Quest for Wholeness: Spirituality in Teacher Education

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Abstract

This paper supports the argument for acknowledging and honouring the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs for students and professors, as a means of facilitating opportunities for all to engage their subject matter, their peers, the world, and themselves in an integrative, holistic manner. The paper first explores what spirituality is and its role in relation to religion, based on the work of researchers over the last 20 years. The role of spirituality in the post secondary context is then explored, and in particular, acknowledging the spiritual dimension in teacher education is examined, highlighting the importance of providing a balance to the externally focused approaches that current educational practices embody. Implications for acknowledging and honouring the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs conclude the paper.
The word “spirituality” can evoke intense interest from some people, and cause others to become defensive or physically recoil. Despite the charged nature of the word spirituality, what is occurring on university campuses is the recognition that the spiritual dimension can contribute to learning in meaningful ways, and Scott (1990) asserts that what is called for is “our evolution toward a more integrative definition of knowledge, practice of research, and facilitation of student learning” (p. 16). Although the Latin root of university is *universus*, meaning “whole” or “one”, suggesting a holistic paradigm for teaching and learning in post secondary institutions, the dominant paradigm does not reflect this. As professors and students alike engage in learning, the dominant focus is objectivism in both research and teaching, and as Palmer (1998) argues, “Although the academy claims to value multiple modes of knowing, it honors only one – an “objective” way of knowing that takes us into the “real” world by taking us “out of ourselves” (p. 17). One wonders how one can come to fully understand a subject or a concept if one is metaphorically disembodied.

What is evident on university campuses is a paradigm shift from instruction, to teaching and learning, with the goal of producing learning (Barr and Tagg, 1995). The acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension in teaching and learning in the post secondary context can contribute to honouring other modes of knowing, by allowing students and teachers to engage the “real” world while remaining connected to their inner lives or “real” world; thus re-membering themselves.

This paper supports the argument for acknowledging and honouring the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs for students and professors, as a means of providing opportunities for all to engage their subject matter, the world, their peers, and
themselves in an integrative, holistic manner. The paper first explores what spirituality is and its role in relation to religion (Harvey, 2004; Kessler, 2000; Lantieri, 2001; J. Miller, 2000; Palmer, 1998), as it can be argued that to be human is to be spiritual, and that spirituality is an inherent human characteristic (Harvey, 2004). The role of spirituality in the context of post secondary education is then discussed (Chickering et al., 2006; English & Gillen, 2000; Palmer, 2003; Scott, 1990; Tisdell, 2003). In particular, the inclusion of spirituality in teacher education programs is examined, highlighting the importance of providing a balance to the externally focused approaches that current educational practices embody. The acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs has the potential to demonstrate how the intellect can be joined with heart and soul, which will contribute to teachers in training who are not only equipped with methods and theories, but also self knowledge (Palmer, 2003). The paper concludes with implications for acknowledging and honouring the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs.

I decided to become a teacher over 20 years ago based on my desire to assist children in developing into their full potentials. I intuited on a deep level that the inner lives of the children that I worked with were important, and that it was incumbent upon me to provide them with opportunities to engage their inner as well as their outer lives, including their spirits. The growth of the child’s spirit can be compared to their physical growth, both of which are dependant on being fed and nurtured, and when young people are given opportunities to explore and express their spirituality they thrive (Kessler, 2000). I experienced great joy in working with children in grades one, two, and three, through observing their innate curiosity and freedom in exploring the world around them.
It soon became evident to me that they arrived at school each day as whole human beings; mind, body, and spirit, and often with deep, spiritual questions. What a lot of children soon begin to learn from the messages that they receive from the adults entrusted with their care, is that these deep, spiritual questions are not acknowledged or honoured in the place called school.

This acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension is an integral part of my teaching philosophy which is grounded in holistic education. Holistic education is founded on the principle of wholeness, and as R. Miller describes in his interview with Koegel (2003) “holistic education focuses on meaning, connection, and the search for wholeness (p. 14). Holistic educators are called to act upon two principles, beginning first with the person, and then responding to the person with a loving heart, an open mind, and an understanding of the world that the person is interacting with (R. Miller, 2001). This holistic pedagogy still resonates deeply within me, in my current position as a faculty member in a teacher education program in an urban university in Western Canada.

Characteristics of Spirituality

Arriving at a definition of spirituality is somewhat like trying to describe love; one feels or knows what it is, yet articulating it is problematic at best. Due to its highly subjective nature, trying to define spirituality is complex, and as Tisdell (2003) notes, “Spirituality is an elusive topic. Different people define it in different ways, but all definitions somehow seem to be incomplete” (p. 28). Although there are inherent difficulties in arriving at consensus regarding a definition of spirituality, there are some common characteristics of spirituality that many authors identify. The main
characteristics of spirituality that are identified in the literature include: 1) search for meaning/search for meaning and purpose, 2) relatedness and connectedness, 3) interconnectedness, 4) relationship to a higher power, 5) sacredness, 6) transcendence, and 7) self-knowledge.

Upon reviewing the literature on spirituality in education, the search for meaning was consistently identified as a central characteristic by the majority of authors (Fish & Shelly, 1988; Kessler, 2000; J. Miller, 2006). Creating meaning from one’s existence is of central importance to students in post secondary institutions, as they are at pivotal points in their lives, often making the transition from late adolescence into adulthood. Most authors concurred, adding the element of search for purpose to the search for meaning (Fraser, 2004; Harvey, 2004; Howden, 1992; Kessler, 2000, 2005; Love & Talbot, 1999; McGee, Nagel & Moore, 1991; J. Miller, 2001; Rolph, 2003; Tanyi, 2002). The process of discovering one’s purpose, as well as finding meaning in life, is critical for most students who are embarking on their adult lives and careers.

The second characteristic of spirituality as reported by numerous researchers is relatedness or connectedness to self, others, and a higher power (Chávez, 2001; Fish & Shelly, 1988; Kessler, 2005; Lantieri, 2001; J. Miller, 2001; Oldnall, 1996; Palmer, 1998). This aspect of spirituality is key, as humans are relational beings who depend on healthy connections with others, often for their very survival. Young people in particular desperately want to be seen and heard (Kessler, 2000), highlighting the need for educators to facilitate the development of healthy relationships within their learning communities.
The importance of a connection to a higher power is also noted, as the findings of the UCLA study on the spiritual life of students revealed that “Three-fourths (74%) of the freshmen also reported that they feel a “sense of connection with God/Higher Power that transcends my personal self” (Lindholm, 2005). The centrality of the connection between self, others, and a higher power illustrates the innate human drive for connectedness.

The interconnectedness of self, others, and a higher power was also a recurring characteristic of spirituality (Harvey, 2004; McGee, Nagel & Moore, 2003; Palmer, 1998; Yasuno, 2004). J. Miller (2001) posits that, “The mystical traditions within each religion describe the nature of reality as deeply interwoven and interconnected; divine energy is manifest in the multiple forms of life” (p. 2). Whether people identify with a particular religious tradition or not, the feeling that one is interconnected to others and to a higher power does impact on people’s lives, and can contribute to meaning making, ultimately reflecting the innate human drive to become whole.

Fourth, the importance that students placed on their relationship to a higher power as being separate from connection to self or others was reported; some researchers did not include relationship to a higher power with relationship to self and others (Chickering et al., 2006; Harvey, 2004; Oldnall, 1996; Ruiz, 2005). Although not all students identify a connection to a higher power as being important to them, the feeling that one is connected to something outside of and beyond one’s self can provide an anchor for many students.

Several authors identified sacredness as being a central characteristic of spirituality (Chickering et al., 2006; Harvey, 2004; Kessler, 2000; J. Miller, 2000; Palmer, 1998). What people identify as being sacred is quite personal, varying from
reading a particular text, or having an experience in nature, to observing a piece of art or witnessing the birth of a baby. The impact of a culture that is epitomized by disrespect, where nothing is held sacred, and the wonder of the universe is reduced to mere data, is reflected in education (Palmer, 1998). In educational settings, acknowledging the sacred can add richness, depth, and relevance to students’ learning experiences.

The sixth characteristic of spirituality found in the review of the literature is transcendence (Duff, 2003; Harvey, 2004; Kessler, 2005; McGee, Nagel & Moore, 2003; Rolph, 1991). The feelings associated with rising above one’s normal mode of being, or of going beyond the boundaries of self are common themes in the literature on spirituality in education, and Harvey (2004) defines transcendence as “rising above the limitations of space and time or of consciously becoming aware of the universe and cosmos” (p. 13). People sometimes refer to experiences of transcendence as “aha moments” when clarity, connectedness, or insight occurs.

The final characteristic of spirituality as gleaned from the review of the literature is self-knowledge (Chickering et al., 2005; De Souza, 2003; Duff, 2003; Fraser, 2004; Krishnamurti, 1953, McGee, Nagel & Moore, 2003). Through discovering and coming to know one’s self, one is better able to relate to others and the world around oneself, and Krishnamurti (1977) believes that “Ignorance is not the lack of knowledge but of self-knowing; without self-knowing there is no intelligence” (p. 97). In the context of education, this dimension has implications for teachers and administrators in providing a balance to exteriorly imposed knowledge, and can contribute significantly to the formation of teachers, who will be faced with issues on a daily basis that press them to draw on their self-knowledge.
Throughout the literature review on spirituality in education, I consistently noted a characteristic that was minimally represented, but which I believe is an intrinsic component of spirituality; a connectedness and interconnectedness to the Earth and the Cosmos. Some authors noted the connection to the Earth in their descriptions of spirituality (Caine, 2003; Fenwick, English & Parsons, 2001; Koegel, 2003; Palmer, 1998; Rogers & Hill, 2002), yet these represent a minority. In an interview with Koegel (2003), R. Miller addresses our connection to the Earth and the Cosmos as part of his “levels of wholeness” model.

My rationale for including the connection to the Earth and the Cosmos derives from my assertion that it is narcissistic of humans to think that although we inhabit a living, breathing planet, and are whirling through time and space, that we are somehow divorced from its’ very being. Furthermore, we are wired for connection to the Earth and the Cosmos, and as M. Tucker (1996) describes Thomas Berry’s work “He calls for reinventing the human at the species level which implies moving from our cultural coding to recover our genetic coding of relatedness to the earth” (p. 3). One of the great tragedies of our technological, reductionistic, competitive, and consumeristic society is that this exclusive focus has metaphorically and literally ripped us from the fabric of our very being and our sustenance.

The spiritualities of Indigenous peoples including the Maori in New Zealand (Fraser, 2004) and the Aboriginal peoples of Canada (Wilson & Wilson, 1998) illuminate the connection to the Earth and the Cosmos. Fraser (2004) describes the amalgamation of Christian and Maori beliefs in education in New Zealand, including the incorporation of Maori prayers to “Tangaroa (God of the sea) and Papatuanuku Earth mother) (pp. 92-
Relational accountability is a principle of Aboriginal spirituality, as the interreconnectivity of all life is valued, and that all individual actions are in relation to every living organism, and must be honored (Wilson & Wilson, 1998, p. 157). As we reconnect with the Earth and the Cosmos, we will begin the process of re-membering ourselves, and in doing so, create opportunities to re-member not only our institutions, but our world.

Based on the research of these scholars the characteristics of spirituality include a search for meaning and purpose, relatedness and connectedness, interconnectedness, a relationship to a higher power, sacredness, transcendence, self-knowledge, as well as my inclusion of a connectedness and an interconnectedness to the Earth and the Cosmos.

**Spirituality and Religion**

During any discussion on the topic of spirituality the question of whether or not one is talking about religion is inevitably raised. Researchers approach the relation of spirituality to religion in numerous ways, including making a clear distinction between the two, and describing ways in which they overlap. Many authors make a clear distinction between spirituality and religion (Chickering et al., 2005, 2006; Kessler, 2000; R. Miller, 2006; Nash, 2001; Palmer, 1998; Tisdell, 2001), differentiating between religion as following a religious tradition, and spirituality focusing on an inner journey of growth (Chickering et al., 2005). The distinction between an institutional structure and an individual experience is also noted, as Tisdell (2003) emphasizes, “Organizational religions have institutionalized components to them – written doctrine, codes of regulatory behavior, and organized communities of faith. Spirituality is more about how
people make meaning through experience of wholeness, a perceived higher power, or higher purpose” (p. 47). Those who differentiate between spirituality and religion regard spirituality as being more personal and experiential, as contrasted with religion, which is institutional, public, and having shared beliefs.

Other authors believe that spirituality and religion can be interrelated (Kessler, 2000; J. Miller, 2000; Nash, 2001; Webster, 2004), as Nash (2001) illustrates “I believe the two terms actually represent two closely related perspectives – the institutional and the personal – on the same phenomenon, transcendence. In my usage, religion is what we do with others, spirituality is what we do within our selves; the former is public faith, the latter is private faith” (p. 7). It is clear that one can identify oneself as being spiritual without necessarily being religious, although some people who identify themselves as being religious also acknowledge the spiritual dimension.

Although the word “spirituality” has deep religious roots, academics in particular, view spirituality as being flakey, airy-fairy, and self-indulgent, often referring to it as New Age. What is often termed New Age also has ancient roots, but is sometimes popularized in forms that are not grounded in deep spirituality. Tacey (2002) addresses the manner in which the term New Age has been used by the academy “the “New Age” is largely a cliché of our academic invention, a derogatory category into which we place everything that appears not to fit our secular paradigm of knowledge” (p. 176).

As spirituality is discussed in a post-modern context, where various academic disciplines continue to view it through a modern lens, confusion is bound to arise. In response to this confusion some researchers are offering a new post-modern lens through which to look at spirituality, and indeed they are describing it as a post-modern
spirituality with new frameworks and language (Estanek, 2006; Tacey, 2002). Tacey (2002) describes how post-modern processes and valuation of uncertainty have contributed to transforming modern assumptions, but that due to the deep secularism of academia, that spirituality and religion have not been transformed in the same way (Tacey, 2002, p. 173), and that in fact “the deconstruction of religion in theology has not, or not yet, had much impact on how religion and spirituality are viewed in the mainstream disciplines of sociology, history, philosophy, literature, or cultural studies” (p. 173).

If engaging one’s spirituality within educational settings can provide students with deep, integrative understandings of themselves, others, their subject areas, and the greater world, why is it excluded from most post secondary educational environments?

*Check Your Spirit at the Door: Spirituality in Post Secondary Education*

Upon entering a recording studio, a sign is usually posted above the door reading “Check ego at door”. In a similar way, when professors and students enter their learning environments on a daily basis, they are covertly asked to check their spirits at the door. This de-spiritualized ethos is curious, considering the beginnings of post secondary education in Canada, which were predominantly influenced by models of religious education.

As a result of educational institutions’ efforts to avoid religious indoctrination, on most university campuses, spirituality and religion have little, if no, voice. Within the context of post secondary education, the prevalent paradigm is objectivism, which Palmer (1998) states, “treats the world as an object to be dissected and manipulated, a way of knowing that gives us power over the world” (p.2). This dualistic epistemology, which is
Descartes’ legacy, results in teachers and learners feeling disconnected, fragmented, and alienated from not only their studies, but from each other, the world, and ultimately themselves. Vestiges of colonialism are present in academia, as Shahjahan (2005) states, “such positivist secular discourses are colonial in nature and have a long history of displacing non-dominant ways of knowing the world, especially spiritually” (p. 693). The effects of this exclusion of Indigenous knowledges impacts on teachers and students, and the academy is being called upon to recognize and validate other ways of knowing (Dei, 2000; Shahjahan, 2005).

The spiritual dimension is absent in most curricula in post secondary settings, and students become quite adept at both learning and demonstrating their learning in fragmented ways. This fragmentation is engineered purposefully through grading systems that divide students and teachers, departments that do not communicate with each other, and a bureaucratic structure that pits administration with faculty (Palmer, 1998). What this structure results in is competitiveness and distrust of not only the processes, but of each other.

The fragmentation of organizational structures in post secondary education is well documented (V. Miller, 2001; Palmer, 1998; Scott, 2005; Shahjahan, 2005). If one engages the “real” world by being disconnected from self, perhaps that is what one ultimately comes to know; that learning is fragmented and that as the learner is not in relation to the subject, the learner ultimately does not matter. This fear of developing relationships between things and people is threatening to the academy, and as J. Miller (2001) argues, “the dominant Western mode of knowledge, like a genetically modified plant, crowds our alternative epistemologies and modes of meaning – making. Intuition,
imagination, contemplation, revelation, and the knowledges of the somatic self have little room in our professional conversations” (p. 305). Imagine how much deeper, richer, and complete our levels of understanding our areas of investigation could be if we engaged them with our whole selves.

Although there is often fear associated with acknowledging the spiritual dimension in post secondary education (Chickering et al, 2005; J. Miller, 2005; Nash, 2001; Palmer, 1998), it is often more of an issue for the professoriate than for the student body. The findings of UCLA’s comprehensive study entitled *Spirituality and the Professoriate: A National Study of Faculty Beliefs, Attitudes, and Behaviors*, which was conducted on some 40,670 faculty at 421 colleges and universities, describes the disparity between what faculty believe and how they teach. They reported that four in five faculty identified themselves as being spiritual, and that more than two-thirds reported that they purposefully seek out opportunities for spiritual growth. Almost half of those surveyed described the integration of the spiritual dimension in their lives as being essential (Lindholm, 2005). In order for students to be provided with opportunities in which to engage the spiritual dimension within the context of their academic studies, professors must also be given permission to acknowledge the spiritual dimension in their work.

Spirituality is not typically represented on the campuses of most Canadian universities despite the overwhelming research that indicates that the student body has a deep hunger for the spiritual dimension in their lives (Kessler, 2000; R. Miller, 2001; Nash, 2001; Rolph, 1991; Scott, 2002). The Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California in Los Angeles carried out a study on 112,232 first-year students attending 236 colleges and universities, entitled *The Spiritual Life of College*
Students: A National Study of College Students’ Search for Meaning and Purpose, in which this spiritual hunger was expressed. Eighty percent of the student body reported being interested in spirituality and feeling joy in relation to their spirituality, while half of them indicated that it is very important for them to seek spiritual growth opportunities. Furthermore, eighty percent of the students surveyed discussed religion/spirituality with others, over seventy five percent of them believe in God, and forty eight percent of the students surveyed expressed an expectation of their colleges and universities to help them develop spiritually (Lindholm, 2005).

As evidenced in the literature review, students place great importance on spirituality, as they find themselves navigating through their academic studies and increasingly complex social issues. The acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension in post secondary educational settings ultimately has the potential to contribute to remembering fragmented institutions.

Spirituality in Teacher Education

“We teach who we are”. Parker Palmer’s (1998) words are powerful, and challenge educators to examine their inner lives more closely. If we do teach who we are, what are we modeling for teachers in training? Do we model ways of being in the world that are holistic and integrative, or do we continue to adhere to educational approaches that are based on objectivism, reductionism, and disconnectedness?

An examination of spirituality in teacher education revealed little support for acknowledging the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs (Borowski, 2003; J. Miller, 2000; Palmer, 2003; Rogers & Hill, 2002; Rolph, 1991). The social context of teacher education impacts on expectations of both teachers and learners, often excluding
the spiritual dimension. The technological, consumeristic, nature of society focuses on the external, material needs of people, to the detriment of their spiritual needs (Rolph, 1991). This focus on externals results in disconnection and fragmentation in education as well, and as R. Miller (2001) states, “our considerable powers of intellect have served primarily to disconnect us from the world. Modern systems of education have fed these powers well, training young people how to gain knowledge over the world, knowledge at the expense of feeling, information without wisdom, facts without moral discernment” (p. 31).

As knowledge becomes a commodity which one wields in the world rather than something that one comes to deeply know and love, it ultimately breeds dispassion. Yet within this societal context the spiritual dimension is invisibly omnipresent. Spirituality can be likened to the elephant in the middle of the room; everyone is aware of its presence, yet it is ignored, and Palmer (1998) asserts that spirituality “is at the heart of every subject we teach, where it waits to be brought forth” (p. 8).

Fear of incorporating the spiritual dimension into teaching and learning environments does damage to both students and teachers, as an integral facet of their being is silenced. In the context of teacher education, students will more readily acknowledge the spiritual dimension in their academic studies if their teachers not only model and embody it for them, but give them permission to do likewise. Although some professors are courageous enough to acknowledge the spiritual dimension in their teaching, many also suffer in silence on a daily basis. Teachers in training must be prepared to guide students through their deep and sometimes perplexing questions, and
this will best be accomplished by developing future teachers who more fully understand their inner lives.

Within conventional educational practices which focus on externally based knowledge, the idea of acknowledging the spiritual dimension in learning may be seen as a threat not only to educators and administrators, but to the very maintenance of the institution. Although the majority of teacher education programs use conventional approaches, holistic models are being incorporated by some teacher educators who focus on integrating the inner and outer lives of teachers in training (Borowski, 2003). Despite the reluctance or fear of many to incorporate the spiritual dimension into their teaching, many educators do incorporate Gardner’s (1993) theory of multiple intelligences and Goleman’s (1995) research on emotional intelligence into their classrooms. In addition to the work of Gardner (1993) and Goleman (1995), several researchers have identified spiritual intelligence as a separate intelligence (Hay & Nye, 1998; Vaughan, 2002; Zohar & Marshall, 2000).

In light of the research on holistic education and spirituality in education, glimmers of hope exist for the eventual acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs, providing teachers in training with opportunities to not only acquire solid foundational knowledge and skills, but a deeper understanding of who they are.

**Implications**

Teaching is a highly complex activity, and educators today are faced with a barrage of demands, and as Johnson (2005) argues, “in a world of Praxis exams, No
Child Left Behind, standardized achievement tests, behavioral objectives, technical teaching, emotionless pedagogy, and standards-based education it often feels like a holistic philosophy and authentic teaching are not valued” (p. 36). Professors who teach in teacher education programs are no less immune to these expectations, including courses that are mandated by governments and program changes imposed by institutional leadership.

I recommend that two areas be considered in order to affect a shift from externally imposed educational practices to a balance between the outer and the inner worlds of students and teachers; the institutional level and the individual level. First, the institutional culture must begin to acknowledge other ways of knowing, as an exclusive objectivist epistemology will only result in further fragmentation, and Scott (1990) states that what is called for is “our evolution toward a more integrative definition of knowledge, practice of research, and facilitation of student learning” (p. 16). Indigenous knowledges must be acknowledged and honoured as valid modes of knowing, and as Dei (2000) states, “to achieve a genuine synthesis of all existing knowledges, the academy must work with the idea of multiple, collective and collaborative dimensions of knowledge” (p. 119). It is therefore incumbent upon administrators and policy makers to facilitate this paradigm shift towards more integrative, holistic learning.

Teacher education programs have the most inherent power and responsibility to affect the formation of teachers who will then be charged with the responsibility of leading their students. Our institutions must begin to support the development of teachers who will be equipped to respond to the spiritual needs of their students (Renteria, 2001). Clearly, teacher educators must be supported by their administrators and each other to
begin to acknowledge the spiritual dimension within the context of their academic work. What is called for is teachers who embody wholeness in their classrooms, and as Palmer (1998) emphasizes, “teaching and learning, done well, are done not by disembodied intellects but by whole persons whose minds cannot be disconnected from feeling and spirit, from heart and soul. To teach as a whole person to the whole person is not to lose one’s professionalism as a teacher but to take it to a deeper level” (p. 10). Teacher education programs have the potential to provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to become more of who they are.

Second, although the inclusion of spirituality into post secondary contexts cannot be mandated by administration, individual professors can begin to acknowledge their inner lives in their academic work, and teach from their wholeness. I am not suggesting that educators jump on yet another “band wagon”, but I am inviting them to examine how they might begin to integrate their inner lives with their outer lives as teachers. In a practical manner, spirituality can best be acknowledged in classroom learning experiences as teachers begin sharing their inner lives with their students and providing them with opportunities to engage the spiritual dimension in their academic studies. This requires the cultivation of safe, caring learning environments that make space for the sharing of stories, deep listening, engagement of the imagination, the inclusion of the arts, reflection, and silence.

As we navigate these new waters, we must also guard against spirituality in education becoming regulated with stringent pedagogy, and as R. Miller (2006) asserts, “I would argue that it is the care and love that nourish human development, not the pedagogical ideology” (p. 9). Incorporating spirituality into teacher education as a new
pedagogy is not required here; what is called for is an acknowledgment of the spiritual dimension that is already present in all that we do as teachers and learners. Acknowledging and honouring the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs has the potential to provide both the student body and the professoriate with more holistic, integrative approaches to coming to more fully know and love not only their areas of investigation, but their peers, the world, and themselves.

This paper has supported the argument for acknowledging the spiritual dimension in teacher education programs as a means of facilitating integrative learning, which impacts on the formation of future teachers, who after experiencing the spiritual dimension in their academic studies, may choose to incorporate it into their teaching. As teacher educators, if we are to acknowledge the spiritual dimension in our teaching, we must acknowledge and honour our inner lives, gain institutional support, and through embodying wholeness in our classrooms, give our students not only the tools, but permission to acknowledge and honour their spirituality as well. This important and ultimately transformative work will begin in the hearts of teachers.
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