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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of 'Education and Psychology

AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF A MANAGER EXPERIENCING
PROFESSIONAL TRANSITION

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Change

by

Jean Ann Larson

December 2011

Kenneth L. Murrell, DBA – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Jean Ann Larson

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

I lovingly dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Robert, and my daughters Danielle and Natalie whose loving support made this learning adventure possible. Also, to all my many colleagues (you know who you are!) along the way, past and present, thank you for your words of encouragement and our many lengthy discussions that allowed me to think out loud and reflect upon and clarify my thinking and my learning. I couldn't have done any of this without you.

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I'd like to acknowledge the appreciative approach taken by my dissertation committee who made this a deeper and richer product. In addition, I would like to acknowledge and offer up gratitude for the teaching, love and acceptance from my vision quest guides at Heron Walk: Sandy Maase and Sherry Pilon. I had no idea at the time how this experience would impact my research and my life.

VITA

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EDUCATION

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2010 – Present	Vice President, Clinical and Quality Services – Children’s Medical Center, Dallas Texas	<p>Established the organization’s first enterprise project management office (EPMO) responsible for budget recovery initiatives to save \$50 million annually. Working to integrate the quality division functions including Performance Improvement and Transformation, Accreditation, Quality Review and Healthcare Informatics. Successfully led and helped improve employee satisfaction while reducing costs within clinical services – including the departments of laboratory, radiology, clinical nutrition and PM&R</p>
2001 – 2010	Chief Learning Officer Wm. Beaumont Hospital System Royal Oak, Michigan	<p>Established and led the organization’s Corporate University, driving leadership and employee development, employee engagement and organizational development. Oversaw talent and succession management for the 18K employee health system. Served as a key member of the hospital acquisition / transition team. Performed on-site consultations, executive team development, coursework creation, systems training and on-line learning. Directed a curriculum development team that provided several certification programs.</p>
1997-2001	Assistant Hospital Director Wm. Beaumont Hospital System Royal Oak, Michigan	<p>Owned responsibility for Management Systems, Management Engineering, Decision Support, Finance, Medical Information Services, Medical Transcription, Medical Library and Telecommunications, as well as functional responsibility for hospital information systems and service line management</p>

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Board Certified Health Care Executive in the American College of Health Care Executives (FACHE)
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ABSTRACT

This autoethnographic case study explores how one manager navigated a period of significant professional transition as a senior healthcare executive. The intent is to study how “managerial leaders”, which is Peter Vaill’s (1996) definition of managers of people and organizations, can transition and develop behaviors and ways of thinking and being, in order to stay effective and learn and grow while experiencing significant changes. The study focuses on behaviors, practices and conditions that can be employed during times of transition in order to enable learning and professional development from the experience of transition.

Using an autoethnographic approach, the case study explores on a much deeper level a journey through professional transition and its potential to impact growth and development. Though each person’s experiences are unique to his and her journey through life, the intent is to share these findings in order to inform other managers as they go through professional transition while furthering the knowledge within the conceptual framework of transition and human development.

The design of the study examines my personal experiences, observations, conversations with others and reflections upon a professional transition as told through journals and artifacts, while being framed by an analysis of the literature in order to derive meaning and help explore my ability to develop during that time. As part of this autoethnographical study, the literature review played a key role in helping me to frame and make sense of my own experiences of professional transition and development. The literature review explores the overlap and interrelationship between transition and development during a professional transition. The theoretical framework is based on the literature of transition as described by Bridges (2001) and Kübler-Ross (1997). As an extension of transition leading to growth and learning, there is a brief review of several models of human development including Loevinger’s (1976, 1983) model of ego

development, Cook-Greuter's (2000, 2002, 2004) ego development stages, Torbert & Associates' (2004) action logics and Wilber's (2000b) integral model of human development. These models provided a framework upon which I could better explore and understand my own ability to develop, learn and grow during my own professional transition experience.

Keywords: Autoethnography, Autoethnographical study, professional transition, human development, personal growth, senior healthcare executive, stages of human development.

Chapter 1. My Lived Experience and the Purpose of the Study

This autoethnographic case study explored how I as a manager and executive experienced and developed during periods of significant professional transition. My purpose was to uncover behaviors, practices and conditions that can be employed during times of transition in order to be able to learn and develop from the experience of transition as opposed to becoming undone by it.

Issue and Context

It is cliché to say that the only constant is change, but it is true in all places and all industries. Managers will experience many changes providing many opportunities for transition throughout their careers whether they change jobs, change industries, change companies or just change positions at the same company. The more capable and flexible we can be in our experiences of professional transition, the more likely we are to succeed at having a rewarding career where we can contribute across our lifetime. What's more, if we can use the transition periods to learn and grow, the more value we will be able to contribute to our families, organizations, our communities and the world at large.

In Friedman's (2005) *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, he writes about economic shifts and bifurcations in societies around the globe. We hear about the impact on companies, regions, and countries. A recent *Time* article entitled, "The Decade From Hell," (Serwer, 2009) chronicles the unforeseen events of the 2000s illustrating the changes and misfortunes, as well as some good news, that occurred over our current past decade. Per Spiral Dynamics (Beck & Cowan, 2006) and other authors (Friedman, 2005; Ramo, 2009; Vaill, 1996), these significant changes are to be expected and will continue indefinitely and persistently. Thus, it continues to be important for us to hone the human capacity to grow and develop under turbulent

settings. But what as individual managers can we learn about from our experiences in times of change and transition? The intent of this study was to explore and unearth clues that will help managers learn and development as they grapple with change and the transitions required by the changes that they will inevitably face.

Though it seems that all around us change is inevitable and continuous, we often seem unprepared to accept it and even shocked and surprised when our normal routines and assumptions are disrupted. Ken Murrell (2007) notes that currently there is a perfect storm scenario based on natural and planetary changes impacting us at the same time we have tremendous political instability, and turmoil occurring simultaneously within a global economic system that is going through a level and pace of change never seen before. Peter Vaill (1996) describes this unprecedented change as a state of being in “permanent white water.” Paul Tillich (1952) in *The Courage to Be* even suggests that this white water is a blessing because it gets us out of our comfort zone and pushes us to learn and grow. All of us as managers, professionals, parents, friends and family members are and will continue to be affected by these changes ensuring that there will be more and more transitions for us to experience, learn from, and move through. On the other hand, if we simply find the change and transition “stressful,” it has the potential to harm us if not destroy us. There are many business and self-help books that talk about the need to change, transition, and learn from these experiences. They often sound trite and describe a fixed linear process. But how many of us have actually deeply explored these concepts while living them? The intent of this autoethnographic study was to explore how we can learn and grow during professional transition while at the same time maintaining our ability to stay effective and provide essential organizational leadership that is needed now more than ever.

As such, the study was a review and analysis of a personalized account of a healthcare executive experiencing a professional transition that involved leaving an

organization after 23 years of employment at that same institution. For an overview of the sequence of events, see Appendix A - Chronology. Due to the impact of the economy on the region and my employer, I perceived that my future there was limited. I not only left my employer in order to escape a difficult regional economy, I moved across the country and took a very different type of position with another organization. My autoethnographic journaling during that time provides an insider perspective as to what I was observing, feeling, and how I was deriving meaning, learning and developing as a manager and as an individual. It is my intent that my experience and the reflection upon that experience will enable other managers and executives in the midst of professional transitions to reflect upon their own experience of transition in order to help them use the experience to grow professionally and further their own development.

My Lived Experience

My lived experience and the case study that is in effect my story of transition was the basis for the analysis. As an autoethnography, it allowed for a deeper exploration of the impact of professional transition upon an executive's ability to learn and grow.

Executive with a large health system. I came of age and became a healthcare executive with an organization that appealed to my need to add value to my community and to the world. I was proud to say that I worked there. I had started out as an internal consultant and then worked my way up the organizational ladder taking on more responsibility while learning and feeling challenged. I had served as a manager, assistant director, director, and an administrator with a variety of experiences. I had used the path up the career ladder to transition and learn and grow. However, it seemed that though some of the transitions had been bittersweet in the past, none of them had prepared me for what I was to face in the time period this study covers. Most of my prior job changes were seen as positive and allowed me to take on more responsibility.

Unfortunately, at the end of my career with the large health system, my role required me to downsize over half of my team. These changes led me to see myself and my role differently. I knew I had to make decisions about who I was and where I wanted to go.

Changes causing the transition. As a senior executive in a large health system in the upper Midwest during the recent economic recession, I had a unique perspective to observe, practice, change my behavior and reflect on how I learn in my day-to-day situations. In addition, when the study began I was engaged in the job search that would take me to a new city, a new organization and a new role. Through this study I gained a better understanding and insight of how I learn, adapt and change my behaviors as a manager to be successful while transitioning through several roles. Given the most intense time of change for a manager is when he or she transitions to new roles (Nicholson, 1984), understanding how a manager can learn in order to be successful and effective in those roles is worthy of further exploration. This study explored through this autoethnographic case, how managers can learn and develop during transition.

In 2008 and 2009 the US automotive industry came to a crash (Katz, 2010) within the larger global financial system downturn. Two of the formerly “big three” US-based automotive firms declared bankruptcy and required a government bailout. This was unthinkable even two to three years earlier. As recently as 2008 the region where I was living was bullish on the area’s future in general and the automotive industry specifically (Grimes, 2009). Given that the region was in the eye of the automotive industry meltdown storm, we were impacted by the global economic crisis almost immediately. Unemployment and home foreclosure indices seemed to creep up every week until the state had the highest unemployment rate of 15% while our formerly “booming” county had over 20% unemployment with a nearby major city experiencing more than 30% unemployment (“Regional and State Employment and Unemployment

Summary," 2009). We read these types of statistics every week in newspapers around the world – whether in North America or beyond. But what does it mean to the individuals living it? When the economy suddenly crashes, how do managers learn, adapt and manage in these times of on-going transition?

Given that the automotive industry viewed healthcare providers as just another supplier of goods and services, as the automotive industry's fortunes fell, so fell the fortunes of all of the local health care systems. And, as has been observed about organisms (Adams, 2007; Capra, 1996) in their capacity to optimize themselves to their environment, organizations similarly do the same by optimizing their organization structure and mechanisms around their local environment and situation. Thus, our healthcare system had performed optimally and took advantage of an automotive-based industry that provided generous health care benefits long after other areas of the country had begun to rein in costs and slow down the growth of health care benefits to employees and retirees. We built our strategies and success around the assumption of indefinitely generous healthcare benefits in a growing employer and patient base. As employers began laying off employees en masse or going out of business or leaving the state, these assumptions suddenly did not hold true.

What is my role in this situation? As a senior health care executive, and as a doctoral student in organization change, I had a front row seat in order to observe and participate in what was occurring around me as the economy changed and as my life and the lives of people around me were affected. As I was also an actor in this situation, my goal was to make sense of what was going on around me in order to learn and determine what behaviors or ways of thinking and learning that I could bring to the forefront to help myself find a way through the transition in order to adapt, learn and grow. Specifically, I wanted to understand what I was learning as an executive and

manager going through a disruptive change that could help me adapt, change my practice, learn, and grow in order to move to a new role in the new organization in a new city. Historically, I had always sought out learning for learning's sake. I felt that as the organization's chief learning executive, I had the very best job I could ever have for me at that time given my interests and passions. I pursued a doctorate in organization change with the blessings and letters of references from the organization's top executives. I was preparing myself to be the best learning executive that the organization could ever wish for. In the midst of this, a new situation confronted me. There was much doubt as to how much if any additional learning was desirable or affordable for the organization during economic crisis. Instead of growing my team and challenging ourselves to meet ever increasing demand, we were faced with being downsized to, at first, two thirds of our original size, then down to a team of four which represented less than one fourth of our original size. Despite still having a "job," the organization was no longer a place that I felt I wanted to stay. It was a heart breaking experience to have to dismantle a high performing team that worked so well together and had provided so much value to the organization. After 23 years, I finally realized that it was time to move on. In the meantime, I felt a strong desire for closure and to help as many of my employees as I could before I left. I wondered how I would reinvent myself in a new place and how our family would handle the move to another state. How could I learn from all of this and benefit from the many lessons that would be waiting for me? My goal was to use my new learning in order to build a bridge to be successful in a new role.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of my study was to explore my experience as a manager going through a professional transition. The intent was to explore how "managerial leaders" which is Peter Vaill's (1996) definition of managers of people and organizations, can

transition and develop behaviors and ways of thinking and being in order to stay effective and learn and grow while experiencing significant changes and transition. I liked this term “managerial leaders” as it best described my role throughout the changes and transitions that affected me. I was managing a team of people while also helping to manage and influence an organization. I often didn’t realize the influence I had upon the organization or the team until after I left. Again, the intent of this autoethnography was to explore on a much deeper level my journey through professional transition and its impact on my growth as a manager. And, though each person’s experiences are unique to his and her journey through life, the intent is to share my findings in order to inform other managers as they go through professional transition while furthering the knowledge within the conceptual framework of transition.

Research Questions

My research questions lent themselves to autoethnography. As I reviewed and began to analyze my journals, a set of questions emerged. The four major questions became: How can I explore and better understand my experience of a professional transition? How am I developing and learning as manager due to this professional transition? How can this study contribute to the literature on transition and development? How can this study help to provide insight to other managers experiencing transition?

Organization of the Remaining Chapters

As this is an autoethnographic dissertation, I have taken the liberty to organize the chapters differently than that of other dissertations. In addition, throughout the various chapters, I use a first person reflective approach unlike that used by many traditional dissertations. The reader will notice that even within chapter three, the literature review, I often reflect upon the literature and how it resonated or not with my own lived experience.

This first chapter included not only the overview of my study, it also explained who I am and my unique role and why this autoethnographic approach is a particularly fitting way to delve into my subject and research questions. Chapter two covers autoethnography, my methods and how I am doing the study and how the literature review is integrated with and informs part of the analysis. Chapter three is a preview to the analysis, and as such, has been woven together with the literature review which uses the conceptual framework of transition while discussing relevant literature on human development and learning. Chapter four includes observations and themes derived from my analysis of my journal entries against the background of the literature. Chapter five includes my findings, conclusions, recommendations, opportunities for more study, and next steps.

When I started this journey of understanding how managers can learn and grow during times of transition, I had no specific plan to use autoethnography as a methodological approach. However, I began to record my experiences during that time in a “dissertation journal” as I called it then. I also recalled the rich readings and stories from my studies of anthropology many years ago in undergraduate school. In particular, I was impressed with the lived experiences as depicted in those courses and specifically of the peoples of Latin America in my first major of Latin American studies where Lewis (1961) used ethnography to dive deeper into the experiences of an extended Mexican family living in a Mexico City slum. This type of research seemed to give me a deeper appreciation of different cultures and the lives of others. And though my life was very different from theirs, I could relate to the human emotions on levels I never experienced reading traditional research. It is my intent that readers of my work, despite different perspectives, will be able to relate to my experience of professional transition.

Within my area of change and transition in the workplace, there are a range of offerings from the highly academic studies focused on one very small specific part of

professional transition all the way through lay literature that covers very broad platitudes (Johnson & Roberts, 1999; Kotter & Rathgeber, 2006) about the need to accept or “deal with” change and transition in our lives. Using autoethnographic research based on my own experiences seems to be an opportunity to provide richer textures and deeper insights into what professional transition can represent for a fellow traveler experiencing life’s inevitable changes and professional transitions.

Chapter 2. Methods

To understand the currents of the river, he who wishes to know the truth must enter the water.

Nisargadatta Maharaj (1997)

Design

The design of this study analyzed my experiences, observations, conversations with others and reflections upon professional transition as told through journals and artifacts while being framed by an analysis of the literature in order to derive meaning and help explore my ability to develop during that time.

An overview of the autoethnographic case study. In order to study how an executive or manager such as myself can learn and build new awareness and skills during a professional transition, I used an autoethnographic case study of myself transitioning from the role of senior executive at a large health system in the Midwest US from September 2009 through October 2010 when I transitioned to an operational vice-president of a health system located in the southwest US. For an overview of the timeframes and precursors to this study, please see Appendix A – Chronology. When I started this study, and like most transitions in life, I did not know where I would end up or how it would turn out. The study includes my thoughts and feelings as I interact with others in situ and reflect upon my behavior and thoughts. My participation with others and situations is what I am observing and studying. This is what Ellis (2004) calls the “ethnographic I.”

This study may be classified as a personal narrative where the purpose is to understand the aspect of professional transition in my life as it unfolds within my broader lived experience. My goal is to share my learning and insights from my own development path as I go through the day-to-day messiness of transition. Beyond just a self-reflection upon my experiences, I used the literature in order to frame and provide a sense of

meaning around my experience. The intent of the study is to add to a deeper understanding of transition in the literature while providing insight to other professionals who are experiencing professional transition.

Ellis (2004) notes that the story can be the analysis. She further observes that “stories are the way humans make sense of their worlds. Stories are essential to human understanding and are not unique to autoethnography. Stories are the focus of Homeric literature, oral traditions, narrative analysis and fairy tales”(p. 32). She argues that stories should be both a subject and method of social science research. Ellis shares that she writes when her world falls apart or the meanings she has constructed for herself are in danger of falling apart. This certainly became the case for me as my professional identity and the economy around me seemed to be simultaneously changing dramatically. Adrienne Rich (1979) further notes that “the story of our lives, becomes our lives” (p.189). Thus, my story becomes the case or platform from which sprung the analysis.

For this first-person research study, I employed a number of different methods, including journaling, artifacts, recording of conversations and observations to understand my experience and derive meaning, exploring what, if anything, I was learning. To facilitate the reflection and learning, I adapted Argyris’ (1985) concept of the left-hand/right-hand column technique for my journal rubric. Though Argyris did not design it to be used this way, I used it as a framework for my journaling process to help me reflect on events, my observations and clearly explore actual events and observations versus my thoughts and reflections upon those events. This format and my use of it are discussed later in this chapter and an example is provided.

Qualitative research. This study is firmly rooted in qualitative research. In general, the qualitative approach is based on the philosophical orientation called phenomenology, which focuses on people's experiences from their perspective. Inquiry begins with broad, general questions about the area under investigation. Researchers seek a holistic perspective about that experience (Roberts, 2004). Qualitative researchers look at the essential character or nature of something, not the quantity, (i.e. how much, how many). Qualitative research is often more emergent rather than tightly predesigned. The research questions may change and be refined as the inquirer learns what to ask and to whom it should be asked. The theory or general pattern of understanding will emerge as it begins with initial ideas and then develops into broad themes and coalesces into a grounded theory or broad interpretation.

The qualitative researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). This introspection and acknowledgement of biases, values, and interests is typical of qualitative research. The personal self becomes inseparable from the researcher self. As I explore my own professional transition as an executive from one organization to another, one role to another, one state to another, I find it hard to separate my professional and my personal being. As much as I may wish to compartmentalize at times, I am a whole person and thus must approach my research from this holistic perspective.

As a field of inquiry that crosses disciplines, fields and subject matters, qualitative research has its foundation in human sciences. Creswell (2007) describes qualitative research metaphorically as an intricate fabric made of different threads, textures, and colors. The general worldviews and perspectives are like the loom that holds the fabric together. In its postmodernism approach, qualitative research explores and examines the viewpoints of individuals and the constraints of everyday social life, personally and

more in-depth (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Yin, 2003). Qualitative research studies ideas or subjects in their natural setting to more clearly understand or interpret phenomena and what individuals bring to the situations. Creswell (2007) notes that

qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Qualitative researchers use an emerging approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. (p.16)

Described by Creswell (2003), qualitative inquiry employs different knowledge claims, strategies of inquiry, and methods of data collection and analysis. These multiple methods are interactive and humanistic and they are growing. A concern with qualitative studies is that “perhaps ...they do not have endings, only questions” (Wolcott, 1994, p. 5). And though this dissertation does have an ending in order to conclude my doctoral degree requirements, many of those endings are questions for additional research and study by me and other researchers.

Autoethnography. Autoethnography is a form of qualitative research that may be described as an attempt by an individual to explore and understand his or her experience with a particular phenomenon or issue. Autobiography and autoethnography provide us a means to bring personal lived experiences into a dialogue with theoretical perspectives (Raudenbush, 1994) making this type of approach a valuable way to study managers experiencing professional transitions.

Autoethnography is a break from an arm's length approach that divorces the writer from the experience as if maintaining a sterile field around the subject. However, Ken Gergen (2009) suggests that we “write as our full self” (p. 225) and asks, “what if we abandon the formalisms of traditional academic writing, and attempt to ‘fully be there’ for the reader (p. 226).” He suggests that instead of presenting ourselves as completely

rational beings, bounded and superior to the reader, we let our guard down and allow our humanness to shine through allowing ourselves to express desire, emotion and bodily sensation. Given that my experience is what informs me in this study and relationships with others are what sustain me and others moving through transition, it seems natural that I bring my full self to this study. As Alexander Fleck (1957) says, "One must know before one can see"(p. 27). This quote along with a Spanish proverb illustrates why I, as a manager experiencing a professional transition can provide some insight on this topic. I am in the proverbial bullring: "Talking about bulls is not the same thing as being in the bullring" (Spanish proverb).

The origins of autoethnography arise in the field of anthropology and the ways in which anthropologists wrote ethnographies of their own people (Muncey, 2010). Hayano, (as cited in Muncey, 2010) was one of the first authors who referred to autoethnography in academic literature. He developed his own initial criteria for autoethnography used in anthropology which can be described as having prior knowledge of the people, their culture and language and the ability to be accepted to some degree or to pass as a native member. As a manager personally experiencing professional transition and having been in a similar type of position for over 20 years, arguably I, as the autoethnographic researcher in my study meet these criteria.

The case study. With a long and respected history as a research method, the case study is recognized across many social science disciplines (Creswell, 2003). Yin (2003) describes case study as explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive in its approach. It provides the researcher a boundary from which to explore a case or multiple cases within a context or event (Creswell, 2007). The type of case study is determined by the size of the bounded case and how many individuals, also referred to as cases, are involved in a specific event. There are three variations that distinguish case study

classifications: (a) an intrinsic case study is a single, collective, or multiple case study that informs more about the particular case, (b) an instrumental case study is one bounded case that illustrates the issue or concern and informs beyond the specific case, and (c) a collective case study is one issue or concern that studies multiple cases which illustrate and inform about the same issue (Creswell, 2007; Stake, 1995). While Stake (1995) posits that it is not unusual that the researcher does not make a choice among the three case study classifications, this study lent itself to the definition of an instrumental study as it was bounded within one event or concern. This particular autoethnographic case study was designed to explore the experience of one manager learning and adapting during a professional transition. The intent was to add to the academic literature while providing insight to other professionals who are or will be experiencing professional transition.

Stake (1995) notes that a case study didactically provides the researcher the opportunity to teach what has been learned through the study as well as allowing readers to discover their own learning that the researcher may or may not have included in the study. The data collection in case study research is usually extensive and relies on multiple sources of information such as observations, interviews, documents and audiovisual materials (Creswell, 2007). Yin (2003), for example, recommends six types of information to collect: documents, interviews, archival records, direct observations, participant observations, and physical artifacts. This study's data included two types of journals, personal correspondence and conversations, organizational emails and news articles as well as direct observations.

Data Collection

Data collection tools may vary greatly in autobiographical studies. To ensure proper validity in an autoethnography, Feldman (2003) developed four criteria upon

which data collection are based. Those criteria are: (a) Provide clear and detailed descriptions of how we collected data and make explicit what counts as data in our work; (b) Provide clear and detailed descriptions of how we constructed the representation from our data. What specifics about the data led us to make this assumption? (c) Extend triangulation beyond multiple sources of data to include explorations of multiple ways to represent the same self-study; (d) Provide evidence that the research changed or evolved the educator and summarize its value to the profession. This can convince readers of the study's significance and validity (Feldman, 2003, pp. 27-28).

Sources of data.

Journals. My journal entries highlighted the significance of the professional changes and transition that occurred for me as a manager experiencing professional transition. The data from the journals provided a set of observations and themes to organize the content of the journals. Issues of professional identity, concerns for family, loved ones and colleagues, and contextual issues emerged from the content. The findings from the data were analyzed to provide insight into a professional transition that seeks to account for personal changes and possible growth. During the course of the study, I used two different approaches to the journaling process. Below I describe my journaling approaches.

Argyris' right-hand/left-hand column journal. As mentioned earlier, I repurposed Argyris' (1985) concept of the Right-Hand/Left Hand Column for my main journal. In order to do this, I set up a template in Microsoft OneNote under the header of "dissertation journal" where I used Argyris' left-hand/right-hand column approach to recording a conversation or my observations of a situation. In the left-hand column, I recorded my observations of situations at work and throughout my day. In the right-hand

column, I wrote my reactions to and reflections upon those observations. Argyris' left-hand, right-hand journal was designed to help individuals reflect on encounters with others in situations that might be controversial or emotional. It has also been used to help explore what might be unstated or hidden from the participants in an encounter or conversation. In the left-hand column, the writer records his or her and the other speaker's exact words during the conversation. In the right-hand side, the writer records his or her thoughts during this point in the conversation. This technique helps us uncover our own "stories" about situations and helps us separate what was actually said versus our perceptions of what was said.

In the past, I had used the technique during difficult conversations in my career and it helped me sort out what was actually said, versus whatever real or imagined issues and biases I might have brought to the table. During those times this approach helped me reframe the "story" I was telling myself or even provide alternative perspectives about that story. Given that experience, adapting the journal to help me with my autoethnographic journey provided me a deeper reflection and analysis of the experience and emerging themes.

This approach also serves as a bit of my own private Johari window exercise. The Johari process asks me to further explore my data versus that of others as I explore the window of learning through transition. Luft (1961) and colleagues used the Johari window metaphor to help describe four quadrants of awareness where quadrant one is the part of ourselves that we see and that others see as well. Quadrant two is the quadrant called the blind area where others are aware of behaviors that we are not aware of. Quadrant three is the hidden area which includes those thoughts, behaviors and things that we are aware of but do not share with others due to sensitivity such as embarrassment or fear. Argyris' left-hand/right hand column technique is an approach to uncover these hidden areas. Quadrant four is the quadrant of mystery where neither we

nor others are aware of our behaviors or motives. Though it is difficult to fully uncover quadrant three, the reflection and the journaling helped me further explore my own behaviors and others' reactions to my behavior. And as with any research subject, my own privacy deserves to be respected in order to protect my sense of being and to preserve my dignity as an individual. Thus there will be portions of "quadrant three" in this autoethnography that will not be discussed or explored in this document.

My intent in using the LH/RH approach was to adapt it as a journaling tool that would enable me to separate out my observations of what I was seeing, reading and hearing from what my feelings and reactions were to those observations. Often times, the reflection upon the observation within the journaling process would help me reframe or see that situation from different perspectives which in turn helped me learn and grow. It enabled me to do this by helping me clarify what I observed or what was said, versus how I was interpreting or making meaning from the event or conversation. Common themes began to emerge across several different events and timeframes. Also, it enabled me to understand that there were many different ways to interpret what I was experiencing. It helped me better appreciate that "it is all invented" (Zander & Zander, 2000) or socially constructed (Balogun & Johnson, 2004), and therefore, I had choices in how I reacted and acted moving forward. So, though Argyris' right-hand/left-hand column concept was intended for something different than what I adapted it for, I found the concept helpful as I recorded and reflected upon my experiences in transition.

Long hand journal. In addition to this OneNote-based left-hand/ right-hand column journal, and often concurrently, I kept a journal written in long hand. I had started this journal as I began to explore what learning experience I would design as part of a doctoral course requirement for the "Learning Outside Your Culture" – EDOC 768 course. This journal was a free, unbounded and loosely structured journal of my

thoughts and reflections, first on the experiences leading up to, during and after a vision quest experience that I undertook to fulfill the requirements of that course. A large part of that experience was learning about how I transition into, exist within, and then transition out of an experience that was not within a normal comfort zone for me. The website of the group that organized the vision quest described it as follows:

The Sacred Ceremony is used to find purpose and commitment; to seek direction between careers; to regain passion for life; when faced with a crisis; or simply when there is a sense of dis-ease. The vision quest is a time alone in nature fasting from all things familiar, reflecting on our life choices. The quest has the potential to bring insights and is a process of getting to know one's self. (Masse, 2008, p. 6)

I soon began to realize through my journaling and as I wrote my dissertation that living that experience was the best preparation that I had for my professional transition. Also, the experiential themes that cycled through the vision quest: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual, provided me another lens that I could experience, reflect upon and through which I could view my professional transition.

Artifacts. Other data I collected included email messages, correspondence to and from others, notes on personal conversations, corporate news briefings as well as news articles from various sources. These sources provided documentation and insights that helped frame my transition within a certain timeframe in some cases, and at other times the artifacts served as guide points that helped me to clarify the meaning of what I was experiencing. A combination of these items and my observations led me to further reflect upon my options and either take new actions or not.

Timeframe. This autoethnographic case study is based on my experience as described in Chapter 1 as a manager and executive during a professional transition during the 2008-2010 economic down turn. The timeframe studied begins in September of 2009 and ends in October of 2010. I selected this somewhat artificial timeframe as it

represented points in the journey from where I decided that I needed to make a significant professional change – and was open to the thought – through the point at which I relocated to a new state and was four months into a new position in a new organization. However, similar to my vision quest experience, transition began and continued even when the main event or specified period was before me or behind me. This timeframe allowed me to explore my learning and adapting during a time of great transition, using the philosophical underpinnings of action science and ethnography. My data included approximately 208 electronic journal pages and 202 written journal notes. It also included well over 50 artifacts. Given that the entries are highly personal in nature, only selected excerpts will be provided in order to illustrate my approach to my research and the development of my observations, themes, analysis and findings. For an overview of the sequence of events and changes going on around me that anchored this study, please see Appendix A – Chronology.

Ethical Considerations

Though autoethnography does not generally involve “human subjects’ research” and as such does not require IRB approval, it does often provide a deep level of disclosure for the author. Obviously, the author can choose what to share or not to share. However, it generally requires a certain level of courage to write autoethnographically as a researcher (Ellis, 2004). Research generally requires that the author “do no harm” to the participants, but it is interesting to consider who is at risk with an autoethnographic study. Muncey (2010) notes that none of us lives in a vacuum and it is important to keep in mind that autoethnographers can put themselves at risk. I certainly found myself concerned for my privacy as I shared my journal entries during this time of transition and learning and that feeling of vulnerability was a constant companion. As I included conversations with colleagues and even discussions at formal

and informal meetings, I emphasized the impact on myself and my experience with transition rather than identifying who said what. My main concerns included not causing unintentional harm to my current or past organization or any of my colleagues as well as not jeopardizing my current or future career opportunities.

Muncey (2010) further argues that since the researchers allow themselves to be vulnerable, they must provide themselves with appropriate support mechanisms. She warns that producing autoethnographic text will invite critical review by an audience. Bruni (2002) argues that it is ultimately the researcher who is responsible for what is ethical. She also challenges us to ask the following questions about autoethnographic research:

How is the autoethnographer positioned and by whom? What are the ethical dilemmas generated by various positioning? What are the implications of these dilemmas for the conduct of autoethnographical work? Are certain types of research deemed to be out of bounds? (p. 24)

In response to these questions I offer the following. In terms of how I was positioned in this study, I described my unique role as a professional within my organizations during the time frame studied in Chapter One of this dissertation. Some ethical dilemmas included the need to protect my colleagues, the organizations of which I have been part of, as well as myself. The implications of these dilemmas included the need to balance protection of myself, colleagues and the organizations against the need to write a deep, rich, narrative to meet the needs of my research study and my audiences. With respect to this study, since I choose what to disclose or not to disclose, I am purposely selecting data which are not out of bounds. However, as stated before, I needed to be very deliberate about not harming my organization, my colleagues or myself even unintentionally.

Ellis (2004) writes that the autoethnographer must also be self-aware in order to not be self-indulgent. In the heat of a situation, this can be a challenge. However, my

left-hand/right-hand column style of writing and reflection helped to mitigate this. My left hand column focused me outward on what I was observing and hearing around me. The right hand column focused me inward on my interpretations and thoughts about the events. The process helped me separate observations from what I was thinking and feeling about these observations. It challenged me to find other and even deeper interpretations of the meanings of my experiences and my reactions to those experiences. Ultimately, it must be noted that this study was about professional transition, not me as a professional – albeit it highlighted my experience with professional transition and made it the foundation of the autoethnographic case study.

Human Subject Considerations (non-human subjects)

This autoethnographic study did not involve any other human subjects in ways outside of normal work routines so it did not require Institutional Review Board Approval. It did however; require that I fill out a Non-human subjects research form. As mentioned earlier, my journals included notes from conversations and formal and informal discussions with others and my reflections and reactions to those encounters. However, I did not cite names or details about any of the individuals involved in order to protect them, myself and the organizations of which I have been a part. As appropriate, as in the case of close colleagues, I refer to them in general terms as a close friend or colleague to further protect their identities so that they cannot be identified by their first names. This approach was intended to minimize any readers' speculations about whom I was writing.

Data Analysis

The analysis of autoethnographic data begins the moment the researcher perceives the information. In an autoethnography the analysis of data is an ongoing event, developing and crystallizing over time. With each re-reading of my personal

journals, each examination of a written artifact and with further introspection and self-analysis, the process and clarity of the research was enriched. Thus, the gathering and analysis of data went hand-in-hand as theories and themes emerged during the study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). The reflection involved by the researcher consistently shaped and formed the description and sensemaking of the experiences of the researcher within my self-study.

Ellis and Bochner (2000) assert that the analysis of data in a personal narrative involves a process where the researcher emotionally recalls the events of the past. The researcher looks back on specific, memorable episodes and experiences paying particular attention to the emotions and physical surroundings during the recollection. Emotional recall is expressed through writing that includes thoughts, events, dialogue, and physical details of the particular event. A unique aspect of a qualitative study is the ability of the researcher to let the data emerge as the research and writing is progressing. In the initial phases of my study it was not always clear what distinct themes would emerge. As noted by Janesick (2000), “the qualitative researcher uses inductive analysis, which means that categories, themes, and patterns come from the data. The categories that emerge from field notes, documents and interviews are not imposed prior to data collection” (p. 389).

Designing the data analysis and validation. There can be many challenges in designing the data analysis approach to qualitative research and particularly autoethnographic, first-person based research. Grundy and Kemmis (1981) suggest that it is during the reflective part of the action research (AR) cycle that data analysis begins to occur. This reflective stage provides the practitioner with important insights and new learning to enable him or her to change behavior and/or move the AR cycle forward. The practitioner is the sole interpreter of the data. However, in order to better understand my

insights and new learning, I found it helpful to discuss my findings with others experiencing similar transitions. Reflections upon these conversations can be found throughout my journals. As French (2009) notes,

The interpretation of others is vitally important because they may provide insights that are not obvious to the lone practitioner. The term “triangulation” has been appropriated to refer to the cross referencing of a number of participants’ perceptions of an event or interpretation. Triangulation allows for the sharing of real insight and learning. (p. 197)

I certainly found this to be the case for my study. I was hesitant to begin a job search to leave a position and organization for me that at one time seemed perfect. However, as I was able to confide in and discuss my observations of the economic and organizational issues I was seeing with a trusted colleague, I was able to confirm my reactions and begin planning the next steps toward a job search. Essentially, these conversations gave me the courage and confidence to transition through the changes I was experiencing.

Analysis plan. After attempting to categorize the data around themes, I realized that there was no one way to categorize or code data, but that it is ever changing and very fluid. It could vary from one day to the next, so making a determination about the most likely place the data would fit proved to be an arduous and sometimes confusing task. My own constructs of the context were enhanced and more informed as my reviews of the data increased. This greater understanding can be attributed to what Guba and Lincoln (1989) refer to as ontological authenticity – an understanding derived about the researcher’s own point of view.

My approach to the analysis included a thorough reading and cataloging of my journals in order to immerse myself in the data. I first completed a thorough reading of the journals in their entirety. This exercise gave me a more complete overview of the transition period and provided vivid details of the joys, trials and tribulations I

experienced. Using colored tags and markers I then began grouping the observations by using an inductive method in order to create categories or themes. Initial categories included a sorting of journal entries into Bridges (2001, 2004) three larger phases of transition: ending and separating from my old role, the neutral zone or in-between time, and entering and embracing my new role. Further readings and review of the literature on transition also enabled me to make new sense and meaning out of my stories and my experiences (Weick, 1998; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Ultimately, the observations and themes were reviewed to explore and understand how this professional transition contributed to my learning and growth as a manager.

In order to provide additional evidence that I was indeed able to use my experience of transition to learn and grow as a manager, I retook the Leadership Development Framework (LDF) Assessment (Cook-Greuter, 2004). I had originally taken it in 2007 as part of my doctoral coursework, so by taking it in 2011 I had access to a validated instrument and comparison that could be used to determine if I had developed or not during the period of professional transition. This instrument and the research behind it are discussed more in Chapter Three.

Critics of Autoethnography and This Approach

There has been much debate regarding the methodology of autoethnography and whether it constitutes scientific research. As a newer more emergent type of qualitative research, there are questions about the ability of autoethnography to provide theoretical contributions and around the methodological rigor of this type of research. However, Bansal and Corley (2011) note that a study provides a theoretical contribution when it either changes, challenges or fundamentally advances the understanding of a phenomenon. The intent of the analysis of my journals was to provide a deeper understanding of how professional transition is experienced by an executive.

Furthermore, it was my intent, through the use of my journals and reflections to be transparent about how I engaged with and experienced the phenomenon of transition through the use of rich descriptions of the data leading to my findings and conclusions.

Bansal and Corley (2011) note that:

Because discovery can be serendipitous, methodological rigor is conveyed through the authenticity and candor of the text. It is important that researchers be able to describe how they discovered their insight, and how they were able to deepen it further through extended engagement with the focal phenomenon and associated data. (p. 236)

The use of self as the only data source can also be problematic. Ellis and Bochner (2000) argue that a story could be considered scholarly if it makes the reader believe the experience is authentic, believable, and possible. The intended purpose of autoethnography is to provide the opportunity for the reader and author to become co-participants in the recorded experience (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). There are also multiple warning signs, skills and difficulties that are experienced or needed in writing ethnography, according to Ellis and Bochner (2000). Researchers must be adept at identifying pertinent details, introspection, descriptive and compelling writing, and confronting things about themselves that may be less than flattering. Also, the researcher must be able to handle the vulnerability of revealing oneself to a greater audience. The use of self as the source of data can be restrictive, yet a powerful aspect of unpacking the many layers involved in the study of a particular phenomenon or social context. In a world where empirical science is often still considered king, producing evocative writing accounts that are labeled as research can be a difficult endeavor. This study took into account the benefits and challenges of studying a cultural situation through the lens of a researcher as the primary instrument.

Limitations of Autoethnography

Autoethnography is said by some to be an avant-garde method of research. “The emergence of autoethnography and narratives of self...has not been trouble-free, and their status as proper research remains problematic” (Sparkes, 2000, p. 22). Despite the influence of postmodern thought, the academic conventions are powerful, and there is resistance to the intrusion of autobiographical approaches to knowledge production and sharing.

Because autoethnographic writings begin with the researcher’s use of the subjective self as, perhaps, the only source of data, or at least the main source of data, autoethnography has been criticized for being self-indulgent, narcissistic, introspective, and individualized (Sparkes, 2000). The focus on biography rather than formality is a concern for some, because personal experiences have the platform and are separated from other discourses in their contexts. “There is an extraordinary absence of social context, social action, and social interaction” (Atkinson, 1997, p. 339). However, the autoethnographic author is then challenged to provide that social context and to describe the value of this type of research for academia and for practitioners. In this study I have chosen to weave in the literature review and other authors’ thoughts amongst my own lived experiences.

The lack of systematic and methodological rigor is also noted as a barrier to the acceptance of autoethnography. Even for those open to qualitative inquiry, traditional criteria such as credibility, validity, dependability, and trustworthiness can be important, although not always easily applied to autoethnography (Holt, 2003). Duncan (2004), herself an autoethnographer, has noted that criticisms have been leveled at the “more experimental forms of autoethnography in which the boundaries of scholarship are merged with artistic expression as a way of challenging the limitations of what is normally accepted as knowledge in academic contexts”(p. 11). She criticized evocative

personal writing that relies on a direct emotional response from a reader rather than offering analysis, grounding in theory, and methodological rigor. In response, those who support autobiographical inquiry have argued that autoethnography is more authentic than traditional research approaches, precisely because of the researcher's use of self, the voice of the insider being truer than that of the outsider (Atkinson, Reed-Dannahay, & Anthrop, 1999). The sensibility of the use of self in research was revealed by Ellis (1991) when she asked, "Who would make a better subject than a researcher consumed by wanting to figure it all out" (p. 30)? Her frequent collaborator, Bochner (2001), objected to the assertion that a focus on self is decontextualized. Those who complain that personal narratives emphasize a single, speaking subject fail to realize that no individual voice speaks apart from a societal framework of co-constructed meaning. There is a direct and inextricable link between the personal and the cultural. Thus, intense meaning, culturally relevant personal experience, and an intense motivation to know are what typify and strengthen autoethnography (Sparkes, 2000).

Because different epistemological and ontological assumptions inform autoethnographic inquiry, it makes little sense to impose traditional criteria in judging the value of a personal text (Sparkes, 2000). It is suggested that rigorous methodology and generalizability are not necessarily that which we should attain. "Think of the life being expressed [in a narrative] not merely as data to be analyzed and categorized but as a story to be respected and engaged...we shouldn't prematurely brush aside the particulars to get to the general" (Bochner, 2001, p. 132). Frank (2000) noted that those who criticize the rigor of personal narrative are missing the point. "Maybe the point is not to engage [narrative] systematically but to engage it personally" (p. 355). In judging narratives, then, we should "seek to meet literary criteria of coherence, verisimilitude, and interest" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 11). In other words, "Does this account

work for us? Do we find it to be believable and evocative on the basis of our own experiences” (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1998, p. 529)?

Methods to Ensure Validity

There are many ways to determine the validity of a study. There are also challenges to ensuring validity in this type of autoethnographic research as is the case with qualitative research when the reader is looking for traditional measures of validity that might be seen in quantitative studies. Patton (2002) notes that the credibility of a qualitative study depends on the use of rigorous methods of fieldwork, on the credibility of the researcher as well as a “fundamental appreciation of naturalistic inquiry, qualitative methods, inductive analysis, purposeful sampling, and holistic thinking” (pp. 552-553). Locke, Silverman, and Spirduso (2004) note that there are two generic issues in designing all types of research and they are the characteristics of *validity* and *reliability*. Validity generally means the “condition of being true” and there are two aspects of validity – internal validity and external validity. Internal validity asks if the findings tells the truth about the question posed by the study while external validity asks if the findings tell the truth about the research question when applied outside of the current study (Locke et al., 2004, pp. 125-126).

External validity in this type of qualitative, autoethnographic study is determined differently and is used to determine whether the findings and conclusions are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, participants and readers. Terms such as “trustworthiness,” “authenticity,” and “credibility” speak to this idea (Creswell, 2003). Creswell (2003) mentions several strategies that may be used in qualitative research that can help ensure the accuracy or validity of the findings. This study used at least four of these strategies. First, it was my intent to use *rich, descriptive writing* to help convey my findings and take my readers into my experience with professional transition and

perhaps touch on some common experiences that they may have shared or be sharing. Secondly, I *clarified the bias* that I bring to this study. As it was an autoethnographic study, it was important that I conveyed my own role and self-reflection in order that the reader perceives an open and honest discussion of my experience with professional transition. Thirdly, I attempted to make sure to *present discrepant information and other perspectives* both from the literature and my conversations with colleagues experiencing transition. A fourth strategy described by Creswell, *spending prolonged time in the field*, is one of the strengths of my autoethnographic research. By my study of my own lived experience with professional transition, I by definition “spent prolonged time in the field.” I have also used *peer debriefing* and *member-checking* to a lesser extent as I have recorded my conversations with colleagues on similar journeys of professional transition.

Ellis (2004) feels that in autoethnographic work, validity should be viewed in terms of what happens to the readers as well as to the research participants and researchers. It evokes in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible. It helps readers communicate with others different from themselves or offer a way to improve the lives of the participants and readers – or even that of the researcher. Readers can provide theoretical validation if they are able to relate to what is written and compare and contrast how their lives are similar or different from ours and possible reasons why (Ellis, 2004).

Qualitative studies by their nature cannot always be easily replicated because the real world changes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) and how we view the world also changes. Clifford’s (1986) resolution of the problem lies with his belief that “culture is contested, temporal, and emergent.” In this sense, truth is relative, depends on the reader’s perspective and always subject to interpretation. The ethnographer is generating data through recording observations that depicts the author responding to the experiences and conversations with others. The validity of the data generated is its

existence. At the end of the day, a description of a personal experience and our reflections upon that experience comprise our own real truth.

This study built upon on the tradition of observations in the field and particularly on the work of Mintzberg (1973, 2009) and Sune Carlson(1951), a Swedish professor who first studied managers by observing them in their day-to-day work. However, by using a qualitative approach, autoethnography in particular, I was able to deeply explore my experience as a manager in my day-to-day work going through a significant professional transition. Gergen (2009) talks about the value of qualitative research, and particularly autoethnography where it allows the “people” – in this case the researcher – to speak for herself within the case study. Torbert (1981) also argues that self-study can improve managerial and organizational effectiveness. As I also explored my own personal and professional development as part of this study, improving my effectiveness was a personal and research goal.

Transition in one’s life is very personal and very visceral. It affects us mentally, emotionally and physically, making it challenging phenomena to explore and understand. If we look at Wilber’s (2000a) four corners of the Kosmos, and use autoethnography as a research framework, we can attempt to avoid flatlanding the experience of transition. Wilber talks about the need for science and research to be more holistically rigorous about studying a situation. We have to explore not only third-person observations (its), we also have to take into account the social system (its), the cultural system (we) as well as the interior individual (I). The design of this study explored predominately the first-person perspective but also tapped into the literature to provide second and third person views to help me as the researcher, consider different perspectives and derive deeper meaning and learning from the experience of professional transition. Also, my right-hand, left-hand journaling approach helped me explore my experience in a more holistic way. Specifically, my left-hand column recorded third person observations (its) and the

social system (it) while my right hand column notes focus on me as the interior individual (I) with the cultural system (we) overlapping both columns.

Transition to the Literature Review

As part of this autoethnographical study, the literature review played a key role in helping me to frame and make sense of my own experiences of professional transition and development. At times my journaling, reflections and the reading I was doing for the literature review seemed to comingle. Often an experience would lead me more deeply into the literature. At other times, an author or article would cause me to journal and reflect upon a current issue in my own transition.

Chapter 3. Literature Review and Analysis

A change occurs in our life such as a natural disaster, loss of a job, a health crisis or injury, or a life phase change, e.g. becoming a parent or an empty nester. At this point, we are faced with an opportunity and perhaps a choice or fork in the road. We may not even be aware of the choice before us. We can begin the potential journey known as transition, or not. Some of us will make that journey but many of us will not. And within that journey of transition, some of us will grow and develop while others will not. This autoethnographic case study of my professional transition and subsequent development explored these phenomena with the hope that the findings would resonate with others on similar journeys and that the findings would help build on the existing literature dealing with transition and development. From a societal and global view, this study may also contribute in a humble way to providing new frames and perspectives to humans and organizations as they transition and deal with the inevitable change going on around us.

Overview and Purpose of the Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review was to explore the human experience of transition focusing on managers' experiences in professional transitions. The literature review along with my research sought to determine if there are particular enablers and obstacles that help us or prevent us from learning and developing from our own transitions. The research approach I took was an autoethnographic case study based upon my lived experience as a healthcare executive experiencing professional transition in my own career.

Focus and Scope of the Literature Review

Given my research questions, I focused my literature review on the topic of transitions. Though there is also a larger body of literature around the broader topic of

change and how humans experience it, the theoretical framework of transition seemed most appropriate for this study. The literature review explores the overlap and interrelationship between transition and development during a professional transition. It discusses change, how humans potentially experience transition because of change, and how that body of knowledge intersects with how a manager may develop during times of professional transition. The theoretical framework was based on the literature of transition as described by Bridges (2001) and Kübler-Ross (1997). As an extension of transition leading to growth and learning, I also do a brief review of a couple of models of human development that most seemed to help me make sense of my own development. As I explored this area, I did a fairly extensive review which is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, for the interested reader or researcher, I have included it in Appendix B as it helped me with my own learning. Some of the models that informed my research include Loevinger's (1976, 1983) model of ego development, Cook-Greuter's (2000, 2002, 2004) ego development stages, Torbert & Associates (2004) action logics and Wilber's (2000b) integral model of human development. These models provided me a framework upon which I could better understand my own ability to develop, learn and grow during my own professional transition experience.

Definitions

Key terms used in this study are discussed in more depth later in this chapter. However, as a point of reference, here is a brief summary of a few of the key terms and the definitions that I use in this study. First of all, this study distinguishes between change and transition. Change is an external event that happens outside of us and outside of our control (Breu & Benwell, 1999; Bridges, 2001). We may or may not transition because of the change. However, transition is our internal response to that

change and involves how we process and deal with that change (Bridges, 2001, 2004).

According to Bridges (2001):

Transition is the process of letting go of the way things used to be and then taking hold of the way they subsequently become. In between the letting go and the taking hold again, there is a chaotic but potentially creative “neutral zone” when things aren't the old way, but aren't really a new way yet either. This three-phase process - ending, neutral zone, beginning again - is transition. (p. 2)

A definition of learning that that I use for this research comes from Vaill's (1996) book, entitled *Learning as a Way of Being* which defines learning as “changes a person makes in himself or herself that increase the know-why/or the know-what and/or the know-how the person possesses with respect to a given subject.” Because I am also referencing Wilber's (2000b) integral model of human development, I am using his definition of development. In *No Boundary*, Wilber (2001) defines growth (development) as an “enlarging and expanding of one's horizons, a growth of one's boundaries, outwardly in perspective and inwardly in depth” (p. 13).

I am using qualitative action research methods for this study. Specifically, I am using autoethnography which may be described as an attempt by an individual to explore and understand his or her experience with a particular phenomenon or issue. Autoethnography provides us a means to bring personal lived experiences into a dialogue with theoretical perspectives (Raudenbush, 1994) making it a useful way to study managers experiencing professional transitions in a valuable way.

Transition and Transition Theory

The literature and various theoretical frameworks concur that transition processes occur when life's circumstances or relationships change. Transitions entail change and adaptation, in areas such as developmental, personal, relationships, situations, socio-cultural or environmental changes, but not all change results in transition. Life crises and loss experiences may force change and adaptation. Common

to these experiences, is the dislocation, disorientation and disruption caused to the person's life and the need for them to locate new ways of living and being in the world that incorporate the changes (Kralik, Visentin, & Van Loon, 2006).

Transitions are different than changes in that they are not events, but rather the “inner reorientation and self-redefinitions” that people go through in order to incorporate change into their life (Bridges, 2004, p. xii). Most authors in a literature review by Kralik et al. (2006) describe transition as not only a passage or movement, but also a time of inner reorientation and or transformation.

Kralik et al. (2006) describe Van Gennepe's (1960) three-phase approach to transition. Working in France in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Van Gennepe made a significant contribution to ethnography and anthropology. He understood life as a continuous cycle of death and rebirth, what he called the law of regeneration, and from his observations of traditional societies, he proposed that individuals within a society move between fixed positions or events such as birth, childhood, marriage and death. Central to his analysis was not necessarily the nature of the position or status held by the person, but the process(es) involved in acquiring the new status. What he felt was critical was the passage or movement between positions. In observing movement across these positions, he suggested that a common pattern was discernible, which recurred irrespective of the event. He described this pattern in terms of three phases of separation, transition or limen, and incorporation. Van Gennepe called this schema “rites de passage.” Passage is perhaps more accurately translated as transition and schema as pattern, so the three phases constitute the pattern of rites of transition. First, preliminary rites or rites of separation are characterized by removal or separation of the individual from their normal social life. Second, liminal rites or during transition consist of states of confusion and a sense of being in no man's land. Third, post liminal rites occur when the individual comes back and is reincorporated into

society. This explanation from an anthropological frame resonates with me as these patterns of transition could have been culled from my vision quest experience that I undertook as part of my doctoral studies in the summer of 2008. For the vision quest experience, I first separated myself from all the trappings of myself and my familiar surroundings and props as a person. I went alone into the forest with no food or shelter except for water and blankets. The four and a half days of fasting from all familiar things felt very much like “no man’s land.” Lastly, I walked out of the forest and had to figure out how to reintegrate myself in my old world away from nature and then back into my familiar roles of wife, mother and learning executive. I recall how difficult it was to leave the outdoors even to get into my car for the drive back home. I kept the windows and sun roof open for the three hour drive despite a light rain.

Kralik (2002) describes transitions in chronic illness in the women in her study as experiences that involve movement from something she calls “extraordinariness to ordinariness” and sometimes back again. The movement is comprised of processes that are nonlinear, sometimes cyclical and potentially recurring throughout a woman’s life. One of her subjects writes that “extraordinariness is like the struggle that follows a crisis...trying to find a way to work through it. It’s not a comfortable time...it’s a struggle and your emotions are tossed all over the place as you strive to adjust. In many ways you can’t continue in that state of high discomfort and so you learn to get some control of your illness and the way you perceive it” (Kralik, 2002, p. 150). Though I have been fortunate to not yet suffer from a chronic illness, in the midst of launching a job search, I slipped on a patch of ice, crushed my wrist and required surgery and metal plates to repair it. I remember several weeks and months during the healing process of feeling very “extraordinary” in the sense that the very activities of daily living became a “problem to be solved.” I longed to be normal and ordinary again where I wouldn’t have to constantly ask for help or rearrange my coming and going around my arm. I worried

about my ability to travel out of town for interviews while in a cast and with limited use of one arm.

A slightly different view of transition is Kegan's (1982) view that life is one big progression of change and developmental transformation and transition. People embrace it rather than resist it. Since I have read and experienced that most transitions involve some sort of loss or pain, I would like to meet those who consistently “embrace” transition in order to learn from them. One literature review that examined 15 models of change found that the crux of human change is that humans move through transition from “normality” through disruption and then back to a re-defined normality (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002). The terminology of transition also captures the sense that rather than a one-off-event, it is a continuous passage (Draper, 2003).

Others also note that transition is not a unidirectional and linear process. Per van Loon, Koch and Kralik (2004), “Our research...[suggests] that transition is a more intricate and convoluted process with forward and backward movement” (p. 208). Powell-Cope (1995) states that the transition process is “not linear but recurring, so that at any given time new losses require ongoing readjustments and thus transition continues throughout life” (p. 57). This was certainly my experience over the 3 years with my husband living and working in Los Angeles and me in the Midwest. In addition, we were soon dealing with regional economic and organizational changes, my fall, injury and surgery, the move to the southwest US to take on a very different role along with suddenly and unexpectedly becoming empty nesters and finding ourselves thousands of miles away from our daughters. As one of comedian Gilda Radner’s (2000) characters would quip, “it is always something” (p. 2).

Transition as Distinguished From Change

Some studies use the terms change and transition almost interchangeably (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002). However, this study makes a distinction between the two. Transition theory seeks to understand how individuals respond to environmental change (Breu & Benwell, 1999). Transition is not change but a response to change. Transition theory builds on the notion of change and transition being two parallel dynamics: change is external to the individual as opposed to transition, which is internal to the individual (Bridges, 2001, 2004). Transition is a non-linear psychological response to change. "Transition theory is centrally concerned with identifying the internal psychological dynamics that emerge when individuals move from one relatively stable state or life pattern to another" (Adams, Hayes, & Hopson, 1976, p. 2).

Meleis and Trangenstein (1994) also identify the difference between transition and change, and agree that transitions are generally internal processes that occur over time and have a sense of flow and movement. Change is defined as something that happens outside of us. It is situational. We often have very little control over it. Transition is not change but a response to change. As noted earlier, it is a non-linear psychological response to change. "Transition is not simply a change, but rather the process that people go through to incorporate the change or disruption into their lives" (Kralik et al., 2006, p. 320). For me, the transition process allowed me to face the external changes for what they were and then derive meaning so that I could see different options and select my next steps.

Bridges (2001) also talks about the difference between change and transition. He notes that change is situational. For example, getting a new boss is a change, and so is receiving a promotion or losing your job. Moving to a different house is a change, and so is remodeling your house or losing it in a fire. And, of course, losing a loved one is a change albeit a huge one. However, transition is the process that we go through to let go

of the past and explore how we will move into a new future that the change is pushing us toward. Per Bridges, (2001):

...transition helps you come to terms with change. It reorients you so that you can mobilize your energy to deal successfully with your new situation - whether it is a "good" one or a "bad" one doesn't matter - instead of being hampered by attitudes and behaviors that were developed for and more appropriate to your old situation. (p. 33)

He further notes that ... "reorientation is transition's essential function, even in matters of life and death" (p. 34).

Transition and Change Equate to Loss

Many authors writing about transition refer to Kübler-Ross'(1997) five phases of grief from her book, *Death and Dying* which are similar to reacting to a change and transitioning through a perceived loss – in this case the loss of a loved one. The phases are: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance which may be viewed as analogous or as an overlay to Bridges three phase transition model of endings, the neutral zone and beginnings.

Harvey (1990) equates all change with loss. He notes that "it is crucial to remember that for every change proposed or achieved, someone loses something" (p. 4). Examples include the breaking of ties with co-workers through relocation, loss of expertise when new technology replaces old, loss of a perceived power base when organizations are restructured. Deal and Kennedy (1982) suggest that significant barriers are raised whenever change is not recognized as loss. In fact, they say those who do not recognize the loss can be doomed to remain in the "denial state." However, Kralik (2002) notes that "through reflective narratization, extraordinary stories of loss may change to stories of challenge and creativity" (p. 153). My journaling during the time of my study served as a bridge to the retelling of many stories that then allowed me to

process and create a new perspective and identity that was consistent with who I choose to be in the world.

Bridges (2001) also describes transition and what he calls the four cardinal aspects of loss: disengagement, which is the separation from whatever it is that you have lost; disidentification, or the way that the loss destroys the old identity you had; disenchantment, which refers to the way that the loss tears you out of the old reality you accepted unthinkingly; disorientation is how, as a result of losing the object of your feeling and the identity you had together (as with a loved one) or with it (as with a job) and the reality you experienced, you feel bewildered and lost.

Transition Impacts the Self-identity

A key finding is the challenge to self-identity that occurs during the transition process or what Bridges (2001) refers to as disidentification. Self-identity and transition appear to be concepts that are closely linked (Kralik et al., 2006). Reconstruction of a valued sense of self-identity is essential to transition (Kralik et al., 2006). "Biographical disruption is used by some authors to describe the changes to self-identity that require redefinition in the face of adversity" (Kralik et al., 2006, p. 326). Per Kralik et al. (2006), "people who have experienced profound disruption often have a diminished sense of identity. Thus, they must re-story or recreate a new story" (p. 326).

However, transition involves a complex interplay of adaptive activities to manage situational alterations, as well as a deeper psychological and spiritual incorporation of changes that aid reorientation of the sense of self (Van Loon et al., 2004). Per Bridges (2001), once in the neutral zone you go onto the 5th "dis" - the discovery of a new life, a new identity and a new outlook. This resonates with me as I went through the neutral zone but began to feel on some days that I was in the midst of trying to develop a new life and an identity in my new home and new job. Bridges (2004) notes that transitional

processes require time as people gradually disengage from old behaviors and ways of defining self. In my experience this is an iterative process. Some days I was able to leave the self-doubt of transition behind and realize that the same individual who I have always been is still here and still adds value regardless of the role, title or location. Other days the anxiety and uncertainty made a powerful return.

How we make sense of the changes around us and how we frame them are critical to the process of transition. Human beings are habitual makers of meaning (Erikson, 1963). The need to find meaning and coherence in life events can be argued to be a basic human need (Frankl, 2006). Sensemaking helps us turn circumstances into a situation that we can comprehend and react to in a logically perceived action (Weick et al., 2005). Because of the changes in the economy and my place of employment, I had to make explicit efforts at sensemaking. Weick et al. (2005) note that these efforts tend to occur when the current state of the world is not perceived the way we would have expected it to be. Either the perceived rules are changing or the new ways in which we might engage are not apparent or available. These new situations and my way of making sense of them pointed me toward a decision that I was going to have to change my place of employment, profession and possibly my state of residence.

Work Role Transitions

Since my transition was precipitated by changes that caused me to decide that I needed to make a job change, I reviewed the literature on work role transitions (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Nicholson (1984) defines work role transitions as any change in employment status and any major change in job content. Furthermore, he notes that these work role transitions can have a major impact on the future development of individuals and organizations. Commons, Krause, Fayer and Meaney (1993) observed that the workplace atmosphere, situations and challenges can guide cognitive

development and may even place a ceiling on the stage or level that can be attained within a given context.

Career theorists (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) have treated macro role transitions as both actual role changes (Brett, 1984; Nicholson, 1984) and as the processes that precede and follow a role change (Ashforth, 2001; Hall, 1976; Louis, 1980). Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) use the term to refer to a process that may begin long before an actual role change and that often extends significantly beyond it. This concept of the macro role transition accurately describes my experience leading up to the point where I made a decision to make a career change, through the actual move and in some cases continues to this very day as I process my new identity and the new professional role that I am currently performing.

Because new roles require new skills, behaviors, attitudes and patterns of interpersonal interactions, they may produce fundamental changes in an individual's self-definitions. "For many, though certainly not everyone, a job or occupation is a central component of their understanding of who they are" (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010, p. 150). Again this highlights the relationship between transitions and self-identity and particularly the impact of work role transitions on self-identity. Stories of self help explain both the individual's background and future goals, and help them make sense of confusing or unanticipated changes. The individuals can then look back on role moves to justify the rationale for the transition to themselves and others (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010).

Per Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010), two major work role transition characteristics include *magnitude* which involves intercompany, function, and profession changes and; *non-institutionalized* which means that they do not form part of an established occupational ladder or organization, and where the planned career path and socialization process are disjunctive. My work role transition from a chief learning

executive to a vice president of clinical and quality services describes a high magnitude and non-institutionalized transition. Another characteristic is whether the transition is desirable or undesirable. Is it a step up or a demotion or a move to a place the individual does not want to go? I perceived my work role transition as a step up, but I was not sure that I wanted to relocate my family and sever ties with friends and colleagues I had known, in many cases, for over twenty years. A last characteristic is that work role transitions are ambiguous (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). My experience and readings of the transition literature would certainly support the assertion that most transitions, let alone work role transitions are ambiguous. From this discussion, it seems that my role transition was discontinuous, non-institutionalized and traditionally undesirable in that it does not follow an expected path, as well as being highly ambiguous. I had to reinvent my own stories about myself within my own mind to make sense of the changes that were required in order to begin the transition.

I had a difficult time in my journaling and in conversations with other managers experiencing work role transitions in separating my work role transition from my overall experience of transition. It is difficult to separate work role transitions from any other type of transition. Since we are a complete package of mind, body and spirit, work role transitions or any other kind for that matter, affects us completely. Stephens (1994) cites literature indicating the difficulty of separating life stage transitions from work role transitions which is one part of the reason that I am using transitions as my theoretical framework in better understanding my experience. In addition, a lot of my anxiety and time in the neutral zone of this transition was spent worrying about the impact upon my family and particularly my youngest daughter - especially since she ended up staying at her previous school to complete her last year of high school. A significant number of times where my journal entries describe grieving, a sense of loss, uncertainty, and self-doubt were times when I was very concerned about the impact of my move on my

daughters and my family. I also often questioned whether the new role was one that I was really seeking. I had to wonder if I was running away from a difficult situation but would just land in a different undesirable position.

Life-stage transitions “are the non-work counterpart of career stage transitions, entailing movement between stages of the life cycle” (Stephens, 1994, p. 487). Earlier researchers (Louis, 1980) categorized and placed life stage transitions and work role transitions into separate categories. They are in fact a subset of extra-role adjustments. My sense is that this forced cleaving of the phenomenon was due to the fact that in these earlier studies less qualitative methods were being used on human experience resulting in (hopefully) unintended reductionism. The intent of using this first-person qualitative approach is to allow for a deeper more holistic review of transition. My work role transition has also led to the life stage transition in that it caused me and my husband to prematurely become empty nesters when my youngest daughter stayed behind to complete her senior year in high school. Even to this day my husband and I remain in the southwest US while our daughters live in the upper Midwest in order to attend university.

Obstacles to Transition

There are many obstacles to our ability to transition and learn and develop from our personal experiences of change. Maurer (1996) identified eight distinct ways in which individuals, knowingly or unknowingly, resist moving from their initial state. Mariotti (1996) summarizes these responses as follows:

1. Confusion which is described as difficulty in realizing that change is going to happen.
2. Immediate criticism - rejecting change before hearing the details.
3. Denial - refusing to accept that things have changed.
4. Malicious compliance - smiling and seeming to go along, only to demonstrate a lack of compliance later on.
5. Sabotage - taking actions to inhibit or kill the change.

6. Easy agreement - agreeing with little resistance, without realizing what is being agreed to.
7. Deflection - changing the subject and hoping that it will go away.
8. Silence - complete absence of input, which may be the most difficult resistance to deal with.

Not only do these responses keep us from transitioning and ultimately learning and developing, they often put our existence in the status quo and our preferred way of being at risk.

At some point in my experience with professional transition, I experienced each of these responses and sometimes more than one at a time. For a while I was confused about how shocks to the local economy would affect my organization. The economy is supposed to be conceptual not as real as I was experiencing it! It went from being a topic from an article in the *Wall Street Journal* to being a major impact on my life and decisions. I rejected the actions that senior leaders were trying to employ to save the company by criticizing them. I also spent a good portion of a year in denial, hoping things would get better and I wouldn't have to lay off most of my staff. And, when I first heard of the required layoffs that I would have to execute, I engaged in malicious compliance by publically putting on a brave face while expressing anger to close friends and colleagues. In addition, I used deflection in the hope that the need for layoffs would somehow dissipate or go away. I also wonder if falling and breaking my arm in January of 2010 was an unconscious effort to sabotage my transition and move.

Per Cook-Greuter's (2004) open-ended assessment questionnaire that I completed in August of 2007, my action logic at the time was that of an Achiever. And, per Torbert & Associates (2004) the achiever action logic makes it difficult to see beyond a limited number of options. I saw no strategic options beyond what was offered by my current employer. Therefore, in my own experience with professional transition, it took me a significant amount of time to perceive the changes and react to them. I was very

confused about what I was seeing and I was in denial about what those changes might mean to me and my team. I also think that on some level I was hoping it would take a turn, get better and all the changes would go away making the transition unnecessary.

Enablers of Transition

Glacken, Kernohan and Coates (2001) identified factors facilitating transition. Their study participants were unanimous that becoming informed about the change and the passage of time were the two key factors that empowered them to engage in the transition. Schumacher and Meleis (1994) also identified three indicators of a successful transition; namely subjective well-being, role mastery and well-being of relationships. It was evident that the transition process in terms of duration and outcome was an individual entity. Positive outcomes included improved physical well-being, the acquisition of new inter-personal skills such as assertiveness and a general satisfaction with the quality of their life despite the presence of a chronic disease. I am finding that as I move through transition, I am learning to become more assertive in how I approach my new role and position within my new organization.

The importance of relationships and connections are also seen as an integral part of successful transition (Boeije, Duijnste, Grypdonck, & Pool, 2002; Kralik, 2002). However, one of the most challenging aspects of transition can be the loss or change in relationships due to a job loss, loss of a loved one, change in life status, e.g. active parent to empty nester, etc. This becomes a conundrum. As we transition, we must hang on to the supportive relationships that are still available to us while searching for new supportive relationships within the new beginnings and new situations.

Characteristics of Transition

Transition is both a result of and results in changes in lives, health, relationships and environment (Meleis, Sawyer, Im, Hilfinger-Messias, & Shumacher, 2000).

Transitional experiences have been identified as complex and multidimensional but importantly, several authors (Chick & Meleis, 1986; Meleis & Trangenstein, 1994; Schumacher & Meleis, 1994; Meleis et al., 2000) have identified several essential properties. These properties include: awareness, engagement, change and difference, time span and critical events which are described below. These elements may begin to help us understand why some make a transition or not, despite having similar changes or events happen to them.

Chick and Meleis (1986) suggest that awareness is a defining characteristic of transition, and they claim that for an individual to be in transition, the person must have an awareness of the changes that are occurring. Bridges (2004) and Selzer (1989) both highlight the importance that a person needs to acknowledge that a prior way of living and being has ended, or a current reality is under threat, and that change needs to occur before the transition process can begin. The process of surfacing awareness involves noticing what has changed and how things are different (Kralik, 2002; Meleis et al., 2000; Meleis & Trangenstein, 1994). I recall once at a lecture by Warren Bennis, he commented that the one thing he wished for us was that we would become excellent noticers. Being able to notice and be aware provides us an ability to engage in and be part of the changes and transitions that we face. I recall, perhaps due to my normal optimistic outlook, that for a long time, it was difficult to perceive that the coming changes would affect me and that I would need to make changes in my life in order to transition onto the rest of my life.

The level of engagement in the transition is the degree to which a person demonstrates involvement in the process. Some examples of engagement may include seeking out information, using role models and proactively modifying activities. Level of awareness influences level of engagement (Meleis et al., 2000). To understand the transition process it is important to uncover and describe the changes and the effects of

change that are taking place in the individual's life. Dimensions of change that can be explored are the nature, temporality, perceived importance or severity, personal, familial and societal and their influences (Meleis et al., 2000).

Confronting difference can be exemplified by feeling different, being perceived by others as different or viewing the world in different ways as a result of transition.

Dimensions of difference that can be explored include the nature of the changes, how long it may take for changes to occur, what trajectory they may follow, the perceived impact of changes, and the personal, familial and societal influences having an impact on the changes (Meleis et al., 2000).

Bridges (2001) suggests that transitions follow a time span and commence from the first signs of anticipation, perception or demonstration of change through a period of instability, confusion and distress to an eventual calming with a new period of stability. Bridges (2001), Meleis et al. (2000), and Kralik (2002), support the notion that transitions are associated with a critical event which may create an increasing awareness of change or difference, or may be characterized by a sense of stabilization in new routines, skills and lifestyles. In many cases, a change will occur; we will experience transition which will lead to more changes which again lead to transition. Thus change and transition are interrelated, iterative processes.

Transition May be Transformational

In Kralik's (2002) studies, women found the experience of a significant illness to be transforming because their lives became characterized by change. In the quest for ordinariness, they experienced a dynamic state, consisting of a series of changes, but also a sense of progression. However, some perceived that this progression involved two steps forward followed by one step back. Ordinariness was not a passive state of being, but rather one that required phenomenal personal effort and constant vigilance

over thoughts and responses to the experiences of living with illness. In a recent book, *Rapt* (Gallagher, 2009), the author reviews recent findings in psychology noting that our happiness depends on where we focus our thoughts and what we notice and attend to. Left to our own devices and if we are not careful, our thoughts will focus on negative issues. For the women in Kralik's study, they were making changes in their lives that led to transition. They framed and embraced the illness experience as an opportunity to learn and expand, rather than viewing themselves as a victim of the illness. They learned to respond to the present, and approach each moment as new. They worked to suppress the judgmental voice of self-criticism which surfaced when they drew comparisons with their past. This corroborates with my own experience with a shattered wrist and surgery – however minor this is compared with a potentially terminal diagnosis. One of Kralik's study participants notes:

Then comes the time to move on. It's like a re-birth. All the knowledge you had about yourself, feelings, dreams, etc. go through a rather radical shake-up. You are a new person; the illness has made you stronger in some respects. Your focus is now on yourself and maintaining a very fragile health balance. (Kralik, 2002)

There are no specific directions to follow to ensure that transition will be transformative, but Bridges (2004) offers these three ideas about the journey. First, every journey is a round-trip that does not end when you reach your imagined destination. But you must bring back whatever you gained and with its help, transform into what you have been seeking. Transition endings can be transformative, but we take those endings in the neutral zone with us and we grieve them. Throughout my own transition I kept dreaming of strange journeys. In several of those dreams, I passively watched myself die. In dream interpretation, dying in one's own dream often symbolizes rebirth and transformation. These dream journeys remind me of JRR Tolkien's (1986) *Lord of the Rings* books and the story *The Wizard of Oz* where the plot involves the characters taking a journey in order to grow develop and learn more about themselves.

In my vision quest experience I saw images from Tolkien and the Wizard of OZ. My dreams continue to depict journeys.

Second, according to Bridges (2004) the transition journey experience exists at every level - from that of the whole lifetime to that within every individual transition we make. It may even be that this "whole lifetime" is simply one of those little transitions within some larger cycle of existence. And third, it is being on the path of transition- the way - that has the effect upon us, not just the steps we take on getting to the path's destination (Bridges, 2004). My vision quest was both a journey and a study in transitions: transitioning into a new experience, living within that experience and then transitioning out of the experience. It seems that life is a spiral of transition giving us every opportunity, should we choose to do so, to develop and grow every day. Per Peck (1998), life is a series of problems to be solved that are felt as pain. But once we accept this fact, we can transcend it and welcome these problems as an opportunity to grow.

Transition May Lead to Development

When the outside forces of change act upon us, change may lead to transition and ultimately to development. Loevinger (1976) has observed that only when the environment fails to conform to a person's expectations – which is often the case during a change – is there potential for growth. She notes that individuals grow when they are exposed to interpersonal environments that are more complex than they are such as within the workplace. However, neither the transition nor the development is guaranteed (Elrod II & Tippett, 2002). Kralik et al. (2006), notes that "transition occurs over time and entails personal, developmental, relational, situational, societal or environmental change, but not all change involves transition" (p. 327).

However, Bridges (2001) notes that the second function of transition is personal growth. Reorientation refers to that process as a turning in the way we go through life.

Bridges (2001) says that “personal growth refers to the way reorientation brings us into a new and more adequate relationship with the world around us” (p. 39). “Transition helps you come to terms with change” (Bridges, 2001, p. 33).

Bridges (2001) further notes that:

It is the transition that was the important fact, because it is the transition, not the stages or phases that reorient and develop us - as well as giving us access to our authentic selves, our creativity and a deeper level of spiritual significance in our experience. The stages are just the natural and temporary resting places between transitions - and they are far more various and unique to particular individuals than the tidy models would suggest. It is transition that does the heavy lifting of growth and development. The stages are simply the necessary times during which we can incorporate and consolidate the discoveries made and the power released in the transitions. (p.46)

Thus the literature links change and transition to potential personal growth and learning. Vaill (1996) notes that the “permanent white water” of change around us forces us to transition into new ways of learning and being. He describes the characteristics of permanent white water as conditions full of unforeseen surprises, problems and events, complex systems leading to novel or new problems never seen before, conditions featuring events that are ill-structured and ill-defined and often very costly. He further notes that “permanent white water is not just the facts and events that surround us, it is the meaning that we attach to them” (Vaill, 1996, p. 15). Loevinger (1976) refers to events that she called “pacers” which she describes as complex interpersonal events such as divorce or ill health that might pull an individual to a higher level of ego functioning.

The literature and my experience suggest that transitions are vital to managerial leaders' growth (Argyris, 1991; Vaill, 1996; Watkins, 2003) because they provide the environment and opportunities that enable managers to learn. Permanent white water puts managers and individuals in situations where they are doing activities with which they know little about or have little previous experience. Per Vaill (1996), “this means that managers or people have to be (or become) extremely effective learners” (p. 20). In

other words, in order to develop or learn, we have to become effective at using change to help us transition, transform and develop.

Bridging Transition to Development

Kurt Lewin (as cited in (Segal, 1997), developed the concept of psychological space, and the concept again appeared in Jung's (Jung, Read, Fordham, & Adler, 1971) collective unconscious and in the concept of MEMEs (Beck & Cowan, 2006). MEMEs may be described as ideas, behaviors or styles that spread from person to person within a culture (Silby, 2000). While genes transmit biological information, memes are said to transmit ideas and belief information. Lewin, (as cited in (Segal, 1997), envisioned the human personality to be comprised of a series of fields or "life spaces" as he called them. A life space "consists of the person and the psychological environment as it exists for him" (Segal, 1997, p. 56). All behavior (including action, thinking, wishing, striving, valuing, achieving, etc.) is conceived of a change of some state of a field in a given unit of time (Cartwright, 1951). There can be many fields in a life space at all levels of specificity, e.g. home, family, work, church as well as subdivisions within the field space e.g. work subdivides into boss, peers, subordinates, projects, etc. What we create is relational and much of our energy to live comes from these relationships with people, times, places and our identities. Thus to transition, we have to create new shared life spaces that can encompass new situations, settings and people.

Lewin (1951) viewed change as a sequence of activities that result from disturbances in the force field that surrounds the organization or individual and that sustains its stability. If the forces favoring the change are stronger than those resisting, the individual or organization will go through three phase changes...freezing, unfreezing and then refreezing. These three phase changes bring to mind Bridges' (2001, 2004) phases of transition – endings, the neutral zone and new beginnings. Perhaps, the

changes that disturb the “force field” in our life space cause us to expand or lower our boundaries which then provide us opportunities for personal growth and development. In *Rapt*, Gallagher (2009) notes that when we have an optimistic outlook, our perspectives are broader and more open. While we are fearful or sad, the perspectives are much narrower. The challenge is being able to appropriately expand and lower our boundaries while we journey through a transition in order to take advantage of the learning and development that the transition offers us while maintaining the central core of who we are and what we value. Again this is consistent with Wilber’s definition of growth as an expansion of boundaries. But how do we overcome the defensive mechanisms that make us resistant to change and transition while keeping those defenses that will keep us safe and help us maintain our own personal integrity?

Argyris’ Defensive Mechanisms

In Argyris’ (1985, 1991) work, he observed that defensive mechanisms seem to describe why individuals, groups, teams and organizations are less effective than they could be. He defines defensiveness as a frame of mind or action taken in response to danger while a defense mechanism is a specific response such as projection, denial, etc., used to cope with internal or external dangers (Argyris, 1982). Argyris (1985) defines “defensive routines” as “thoughts and actions used to protect individuals’, groups’, and organizations’ usual ways of dealing with reality” (p. 228) which can be threatening.

Argyris (1991) posits that managers and professionals have difficulty learning due to the very fact that they have usually been successful over the course of their careers. They have played by the rules and are accustomed to achieving what they set out to do and more. They are high achievers with high expectations of themselves and others. Consistent success then serves to reinforce the natural human tendency to

reason defensively. If this is the case, significant transitions may serve as times of great learning since the stresses of the outside world and the disruptions we are experiencing, cause us to “fail” or at least not achieve what we want using the same rules and behaviors that served us in the past. In fact, Argyris (1991) notes that learning is more likely to occur during times of great change when we are forced to reflect and challenge our own assumptions about what defines success. In my case, the transitions and disruptions I faced as a professional and an executive in the upper Midwest during the implosion of the US auto industry forced me to go beyond my engineering-based single loop learning in order to learn new skills and behaviors. Daily life in a new place and organization continued to reinforce the fact that that what made me successful in the past would not necessarily make me successful in the present or future. Once I was faced with uncertainty and potential failure, it forced me to move into double loop learning. I had to look inward and critically reflect on my own behavior, identify ways that I have contributed to my current challenges so that I could learn to be more effective and move on to greater growth, learning and development.

For Argyris (1982), continuously questioning our assumptions is a key element of the learning process. This perception brings us close to what Bateson (1972) called level III learning, or triple loop learning which he thought to be so rare that he considered it is almost mystical (Yuthas, Dilliard, & Rodgers, 2004). This type of learning engages in radical questioning of both the context and meaning surrounding the learning. It extends level II learning by posing questions as to the purpose of learning or the principles upon which it is grounded. Thus, we question how we learn, and then we reflect critically upon the questioning process itself. This level is little understood, but has been reduced to its simplest form by those who refer to this level as “learning to learn how to learn” (Yuthas et al., 2004, p. 238). This concept is part of the aim of my research. Specifically, how do managers learn to continuously learn, adapt and change behaviors and practices when

faced with significant change and transition? As my colleagues in the automotive industry used to like to say, “We are changing the tire while we are driving the car down the road”. Robert Quinn (2004) depicted it as “building the bridge as you walk upon it” (p. 22).

Learning and Development

“In a time of drastic change, it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned usually find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists” (Hoffer, 1973).

There are many definitions of learning and development. One definition of learning comes from Vaill’s (1996) book, entitled *Learning as a Way of Being*, which defines learning as “changes a person makes in himself or herself that increase the know-why/or the know-what and/or the know-how the person possesses with respect to a given subject” (p. 56). In *No Boundary*, Wilber (2001) defines growth (development) as an “enlarging and expanding of one’s horizons, a growth of one’s boundaries, outwardly in perspective and inwardly in depth” (p. 13). These definitions resonate with my research in that they are multidimensional and begin to describe growth and human development as iterative, non-linear, multi-faceted phenomena. If transition potentially leads to learning and development, what models can be used to help managers going through transition understand if and how they might be growing and developing from the experience? This section of the literature review begins to explore this question as a backdrop for my own experience of transition.

Human Development Models

In order to determine if I was learning and developing from the professional transition I experienced, it was helpful to frame my experiences and findings around an understanding of human development. As I got into the literature and did a deeper review, I found it very helpful as a backdrop to my experience. It gave me a sense of

meaning and purpose for the transition and losses I was experiencing. Thus, the intent of this section of the literature review is to provide just a brief literature review of the models and theories of human development that most impact my research. The remaining literature overview is in Appendix B.

Cook-Greuter’s Ego Development Stages

Cook-Greuter’s (2002) Ego Development Theory (EDT) is best understood as one of several models including Jane Loevinger’s (1976 & 1983) and Bill Torbert & Associates (2004) that describe different levels of development in the Upper Left Quadrant in Ken Wilber’s (2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2003) All Quadrants, All Levels (AQAL) map of human experience. EDT covers pre-conventional, conventional, post-conventional and early post-post conventional ways of meaning making in Wilber’s comprehensive model of consciousness (Cook-Greuter, 2002). Cook-Greuter presents the position of the ego development in Wilber’s model alongside Torbert’s Action Logics (Torbert & Associates, 2004) in the table below. Her model helps tie together the several models that informed this research. See also Appendix B.

Table1

The Position of the Ego Development in Wilber’s Model

Ken Wilber	% of US Population	Cook-Greuter Ego Development Stages	Torbert’s Action Logics
SOUL Transcendent	Post-conventional, Transpersonal, Ego-transcendent		
Unitive view	<1%	6 Unitive	Ironist
VISION LOGIC	<2%	5/6 Construct-Aware	Alchemist
Post-conventional Systems view	~12%	5 Autonomous 4/5 Individualist	Strategist Individualist
MIND Conventional	~75%	4 Conscientious ¾ Self-conscious 3 Conformist	Achiever Expert/technician Diplomat
BODY Pre-conventional	~10%	2/3 Self-defensive 2 Impulsive	Opportunist Impulsive

Note. From “Ego development: Nine levels of increasing embrace,” by S. Cook-Greuter, 2002. <http://integralrising.org/documents/cook-greuter/9 Levels Increasing Embrace.pdf>. Copyright 2002 by S. Cook-Greuter. Reprinted with permission.

Human development has been described in many ways. However; most theories see it as evolving in a spiral fashion, not in a stepwise linear fashion, with movement possible in all directions. In the figure below (Figure 1) taken from Cook-Greuter's work (2002) "up" is equal to transformation or vertical development. Horizontal means that there is an expansion or transfer at the same stage where new skills or knowledge are obtained. The down arrow depicts a temporary or permanent regression. Most growth in adults is of the horizontal nature. We learn new skills, methods, facts and ways of doing things and organizing. However our current stage or mental model, in most cases, stays the same. My interest in my own development was whether I had experienced vertical development – either up or down.

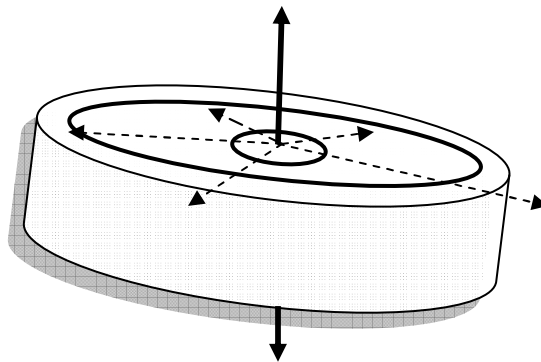


Figure 1. Ego development model. From "Ego development: Nine levels of increasing embrace," by S. Cook-Greuter, 2002, from http://integralrising.org/documents/cook-greuter/9_Levels_Increasing_Embrace.pdf. Copyright 2002 by S. Cook-Greuter. Reprinted with permission.

Cook-Greuter's (2002) Ego Development Theory describes a system with three interrelated components including *doing*, *being* and *thinking*. The *doing* component looks at what adults see as their purpose in life, what they need to act upon and what their goals and ends are. The *being* component deals with awareness and experiences of being in the world. The cognitive or *thinking* component addresses how the individual thinks of himself or herself in the world – what are his conceptions, knowledge and

interpretations of what happens to him. This model resonated with my autoethnographic approach to transition. As I moved through the various transitions in the past two years, I had to *be* present to my experiences, *think* or rethink my role in my “new” reality while *doing* new actions and interventions to move onto existing and new goals that were important to me. For example, I could not run away from the changes that were challenging my self-identity. Nor could I run from my fear of a new city and job. I simply had to be there at that time and in those places. I also had to do many things over these past two years that led me in new directions. And I had to rethink who I was and what my contributions could be in the new roles I was taking on while letting go of the old roles which I had allowed to previously define me.

Cook-Greuter’s (2002, 2004) Ego Development Stages are richly developed and richly described and greatly inform the Leadership Development Framework (LDF) also known as the leadership maturity framework (LMF), now called MAP for short and referenced by both her and Torbert (Rooke & Torbert, 2005; Torbert & Associates, 2004). However, since my research was related to how managers grow and develop through professional transition, I also refer to Torbert’s Action Logics since they were relevant to me in my study of professional transition. Given the use of these models in several prior empirical studies of managers and leaders, they also translate most easily for practitioners by better capturing professional concerns and professional applications (Torbert & Associates, 2004). I also maintain the description of Torbert’s action logics and Cook-Greuter’s LDF in the main section of this study since I repeated the 2007 assessment I took in 2011 in order to evaluate evidence that I had developed and grown during the period of transition.

Torbert's Action Logics

Torbert and Associates (2004) action logics, that were developed with Cook-Greuter and others, are defined as “how leaders interpret their surroundings and react when their power or safety is challenged” (p. 66). The concept of action logics became helpful to me as a learning executive because it helped me understand myself and other leaders and professionals around me. I was able to better appreciate my strengths as well as my limitations in various situations. And though there are critics of action logics and their broader applicability, they resonated with me and many of my executive colleagues in that we can use them as a framework for the corporate workplace. By understanding how colleagues might be operating from different action logics than my own, I could more easily relate to them without excessively judging them (or pulling out my hair in frustration.) I also found that under times of stress, fatigue and fear, I could quickly regress to an earlier stage and I needed to be aware of this tendency. I learned that we have access to our current action logic and all the earlier action logics for our repertoire of acting and thinking. And as Torbert and Associates (2004) wrote, I realized first hand that I was totally blind to any action logics later than mine and others seemed to be blind to some of my action logics as well. At times, it was almost as if I was speaking a language that others did not understand. Due to the fact that we cannot see our own action logics, especially when we most need to see them, this can often be one of the biggest sources of conflict at home and at work.

Rooke and Torbert (2005) believe that leadership styles can be divided into the following seven action logic categories and they are described as follows. The *Opportunist*, which makes up about 5% of the sample of North American leaders, treats the physical or outside world as the primary reality and concentrates on gaining control. His or her timeframe is very short term and he endeavors to win any way possible. The

opportunistic is self-oriented, manipulative and believes that “might makes right” (Torbert & Associates, 2004).

The *Diplomat*, which represents about 12% of the sample, concentrates on gaining self-control and tries to avoid overt conflict. This individual wants to belong, obeys group norms, and rarely rocks the boat. His or her main concern is what others think and doing what he or she feels that the group would want them to do. The time horizon for this action logic is 1 week to 3 months.

The *Expert*, representing 38% of managers, seeks to master his or her cognitive grasp of one or more particular disciplines such as engineering, accounting, marketing, etc. An individual with this action logic rules by logic and expertise. This action-logic treats logistical power as most meaningful and works within a 6 month to one-year time frame. This individual seeks rational efficiency and feels successful when “I” accomplish tasks as efficiently as possible (Torbert & Associates, 2004).

The *Achiever*, which Torbert and Associates (2004) found to make up about 30% of the sample, is composed of highly educated professional adults who are able to transform once more. Sadly, Torbert finds that most people achieve the action logic of expert at about the age of 26 but then never transform again. This action logic is able to balance a one- to three-year time horizon, juggling the shorter time horizons creatively, treating the interplay among planning, performing, and assessing the outcomes as what is really real. This individual is capable of meeting strategic goals and is able to effectively achieve goals through teams while juggling managerial duties and market demands (Torbert & Associates, 2004). When I took the LDF or MAP in 2007 this was found to be my action logic. This action logic encompasses the traditional scientific mindset. It is the highest stage fully supported by Western culture and society. Culturally it forms a kind of ceiling in development, overcome by less than 10% of the general population.

The *Individualist*, representing 10% of the sample, is capable of interweaving competing personal and company action logics. He or she is able to create unique structures to resolve gaps between strategy and performance. This action-logic is described by Torbert and Associates (2004) as being a journey or a bridge toward later action logics. The individual with this action logic takes a relativistic approach and is capable of focusing both on present and historical contexts and is often aware of conflicting emotions. This individual experiences time as fluid and is interested in his or her own and others' self expression. He or she is capable of noticing his or her own shadow and may suffer from possible decision paralysis. There were certainly times when I was in the neutral zone of transition (Bridges, 2004) that I felt as though I was experiencing this action logic. I became very aware of the evil I could employ from deep well of fear and at times I became afraid to make a decision and act.

The *Strategist*, which represents 4% of the sample of managers, is very capable of appreciating the need to change, adapt and that there are multiple ways of seeing things. The manager at this action logic is capable of recognizing the importance of principle, contract, theory and judgment – not just rules, customs, policies and exceptions. Strategists place a high value on timely inquiry, mutuality and autonomy. He or she is able to weave short-term goal-orientedness with longer-term developmental process-orientedness. He or she is aware that the paradox that one sees depends on one's action-logic. He or she can be very effective at conflict resolution and enjoys playing a variety of roles. This action logic manager is capable of generating organizational and personal transformations. He or she exercises the power of mutual inquiry, vigilance, and vulnerability for both the short and long term (Torbert & Associates, 2004). Strategists tend to value perspectives that are constructive, people-orientated, inclusive, dynamic and which foster continuous learning over those

perspectives that are critical or judgmental, single constituency, exclusive, static, and merely fact-oriented, or “objective” (Cook-Greuter, 2011, p. 28).

Though the *Alchemist* only makes up 1% of the population, these individuals are able to generate social transformation through integrating material, spiritual, and societal transformation. Alchemists do this through exercising their own attention, seeking single, double, and triple-loop feedback on the interplay of intuition, thought, action and their effects upon the outside world. He or she stands in the tension of opposites and seeks to blend them while intentionally participating in the work of historical and spiritual transformation (Torbert & Associates, 2004). Though Cook-Greuter’s (2002) ego development theory and Wilber’s (2000b) model go even further than the alchemist level, very few of these later action logics are found in the corporate world. Cook-Greuter (2002) notes that working in corporate America may not be a palatable choice for these transcendent unitive types. “It is therefore not valid to assume that growth-enhancing factors show a linear effect across the entire spectrum of developmental stages, as most correlational studies imply...and post conventional development remains a rare phenomenon that needs to be explored through innovative qualitative research” (Pfaffenberger, 2005, p. 297). This would seem to be a further argument for using a qualitative method such as autoethnography for my research and similar studies in human development.

This full range of developmental thinking was originally slow to be integrated into the workplace (Cook-Greuter, 2004). However, Torbert (1972, 1981) was an early proponent of applying developmentalism to leadership and organization change work. This is why his model and action-logics helped me better understand my development as a professional manager. This model has been validated within the corporate world as an effective model through the use of the associated assessment tool, the Leadership Development Framework (Cook-Greuter, 2004). I also had previously used the

assessment tool in 2007 giving me a baseline of my developmental stage at that time. I received a reply from Susanne Cook-Greuter and my responses to the questionnaire indicated that I was at the “Achiever” action logic which was described earlier. For my results see Appendix C.

A key point is that leaders can transform from one action logic to another through a variety of means. In other words, they can develop and grow. Individual actions, external events, organizational work practices, and planned, structured development interventions can all support transformation. For example, indicators that leaders are ready to transform include asking existential questions, searching for new perspectives, developing new relationships, exploring new forms of spiritual practice or new forms of centering and self-expression. Interventions that organizations can facilitate to help leaders continue to develop include encouraging self-awareness as well as promoting greater awareness of worldviews. Torbert and subsequent researchers (Cook-Greuter, 2004; Pfaffenberger, 2005; Rooke & Torbert, 2005; Torbert & Associates, 2004) provide specific ideas on potential interventions to assist leaders on transforming from one action logic to another.

The leader’s voyage of development is not an easy one. Some people change little in their lifetimes; some change substantially. Despite the undeniably crucial role of genetics, human nature is not fixed. Those who are willing to work at developing themselves and becoming more self-aware can almost certainly evolve over time into truly transformational leaders. (Rooke & Torbert, 2005)

In my experience, a significant professional transition provides many such interventions and opportunities for development. My journaling, moving across the country, reinventing myself in a new role at a new organization provided ideal interventions to help with my own personal and professional development. The irony is that I would never have designed such a development opportunity for myself, but the changes in my life served as the catalyst.

Ken Wilber's Model of Integral Learning and Development

Wilber's (2000b, 2001, 2003) integral model of learning and human development builds on and incorporates most of what various thinkers and cultures have learned over the centuries about human development. It draws from and builds upon the work of many scholars but especially Clare Graves (Beck & Cowan, 2006; Graves, 1970) and Jane Loevinger (Wilber, 2000b). Earlier we saw Cook-Greuter's (2002) and Torbert and Associates (2004) action logics represented alongside Wilber's model. Wilber's model resonated with me because it is not just one dimensional and it accounts for cognitive development, moral development, emotional development, physical development, spiritual development and all the waves and streams of development. It encompasses and elaborates on many of the great theories and traditions that have gone before. It extends our identity beyond the mind or ego to the "entire organism as a whole" (Wilber, 2001, p. 12). It reunites our body, mind and spirit from the reductionism of earlier models. It is a holistic model.

The integral framework. Integral-meta theory (Wilber, 2000a) offers a framework and methodological map for generating a more comprehensive analysis of development and learning in individuals and organizations. Wilber's all quadrants/all levels (AQAL) metatheory rests within the quadrant model where quadrants signify the first person (I), second person (you or we), and the third person or object (them or it). In particular, the AQAL lenses can help us locate our biases and partial perspectives, as well as bringing to light those aspects of our everyday experience and reality that we might be ignoring or privileging. When we explore the multiple perspectives and corresponding territories of AQAL, the opportunities for learning about ourselves, others and the world grow in a more comprehensive fashion. This argues for studying a

phenomenon from multiple perspectives: first-person, second-person and third-person perspectives.

The quadrant model can, furthermore, be extended dynamically by a series of different developmental stages or levels and lines of development of learners and learning. Within each quadrant there are levels representing patterns of increasing complexity and capacity. These levels unfold in a sequence with each later level transcending yet including the levels prior to it. As Wilber (2003) points out, “the senior dimensions do not sit on top of the junior dimensions like rungs in a ladder, but rather they embrace and enfold them” (p. 14).

Many theories of psychological development (Kegan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1977; Wilber, 2000b) have proposed stage-based models to explain the emergence through the life span of basic components of human functioning and overall growth. These stages or levels of development refer to what is being developed (matter, body, and mind, soul, and “spirit”) and the amount of consciousness and patterns of complexity in the developmental process. Thus, Wilber’s (2001) term “level” here is not meant in a rigid or exclusionary fashion, but serves to indicate emergent qualities of development that tend to come into being in specific ways. The levels’ developments emerge via a transcending, but also including embracement and enfoldment (Torbert & Associates, 2004). With this facility, the levels mark out new capacities and emergent qualities evolving from simple to more complex relationships through life and also in the organizational and learning context. Furthermore, these basic levels of consciousness unfold at different rates and can be seen as overlapping waves in a spectrum of consciousness (Wilber, 2003).

The “lines of development” reflect innate capacities and functions within the stages. The lines of development refer to a person’s capacity to learn and perform successfully in various circumstances. These concern different multi-dimensional

aspects of the learning process. For example, learning can depend on motivational drives and needs, moral development, ego development, visual-spatial capacities, logico-mathematical thought, linguistic-narrative knowledge, aesthetic competencies (e.g. musical, artistic, bodily-kinesthetic), interpersonal capacities, affective development, among many others (Wilber, 2000b). Most of these lines develop in a relatively independent fashion at their own speed with their own dynamics. Some lines are necessary, but not sufficient, for the development of others, while some develop closely together (Wilber, 2003). Originating and related to different domains, the lines are reaching for higher levels of maturity that are a healthy functioning for and integration of the entire system.

In *No Boundary*, Wilber (2001) defines growth (development) as an “enlarging and expanding of one’s horizons, a growth of one’s boundaries, outwardly in perspective and inwardly in depth” (p. 13). That is the definition of ascending using his current four quadrants. When a person ascends a level of the spectrum, he in effect has remapped his soul to enlarge its territory. Growth is reapportionment rezoning, remapping, then an acknowledgement and then enrichment, of ever deeper and more encompassing levels of one’s own self” (Wilber, 2001, p. 20). Transitions cause us to question our boundaries because those boundaries are shifting.

From my journal entries, I realize that many of my boundaries were moved or challenged throughout this experience of professional transition. From September 25 and 26th, 2010 I reflect on my reading of Wilber’s integral model of development:

September 25, 2010 – Wilber views development as described by levels or waves that we must move through as we learn and grow. Within those levels, we are bounded by what we can see. We can see below but not the levels above. The levels define our boundaries between us and the outside (it and them) and higher levels allow us to encompass even more of the other (family, our town, our tribe, community, our country, the world, the universe, etc. Could it be that transition breaks down barriers and in some cases, causes us to redefine and draw the boundaries a little bit wider affecting our "view of the world" allowing us to grow, develop and ascend a level of consciousness? We redefine who we are in the universe - we expand.

September 26, 2010 – It seems we spend all our lives creating boundaries around ourselves. In fact we are criticized in public if we don't have good boundaries...psychologically speaking. I realize one reason that why my 768 – self as instrument (change) course where I experienced a vision quest was so profound (there were many reasons) was because I had to let down my boundaries and explore ways of being foreign to me...but in many cases were actually part of me. Sleeping in that forest, I was very much a part of it. Was it because there was no tent to separate me from the sounds, smells and sights of the forest? There were no boundaries between myself and the forest so I had to become a part of it.

September 26, 2010 – Before I went into the forest, I had to take down barriers...my usual way of dressing, makeup, my social status, my professional status, my role as a mother, wife, friend etc. I even left my blackberry phone behind. Those are all boundaries I draw around myself as I define Jean Ann. Interestingly enough; I discovered even more of me. There was a deeper Jean Ann beyond the boundaries and without the trappings and security I wrap myself in. And Jean Ann was neither good nor bad. She loves and is loved very much. I am very much a part of the universe. In the forest I didn't even feel bounded by this life.

September 26, 2010 – But beyond this boundary breaking experience, what did I learn? All the symbols and meanings were around LOVE - all four definitions of love. I even "saw" the tree bark saying "I love you" and it was comforting. I was comforted by insects and animals. LOVE BREAKS DOWN THE BOUNDARIES!!!!!!!!!!

Similar to my vision quest experience of having to deal with the physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual aspects of the experience, within this professional transition I experienced, I found that I had to reflect upon and find ways to quickly learn the cognitive parts of my new role and place. Emotionally, I had to deal with losses and separation from what was familiar as well as colleagues, family and friends. Spiritually, I asked myself, what was I supposed to be learning from these experiences and why was I here. Even physically, I found that I had to maintain my strength and physical energy in order to support my development in the other stages and levels. Thus, transition is not just about learning a new job or situation; it involves our heart, mind, body and soul, giving us an opportunity to develop the self in many dimensions. The question is how do we create spaces inside ourselves that allow us to evolve and grow through transition without stretching too fast and too far beyond our limits and capacity to grow?

Enablers of Transition Leading to Growth and Development

What does the literature say about enablers of growth and development? There are environmental enablers and there are social situations that help us grow. Pfaffenberger (2005) notes that advanced development is facilitated by certain stable personality characteristics (stable meaning that they stay pretty much the same throughout life) and by meaningful engagement with challenging life events. She also observes that meditation and certain targeted educational events may have the potential to further adult development.

Environmental and social enablers of growth and development. Kegan (1994) argues that if “the environment demands that an individual functions at a lower or at a higher level than where the person is developmentally established, discomfort arises and often leads to the avoidance of such situations” (p. 114). This means individuals may change their workplace or home situation instead of their developmental stage. Rooke and Torbert (2005) indicate that “an area of possible future research is whether we can assign a stage to a social situation, such as a workplace” (p. 76). When people are presented with new situations as was I at my first organization and then later at my current organization, I first resorted to assimilation in order to fit the new information into my existing frame of reference. Only when assimilation fails, will they use accommodation to restructure their self-concept and their relationship with the world. This restructuring may be seen as a means of gaining greater complexity and may facilitate growth. Block (1982) suggests that adulthood offers people stable niches that rarely demand a restructuring of their worldviews, which may be why changes in ego stage are *not* the rule after formal education has been completed.

Also per King (2001), therapy may promote development exactly because the conscious engagement in life’s problems seems to be what facilitates growth and

learning and therapy often engages this kind of process. King notes that experiencing challenging events by itself does not seem to encourage ego development. She found that accommodation was not related to the experience of difficulty per se but to *seeing* it as challenging one's worldview and to consciously struggling with the event. Thus, the conclusion is that cognitive abilities and psychological structures interact with life circumstances and the nature of this interaction is relevant to whether growth occurs. Journaling and reflection helped me consciously engage in seeing my life's challenges in a new way and this approach helped me turn my crashing worldview into a learning and growth experience. I made the decision to learn from the change and transition instead of let it do me in. This was tough though because I wanted so badly to assimilate with the world's expectations for me.

According to Helson, Mitchell and Hart (1985) what marked those who grew from their experiences was their sense of clarity about what they wanted in life and great faithfulness to their goals. They were resourceful and willing to acknowledge conflict in their relationships as well as in the discrepancy between who they sought to be and who they were. The women in their study actively engaged in efforts to resolve these conflicts and mature as persons. This description sounds like a "strategist" or "individualist" to use Torbert's terms. Utilizing the sentence completion test they were found to be at a post conventional stage.

Manners and Durkin (2000) developed a model of how and why ego stage changes. They proposed that stage transition takes place in response to a challenging event that is of an interpersonal nature, disequilibrating, personally salient and emotionally engaging. One of their examples is psychotherapy. Manners and Durkin did develop an intervention and showed very positive results in 10 weeks. However, they would not share the specific details so their research results could not be replicated (Pfaffenberger, 2005). I have to wonder about the ethics of approaching research in this

fashion and why those details could not be shared. However, given that I transitioned (or developed) two ego stages due to my response and transition to my professional transition which certainly could be described as a interpersonal, disequilibrating and emotionally engaging event, my experience is consistent with Manners, Durkin, and Nesdale's (2004) model.

Transcendental meditation (TM) per Alexander, Heaton and Chandler (1994) is another intervention that can serve as an enabler. They propose that ego development is halted due to the accumulation of stress in the nervous system and due to the lack of exposure to appropriate growth strategies. They suggest TM is a growth inducing strategy because its practice is associated with profound relaxation and a shift to deeper levels of the mind which facilitates transpersonal experiences. TM unfreezes ego development and has shown more potential to facilitate advances to higher stages, regardless of starting point, than any other technique. While experiencing the stresses of my transition, I began to practice TM in earnest. I had learned the fundamentals while on my vision quest the summer of 2008 and I meditated two to three times per week though at times it was difficult. However as the change around me began to accelerate, I began to meditate at least once daily. It helped reduce stress, reframe and see situations "clearly" or perhaps differently. On my daily jog and during meditation is when I find that some of my most creative observations and solutions seem to magically appear.

Individual ego state enablers of growth and development. In addition to environmental and social enablers of growth and development, there are also individual ego state enablers. The individual trait of openness was positively correlated with ego stage. It describes attributes associated with a willingness to take in new experiences. According to McCrae and Costa (1980), this trait is strongly associated with genetic disposition. I probably have this trait. I have always been attracted to new cultures, new

languages, new people, new adventures, since high school, etc. I worked my way through college teaching English as a second language while meeting people from all over the world. I also spent two summers living with a family in Mexico far away from my small hometown in Kansas. Other cultures continue to attract me.

Manners and Durkin (2000) also point out that a coping defensive style is stabilizing to ego stage because the individual will deny information that is unsettling and requiring of a restructuring of personality. Maybe this is why it took me so long to accept that I needed to make change, until I talked to my close friend and she said, “We’re going to get out of here,” my job search had been very half-hearted. Prior to the conversation with her, I was in denial of the unsettling situations that would not allow me to remain in my “perfect job” as a learning executive.

In addition, Bursik (1995) showed that the achievement of higher ego stages for both genders is related to the integration of traits and behaviors typical of the opposite gender. This may illustrate as Loevinger (1976) suggested that higher stages are marked by greater flexibility and less adherence to social norms and expectations. This may describe aspects of my personality since I have always been attracted to science, aviation and I even became an engineer – all male dominated pursuits.

Transition to Chapter 4

The literature review informed my review and the analysis of my journals. In addition to the broad overview of transition and then development, I highlighted overlaps and areas of the literature that resonate with my own lived experience. My lived experience explored how I lived through a professional transition and how I was able to learn and grow from those experiences. For a synopsis of my lived experience, please refer to Appendix A – Chronology.

Chapter 4. Analysis and Interpretation

Analysis is a key part of autoethnography (Ellis, 2004; Ellis & Bochner, 2000). The writer, as a participant observer, records descriptions of events, experiences, and emerging understandings in a journal about the interchange of life and self. The journal entries are subjective texts that provide insight and interpretation of culture and self as the drama of transition and life unfolds. Each journal entry may be classified around specific categories of observations or themes. The themes that emerge are as limited as the knowledge of the researcher, but can be as broad as the researcher's imagination. I organized my journal entries around observations that related back to the literature review.

The review of the journal and reflective observations provided the framework for the interpretation of the data. The current classifications of data emerged after a number of attempts at organizing the journal entries. Since I was trying to explore how I was experiencing transition as a manager, I categorized my entries against the backdrop of the phases of transition described by Bridges (2001, 2004). As such, patterns and themes began to emerge about my experience as a manager moving through transition. In addition, I began to pull from the journals evidence that the journey of transition has helped me to grow and develop as a leader and as a person. To further test my perception that the professional transition served as an intervention that helped me grow and develop as a leaders and a person, I retook the Torbert, Cook-Greuter LDF/MAP assessment. See Appendix D.

Phases of Transition

The phases of transition as defined by Bridges (2001) and interpreted for this study include: ending and separating from my old role, color coded in my journals as red **R**; the neutral zone or the in-between time, color coded in my journals as yellow **Y**;

entering and embracing my new roles, color coded in my journals as green **G**. To help illustrate what I was interpreting from my journals, I include journal entries as appropriate. In some cases I have color coded them as to the phase(s) of transition I was experiencing at that time. Individual entries that helped illustrate the specific observations, themes or findings offset and single-spaced while entire journal entries are reproduced as they look in my OneNote journal or long-hand journal. The rest of this chapter is organized around the major observations and themes. Findings and conclusions will be included in the final chapter.

Knowing I was in Transition

Though I was probably in transition before I was aware that I was and certainly before and beyond the timeframe I set in order to frame this study (September 2009 through October 2010), Bridges (2001) notes that endings and losses are the first signs that people are in transition. The items that he includes as signs include:

1. A sudden and unexpected event that destroys the old life that made you feel like yourself. For me this included my husband Robert moving to LA, team layoffs, and my lost team.
2. The "drying up" of a situation or relationship that once felt vital and alive. For me this was my husband moving; compact with my organization and the senior leaders.
3. An activity that has always gone well before, suddenly and unexpectedly goes badly. For me this was my role at my organization.
4. A person or organization that you have always trusted proves to be untrustworthy and your whole sense of reality comes apart. Again this was the organization to which I had given 23 years and to whom I felt very loyal.
5. An inexplicable or unforeseen problem crops up, at the worst possible moment, to disrupt the ordinary functioning of your life. Breaking my wrist/hand and the subsequent surgery.

Observations

"Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are" (Reagon,1983).

As I reviewed my journal entries I began to note that there were observations I made throughout the journey of transition. These observations rose out of the journal entries and often repeated as patterns or threads running through the entries. Sometimes they were observations about the situation and other times they were observations about my experience of professional transition. Within the journals, I questioned myself and my situation as well as my reactions to those situations. I noted that my observations about situations were different from day to day. The observer observes the observer and what is seen and how it is seen changes over time. As I reviewed my journals, I often felt as if I were a voyeur into my life and that the perspective and my reactions to situations were in flux. The next few sections represent key observations I derived from my journals.

Impact of transition on my emotions. Change that leads to transition seemed to need to cause pain or discomfort in order for me to grow and develop. Often the difference in perspective either caused or was precipitated by my feelings at the time. So, throughout my journal entries, I recorded the impact of the transition on my emotions and the impact of my emotions during the transition journey. Emotion seems critical in order to engage in the process of transition. Table 2 gives an example of the RH/LH column journal entry for August 9th illustrating the impact of transition on my emotions. These types of illustrations will continue throughout in order to link my data, observations and findings. Following the table are individual observations from my journal. Again, this pattern will continue throughout.

Table 2

August 9, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>Well today was the day I had to reassign 4 people. All of them were cool and handled it well. They will be with us till November 30. My heart is broken. I just broke up probably one of the best teams I could ever have....cruel and unjust. I need to get out.</p> <p>R Y</p>	<p>My heart is breaking and I feel awful and disappointed. This is just one reason I need to get out of here. I am having trouble breathing</p> <p>R Y</p>
<p>Lucy got her job offer so she is free to leave and is Soooooo lucky. I am jealous as I should have had the job in Dallas. I wish her well, much luck and success.</p> <p>Y</p>	<p>I am still puzzled as to why I didn't get the job. They had really given me the impression that I had the job....did I do something wrong? Did they find something in my background that wasn't right? Should I seriously consider the other job if they offer it? God help me</p> <p>Y</p>

May 19, 2010 – Lots of anger, denial, grief and pain seem to be required to move me past fear. At times the pain and uncertainty seem to push me past what Argyris describes as defensive mechanisms. The pain and uncertainty make me feel vulnerable. What do I have to lose? Why am I so angry?

May 17, 2010 – ... pain makes us grow. Would have I looked for other opportunities if [my earlier organization] had not broken my heart?

May 17, 2010 – At times anger motivates me to move through transition and though it is part of the red zone, it propels me through the neutral zone allowing me to take hold of the new – so maybe cycling back through the phases is a good thing – it gives me momentum to move from red to green – there seems to be law of physics involved here. Maybe the cycling back and forth helps us develop momentum and velocity to get through the transition and even learn and grow.

Wandering in the neutral zone seemed to help get beyond my fear and beyond the pain...beyond the “f--- it” as described in story from Zander and Zander’s book (2000) *Art of Possibility*. In the book, Zander describes a young Spanish cellist who lost an audition for a principal role with the Barcelona symphony. The cellist felt that he had played too conservatively and with little passion. For the next audition, he figured, “what do I have to lose,” and he went to Madrid to audition for principal cellist there. He let out all the stops by pouring his heart and soul into the piece – explaining to Benjamin Zander that at that point he was “beyond the f--- it!” He played beautifully as never

before. And, he got the part at twice the salary he would have received in Barcelona. Maybe the emotion provides us the passion we need to propel us forward in a more authentic way.

Difficult to distinguish between the phases of transition. Even though I used Bridges (2001) three phases of transition to catalog my journal entries, I found very quickly, that it was very hard to determine what transition phase my thinking was in at any given point in time. I began to wonder if this was even a viable way to analyze my journals. However, this in and of itself told me something. It was hard to distinguish the phases of transition because I did not experience them in a linear fashion and the boundaries between those phases seemed permeable. I experienced all the phases in a single day and there were times when one situation and my reflection upon it sent me swirling through all the phases of transition. As I note in my journals:

May 9, 2010 – I go back from one phase to another in one day's entries within transition, I am often letting go of the old, dipping into the neutral zone (feels like free falling) all the while looking to a new future. The metaphor that comes to mind is that I am swimming in the deep ocean, and it is endless.

May 17, 2010 – On many days in May 2010, I was in all the phases of transition, letting go, neutral zone and starting anew in one day and sometimes in one journal entry as I describe and reflect upon the journal entry. "Interesting that as the day to leave my employer of 23 years comes closer, I seem to experience all the phases of transition simultaneously more frequently."

May 24, 2010 – I am starting to become anxious and sad as the day approaches that we will leave our home of over 20 years. As our last night in the house approaches I experience all the phases of transition at once. Is this possible?

March 2010 – Failure and success are sisters in the family called transition." (quote by UNKNOWN) A Greek tragedy? Some days I am exhilarated as I master a new way of thinking and behaving and I feel successful. Over days, I feel failure to my depths.

June 10 – 16, 2010 – Ceremonies and events such as my farewell tea and luncheons seemed to help me into the neutral zone so I could "let go" and eventually grasp the new. As the time came for me to leave my employer, time both sped up and slowed down. However, the formal farewell tea was a wonderful way to celebrate leaving and moving on. If nothing else, I was in the neutral zone.

June 8 – 9, 2010 – Transition is iterative and I find myself spiraling between the different phases. Transition requires time as I go through many iterations several times.

On September 14, 2010 below in Table 3, my entries for the day and the associated coding illustrate how I am recycling through all the stages of transition within one day.

Table 3

September 14, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>Better day today but still not my dream job. I do not like the commute but it wasn't so bad today. Not sure if I have reached a sense of ordinariness or not. G</p>	<p>Still wanting to go home but home is here! R Y</p>
<p>Talked to Julia about the lady who is interested in our condo...possibly buying or renting. They'll look at it Thursday night after work. G</p>	<p>I loved our condo, and I really miss it. I hope it looks ok. Don't know what we'll do, sell it or lease it. Selling it seems so final. We would be done with our hold state. I actually miss it. My girls are there. Many friends are there. I spent 24 years of my life there, raising my family R Y</p>
<p>Talked to Natalie tonight. She is studying for her world history AP class. She says she likes it though it is work. She felt the non-AP students were "dumb" about world history so she got out. She sounds good, but my how I miss her. G Y</p>	<p>I would be angry at the situation but it is in the past and seems pointless. Plus I am just tired. I am tired of many things. I am tired of the horrific heat. Seems to never ever cool down. It threatened to storm and is now down to 77 degrees but still feels muggy. R Y Lonely. Just Robert and me Y</p>

From my literature review, Bridges (2004) says that this recycling through the phases and not knowing exactly what phase we are in at any given time is normal and to be expected. It is the journey that is more important, not the milestones or the phases that we are in. My own experience confirmed this as well.

Time becomes amorphous. In addition, there were times when the past, present and future seemed to be one. Perhaps I was reminiscing about the past, walking in the present and worried about the unknowns of the future. In February of 2010, I note that time is amorphous:

February 10, 2010 – I had feelings of not being in the past, present or future – time is amorphous and I am experiencing time more as an ocean as opposed to a river. One minute I feel as though we have just arrived and moved into our house, our girls are born and grow up. Now it is time to leave. Time does not seem linear.

Throughout the transition, time periods seemed to blend together. It seemed surreal that just a year prior to the point in time, I was living a very different life in a very different role and organization. Without time as a solid anchor, it was hard to know who I was and who I wanted to be. I was learning that time and my place in it helped to determine my role and self-identity. And if time seemed amorphous, just who was I anyway? Sometimes I felt like I was watching myself as an actor. Was this me – in the past, present or future? And, did it really matter anyway? Maybe time doesn't matter. I am just me.

Dreams are both vivid and symbolic. I dream vividly of death which I learn symbolizes changes and transition as illustrated in Table 4 on December 30, 2009. The dream does not scare me though it is very vivid. I am an observer only. I recall watching myself as if I was in a movie. I was being chased by individuals who were intent upon killing me. I ran for a long time escaping capture many times. Then finally "they" killed me with a blunt instrument. I remember watching the scene outside of my body – I even spit on my killers. Though I was dead, they felt the insult and I was glad. Close to the time when I had to contemplate and then lay off my team, and as I began to have difficulty sleeping, my dreams become even more strange yet realistic. I often wondered if I was awake or sleeping.

Table 4

December 30, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>The night before last, I dreamt that I was pursued and killed. Interestingly enough I didn't feel fear, just the fact that my death was inevitable. I was unable to escape my death as I was running with a small crippled man who could not run fast. I did sense that the pursuer was an enemy. I watched them take my body back to a morgue like place. I felt defiant and wanted to "spit" on the people...however being dead it was very difficult. However eventually though dead, I was able to spit at a couple of the people. They were surprised but unbelieving that a corpse could "spit"</p> <p>G Y</p>	<p>I was curious so looked up possible meanings of a dream of one's own death. Here is what it said:</p> <p>To dream of your own death, indicates a transitional phase in your life. You are becoming more enlightened or spiritual. Alternatively, you are trying desperately to escape the demands of your daily life. To dream that you die in your dream, symbolizes inner changes, transformation, self-discovery and positive development that is happening within you or in your life. Dreams of experiencing your own death usually means that big changes are ahead for you. You are moving on to new beginnings and leaving the past behind. These changes do not necessarily imply a negative turn of events. Metaphorically, dying can be seen as an end or a termination to your old ways and habits. So, dying does not always mean a physical death, but an ending of something.</p> <p>My sense is that all of these possible interpretations apply to my life right now. I am definitely in a transitional phase. I am breaking away from an employer that I have been with since 1986. I am taking apart a department and function I created and am ending several important relationships in my life right now. I also believe that I am becoming more spiritual. And, yes, I am trying to escape the fact that next week, I have to lay off more people and further minimize our department. Hopefully all of this will mean that I am changing and transforming for the better. I hope that it means that GOOD big changes are ahead.... A new job? In a new place? Robert and me back together in the same city? I need to leave the past behind and move onto new beginnings.</p> <p>Y</p>

Need to care for myself physically. I began to realize that transition is a marathon journey and that I do better when I have eaten healthy and gotten rest. As challenging as it is, I tried to exercise and eat healthy. It was hard though. The challenges caused me to crave sweets and carbohydrates. I ran my usual three miles when possible, but some mornings, it was more difficult than other days. When I did run, I felt so much better and calmer. I was able to finally sleep at night. It took away the

fear...most of the time, and at least temporarily. A couple of journal entries from the summer of 2010:

August 17, 2010 – There is a need to care for myself physically – transition is like a marathon and am really challenged by anxiety and fear (putting me smack dab back in the red zone) when I am tired.

August 17, 2010 – Sleep and energy levels are important. Transition, like life, is sometimes a marathon and a sprint. I have to be ready for whatever the day throws at me.

I also profoundly felt my age and mortality during my recovery from the fracture and wrist surgery. Simple things became difficult.

Difficulty in separating out personal versus professional transition. This study is about professional transition, but I had difficulty separating between my professional and personal transitions. The professional transition affected me personally as well as my friends and loved ones around me. Earlier researchers (Breu & Benwell, 1999; Nicholson, 1984; Slay, 2006) seemed to be able to focus on professional transition. How did they carve the professional piece out of the whole person? A couple of illustrations from my journal are below.

August 21, 2010 – I find it difficult to separate my personal transition (home, friends, family, etc.) from professional transition – what the academics call a work role transition. For me, they are comingled. I am the sum of all my parts. Is this one of the problems with traditional positivist research where life and its accoutrements are easily compartmentalized? True confessions: I have developed and used the skill of compartmentalization to get through difficult days (e.g. laying off members of my team, saying good bye, etc.) and to shut out issues or parts of myself and my “reality” that I did not want to deal with.

September 10, 2010 – Maybe all transition is a mix...it cannot be split out. It may start out personal and then bleed over to professional or vice versa. In my case, who knows where it really started. Did it really start with my professional role? It became and still is a “spiral” – hopefully an expansive one in my development path! I remember the summer of 2008 before everything completely imploded. I was driving to work on a shimmering perfect summer day feeling blessed that I had arrived at a wonderful place in my career. I and my team were doing excellent work and we felt that in many small ways each day we were having a positive impact on the members of the organization. I was also pleased that I was in a place where I could find an internship for my oldest daughter with my organization. I was proud to be part of that organization. I felt it benefited me, my family and community. And, it had for more than 20 years.

September 10, 2010 – I question if continuing my doctoral studies while in the midst of a job search and then in a new job is worthwhile. The program is endless and so is the transition. I try not to think too much about this and just keep taking one step at a time. I am afraid if I stop writing, I'll stop forever and never complete the program.

So I find that just as time is fluid and one, so is my very being. I am a professional but most of all I am simply a person. Carving out aspects of me, does not seem natural nor do I see that it serves a purpose for research or for my own learning. Also, I realize that deep down inside, there is only one me and I have always been here. I have learned to recognize eternity in the midst of transition.

Effect upon relationships and self-identity. Change and transition affect my relationships which in turn affect my self-identity since I often define my roles around important relationships, e.g. mother, wife, daughter, boss, coworker, etc.

May 19, 2010 – Transition affects all of our roles and relationships. I continue to worry about the effect of moving youngest daughter right before her senior year. I feel uncertain. I also wonder how my relationship with my husband will be affected. Will we survive as a couple, a family?

The changes that lead to transition inevitably lead to worry about and impact upon others, e.g. moving daughter in her senior year, husband moving across the country. It seems we all need each other to provide “change” or trigger points to help us learn and grow. Throughout my journals I worried and grieved a lot about my youngest daughter and the impact my transition had upon my family and professional colleagues: I had to force myself to remember that they are creative, capable and complete individuals who create their own lives and identities. They will find their own paths through their own transitions as we all must. All my roles and relationships are affected by this work role transition – on May 20th 2010 I am uncertain about my role as a professional, wife and mother.

Table 5

August 21, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>Natalie was openly crying last night. It breaks my heart. She is missing her friends back home so much and dreading the beginning of school on Monday</p> <p>R</p>	<p>My heart is breaking because I am struggling with this move. I also recall how tough the first couple of weeks were at the new job. I too am missing our old home. I am tired of the heat. I am tired of long days at work. I am not enjoying the work. I am basically an overpaid data tech. Hours are too long and are not value added. The folks around me are still trying to "make their mark." For me, this is not necessary or even relevant. How can I escape? Do I just put in a couple of years, finish my dissertation and get out?</p> <p>R</p>

Bridges (2001) talks about the 5th DIS- the discovery of a new life, new identity and new outlook. There were days where I felt that I was on the cusp of discovering and inventing a new life and a new me.

August 29, 2010 – Once in the neutral zone you go onto the 5th DIS....discovery of a new life, a new identity and a new outlook p .62-63 (Bridges) I am in the neutral zone and trying to develop a new life and an identity. My outlook is cautious. I am still weepy. **Y**

Developing new skills – asking for help, discussing “undiscussibles”.

During the transition period I realized that I had to develop new skills. I was also less afraid to try new behaviors. It seemed that my defensive mechanisms (Argyris, 1962, 1991) were lowered and I was able to observe, reflect and try new behaviors as I experienced and felt new situations. Torbert and Associates (2004) action inquiry seemed to be easier to employ. Nothing was set in stone and therefore could be tested. The rules of success changed for me, so I had to create new rules and test them. Though I am normally risk-averse, I had to take more risks and move out of my comfort zone.

During my vision quest and after my surgery, I had to learn to ask for help and learn to be more interdependent. During my transition, I personally had to learn to ask for help and be interdependent which due to my strong sense of independence is very difficult for me. I have to learn to trust people and processes that are unfamiliar to me.

February 2010 – I learned this lesson within the experience of my vision quest and then again with the injury and surgery to my arm. I had to ask for help when I was injured, otherwise I was limited in my ability to function.

Transition helped me learn to speak more directly and bring my own feelings and thoughts to the table. I learned that “undiscussibles” (Argyris, 2000) can be dangerous for individuals, couples, friends and organizations. A barrier to transition and growth for organizations and individuals is when there are undiscussibles. Internally we need to challenge our own thinking and ask ourselves what we are not facing. We sometimes have blockages to our own transition because we have things we know inside of us but they are undiscussible. Table 6 illustrates how this became very clear to me.

Table 6

January 13, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
When I was out jogging this morning, some aha's came to mind that seemed profound to me...probably because I saw the lesson in threes and in parallels...Here I transcribe:	I am learning that when I do have the courage to speak authentically (respectfully of course!) people do respond to me differently and engage at a much more real and human level. Y G

(continued)

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>While jogging this morning, something became more/very clear to me. We MUST remain in regular healthy conversation/dialogue in organizations and relationships to stay connected and productive. Just because there is no conflict doesn't mean that the relationship is healthy - or the organization. Regular authentic dialogue from the heart is what counts. Where the undiscussibles pile up - then it gets even harder to talk...and we hurt ourselves and others...sometimes we are even having a false one sided dialogue unchallenged because the other is not there to talk, pick up the thread and challenge our assumptions...then at worst, the downward spiral begins. We do this to individuals, groups, organizations and entire cultures and countries. Once things close up/down, the relationship become stagnant. We must speak from the heart.</p> <p>At my former organization there were SO many undiscussibles which cause us to make so many stupid decisions that affect people's lives. Many bad decisions or no decisions are made on faulty information that is never challenged or substantiated. There is no malice intended...it is all the law of unintended consequences...but the ignorance causes myriad evil and hurtful results. The analogy in healthcare is the ability to discuss near misses and errors. If we don't discuss them they perpetrate. If we discuss them, we learn from them, can reflect and change our practices.</p> <p>I also have personal examples of this as well. When Robert and I stopped talking and engaging - well before he moved to LA - LA didn't help, we grew apart and distant. Since August of 2008 we have been slowly trying to reinitiate dialogue. I was surprised when he spoke up and actually indicated he loves me and wants to stay with me. So we begin talking and reacquainting with each other. In the past we were good friends. I know now we are different. But whatever happens, we will create it via honest authentic dialogue.</p> <p>I guess I had to learn this lesson on many different levels.</p> <p>Y G</p>	<p>Y G</p>

Externally, I learned to speak my mind honestly and directly because the landscape and situation were both new to me.

January 25' 2011 – I had to leave my organization because I had no voice – I, and many like me, became “undiscussible.”

I wonder if I was too optimistic in my old situation for too long. I was always putting a positive spin on things and hoping for the best. The reality was undiscussible and I did not want to face the possible actions I would need to take in order to change the situation or move on. Perhaps it was all in front of me but not something that I could access or discuss. As Tenkai (Reischauer, 2009) wrote, “See with your eyes, hear with your ears. Nothing is hidden” (p. 45).

I seemed to develop the capacity to speak more directly, honestly and authentically in difficult times because of the love and respect I was feeling for the individuals that I had to lay off. I felt had no other choice and I learned that dialogue becomes critical. And though in reality, I had many choices, in order to live my own values and to respect the humanity of my fellow colleagues, I chose to speak directly and honestly. They deserved nothing less. I couldn't increase their pain by lessening mine out of fear. To this day, I find it easier to be authentic and direct in my communications. But, I do it out of sense of care and concern and not from an “authoritative” place. In my new position, I become known as a straight talker. People tell me that I say the things that many are thinking but afraid to say. However, I also have to appreciate that directness can be painful to some. However, it may be a skill that I bring to my organization as it begins to face unprecedented change.

Though I wonder to this day, if I am really able to consistently practice speaking honestly and authentically. I can think of some “undiscussibles” that are still easier not to confront at this time. I also wonder what “undiscussibles” there are that I am not even aware of. And alas, as part of autoethnography I have to be selective about what I can share and purposefully leave some things unsaid and “undiscussible” even though they have been an integral part of this journey.

Who am I - really? I seemed to be able to move on and take hold of the new when I got in touch with who I am, letting go of fear, trusting the process. This is similar to my vision quest experience. I had to reacquaint myself with the various parts of “Jean Ann.” Many parts had been lost and left in the past years ago. Ironically, I was able to take hold of the new when I reacquainted myself with the former me, the real me and/or all of me. The holistic sum of the parts is so much more effective than the various roles and façades I felt compelled to portray throughout my life. It seems that transition took me back to the past and to the basics of who I am. Again this experience was presaged by the vision quest. Transition gave me the opportunity to drop the facades and reacquaint myself with who I am and who I have always been.

Letting go of those facades seemed to occur when I have no or limited choices. My sense was that change and events around were occurring so quickly that I have no choice but to move on. I often wondered, “What is next for me?” Planning too much and too detailed a fashion seemed futile.

Difficulty in identifying why the change moved me into transition and development. My dissertation chair asked me to consider what factors; social/environmental versus individual/personal might have enabled me to use the changes around me to transition, and then learn and grow. What about me and my experience are unique that allowed me to grow while this is the exception rather than the rule? What is difficult is that the “membrane” between my environment (current situation, past history, socialization, etc.) and who I am individually and personally is very permeable. It is hard to know where one starts and the other stops. So much of who I am was acquired from my upbringing and surroundings.

Why are some people able to use change to help them transition and grow? How many change opportunities have I resisted using and missed out on the opportunity to

transition, learn and grow. What can I do to make sure that I am able to take advantage of transition to learn and grow in the future? What is the secret? Is it about our choices, where we focus our attention, our support groups, and our relationships? So what are the common themes? How does change cause transition which might or might not cause development? My journal entries seem to provide more questions than answers.

Have the changes which led me to transition led me to develop? It seems partly iterative; e.g. I saw change around me...it shook up my levels a bit so I was able to begin seeing myself beyond my boundaries, make a transition which then led me to ascend another level and perceive more change and transition. We are like electrons at a particular atomic level. Until there is enough friction/energy, we never "jump" or evolve to the next level. Our social environment shapes us as individuals, introduces changes which provide an opportunity to experience transition, but there is a dance. I am finding that though I doing this autoethnographical research, I still have more questions than answers. In the findings section of this dissertation I will make an informed guess or hypothesis as to how and why I was able to grow two ego stage levels.

I have a journal entry on August 9th 2010 illustrated in Table 7 where I question and explore what enables or hinders my ability to use the change to transition and develop. I reflect upon experiences that helped push me outside of my comfort zone causing me to learn. I wonder, am I only capable of developing when I put myself, or when I am forced into situations outside of my comfort zone?

Table 7

August 9, 2010 – RH/LH Column Journal entry

Observations	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>In talking with Ken, he asked me to explore the foreground which is my study. The background is what others say...the literature review. He challenged me to investigate new ways of being? Have I found new ways of being?</p> <p>How have my experiences made me fortunate?</p> <p>Have the challenges and difficulties led to growth?</p> <p>What do I have that enabled me to survive a very difficult time? What are the enablers? What are the obstacles (FEAR)</p> <p>G</p>	<p>I believe that through living in other cultures: Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Honduras, etc. and the vision quest, I observed other ways of being. I have untapped reservoirs of strength and knowing within myself. Like giving birth, the four days in the forest made me aware of my physical strength. In Mexico and Venezuela I saw others, with very different value systems and cultures, making up their lives of love, service, grief, joy, sadness and frustration. And even as a young girl of 15, they were able to accept me and love me and I was able to accept and love them too.</p> <p>The vision quest gave me the opportunity to open my eyes to other realms of seeing, being and knowing. I found that even without all of my "props" of who I am, there is a deeper me or self within. I also learned of other realms from Sandy, my vision quest protector. She taught me of the power of Reiki energy healing for both acute tooth pain and for muscle aches She helped me appreciate love that is an inherent part of the universe and the unity that includes me. I also learned that the spiritual world just is. It is as comfortable as a sitting in my favorite chair with an old sweater. It is not scary or bizarre. And an underlying theme is 'love' - perhaps all four meanings from the Greek: agape, eros, philia and storg In my contemplations and arguments with myself I believe I explored all of these definitions in the forest.</p> <p>I wonder if I was too comfortable with my life in Michigan which caused me to stray from my center or my core. Now I am in Texas....in the desert - I have to rely on myself, while appreciating my husband and his love for me. So will this help me move forward and develop? I am also learning about love being far from my beloved daughters.</p> <p>When I look back on my life, times of change: moving, studying, etc. Life phase changes have "forced" transition upon me....or did I choose it? But what is the alternative? I had to keep putting one foot in front of the other. And what opportunities to learn and grow did I miss?</p> <p>What helps me move forward? The ability to be the observer? What hinders me? It seems that fear, lack of self-esteem and at times selfishness hold me back.</p> <p>G</p>

We make our own sense of our experiences and identities. Based upon my observations of professional transition, sensemaking was important to recreating myself into a new role and at a different developmental stage which can be an important part and outcome of transition. Bridges (2004) also found sensemaking an important part of the transition journey. In order to learn and grow, we must make sense of the changes going around us. And how we are able to socially construct those changes help us experience those changes as either a victim or a learner.

During the professional transition, I was reframing and relearning. Argyris and Schön (1974) define three action strategies for Model II behavior. Model II behavior includes the ability to speak openly and let others challenge our assumptions. Model II behavior is cooperative, win/win, rational and emotional, truly caring, and reflective in its reasoning (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Argyris and Schön note that the governing values of Model II behavior include: maximizing valid information by providing others directly observable information; maximizing free and informed choice where individuals can define their own objectives, define how to reach them and relate his or her objectives to his or her personal need; maximizing internal commitment to decisions made so that one feels responsible for the choices made. Argyris and Schön define three action strategies for Model II behavior. Those strategies are: make designing and managing the environment a bilateral task – everyone is involved in the sharing control over the situation, make protection of self or others a joint operation, speak in directly observable categories – “This creates a predisposition towards inquiry and learning” (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 91). With my team, which was being dramatically downsized, we had to reframe and relearn collectively. I did my best to employ Model II behaviors despite the fear and anxiety regarding the situation. However, I had a deep respect and high regard for my team that I could not be anything but honest. Plus, they had helped to teach me interdependence.

Also, conversations about the past and present help us create our reality and learn. Through social constructionism, we assume that we create our own reality which enables us to act and take a different path or paths (Pasupathi, 2001). Talking about the situation and possible options of staying, leaving and moving on, helped me to reframe my possibilities.

December 9, 2009 – Talking to others on a similar path is helpful, reassuring and energizing....my friend – helps me move forward...many many times – most recently on Sept 22, 2010, she helped me reframe my/our situation more positively.

April 1, 2010 – It was great talking to my trusted friend and colleague...a fellow traveler who has undergone and is undergoing similar transition. We reflected on what was working, our challenges and what we think we are learning. She had many interesting perspectives. We talked about the fact that supportive relationships helped us get through....for both of us our husbands and a few key friends or family members had helped us through the tough times. We talked about how or why we were different. Many people we know see the changes but instead of acting, they become paralyzed. For them, there is no transition...it is just about "hunkering down" and trying to weather the storm until it returns to normal. It is about fear.

October 4, 2009 – My colleague talked about the signs she saw in the economy and the fear she felt. The fear caused her to start visualizing a different positive future...so she began to look for other opportunities. For others, the fear paralyzes them...all they see is a negative future. I know that for many months I was paralyzed or even at first, hoping for the best and that it really wasn't so bad and that I could stay where I was. But at some point I had to push the denial aside and realize that if I wanted to choose my future, I was going to have to create it on my terms.

The theme of social constructionism is intertwined with development through the action logics.

June 4, 2010 – Could it be that as I develop and learn, it causes my reactions to my environment to change which then causes the environment and those around me to change giving me an enhanced ability to transition and then learn from the transition. Rather than a cause and effect, it is an endless spiral and hard to get my thoughts around. I talk about framing my own reality and identify a more current example about how I've told myself a negative story about someone making myself internally angry or less respectful toward them. I realize that because of this negative story, I unconsciously treat them differently and get very negative responses back from them, further hurting the relationship. I also learn that I can completely turn this around by how I reconstruct the situation and the relationship. My actions and reactions, which are within my control, once I am aware of them, help me reshape what I consider reality which enables me to get a different outcome.

Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) note that "sensemaking is about action. In sensemaking, action and talk (inquiry with another) are cycles" (p. 412). My discussions

with a trusted colleague throughout my job search helped me take the steps to begin and continue the search and to continue imagining that there might be other opportunities despite my reluctance to make the changes that would take me far from a place, time, and job that I loved. In essence, transitions cause us to challenge our own social construction. It causes us to ask ourselves two important questions: What is going on here? And what do I do next?

Torbert (2000) notes that transition can cause the need to use action inquiry in order to survive the many new experiences. This is like the cycles of action research (AR) and action inquiry is a form of AR which helps us rewrite ourselves or socially reconstruct our “realities.” We act, assess, talk, think and then try it all over again. Eventually we evolve and grow into new spaces and places. Again, reflecting back to my conversations with my close friend who also saw the same signs that I did and the need to leave, I found our conversations around our situation and possible next steps to be an important part of how I could construct a new reality and take the action steps to get me there.

Transition involved dealing with losses. On some level, change can result in feelings of loss and certainly change that leads to transition causes us to feel a sense of loss. That loss may be a loss of a past or present identity as well as pain and regret for the people and places we realize that we didn't appreciate or love until we lost them. Bridges (2001) notes that within transition there are four cardinal aspects of loss: disengagement, which is the separation from whatever it is that you have lost; disidentification, or the way that the loss destroys the old identity you had; disenchantment, which refers to the way that the loss tears you out of the old reality you accepted unthinkingly; disorientation is how, as a result of losing the object of your feeling and the identity you had together (as with a loved one) or with it (as with a job)

and the reality you experienced, you feel bewildered and lost. These four aspects of loss resonate with me as I reflect back upon my experience of professional transition.

On May 18th 2010 and in the right hand column of my journal on May 20th, included in Table 8, I talk about disillusionment and a corresponding loss of my identity as a professional and to a certain extent as a mother since I am becoming an “empty nester.” I further talk about the need to reinvent myself in the southwest US. The whole region and my organization have disillusioned me.

Table 8

May 18 -20, 2010– RH/LH Column Journal Entry

Observations and Descriptions	Thoughts and Impressions
<p>I am having a really hard time with the grieving process and I feel guilty</p> <p>Y R</p>	<p>I seem paralyzed or at least like I am walking through deep mud. I cannot seem to be productive. I am so sad. I have been so disillusioned, by my organization, by him. I am losing my identity. Is my career number one? Can it be? Was it ever? Everything I built, I had to disassemble. I have not lost anyone in death but I have lost part of me. The empty nest is catching up with me too. I did not expect it because I thought I had a life, a career. I thought that that would shield me. But, that was a chimera. Now my girls are on their way out. My job is over, my life here is over. I must go with my husband and reinvent myself in the southwest...both my career and my friends. Somehow, I feel that I am missing something - that somehow, I missed out. What would I have done? What could I have done? What evil did I do? I remember learning that fear is what causes evil. I was afraid and I was evil.</p>
	<p>Because of it, I hurt badly...pushed people and situations away. It can never ever be the same. I must go on. Reinvent myself. As Eckhart Tolle (1999) says, “I must stop thinking about my thoughts...situations just are. My thoughts about those situations are what grieve me.” This is ironic since the right hand column records my thoughts and reactions and I need these feelings in order to help me grow from my experiences. Maybe I need to start a debate with Eckhart Tolle.</p>

(continued)

Observations and Descriptions	Thoughts and Impressions
	<p>I feel as though I am in a fog. I am very weepy and want to cry a lot. How can I escape? How can I shake this? Even learn from it? What is this situation trying to teach me?</p> <p>Y R</p>

Kübler-Ross' (1997) writing also helped me to understand that the loss in transitions helped me to grow. Transition is an integral part of life. It teaches me about unconditional love. We never really lose anything in the universe. It is all ours. It always was, is and will be. This is a comforting way to frame transition and loss.

Reframing around love and gratitude

As I began to see my way through the transition, I realized how blessed I was by all the love in my life. Reframing around love through transition is similar to Otto Scharmer's (2007) description of Theory U which he describes as the concept of authentic presencing. By moving through the "U" we connect with our essential self, and we pay attention in a way that allows us to experience the opening of our minds, our hearts, and our wills. However in order to get to authentic presencing, we have to move through the depths of the U. Once I passed through the bottom most phases of transition, I began to ascend again and started to see that I could move through the experience and that I am truly blessed. In August of 2010, living in a new city, 6 weeks into a new job at a new organization, I began to reframe my thoughts around gratitude and love.

From the August 28, 2010 right hand column of my journal:

I realize that I am blessed to be here and now. I need to use my current job and situation as a school for learning and witnessing the nature of unconditional love. I need to pick up the thread in order to learn, love and develop.

As indicated in my vision quest, the true power and beauty is love, unconditional love. In our lives we see only glimpses...and sometimes they are even pathological - in my case I cling like a moth to flame and get burned. I need to let go...practice unconditional love

but let people be. Sandy, my vision quest protector exemplified this. During the quest, I was touched by her unconditional love. I had never felt so taken care of since I was a small child growing up with my parents - and of course then I had no idea that that wasn't the way it was always supposed to be.

I hope that as my daughters go through their days and their lives, they feel that same unconditional love that I have felt. Being a mother is truly a gift.

As I summarized the major observations and themes from journals based on my experience of developing during a professional transition, my experience helped me arrive at the following findings.

Transition to Chapter 5

From the observations and reflections upon my professional transition journey, several themes emerged into findings and conclusions. With the findings, I began to explore what this experience of professional transitions is teaching me and how I have learned from my experiences and the experiences of other writers. I deeply understood and appreciated that other writers had similar if even only tangential experiences to mine. Their writings and wisdom offered me strong shoulders on which I could stand. I realize and appreciate that as human beings we are all on a similar journey of life and that it is the friction against us caused by relationships and situations that allows us to transition, learn, grow and develop.

Chapter 5. Findings, Conclusions and Moving Forward

Findings

In analyzing my data, it was often difficult to determine what was an observation, a finding, or what conclusions and recommendations could be culled from my journal entries. My observations offered glimpses into my lived experiences and my thoughts and feelings around those observations. At some point, my observations and the themes I extracted began to morph into overarching learnings and findings. My findings emphasize what I have learned and how I have developed as a manager and as a person. The findings below represent what I have learned and the current conclusions I have drawn from this time of professional transition.

I am always in transition. Life is transition and transition is the flow of life. As the Chinese proverb says, “Flowing water never goes bad.” We must embrace change and transition in order to live and grow. In reality, we are always in transition, or on the cusp. We are just not always aware of it. Bridges (2001) notes that we are within transitions that are also within transitions as we live our lives. It is an endless spiral. Though we cannot control the external changes around us, whether our transitions cause us to spiral in an upward path of growth and development or downward into stagnation is a choice that we can make for ourselves.

July 4, 2010 – I begin to wonder if this is just what life is....we are always in some cycle of transition –some large, some small. Some transitions we are barely aware of. Others are or later become earth shattering.

The Vision Quest prepared me to handle transition. As I journeyed through the transition, I realized how pivotal my vision quest experience was in preparing me to develop through transition. The vision quest provided a transition experience and the corresponding learning that involved my mind, body and spirit and felt both visceral and

spiritual. Prior to going on the vision quest, I had to try to prepare myself for a journey and changes that I could not anticipate. Then, I had to “be” in that space. At the time, I was fearful and resentful of the whole process and couldn't wait to get out. I did it in order to complete a requirement for my doctoral program. But it turned out to be very profound. For the course I designed a learning experience that took me out of my comfort zone where I could learn on a much deeper level, perhaps in spite of myself. It has provided me a place where I can go back to my very being and my core self. And though no trumpets blared or cymbals crashed, even to this day, lessons continue to unfold from that week long experience.

August 28, 2010 – It seems that my vision quest and the paper I wrote about it are more than an “artifact.” It is a real experience that taught me in one short but long week about myself and transition. It also taught me that I am a lot stronger than I ever imagined possible.

It should have come as no surprise that the best groundwork to prepare me for transition was my vision quest experience. The vision quest is a metaphor for transition in many cultures (Foster & Little, 1980; Masse, 2008). It exercised my transition muscle and gave me confidence in my abilities to weather the storm (literally and figuratively) and learn new skills outside of my comfort zone. I was also researching and exploring transition in myself.

And, I emerged as a different and changed person. Being cognizant that I am able to survive and learn new things about myself – though terrified at times, helped me through my professional transition as well. Also, the vision quest helped me to realize that I have incredible inner resources, support systems and capabilities that I seldom appreciate or utilize. I also learned to trust and ask for help. To this day, I continue to derive meaning and awareness from that one week in late July 2008.

July 10, 2010 – My first few days at the new job are like my vision quest – I am out of my comfort zone. I am experiencing stress at the physical, emotional intellectual and spiritual levels.

Transition helps me live more in the moment. As Emerson (1994) said, “We are always getting ready to live, but never living” (p. 154). During the experience of professional transition, I felt more in the moment and alive – albeit at times I was grieving and in pain. I couldn’t see what was ahead so I had to be in the moment. My journal entries often reflected this feeling of being in the moment during the times when I felt the transition deeply.

July 4, 2010 – Transition seems to make things more poignant in that they stand out more. I seem to live more in the present moment. I am a very intense observer. The last few days with my former employer and in my old home are very detailed and I am aware of many things – almost seeing them for the first time. Also on the new job I keep noticing more. I feel more alive. I pay intense attention to everything needing to learn and pick up all the cues around me.

July 4, 2010 – Something that occurs to me...because I am in a new situation (new job), I am on high alert. I must pay close attention to everything around me. Everyone is observing me closely. I feel like a small child who is hyper observant. Maybe this helps me stay in the present moment? However I also need to learn and contextualize what I am observing. I also have to ask for feedback and welcome it (I code this reflection “yellow” for being in the neutral zone.) This is very interesting. The neutral zone as I code it does not seem to be an ephemeral space where we emotionally and psychologically go to “float around,” it is a very active place where new growth and learning are being birthed – akin to what goes on inside a germinating seed.

Bridges (2001) comments that “it is when we are in transition that we are most completely alive” (p. 85). He further says that “once in the neutral zone you go into the fifth dis...discovery of a new life, a new identity and new outlook” (p. 86). This was certainly something that I experienced and continue to experience each day.

It occurs to me that this feeling of “being alive” and feeling in the moment may be due to the pain. Most days in the old and the new situation, I was trying to get through the day and figure out who am I now, do I like this new job, new city, new identity? Where do I fit? At the same time I was missing my old world, house, neighborhood, friends, family, job, etc. It seems that this feeling of being more alive – for better or worse - seems part the transition journey. The readings: Bridges (2001, 2004), Vaill (1996), Torbert and Associates (2004), Rooke and Torbert (2005), and Torbert and Fisher (1992) spoke to me because of the journey that I was on. The transition and being in a

strange place heightened my awareness. I felt that I had to be conscious and “on” at all times. I had to attend to my entire situation because nothing came easily. Perhaps this is one of the ways that transition helped me learn and grow. I become a better “noticer” as Warren Bennis advised us to do in a lecture as part of our doctoral course work. It was exhausting work to be on high alert and notice everything. It was difficult to relax. Learning and developing from transition is like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it gets.

Thoughts on development. Wilber (2000b, 2001) views development as levels or waves that we must move through as we learn and grow. Within those levels, we are bounded by what we can see. We can see below but not the levels above. The levels define the boundaries between us and the outside (it and them), and higher levels allow us to encompass even more of the other (family, our town, our tribe, community, our country, the world, the universe, etc.) Based upon my experience, it seems that transition breaks down those barriers and in some cases, causes us to redefine and redraw the boundaries a little bit wider affecting our “view of the world.” This in turn allows us to grow, develop and ascend a level of consciousness. By breaking down those barriers, we redefine who we are in the universe and we expand. In the end it seems that development is not linear, but is rich, complex and at times, mysterious.

Transition impacts my growth and development. Transition impacted my growth and development as a leader and as a person. I sensed that the transition helped me move from an Achiever through an Individualist and ultimately to a Strategist (most of the time) to use Torbert and Associates (2004) action logics terminology. To confirm my assumption that I had developed and hoping that it wasn't just wishful thinking, I anxiously awaited my results to the Leadership Maturity Profile from Dr. Cook-Greuter using her sentence completion SCTi-MAP method. She offered the results in a format

she termed an updated form of the MAP (Cook-Greuter, 2011). The results from the MAP questionnaire I completed in April 2011 versus that of 2007 confirmed that I had moved up two developmental stage levels from Achiever to Strategist. Per Cook-Greuter (1999, 2000, 2002, 2004), it is rare for someone to move up two levels once they have reached adulthood and particularly beyond the Achiever level which in the West is often considered the pinnacle of success.

I wondered why I was able to develop and grow from this experience and not become undone by it. A major enabler of transition leading to development is what Pfaffenberger (2005) calls a “meaningful engagement with challenging life events” (p. 279). My vision quest experience gave me the practical experience to learn to engage in my environment and meet challenges outside of my personal comfort zone. Breaking my arm taught me to engage in order to relearn basic activities of daily living. Every activity of daily living presented me with a problem to be creatively solved. And though I would not recommend breaking a limb or embarking on a vision quest in order to develop and grow, I would suggest that for those of us on a quest for learning and growth, we seek out those opportunities to engage with challenging life events.

King (2001) notes that psychotherapy can also serve this role of helping us engage in confronting the challenges we face. Though I didn't have psychotherapy, I immersed myself in reflecting and observing my behaviors, reactions and feelings during a challenging time of professional transition through the use of my dissertation journals and my literature reviews. Ironically, writing this dissertation served as an intervention that helped me meaningfully engage in the challenge of new life events which in turn allowed me to personally grow towards a higher ego development state. Writing the dissertation while moving across the country, starting a new job and becoming an empty nester with daughters living far away, also gave me many opportunities to engage with

new struggles and challenges. At times, the logistics and heartaches along the way made it all seem to be a puzzle to be solved.

Transition is non-linear as is my development. Bridges (2001) offers three ideas about the journey of transition though he notes that there are no clear step-by-step directions to follow. First, every journey is a round-trip that does not end when you reach your imagined destination. It is only after a return trip where you bring back whatever you gained; and with its help, transform it into what you have been seeking. Second, the journey experience exists at every level - from that of the whole lifetime to that within every transition we make. It may even be that this “whole lifetime” is simply one of those little transitions within some larger cycle of existence. And third, it is being on the path - the way - that has the effect upon us, not the steps we take on getting to the path's destination (Bridges, 2001). A key point I would add to Bridges' metaphor of the round trip journey, is that we need the reflection upon the events to make it a round trip journey that enables us to learn and grow. Reflections upon the journey also help us recognize and learn from the transitions within transitions as well as recognizing that we are in transition. Why is this important? It helps us use the transition to learn and grow. And, since we will always be in transitions that at best may be uncomfortable and at worst, may be painful, we may as well use the opportunity to learn and grow.

Importance of reflection and journaling. As I alluded in the last paragraph, the act of journaling and reflecting on the events around me and my thoughts and feelings around those events helped me to transition and learn from the changes around me. I had to reflect upon situations and actions if I wished to grow. Also, on the tough days my journaling and reflections helped me to makes sense of the situations and learn and grow from them. It was the reflection upon and study of my situation that helped me develop. Also, use of the RH/LH columns in journaling about my professional transition

aided in my ability to employ action inquiry (Torbert & Associates, 2004). This approach was a meta-cognitive approach where I reflected and thought about my thinking as well as my actions in order to reframe and use the experiences to grow. Thus my reflection upon experiences gave me traction in my ability to learn and develop.

My Next Steps

Autoethnography is a unique and personally demanding approach to studying a phenomenon. One's very life becomes a laboratory for learning and deriving meaning. As a methodology it is often messy as is life. It is difficult to recognize endings or beginnings until we view them from the past. Thus, it was difficult to arbitrarily select a time frame for this study, a beginning and an end, because the transitions within transitions continue every day of my existence. Transition and development are not events or points in time. Both of them are iterative processes and journeys. Transition doesn't necessarily have a happy ending nor does it end because the dissertation must end. One unintended benefit of writing this dissertation is that I now appreciate that I am constantly in the midst of some sort of transition, so I must seize the opportunity, observe it, embrace it and determine what it is the moment is capable of teaching me. Sometimes I cannot learn the lesson so I just have to keep moving, one step at a time. As Winston Churchill (1986) was quoted to have said, "If you're going through hell, keep going" (p. 596).

Knowing that I will be in transition every day of my life, and in order not to lose my development momentum achieved while writing this dissertation, I am maintaining my journals both the long hand journal and my adaptation of Argyris' RH/LH column journal. I do this in order to intentionally and meaningfully engage with the problems and challenges in my life. I also make it a daily practice to spend time in meditation. As soon

as the manuscript is handed in, my plan is to become more intentional about meditation as I am with my journaling.

Why Does This Matter?

Managers will likely experience a variety of transitions throughout their careers. Some planned and others not. Helping these managers survive these transitions can be important to maintaining organizational talent. Even better would be helping these managers learn and grow from the transitions that they experience. And if these transitions can help managers achieve higher ego states, even better. Several studies have shown that higher ego stages are associated with increased managerial effectiveness (Bushe & Gibbs, 1990; Torbert, 1994). Torbert's studies show that as managers progress to higher stages, using action inquiry, action and inquiry do indeed become more integrated, and individuals become more effective in leadership positions.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Practitioners can learn from my study to embrace transitions as opportunities to learn and grow despite knowing that those transitions may involve discomfort, pain and may even threaten to rock their very worlds. We should stop and ask, "What is this situation trying to teach me?" Or, "What can I learn from this?" Sometimes letting go and just going with the flow and the moment can bring momentary if not lifelong insights. Also, each transition better prepares us for all the other transitions that will follow as we experience our lives. Facing each new change and transition and letting ourselves learn from it is preferable to letting it become our undoing. I grudgingly learned to recognize that things that are unpleasant or unfamiliar can be the best teachers. Though losses and job changes that may include moves away from loved ones or colleagues are not joyous occasions, we often learn the most from them, even if distance from the events is required before we can appreciate what we have learned.

Learn how to learn from transition by harnessing the power of reflection through the use of journals, meditation, psychotherapy, etc. Do what it takes to actively engage in the problems of life to allow you to learn from the constant transitions that all of us do and will experience. As noted in the literature, journals allowing us to reflect upon our experiences along with meditation and psychotherapy help us actively engage in addressing the problems and challenges in our lives which in turn allows us to learn.

Maintain strong relationships and support systems. Having strong relationships with loved ones along with support systems helps make transition less difficult especially on those days that seem unending and impossible. In addition, loved ones and colleagues can serve as sounding boards that help us verbalize and reflect upon our experiences. Without the most steadfast of husbands and friends, this journey would have been more difficult and my learning diminished. Through our loved ones we are truly blessed.

Recommendations for Academics

I recommend that academics recognize that transition and human development processes are lived experiences studied best and most richly by going into the depth of these experiences and penetrating into the internal "I" of these sometimes messy but rich life challenges. Please do not discount this type of research even if it is a research tradition that you are not comfortable with. There are many ways of observing and understanding the human experience. All can be honored. Embrace this type of research when it is most appropriate. Do not force fit human experience into a quantitative methods or preformed theories or constructs. Let the meaning emerge and sit with it a while before immediately assuming it doesn't make sense.

Limits of the Study

The most important limit of this study is that it is based on one woman's life experience and learning from a professional transition. I caution readers against generalizing my experiences. We all experience transition differently and there are many causes of and types of transition. However, we must honor each other's journeys of transition and growth. I look forward to reading and hearing of others' journeys and learnings from transition.

How does this work help to develop this type of research?

Autoethnography describing lived experience framed around a theoretical framework can help provide better insight into and understanding of the human systems phenomena we are studying. It provides a lived way to reflect upon and test the literature on human experiences such as transition and broader social systems. It corroborates much of Bridges work on transitions while challenging other authors. In addition, it can provide a deeper dive into the experience of human development.

Taking this message to a wider audience

I am just beginning to identify the appropriate audiences for this work. Packaged correctly in a succinct, accessible way, it will resonate with practitioners since many of them are currently living through their own transitions and have survived transitions in the past. When I would share a brief synopsis with colleagues of my research topic, I received many comments of interest and could tell it was resonating deeply with many people. This sharing with practitioners can be done in a variety of ways such as through blogs, articles and workshops in a variety of venues. My first step is to share it in a workshop form at a couple of practitioner forums and conferences in order to get reactions and a better idea on how it can be most beneficial to the practitioner community.

How can this research be expanded?

This research can be expanded in many directions. First of all, everyone experiences transition differently. It would be interesting to read of others lived experiences with professional transition and other types of transition. As I mentioned before, I look forward to reading about and hearing about others' journeys and learnings from transition. Also, it would be of interest to test others' ability to develop and grow from transition using the LDF-MAP to compare development stages at a point before a major professional transition versus the stage after the transition.

Another question to explore is how individuals' and specifically leaders' transitions and development help transform the organizations of which they are a part. Torbert and Associates (2004) note that post-conventional leaders – that is, those beyond the Achiever state – have a much higher ability to transform the organizations that they lead. Also, this research has potential implications for leadership development and education and learning for all ages. How can my findings around how we learn and develop from transition be applied to leaders as well as learners of all ages? It would seem that if we can help leaders and students and all learners reflect upon their life's challenging events and fully engage with learning from them, we can help people develop deeply as individuals and move them towards higher development stages, instead of settling for just acquiring new skills and knowledge.

How can this type of research be honored and taught?

For all of us, we can teach this as a viable way of exploring human experiences and phenomena. There are some great texts by Ellis and Bochner (2000), Ellis (2004) and Muncey (2010) to help students and scholars know how to appreciate and apply this methodology. In addition, we can provide autoethnographic studies in a variety of disciplines to demonstrate the richness of the texts and the deeper understanding that

may be derived from this type of research. In addition, this type of research, richly written and summarized can help provide a bridge to practitioners as the methods of autoethnography such as rich prose, photographs, etc., can be often be more easily accessed and understood by non-academicians.

Conclusions

At the end of this journey, some key conclusions include the following thoughts. In spite of the many struggles, or perhaps because of them, the dissertation process has served as a springboard for further development and provides me tools and natural next steps to continue my lifelong learning. Also, as I travel the last half of my life, I will be better prepared for transition and better able to learn from it. But in order to reap this learning, I must actively face my life's problems, no matter how challenging, in order to learn and grow. And to best survive and thrive within life's inevitable changes, challenges and transitions, I must not be afraid to ask for help from loved ones, while appreciating their love each day.

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APPENDIX A

Chronology of events

Date	Event	Comment
1-Jul-08	Vision Quest in Canada	An experience of transition
1-Sep-08	Dow Jones takes a hit, world economies reel	Local economy impacted; talks of layoffs begin
1-Oct-08	I get a call from a work colleague that my areas are targeting for layoffs or elimination	I am sitting on a park bench in front of my parents' house in a very serene spot when I get the news
1-Aug-09	Family trip to Italy	While there I learn that my assistant is offered early retirement. Also get a call that my dad needs open heart surgery
1-Aug-09	Executive search firm tells me that that my current employer is interested in me and that I can interview when I get back	I am excited and flattered that I have options
1-Sep-09	MY STUDY TIMEFRAME BEGINS	
1-Sep-09	A colleague and I decide that we will begin a job search and that we will help and support each other	
1-Nov-09	I have my first interview with my current employer	
1-Nov-09	I find out I don't get the job	I wanted the job though my heart is not in it. My youngest is still in high school. I am about to begin my dissertation work using my team
5-Nov-09	First round of layoffs and reassignments	
1-Dec-09	I find out that though I didn't get the job, they have me in mind for another opportunity	I am still disappointed and doubt I'll ever hear back again
23-Dec-09	CEO sends out a holiday message noting that the worst of the layoffs is behind us	My team feels secure. I feel physically ill as I know that two more rounds of layoffs are coming
1-Jan-10	I continue to discuss new job opportunities with the new organization	
1-Jan-10	Wage freezes for all employees 3-10% cuts for executives	
5-Jan-10	Second round of layoffs	This time people have no hope of being reassigned and lose their jobs.

(continued)

Date	Event	Comment
13-Jan-10	My former assistant and best friend's "early" (forced) retirement is today	I am losing a colleague I had for over 12 years
19-Jan-10	I slip and fall on the ice crushing and breaking my wrist	I spend the day in the Emergency Center
29-Jan-10	I have surgery on my wrist	A lost weekend with a PCA pump
1-Jan-10	Third round of layoffs to the department	I grieve as my team is one fourth its size
1-Apr-10	Other organizations begin to freeze salaries and cut benefits in my community	
1-May-10	I am offered a job by my new employer	I accept the offer and leave my former organization after 23 years
1-May-10	Discreet house hunting trip. Only my former boss knows. He encourages me to go for the new job	
1-Jun-10	Many good byes and my farewell tea	
1-Jul-10	We move to a new city and I start a new job	
1-Sep-10	Youngest daughter moves back to complete high school	We are now empty nesters
1-Sep-10	Time article on Grosse Pointe indicating that "jobs are in flux, and property values have tanked."	"Recession in Grosse Pointe" by Lynnette Clemetson - Sept 27, 2010
1-Oct-10	STUDY TIMEFRAME ENDS	

APPENDIX B

Human Development

One of the first basic models that I explored that describes how humans learn and develop is the Kolb model of experiential learning. It is based on work done by John Dewey and Kurt Lewin and speaks of creating a learning space (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). “Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) provides a holistic model of the learning process and a multilinear model of adult development, both of which are consistent with what we know about how people learn, grow, and develop (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2000).” This model helped explain how it was necessary for me to experience situations in order to deeply learn from them. A key aspect of this model is that it depicts learning by doing while requiring reflection upon the experience to help determine the possible next actions. It also shares similarities with Torbert’s action inquiry model where we use our observations and reflections upon them to chart new paths for ourselves. I had read about personal change and transition, but until I really experienced going through the professional transition, I had only a vague sense of the concept. Further reflection and conceptualization helped to further bring learning from the experience into my awareness. And because I was entering new situations, I began to actively test and try out new behaviors and ways of thinking. See the schematic below (Davies & Lowe, 2000).

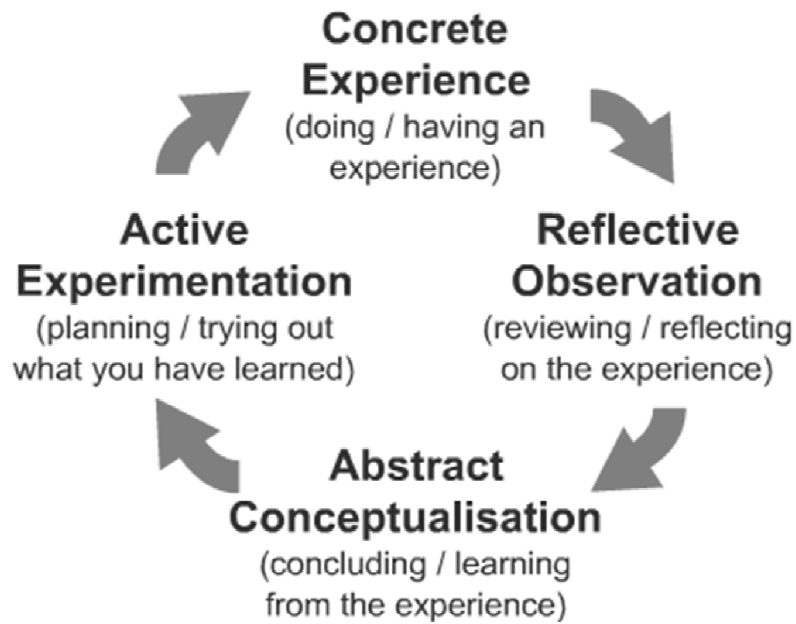


Figure B1. Kolb model of experiential learning. From *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*, by D. Kolb, 1984, p. 21, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. Copyright 1984, by David Kolb. Reprinted with permission.

Action Inquiry

Also during my journaling and the process of professional transition, I began to attempt to utilize action inquiry in order to help me more effectively respond to a constantly changing world where both my identity and the rules of engagement were changing. Action inquiry helped me put the Kolb learning cycle into practice. Action inquiry is action-oriented research which places the emphasis on a field integration of action and reflection so that knowledge developed in the inquiry process is directly relevant to the issues being studied which according to Torbert and Associates (2004) creates a form of knowledge useful to the actor at the point of action. Torbert and Associates in their book, *Action Inquiry: The Secret of Timely and Transforming Leadership*, note that there are several defining qualities of action inquiry. These qualities include the assertion that every action and every inquiry is implicitly action inquiry and that action inquiry interweaves research and practice in the present, similar

to the aims of action research. Researchers may unknowingly engage in action inquiry. Action inquiry combines subjective (first person), intersubjective (second person), and objective data (third person) making the research a mixed methods approach if we assume that first and second person research tends to be more qualitative in nature while third person research lies closer to the realm of quantitative research. Lastly, Torbert notes that action inquiry has the power to transform – both the “subjects of the research” and the researchers themselves because they play two roles. They are the subjects of both the research and the researcher doing that research. This transforming ability of using action inquiry through autoethnography and a reflective process with my journals as I moved through the professional transition gives some insight into how and why this particular professional transition helped me grow and develop as a leader and human being.

Torbert and Associates (2004) further describe action inquiry as an exploration of the fit and misfit between four territories of human experience – between our purposes and intuitive sense of what we need to be attending to; how we understand and frame the situation at hand – our espoused theory as it were; the qualities of our actual behavior; and what is going on in the world around us. This is what occurred as I began to experience a mismatch between who I thought I was versus what I was experiencing in my professional sphere. Torbert and Associates observe that all inquiring conversations will explicitly incorporate these four territories of experience. During our conversations and encounters, we must intentionally practice *framing* – making very clear the perspective we are taking and the purposes that we are pursuing; *advocating* – being clear about the course of action we are proposing; *illustrating* – grounding the advocacy in a particular concrete example; and *inquiring* – inviting others to comment and respond and making sure that everyone brings their best thinking, perspectives and experience to the discussion. In both of the organizations I was part of and within my

family relationships I often found myself unconsciously employing these types of conversations to make sure that I was assessing a particular situation correctly and to make sure that I could also bring shared meaning to the table.

This approach allows us to monitor our own conversations and seek to balance the four types of speech and adjust as necessary in order to listen to and seek the perspectives and best thinking in our day-to-day encounters with others. As we learn this inquiry practice and become more aware and more skilled, it can transform our conversations from habitual, unaware and repetitive rituals toward inquiring dialogue (Reason, 2001). And though it takes work, energy and effort, the practice of action inquiry helped me engage in honest conversations regardless of whom I was dealing with and despite the situation in which I found myself.

Loevinger's Model of Ego development

Loevinger's model of ego development is the only one of the post-Piagetian theories that attempts to describe personality as a whole (Pfaffenberger, 2005). Her theory (Loevinger, 1983) conceives of the ego as a "master trait" that integrates emotional, cognitive and interpersonal aspects of functioning. Her framework allows us to have a dynamic understanding of the process of change and growth (Pfaffenberger, 2005). Loevinger (1976, 1983) defines the ego state as a frame of reference or a filter that the individual uses to interpret life experiences.

Loevinger (1976) conceptualized nine stages of personality development. She grouped those nine stages into three tiers as described below. The first tier, also called pre-conventional, consists of three stages: symbiotic, impulsive and self-protective (Pfaffenberger, 2005). They represent normal development during childhood but can signify maladaptive strategies in adults. Adults at these levels fail to understand others' points of views, tend to be devoid of compassion and lead lives narrowly focused on

their own gain and advantage. Miller (1994) and Cook-Greuter (1994) determined that about 10% of all adults function at these levels.

The second tier is the conventional level and is where about 80% of the adult world functions. It is composed of three stages which include the conformist stage which describes people who strongly identify with the values and norms of the social group they belong to. They particularly emphasize overt behavior and the material aspects of life. These individuals tend to be quite rigid and tend to have a rigid black and white worldview in terms of gender roles and their own opinions. Growing up in a small town, I lived at least the first eighteen years of my life in this conformist stage.

The second stage within the second tier is the self-aware stage and per Cohn (1998) is the modal stage for the majority of adults in our culture. Here adults begin to reflect upon group norms as opposed to simply accepting them and they begin developing a growing awareness of their inner life. They can consider different possibilities and alternatives as well as exceptions to the rules. But cognition and affect remain well within established categories and are more or less undifferentiated (Pfaffenberger, 2005). I would assess myself at this stage during my college and early careerist years. I was beginning to see other options and possibilities but as an engineer, I viewed them through already predefined frames.

The sixth stage, the conscientious stage is a step toward more internalization and differentiation. Moral considerations and responsibilities toward others are very important along with achievements and long term goals. During most of my career and leading up to entry into this doctoral program, this was my ego stage. It fit for me at that time because I was raising a family and leading and teaching healthcare teams. I was building my career and teaching goal setting through Covey (Covey, 1989; Covey, Merrill, & Merrill, 1996) programs. My emphasis was on being “the best that I could be,”

setting goals and doing what I perceived to be the right things to do. In much of the western world, this would appear to be the pinnacle of “success.”

The post-conventional or third tier begins with the individualistic stage and it describes less than 10% of the adult population (Pfaffenberger, 2005). To grow beyond the second tier stages, individuals must become more tolerant of themselves and others. A person at this stage becomes more aware of and accepting of complexities that may not be resolvable. Per Pfaffenberger (2005) individuals at the individualist stage become “more psychologically minded.” Psychological mindedness is a concept which refers to an individual's capacity for self-examination, self-observation, introspection and personal insight (Hall, 1992). It also includes an ability to recognize and see the links between current problems within the self and with others, and the ability to develop insight into one's past particularly for its impact on present attitudes and functioning. As I move into this stage, I am becoming more aware of contradictions and polarities within myself and others. I have both a strong need for autonomy, but it is tempered with emotional connections. I am learning that it is not enough to be independent. I must also be interdependent with colleagues and loved ones.

The second stage in the third tier is the autonomous stage and is often equated with Maslow's (1970) definition of self-actualization where individuals become more capable of systems thinking and accept the subjectivity of viewpoints and the contextual relativity of truth. They become more able to tolerate ambiguity and contradictions. Self-fulfillment and self-expression become more important in their lives. Interestingly, in Loevinger's (1976) early work she also mentioned the third stage in this tier, the integrated stage, but pointed out that she could not define it because the sample pool of individuals in this stage is so small. However, significant work has been done by Cook-Greuter (1999, 2000) on these highest stages of human development. She evaluated thousands of sentence completion tests to further understand advanced development.

She proposed to replace Loevinger's (1976) integrated stage with two post autonomous stages. She suggests that less than 1% of adults ever reach this level of development. The first post autonomous stage is called construct-aware where individuals become interested in the process of meaning-making. They understand how language can shape and constrict what we experience. Persons at this level begin to understand that their egos are actually constructed from their memory and are maintained through on-going internal dialogue. As this self-awareness increases, they become interested in alternative ways of knowing. At the following unitive stage, individuals can "sustain an on-going openness to experience that is fluid and without any struggle". (1999, 2000)

A Brief History of the Development of Cook-Greuter's Leadership Maturity Framework (LMF)

The concept of self-development has its roots in ancient Greek, Hebrew, Hindu and Buddhist philosophy (Cook-Greuter, 2002). Early in the twentieth century, development gained interest as people sought to understand the consequences for humans of Darwin's work. Freud, Adler, Jung and others have all contributed to our understanding of the nature of the self or 'ego' and its meaning making function in human beings. Drawing on these sources and on original research in the nineteen sixties and seventies, Jane Loevinger (1976) put forward a developmental theory and created a measurement instrument to assess adults' meaning making level. This instrument, The Washington University Sentence Completion Test (WUSCT) is one of the most widely used and best validated in the field of personality assessment and has been used in thousands of research projects worldwide. Cook-Greuter's (1999, 2000, 2002, 2004) 25 year research lead to a reformulation of ego development theory and the expansion of the SCT to include stages of self-actualization and ego transcendence based on thousands of pieces of evidence.

Cook-Greuter (2004) notes that the Leadership Development Framework (LDF) is one such full-range model of mental growth in adulthood that describes the stages of development from egocentric opportunism to wise, timely and world-centric action. Torbert (1987) first developed the contours of the LDF based on a creative synthesis of existing theory and his own original research and adaptation. At the same time, he collaborated with Cook-Greuter who revised and expanded the WUSCT (Loevinger et al., 1970) assessment tool to better capture professional subjects in organizational contexts. The Leadership Development Profile (LDP) goes beyond the original instrument in the range of mature worldviews it covers and in its much broader application. The LDP is used as both a diagnostic tool and as basis for feedback and integrally-oriented change work with clients and organizations.

The LDF survey has been used for over 25 years with thousands of leaders in hundreds of companies throughout the U.S and Europe. It was found that company and individual performance varies according to action logic. The authors (Torbert & Associates, 2004) believe that once a leader becomes aware of his or her action logic, it is the first step towards developing a more effective leadership style.

The LDF is based on research that documents the human potential for life-long transformation. When applied to managers and leaders, the LDF provides a way of understanding how they tend to interpret events and, thus, how they are likely to act in a given situation or conflict. Although people may have access to several action logics as part of their repertoire, they tend to respond spontaneously with the most complex action logic they have available, or from their center of gravity. Under pressure and rapid change conditions, people often resort to behavior patterns from earlier stages. In contrast, moments of perceiving life in ways associated with stages much later than one's center of gravity are rare. These can be glimpsed during peak moments or temporarily manifested under ideal support conditions.

The LDF tool can also be utilized with the same leaders at later dates to validate that the leader's abilities and corresponding action logics have grown. I "retook" this assessment in April of 2011 to see if my action logics had shifted or not since the first time I did the assessment in 2007. In 2007 when I profiled within the achiever action logic, the results displayed the spectrum of action logics, almost like a frequency distribution, indicating which action logics I favored most. In April of 2011, my profile indicated that I had moved two developmental stages to that of a strategist.

With these development frames, it is pointed out (Loevinger, 1976; Pfaffenberger, 2005; Torbert & Associates, 2004) that we can "see" or employ any of the earlier levels including and up to a particular level, but that we may not be aware of or able to understand those levels beyond our reach. This is consistent with my own experience. When I go back to the small town where I was born and lived for my first 18 years, I live in the world of the "diplomat" as described below because that is the action logic I employed growing up there and that is how people know me and relate to me. In fact, I find that when I do display action logics beyond that of diplomat, it is almost as if I am speaking a different language. I have also found through my transition that if I am tired, ill, injured as I was when I broke my arm and was recovering from surgery, I had a tendency to regress back to opportunist and diplomat levels. This was no doubt for self-preservation, but it also reminds me that for my own learning and growth to continue, I must take care of myself physically.

Torbert and Associates (2004) contributed to the LDF by creating labels for the stages to better capture professional concerns and by experimenting with and developing professional applications. In addition The Leadership Maturity Profile (formerly LDP, now MAP) expands the use of the instrument. It includes giving feedback to clients both to individuals and to whole teams. The MAP provides a unique basis for change work with clients and organizations (Cook-Greuter, 2002).

APPENDIX C

LDF 2007

Personal MAP Profile for **Jean Ann Larson** **H3987** 2007

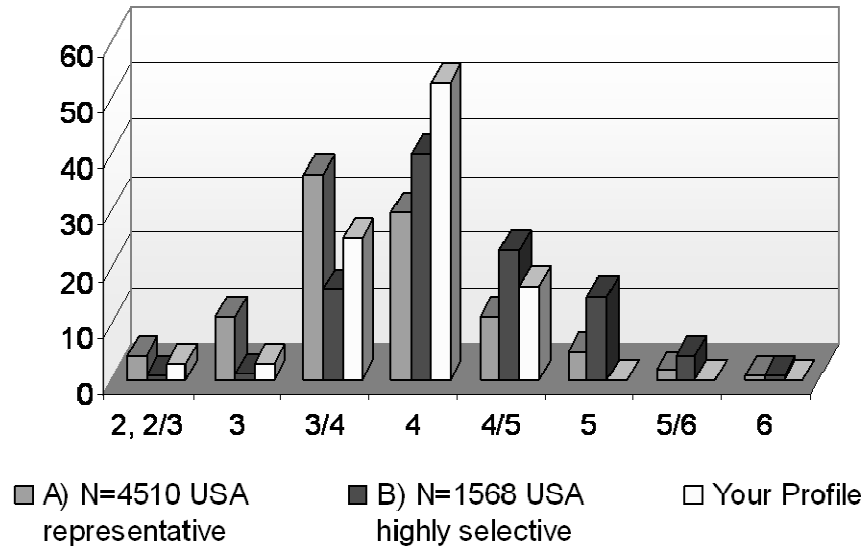
Rater's comments

TPR 4

TWS 242

Yours is the writing of a person at home at the Achiever stage with 52.8% of all responses at that level. Your sentences are relatively short mentioning one idea. Learning, growing (1, 9, 23, 24) fueled by curiosity (1, 6, 8) are clearly important to you. You are beginning to notice that perception (27) and perspectives (2) can influence one's interpretation of a situation. You value doing one's best (4), taking responsibility (31), having choices (11, 13) and finding reasons for behavior (27). You remark that women have more roles to play than men (20, 34) a belief that could be tested. You like your curiosity about the world (6) and learning every day, but also realize "too much" curiosity can be a problem as it needs to be channeled. You worry about your children (22), when you remain silent (16) and when your actions when they are incongruent with your vision (16, 25). That vision includes "working together" (19, 30) yet when it comes to coping you do not seem to actually engage others (2, 26, 33). Growth likely in engaging others more in making sense of your own perceptions & in becoming even more focused on your vision and how to translate it together with others into action.

Your Profile Compared to 2 Other Samples



Comparison Groups:

Group A with 4510 people is a representative sample of the general population. It was collected by Cook-Greuter from 1980-1995. It is a mixed group from all walks of life, all social strata, and adult ages (18-72).

Group B with 1568 participants consists of leaders in their respective fields, managers, and consultants who have been profiled by us since 2000. It is a highly selective sample consisting mostly of professionals. These individuals were either volunteering to take the SCTi-MAP (LDP) for self-development purposes or did so as part of and in the context of an organizational development effort.

Your Personal MAP Profile

ID# 3987

You have completed thirty-six unfinished sentence stems. First, each sentence completion is given a separate 'score' which corresponds to one of the nine meaning making stages by a highly trained, certified MAP rater. You will have a distribution of thirty-six scores across several of the nine stages as indicated below under Individual Sentence Scores.

Next, the distribution of your responses undergoes several statistical analyses: Among these, the simple and cumulative distributions are calculated as well as the **Total Weighted Score (TWS)**. The higher a response, the more weight it is given.

Finally, the MAP rater allocates an overall developmental stage to you as shown on the next page called the Total Protocol Rating (TPR). The TPR is determined by a combination of quantitative and qualitative assessments. The rater assigns an overall, final stage score to you based on an interpretive assessment of the sequence of your responses and the writing, patterns, and concerns as a whole.

Individual Sentence Scores																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
4/5	4/5	4/5	4	4	4	3/4	4	4	3/4	3/4	4	3/4	4	4	3/4	4	3/4
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
4	4	4	3	3/4	4	4/5	4	4/5	2	4	4	4	3/4	4	4/5	3/4	4

# and % of your responses at				List of your sentences by stage
1	2.8%	Stage 2	Impulsive	28
0	0.0%	Stage 2/3	Opportunist	
1	2.8%	Stage 3	Diplomat	22
9	25.0%	Stage 3/4	Expert, Specialist	7 10 11 13 16 18 23 32 35
19	52.8%	Stage 4	Achiever, modern rational	4 5 6 8 9 12 14 15 17 19 20 21 24 26 29 30 31 33 36
6	16.7%	Stage 4/5	Individualist Pluralist	1 2 3 25 27 34
0	0.0%	Stage 5	Strategist Synergist	
0	0.0%	Stage 5/6	Magician Catalyst	
0	0.0%	Stage 6	Unitive	

APPENDIX D

LDF 2011