CHAPTER ONE

Overview of the Social-Justice Model for Service-Learning

I have often wondered why authors make readers wait until the conclusion to know "the answer." This chapter presents the whole picture regarding how you can build a service-learning program fostering student action for social change. I offer an introduction to the four essential elements of critical consciousness, the three stages of critical-consciousness development, and tools you can use to support students as they embark on this journey.

But first, as a language teacher, I believe we need to bring clarity to some terms and concepts. In everyday life, people use expressions that they understand in general but have a difficult time articulating. Additionally, the educational community often takes fuzziness to a whole new level. For instance, in my critical-pedagogy doctoral cohort, twenty-five intelligent people struggled for four years to clearly and concisely define *critical pedagogy*; and, for years, I sought definitions of *social justice* and *critical consciousness* and even tried Googling the terms without receiving meaningful results.

Part of the reason we struggle to define such terms is that concepts can have different meanings to different people in different contexts. Additionally, words, whether intentionally or not, often become co-opted and infused with coded implications and political overtones. For example, some people are uncomfortable using the term *social justice*, because others may see it as either a religious term or a political agenda. But isn't "social justice" synonymous with transformative social action, civic engagement for equity, or moral and civic responsibility? These terms seem more acceptable to a wider audience.

In that spirit, let's clarify several concepts, so we are starting at the same place and can progress from there. Additional terms are defined as they occur throughout the book, as well as collected in a glossary in the appendices.

Key Concept Areas

As an introduction to these definitions, we must first examine the term *critical*. This word has many meanings. People often think of being "critical" as disapproving and negative, while others use *critical* to mean "vital or important." In still other instances, *critical* can mean "dangerous or life threatening." In my writings, I draw upon Stephen Brookfield's definition, which insists that for something to be *critical*—whether in critical learning, critical analysis, critical reflection, or critical pedagogy—individuals must examine power relations inherent in the situation or context; question the underlying assumptions on race, gender, and class; and understand its connection to the dominant ideology.[1]

Community Service, Service-Learning, and Critical Service-Learning

There are so many definitions of *service-learning* that when I first started my work, I needed to construct a definition I could use to clearly and concisely explain it to others:

> Service-learning is a learning strategy in which students have leadership roles in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet real needs in the community. The service is integrated into the students' academic studies with structured time to research, reflect, discuss, and connect their experiences to their learning and their worldview.[2]

Explaining the difference between *community service* and service-learning can be difficult. I find the following example composed by the National Youth Leadership Council helpful:

- Cleaning up a riverbank is SERVICE.
- Sitting in a science classroom looking at water samples under a microscope is LEARNING.
- Science students taking samples from local water sources, then analyzing the samples, documenting the results and presenting the scientific information to a pollution control agency is SERVICE-LEARNING.[3]

Critical service-learning is a distinct subset of service-learning. While there are many worthwhile service projects that meet real needs in the community, for service-learning to be critical, students and teachers need to examine issues of power, privilege, and oppression; question the hidden bias and assumptions of race, class, and gender; and work to change the social and economic system for equity and justice. To include *activism* in the previous example, we add a fourth dimension:

- Science students creating public service announcements to raise awareness of human impact on water quality in order to change community attitudes and behavior is CRITICAL SERVICE-LEARNING.

Multicultural Education, Critical Multiculturalism, and Critical Pedagogy

Multicultural education is another term with many construed meanings, ranging from celebrating cultures and customs, to diversity training for tolerance or acceptance of others, to examining agents and targets of oppression. Analyzing issues from different perspectives is often included as a component of multicultural education. Here is a brief summary of several leading educators' views on multicultural education.

According to James Bank, *multiculturalism* is an idea that there should be educational equity for all students; educational reform to ensure that all students have an equal chance for success; and a process of striving for the goals of equality and eliminating discrimination. To that end, *multicultural education* should be broadly defined to include content integration, the knowledge-construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and the empowering of the school culture and social structure.[4]

Sonia Nieto's definition in *Affirming Diversity* incorporates a wide-angle view of multicultural education by highlighting that it is antiracist, basic, important for all students, pervasive, socially just, process oriented, and critical

> Multicultural education is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender among others) that students, their communities and teachers reflect. Multicultural education permeates the schools' curriculum and instructional strategies as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and families . . . Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection,

and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multicultural education promotes democratic principles of social justice.[5]

For a comprehensive explanation of variations in multiculturalism, I suggest Joe Kincheloe and Shirley R. Steinberg's book *Changing Multiculturalism*.[6] They provide a detailed description of five stances of multicultural education: conservative/monoculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism, left-essentialist multiculturalism, and *critical multiculturalism*. In a similar manner, Carl Grant and Christine Sleeter organize five approaches to multicultural education as follows: exceptional and culturally different, human relations, single-group, mainstream multicultural education, and critical multiculturalism.[7]

As a classroom teacher, my working definition for *multicultural education* evolved over time, but one metaphor has remained constant: multicultural education is like the proverbial three-legged stool. It must impact the content you teach; the student-centered teaching and learning strategies you use; and the climate, relationships, and policies you create in the classroom and school community.

Additionally, I have learned that multicultural education goes beyond learning about others, most emphatically beginning with learning about yourself. It requires looking at your beliefs, attitudes, biases, and assumptions; assessing their origins; and reevaluating who benefits from the existing social system and who is disadvantaged. "Studying 'the other,'" state bell hooks and Cornel West, "is not the goal, the goal is learning about some aspect of who you are."[8]

Critical multiculturalism, also called "social reconstructionist multicultural education," is transformative because its goal is achieving awareness of the social, economic, and political forces shaping society in order to change society. This requires questioning our formerly unexamined beliefs and assumptions, thinking critically about reality, and challenging the policies and practices that reproduce inequality and injustice.[9]

While there are many approaches to critical pedagogy in the classroom, its fundamental goal is to examine the educational system critically and work to transform the dominant social and cultural values in the interest of a more equitable democracy.[10] My short version is that critical pedagogy empowers students to change the world, creating the ability to see reality as it is and critically ask "Why?" Students are active participants in creating knowledge through critical inquiry, reflection, and action. Classroom strategies and activities include problem posing; research and analysis of

issues examining power and oppression; and questioning one's assumptions, beliefs, and perceptions.[11]

Critical service-learning, critical multiculturalism, and critical pedagogy intersect with the same underlying goal of social transformation. They also incorporate similar teaching strategies of critical analysis, reflection, and action. Differences lie in their originating movements: service-learning is rooted in experiential education, multicultural education grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s, and critical pedagogy is grounded in Paulo Freire's work for adult literacy and liberation in Brazil in the 1970s.

Critical Consciousness, Social Justice, Praxis, and Phronesis

The path to social change begins with developing a critical consciousness. In general, this means having an accurate view of reality, but we can benefit from a less ambiguous description. The four elements of critical consciousness development are

- developing a deeper awareness of self
- developing a deeper awareness and broader perspective of others
- developing a deeper awareness and broader perspective of social issues
- seeing one's potential to make change[12]

The most functional definition of *social justice* I have found is in *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility*, edited by Anne Colby and others. They define social justice education as a contribution "to social change and public policies that increase gender and racial equality, end discrimination of various kinds, and reduce the stark income inequalities that characterize this country and most of the world."[13]

Critical educators often discuss the importance of *praxis*, which is critical reflection and action with the goal of social change for equity and justice. Peter McLaren adds another dimension by arguing that "praxis (informed actions) must be guided by phronesis (the disposition to act truly and rightly) . . . [meaning] actions and knowledge must be directed at eliminating pain, oppression, and inequality, and at promoting justice and freedom."[14]

With a working understanding of these key concepts, teachers who want to create effective service-learning programs must focus on being critical. It is important to examine power relations and question assumptions about yourself, your philosophy of education, and your curricula. In becoming a critical multiculturalist, dedicated to social change, you can inspire your

students to work for social justice as you guide them on their journey to a critical consciousness.

Education as an Act of Social Justice

It is a common thought that teaching is only about the transmission of knowledge and usable skills: education should be apolitical, and teachers should not have a particular agenda. At first glance, this makes sense. However, in reality everything we do in school has political implications, from the choice and delivery of curriculum, to the policies regarding discipline, testing, tracking, funding, and ultimately who has access to power within the school community. We have only to look at students' experiences and achievement within and among schools to recognize the extent of disparity and injustice. Schools can serve to support the status quo by privileging students from dominant groups, or they can be sites of change by empowering students to be active, critical citizens who will question and transform society.

Education becomes an act of social justice when seen as part of a larger democratic process dedicated to equality and equity in schools and in society. Teachers seek to connect the curriculum to students' lives and the world around them and guide students in critical inquiry, reflection, and action so they can identify and solve problems. Based on the democratic values of freedom, justice, and equality, teaching results in questioning the status quo and becomes an act of resistance against injustices.[15]

To effectively provide this type of learning environment, we must first examine the purpose of education and understand our role as educators. The term *education* comes from the Latin *educare*, meaning "to bring up or rear." It is related to *educere*, meaning "to lead out."[16] Thomas Groome, in *Educating for Life*, notes that "Plato described teaching as 'turning the soul' of learners and he meant touching and shaping the innermost 'being'—their identity and agency."[17] Clearly, the purpose of education is broader than simply providing content and skills. This belief is grounded in the philosophy that our children should not only be knowledgeable, talented, and skilled, they should be moral and ethical contributors to the community.

As teachers interested in equity and justice, we bring who we are and what we believe to the classroom. We need to be aware and critically reflect on our beliefs and motivations. In order to articulate this, we must recognize the relationship between our educational philosophy and our political views.

With this in mind, let's examine the term *agenda*. There is a fine line—a small semantic difference—between *having* an agenda and *pushing* an agenda. How our agenda is perceived is determined by how we express our motivation. Do we ground it in educational philosophy or a political ideology? An educational agenda incorporates the school's mission, teachers' philosophy of education, and beliefs about students. When an agenda is seen as biased or political, it can be perceived as something manipulative or narrow in scope and can undermine the broader purpose of education.

Obviously, there is an overlap between our personal political views and our philosophy of education. And yet, in a democratic classroom, students must be at the center of the educational experience, creating their own ideas, beliefs, and view of the world. Teachers who regard education as an act of social justice need to have a profound respect for and confidence in students. Our role is to support students and create learning experiences where they gain factual information, critically reflect, and grapple with reality.

Road Map to Social Change through Service-Learning

The social-justice model for service-learning has three core components. Figure 1.1 depicts the road map through these core components: the four essential elements of critical consciousness, the three stages of White[18] critical-consciousness development, and the strategies for navigating them. This theory, developed from interviews and survey responses from Benilde–St. Margaret's School (BSM) alumni, provides a framework for educators dedicated to education for social change.

Four Essential Elements of Critical Consciousness

As I spoke to individuals committed to social justice, I heard about their families, early service experiences, and high-school, college, and adult experiences and attitudes regarding service and social justice. In synthesizing their common experiences, attitudes, and beliefs, it became clear that they serve as building blocks for developing a critical consciousness and a social-justice orientation to service. Furthermore, these collective early experiences contribute to developing a deeper self-awareness, a deeper awareness and broader perspective of others and of social issues, and the potential to create change.

Achieving a deeper self-awareness means having a clear understanding of your level of privilege, your values, your role in society, and your responsibility to others. Participation in service and discussions about moral and civic obligations help individuals clarify their values and become committed to work for the common good. Young people, working alongside adults, confronting issues of poverty and discrimination, see social-justice work as a possibility for themselves. It provides a basis for them to see their own privilege

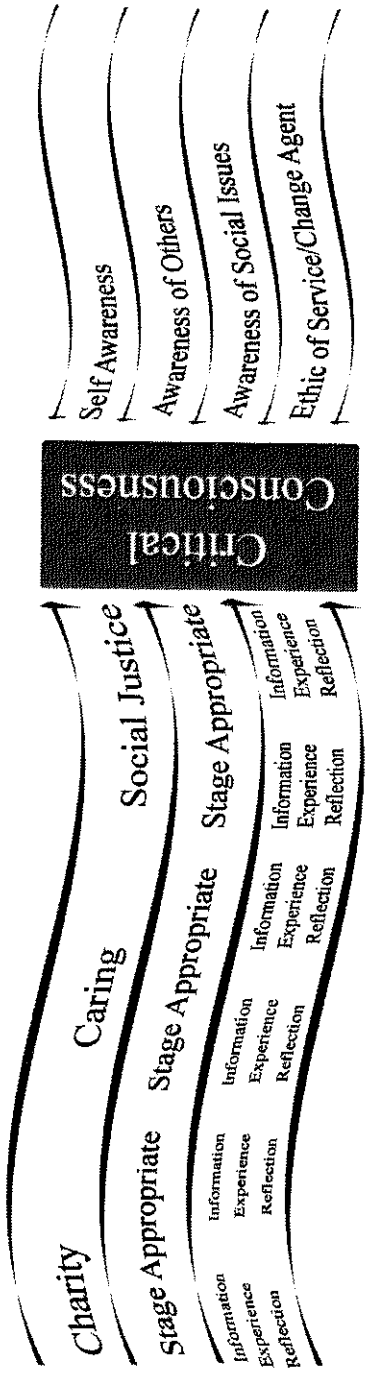

Figure 1.1. Roadmap to Critical Consciousness

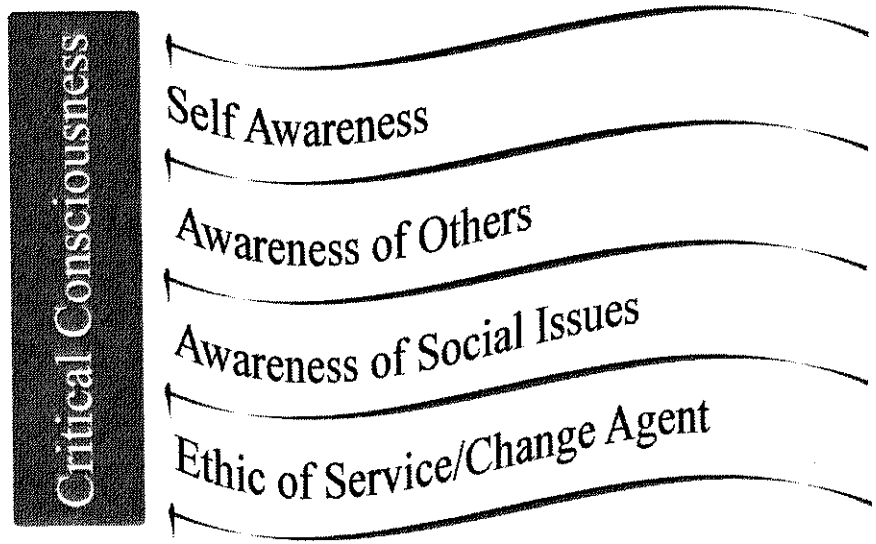

Figure 1.2. Four Essential Elements of Critical Consciousness Development

and power and examine how their actions can contribute to or fight against the status quo.

For White, middle-class students, gaining a deeper awareness and broader perspective of others often occurs as a result of working with populations from different backgrounds. Students are out of their comfort zones and see injustice and inequity for the first time. As they interact with the people they are serving, they hear people telling their own stories. Putting a face on poverty breaks down stereotypes, and statistics become meaningful. Students become less judgmental and compassionate as they become more adept at perspective taking and considering chance's role in poverty situations.

Developing a greater awareness and broader perspective of social issues occurs through accurate information, constructive service experiences, and critical reflection. As students inform themselves on social, economic, and political issues, they question beliefs and assumptions that no longer provide adequate explanations for reality. Students develop a more critical, complex view of the world and begin to see how power relations limit options for oppressed groups. Students' increased understanding of social issues fosters an institutional, systemic view of the causes of injustice and inequity, where they may have only seen individual deficits.

Effective service-learning helps students see their potential to make change. Having many positive service experiences enhances their feelings of competency and *efficacy*. Doing important work that has real impact on

people and the community develops a sense of *agency*—the belief that you can make a difference. Students develop an ethic of service and adopt it as part of their identity when they work with friends in a culture that values it. People who have a clear sense of their values are more likely to live in accordance with their beliefs, and individuals who regard service as a part of their identity are more likely to connect their personal commitment to service with a profession where they can make a social contribution.

Three Stages of White Critical-Consciousness Development

In addition to the set of essential elements of critical consciousness, another core component of the social-justice model of service-learning consists of the stages of White critical-consciousness development. Although those interviewed were committed to social justice, the survey responses represented a broad range of alumni experiences and attitudes. In reading the responses to the question "Why do you volunteer?" I had a nagging uneasiness with several answers and the terminology used. Responses like "It feels good to help the disadvantaged"; "I am so blessed, it's the least I can do"; or "All they really need is just a hand up"; led me to question the service providers' motivations and their views of the people they were serving. It seemed they were exploiting others for their own benefit and perpetuating an "us/them" mentality.

Yet having been a teacher at BSM for over thirty years, I knew many of the alumni to be generous, kind-hearted individuals who were just trying to help. After a dialogue with Dr. Eleni Roulis, my professor and critical friend, I began to view their responses as part of a journey traveled on the path to developing a critical consciousness.

While BSM has some socioeconomic diversity, the students are predominantly White and middle or upper-middle class. Therefore, my conclusions pertain particularly to the White experience of critical-consciousness development. Although students of color or those living in poverty would move through stages in a similar fashion, there would be different components due to their firsthand experiences with racism and classism.[19]

The initial stage of White critical-consciousness development through service-learning is *charity*. It is the natural point of departure for suburban students living in a segregated, racist society. Having minimal experience with diverse populations, racism, and discrimination, they uncritically internalize negative media messages about race and poverty. They want to help but have a limited view of the world. Being charitable is a good characteristic; but given the possibility that students might exploit marginalized populations for their own benefit, teachers should see this as only a first step and guide students into the next stage of critical-consciousness development: *caring*.

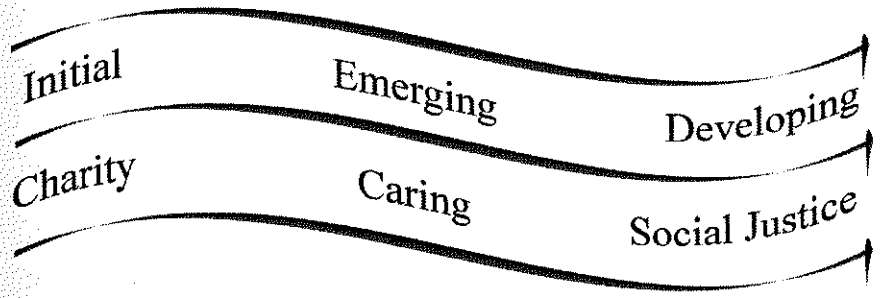

Figure 1.3. Stages of White Critical Consciousness

The emerging stage of White critical consciousness through service-learning is one of caring, and the catalyst to moving into this stage is relationship. As students interact with those they are serving, they develop *compassion*, see injustice, and question past beliefs. The dissonance between what they thought to be true and the reality they see makes them more aware of themselves, others, and social problems. If individuals are located in the caring stage for a period of time and care deeply about those they are serving, they become compelled to do something to change the system and move into the third stage of critical-consciousness development: *social justice*.

The developing stage of White critical consciousness is social justice. I have intentionally labeled this stage "developing" rather than "developed" because seeing others, the world, and ourselves clearly is a never-ending process. In the social-justice stage individuals make a lifelong commitment to work as *allies* with oppressed groups, to understand the root causes of injustice and take action to make the system more equitable.

Navigating the Stages of White Critical-Consciousness Development

The third component of the social-justice model for service-learning is a framework for teachers to help guide students on the path of becoming more critically aware. As they move through the stages of critical-consciousness development, students need stage-appropriate information, experience, and reflection for successful navigation. As educators, we create learning situations that initiate deeper self-exploration and critical analysis.

For students to navigate from the initial charity stage of critical consciousness to the caring stage, they need accurate information on those they

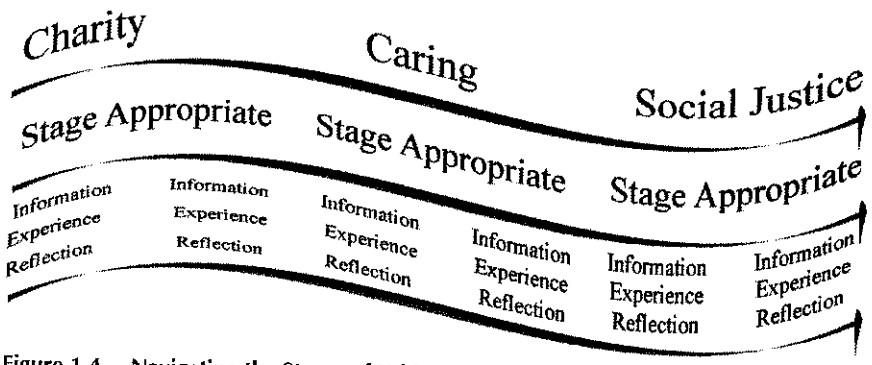

Figure 1.4. Navigating the Stages of White Critical Consciousness

serve and on social issues, such as homelessness, poverty, or the immigrant experience. Stage-appropriate service experiences include working in soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and food shelves. Student reflection should focus on clarifying their own values and obligation to others, as well as reflection on the current state of affairs and their vision for a better society.

In moving from a caring to a social-justice orientation to service, students need to investigate the social construction of race and the legacy of oppression in American institutions. This exploration also includes gaining a deeper awareness of White racial-identity development, White privilege, and the role of White antiracists. Service experiences should be in agencies that provide direct service as well as social-change advocacy. Students reflect on targets and agents of multiple systems of oppression (racism, sexism, classism, ageism, heterosexism, and others) and examine what they can do to combat oppression.

Once individuals develop a social-justice orientation to service, their task is to mature their critical consciousness. Information is needed to better understand the political and economic systems that perpetuate inequity and injustice. Service experiences are with advocacy, political, and/or grassroots agencies committed to transformative action. Reflection is centered on understanding how power and privilege operate to the advantage of the dominant class and to the exclusion of others.

It is important to acknowledge that critical-consciousness development progresses slowly over time and is not necessarily a linear process. Students often move between stages as they continue their service-learning journey, and individuals can be in more than one stage in different areas of their understanding. Realistically, given students' maturity levels and varied experiences, only some reach the developing stage by early adulthood. However,

if students are equipped with critical-thinking skills, multiple service experiences, and a better understanding of themselves and the world, seeds are planted for continued growth toward critical consciousness.

Now it's time to find out more about how you can build a service-learning program robust enough to initiate and promote growth toward critical awareness and a commitment to social justice. Subsequent chapters offer a deeper understanding of the model and concrete strategies to use in the classroom. When teachers focus on social-justice education, they make a long-term commitment and accept an awesome responsibility to students and to society.

CHAPTER TWO

Becoming Committed to Service

This chapter describes the effects of early service experiences on adult a titudes and behaviors toward service and social justice. Using both quantit tive and qualitative tools, I asked adults to reflect on their experiences ar capture in their own words the impact service work had on them. We will s how these reflections not only highlight many positive outcomes of servic learning experiences, but also lay a foundation for building service-learni programs committed to social change.

By the Numbers: Effects of Early Service Experiences

High-School Service Experience

Regardless of the type of service program, individuals who participated in ar service during high school were more likely to volunteer extensively as adu than those who did not. Likewise, they worked more often to promote soci justice and were more likely to volunteer for professional or work-relat organizations. Service participants reported that as a result of high-scho service activities, they developed a greater awareness of social problems, ar they clarified their values and identities as individuals.

Those who participated in an intense service experience, such as Pea Corps, Americorps, residential missions, or service trips of a week or longe were more likely to promote and work for social justice as adults. As y might expect, there is a growing trend of young people seeking out the opportunities. Ten percent of the 1975–1994 alumni group volunteered

an intense service program, compared to 25 percent of those graduating between 1995 and 1999.

Service-Learning Programs versus Community-Service Programs

Comparing the responses from students who participated in service-learning with those who participated in community service, we see differences both in service experiences and in their understanding of social issues and social justice. The experiences differed in the types of agencies where they volunteered, the populations with whom they worked, and the frequency and intensity of their work. When compared to community-service participants, service-learning participants

- volunteered more at food shelves, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters;
- participated in more service projects initiated by themselves, family, or friends;
- participated in service more hours per month;
- participated more frequently in weeklong service experiences during high school.[1]

Participation in service-learning resulted in a more complex understanding of service, social issues, and poverty. These students had more direct contact with people living in poverty and people from racial or ethnic groups different from their own. They indicated that critical reflection and discussion on social justice was a component of their service experience, and they developed a greater awareness of social problems; saw issues of discrimination and poverty as a societal problem rather than as individual deficits; and worked with adults committed to promoting social justice for all citizens.

By the People: Effects of Early Service Experiences

In the survey I asked alumni for reflections: "What did you learn from your service experience, which you would like to pass on to a young person just starting out?" and "What impact has your early service experience had on your behavior and attitude toward service and social justice?" In their responses, alumni spoke about how the experiences impacted their personal growth, values, and identity. They also reflected on the role service played in developing their worldviews and awareness of people with diverse backgrounds.

Table 2.1 is a summary of themes drawn from their collective memories, providing evidence of service's positive outcomes. As we walk through their reflections, I include individual quotations demonstrating how they internalized the experiences. You will notice that their responses reflect different orientations to service. Some descriptions clearly denote a charity outlook, others demonstrate a caring attitude, and several reveal a commitment to social justice.

Table 2.1. Outcomes of Early Service Experiences

INCREASED SELF-AWARENESS AND THE ABILITY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Students

- learn more about themselves and develop confidence;
- gain a sense of empowerment and realize their potential to make a difference;
- clarify their values;
- realize their capacity to give and develop patience and compassion;
- become less materialistic and more appreciative of what they have;
- gain a better perspective of their lives;
- come to recognize their own privilege;
- develop skills and interests that lead to career paths;
- develop an ethic of service which continues through adulthood;
- develop a commitment to the larger community;
- become more politically aware and develop a commitment to act.

INCREASED AWARENESS OF OTHERS

Students

- learn about people whose experiences and backgrounds are different from theirs;
- gain a better understanding of perspectives and diversity;
- become more open-minded and less judgmental;
- develop an understanding of themselves in relation to others.

INCREASED AWARENESS OF SOCIAL ISSUES

Students

- become more aware of social issues;
- can identify different perspectives on reality;
- develop a deeper understanding of social justice;
- have a more complex understanding of the current situations and the need to look for political solutions;
- may participate in service abroad and thereby develop a global awareness of poverty, and see themselves connected to others worldwide.

Increased Self-Awareness and the Ability to Make a Difference

Alumni overwhelmingly saw their service experiences as positive and enjoyable, noting that volunteering made them feel good about themselves. They also recognized the reciprocal nature of service and how they often received more than they gave, learning more about themselves and developing confidence. They gained a sense of empowerment and realized their potential to make a difference in the world. Not only did society benefit from their service, but being role models often led others into service.

- "The personal satisfaction and the rewards are priceless. I volunteer more now than ever because I enjoy it so much."
- "[Volunteering] may be uncomfortable at first, but the rewards are worth the effort. Volunteerism makes you feel good about yourself at the time and helps to build good character. It helped me break out of my shyness."
- "Serving is an opportunity, so it is imperative for volunteers to realize that while they are giving their time and expertise, they are also taking from the people and the situation in so many different ways."
- "It can contribute to developing yourself, your confidence, and how it can impact your interests and career path."
- "One person, one deed, one interaction can make a difference."
- "I've learned that even one person can make a difference. Volunteering has a snowball effect—you can influence others to become involved and have a cause. No matter how small a contribution of time you make, it can significantly impact others."

Service involvement changes students and helps clarify their values. They realize their capacity to give, and they learn patience and compassion. Many responses include phrases such as "more compassionate," "*empathy* to others," and "consideration or concern for others." For example, one woman noted, "In a way it has influenced me in the way I deal with people. I work in criminal justice and it has made me more compassionate." Another described how service activities "increased my patience and understanding of people different than myself."

- "Volunteering aided in my growth and development as a young adult. Also I feel my values and morals were highly influenced by this experience."
- "One week as a counselor at a camp for the mentally handicapped made me realize how much I could give and how easy life for me is."

As a result of their service, students became less materialistic and more appreciative of what they had, often gaining a new perspective on their own lives: "My service made me appreciate the life that I had, even though I knew some of my friends had a lot more than I did. It put things in perspective." Alumni saw service for young people as particularly important, noting that "high school and adolescence in general can cause people to fixate on their own tiny world." Service "puts you in the habit of looking past only yourself," making you "think with a wider view; not everyone has the same privilege."

Students' personal values change through mission trip experiences, as they come to realize their own privilege and become more open-minded and nonjudgmental:

- "Before traveling to Mexico for my first time with the school mission trip, I was very attached to physical things and 'security.' When I saw the joy and freedom from stuff and the ability to share (even when it hurt) that those very poor people had, I lost my love for 'things.' I wanted what they had."

Through service, students often develop skills and interests leading to different career paths. The "positive experiences and a sense of confidence" led one graduate to change his path to human services and to volunteer for the Peace Corps. Similarly, many are drawn to helping fields as a result of their early experiences in service. Nurses, teachers, and individuals working in the justice system described how volunteering influenced them in their work, making them more compassionate and understanding of diversity, and giving them the ability to see issues in more complex ways.

- "The majority of my volunteer work was hospital-related. It brought out something I didn't know I had—the want to help. I became a nurse."
- "I think my volunteering/service greatly affected my career path and decision to be a pediatrician. In medicine, you serve people every day as your profession and often see injustices and can try to change them. You are an advocate for your patients—in my case children. I'm fortunate that I found a profession that melds my love of science and learning with my love of service."

Service becomes a part of students' identity; they come to see volunteering as part of who they are and what they do. Phrases such as "a pattern for life," "part of my way of life," or the double negative "I can't imagine not

volunteering," illustrate the profound influence that service has on identity formation, connecting early service experience and life choices.

- "At the very least, it instilled in me a commitment to the larger community that should be reflected in the way I live my life with or without volunteer work."
- "In high school, being involved in service activities was the norm. Now it feels unnatural not to be volunteering in some fashion."

Service also impacts students' political formation. Many alumni described themselves as having become more liberal, wanting to influence social issues, and believing in the "power and importance of people organizing, lobbying, and working for social justice." Service has the potential to broaden political awareness and the commitment to act.

- "Service experiences have instilled a strong desire . . . to do whatever I can to help those without a voice be heard."
- "I have a greater awareness of the world we live in. It shaped my political beliefs and fosters a commitment to justice and equality for all persons regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation."

Early service experiences greatly influence adult service because they create openness and a willingness to continue service, as seen in comments such as "opened the door to something that I eagerly continue," "laid the groundwork for future involvement," and "planted a seed." For others these experiences "took the mystery of community service away," and were instrumental in "breaking the ice and opening my willingness to 'get out there.'" A final comment is representative of the message conveyed by many: "Early service shaped my attitude and provided the foundation that I have continued into adulthood."

Increased Awareness of Others

Early service experiences help students learn about different people, "opening their eyes," and making them more open-minded, and this wider view results in a better understanding and less judgment.

- "It has helped me understand different backgrounds that my students come from and allows me to reach them more effectively."
- "My service taught me about other identities and ideas. It taught me to be open-minded."

- "When you attend BSM or just live in the suburbs, it becomes easy to believe that everyone drives an SUV, that you are poor if you make $75,000. Service takes you out of the bubble. It gives you perspective."
- "It opened my eyes to the world outside of my protected suburban life. People struggle daily and are in situations which are outside of their control. Volunteering can educate someone about the poor or disabled or addicted in ways that the media cannot."

This increased awareness of perspectives and diversity and the deeper understanding of others is a result of "getting out of their comfort zone." While there may be some initial fear, it gets easier over time.

- "Getting out of your comfort zone is a great experience. Interacting with people, places and events that you normally don't come across is an excellent way to determine what is actually important to you and is a big wake-up call in regards to what is and is not working correctly in this country."

This teaches students about themselves in relation to others and opens them up to different situations. As one person counseled, it is all right to feel uncomfortable and "find you have some 'unspeakable' prejudice against people who are drunks, or poor, or minority . . . it happens to everyone," and young people should continue volunteering and work through it.

While many alumni felt they were more open-minded and had a greater understanding of diverse populations, they often had differing views of those served. Those with a charity orientation to service used words such as "disadvantaged" and "needy," illustrating a deficit view of those they helped. Others revealed a more caring attitude, noting that they could see themselves in the same situation. Expressions like "stepping into someone else's shoes" and "there but for the grace of God, go I" indicate an ability to imagine life from other perspectives.

- "When working with people society considers 'less fortunate' or 'disadvantaged,' remember we are all two steps away from being in their place—it can happen to anyone."

The third group of responses reflects a social-justice orientation. They show "an awareness of human worth and dignity of others regardless of their lot in life" and express understanding of the equality of all, despite different life circumstances.

- "It took me awhile to realize that there is a difference in attitude in volunteering as an 'advantaged' person to 'disadvantaged' people and being a person simply who is in a current place to help another person who needs it at the time."
- "More than anything I came to learn enough to understand Ani DiFranco's song lyrics. 'If I were you, you are just who I'd be.' Life's circumstances are not character flaws. You can't judge people who have faced challenges you have not."

Increased Awareness of Social Issues

Early service experiences give students an increased awareness of social issues and a new perspective on reality. One individual explained that she "was raised thinking everybody had the same amount as myself and those in my neighborhood" and through volunteering saw that was not the case. Volunteering gives "a better perspective on some of the challenges that exist in a community—poverty, broken homes, low literacy rates." Many expressed new understandings with comments such as "Life isn't fair, and people don't always get what they deserve," and "It made me see or seek out the other side of societal ills. I realize that things aren't always what they seem, that there are gray areas."

Early service experiences also lead to a deeper understanding of social justice and the understanding of the potential for change given supportive measures.

- "My experiences helped me see more societal problems and helped me to realize the importance of social justice."
- "It embedded the importance of serving others into my value system and increased my awareness of social issues. It has taught me that all people can lead productive lives if we are accepting and supportive in our attitudes and actions with others."

One alumna noted that she applied her early service experiences to college classes on social justice: "I feel that because of my experiences, I have a greater capacity to critically think about social justices and injustices."

The awareness of social justice is reflected in a more complex understanding of the situation and the need to look for political solutions. Many alumni offered opinions on "how our country should be run" and the role of government.

- "My experiences helped me realize that there are so many disenfranchised people in this country for whatever reasons. You learn that it is not fair or appropriate to blame individuals for their poverty or other problems. Somewhere along the line the community or the government has failed them. Our task is to rebuild social safety nets for these people while also helping them to be more accountable for their decisions and actions."
- "I realized that there are more people than ever who needed aid . . . I think it shows me that government programs, not only volunteer groups or non-profits, need to be put in place because then every socio-economic group would be given basic needs such as health care."

Service experiences abroad provide a global view of poverty and have a powerful impact on students. They contribute to seeing themselves, "not only as an individual, but as a part of the world and thus a responsible contributor to it."

- "Social justice is a world-wide and complex issue that will need to be addressed indefinitely."
- "It would be difficult to measure the impact on my life. All my experiences were incredible. I think because my service was mainly focused outside of the U.S., it has given me a wide understanding of our country and the impact we have to other countries and people with regard to social justice."

In summary, adults reflecting on their early service experiences frequently described the impact on their behavior and attitude toward service and social justice as increasing their awareness and understanding of themselves and their potential to make change, as well as building a broader perspective of other people and the world. These quotes illustrate that service-learning programs, when designed and delivered effectively with an emphasis on critical pedagogy, play a crucial role in developing citizens engaged for the common good. Chapter 3 delves into how social-justice service-learning affects individuals, providing a foundation on which to build better programs.

CHAPTER THREE

Becoming Committed to Social Justice

The challenge for teachers who are building a social-justice service-learning program is to understand how individuals become committed to social change. Through my research, I have identified common experiences, attitudes, and behaviors of people working for social justice, providing a framework for service-learning programs that foster long-term civic engagement for equity and justice. By examining this set of characteristics, we are one step further on our journey.

This chapter is based on the reflections of eleven alumni from Benilde-St. Margaret's School (BSM) gathered during individual interviews about their experiences with service and social justice. Their profiles provide living evidence of what we hope to achieve through social-justice service-learning programs.

In their current jobs or professions, these individuals indicate a connection between their careers and their commitment to social justice. Some of them work with social-service agencies where personal and professional services are intertwined with social justice. Others use their professional advocacy careers to advance social causes and youth development, and still others create social-justice opportunities by using business skills to effect social change. More than half are politically engaged or have advocacy roles in their service activities.

In addition to the service/social-justice component of their jobs, many individuals continue to devote time to regular service activities, and all continue to work in varying degrees with agencies serving populations living in

Table 3.1. Common Experiences of Adults Committed to Social Justice

Family
- Their families instilled values and modeled service.
- They had a family situation that made them feel different from their peers.
- They had a broader, more inclusive definition of *family*.

Educational Environment
- Values were both taught and modeled in their schools.
- Their classes provided opportunities to explore and discuss their beliefs and obligations to others.
- Their schools' missions included a commitment to service and social justice.
- Their schools provided a mentoring environment.

Common Service Experiences
- They had extensive service experiences in multiple sites.
- They had leadership roles in designing and implementing service projects.
- They worked directly with people from different backgrounds.
- They enjoyed service and participated in service with their friends.
- They worked alongside adults committed to social justice.
- They had service experiences abroad.

poverty. Additionally, they volunteer in the community with youth groups and in educational institutions, as well as through their professions in work-related organizations.

The commonalities from their personal stories give us insight into key ingredients that contribute to forming an action identity committed to justice. After exploring their experiences growing up, we see how their background contributed to their identity formation and their commitment to social justice. In the final section of this chapter, we broaden our understanding by connecting these findings to other research on the characteristics of social-justice activists, identity formation, and the role of mentoring institutions.

Common Characteristics of Individuals Committed to Social Justice

Family

It's no surprise that the family functions as the first teacher for most children, communicating on a daily basis what is valued and expected both through words and actions.[1] When parents are committed to service in the community, children receive the message that helping others is important.

In describing their families, all my interviewees discussed influences that instilled values and modeled service. Many had their first service experiences with their mothers or other family members, volunteering at church, in nursing homes, and in the community. This laid the foundation for service to become part of their identities.

As they gave details about their childhoods, I noted that each person mentioned a family situation or trait that made him or her feel different from peers. Many had family structures that represented a broader, more inclusive definition of *family*. Several families had adopted children, some from other racial and ethnic groups, and two had multigenerational or extended-family living situations. Some people mentioned divorces, remarriages, and step-families. Other situations included parents with issues of mental illness and chemical-abuse treatment. While these circumstances are more common today, it was not the case growing up during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Having a family structure or circumstance that varies from their peers' gives children an experience with difference, as they learn the meanings of *in-group* and *out-group*. This early personal relationship with "otherness" builds their capacity for empathy and compassion and results in a more inclusive view of others. The broader view of what constitutes "family" allows children to see that their caring circle can be expanded to include new people to whom they have become connected.

Teachers know that families are important, but they often have very little control over what is happening at home, and they may have limited knowledge about individual students' family lives. While a family background that instills service as a core value is important for creating an orientation to social justice, many students will develop a thirst for social justice regardless of their early family experiences.

Educational Experience

In addition to families, schools and religious organizations send messages to young people about norms, values, and expected behavior,[2] and they play a critical role in developing students' moral and civic identities. Many interviewees said the values that were both taught and modeled in their schools were important factors in their formation. Seven attended Catholic elementary schools, all attended BSM Catholic high school, and nine attended a Catholic postbaccalaureate institution. They recalled teachers who spoke about their community involvement and service activities, such as Peace Corps and mission work. In public institutions, teachers participating in service activities are also in a position to incorporate their stories and experiences into the curriculum, as long as they avoid including religious missions.

A school's mission is a major factor in the development of students' social justice orientation during their formative years. The interviewees' high school is committed to educate within a framework of Christian values and to develop students in mind, body, and spirit. Students are challenged to choose ethical and moral courses of action and to act in accordance with their beliefs through charity, works for justice, and service to others.

Looking back, interviewees described their religion classes as opportunities to explore their faith and their obligation to others. Theology classes provide students opportunities to take time for reflection about values and beliefs and to have conversations on important issues, such as the meaning of living a moral, ethical life. Teachers and coaches are encouraged to talk about values and describe their own service experiences here and abroad. These interactions can be catalysts for students to expand their view of possibilities and obligations and to think about how they can make a difference. In secular institutions, the basic tenets of humanism can be incorporated into social studies, history, civics, and government classes. Discussions of ethics and morality are vital to schools' democratic mission.

Through high school and college, young people's developmental task is to define their identities.[3] They are at a point in their lives when they have to make conscious choices and decisions about beliefs, abilities, and their philosophy of life. During this developmental phase, students need a supportive community where they can grapple with important life questions such as who am I? where do I belong? who do I want to become? and what is life all about? Encouraging students to ask big questions and think critically creates an environment that is supportive of their search for meaning and purpose.[4]

Teachers can encourage students to think about their place in the world by using the Socratic method of questioning. Simply asking why, how, or what in relation to the subject matter can create interesting and revealing discussions that delve deeper into the topic at hand and connect it to the students' lives and the world outside the classroom.

Common Service Experiences

A significant ingredient of these alumni's service experiences is that they had multiple experiences at many sites. They worked directly with people from different backgrounds, participated in service with their friends, and worked alongside adults committed to social justice.

High School

Nearly all interviewees participated in service during high school. They provided service to the school and wider community through classes,

churches, civic groups, and school clubs. Many assumed leadership roles in initiating service projects. Tutoring at school or at other institutions was a common activity, and food shelves, homeless centers, nursing homes, and hospitals were other volunteer sites. The majority of these students worked directly with diverse populations in their service activities. Several named teachers who were instrumental in getting them involved in service.

Reflecting on the high-school service experience, they realized that it helped them overcome their fear of people with different backgrounds and circumstances and laid the groundwork for future service. Venturing into new territories with new people and performing meaningful work developed their feelings of being capable and making a difference.

Participating in service with their peers was also a common thread contributing to becoming more comfortable in diverse settings. They commented that working with their friends made service activities an enjoyable, natural activity, stating, "It's just what we did."

College

All eleven participated in service during their college years, although their service experiences varied a great deal in frequency and intensity. Many individuals mentioned a service center on campus that helped facilitate service experiences, and two continued to engage in service activities organized by their college alumni groups. The three alumni who were most involved in service and social justice attended Jesuit universities. They clearly stated that service was part of the mission, integrated into the school's cultures and course work, and an expectation of all students.

Service Experiences Abroad

Nine of the interviewees lived, studied, or volunteered overseas for varying lengths of time and with varying frequency, ranging from one week to two years and from one to seven times throughout their youth and postcollege years. These experiences impacted their understanding of themselves and the world. In addition to overseas experiences, two had full-time yearlong commitments to service programs in the United States.

Organizations

In describing their service history and their current service activities, all interviewees indicated that they worked directly with people living in poverty. In addition, they volunteered at similar types of organizations, in three general areas: those serving marginalized persons living in poverty or crisis, such as food shelves, shelters, and housing programs; youth-development

programs, youth-in-crisis programs, and tutoring programs serving urban poor or students who had recently immigrated; and overseas service programs. Several also provided services to individuals with physical or mental challenges. Many were involved in civic committees or participated in political or social-advocacy work. Other sites of volunteer work mentioned were hospitals and nursing homes, places of worship, and their high school and colleges.

Transforming Experiences into Identity

In synthesizing the common experiences of these individuals, several components emerge as important factors in forming their identities and their social-justice orientation to service: multiple, enjoyable service opportunities with family and friends; the design of school-based service experiences; and working with diverse populations. How do these early experiences impact who they become as adults?

Multiple opportunities for service work in high school and young adulthood, along with parental and school role models, instill the value of service to others and create an ethic of service. The fact that students enjoy service work and participate in activities with friends reinforces the positive nature of service, and it becomes a part of who they are, as illustrated by the double negative stated by more than one person, "I couldn't not do it."

The design and implementation of school-based experiences are important factors in developing a social-justice orientation to service. Students at BSM are required to take one of the religion classes that incorporate Catholic social teachings; choices include two service-learning classes and an advocacy-based class. The students volunteer with agencies serving marginalized populations, most frequently with people living in poverty or people living with mental or physical challenges. Having service experiences embedded in courses provides a structure for students to better prepare for the experience with accurate information and ample time for critical reflection before, during, and after the service activity.

Researching social problems and discussing moral issues—such as humanity's obligation to the common good, care for the poor, and the dignity and rights of all people—help students develop a clearer view of the underlying causes of poverty and a stronger sense of their responsibility to others. With time devoted to both inward reflection, asking, "What effect did this experience have on me?" and outward reflection, asking, "Why does this situation exist?" and "How do my actions work for or against change?" students begin to see their potential to make change.

In students' quest for identity, they look for others who are like them and have the same values. When service programs are designed to encourage

peers to work alongside each other on projects that they have developed, they see it as both a fun and a meaningful activity. The collegiality surrounding the service experience is continued after high school and college into adulthood. Service programs that create leadership opportunities reinforce students in conceiving of themselves as capable and effective and increase their independence and self-directedness.

Working with diverse populations impacts students' orientation to service. While diversity exists at BSM, the majority of the students are of similar socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. In order for these students to develop a commitment to social justice, they need to experience diversity and be in relationships with individuals from different backgrounds and circumstances. Not only does this, along with accurate information and reflection, break down stereotypes, it puts a human face on suffering and fosters care and compassion. These encounters dismantle the wall between "us" and "them."

Travel, studying, and/or serving in other cultures provide additional opportunities for students to learn about themselves, others, and sociopolitical issues. Seeing other ways of being, knowing, and living spurs individuals to reassess their own values, beliefs, and knowledge. Positive interactions develop a sense of connectedness and increase their ability to see the complexity and interrelatedness of economic, social, and political situations. With opportunities for reflection and social analysis, students begin to see how those with power organize information and direct events to maintain the status quo.

Deepening Our Understanding of Identity Formation

We have seen how individuals' backgrounds and experiences contribute to their adult orientation to social justice. Not only do these findings hold true for this particular group of adults, but other authors have found similar results with different populations. Additionally, by connecting what we have learned in this chapter to other research on socialization, identity formation, and the impact of educational institutions, we deepen our understanding of how individuals become committed to social justice.

Commonalities of People Committed to Social Justice

In *Common Fire*, Laurent A. Daloz and others conducted a study in which they interviewed more than one hundred adults who had made long-term commitments to work for the common good. They found these individuals

- had parents who were active in the public sphere;
- had a strong sense of self-esteem and a feeling they could make a difference;

- recognized justice and injustice and saw the contradictions between espoused values and reality;
- had traveled significantly in young adulthood.

Their commitment to the common good was strengthened through their communities, peer groups, and mentors. They also had opportunities to increase their leadership skills during their teen years. They developed compassion and changed their opinion of who is "one of us" through constructive engagement with otherness. The interviewees maintained the conviction that everyone counts and recognized resemblance in difference as a fact.[5]

Likewise, Stanton, Giles, and Cruz, in *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on its Origins, Practice, and Future*, examined the characteristics of early service-learning teachers and found commonalities that planted seeds of commitment for moral and civic engagement. Parental role models as volunteers and activists, connection to school life, a family-centered community, and a coming of age during the turbulent times of the 1950s, 1960s, or 1970s were common elements in their development. In addition, they had inquiring minds and questioned the meaning of family, society, and education.

Service-learning pioneers were committed to service both on the individual level of helping people in need and on the societal level, which was nurtured by role models, challenging friends, and critical events. They had a strong sense of themselves and their ability to have an impact; strong religious, ethical, or spiritual motivations; and well-developed political convictions. Findings also showed visionary passion and commitment, compassion, and self-directed independence as common characteristics.[6]

Identity Formation

Students learn about themselves through introspection, reflection on how others see them, comparison of themselves to others, and memories of past experiences. Family, individuals, groups, and society influence their identity development. The social context is important as young people's worlds expand beyond their immediate families to the broader culture, and they come to see themselves in a larger context.[7] How individuals view themselves includes past experiences, what they currently think about themselves, and what they see as possibilities. They construct their images of their future selves from models of what they hope to become and those they want to avoid.[8]

Miranda Yates and James Youniss present an updated theory on socialization in *Roots of Civic Identity: International Perspectives on Community Service and Activism in Youth*. They explain that in the past we thought socialization was simply the internalizing of societies' norms and values, a conception that depicted youth as passive receptacles, receiving culture from adults. Now we recognize youth as active participants in organizing and making sense of messages sent by adults and institutions. Socialization involves a cognitive process and the acquisition of practices that become "habitual ways of acting that are part of a person's self-concept or, more accurately, essential components of a person's identity."[9]

The authors determined that active experiences lead to habitual practices, which become part of one's identity.[10] For example, they found that the strongest predictor of adult involvement in democratic practices is participation in student government. Similarly, they report that students and adults who are active in service see their actions as a part of who they are and not as something unusual or meriting recognition. Their results also state that community service-learning instills habits of political participation in students.[11]

Individuals' sense of identity determines their course of action and motivates them to behave in accordance with their values. Young people's identities develop over time as they reflect on and question their beliefs and assumptions. Identity formation also occurs as a result of identification with role models. Service-learning encourages youth to investigate and discuss social, moral, and political issues and reflect on their responsibilities and obligations.[12]

Moral and Political Development

In *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility*, Anne Colby and others investigate the process of identity formation, including the connection between self-knowledge and one's moral and political development. They describe the interconnectedness between moral development (judgments about how to treat others) and civic principles of democracy, such as respect, tolerance, and the rights of both individuals and groups. Likewise, engaging in civic activities, like promoting access to housing or health care, or drawing attention to environmental concerns, always includes moral considerations.[13]

These researchers conclude that developing engaged moral and civic individuals requires a moral and civic understanding that includes a knowledge of complex issues and institutions, as well as ethical and democratic principles; the motivation, conviction, and perseverance to act morally and ethically; and the necessary skills in communication and political participation, and the ability to work with people and organize them for action.

The motivation to act requires a strong sense of self and efficacy. Colby and colleagues also note that in addition to caring about the issues and being involved, civically active individuals need to feel it is possible for them to make a difference. That is to say, they need to have both personal and political efficacy in order to effectively engage in the political process.[14]

Service-learning is one of the strategies used by institutions committed to developing students with moral and civic responsibility. Yates and Youniss found strong evidence that youths' civic engagement can result in the formation of political habits that are integrated into their identity, continue into adulthood, and shape how they see their role in society. The long-term impact of early service experience results from students seeing themselves as "politically engaged and socially concerned person[s], . . . [with a] sense of social agency and responsibility for society and political-moral awareness."[15]

Mentoring Institutions

Sharon Daloz Parks, in *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith*, describes the characteristics of mentoring institutions that assist students in identity formation. Noting that the overused term *mentor* can have many meanings, she restricts its meaning to "those who are appropriately depended upon for authoritative guidance at the time of the development of critical thought and the formation of an informed, adult, and committed faith."[16] She describes a mentor as the person who recognizes you and your potential, supports you in your journey, challenges you to be critical, and inspires you to meaningful commitment.

Educational institutions can provide mentors and a mentoring environment that encourages students to ask big questions and think critically. Parks identifies seven characteristics of a mentoring institution:

- being a network of belonging where young adults feel at home physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually;
- asking the big questions, which stretch students in their thinking about themselves and social arrangements;
- providing opportunities for constructive encounters with otherness, which create bonds transcending "us and them" to a new "we" and a commitment to common good;
- promoting habits of mind that encompass dialogue, critical thought, connected-holistic thought, and contemplation;
- fostering worthy dreams in which students imagine possibilities and find a vocation which adds meaning and purpose to their lives;

- providing access to images including the truth of a world of suffering and wonder, positive self-images, images of others both as similar and unique, and images of interconnectedness;
- creating communities of humanizing practices where the hearth gives students balance and invites dialogue and reflection, where the table always has a place for all to share, accommodate, and be grateful, and where the commons provides a space for the community to stand up, and to stand with others over time.[17]

Colby and others also conducted research on the ability of educational institutions to impact student moral and civic identity. They studied twelve institutions of higher education, including public and private, that are intentional in providing moral and civic education to students, defined as

> imparting the understanding that it is important to be generous and responsible to our family, friends, and neighbors . . . [and] responsible, responsive, patriotic, and loyal to our nation and society . . . [and to acknowledge that] educated citizens must understand and accept their obligations to all humanity, to making this a nation worth defending in a world safe and promising for all its inhabitants.[18]

Common features among these universities include integrating moral and civic education into the curriculum, often tying it to critical thinking, and teaching effective communication for civil discourse. They design activities that move students beyond the classroom and help them to see themselves as citizens, which raises their sense of efficacy and incorporates moral and civic action into their identity. These institutions also link moral and civic education with issues of diversity and multiculturalism, to foster respect for difference and develop a global perspective. Three themes that emerge are connections with communities, moral and civic virtue, and concerns for social justice.[19]

In identifying common themes from the stories and experiences of eleven individuals committed to social justice and linking them to findings from other research, we begin to understand how well-designed programs can help individuals develop a social-justice orientation to service. Important elements include understanding the characteristics of people committed to social justice, understanding the process of identity formation, and understanding the potential of mentoring institutions. Service experiences embedded in educational settings can foster an ethic of service and increased awareness of self, others, and social issues, resulting in individuals developing a more critical consciousness, a motivation to create change, and a lifelong commitment to social justice.

CHAPTER FOUR

Developing a Critical Consciousness

Four Elements of Critical-Consciousness Development

How can service-learning become transformative in nature and develo engaged citizens working for social change? The short answer is: *throug developing a more critical consciousness.* There are four essential element that contribute to critical-consciousness development: developing a deepe awareness of self, developing a deeper awareness and broader perspectiv of others, developing a deeper awareness and broader perspective of soci issues, and seeing one's potential to make change. However, service exper ences alone will not generate a commitment to social justice. We need t be intentional in the mission and design of the service program and creat opportunities for students to grow in each of these four areas. Teachers mu also work to become critically aware so that we can better guide our studen in developing a critical consciousness.

Developing a Greater Awareness of Self

Effective service-learning opportunities help students develop a strong sen of self, giving them a sense that what they are doing is important. The eth of service becomes a component of how they see themselves. Service exper ences that are designed to give students opportunities to set goals, impleme plans, and persist in their efforts increase their feelings of competency and e ficacy. Doing work that has real impact on people and the community foste a sense of agency and the belief that they can affect change. Additional

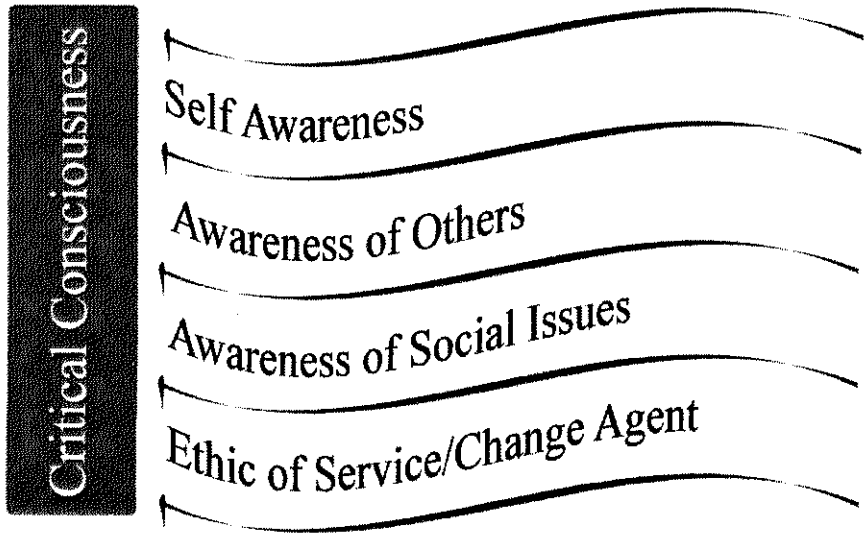

Figure 4.1. Four Elements of Critical Consciousness Development

when students take on leadership roles in service activities, it reinforces their self-image as capable and effective and increases their creativity, independence, and self-directedness.

Well-designed service programs encourage peers to collaborate on projects so they can realize helping others is both an enjoyable and a meaningful activity. Working with their friends is key for students because in searching for their own identity, they frequently look to others who are like them and have the similar values. High school and college peers who participate together in service activities often continue their commitment of service into adulthood.

Students become more aware of themselves as they clarify their values through reflection, discussion, and actions. Skillfully designed assignments and discussion provoke students to think about who they are now, who they want to become, how they will act, and what will be important to them. These discussions also contribute to their understanding of civic responsibility and a moral obligation to work for social justice.

Another element that helps students clarify their values is working with adults who are committed to social justice. Their parents, teachers, friends, and other adults who are working in service agencies addressing social issues are sources of inspiration, challenging them in their thinking and actions. Mentors and adults outside family relationships provide an objective affirmation of the value of service and the confirmation that everyone is responsible

for the common good. Students learn from these role models and come to identify with their values.

Students are increasingly seeking service opportunities away from their familiar surroundings. Often organized by schools, colleges, or religious organizations, these experiences include international travel or travel to impoverished communities within the United States. These experiences not only increase students' understanding about themselves, but also expand their awareness of others and knowledge of social issues.

Developing a Greater Awareness of Others

Often students' experience with otherness begins in their early years as a personal encounter with being different from their peers. Having a family situation or personal characteristic that sets them apart results in learning the meaning of *in-group* and *out-group*. This experience lays the groundwork for seeing diversity and developing compassion for others.

Most middle- and upper-class White students spend the majority of their time with people of similar socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. In order for these students to develop a commitment to social justice, they need to experience diversity and be in relationships with people who have different life experiences. Not only does this break down stereotypes but, along with accurate information and reflection, it puts a human face on suffering, fostering care and compassion. These encounters dismantle the wall between "us" and "them."

Students' self-awareness and awareness of others increase as they work with agencies serving diverse populations. Working with people from different ethnic or racial backgrounds, people living in poverty, or individuals with physical or mental challenges initiates a student's exploration of difference, similarity, and diversity within inclusiveness. Students come to see people as individuals with their own stories, rather than as statistics and stereotypes. Through these experiences, students recognize other ways of living and thinking, which encourages them to be more open-minded and to see the world from other perspectives.

Encounters with otherness help students overcome their fear of the unknown and lay the foundation for future social-justice work. Understanding the significant role that circumstances, which are often beyond one's control, play in people's lives allows students to see how misfortunes could befall anyone. As students create relationships with diverse people, it opens avenues of caring, *empathy* (the ability to understand and share another's feelings), and *compassion* (a general sense of responsibility and tendency to

make commitments).[1] Reflection promotes a sense of interconnectedness between people and a will to act to relieve suffering.

Developing a Greater Awareness of Social Issues

Accurate information, constructive service experiences, and critical reflection develop students' critical consciousness of the world. When students become more aware and informed about sociopolitical issues, they realize that what they had previously believed is often inaccurate. Those beliefs no longer adequately explain the reality they see through their service work with diverse populations and communities.

Students see the contradictions between what they (and society) say they value and believe in and the injustices they see others experiencing. This creates a dissonance that destabilizes their worldview and leads to self-examination and questioning. Given new information and opportunities for reflection and analysis, students accommodate new knowledge and develop a critical, complex view of the world. As students build relationships and gain perspective, they see how power affects political decisions and limits options for oppressed groups, which contributes to their understanding of institutional, rather than individual, causes of injustice.

While students need only travel fifteen minutes to see examples of injustice and people living in poverty in their own communities, having a study or service experience abroad can have a powerful impact on how students think about themselves, others, and sociopolitical issues. Seeing the reality of economically disadvantaged people overseas sparks students' reappraisal of their values, beliefs, and knowledge. Positive encounters continue to develop their sense of connectedness with others and increase students' ability to see the complexity and interrelatedness of economic, social, and political situations. With opportunities for reflection and social analysis, they begin to see how government and policy decisions in the United States affect other countries and peoples.

Seeing One's Potential to Make Change

Once students understand that the world is more complex and social problems are more widespread than they thought, service-learning becomes a vehicle for acting on their beliefs and making a difference. Witnessing poverty, discrimination, and injustice presents an opportunity for students to step back and compare their privileged world with that of others and question, Why? This often leads to more research and analysis and contributes to students' political formation and commitment to civic engagement.

The double negative used by several alumni in talking about service: "I couldn't not do it" illustrates the long-term impact on students who value the camaraderie of service when participating with friends. This is one strong reason why providing multiple service opportunities in their high school and college years helps to instill the value of service to others. These early peer service opportunities coupled with parental and school role models create an ethic of service that continues throughout their adult years.

As a result of discussion and reflection around the questions, "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" in conjunction with "Why are there social problems and injustices?" students develop a commitment to the common good and praxis for social justice. People who have a clear sense of their values and who see service as a part of their identity are more likely to live in accordance with their beliefs. They also tend to connect their personal commitments to service with jobs or professions where they can make a social contribution.

Three Stages of White Critical-Consciousness Development

As students grow in their ability to see themselves and the world more clearly, their views and orientation to service change as reflected in a three-stage model of White critical-consciousness development. The initial stage of consciousness—charity—is a natural point of departure for many White, middle- and upper-class students who have little experience with discrimination, poverty, or diverse racial and ethnic groups. In the second stage, students' worldviews are emerging, and their service orientation evolves into caring about those they are helping. The final stage of White critical consciousness incorporates an understanding of the underlying causes of injustice and a commitment to work for social change. To understand these stages and the importance of helping students foster a critical stance to their

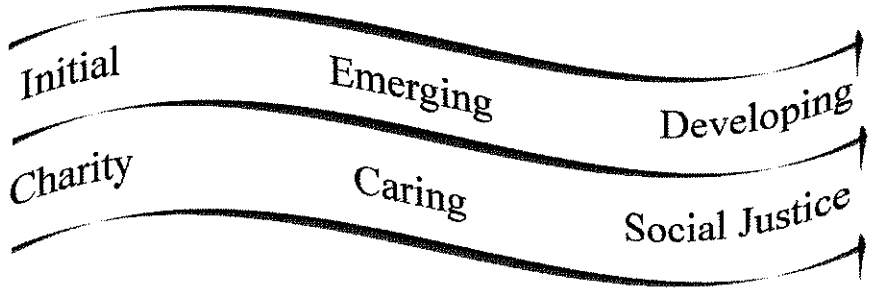

Figure 4.2. Stages of White Critical Consciousness Development

service experiences, we need to address some fundamental issues regarding charity, caring, and social justice.

Is Charity Bad?

Is charity bad? Of course not. Charity, as described by Merriam-Webster, is commonly understood as "generosity and helpfulness, especially toward the needy or suffering," is a necessary component of our society and the human experience, and there are many schools and organizations that contribute to their communities through charitable projects such as food drives, fund-raising, raking yards for the elderly, tutoring, helping with youth clubs, and environmental work.

Research indicates that altruism—helping others without any expectation of personal benefit—is an innate part of human nature. Felix Warneken and Michael Tomasello report altruism in infants as young as eighteen months. Twenty-four toddlers were presented with an adult male experimenter who encountered a problem, such as dropping an object he could not reach or knocking over books. Without the adult looking at or speaking to the child, the infant got up and helped the adult. Of note was that the child only helped complete the task if the experimenter seemed upset at not being able to reach his goal.[2] Indeed, if the desire to help others is imprinted on our human nature, what is problematic about charitable service-learning programs?

The charity-or-justice debate is a major tension among service-learning advocates. Teachers and administrators question whether service-learning programs should be apolitical or a vehicle to engage students in political, economic, and social issues. Questions raised over a decade ago, such as what are the goals of the program? whose values are being promoted? whose needs are being met? and who is doing what to whom and for what reason?[3] are still relevant today. The answers to these questions guide the goals and orientation of any service program: one based in charity, the other oriented to social change.[4]

Program orientation is often based in a teacher's view of society. Some educators believe that society tends towards equilibrium, with everyone in the proper position. They deem the division of labor a necessary component for a properly functioning economy and think the poor only need opportunity, not power. They do not see social barriers to equality and look for peaceful integration of people into existing structures. Their service-learning programs partner with agencies that cooperate with power holders.[5]

On the other hand, there are educators who see society as divided between dominant and subordinated groups, such as corporations and workers, men and women, and Whites and people of color. They design service-learning programs that work to eliminate injustice through collective action for social change. They organize at the local level with the desire to create a social movement for change. Typically, White, middle-class people, who do not recognize institutional discrimination, tend toward charity programs, and people of color who have suffered institutional discrimination tend toward social-justice service-learning.[6]

The majority of K–16 service-learning programs are charity based and apolitical with a primary focus on student development.[7] Often administration and teachers do not take a justice-oriented stance because they are afraid of losing bipartisan support and funding and do not want to appear to endorse a biased curriculum. Advocates for social change, however, note that universities and communities have a long history of uniting to advocate for justice, as in the civil rights movement, and challenge educators to prepare students to be engaged citizens.[8]

The question remains: What is wrong with charity-based programs? Advocates for social justice critique several aspects of these programs. First, they contend that apolitical education is not possible. Education in general and all service-learning programs in particular are political in that they either support the status quo or work to change it. The decisions surrounding mission, curriculum, methods, and type of reflection all have political dimensions.[9]

We see this more clearly by looking at the concept of service-learning and developing active citizens. Most institutions agree that service-learning is an effective strategy to achieve civic engagement goals,[10] but citizenship means different things to different people. As Kahne, Westheimer, and Rogers suggest, being a good citizen can range from paying taxes and obeying laws, to being active in civic affairs and organizing food drives, to questioning, Why? and working to change the system. Depending on your perspective of what makes a *citizen*, service-learning programs can either support an agenda minimizing the role of government in addressing the needs of the poor, or they can develop a transformative agenda to create more just policies and social practices.[11]

A second area of critique is the missionary ideology of White, privileged students going into areas of poverty to "do for" the poor.[12] Without adequate preparation and knowledge about the populations served, their social and political contexts, and an understanding of discrimination, racism, and classism, students' service experiences often reinforce stereotypes and promote a paternalistic attitude toward those they are serving. Seeing these individual acts of kindness as the "least we can do" cements the notion of being saviors for the poor.

Another potential negative effect is the students' exploitation of those they are helping for their own personal growth and opportunities. I often

hear people comment, "It feels good to help the poor," "I get back more than I give," or "Volunteering looks good on a college or job application." While these volunteers are providing a needed service, the motivations are not truly charitable.

A final criticism of charity service programs is that they tend to maintain the status quo of inequity rather than work to create a more just society. When service is seen as an individual act of one person helping another in need, we do not develop the broader perspective of societal inequity, and it limits our ability to address the root causes of injustice.[13]

Having a willingness to help others and devoting time and effort to charity are good, but given the potential for charity-based service-learning programs to reinforce stereotypes, exploit those being served, and impede social change, we should see it as a beginning stage and help students develop a critical stance.

Caring: What Does It Mean to Care?

Care can be interpreted in many different ways. It can mean to help by providing for someone's needs. Likewise, we say *care* when we mean giving something or someone a great deal of attention to avoid a problem, as in doing something "with great care." *Care* can invoke the idea of interest or worry, as to be anxious or upset about something, such as, "I care about global warming." We use *care* to mean providing people or animals with what they need and protecting them, especially where they are young or ill and can't take care of themselves. *Care* can quite simply mean to like, as in, "I care for Bill," or "I don't care for brussels sprouts." In the expression "to take care of" someone or something, *care* means to be responsible for him or her or it, and do whatever needs to be done.[14]

How are we using the term *caring* in the second stage of critical-consciousness development? At the core, it is about the relationship between those providing and those receiving service. We can draw on the work of Nel Noddings and Carol Gilligan to deepen our understanding of what it means to care.

Noddings has written extensively on the ethic of care as it relates to education and society. Her work offers insights into the feelings and connections students should develop in their relationships during service-learning experiences. She describes caring as having regard for someone by giving attention to and having concern for him or her, which includes considering that person's needs and desires. Noddings discusses *disposability*, derived from the French word *disponibilité*, meaning investing in someone and making yourself available to that person. Like the expression, "I'm at your disposal," disposability conveys, "I am here for you" and implies, "I care enough to make a commitment."

Engrossment is another concept Noddings uses to express empathy developed from "feeling with" someone. Engrossment involves receiving another person's feelings as your own, rather than simply projecting how you would feel if you were in that person's position. It is a crucial difference in perspective. Rather than putting ourselves in someone else's shoes and intellectually analyzing how we would feel in an objective manner, engrossment involves receiving the person into oneself and actually feeling his or her emotions. In her model, caring involves changing our personal frame of reference in order to feel the other's point of view. The first step in developing this critical awareness is realizing that the situation of the person for whom we are caring could happen to us. This is often a catalyst for action. When we see someone's reality as a possibility for us, we feel compelled to act to remedy the situation.

Noddings believes that relationship is at the center of caring and acknowledges the mutual relationship between the giver and recipient of care. Both the caring and the cared-for contribute to the relationship: care must be received and accepted by the person being helped. The cared-for looks for a sign that the one caring has genuine regard for him or her and is not just providing a routine, meaningless service. Without trust and acceptance in the relationship, the person cared for is dehumanized and feels like an object.[15]

We can easily connect Noddings's theories to effective service-learning practices by examining the role of mutuality and reciprocity in the relationships between service providers, community agencies, and community clients. Service-learners must recognize that while they are contributing a service to the community, they are also benefiting from the experience and taking away important knowledge and personal growth from their interactions. To avoid exploiting those we serve, we must really care, have regard for them, feel with them, and invest ourselves in addressing their needs.

Similarly we find parallels between the stages of critical-consciousness development and Gilligan's research on the stages of moral development. She delineates a progression from *preconventional*, to *conventional*, to *postconventional* based on relationships with an ethic of care. In her initial stage of caring, people are egocentric and make decisions based solely on what is in their best interest and for their own survival. Then, in transitioning to the second stage, individuals recognize their responsibility to others and focus on caring for them, often in a self-sacrificing way that puts the needs of those cared for above their own.

The catalyst to move into the third stage of moral development is recognizing the inequality in the self-sacrificing relationship and realizing that the care giver is also worthy of consideration and care. The focus of the third stage is on the dynamics of the relationship and the interconnection between the other and oneself.[16]

Drawing parallels between Gilligan's theory and how students progress though the stages of critical-consciousness development, we see how students move from charity—"it's mainly about me," to caring—"it's all about them," to social justice—"we need to work together." At the charity stage, students are mainly concerned about themselves, how they feel, and what they get out of the experience. In caring, students begin to develop relationships and consider the needs and feelings of others, and they see it as their responsibility to improve opportunities. At the last stage of social-justice activism, students realize that dismantling an unjust society is in everyone's best interest and requires working in solidarity for our common good.

As a concluding observation, we find an analogous understanding of care by looking at progressive health-care practitioners. Gone is the authoritative, paternalistic health-care-provider-as-expert knows best, declaring what is to occur and demanding passive acceptance. Rather, today's practitioners demonstrate a concern for the well-being of their patients, engaging them as active partners in selecting and meeting their health-care goals. Caring in this therapeutic relationship is "the commitment to alleviate another person's suffering [which] entails the willingness to become personally involved."[17]

Social Justice: What Makes a Person Say, "I can't not do it"?

There are two situations that channel us toward social-justice advocacy. First, when we have a keen awareness of our core values, and are committed to ideals of justice, freedom, and liberty, believe that all people are of equal value, deserving of basic human rights and dignity. We are moved to act on our beliefs when we develop relationships with those we are helping. It is through these relationships that we come to care about individuals and personally invest ourselves in them and their situation. We see their suffering and feel an obligation to do more than provide assistance; we feel it is our responsibility to work for systemic change to end the circumstances of injustice. When we really care, we have to act.

The second situation leading us to a social-justice stance is confronting the contradictions between what we previously thought and the reality we see. Those experiences create a dissonance that forces us to reevaluate our view of reality and what we had known to be true. We need to examine

our past biases and faulty assumptions to accommodate the knowledge acquired through service work. We begin to alter our view of others, the world, and ourselves as we come to see how society is based on dominant and subordinate groups and how power and privilege are used to maintain the status quo. This very difficult, often painful experience requires breaking through *hegemony*.

Although hegemony affects everyone, it is not a term familiar to most people. *Hegemony* is the "common sense" understanding of how the world functions and why situations are as they are. To make the concept more tangible, I often think of hegemony as a thick fog or a heavy blanket that covers us, preventing us from seeing reality accurately. Breaking through this barrier is not easy but leads to developing a critical consciousness.

Invisible, yet all-pervasive, hegemonic messages are unconsciously accepted into our minds and regulate our thinking and behavior. Hegemony is so embedded in society and in people's ways of thinking that it projects an accepted view of how the world is, how it has always been, and how it will continue to be.

Hegemony, representing the dominant class's worldview, serves to reinforce the status quo and the power of the privileged class. These ideas are spread through culture, media, and institutions such as schools and churches. The beauty of hegemony is that its messages are so ingrained in the culture that we regularly accept them as our own, even though it is against our best interests. We consent to practices and policies that maintain a society based on injustice and special interests.

A few examples further explain hegemony. If we examine how media, politicians, and ordinary people use language to hide and distort meanings, we can take the first steps toward breaking down myths and stereotypes. At a very young age, we learn that the United States is founded on the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. These notions are supported by myths such as "racial discrimination is against the law and therefore only exists among a few uneducated people"; "all immigrants can become part of the American melting pot"; and you can "pull yourself up by your bootstraps."

These myths promote the idea that we are all equal and have the same opportunities for social advancement if we simply work hard. The reality is that the playing field is not level, and due to racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, and other institutionalized bias, life is stacked against some and favors others. Stereotypes of people of color, women, and those living in poverty are often reinforced through the home, media, and even school curricula, which provide "common sense" explanations for the differences we see among people and their socioeconomic statuses, such as "boys are

better at math than girls," "if they would just learn to speak English . . . ," and "certain people don't want to work."

Breaking through hegemony involves making the invisible visible. In our classrooms we can follow Paulo Freire's path to help students unveil the world of oppression by encouraging them to think critically, engage in critical dialogue, and problematize the reality they see. Why is a particular situation like this? Who benefits? Who is disadvantaged? What are the barriers to change? We should not tell students what to think, but rather enable them to think critically and encourage them to question, challenge, and change reality.

Putting the Pieces Together: Service-Learning, Critical-Consciousness Development, and Social Justice

With an understanding of the elements and stages of critical-consciousness development, we can trace the connection between them through service-learning experiences. As students navigate the road map of critical consciousness, their view of themselves, others, and social issues, and their potential to make change, mature. Table 4.1 presents three portraits of service-learners and maps their transformation as they move through the three stages of critical-consciousness development. While the matrix indicates a directional development, we need to acknowledge that growth does not necessarily occur in a lock-step process. People may be at different levels at the same time and may at times loop back before further advancement. Additionally, since growth is additive, those who have reached the developing stage retain their charitable and caring natures.

"Give a man a fish, and he will eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he will eat for the rest of his life." This common proverb provides an image for the charity and caring stages of critical-consciousness development through service-learning; but to complete the metaphor we need include the social-change aspect and make room at the river for all to fish.

Ethic of Service: Why Do I Serve? How Do I View Service Work?

As individuals become more critically aware, their ethic of service moves from charity to caring to social justice. These changes are seen in their orientation to service and their motivation to serve, as well as in awareness of the reciprocal nature of service-learning. In the initial stage, students' orientation to service is based on charity, and they are motivated to give back to the community because they have so much, but also because helping others

Table 4.1. Stages of White Critical-Consciousness Development and Service-Learning

		Initial: Charity	*Emerging: Caring*	*Developing: Social Justice*
Ethic of Service	**Metaphor**	Give a fish.	Teach to fish.	Make room at the river for all to fish.
	Service orientation	Charity: give back to community *Do for others.*	Caring: compassion & empathy *Do for, but are in relationship with, others.*	Social justice: systemic change, work in solidarity *Do with others.*
	Motivation to serve	"Helping others feels good." "I learn a lot." "A great opportunity."	"I can make a difference." "Sense of efficacy & agency"	"My liberation is connected to yours." "I can't not act."
	Reciprocity in service	"I get back more than I give."	"I receive & contribute."	"We work together for common good."
Awareness of Self & Others	**White racial-identity formation**	Color-blindness *Do not see their own race.* "I don't see race."	Awareness of racism, but don't know what to do *Often feel guilt & frustration.*	Potential to be White antiracist allies to people of color *Begin to unlearn internalized racism.*
	Diversity	Everyone is the same *or* everyone has differences.	Acknowledge differences, value diversity.	Interconnectedness: diversity within inclusiveness.

(continued)

Table 4.1. (*continued*)

		Initial: Charity	*Emerging: Caring*	*Developing: Social Justice*
Awareness of Self & Others	**View of the other**	Deficit view of others: "less fortunate, disadvantaged" *Stereotypical: some deserve help, others don't.*	View others as individuals, each with own story, not stereotype *Realize "it could be me."*	View others as equals: community members seen as strengths & resources *Are connected to others.*
	Reflection on self & otherness	Unaware of self in relation to otherness *Think everyone is basically the same.*	Compare others' lives to theirs *Begin to question beliefs, attitudes, & what has previously been taught/ learned.*	Critical reflection on assumptions, privilege, oppression, power structures surrounding race, class, gender, etc.
Awareness of Social Issues	**View of the world**	World is simple & basically good. *Some people need help due to dysfunctional families, poverty, or poor education.*	World is bigger & more complex than thought. *See inequity & contradictions between societal stated beliefs & reality.*	Injustice is inherent in social, economic & political systems on a global level.
	Source of the problem	Individual responsibility: "if everyone just tried harder" "Pull oneself up by the bootstraps." *Blame the victim.*	The need for government to protect & ensure basic rights for all *Avoid judging others for situations out of their control.*	Policies & practices maintain & reproduce the status quo that favors certain groups at the expense of others.
	View of social justice	Increase resources.	Treat people fairly & increase their opportunities.	Examine root causes of injustice & work for systemic change.

in need makes them feel good about themselves. Describing this win-win situation, students often state they "get back more than [they] give." In this stance they are "doing for" others.

As students emerge into critical consciousness, their orientation to service becomes one of caring. As a result of seeing injustice, they develop empathy and compassion for the people they are helping and feel morally obligated to ease their suffering. As a result of past service experiences, students gain a sense of efficacy and agency and are motivated to serve because they know what they do matters. They become aware of the reciprocal relationship between those providing and receiving service, acknowledging what they are gaining in terms of knowledge, perspective, and personal growth. At this stage, service providers are still "doing for" others, but the difference is that they are in relationship with those they are helping.

The orientation of service at the developing level is one of social transformation for equity and justice. White, privileged individuals come to realize that both the powerful and the powerless are dehumanized when oppression and injustice are allowed to continue. They see the connection between their liberation and that of subordinated groups and commit to work in solidarity with them. Individuals in the developing stage feel morally obligated to make the world more just and work as allies with oppressed groups for the common good. They "do with" others.

Awareness of Self and Others: "What's race got to do with it?"

Gaining a greater awareness of self is so inseparable from having a broader perspective of others that we need to discuss these elements of critical-consciousness development together. The number one task of White people in this country is to understand the social construction of race and the role that race, racism, and White privilege has played in history and continues to play today. As we grow in this understanding, we develop more accurate views of others, the world, and ourselves. As students move from charity to caring to social justice, they develop a greater understanding of identity formation and diversity.

Students at the initial level of critical consciousness are unaware of race. We often hear them say they are color-blind and "don't see race." In addition to not seeing others' race, they are unaware of their own Whiteness, because color blindness is an expression of White privilege. Uninformed about historical and current social inequalities, students believe that discrimination no longer exists and that we are all the same or we all have differences. At this stage, service providers hold a deficit view of those they are serving, referring to them as less fortunate and disadvantaged. Their view of others is

stereotypical, and they believe some people are deserving of help, and others are not. They are unaware of themselves in relation to otherness and believe everyone is basically the same.

Students with an emerging critical consciousness see difference and value diversity. Usually as a result of relationships with people of color, they become aware of racism, but do not know what to do about it and often experience discomfort, shame, guilt, and anger. Their service activities enable them to see those they are helping as individuals, and poverty statistics become real and meaningful. Students compare their own situation with that of those living in poverty, and realize the role of chance in determining one's situation. In the event of unemployment, illness, or family change, many of us could easily find ourselves without money for basic needs. New perspectives and understandings compel students to question previously held notions and beliefs about others and critique what they have been taught as truth.

As individuals reach the developing social-justice stage of critical consciousness, they see their potential to be White antiracists and to work as allies of people of color in fighting injustice. The first task is acknowledging internalized racism and beginning to unlearn racist ways of thinking and being. Through relationships with others and personal reflection, they appreciate the interconnectedness of humanity and create spaces that support diversity within an inclusive environment.

These students view all people with dignity, seeing them as worthy of love and deserving of basic human rights. Their view of others changes from deficiency to one of strength, seeing community members of oppressed groups as strengths and resources for addressing social injustices. Critical reflection leads them to continually question their assumptions and privilege and reveals power structures that perpetuate discrimination against oppressed groups based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, level of education, and other biases.

Awareness of Social Issues: What's Really Going On Here?

Gaining a greater awareness of social issues involves having an accurate view of the world, understanding the sources of contemporary problems, and considering how best to solve them. To students in the initial stage of consciousness, the world is basically good and full of hope for all who want to take advantage of opportunities. Social and economic advancement is based on merit, which means all those who work hard can pull themselves up by their bootstraps. They understand that some people need help, but think it is usually due to a dysfunctional family, poverty, or poor education. The answer to economic and social problems is to increase resources through donations,

collections, and drives. In charity-based service programs, students receive long-term benefits in terms of personal growth and academic achievement.

Caring moves service-learners into the emerging stage of critical consciousness. As they reflect on the injustices they see around them and the contradictions between societal beliefs and principles and lived experiences, they realize the world is bigger and more complex than they had thought. Students question the government's role in protecting and ensuring basic human rights for all. They avoid judging others for situations over which they have no control. Their view of social justice is treating people fairly, and they work to increase opportunities for those in need.

Service activities at the emerging stage involve working in soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and food shelves. Students also work at drop-in centers, posttreatment housing projects, and schools serving students who live in poverty and/or come from immigrant populations. Other marginalized populations served are the elderly and those living with mental or physical challenges.

Students at the developing stage of critical consciousness recognize that injustice is inherent in social, economic, and political systems on a global level. The sources of injustice are governmental and corporate policies and educational practices that support and reproduce the status quo, favoring privileged groups at the expense of others. As a result, they seek social justice by examining the root causes of injustice and working for systemic change. Service work at this level can no longer be described as "projects" or "activities" because of the ongoing, sustained level of commitment required. Such work includes advocacy for groups who cannot advocate for themselves, such as children and immigrants; coalition building; public education on political, economic, and social issues; and work with grassroots organizations to advance social and environmental causes.

Conclusion

Mainstream service-learning programs are primarily located at the initial stage of critical consciousness. Individuals are immersed in society's hegemonic messages and, as a result, do not question underlying assumptions and biases. Living in segregated communities limits contact with diverse populations; and, with few opportunities to build relationships across racial, ethnic, and class divisions, students receive their information from both overt and covert messages in media and from individuals who surround them. This results in faulty opinions and judgments based on inaccurate and often prejudicial information, which reinforces racism, classism, sexism, and a naive worldview.

High-school and college service programs that are committed to social justice are most often located at the emerging stage. As a result of volunteering at agencies serving people living in poverty and other marginalized populations, individuals at this level begin to think critically about previously held notions of race, class, and gender. Their service work creates spaces for direct interaction with diverse populations, dispelling previously held prejudices and initiating a new understanding of "us" and "them." Research, accurate information, and class discussion are tools that reinforce moral and civic values, a desire to alleviate suffering, and the development of skills to effect change. Formerly isolated and insulated from reality, students leave their suburban bubble and get out of their comfort zone, gaining new perspectives on others and the world.

Entering into the developing stage of critical consciousness requires a change of minds and hearts at the most fundamental level. Once individuals become aware of how the system awards certain groups of people access to power and the ability to define reality, they undergo a total reordering of what they believe to be true. Growing more aware of power relations, individuals are awakened to the hidden hegemonic messages that form people's consciousness, political opinions, knowledge of self and others, and worldview, and that manipulate their actions in the interests of the dominant group, rather than in their own interests.

For members of the White middle and upper-middle classes, developing a critical consciousness forces them to acknowledge their White (and, if applicable, male) privilege and reflect on how their actions and attitudes contribute to or work against maintaining the status quo. On a personal level, they need to confront their willingness to give up power, so that others can take a seat at the table.

Humbled in their new awareness, individuals at this level move from knowing the answers to asking questions, from being in charge to being an ally, and from concerns of individual suffering to working for systemic change. Arriving at the developing stage of consciousness is a result of hard work, critical reflection with others striving for integrity, and studying the operations of political and economic systems. Being at this level puts individuals in a difficult, and at times painful, position because once awakened, they cannot return to a simpler, naive existence of not knowing. Well-designed service-learning programs support students as they see possibilities for change and decide to live with integrity and work for social justice.

CHAPTER FIVE

Navigating the Stages of Critical-Consciousness Development

Equipped with a good understanding of critical-consciousness elements and the developmental stages that students experience as they become more critically aware, our questions become, How can educators help students navigate through the stages of critical-consciousness development? and How do students move from here to there? The short answer is through information, experiences, and reflection. Table 5.1, "Navigating the Stages of White Critical-Consciousness Development," provides an overview by highlighting information, experiences, and reflection for navigating from one stage to another.

It is vitally important that student activities be stage appropriate to prepare them for the next steps. Taking a lesson from early practices in diversity training, how often have multicultural education efforts been thwarted by well-meaning workshop leaders presenting internalized racism and White privilege to White audiences who were unaware of their own race? We need to take students at their starting point and intentionally design curricula, experiences, and reflection activities that respectfully point them on their journey of self-discovery, discovery of others, and appreciation of the world.

The guidelines presented in this chapter offer educators a framework to promote student growth. It is not necessarily all-inclusive nor the sole path for stage navigation. While we may imagine the movement to be one-directional, students often need to travel back and reinforce foundational pieces during their journey because of the dynamic nature of student learning and development.