, and experience a wide range of opportunities for participation, the complexities of parenting were not readily linked or applied by participants to the challenges of organizational life or team-based work. Even though, much of the

richness of parenting experience might be transferable and have broad applications to both venues.

The researcher interpreted the paradox of organizational life as a vicious circle that engulfs parents and other marginalized groups. When organizations deem insights that are inconsistent with mainstream thinking to be irrelevant, parents, and others, are forced to compartmentalize their existence and precluded from participation.

Without opportunities for input from their own experience, no connections are made between the validity of that experience and applications to organizational life. Hence, the capacity for future participation is minimized. Organizations exclude parents' voices because they are deemed irrelevant. Once marginalized, parents believe their experiences to be irrelevant, and the capacity for parents to act is diminished.

In short, "(P)articipation becomes a farce when it is applied as a sales gimmick or a device for kidding people into thinking they are important" (Bennis & Schein, 1966, p.18). An unbalanced resolution of the tensions between participation versus control, subverts not only the integrity of the organization, the satisfaction and agency of workers, but the democratic fabric of our society as a whole.

"The main branch of education of human beings is their habitual employment...the spirit of a commercial people will be essentially mean and slavish wherever public spirit is not cultivated by an extensive participation of the

people" (Mill, 1962, p.230). Disillusionment with falsehoods and pretense will inevitably translate into apathy in the civic realm in as much as "A servile system in industry inevitability reflects itself in political servility" (Cole as cited in Pateman, 1970, p.38).

However, teams and other forms of workplace participation such as those at UOP, that are cultivated and implemented in an ethical, democratic form, may lead to interdependence, equality, and true community. Because the work team constitutes one of the most important psychological reference groups for individuals (Pearce & Ravlin, 1987), workplace participation may serve an important educative function (Rousseau, 1947) and leave "the individual better psychologically equipped to undertake further participation in the future" (Pateman, 1970, p.45). Workers may then "generalize from experiences in non-governmental authority structures to the wider, national political sphere" (p.47). Public and private interests may become linked.

The imperative seems clear. "Turbulent environmental circumstances emerging today are forcing the fact of transformation upon all organizations...organizations must either modify their forms and structures in ways appropriate to the emergent environment or, over, a period of time, cease to exist" (Owen, 1984, p.209). Workplace teams become an ideal vehicle to respond to the complexities of post-modern life while affording team members the opportunity to learn principles of democracy and to practice leadership.

The Paradox of Leadership Relationships

If, as the researcher has posited, collective life is rife with competing tensions, complexity, and ambiguity, the implications for leadership may reside in the successful negotiation of paradox, the ability to simultaneously engage around apparent opposites, and to reconcile polarities for new growth and creativity. Several leadership theorists have written about the successful navigation of this learning process.

Ralph Stacey, a change theorist and expert in complexity, suggests that when a group of people can reflect upon their own group processes, when they can understand something about the system they constitute, then they are able to hold some of the paradoxes of group life, engage in double-loop learning, and become creative. (Stacey, 1996, p.160).

Stacey posits that leadership is the means by which groups can “contain anxiety without abandoning the edge of chaos...to accept the destructive aspects of creativity and yet be able to continue working” (p. 162).

Similarly, Heifetz (1994) suggests that leadership is the process of supporting social systems to increase their adaptive capacity. Leadership contains group anxiety in a “holding environment” so that the group might resolve conflicts, wrestle with ambiguity, and strengthen tolerance for uncertainty and the ensuing frustration. Heifetz underscores the need for explicit norms and boundaries, to help contain the anxiety of working cooperatively.

Peter Senge also explores the creative forces of ambiguity (1990). He suggests that creative tension exists in the juxtaposition of current reality and the vision of an ideal future. Energy is derived from revealing hidden assumptions and seeing interrelationships despite conflict.

The overarching theme of these writings is that holding opposites and wrestling with paradox, generates tension and anxiety. Leadership then, becomes a process of "Sorting out the opposite sides in a conflict, identifying their positive intentions, and then blending and integrating them" (Andreas & Andreas, 1989, p.137). Leadership mitigates anxiety. Leadership allows groups and individuals to embrace uncertainty, to learn and grow in new and creative directions.

The embrace of new growth and change "is probably the most painful, tiring, exhausting and yet, need-fulfilling and exhilarating of human activities" (Argyris, 1964, p.274). Hence, "A leader has to have the emotional capacity to tolerate uncertainty, frustration, and pain." (Hiefetz & Laurie, 1997, p. 128). Paradoxically, while containing the anxiety of others, leaders simultaneously experience their own threshold for uncertainty, and work to maintain their own personal, psychological safety while effecting change.

If leadership is about tolerance for complexity, then it seems that "Leadership is always about self and others." (Gini, 1996, p.8). While some may argue that parenting bears no analogies to such an understanding of leadership (Block, 1993), it is this researcher's assertion that parents may possess a

reservoir of experience in navigating uncertainty and complexity. This dynamic complexity may be navigated more or less successfully, depending upon the parent, but must be navigated nonetheless.

Furthermore, in the throws of uncertainty, parents may garner insights that would benefit teams and other organizational structures as they address the turbulence of a new millennium.

No matter how carefully structured any group might be, no matter how well a leader or follower believes controls have been imposed, no matter what history or statistics might suggest – the unfolding of human events takes on a life of its own. And therein lies much of the beauty and wonder of the learning community. (Guzman, 1995, p. 156)

This researcher perceives an analogy between the parenting experience around a child's development and the evolution of community. Both are complex, collaborative, reciprocal processes. Neither can be controlled, and all participants in the relationship are forever changed.

Future Research Directions

This study has implications for future research efforts aimed to more deeply explore adult development, teams, organizations, and leadership.

Parents

In the progression of growth and development in the human person, "Few aspects stands as impactful as those of the parenting process" (Summers, 1995,

p.125). Yet, the influences of child-rearing on the progression of adult development remain little understood.

The focus group participants offer an initial understanding of these reciprocal influences. A more in-depth examination of parents' perceptions regarding the reciprocal influence of parent and child is warranted – how the parent shapes a child's growth and development and the child in turn, teaches and changes forever, the developmental path of the parent. The reciprocity inherent in the parenting relationship has implications for adult developmental theory and a fuller understanding of parents' contributions to teams and other participatory organizational structures. In-depth, ethnographic interviews of parents who might be willing to share heartaches and triumphs, is a logical progression in generating new lines of thinking about adult developmental processes, since “relatively little attention has been paid to the differences and similarities between the family and other small groups...” (Becvar, 1982, p.88).

The researcher surmises that families of origin influence much of the behaviors that individuals exhibit when working in teams; much of what is co-created in small groups may be traced to patterns of interaction first experienced in the context of family. Our understanding of both teams and families may be enriched by further exploring these parallels.

Teams

“What makes research on teams so difficult is the way in which the group dynamics are embedded in the organizational construct” (Provo, 1996, p. 295).

Hence, the researcher recommends the study of multiple contexts with intact teams, over a greater period of time, specifically, no less than one year, allowing relationships to evolve.

In addition to studying intact groups over longer periods of time, the researcher's continuing interactions with teams, in a variety of settings, has revealed distinctions with respect to participant sophistication and a range of prior experience with teams. Further research may be warranted to dispel or support the notion that more sophisticated team members may not experience competing tensions as acutely as their inexperienced counterparts. Or, it may be possible that "As experience increases, individuals are likely to generalize their teamwork schemas to similar team tasks and team experiences" (Rentsch, Heffner, & Duffy, 1994, p.453), and perhaps more knowledgeable and experienced team members may be increasingly likely to perceive connections between parenting and team-based interactions. Additionally, effects of socio-economic status on team participation need be further examined.

Leadership

Future research endeavors intended to engender an appreciation for the contributions of parents' experiences in leadership relationships must presume a multi-disciplinary approach. A deeper understanding of the dynamic complexity of the parenting experience demands an incorporation of concepts from education, business, philosophy, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and family systems theory.

Additional research directions may also include a study of participant observation as a methodology for training future leaders. "A process-wise leader can be both a participant in an interaction and an observer" (Noer, 1983, p. 202). If the capacity of a learning organization hinges on the ability of members to gain insight from personal experience and the experience of others, and to adapt and change according to that insight, (Mankin, Cohen, & Bikson, 1996) then we must teach leaders the powers of observation as well as the skills of influence.

Lessons Learned

"Qualitative researchers leave their mark not only in the context but also on any resulting documentation and discussions. Not only are they learning about a particular context, but they are also learning from and with it" (Meloy, 1994, p.85).

The researcher's experience as a process-wise observer was indeed rich in both content and process. It was a growth opportunity, for the researcher to quiet herself and listen to others, to allow insights to emerge and new directions to unfold.

An evolving understanding of qualitative research and research in relationship was as valuable to the researcher as the content surrounding parenting experience and work in teams. For example, it was the researcher's intent to capture the subtleties and richness of process, as well as specific content related to the way parenting experience might contribute to work teams.

This was indeed a slippery and precarious undertaking. Process is unpredictable.

The process cannot be controlled. It is the most unpredictable of elements, just because it is contingent upon and responsible to the most unpredictable of all features: human behavior, development, interaction, and perception. In its humanness lies its strength – and its uncertainty. (Guzman, 1995, p.157)

With time, the researcher came to embrace this uncertainty. The evolution of the dissertation writing mirrored the metamorphosis of the researcher's own understanding.

The researcher, the product of a culture that worships hard science, trained in the traditions of experimental psychology, struggled to embrace the principles of qualitative research. She seemed destined to look for causality and quantifiable difference while attempting to control variables.

This struggle is evidenced in the researcher's original intent to categorize, and essentially tally, the behaviors of participants. This exercise would yield a difference between the behaviors of parents and non-parents within the context of teams. After the first team observation session, however, the researcher realized that such an exercise was antithetical to the desire to deeply and qualitatively understand the team experience.

The next challenge to the researcher's original conceptions of the work involved the definition of participant observer. Initially, the researcher conceived

of herself as a passive observer. Despite the knowledge that her presence would indeed and inevitably influence interactions, the researcher discounted her own desire to be actively engaged in the research relationship.

At the end of the first team meeting, when the researcher was astounded at her own desire to share information with the group, to offer help and assistance, to be known, she realized that you “can’t observe in non-relationship” (Gilligan, 1997). The researcher interpreted her own desire to be emotionally present in the moment, as the choice to do research in a relational way, rather than a difference between qualitative and quantitative approaches. The researcher realized that her findings would be grounded in going to another person for help. And that the conditions under which a participant may be expected to open their heart and mind to another person, clearly necessitated a reciprocity, a mutual giving – research in relationship.

In addition, the researcher experienced somewhat of a disconnection between the participant observation and the focus group session. Participant observation involved the researcher in an infinitely less directive role than that of a focus group leader, and the researcher found herself resistant to the idea of “focusing” participants’ insights.

Furthermore, the research suggests that focus groups may serve as a powerful validation tool, but the writings pertaining to this research seemed to progressively evolve. The researcher had not planned to revisit with participants around the emergent nature of the work. In future, the researcher would engage

with participants in an interview format, to garner participants' insights on several occasions.

And finally, the researcher has come to feel that the use of the third person as a voice to relay the findings herein, while comfortable at the outset, will be inappropriate for future written conversations between the researcher and her future readers. The use of the third person denies that the researcher is actively co-creating with her participants – engaging, shaping, filtering, and sharing. In future, I will speak from my heart, my head, in my own voice, to applaud the validity of my own experience.

Summary

“Life is about a balance of conflicting forces” (Hwang, 1997). Opposites are essential for unity, and “wholeness is possible only via the co-existence of opposites (Jung as cited Smith & Berg, 1987, p. 26). The turbulent nature of post-modern life “demands that we start thinking in ways that move beyond dualities and instead emphasize balance, acknowledging” ambiguity (Helgesen, 1995, p.16).

In the “oneness of polarities” (Taoism, 1993), we may find understanding. In the “interactions between people, between generations, and between ecological systems of past and present” (Summers, 1995, p.121), we shape our future. The water carriers of our society, parents and others, who practice an ethic of interdependency and tend to embrace life’s dynamic complexity may

ensure a future that is founded on respect for diversity, complexity, democratic, inclusive participation, and respect for the unity of both self and other.

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Figure 1
Progression of Gen 300 Class and Team Tasks

	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four	Week Five
Class Tasks	Form Study Groups				Deliver Presentation
Team Tasks		Choose Topic	Compile Topic Research	Prepare for Presentation

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Appendix A

October 18, 1995

Christine Cecil
1255 Gertrude Street
San Diego, CA 92110

Re: Approval to Conduct Research at the University of Phoenix

Dear Ms. Cecil:

This letter will confirm my approval of your observing and surveying study groups in the GEN/100 and GEN/300 introductory courses at the San Diego campuses. It is understood that your findings will be used to satisfy requirements for completing doctoral studies at the University of San Diego.

Ines Kraft, Director of Academic Affairs of the San Diego campus, will assist you in making arrangements to work with the indicated study groups. You may contact her at (619) 576-7469.

I would be interested in a summary of your findings. Best wishes for a successful project.

Respectfully,

Laura Palmer Noone, JD, MBA
Vice President for Academic Affairs

LPN/pla

cc: Ines Kraft, Director of Academic Affairs, San Diego Campus

Appendix B

Dear University of Phoenix Facilitator:

I am conducting a doctoral dissertation study to better understand the potential contributions of parents to the business world; specifically, the role of parents in teams. This study is being conducted under the auspices of the University of San Diego in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a doctorate in educational leadership, with full approval by UOP administration.

The research process will consist of a brief introduction during the first class to recruit participant volunteers. Should students agree to participate, I will observe their study group meetings outside of class for the duration of the course. At the last class meeting, I will ask students to complete a demographic questionnaire, and distribute the results of my findings. At that time, I will also schedule a focus group session which will provide participants the opportunity to validate or repudiate my findings. Please note that all participation is voluntary.

This research project represents a unique opportunity for students to receive feedback pertaining to their functioning in teams, and to gain a specific understanding of their potential contributions to group process. Both people who are parents and those who are not will benefit from *insight into team communication*.

I will contact you in the coming days to answer any questions you might have and gauge your interest in allowing me entry into your classroom. Throughout the process, if you would like additional information or wish to clarify the intent of this study in an way you may contact the following:

Christine Cecil, M.A.
1255 Gertrude Street
San Diego, CA 92110
ccecil@acusd.edu
619-275-6554

Mary Abascal-Hildebrand
University of San Diego
5998 Alcala Park
San Diego, CA 92110
619-260-4538

Sincerely,

Christine Cecil
UOP Facilitator

Appendix C

Invitation to Participate

This invitation will be read out-loud by the researcher.

Good evening. I am Christine Cecil. I am a facilitator here at the University of Phoenix and I am also a doctoral student in Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego. I am conducting a study about parents and relationships. The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how parents might contribute to team communication processes and better integrate work and family to serve as leaders in the workplace and in their communities. Please know that the concept of parenting experience in this study may be broadly and personally defined.

If you agree to participate, I will simply observe and record your study group meetings. At the end of the course I will ask you to complete a very short demographic form and present you with my observations. I will also invite you at that time to attend a focus group so that you can respond to my research findings and tell me if you agree or disagree with my observations.

For a variety of reasons, only study groups in which all members agree to participate may be observed. If you do not wish to participate, you may do so without jeopardy. It will not effect your University standing or class grade in any way. For those who wish to participate, we will proceed with the signing of informed consent forms and schedule our first meeting time. Thank you for your time.

Appendix D

Informed Consent to Act as a Research Subject

Christine Cecil, M.A., a doctoral student in Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego is conducting a study to gain a deeper understanding of how parents contribute to communication processes in self-directed work teams. Since I have been selected to participate in this study, I understand that I will be a research subject.

My involvement will consist of study group meetings and a focus group session, approximately 8 hours over a period of five weeks. There are no other agreements, written or verbal, beyond that expressed on this consent form.

My participation in this study is completely voluntary, and I am free to refuse or stop at any time without penalty. My course grade or university status will not be effected in any way. My facilitator will have no access to my research data. My name will be kept anonymous. Christine Cecil has explained this study to me and answered my questions. If I have other questions I may contact Christine or the dissertation chairperson:

Christine Cecil, M.A.
1255 Gertrude Street
San Diego, CA 92110
ccecil@acUSD.edu
619-275-6554

Mary Abascal-Hildebrand
University of San Diego
5998 Alcala Park
San Diego, CA 92110
619-260-4538

I understand that any information obtained about me from this research will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that the research will be utilized to fulfill partial doctoral requirements at the University of San Diego and results may be published and/or presented in varied forums. I understand that research data may be subpoenaed by court order or may be inspected by federal regulatory authorities.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Please place your initials here acknowledging receipt of a copy of this consent form:

Appendix E
Participant Demographic Form
Group# _____ CODE _____

Please check one of the following:

1. Gender	Male	_____
	Female	_____
2. Age	20-30	_____
	30-40	_____
	40-50	_____
	50+	_____
3. Ethnicity	African American	_____
	Asian	_____
	Caucasian	_____
	Hispanic	_____
	Native American	_____
	Other	_____
	Pacific Islander	_____

4. Circle highest grade of education completed:

9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18

5. What type of academic program are you enrolled in
(please be specific):

6. Current Employment	Full-Time	_____
	Part-Time	_____

7. Briefly describe your previous experience with teams:

8. If you volunteer or engage in any community service, please

list the approximate number of hours per week: _____

9. Parenting Experience _____
 No Experience _____

10. Children Number of Children _____
 Ages _____

11. How many of these are step-children? _____

12. How many of these are adopted? _____

13. How many of these children are related to you, but not your children
by birth (e.g., a niece, grandson etc.)? _____

14. Approximate number of hours per week you spend thinking about
your children when you are not with them: _____

15. Approximate number of hours per week you spend
actively engaged with your children: _____

Appendix F
Participant Demographics

Code Name	Academic Program	Age	Ethnicity	Educ	Employment	Gender	Teams	Volunteer Hrs/Week	Number of Children	Ages	Special	Hours Engaged	Hours Thinking
Fred	Mgmt	30-40	Caucasian	12	NAFTA Coordinator	Male	Limited	None	3	13, 14, 15	3 step	48	30
Inga	Admin	40-50	African	13	NAVY Secretary	Female	None	None	2	17, 20	N/A	15	20
Phan	Mgmt	30-40	Asian	12	Payroll	Female	TQM	None	1	3	N/A	N/A	84
Elle	Acctg	20-30	Asian	12	Credit Union	Female	None	1.5	3	5, 4, 3	N/A	20	10
Winnie	Mgmt	40-50	Asian	13	Assistant	Female	None	N/A	1	17	N/A	Don't Know...	
Mark	Mgmt	20-30	Caucasian	12	Military	Male	None	3	1	10 mos.	N/A	15	20
Ulma	Mgmt	20-30	Hispanic	13	Temporary Assistant	Female	Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gail	Acctg	20-30	Caucasian	13	Military Nurse	Female	Limited	10	1	2	N/A	45	45
Paul	Admin	30-40	African	14	Fire Fighter	Male	Limited	2	2	3, 5	N/A	18	6
Gloria	Nursing	40-50	Caucasian	15	Nurse	Female	Extensive	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mary	Mgmt	20-30	African	14	Admin Asst.	Female	Extensive	N/A	2	1, 3	N/A	115	30
Nate	Acctg	30-40	Caucasian	13	Accountant	Male	Work	N/A	1	2	N/A	30	30
Alice	Nursing	30-40	Caucasian	17	Nurse	Female	None	N/A	2	9, 12	N/A	56	60
George	Mgmt	20-30	African	15	Telephone Sales	Male	None	N/A	2	4, 12	1 Step	40	30
Paula	Admin	30-40	Caucasian	17	Administrative Asst.	Female	None	N/A	2	19, 7	N/A	25	25
Harry	Admin	20-30	Hispanic	12	Hotel Service	Male	Limited	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fran	Admin	30-40	Caucasian	13	Self-Employed	Female	Softball	N/A	2	15, 16	2 step	10	10
Ford	Admin	30-40	Caucasian	13	Military	Male	Extensive	N/A	2	2, 5	N/A	50	40
Matt	Info Svcs	20-30	Caucasian	13	Information Services	Male	Work	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A