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## The Ethic of Care in Teaching: An Overview of Supportive Literature

Lynn M. Owens and Catherine D. Ennis

The purpose of this article is to provide an overview of three theoretical frameworks that appear related to teachers who manifest an ethic of care. An in-depth review of related literature develops Noddings' theory of the ethic of care, focusing on defining care in teaching. It is further supported with theories of moral development, the theory of relational knowing, and the role of self in teacher development. This article provides support for considering and incorporating the development of an ethic of care as fundamental pedagogical content knowledge to be included in pre-service teacher education.

The ability to enact an ethic of care in teaching should be an expectation of effective teachers. Teachers need to be able to care for themselves, their students, the content, and other members of the school community. Too often, that ability to care is assumed rather than nurtured or taught. Too often physical education teachers are able to care only for those students who are willing to learn or are athletes. The need exists to better prepare future teachers and assist current teachers in understanding the ethic of care.

Current teacher education programs and professional development programs often fail to address the ethic of care and its impact on the educational process. While many teachers say they care about students and they care about physical education, without a true understanding of what this really means, teachers may become overwhelmed by the realities of care. Furthermore, if we are to produce caring teachers from our undergraduate physical education teacher education programs, we can not assume that they understand care. Therefore, it is suggested that the ethic of care become pedagogical content knowledge and part of the undergraduate physical education teacher education curriculum. Given the complexity of the ethic of care construct, this article should serve to lead the reader to a better understanding of the ethic of care in physical education.

The ethic of care represents a relatively recent field of study in education. Noddings' (1984) groundbreaking philosophical work describing this theory has led other researchers to conduct their own inquiry as they attempt to confirm and expand Noddings' theory. Findings have supported and expanded the ethic of care as an instrumental yet complicated construct in understanding educational settings. This review of literature will provide an overview of three theoretical frameworks

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Lynn M. Owens is with the Department of Health and Human Development at Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59715. E-mail: [lowens@montana.edu](mailto:lowens@montana.edu). Catherine D. Ennis is with Department of Kinesiology at the University of Maryland - College Park. E-mail: [cde@umd.edu](mailto:cde@umd.edu).

that appear related to teachers who manifest an ethic of care: the ethic of care, relational knowing, and teacher development of self.

## Noddings' Theory of the Ethic of Care

Noddings (1984) argues that caring should be at the heart of the educational system. This concept serves as the foundation for the theoretical framework of the ethic of care in education. This innately feminist framework emphasizes the differences between the traditional male dominated view of rules, regulations, and abstract thinking and the more feminine, "motherly" voice of context that seeks connection and relationship in interactions and decision making. Gilligan's (1982) work on the development of "a different voice" in girls and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) notions of "women's ways of knowing" will be discussed in this section to elaborate Noddings' view. Noddings (1992) emphasizes that the concept of school morality should be revised to focus on caring as the moral orientation to teaching.

### Defining Care

Philosophers have offered descriptions of care. Martin Heidegger (1926/1962), a German philosopher, described care as the very Being of life. Milton Mayeroff (1971) notes that to care for other persons is to help them care for themselves. Gordon, Benner, and Noddings (1996, p. xiii) define caring as a set of relational practices that foster mutual recognition and realization, growth, development, protection, empowerment, and human community, culture, and possibility. This definition emphasizes that caring occurs within relationships.

### The One Caring and the Cared For

The basic assumption of Noddings' ethic of care is the reciprocal relationship between the "one caring" and the "cared for." In an educational setting, the teacher assumes the role of the one caring while the students are those cared for. In this relationship, the one-caring teacher feels an obligation and a sense of "I must" in establishing the caring ethic. As Noddings (1992) explains, teachers who profess an ethic of care in their practice view themselves as the ones responsible for empowering their students. The caring ethic suggests that teachers approach student needs from the subjective perspective of "I must do something" rather than the more objective "something must be done" approach. Teachers are motivated by this philosophy to perform conscious acts of "being with" and "doing for" for the sake of their students. This is in contrast to leaving student care up to others and removing themselves from personal responsibility. Several characteristics of both the one-caring teacher and the cared-for student are required to facilitate the ethic of care relationship.

### Characteristics of Care

To establish the ethic of care relationship between the one-caring teacher and the cared-for student, several characteristics need to be present. Characteristics of

the one-caring teacher include engrossment in the cared-for student, a commitment to the cared-for student, and a motivational shift from a focus on the teacher self to a focus on the student other. The student in the role of the cared for also has responsibilities in establishing a caring ethic. For the caring relationship to be established, the cared-for student must be both receptive and responsive to the efforts of the one-caring teacher. Noddings' (1984) description of the roles of one caring and cared for are essential for understanding the development of the ethic of care.

As Noddings (1992) explains, the one-caring teacher connects to the cared-for student in an attitude that facilitates engrossment, commitment, and a motivational shift to the cared-for student. The first characteristic, engrossment, occurs when the one-caring teacher establishes a caring relationship by accepting student feelings and acknowledging the relevance of student experiences. Students are receptive to the teacher when they feel included and when they know their feelings are valued by the teacher. By focusing initially on the students' need to be accepted and valued, one-caring teachers become engrossed in their students. The receptivity of the one-caring teacher and engrossment on student needs maintains and enhances the ethic of care relationship.

A second characteristic, commitment, reflects the attitude that there is *nothing* that can take precedence over the one-caring teacher's responsibility to care for students. A one-caring teacher will work persistently to seek involvement in the cared for, going beyond superficial responses. Noddings (1992) suggests that a one-caring teacher practices inclusion of all student ideas and seeks to understand and accept students' feelings toward the subject matter through the students' shared experiences. The ethic of care relationship is enhanced as students realize the one-caring teacher's commitment to meet their needs and to understand and accept each student.

Noddings (1984) emphasizes that in addition to engrossment and commitment, a one-caring teacher's role requires a motivational displacement or motivational shift from focus on self as teacher to a focus on students as other. The motivational shift of caring occurs as the one-caring teacher views the world through the eyes of the students. This allows them to experience the effectance motivation of the student. That is, one-caring teachers are able to determine the motivators for the student, such as what the student may want to accomplish or ways that subject matter may connect to students' lives.

Noddings (1996) explains that the motivational displacement of caring occurs naturally and is supported by the responsiveness of the cared for. In moments of care, the one-caring teacher attends and feels their motive energy flowing toward the cared-for student, who then makes some form of response, thus completing the ethic of care relation. Engrossment, commitment, and the motivational shift on the part of the one-caring teacher allow for receptivity and response on the part of the cared-for student.

In summarizing the role of caring in teaching, Noddings (1996) notes that when teachers care, they exhibit fundamental characteristics. When one cares, there are active moments of caring in which engrossment must be present. One-caring teachers are in a receptive mode, where they attend nonselectively to the cared-for students and engage in the cared-for students' hopes rather than their own, ensuring a commitment to their students. One-caring teachers accomplish a

motivational shift when they feel their motive energy flowing toward the cared-for student. Their energy focuses on helping students further their plans or actualize their hopes. In achieving the motivational shift, one-caring teachers' responses will vary with situations, across time and cultures, and across personalities and moods (Noddings, 1992). One-caring teachers look at each student in each situation in a special way as a result of the motivational shift (Noddings, 1996). The recipient of care, the student, responds in some positive way to the efforts of the one-caring teacher. The freedom, creativity, and spontaneous response of the cared-for student manifests itself under the nurture of the one-caring teacher thus completing the relation (Noddings, 1996).

### Activities of the One-Caring Teacher

Noddings (1984) explained that the ideal of caring evolves from a natural sympathy that human beings innately feel for each other. Further, she states that the most important thing children learn from teachers is how to interact with people and other living things. Caring teachers seek to recapture their own most caring moments and convey those feelings to their students (Noddings, 1992). This can be accomplished as teachers model and nurture an "ideal" of the ethic of care through several activities. These include modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation.

Modeling provides teachers with the opportunity to demonstrate how to care through their own relations with cared-for students. One-caring teachers do not tell students to care, rather they show them how to care by creating caring relations with them. Noddings (1984) notes that the capacity to care appears dependent on adequate experience in being cared for. One-caring teachers offer explanations to their students about the function of offering care. For example, in the beginning of the school year, a one-caring teacher might provide an opportunity for all students to contribute to developing a caring class community by getting to know each other. A one-caring teacher could explain that knowing others allows us to understand similarities and differences in others, thus enhancing class community.

Noddings (1992) explains that the second activity of one-caring teachers, dialogue, consists of talking and listening, sharing and responding. The purpose of dialogue is for one-caring teachers and cared-for students to come into contact with ideas and understandings other than their own. Dialogue reflects an open-ended common search for understanding, empathy, and appreciation, permitting teachers and students to discuss and arrive together at sound decisions. Dialogue can be used by one-caring teachers as a tool for teaching aspects of decision making such as the process of gathering adequate information on which to base decisions. Dialogue also contributes to the development and maintenance of caring relations because it allows students to connect to each other and the teacher through language and shared experience. In using dialogue, one-caring teachers serve as facilitators and counselors, shifting the focus of the interaction as students' needs arise (Noddings, 1992). For example, an episode of student failure and ridicule might prompt a one-caring teacher to facilitate student understanding of what it feels like to be embarrassed. A one-caring teacher could ask students to dialogue with each other about incidents where they experienced embarrassment, thus leading students to

a common understanding that all have shared similar experiences. The sharing of commonality enhances the relational connection that occurs when teachers manifest an ethic of care (Noddings, 1996).

One-caring teachers also provide opportunities for students to share efforts at providing care. Through practice, attitudes and ways of thinking are shaped by experience. Caring teachers provide opportunities for students to develop certain attitudes and ways of viewing the world to enhance their capacity to care. Noddings (1992) explains that when teachers provide opportunities for students to collaboratively practice care, students learn how to care as well as experience the contribution to community that occurs when all are involved in a variety of tasks. For example, in a middle school physical education setting, students could be given an opportunity to serve as mentors to elementary school children in an after-school activity program. This experience might enable them to care for the younger students as they model behaviors and attitudes of their one-caring teacher.

One-caring teachers also use confirmation, described by Buber (1965) as an act of affirming and encouraging the best in others, to develop a positive relationship with their students. Noddings (1992) points out that for one-caring teachers, confirmation of students comes through establishing trust. One-caring teachers accomplish confirmation by developing a relationship with students and knowing their students well enough to realize what they are trying to become. This relationship develops over time as one-caring teachers manifest characteristics of engrossment, commitment, and a motivational shift toward the efforts of their cared-for students. Cared-for students' receptivity and responses to one-caring teachers allow trust to develop. Noddings (1992) believes that even in difficult circumstances, one-caring teachers have the capacity to visualize a student's potential to become better. Confirmation in ethic of care teaching does not occur uniformly, where students are treated with sameness, but rather occurs within a relation of trust as its foundation and continuity of time as a requirement (Noddings, 1996). For example, one-caring teachers may ask for student input and provide multiple ways for students to achieve, thus facilitating student decision making in the confirmation process.

In summary, when teachers care, they work hard to meet their professional and personal responsibilities through modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation. Noddings (1992) believes that by providing cared-for students with opportunities to experience care in many ways through the implementation of caring activities, the ethic of care will be enhanced.

## Support for the Ethic of Care

The ethic of care theoretical framework is understood and supported from several perspectives. Researchers and scholars from philosophy, developmental psychology, and education have contributed to this body of knowledge. Both traditional male-oriented and post-modern feminist researchers have proposed theories of moral development, strengthening our understanding of the ethic of care.

Several scholars (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Noddings, 1996) suggest that caring occurs in relationships that are irrational. Urie Bronfenbrenner suggests that "in order to develop, a child needs the enduring, irrational involvement of one or more adults in care and joint activity with the child." By irrational, Bronfenbrenner

explains that “somebody has got to be crazy about that kid!” (1978, pp. 773-774). He further suggests that children embraced in such nonrational relationships gain situational competence; that is, they become able to master situations of greater and greater complexity through their cooperative participation with adults.

Noddings (1996) supports the notion of irrationality in the one-caring teacher and cared-for student relationship. She suggests that as teachers become relaxed in their connections with students, they assume full individuality in the relationship. Whatever the one-caring teacher actually does is enhanced or diminished, made meaningful or meaningless, by the attitude conveyed to the cared-for student. In this conveyance of teacher self to student other, neither the engrossment of the one-caring nor the attitude by the cared-for is rational. Noddings (1996) emphasizes that neither is reasoned. She suggests that while much of what occurs in caring is rational and carefully considered, the basic relationship is not, and neither is the required awareness of relatedness.

The one-caring teacher receives the cared-for student and views that student’s world through both sets of eyes. Buber (1965) refers to this relational process as “inclusion.” Inclusion occurs when the one-caring teacher assumes a dual perspective and can understand from both their own view and that of the cared-for students. The one-caring teacher watches for incipient interest in particular children and arranges the educational environment accordingly to draw them in. The student, as the one cared-for, will often respond with interest to challenges offered by the one-caring teacher. Noddings (1984) explains Buber’s sense of “confirmation” as when the one-caring teacher sees the student’s best self in the cared-for student and works with him to actualize that self.

## Moral Development

Carol Gilligan’s (1982) groundbreaking research, reflected in the book, *In a Different Voice*, described the differences in moral development as a function of gender and laid the foundation for a generation of research focusing on the development of an ethic of care. Gilligan’s research delineated a process through which women view the making of moral decisions in a different way and with a different “voice”: the “voice of care.” Voice is defined as a sense of self and how one makes meaning of the world (Belenky et al., 1986). Gilligan’s research was designed in response to Kohlberg’s work (1981, 1984). Kohlberg excluded women in his research, examining the construct of “moral development,” and later determined that women were “less developed” morally based on a scale that equated morality with “justice” (Carse, 1996).

Kohlberg’s (1981) research followed the development of 84 boys over a period of 20 years. His empirical results led to the development of a six-stage moral development theory that when applied to females, found them to be less morally developed than males. Kohlberg’s moral development theory is comprised of a three-level progression from an egocentric understanding of fairness based on individual need (i.e., stages one and two), to a conception of fairness anchored in the shared conventions of societal agreement (i.e., stages three and four), and finally to a principled understanding of fairness that rests on free-standing logic of equality and reciprocity (i.e., stages five and six).

Kohlberg and Gilligan's disagreement regarding the conception of moral development falls along the conventional lines of differences between traditional patriarchal thought and a feminist perspective. Both researchers have engaged in narrow analysis, not only in terms of populations studied, but also in terms of problems or issues addressed. Kohlberg's stage theory represents the patriarchal view emphasizing the use of reason, thought, form, rules, and means to seek objective truths as justice. In his theory, most women would have arrested moral development at about stage three-four. By contrast, Gilligan suggests that women follow a distinctive sequence of three perspectives in moral decision making. Each perspective represents a more complex understanding of the relationship between self and other. She notes that each transition to the next perspective involves a critical reinterpretation of the conflict between selfishness and responsibility (Gilligan, 1982). The sequence of women's moral judgment proceeds from an initial concern with survival to a focus on goodness to a reflective understanding of care as the most adequate guide to the resolution of conflicts in human relationships. Gilligan (1982) asserts that moral development proceeds through phases of desire, feeling, content, and substance and ends in seeking subjective truths in relationships to others. Thus, Kohlberg's (1981) "justice" orientation and Gilligan's (1982) "care" orientation stand in contrast to each other.

Kohlberg's (1981) depiction of the "justice" orientation views moral judgment as dispassionate and derived from an impartial view formed by general, universal principles emphasizing individual rights and norms. Gilligan's (1982) "care" orientation, by contrast, understands moral judgments as contextually specific perceptions sensitive to others' needs and to the dynamics of individual and particular relationships. From this perspective, moral reasoning is construed to involve empathy and concern and emphasizes norms of responsiveness and responsibility in relationship with others (Carse, 1996). In utilizing the care orientation of moral development and decision making, the process is imbedded in relationships with others, and decision making depends on the relationship. By contrast, a justice orientation to moral development first considers the moral view of the individual in light of universal rules and as separated from relationships (Gilligan, 1982).

Although Gilligan suggests that a care orientation is not necessarily particular to women's experience, her findings are based only on research with women and on problems that are more women-oriented. Just as the validity of Kohlberg's research was questioned because his subjects were exclusively male, likewise the validity of Gilligan's research is suspect because all of her subjects were female. According to Gilligan, women's experience has been difficult to decipher prior to her work because the role of relationship gives rise to a problem of interpretation. Gilligan (1982) suggests that women perceive and construe social reality differently than do men, and these differences center around experiences of attachment and separation in relationships. Women's sense of integrity appears to be entwined with an ethic of care so that to see themselves as women is to see themselves in a relationship of connection.

Gilligan describes the traditional separation of patriarchy and feminism in terms of images. Patriarchy suggests a top-down, male-dominated approach to decision making with the image of a hierarchy such as the Biblical Jacob's ladder in which there is a competitive, hierarchal scheme to decision making and power. In contrast, feminism is represented by a "Sarah's circle" approach to problem



solving, depicting a circular web of shared experiences and relationships where decisions and power are arrived at collaboratively and in relationship with others. These contrasting images of a hierarchy and a web, drawn from women's texts and women's thoughts, convey different ways of structuring relationships and are associated with different views of morality and self (Gilligan, 1982). These disparate visions reflect the paradoxical truths of human experience, that we know ourselves only insofar as we live in connection with others and that we experience relationships only insofar as we differentiate other from self.

Noddings (1984), following the work of Gilligan, places care as the moral foundation of education. Human caring and the memory of caring and being cared for form the foundation of the ethical response to care. Noddings argues that caring is rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness in a traditionally feminine sense. She notes that faced with a moral dilemma, women often ask for more information, needing to talk to the participants, to see their eyes and facial expressions, to receive what they are feeling (Noddings, 1984). Women can and do give reasons for their acts, but the reasons often point to feelings, needs, impressions, and a sense of personal ideal rather than to traditionally male-dominated universal principles and their application. It is because of the "valuing" in a women's approach that women have often been judged inferior to men in the moral domain (Gilligan, 1982).

In summarizing the differences between traditional and feminist models of moral development, Caffarella (1992) reinforces the views of Gilligan (1982), Noddings (1984), and Belenky et al. (1986), proposing that women have different ways of growing and knowing, generally characterized based on three assumptions. First, identity is linked to relationships, connection with others, and intimacy rather than identity as a separate, self-defined individual. Second, women prefer cooperation rather than competition because cooperation enhances opportunities to build relationships. Third, moral decisions are based on an ethic of caring, emphasizing context and relationships, rather than an ethic of justice, imbedded in universal rules (Liddell, 1993).

## Research on the Ethic of Care

Research conducted to examine the ethic of care has described characteristic themes present in a caring teaching environment and the role of care in school culture and community. For the purposes of this review, selected studies will be included as support for the investigation of the ethic of care in teaching.

### Characteristic Themes of the Ethic of Care

There exists a growing body of research seeking to understand the facilitation of caring relationships between teachers and students in schools (Alder, 1996; Dempsey & Noblit, 1993; Eaker-Rich, Van Galen, & Timothy, 1996; Mercado, 1993; Tarlow, 1996; Webb-Dempsey, Wilson, Corbett, & Mordecai-Phillips, 1996; Wentzel, 1997). These research studies have culminated in the development of characteristic themes of the ethic of care. Although some conceptual commonality exists, terminology used to describe these themes varies as frequently occurs in emerging fields of study.



Using a grounded theory approach similar to that developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Tarlow (1996) conducted 84 participant interviews in three subsamples, families, schools, and voluntary agencies, to generate a useful concept of caring. The schools selected included one rural and one urban vocational high school. The volunteer and family subsamples were drawn from the geographic areas served by each of the two schools. Interview participants from the school subsamples were selected by recommendation of school administrators as being "a caring person." Interview lengths ranged from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Tarlow viewed the caring relationships as valid if they were positive, satisfying, and valued by the referring person, the caregiver, care recipient, and herself. The interviews were then transcribed and analyzed using Glaser and Strauss' (1967) grounded theory approach. Based on her research, Tarlow developed eight characteristics that describe phases of the caring process. These characteristics were providing time, "being there," talking (dialogue), developing sensitivity, acting in the best interest of the other, caring as feeling, caring as doing, and demonstrating reciprocity. According to Tarlow, each of these caring characteristics can overlap and occur simultaneously with others.

Tarlow (1996) notes that three characteristics, time, be there, and talking (dialogue), were prerequisites and constants for caring to begin. The first characteristic, time, describes the actual time teachers and students spend interacting in a school setting, either in a formal classroom setting or more information interactions. Respondents indicated that caring required time and the presence of the caring person. Both teachers and students talked about the importance of time to enhance caring relationships. In the school setting, they acknowledged and accepted a limit to caring dependent on school hours. Students noted that increasing the frequency and duration of their time spent with caring teachers improved and enhanced the student/teacher relationship.

In Tarlow's (1996) research, the second characteristic required for caring to begin is "be there." Respondents defined this term to mean the caring person would be present and prepared to help the cared for in whatever way he or she could. They explained that the one-caring teacher was accessible, approachable, and welcoming for them to initiate a request for caring and could be counted on for help. The essence of "be there" meant the teacher was present and singularly committed. Students perceived "be there" as being physically present. Successful caring relationships seem to be characterized by the perception of an abundance of time for "being there." This sense that the one caring is poised and ready to help expresses a spirit of availability that in and of itself can provide comfort and security (Tarlow, 1996).

Talking or dialogue is the third prerequisite and constant characteristic in caring relationships. In Tarlow's (1996) research, dialogue was frequently depicted as a means of building and maintaining a caring relationship. With students and teachers, talking frequently and easily was important to a caring relationship. Tarlow points out that it does not matter if dialogue was confrontational and aggressive or tender and empathetic; both kinds of dialogue foster a close caring relationship. These three concepts (i.e., time, be there, and talking or dialogue) appear essential for caring relationships to develop and support Noddings' theoretical framework of the ethic of care. Noddings describes three characteristics of the one caring in

caring relationships. These characteristics are an engrossment on the cared for, a commitment to the cared for, and a motivational shift from a focus on the teacher self to a focus on the student other. Each of these characteristics is founded on an investment of time and energy facilitating the one caring cared-for relationships. Tarlow's depiction of "be there" as necessary to begin a caring relationship reinforces Noddings' concept of commitment required of the one caring. Tarlow's concept of dialogue is also noted by Noddings (1984) as an activity of the one caring through which caring occurs. Tarlow's establishment of prerequisites to caring relationships supports Noddings (1984) theoretical framework.

Tarlow's fourth characteristic, sensitivity, was described by teachers as noticing, being conscious of, and attending to the mood and the focus of students. Seventy-four percent of those interviewed indicated that sensitivity to the needs of others contributed to successful caring relationships. Teachers noted that to bring the student into the learning experience, they must pay attention to students and attend to any subtle clues that students' minds might be elsewhere. Tarlow noted that sensitivity to the needs of others occurred early in the caring process, was very complex, and required time and hard work. An overlapping of Tarlow's characteristics of time and sensitivity is apparent as teachers suggest that the more time students spend with them, the more easily teachers notice the needs of their students. In further understanding the caring characteristic of sensitivity, Tarlow (1996) describes the use of empathy as a tool to foster understanding of what the other thinks, feels, and needs. She suggests that caring teachers deliberately attend to the work of getting to know their students as individuals by observing and paying attention to signals in order to be sensitive to their needs.

Acting in the best interest of the other, Tarlow's (1996) fifth characteristic of caring relationships was defined by teachers as actively promoting student success at school and eventually in the work world. Tarlow suggests that teachers act in the present in hopes that their actions will benefit the student in the future. Teaching, supporting, and modeling are strategies used by caring teachers in service to their students. Acting in the best interest of their students also implies empowering students. Empowering means doing something now that fosters student independence in the future. Caring teachers, in acting in the best interest of their students, empower them by fostering student self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-reliance (Tarlow, 1996).

Caring as feeling and caring as doing represent Tarlow's sixth and seventh characteristics of caring relationships. Respondents described caring as both a feeling and an activity. Feelings and sentiments were part of what constituted caring for 75% of the participants. Teachers described caring about students as having positive feelings of concern for their students. Tarlow described two male teachers who both cried during the interview when depicting stories of students who were meaningful to them. Tarlow argues that feelings and sentiments are part of what constitutes the motivation for caring, that is, why people care is nearly always tied to feelings and sentiments. For teachers, caring sentiments reflect empathy and hopefulness for the future of their students (Tarlow, 1996).

Caring as doing, the seventh characteristic of caring relationships, describes the activities of caring for others. In this research, caring meant "doing for others" for 84% of the participants and was defined as performing overt acts for other

people. In school settings, Tarlow found that these acts varied from listening to implementing first aid procedures. Tarlow suggests that a caring teacher assesses what the student needs, then institutes action on behalf of that student. The caring teacher assumes the responsibility for recognizing that something needs to be done and then does it, frequently acting assertively, without being asked. Respondents agreed that teachers who cared about students, taught them by any means necessary to facilitate learning. These means varied from teachers devoting extra time after school with students to listening to student problems.

Finally, like Noddings (1984), Tarlow found that caring is embedded in reciprocal relationships where reciprocity is a mutual interchange, a give and take, which occurs across time. Reciprocal relationships assume and imply a mutual sense of obligation and responsibility. In Tarlow's (1996) study, teacher and student negotiations in balancing needs were integral to the sense of obligation to each other. In schools, the process of balancing needs was bound by the school day and year. Students and teachers negotiate the specifics of their caring relationships. For example, although students might have to wait for a teacher's individual attention at times, a caring teacher, noticing this need, might adjust or create teaching approaches specifically to meet particular students' needs. An additional finding was that more teachers than students identified reciprocity as essential in caring relationships. Tarlow believes that this reflects the reality of hard work often required by the caring teacher. Further, caring teachers tend to be more conscious than students of the demands on their time and energy. This finding supports Noddings' (1984) explanation of the unequal nature of the relationship between teachers and students. Noddings suggests that the teacher-student relationship, by definition, is unequal, with the teacher assuming the primary role of one caring. Students have to learn to care in such relationships, but their first contributions are as recipients of care, the cared for.

In summary, Tarlow's (1996) research describing characteristics of caring reveals that teachers who exemplify an ethic of care in their teaching expend energy to know their students. Caring teachers assume responsibility for initiating action in their relationships with students based on best judgment and anticipation of what students need. Teachers accumulate information about individual students in order to recognize, interpret, and attend to behavioral changes. Teachers constantly reassess needs, make decisions, and institute new ways and means of caring. Caring teachers devote serious attention to thinking about, negotiating, and carrying out actions in the best interest of their students. Tarlow's eight characteristics of caring suggest that for caring to occur, there must be people present, time to do the tasks of caring, and a dialogue established to commence the caring process. Additionally, the caring teacher is sensitive to the needs of students, acts in the best interest of students, has caring feelings toward students, and performs overt caring acts in service to the students and to facilitate learning. The cared-for students then provide reciprocity by responding in such a way as to perpetuate the caring process.

Other scholars and researchers have provided additional support for Noddings' (1984) theoretical framework of the ethic of care. For example, in a four-year study, Mercado (1993) used collaborative-intervention research methods to study the effects of inquiry based learning on middle school urban students. In this collaborative research study, both the researcher and the teacher were active participants in the classroom setting. By this definition, the researcher's role and the teacher

role blended into one role of teacher/researcher for both participants (Woodward, 1985). Mercado visited the school every Friday for four years, interacting with students and teachers as participant-observer. To assure data trustworthiness, she relied on multiple sources of data, multiple perspectives, and multiple interpretive frameworks. These included individually documenting and writing, collaboratively reflecting and contemplating, and collecting artifacts and photographs. The results of her work indicate how relations of care were created and sustained over time through words and actions.

Mercado (1993) suggests that relations of care are an important influence on the academic accomplishments of students. Supporting Noddings (1984) theoretical model, Mercado recognized that dialogue is the means through which teachers and students share information and through which relations of care are established and sustained. Additionally, students are more likely to care when they see others demonstrating that they care. Specifically, Mercado elaborated four themes characteristic of the ethic of care in teaching. These include being together, being real or perceived as authentic, being open, and being fair. Similar to Tarlow's (1996) characteristic of the role of time, Mercado describes being together as referring to the time spent in relations of care. Being real or perceived by students as authentic means being honest and truthful about life, beliefs, feelings, and emotions. Characteristics of teachers who were open to students included being approachable, making it possible to facilitate communication, and accepting others and their viewpoints that were different from the teachers' own. Mercado described that being fair indicates a willingness to discuss and follow principles of right or wrong, just or unjust. These four characteristics of care serve as additional support for the ethic of care in teaching.

In summarizing additional survey research focusing on characteristics of caring teachers, teachers perceived themselves as exhibiting caring when they dialogue with students outside of class, trust students' spontaneous actions, show interest in the process of student learning, assist with school problems, and establish personal relationships with students (McLaughlin, 1991). Other ways that teachers report that they care for students include encouraging student learning (Rogers & Webb, 1991), fulfilling needs for security and belonging (Dempsey & Noblit, 1993), developing mutual trust, challenging students academically (Cogar & Raebeck, 1989), and including students in decision making (Kohn, 1991)

Results of Rogers and Webb's (1991) survey research indicated that students perceive that teachers care when they encourage dialogue, make school fun, and provide a secure place for learning. Additionally, students perceived teachers as caring when they are sensitive to student needs and interests and show concern for student learning outcomes. Students further believed that by providing fun and humor, encouraging success and positive feelings, showing interest in the student as a person, and being responsive to individual students outside of the classroom, teachers are engaging in behaviors indicative of caring (Quaglia & Perry, 1995). Finally, students reported that they value teachers who care and want teachers to recognize who they are, to listen to what they say, and to respect their effort (Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991).

In concluding this section on thematic characteristics of one-caring teachers, evidence has been provided of themes of caring concepts and characteristics from the perspectives of researchers, teachers, and students. By recognizing these

characteristics, additional support is provided for Noddings' theoretical framework of the ethic of care, in particular, the relationship between the one-caring teacher and the cared-for student. Other research efforts have moved beyond the teacher-student relationship to focus on the role of creating caring educational communities that facilitate learning.

## The Role of Care in School Culture and Community

Several researchers and scholars have investigated the role of care in enhancing school culture and developing a sense of community in schools (Beck & Newman, 1996; Dempsey & Noblit, 1993; Eaker-Rich et al., 1996; Walker, 1989). In this section, studies that examine the connection between caring and community in schools will be reviewed.

Eaker-Rich and Van Galen (1996), editors of the book, *Caring in an Unjust World: Negotiating Borders and Barriers in Schools*, addressed the question of the possibilities and implications of caring across cultural differences found in schools today. They concluded that throughout diverse settings, caring is consistently revealed as an important value and desire. They note that caring is significant whether explicitly evoked in the school culture (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996; Mercado, 1993) or an implicit assumption undergirding decisions and interactions (Beck & Newman, 1996). In Eaker-Rich and Van Galen's overview of research findings, some teachers reported they want to care and some students voice an appreciation of receiving care. Adding support for Noddings' suggestion that caring requires continuity, caring relations seem to be facilitated when the caregiver is embedded in the community or culture.

Particularly in dealing with underrepresented or disenfranchised populations in schools, understanding and articulating the history of community and the cultural meaning of caring for different members of a school are essential facets of building continuity among fragmented social lives of many students. Eaker-Rich and Van Galen (1996) suggest that to be effective at caring in settings of diversity, teachers must move from an attitude of "caring about" to a practice of "caring for." Caring about connotes a more global generality and objectification of the one receiving care, as opposed to caring for, which implies a recognition and relationality with the one receiving care.

Further, in support of Noddings (1984) theory, Eaker-Rich and Van Galen consider dialogue as a tool used to shift conceptualizations of caring away from sentiment and into a dynamic process. Other researchers (Beck & Newman, 1996; Dempsey & Noblit, 1996; Walker, 1989) have also investigated the impact of the ethic of care in various culturally diverse settings.

Dempsey and Noblit (1996) spent three years investigating one educational community to study caring in African American communities using an oral history perspective. Oral history is a method asking people to reconstruct their culture, to reclaim their past, and relocate themselves in the present (Halbwachs, 1980). In this study, Dempsey and Noblit interviewed 41 people associated with the local school. They acquired additional information by examining school board minutes, school district documents, and archival data from public libraries and local churches.

Results of this study indicated that a caring school community functions to nurture and sustain students and promote and value relationships between school administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Additionally, caring school communities provide students with a sense of continuity through a commitment to interpersonal relationships focused on student needs (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996).

Walker (1989) also examined the role of interpersonal relationships in creating a caring educational community. In using the term interpersonal relationships, she refers to the direct attention a teacher gives to students to meet their psychological, sociological, and academic needs. She contrasts this type of caring with institutional caring, in which school personnel seek to attend to the same student needs through the development and implementation of school policies. Walker, using a historical ethnographic paradigm, examined one historically African American school identified by the community as a “good” school. She conducted over 100 interviews with administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. Additionally, she collected numerous artifacts including principals’ reports, newspaper clippings, school board minutes, letters, yearbooks, and pictures dating from the school’s beginning as a high school in 1933 to its closing as a segregated school in 1969.

The results of her study indicate several key points. First, students felt that they could relate to teachers when teachers and administrators created a caring educational community. Second, students wanted to emulate the strong role models of their teachers. Third, because students acknowledged that teachers and others cared, they were more likely to believe teachers’ comments about their potential. Further, students reported that they were motivated to excel to avoid disappointing those teachers working hard to insure their success. Overall, Walker’s (1989) research suggested that the presence of caring interpersonal relationships found in a caring educational community enhances students’ feelings about school and serves as a mechanism to enhance student learning.

In studying the effects of a caring educational community in an urban high school environment, Beck and Newman (1996) focused on one high school located in the Watts section of south central Los Angeles. They concentrated on uncovering and understanding manifestations of caring at this school. They were specifically interested in the interplay between care and three aspects of life at this school: diverse ethnic populations, differences in teacher and student socioeconomic levels, and effects of care on African American and Latino female students. Using an ethnographic design, they collected data through field observations and interviews, both formal and informal, of administrators, teachers, students, staff, and parents.

Results of Beck and Newman’s research indicated that teacher caring was made evident to students when teachers acknowledged racial differences, confronted actual and potential tensions, and involved students in developing solutions and strategies. Teachers were perceived to care when they assumed a sense of agency, advocating on behalf of their students’ ability to make decisions. Developing student ability and working to motivate their students while recognizing the personhood of individual students were also characteristic of teachers’ caring. Additionally, teachers accepted as important those issues about which students cared even when they shared differing perspectives or concerns. Beck and Newman (1996) concluded that regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or gender, the faculty, teachers,



parents, students, and staff in this urban high school facilitated a caring educational community by assuming individual responsibilities, providing support, and respecting decisions and opinions of others.

In summary, these research studies have confirmed that the role of care in educational culture and communities is instrumental to student success. Although teacher caring is important, when nested within a community of care, teachers have greater impact on academic success and general well-being of their students. This research provides additional support for Noddings' conceptual framework of the ethic of care as an educational philosophy and practice to enhance learning.

## Relational Knowing

Hollingsworth, Dybdahl, and Minarik's (1992) and others (Greene, 1979; Jersild, 1955; Noddings, 1984) suggest that teachers required a "dynamic understanding of self in relationship to others across multiple contexts" (Hollingsworth et al., 1992, p. 4) to more fully understand themselves as teachers. They argue that knowing through relationship to self and others is central to teaching. Teachers interpret their pupils' actions and reactions by perceiving relational patterns that are unique to the person of teacher (Nias, 1989). As defined by Hollingsworth et al. (1992), relational knowing is knowledge that occurs when caring influences knowing. In other words, it can be explained as what one comes to know about oneself and others as a result of being in relationship with others. For teachers, this refers to what they learn and know about themselves, their students, and their subject matter as a result of their relationships with students while engaged in teaching.

### Hollingsworth et al.'s Theory of Relational Knowing

Hollingsworth et al. (1992) first termed the phrase "relational knowing" as a result of a six-year longitudinal research study to determine the effectiveness of various curricular approaches on urban literacy education. The research project was a collaborative effort involving one teacher educator, Hollingsworth, and seven beginning teachers, five teaching in elementary schools and two in secondary schools. The schools, located in urban environments, served diverse multiethnic communities, challenged with issues of poverty, violence, and devaluation of education. Using a narrative inquiry approach, Hollingsworth and the teachers met together once per month for six years to discuss learning to teach. Hollingsworth employed a collaborative conversational method whereby participants could share, dialogue, discuss, and disagree on various issues occurring in their classrooms and with their teaching. Tape recordings of the monthly meetings were transcribed and systematically analyzed for emergent themes across conversations. In addition to the monthly collaborative meetings, each teacher was observed an average of twice per month for the first three years and once per month thereafter. Teachers were periodically videotaped and engaged in reflective journaling regarding their own and students' lives and learning.

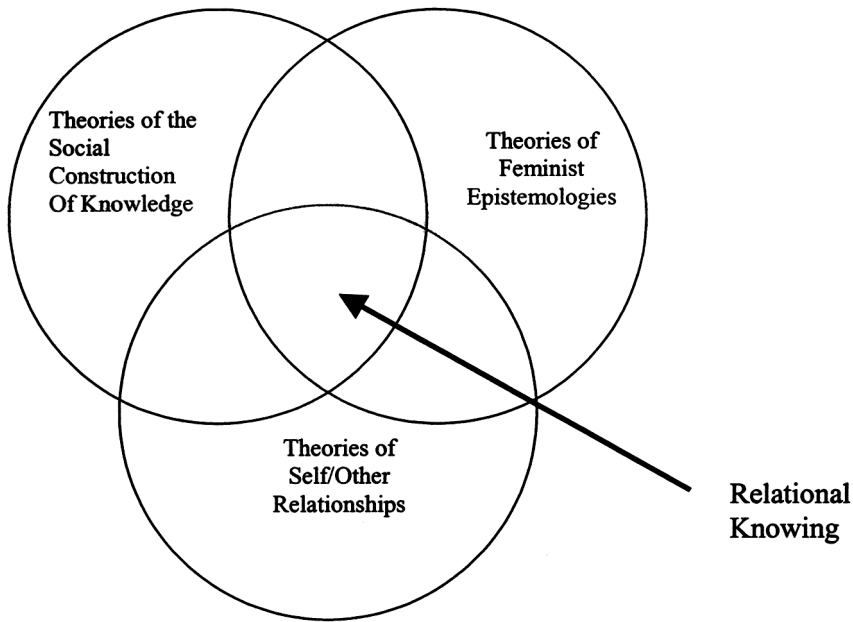


In keeping with the method of narrative inquiry, all participants constructed and reconstructed the text. Hollingsworth initially summarized the findings by noting salient and shifting categories, then verified and amended the summaries with the group. Finally, all participants composed narratives describing the issues discovered together, contributing their own words, interpretations, and stories. Hollingsworth et al. (1992) summarized these narratives to highlight the “spirals of relational knowing” (p. 29) that provided the basis for these teachers learning to teach. These included the teachers learning and knowing about themselves and their teaching through regular ongoing conversations with other teachers and a teacher educator; teachers’ passionate belief in themselves and their students as creators and evaluators of knowledge; teacher willingness to explore and create multiple, eclectic approaches to teaching characterized by relational integrity; and teachers’ willingness to critically examine both themselves and their students in their relationships.

Hollingsworth et al. (1992) locate the theoretical framework of relational knowing at the junction of three intersecting areas of research as described in Figure 1: social construction of knowledge, theories of self/other relationships, and feminist epistemologies.

The first theory, social construction of knowledge, suggests that personally meaningful knowledge is socially constructed through shared understandings (Vygotsky, 1978). Secondly, scholarly work by other researchers and educators supports the theory that knowing through relationship to self and others is central to teaching children (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988; Greene, 1979; Jersild, 1955; Nias, 1989; Noddings, 1984). The third category of research involves feminist epistemological theories including, among others, Belenky et al.’s (1986) study focusing on “women’s ways of knowing”; Gilligan’s (1982) work on the “different voice” of women in moral decision making; Lyons’ (1990) research on dilemmas of knowing; DeSensi and Rosenberg’s (1995) discussion of multiculturalism, moral development, and ethics; Thayer-Bacon’s (1993) work on “selves in relation”; and Noddings’ (1984) ethic of care.

In describing the concept of relational knowing, Hollingsworth et al. (1992) characterizes the following theoretical factors. Relational knowing involves the instantiation and reflection of what is known. This refers to the process of developing representative concrete examples of experience through reflection within relationships to others. Hollingsworth et al. (1992) notes that relational knowing is fluid and present in character, therefore can not be termed “relational knowledge” because knowledge is concrete. In support of Noddings’ (1984) theory of the ethic of care, Hollingsworth et al. (1992) agree that relational knowing is made manifest in teachers’ energy or intuitive perception. Furthering Noddings’ theory, Hollingsworth et al. state that teachers’ relational knowing evokes past memories of stored knowledge transformed into knowing through not only cognitive, but moral, spiritual, psychological, and physical responses. Finally, relational knowing allows the teacher to act in an intuitive mode. Noddings and Shore (1984) support and explain teachers’ intuition as having four characteristics. Intuition requires (a) involvement of the senses, (b) commitment and receptivity, (c) a quest for understanding and empathy, and (d) a productive tension between subjective certainty and objective uncertainty.



**Figure 1** — Hollingsworth's theoretical framework of relational knowing.

In summary, Hollingsworth's theory of relational knowing involves both the recall of prior knowledge and the reflection on what knowledge is perceived within relationship. Building on theories of social constructivism, self/other relationships, and feminist epistemologies, Hollingsworth et al. (1992) suggests that through relational knowing, teachers involved in her research learned to teach with the support of ongoing conversation. They developed a passionate belief in themselves and their students as creators and evaluators of knowledge. These teachers exhibited a willingness to honor diverse skills and styles of their students and created innovative approaches to instruction that respected students' needs. Additionally, these teachers developed a propensity to look critically at both their children and themselves in relationship. Furthermore, while teachers found the disciplinary knowledge from teacher education programs important, it was insufficient for reaching urban students. Teachers reached out to other teachers and teacher educators for relational support and knowing (Hollingsworth et al., 1992). Based on her research, Hollingsworth et al. (1992) argues that the success of teachers and their students relies in their relationship with one another.

### **Support for the Theory of Relational Knowing**

In addition to Hollingsworth's groundbreaking research, others have contributed research in support of relational knowing (Lyons, 1990; Webb & Blond,

1995). To further this construct, several selected research studies are included in this section.

Relational knowing and the importance of teacher-student relationships was central to a research study conducted by Lyons, Cutler, and Miller (1986), focusing on the dilemmas that teachers face. Forty-six teachers were asked in open-ended interviews to discuss the conflicts in their professional lives, how they dealt with them, and if they struggled with moral or ethical issues in daily interactions within the school. Although several themes emerged from the data, one finding was particularly relevant to this review. Teachers cited a recurring dilemma between their sense of self, their relationships with students, and their teaching behaviors. Lyons and her colleagues (1986) surmised that dilemmas arising from working relationships between teachers and students are fed by the daily interactions between them. Lyons and her colleagues' results indicate a strong interaction between the teacher's perspective on knowledge and knowing and students' ways of knowing. This phenomenon, the relationship between students and teachers as knowers, was characterized in Lyons' (1990) earlier research as "nested knowing." Lyons describes nested knowing as the characterization of the interdependence of students and teachers as knowers in learning. She explains that students and teachers come together to form a relationship of learning similar to a set of dynamic objects interacting with one another, yet distinct in their own right. Lyon's research adds support to Hollingsworth et al.'s (1992) theory of relational knowing, the concept of knowing self, others, and subject matter through teacher-student relationships.

The theory of relational knowing combined with caring has also received support from research conducted by Webb and Blond (1995), examining one teacher's practice and the knowledge she developed from caring and being in-relationship with her students. In this study, Webb and Blond posit that caring and relational knowing are central elements of teachers' knowledge and that knowing is found "in the relation." Supportive of Hollingsworth et al.'s (1992) definition, Webb and Blond (1995) describe relational knowing as the interaction between the knowledge of two persons (teacher and student) that happens when they are in-relation. They additionally refer to Lyons' concept of "nested knowing" as the interdependence of teachers and students in learning because each group possesses an epistemology nested within the other's (1990, p. 614).

Webb and Blond (1995) used a narrative inquiry research design to collect data consisting of multiple sources, including interviews with one teacher, field notes, and teacher reflections from 51 days of participant observation, teacher journal entries, documents pertaining to teaching strategies, and surveys of parents' and students' needs. Following Connelly and Clandinin's (1990) protocol for conducting narrative inquiry, the researchers discussed emerging findings and themes, and then shared them with the teacher (participant) who provided additional meaning throughout the inquiry. The author and the teacher collaborated through the course of this research to develop and interpret their results.

Two findings are particularly pertinent in support of this article. The first finding depicts teachers' ethic of care as grounded in their experience and relationship with students. Webb and Blond (1995) note that this teacher's ethic of care required her to be responsive to her students and was manifest by her desire for relationship and connectedness to her students. Further, Webb and Blond (1995, p. 617) argue that this teacher's "knowing" resulting from her caring and being in-relation, influenced

the curriculum that is experienced by each student. Curriculum, in this research, was viewed, not as a document, but as an active process of knowledge construction and reconstruction with students in the context of a classroom.

A second finding involves relational or nested knowing that occurred when the teacher manifested an ethic of care. Webb and Blond (1995) argue that this teacher's knowledge was constantly evolving and changing through knowing in-relationship with students. Building from Lyons' (1990) construct of nested knowing, that teacher knowledge is relational and constructed with students, Webb and Blond use a semipermeable membrane of a living animal cell as metaphor to suggest that teacher knowledge flows in and out simultaneously through the space created between one cell (teacher) and another (student). Webb and Blond's research findings, focusing on relational knowing resulting from a teacher's ethic of care, contribute additional support for both Noddings' (1984) ethic of care and Hollingsworth et al.'s (1992) theory of relational knowing because it explains these as a dynamic process that evolves and changes continuously within an evolving context.

In summary, relational knowing is knowledge that occurs when caring influences knowing (Hollingsworth et al., 1992). In other words, it can be explained as what one comes to know about oneself and others as a result of being in-relationship with others. For teachers, this refers to what they learn and know about themselves, their students, and their subject matter resulting from their relationships with students while engaged in teaching. Building on Hollingsworth's work, research by Lyons (1990) contributed the construct of nested knowing, which is characterized by the interdependence of students and teachers as knowers in learning. Following these studies, Webb and Blond (1995), synthesizing Noddings' (1984) ethic of care with Hollingsworth et al.'s (1992) relational knowing and Lyons' (1990) nested knowing, suggests that relational knowing is constructed from an ethic of care in teaching and in-relation with students characterized by a dynamic, evolving process that changes as a result of context.

## Role of Self in Teacher Development

Teachers' understanding and acceptance of themselves is the most important requirement if teachers are to help students know themselves (Jersild, 1955). For fifty years, this early finding has guided researchers and scholars to focus attention on "becoming" a teacher from the perspective of the development of self and identity. Lipka and Brinthaupt (1999), editors of *The Role of Self in Teacher Development*, support these initiatives and have summarized recent findings that position development of self as a critical component in teacher development. In their book, the process of becoming a teacher through the development of self is examined from multiple perspectives. Tusin (1999) notes that deciding to pursue teaching is essentially a process of developing and implementing a concept of self as teacher. Zehm (1999) suggests that a person's decision to become a teacher involves not only the acquisition of a knowledge base, but also the conscious development of a refined sense of self. McLean (1999) believes that teacher education should place the emphasis on the person in the process of becoming a teacher. Tickle (1999) suggests that effective teachers are those who have an understanding of self, have a self-realization, and use the self as an instrument in their own development.

Although numerous perspectives on the importance of the development of self are available, for the purposes of this article, four have been selected. These are aspects of the development of self that influence the decision to teach, “becoming” a teacher, dimensions of self that influence effective teaching, and understanding caring as it applies to the development of the self as a master teacher.

## Deciding to Teach

The decision to teach represents the starting point for understanding teacher development of self throughout the teaching career. Early research efforts (Lortie, 1975) led to the development of five common themes in this decision-making process. First, the interpersonal theme represents the desire to work with children and youth. Second, the service themes suggests a desire to contribute to a profession of moral worth. The desire for continuation, the third themes, recognizes a potential teacher’s desire to remain involved in a particular subject or educational setting. The fourth theme, material benefits, is noted by potential teachers for whom salary, prestige, and security are important in their decision to teach. Finally, time compatibility, especially for mothers, is recognized as an important theme in the decision-making process. This early research effort was followed by numerous others focusing on understanding the starting point of teacher development.

More recently, preservice/novice teachers have identified several motivators for deciding on a teaching career, including the influence of family members and significant other teachers, the potential to make a difference in the lives of children, the opportunity to give back to society, and a love of learning (Tusin, 1999). In a study conducted by Steigelbauer (1992), methods of survey research were used to compare reasons for becoming a teacher. Elementary school teachers cited helping students establish self-esteem, understanding the importance of a helping relationship, and assuming a parental role as reasons for becoming a teacher. Middle school teachers cited the challenge of and the ability to work effectively with the age group as major indicators. Secondary teachers listed academic expertise and sharing experiences as decisive reasons for choosing a career in teaching. In addition to these findings, all teachers felt a sense of social responsibility and wanted to make a difference for students (Steigelbauer, 1992).

Understanding self in relation to school and teaching is essential for teachers and begins once the decision to teach is made. Using humanistic psychology models, Combs (1965) and Combs, Avila, and Purkey (1973) included building or enhancing self concept as an essential aspect of teacher education. Understanding self has been viewed as a critical component of teacher education due to the personal nature of learning and learning how to teach. These models recognize that teachers are human beings first who behave as a function of their self-concept.

Boy and Pine (1971) support the importance of personhood and expanded self for teachers. Building on a model of involvement of four sets of experiences, human, vocational, spiritual, and recreational, they developed a systematic program of self-development for teachers. They concurred with others (Combs, 1965; Combs et al., 1973) that it is the teacher’s personhood that makes the difference in the development of students.

Many teacher educators are addressing topics association with self, self-esteem, and self understanding (Zehm, 1999). Self-esteem refers to an individual’s ability to

assess level of understanding and appreciation of personal worth (Demo & Savin-Williams, 1992), while self-concept refers to the descriptive information about an individual's cognitive and affective dimensions collected, interpreted, and used by the individual to make predictions about future experiences (Wells, 1992). Zehm (1999) suggests that if teachers do not possess optimal levels of personal self-esteem, they are unlikely to be effective. Additionally, teachers with optimal levels of self-esteem were found to be more flexible in their thinking, more enthusiastic about their own learning, and more effective in applying what they learn to student improvement (Bellon, Bellon, & Blank, 1992; Zehm & Kottler, 1993).

Self-development of teachers has received continued interest since the late 1980s with national attention being paid to teacher professionalization and empowerment (Eisner, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992). Currently, several trends are evident that focus on the continued development of the self in teachers. Providing opportunities for teachers to become reflective practitioners over a period of time enhances self-understanding and improves communication with others. Hunt (1987) described this three-step approach to reflection as the inside-out approach. Teachers begin this process with self-examination, then explore how the context impacts them, and third, examine their reactions to these contextual influences. Clandinin (1986) divided reflective tools into groups based on whether the teacher used them alone or with others. Useful when used alone are reflective tools such as journals, personal narratives, and metaphors. Action research, peer observation, and group debriefing are tools used when working with others such as with a mentor teacher or a cohort group.

The social sciences also have provided a number of theories and applications that may be helpful in understanding the role of self when applied to teacher development. Gardner's (1982) theory of multiple intelligences, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1988), the Communicating Styles Survey (Mok, 1985), and the Max Inventory of Learning Styles (1991) have all been used as instruments to help teacher educators provide preservice teachers with a better understanding of themselves. Zehm (1999) notes that of the 20% of beginning teachers who leave the teaching profession within their first two years of teaching, some have done so because they lacked the understanding of self and self-esteem necessary to build effective relationships within the school context between themselves, their students, parents, and administrators. Therefore, the importance of developing tools that will assist teachers, particularly beginning teachers, in understanding the self focusing on the self-development perspective is evident (Zehm, 1999).

### **“Becoming” a Teacher**

Over the last ten years, attention has been given to the complicated process of “becoming” a teacher. McLean (1999) argues that along with caring being one of the tools that help beginning teachers, images of self-as-person and self-as-teacher are critical to the process of becoming a teacher because they constitute the personal context within which new information will be interpreted. Self-images are important because they provide a lens through which teachers view the experience of the present and envision the future (McLean, 1999). For beginning teachers, the most powerful self-image is the one that envisions themselves as capable of creating the image of teacher that they want to become (Britzman, 1991). Maxine Green (1981)



described the process of becoming a teacher as choosing yourself through making deeply personal choices about who you will become as a teacher. She continued that these choices are heavily contextualized, also reflecting the images of others who have an impact on who one becomes as teacher.

McLean (1999) views three current orientations in understanding the process of “becoming” a teacher. The first orientation is a constructivist view that makes connections to Piaget’s theory on the development of knowledge. Second, a practical view advocated by Schwab (1969, 1971) and Schon (1983) offers a connection among teachers at various stages of their careers where the emphasis is placed on teachers coming to understand their way of thinking about self and the work of their teaching. The third orientation offers a postmodern critical feminist view help by Britzman (1991, 1994), Lather (1991), and Smyth (1987). Although different, each of these orientations emphasizes a better understanding of the process of “becoming” a teacher.

The constructivist orientation places the learner’s mental activities at the center of any instructional exchange (Noori, 1994). Based on Piaget’s theory on the development of knowledge, constructivist teacher education emphasizes a strong continuity between the teacher’s work with children and the teacher educator’s work with beginning teachers. Constructivist approaches to teaching children have developed over the last three decades, most noticeably in early childhood education (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987). Increasingly, advocates for constructivist teacher education, such as Fosnot (1989), have focused on the continuity of human learning and development across all ages. They also recognize the similarity in viewing beginning teachers as they would children, that is, as constructors of knowledge. Using this view, beginning teachers are seen as inquirers who need to develop skills in teaching. Beginning teachers are also conceptualized as theory builders, competent to create increasingly sophisticated understandings through their own cognitive work. The constructivist teacher is viewed as an empowered thinker (Fosnot, 1989) and teacher education as the process by which to support this learner’s mental activity.

The practical orientation arises from collaborative investigations in which teachers examine their personal knowledge of professional practice within complexities of their working lives. Advocates of this orientation believe that teaching is highly complex work that requires personal interpretation, mastery of numerous abilities and details, and management of multiple concerns. Researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986; Connelly & Clandinin, 1988, 1990) conceptualize teachers as highly intellectual beings, as do the constructivists; however, the teacher is seen more holistically. Theory focuses on the interconnections that exist among personal and professional understandings, self-images, and lived experiences. Following Dewey’s (1933) lead, theorists emphasize the importance of personal experiences in the creation of individual understandings. Researchers investigating this orientation frequently rely on qualitative research methods, particularly narrative inquiry. This research is facilitated by the relationship between researcher and participant. Researchers utilize multiple methods, including field notes of shared experiences, interviews, story telling, letter writing, autobiographical and biographical writing, documents, metaphors, and personal philosophies (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986).

Connelly and Clandinin (1990), writing extensively about “personal practical knowledge,” believe that as professionals make decisions about practical action,



they are drawing on the totality of their knowledge. This knowledge is neither exclusively personal nor professional, but a unique blend of multiple sources of knowledge (Zehm, 1999). Other educators (Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994; Nias, 1989) support a practical orientation toward “becoming a teacher.” In their work, teachers are seen as builders of personal theories about professional matters throughout their careers. In summary, emphasis is placed on teachers coming to understand their own ways of thinking about self and the work of teaching.

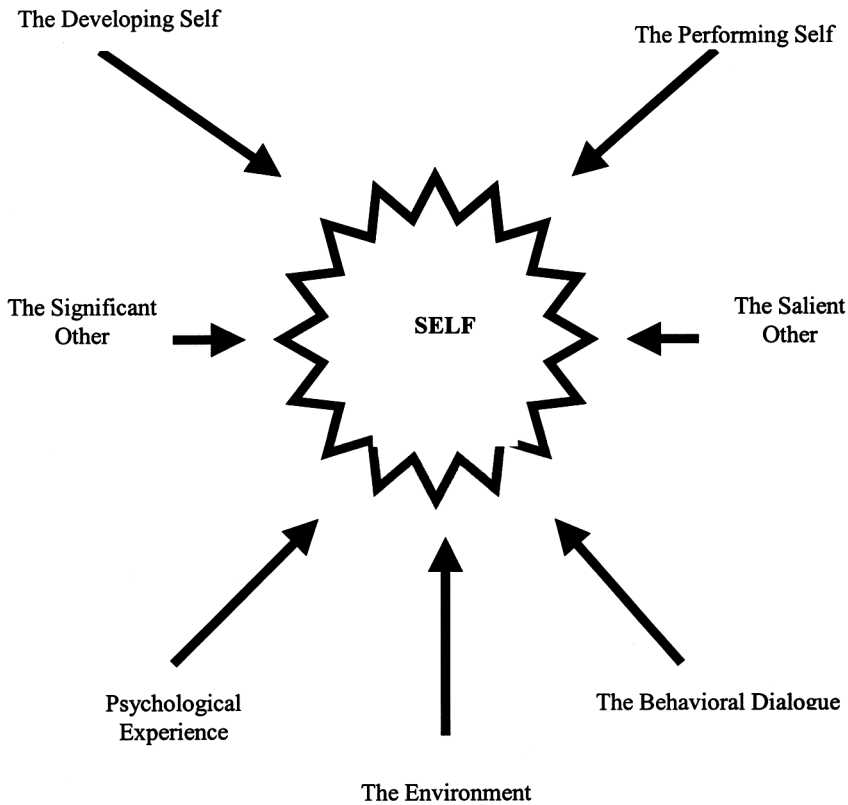
Postmodern critical feminist theorists, in the third orientation, are motivated by moral convictions about social justices and want to use their understanding to improve schools. Advocates of this view recognize schools as silencing and failing large groups of children who are not members of the White middle class. The focus is not on concrete practical answers to complex problems of schools, but rather in providing ways to make fuller sense of teaching and education, so that injustices can be better identified and addressed. Zehm (1999) suggests that the discourse of teaching in this critical orientation is characterized by complexity, conflict, ambiguity, and contradiction. Teachers are viewed as thinking beings engaged in demanding and often heavily conflicted work. Britzman (1991, 1994) suggests that the teacher does not remain a “stable humanistic self” through all the demands of working. Rather, the teacher has an identity that can “embrace displacement” that shifts as they encounter new challenges, work environments, social contexts, new questions, and new ideas (Britzman, 1994, p. 63). The postmodern critical feminist view provides a framework to understand conflicts, dilemmas, and tensions that exist in the process of “becoming a teacher.”

Although each orientation in “becoming” a teacher provides a different lens through which to view the process, each focuses on developing a more complete understanding of the process. As McLean (1999, p. 71) notes, teachers “should be living an examined life, engaged in a never-ending search for self-knowledge, seeking deeper understandings, and ongoing reflection on elements of personal interpretations and actions.” The emphasis in these reflections is on both the professional self and the personal emotional self. This perspective allows the teacher to feel the connections that exist between different yet connected images of self. It is the congruency of these self images that has a major impact on a teacher’s understanding of situational responses to specific contextual events (Clandinin, 1986).

## **Dimensions of Self That Influence Effective Teaching**

Mead’s (1934) social psychological theory of self describes the self as a product formed by internalizing and organizing psychological experiences. These experiences are a result of interactions with the physical environment or context and interactions with significant or salient others. Using this construct of self and applying it to teachers, Borich (1999) developed a framework of self-concept with seven components as described in Figure 2.

Borich suggests that teachers begin their teaching career viewing their self as a developing self that gradually becomes their professional self, based on interactions and relationships with others. Borich (1999) distinguishes seven components in the dimensions of self that influence effective teaching. The first component,



**Figure 2** — Borich's theoretical model of the development of the teacher self.

the developing self, conveys a dynamic concept of self always subject to change through the impact of experience. Second, the performing self encompasses the concept of self-as-doer, exhibiting various teaching behaviors. The third component, the significant other, represents an individual selected and unconditionally valued by the developing self as a source of self-reflection and an interpreter of behavioral dialogue between teachers and students. Behavioral dialogue refers to communication and consequences that occur as a result of the actions of both teachers and students. The salient other, the fourth component, represents an individual selected or accepted by the developing self who is conditionally valued for a specific reflection and interpretation of events in the teaching/learning setting. The fifth component is the environment, which consists of the classroom, school, and professional arena in which the developing self exists and the teacher/student behavioral dialogue occurs. Psychological experience, the sixth component, occurs when the developing self receives, responds to, and internalizes stimuli offered and provided from significant/salient others in the environment. Finally, the behavioral dialogue is a psycho-social concept that contains behaviors of teacher and significant/salient others. The behavioral dialogue seeks to project the observable,

objective reality perceived in the educational environment. Borich (1999) argues that these seven components compose a framework for understanding development of teacher self.

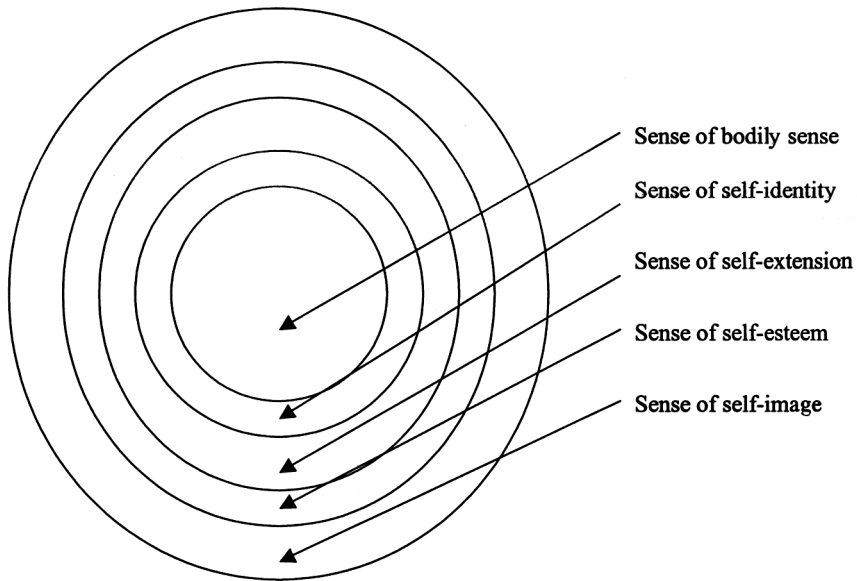
Earlier research conducted by Kash and Borich (1978) developed five senses of self that could be used to differentiate between effective teachers and others at various stages of their career: (a) bodily, (b) self-identity, (c) self-extension, (d) self-esteem, and (e) self-image. Further evolution of these theories has been influenced by the role of relationships to the development of the self and includes concepts of (a) self-as-doer where one participates in the relationships, (b) self-as-process where one experiences the relationships, and (c) self-as-object where one feels the impact of the relationship (Borich, 1999).

Using these theoretical frameworks, Borich (1999) argues that teachers who can express unconditional acceptance of pupils have acquired both self-knowledge and awareness. Using interpretive ethnographic research methodology, Borich conducted a longitudinal study of three teachers over five years: one, a female in an elementary school; the second, a male teaching eighth grade middle school; and the third, a female teaching in a high school. Using methods of observation, interview, and survey, he collected information describing the development of each teacher self over five years. His results indicated that through self-knowledge, teachers can become comfortable and nondefensive in their role, allowing them to acknowledge their own limitations while accepting those of their pupils. Pupils are not viewed as an extension of the teacher but rather as individuals engaged in a learning process. Teachers with self-knowledge understand that pupil performances and products reflect the nature of their previous experiences. By unconditional acceptance of themselves and their students, teachers encourage students to be sympathetic toward and supportive of each other. In other words, teachers with self-knowledge are able to use their own influence as significant other to produce positive change in their classroom (Borich, 1999). The concept of unconditional acceptance between teachers and students as a result of teacher self-knowledge also supports Noddings (1984) theoretical framework of the ethic of care. Specifically, it appears that teachers who provide unconditional acceptance in the classroom are exemplifying a motivational shift from focus on teacher-self to focus on student-other.

Other scholars (Allport, 1961; Erickson, 1963, 1974) have examined the evolving sense of self and affective development leading to a theory of general self-concept that can be divided into five senses of self (Kash & Borich, 1978). Using this framework, presented in Figure 3, researchers can identify beliefs that may differentiate effective teachers from others. These include the sense of bodily self, self-identity, self-esteem, self-extension, and self-image (Kash & Borich, 1978).

Borich (1999) explains that the sense of bodily self is the dominant sense of self that emerges first in an individual's life as awareness of self as a physical entity. In educational settings, differentiation of self from others occurs as the teacher interacts with others in more meaningful, professional ways. The sense of bodily self for teachers is acquired when teachers acknowledge, accept, or celebrate those physical properties that distinguish them from others.

The sense of self-identity is built upon reflections and responses supplied by external sources such as school administrators, peers, supervising teachers, and teacher educators. Self-identity occurs as a result of affiliation with others in a professional environment as the self becomes related to others through communication.



**Figure 3** — The general self-concept as five senses of self.

Borich (1999) acknowledges that for teachers, the sense of self-identity is acquired when they willingly accept responsibilities, privileges, and obligations associated with being a professional. Borich's (1999) third sense of self-concept involves the sense of self-esteem. He explains that this represents the sum of all valued affirmation experiences in the behavioral dialogue of the school and classroom. Borich suggests that if teachers experience little affirmation, they are more likely to develop a negative sense of self-esteem. The sense of self-esteem is acquired when teachers receive affirmation, recognition, and confirmation of their impact in the classroom.

Sense of self-extension, or the performing self, represents the fourth sense of self as delineated by Borich (1999). This sense combines the teacher's outward behavior with cognitive concepts that produce these behaviors and includes the sense of self as doer, learner, and knower through performance. Borich (1999) suggests that the sense of self-extension is acquired when teachers feel that they can exhibit behaviors that will be acknowledged and rewarded by significant/salient others in the educational setting. Borich's (1999) fifth sense of self is the sense of self-image represented by perceptions of self formed from teacher beliefs. It is acquired when the teacher integrates both strengths and weaknesses into unified picture of self, reflecting personal beliefs. Borich (1999) argues that these five sense of self can be used to identify beliefs about the self that may differentiate novice from experienced teachers, influence pupil behavior, and distinguish more effective teachers.

## Caring: Developing the Self as Master Teacher

Master teachers' interactions with students are characterized first and foremost by their call to care (Agne, 1999). This statement summarizes the research findings of educators and scholars who are beginning to examine the qualitatively different and uniquely human essence of the expert teacher. In a paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association, Berliner (1988) noted that unlike novices, expert teachers are capable of reaching deep emotional levels regarding their work and are genuinely distressed when they perceive themselves as failing to teach up to their own level of expectations. Others (Agne, 1992; Welker, 1991) examining expert teachers note that teachers succeed only when they are able to empower others. The practice of the teacher requires, at the very least, a connection to the needs of the common person (Welker, 1991). Agne (1992, p. 121) writes that "serving to empower others presupposes commitment and deep caring, particularly in a profession whose monetary rewards are obviously not a part of the equation." These efforts at understanding the development of the teacher self toward caring suggest that teachers facilitate the learning of others. This facilitation occurs through the presentation of ideas in a setting that has been prepared by teachers to be the most conducive to each student's level, a setting that offers the most care (Agne, 1999).

To investigate expert teachers' beliefs, Agne et al. (1994) developed a teacher belief questionnaire designed to assess four teacher beliefs known to be highly correlated with teacher behavior and student achievement. These beliefs included teacher efficacy, teacher locus of control, pupil control ideology, and teacher stress. Efficacious teachers believe that they have the ability to affect student learning (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Teacher locus of control describes the teachers' tendency to attribute the outcomes of student behavior to factors within teachers' control or outside of teachers' control (Rose & Medway, 1981). Teachers with an internal locus of control assume personal responsibility for student success or failure. Teachers with an external locus of control perceive that student outcomes are associated with circumstances beyond their control. Pupil control ideology refers to classroom management and control skills that range from custodial to humanistic. Teachers with a custodial orientation are highly controlling, punitive, and distrusting of students. Humanistically-oriented teachers assume active interaction and communication, develop effective relationships between themselves and their students, exhibit positive attitudes of mutual respect, and create democratic classroom climates (Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1973). Teachers' beliefs regarding job-related stress included considerations for instructional effectiveness, such as absenteeism, irritability, lack of control, and loss of caring for people that are typical symptoms of teacher stress and burnout (Eskridge & Coker, 1985).

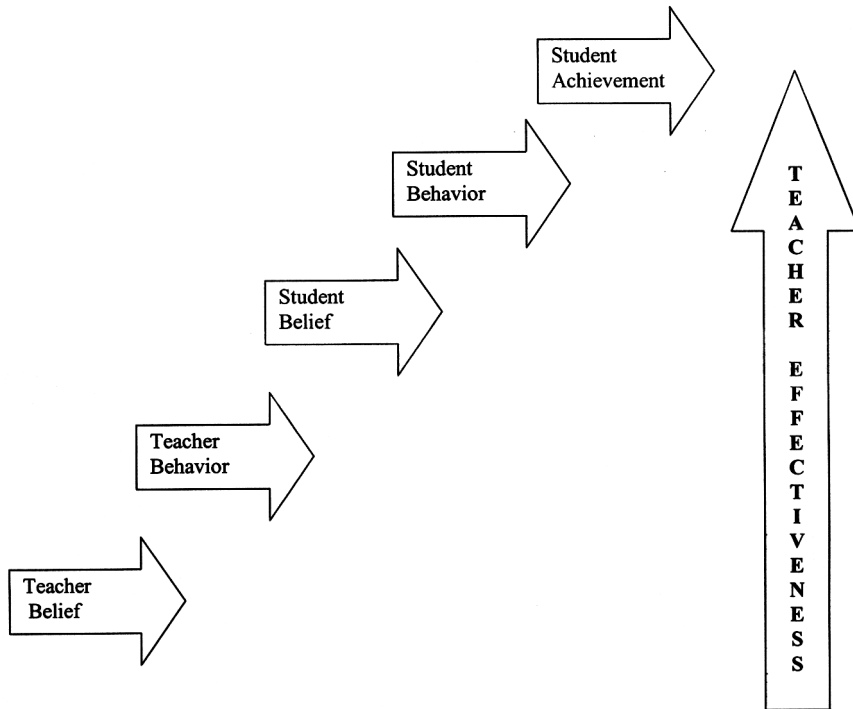
Agne et al. (1994) distributed the questionnaire to expert teachers represented by 88 Teachers of the Year, selected from their respective states between 1987–1990. Results were analyzed using quantitative analysis and compared to a comparable group of in-service teachers ( $N = 92$ ) of all levels of experience and training. The major result was that Teachers of the Year were significantly more humanistic in their beliefs about pupil control than were other classroom teachers. These teachers held more caring beliefs about students than did other classroom teachers. They tended to

be significantly more trusting, accepting, friendly, respectful, flexible, democratic, nonpunitive, nonmoralistic, self-disciplinary and student-empowering than other teachers with equivalent experience, education, and teaching situations. Teachers of the Year were found to hold beliefs that arise from higher levels of self-efficacy and from an internal locus of control. Their belief systems (i.e., humanistic pupil control, high self-efficacy, and internal local of control) were found to be interrelated and descriptive of caring expert teachers' classrooms (Agne et al., 1994).

Based on the results of her research, Agne et al. (1994) developed a model depicting a chain of five interconnecting causal links leading to teacher effectiveness. Previous researchers (Brophy & Good, 1970; Luce & Hoge, 1978) had established models comprised of four causal links: (a) teacher beliefs, (b) teacher behavior, (c) student behavior, and (d) student achievement. Agne et al.'s (1994) findings, described in Figure 4, expanded this model with links comprised of (a) teacher beliefs, (b) teacher behavior, (c) student beliefs, (d) student behavior, and (e) student achievement. Further, Agne proposes that the essential part of the "A" link, the expert teacher's "edge," is caring. She argues that when teacher caring has had time to become established in the classroom, the essential part of the "C" link, student belief, becomes caring too (Agne et al., 1994). According to Agne et al., and in support of Noddings (1992), the key to the classroom is more a function of who teachers are and what they believe than of what teachers do. Agne (1999), like Noddings (1992), believes that they key to the classroom is caring.

In examining the ethic of care in the classroom, Agne (1999) notes that for caring to occur, one must be focusing on another rather than on oneself. Her concern is in examining factors that inhibit and distort caring. She believes that if caring is the most important belief system related to student achievement, then it behooves teachers to understand both factors and elements that support and enhance the caring state as well as those that contribute to its demise. Agne (1999) suggests that fear is a controlling factor in inhibiting caring. She explains that fears arise as a result of unmet teacher needs. For the teacher, these needs may take the form of student cooperation, attention, and motivation to learn. Agne notes that many teachers struggle with notions of control within their classrooms. When teachers perceive fear and control factors, they become consumed with emotions of worry, anger, frustration, jealousy, and greed that lead to increased stress and burnout. Agne suggests that the principle concern arising from fear and control states that they prevent or inhibit compassion or caring states. Further, she believes that to internalize the belief system of caring, it is necessary to realize that there is nothing to control. She suggests that there is only "accepting of the magnificent complexity of humanness" (Agne, 1999, p. 174). With greater awareness of their fears, teachers gain better understanding of their reactions and discover that much of their behavior is a function of their efforts to protect themselves from what they believe may be painful. Facing one's fears through understanding satisfies Noddings' (1984) requirements for an ethic of care, manifestation of a motivational shift, by acknowledging the limitations to care as a result of fear.

Agnes (1999) contrasts a caring teacher, one who has embraced fear by developing a deeper understanding of self, with an armored teacher, one who behaves as a result of fear states. She notes that the caring teacher makes the assumption that students whose behaviors are counterproductive are driven by normal fear states that occurs within us all. This student is, therefore, perceived by the caring teacher



**Figure 4** — Agne's model of teaching/learning effectiveness.

as acting out of fear. From this place of compassion, the caring teacher is able to respond to the student with acceptance, trust, and patience. By contrast, the armored teacher reacts to fear with fear and resents the student's actions because they are perceived as a personal affront against the teachers. This results in a breakdown of the teaching/learning process (Agne, 1999).

In conclusion, Agne et al.'s (1994) research on teacher beliefs leads to the understanding of caring as a critical component in the development of the master teacher self. Agne believes that caring acts as a leavening agent because a small amount serves to cause expansion in the cared for. She finds that with the development of deep caring states comes an intense level of attention and dedication common among expert teachers. This is manifested by increased mental activities focusing on thoughts and ideas concerning the teaching/learning process, leading to more time given to issues of classroom problem solving. Agne (1999) explains that these thoughts and resulting perceptions are the precursors to a personal sense of responsibility evident in master teachers with extensive professional knowledge and preparation, expert decision-making skills, and effective teaching behaviors. The final impact of the caring process emerges as caring beliefs and behaviors of master teachers are modeled and absorbed by students. Supporting Noddings (1984),



Agne (1999) suggests that students begin to adopt caring beliefs and model caring behaviors with each other as a result of caring teachers' modeling efforts. Agne (1999) concludes that the caring ethic set in motion by master teachers results from developing a deeper self-understanding as they work to understand individual needs and fears. This caring ethic then spreads as master teachers manifest a motivational shift from focus on teacher-self to focus on student-other. Students, in turn, model caring behavior to each other.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to provide support for the inclusion of the ethic of care as pedagogical content knowledge. Including knowledge of theories of the ethic of care, relational knowing, and teacher development of self into current physical education teacher education programs would enhance the ability for novice teachers to care for themselves, establishing caring relationships with their students and provide a caring environment for learning. The need for creating relationships with students so that they feel cared for and can then care for themselves, each other, and the content has never been more evident. As teacher educators, it should no longer be assumed or left up to luck that our students, future teachers themselves, realize the significance of care, understand the dynamics of caring relationships and environments, and approach their teaching and their students with care.

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