



Stories of Experience: Learning and Teaching by Creating and Listening

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Abstract

Narrative is a foundational element to understanding human learning. Our inherent capacity to tell and process stories allows us to communicate and remember complex information to improve and adapt to our environments. This paper presents stories of experience as a pedagogical approach that can enliven curriculum in an age of technological dominance by providing a theoretical foundation of experience, narrative, and autobiography. Together with pedagogies of listening, storytelling, and care, they suggest an alternative transformative engagement with learning.

Keywords: Storytelling, narrative, acoustic ecology, pedagogy, attunement

1. Introduction

In the time of relentless technological development, shifting student priorities and waning engagement levels, we as educators are faced with many dilemmas. Out of the seemingly endless ways we are encouraged by technology corporations to change the world, very few options seem to make that kind of transformation. The better the technologies become at replacing or actually completing what we once considered class assignments that worked, the more we need to develop a philosophy of education, as Dewey (1934) once advocated, to negotiate the rising dichotomy between progressive and traditional education. Today we are negotiating for attention and relevance. Our dichotomy lies between ideas that promulgate the political polarization of the day and those that promote the corporate agenda. Indeed, these are difficult times to promote transformative education, but this is why it is important to continually develop ways to engage our students and show alternatives to hegemonic narratives and the new populist order (Cohen, 2021).

Our dilemma today of engaging students in transformative education has never had such competition for time and attention. Almost every teen (96%) in the U.S. is on the internet every day and 46% report being online almost constantly, mainly on a smartphone with breaks on the computer or gaming console (PEW, 2024). This speaks to a need for an approach to education that is authentically human. We need to move toward a philosophy of education that is not a detached intellectual exercise or a word game but one that is relevant and gives meaning and vibrancy to our lives as teachers and learners. Kaag (2020) describes the philosophy of William

James as an “existential live preserver” and stipulates that it is needed because so many of us today seem to “teeter on the brink of the abyss” regarding our “healthy-mindedness” (p. 4).

Today we must negotiate the difference between authentic human expression and that which is computer generated. This has become a difficult and sometimes unclear task. An inability to differentiate this, however, creates a lack of motivation or care toward the project of education in teachers and students alike, which can make us susceptible to promotional culture or to the polarizing polemics inherent in media. The potential of large language models seems mystifying. Yet, AI technology is in its nascent stages, and profit, as opposed to educational potential, will most likely determine its future development. Authentic human learning seems to be in direct competition with technological developments co-opted by corporate interests. In response to the technological takeover of knowledge, hope and care for our future comes out of the lived lives of teachers and learners. What something means only becomes meaningful if it can be related to a specific context of someone’s life.

This paper examines theories of narrative, experience, and autobiography as well as pedagogies of storytelling, listening, and care as the theoretical foundations that permit the indeterminacy, interpretation, and relational aspects of telling stories in a classroom. They explain why and how stories of experience can create and lead to a rich educational environment and transformative experience, or what Jardine, Clifford and Friesen (2006) describe as curriculum in abundance.

2. Methods

This paper uses the classroom practice of telling stories of experience as a foundation to build a theoretical framework. Assignments that used stories of experience were examined to inform the theoretical assertions made here. The review of these assignments included student responses, notes, communications, and observations. A separate case study report was developed that also informed this theoretical paper. A short story of experience from an undergraduate media production course is developed to situate the theories and pedagogies presented and to provide an example of an alternative transformative engagement with learning.

3. Theories

3.1 Narrative

Telling stories is a foundation of human communication and a way of creating meaning in the world. Even the simplest of stories can reveal social and worldly networks of relations that have astonishing complexity (Cobley, 2001). All cultures have developed narratives independently and, yet, striking similarities emerge (Campbell, 1949, 2008, Rank, 1990) thereby suggesting that there exists a basic human universality to the process of telling stories.

The origins of human storytelling are difficult to pinpoint. We know the oldest written narrative (The Epic of Gilgamesh) dates back 5,000 years but cave paintings depict narratives that are more than 30,000 years old. Sugiyama (2001, 2008, 2012) uses phylogenesis (i.e., an evolutionary development approach) to argue that narratives are much older and in fact are directly related to how humans evolved. Individuals who were better at telling and processing stories (i.e., communicating information and ideas by enabling the affordance of better environmental adaptation) enjoyed a reproductive advantage (see Sugiyama, 2001). This perspective suggests that humans are evolutionarily and genetically predisposed to the use of narratives.

Narrative schematic templates (e.g., the initiation, quest and return of the hero's journey) operate on an abstract level which, according to Wertsch (2002), influences collective remembering as well as the construction and organization of meaning associated with experience and events. This suggests a mnemonic function inherent to the schematic organization of narrative that could provide practical benefits for teachers and learners. Using these templates when telling our stories of experience (i.e., personal narratives) suggests a relationship between collective understandings and expectations that are historical with our own personal experiences.

One may posit from this that a relationship to a collective, historical, or even evolutionary construction of meaning may be inherent in the structures and expectations of narratives. Yet, this is what each and every student brings to the classroom. Narratives provide key insight to understanding the educational potential of experience. Through narratives, ideas and experiences can be structured, represented, elaborated, communicated and, most importantly, put into a relevant context. The reflexive practice of reconstructing experience through narratives is what Pinar (2009) suggests to be the ongoing project of self-cultivation by the "juxtaposing autobiographical and academic study, situated socially and attuned historically" (p. 62). The narrative form is a way of organizing experience by holding a moment in time for further analysis.

Narratives provide the form and method for the reflexive practice of understanding experience. The contemplation and construction of stories of experience allow for the complexity of these experiences to be maintained and even celebrated. Doll (2012) and Morin (2008) suggest that this is more than the mere acceptance of complexity and uncertainty in that it is a celebration of a universal recognition of the human condition.

A narrative can be a representation of an experience (mnemonic, historical, interpretable) but it also allows the study and context of the experience to be generative of new interpretations and experiences. When experienced collectively, narratives can reach their full potential of combining historical knowledge with lived experience to provide a rich and abundant source of material for interpretation and inquiry. Narratives become the form, content and source of inquiry that can provide connections to collective knowledge and personal experience while maintaining a celebration of the complexity of the human condition.

3.2 Experience

Late in his career, Dewey (1951) abandoned the term *experience* by substituting it with *culture*. Dewey blames the difficulty of conveying the magnitude of ideas associated with experience and the insurmountable historical weight it carries for this substitution. After a lifetime of trying to develop a theory of experience, this statement provides indication of the complexity and difficulty of defining the term *experience*. This is significant because it conveys how culture includes both the "material and the ideal in their reciprocal interrelationships" (LW Volume 1, p. 363). It also suggests the importance of context to understanding experience.

This idea of reciprocal interrelationships that exist between the conceptual realm (mind) and the pragmatic observable world (environment) is foundational for understanding experience. What happens to us in the real world locates our construction of understanding in a relevant context when reflected upon after. This process of action followed by reflection (i.e., stories of experience that are shared and discussed) creates a cycle that can be repeated by strengthening future experiences and enhancing understanding. Doll (2012) describes this process as *transformative* understanding.

Schön (1983) describes two levels of experience: The primary undergoing level in context is experienced and active. The secondary reflective level is intellectual, academic, historical and analytical. According to Schön, the two levels are divided into the academic world of theory and the actual practice in real-world situations. This division is evident in educational settings that perceive curriculum as a plan or a prescribed set of learning outcomes without taking into account the lived lives of teachers and learners (see Aoki, 2005). Curriculum is more understandable when related to real world scenarios but, even more so, if those scenarios are relatable and specifically contextualized within the experiences of the people involved.

James (1890, 2007) maintained that thinking is a process emergent from and continuously engaged by certain non-cognitive levels of experience. James identified them as emotion, inspiration, intuition, imagination, and habit. Holder's (1995) idea that highly structured, logical, and rational modes of thought emerge from and are fundamentally and dynamically related to less structured experiences can be used as a framework to connect experience and thought. This particular perspective puts non-cognitive involvements (actions) and structured rational thought on a continuum of experience. It suggests a non-linear, dynamic and dialogic conception of experience where our environment and consciousness interact with and inform each other.

Experience includes the entire complex system of interaction between visceral, logical, and environmental factors and thus requires a broader assessment than any few metrics will allow. This concept recognizes that experience and reflection are part of a system of self-organization that allows for continual recursive recreation, or what Maturana and Varela (1980) describe as *autopoiesis* or a form of self-cultivation. Understanding experience as part of a system (complex, interactive, relational) rather than a linear continuum (from action to or from thought) allows generative educational experiences to develop. This approach positions experience as an essential part of learning but not in a definitive, prescriptive way. Educational experience is understood as a complex system that is full of unpredictable outcomes and antithetical to a curriculum with its outcomes already planned. In order for the collective listening and telling of stories of experience to be educational, there must be an openness to unpredictable outcomes.

Experience is a complex system of interaction that brings the social/environmental to the individual's reconstructions in a way that is reciprocal and historical. Society and our environments interact with us in a mutual way and it has the capacity of reciprocal transformation (Jay, 2005). Our collective interpretations of experience forms part of how we interpret our own experiences. The social and the subject have an on-going dialog. The discussion of the importance of experience for education emerges and thereby offers the recognition for alternatives to dominant narratives (Pinar, 2015).

3.3 Autobiography

In describing and representing personal experience, we can locate ourselves in the social community and join an inheritance of collective wisdom. Our stories, however uniquely they manifest, reflect our history, culture, and desire to form part of a community. The separation of the personal and the social is an illusion. Our job as teachers is to learn to appreciate the significance of our personal experiences in order to appreciate the experiences of others.

To appreciate the extraordinary in the ordinary is part of this process (Leggo, 2008). Through autobiographical creative work, we can build reference points of our own development that contribute to our ability to recognize and cultivate development in others. Becoming a teacher does not necessarily happen by taking courses in teacher education, it happens when we recognize particularity, first in ourselves and then in our students. This is a

very different proposition to a list of best practices or a teaching plan. It suggests a much more diverse and complex re-visioning of our lived experience as teachers.

Pinar's (1975, 2023) concept of *currere*¹ has been developed as a way of using autobiography as a source of data to reconceptualize the meaning of curriculum by using psychoanalytical techniques. The method consists of four steps: The regressive (stories of experience), the progressive (imagination of future experiences), the analytic (academic study), and the synthetic (development of a plan of action). This method of autobiography emphasizes the lived experiences of teachers and learners. *Currere* accentuates how everyday experiences of an individual have the capacity to educate by being informed by culture, history, and our political milieu.

Autobiography is a way of interpreting one's experience insofar as "the person you are and will become derive from our reconstructions of lived experience in the world" (Pinar, 2009, p. vii). The process and product of autobiographical work are ways for educational researchers, teachers, and learners to organize, reconstruct, and reflect upon our academic knowledge, our societal context, and our subjectivity (see Pinar, 2012). This position reflects a reframing of curriculum as a dynamic, lived, and continuous project that is inseparable from one's subjectivity (i.e., personal development is continuous even after the course has run). It is a very different notion of curriculum than the commonly defined planned sequence of instruction or learning goals. The subjective reflexivity suggested by the method of *currere* recognizes that the lived experience of teaching and learning is integral to the project of education. A vibrant source of knowledge exists within all teachers and learners if accessed through personal narratives, study, and reflection. Rather than being a plan for instruction, curriculum is conceived as a continuous course of action that is a way of being. This reflective subjective approach is intended to inform and direct our actions as teachers and learners.

4. Pedagogies

In addition to the theories discussed above, pedagogies of storytelling, listening, and care are equally important in explaining why and how stories of experience can lead to a transformative educational experience. They will be discussed in the following.

4.1 Storytelling

The sharing of stories in an educational environment is a way to relate curriculum to a broader social and environmental context. Telling and listening to stories can function as a guide for conduct and reflection on cultivating the self and one's role in society.

The acts of telling, listening, retelling, and relistening to stories of experience serve to inform better storytelling and listening in the future. Personal stories of experience intensify the subjective position and moral character that emerges due to the individual assessment and distillation of lived experiences. The ethical work, consisting of critical examination of one's experiences in the "attempt to transform oneself into the ethical subject of one's behaviour" (Foucault, 1992, p. x), is an ongoing process that is the prime objective of educational stories of experience. Over time, deeper understanding of previous ideas builds toward consistent

¹ Etymologically, curriculum derives from the Latin noun *curriculum* meaning a chariot course. The term was originally created by Pinar (1975) as a method of self-study and self-cultivation that is specifically directed toward teacher development. *Currere*, meaning to run the course, is the infinitive verb form of curriculum. Pinar defined *currere* as a method of autobiographical reflection on educational experiences to include the active development of subjectivity.

principles of action that have recognizable and accumulated benefits not only for ourselves but for our participation in society. The continued process of telling, listening, reflection, and action ideally focuses our expectations on the future by connecting it with the past.

Indigenous educator and researcher Green (Kundoqk) (2020) describes the concept of *Noosa* as a space for learning, teaching, and re-teaching. This concept has an ancient history and deep cultural significance. Yet, it has a universal connection to teaching and learning. *Noosa* is a space for relating stories of experience whereby knowledge is shared through ongoing, open, and reciprocal dialog. Sharing knowledge by telling stories in this way does not assume that there is a specific pedagogical goal, but rather that stories are cumulative and can take on different meanings by different people at different times. Learning is a life-long activity that does not begin or end based on institutional term schedules.

A pedagogy of storytelling requires an openness to unpredictable outcomes. Ormiston (2018) states that “to prepare only for disseminating prescribed knowledges is to prepare inadequately for the complex dimensions and forces that challenge praxis and meaning-making in the classroom” (p.75). Meaning making is interpreted differently by each learner. The specific knowledge that is learnt is different for everyone based on their personal connections and previous experiences. Rather than having specific learning outcomes, a pedagogy of storytelling allows a generative space for sharing the learning, teaching, re-learning, and re-teaching with certain boundary conditions. The conditions for controlling a generative learning space vary but, more generally, a respect for the process and each other could be considered a boundary condition. According to Doll (1993, p. 176), the “right amount” of unpredictability, chaos, richness, and lived experience is impossible to know ahead of time without ongoing reassessment but is necessary for cultivating transformative education.

4.2 Listening

The importance of listening to any form of pedagogy cannot be overemphasized. Listening is a skill that can be developed through practice and an increased awareness to the acoustic ecology (Droumeva & Murphy, 2018). R. Murray Schafer’s (1994) concept of soundscape encourages our engagement in our sonic environment or the acoustic ecology. The idea is that through critical listening we can recognize, preserve and improve our environment. Listening in this situation is an active process where we develop a form of attunement or an attention to resonances as they arise. In teaching, this refers to a flexibility, that is, an openness to adjust (tune) themes, approaches, and class assignments as needed through a practice of active listening to students and situations.²

Attunement is necessarily a relative process. It is a negotiation between a sound and its listener within a specific context. It is informed by our abilities to adjust our perceptions of historical, political, economic, social, and ecological factors. Aoki (2005) takes this idea of attunement further by defining it on a more ontological level. From Aoki’s perspective, attunement is understood as a state of becoming. It incorporates the relativity and complexity of each unique situation while staying connected to the histories and legacies that accumulate collectively. Aoki describes the process of “becoming attuned as developing a reciprocal conversation between our learning and our subjective lived experience” (p. 360).

Pinar (2019) describes attunement as a way to “traverse the gap between our world and what is outside it, from particularity to universality” (p. 261). This notion connects listening with an

² R. Murray Schafer made numerous contributions to a pedagogy of listening, e.g., see: *The Composer in the Classroom* (1965); *The New Soundscape* (1969); *The Music of the Environment* (1973); *The Thinking Ear: Complete Writing on Music Education* (1986); *A Sound Education* (1992).

understanding of how subjective experience (particularity) can resonate in a collective whole (universality). Attunement is a connection between our knowledge and our perception, between what we want and what the situation requires. Pinar's understanding of attunement takes the concept to an ethical, moral, and spiritual level by relating our particular experiences with our knowledge and appreciation for "that which is good" (Aoki, as quoted in Pinar, 2019, p. 263). With this understanding, attunement can have transformational possibilities that go beyond individual understandings to a comprehension of the whole. With conviction, openness, and belonging, attunement has the potential to inform our actions.

Truax (2001) and Westerkamp (2002) developed the idea of acoustic ecology as an interdependent relationship between sound, listener, and the soundscape. The communication significance of any sound can only be assessed within the entire context (environment, history, culture) from where it originated. This concept of listening can provide the opportunity to discover the interdependent relationships between ourselves and the broadest environmental, historical, social, and subjective resonances. This is a skill that can be developed through a practice of mindful listening. Although an instrumental approach to listening is very helpful and essential to developing skills, it limits listening from reaching the potential that attunement suggests. Listening is an active process of connecting what we hear to our culture, knowledge, experiences, and contexts. To develop a pedagogy of listening, there also needs to be an openness for unexpected and unfamiliar sounds to be regarded and appreciated for their pedagogical value.

A pedagogy of listening requires a level of aural literacy that includes a deliberate understanding of the environment as well as the auditory techniques required to listen for that understanding (attention, differentiation, articulation). Listening is a cognitive, socially constructed, and habitually acquired process of discrimination and perception. Listening requires what Hua (2012) describes as an "*open-mindedness*" to "seek the meaning of life presenting and narrating itself, only by being a listener, either a teacher or a student can really experience his or her meaning of life" (p. 66). A pedagogy of listening is a collection of perceptions that combine and reinforce practiced skills with mindful cognition, critical acumen, and imagination.

Listening is one of the key foundations to making stories of experience as an educational process work. Creating and telling stories becomes meaningful when we know they are being heard collectively. Otherwise, mundane experiences can take on profound meaning when others hear them and can respond with their own interpretations and experiences. We feel part of a collective and there is something very human about it. Being heard is foundational because our perception and imagination of our own stories change when we know they are being collectively listened to. This requires a supportive environment where listening skills are paramount.

4.3 Care

Aoki (2005) describes the essence of teaching as "what it means to be attuned to the call of care that is present in every authentic pedagogic situation" (p. 193). Care is a fundamental element in education that seems to be underemphasized in classrooms today. There is an instrumentalization of education that "lionizes economic rationality where individuality is discovered not in community but only in relation to market fulfillment" (Grimmett, 2021, p. 67). This instrumentalization is reenforced with constant technological intervention and distraction driven by the intent of gaining an audience. It creates a situation in the classroom that devalues care for individual experiences. They are valued for their screen effect rather than

their lived experiences. This situation creates a crisis of education that may be addressed with attunement to the call of care.

Developing a culture of attunement in a classroom can create spaces where learners and teachers feel heard and understood as individuals. This process, by necessity, requires the cultivation of care. By listening to and reflecting on each other's stories of experience we create directions of meaning that can support and authenticate one's existence. This practice of care promotes what Noddings (1984) describes as receptiveness and responsiveness, that is, our ability to listen and offer an appropriate response to others. Listening carefully to stories of others allows the opportunity for responses that can confirm a person's worth by adding to the collective meanings of experiences. This process is cumulative in that reciprocal relationships are developed as more stories are told, heard, and discussed.

Care is foundational to an educational practice of sharing stories of experience because of the vulnerability we experience when presenting to a group. The practice of both listening and telling stories promotes empathy by witnessing how receptive and responsive others are. This is by no means a given in every situation and the promotion of value and respect is essential to creating a caring pedagogical environment.

Care is a human condition that can allow individuals to thrive and it seems to be self-generating once it is recognized. The careful reception and response to individual experiences creates engagement and may be considered a way to redirect attention away from technological distraction toward a fundamental human requirement to be heard.

5. Stories of Experience

The following example is a class assignment from a third-year undergraduate media production course which illustrates ways in which a story can capture students' experiences and allow their meaning to be interpreted:

The setting is an undergraduate university classroom, early term. Students are very nervous because today we are listening to their stories of experience. Each student has been asked to create a story based on a personal lived experience. Students share these stories with a classmate, write them down, and then record themselves by reading the story aloud. Today they are played back to the entire class. There are plenty of awkward, hilarious, moving, and real moments but the students show attention and engagement throughout the class. After class, students all remain asking an unexpectedly broad range of questions to each other and the instructor.

This sample assignment creates an image of a classroom filled with emotions and expectations. It also contains specific instructions for using stories to structure knowledge and information. Through a process of reflection and analysis, the term "stories of experience" emerged as a reference to this particular kind of assignment.

Stories of experience begin with a lived experience. Understanding the significant connections between experience and meaning making, or knowledge is essential to this process. We constantly undergo experiences and the close reflexive evaluation of what may seem like a very trivial experience can provide profound meanings. Experiences can be further developed by practicing care and attunement which ultimately leads to more educational experiences in the future.

Autobiography is inherent in stories of experience because we are communicating awareness of what happened to us. Developing the autobiographical method of *currere* (Pinar, 1975) takes time and practice but understanding stories of experience as a starting point allows

for a longer-term appreciation for this process. *Currere* positions education as a life-long learning and self-cultivation project and one that is much bigger than the learning outcomes for one particular class.

Stories, as the ones elicited from students in this assignment, capture the context and environment of a particular situation and open up broader opportunities upon re-evaluation. The situation that originated this story and the classes that followed impacted the way in which this assignment has changed over time by making it more meaningful for learners. For instance, the more personal and/or relatable depictions are in a story, the more students seem to engage. This encourages us to emphasize and cultivate depictions in our experienced stories by thus relating back to Schön's (1983) idea of the two levels of experience discussed earlier. Once a depiction of a feeling has been documented, it can then be described further regarding where, who, how, and why that experience created that feeling. This provides a richer source for secondary reflection and analysis.

More specifically, the example given above illustrates the simple observation that students are very nervous because their stories are being shared with their instructor and classmates. Yet, upon reflection it can provide insight into why stories of experience can create an engaging learning environment. Students may be nervous because they are processing their fear of being singled out in class with their excitement about getting to tell their story. It is important to recognize that this nervousness is in itself an experience that can be reflected upon in the future.

Finally, the description of moments in the story as being "awkward, hilarious, moving and real" exemplifies the multiple and often conflicting emotions that are created using stories of experience in a classroom. The exercise requires the need for attunement and care by recognizing that the vulnerability of sharing autobiographical stories is necessary because learners can easily feel shut down or hurt by comments. Abundant time and care need to be allocated by clearly conveying guidelines for listening with the goal to develop critical listening skills that honour and respect our stories of experience.

Independent of the prescribed curriculum for this class and no matter how often the assignment was recreated, it has been consistently referred to and remembered throughout the term. It represents what Doll (1993) refers to as transformative curriculum which is rich in unpredictability, relationships, and reflection but with enough rigor to stay relevant. The objective of the assignment to cultivate engagement in transformative education for teachers and learners is achieved by relating curriculum to *lived* stories. The stories themselves create a framework that knowledge can be organized and retained. The mnemonic capacity of stories can be used to recall information for both learners and teachers even when it is tangentially associated. For example, the names of the students and the stories they told in class still come to mind when I revisit this particular assignment with its stories of experience.

5. Results

Stories of experience connect to very foundational human motivators. The theories of narrative, experience, and autobiography, in coordination with the pedagogies of storytelling, listening, and care help understand these motivators. The use of narrative forms and the exploration of experience, especially autobiographical narratives of experience, have the powerful potential to motivate and engage students. When this powerful potential is directed toward educational outcomes, positive improvements related to memory, motivation, and engagement can ensue. The theoretical framework and pedagogies suggested here provides a basis for understanding how stories of experience can enhance educational engagement by both teachers and learners.

6. Conclusion

Stories of experience in the classroom can create complex and unpredictable outcomes. Their outcomes cannot be measured based on any one rubric and require a philosophical basis of understanding that includes and celebrates the individuality and complexity of the human condition. The ideas presented here are a starting point for the implementation of stories of experience in an educational context. Every context and individual are unique which in itself prompts an in-depth conversation in order to construct a curriculum that is engaging and meaningful.

Narratives can provide the scaffolding to which we can attach memory, knowledge, and context of our experiences. Understanding narrative as a principal structure of human learning helps us recognize the importance of stories and how they structure meaning in all that we learn. Telling our own autobiographical stories demonstrates how knowledge and learning is not external to us. Telling our own stories is how we develop meaning and how we can internalize knowledge. Indeed, this is how knowledge becomes a matter of what is learnt rather than just information soon to be forgotten.

Individual experiences in life imprint upon us in many ways. The reflection and contemplation of stories of experience not only provide a way to hold and share that experience but ultimately inform the improvement of future experiences. Respecting and sharing each other's experiences in an educational context forms part of an ongoing project of self-cultivation. The complexity that emerges from this practice can take experiences that may initially present themselves as mundane. Yet, they may ultimately transform into meaningful lessons of life.

The telling of stories is certainly a skill that can be developed but, at least from an educational perspective, listening skills are even more important. Attunement to stories of experience is listening to life. It requires critical listening skills to hear the collective human condition in our experiences. Listening promotes the feeling of being heard, which is essential to validating and honouring each other's presence. The degree of receptiveness and responsiveness that we give to our stories of experience is a measure of care for each other and it may provide a response to corporate technological domination of our ideas and aspirations.

What knowledge is of most worth?³ This canonical question of curriculum cannot be answered today with any predetermined curriculum. The pace and diversity of competition for attention that is increasingly pushed on both teachers and learners by corporate interests requires a response that has to be dynamic, individual, and more human. Stories of experience can generate the complicated conversation that is required to answer this question. The unique historical, environmental, and individual context that is preserved and celebrated in stories of experience can provide a response. Yet, we have to develop our receptiveness and responsiveness to hear it.

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³ "What knowledge is of most worth?" was originally published by Spencer (1860) with the answer of "the knowledge of sciences". This canonical curriculum question has taken on a broader meaning over time with Pinar's (2023) reiteration of questioning the crisis of education in relation to corporate and technological domination.

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