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We then presented an orientation of the epistemological assumptions and the streams of inquiry tends to be congruent of study and tends to evoke

■ Magic Formulae

The process of conducting research and becoming a researcher can seem mysterious, mystifying, intimidating, or overwhelming, and can awaken feelings of insecurity, self-doubt, ignorance, inadequate preparation, and anxiety. As a consequence, people entering it can sometimes feel desperate to find some magical information or formula that will help them do it. In fact, this is probably an important source of the market for books like this one and the dozens of other introductions to research that are available. We do intend to provide you with some "magic formulae." But we would like to assure you that you probably do not actually need them. Inquiry and research and one's ability to conduct them, like many other areas of life, evolve through a simultaneously practical, experiential, intellectual, and psychological process of learning, risk taking, approach and withdrawal, digestion, reflection, and integration. In fact this process is quite a lot like swimming, bicycling, driving a car, or cooking, in that one can start it with just enough preparation to take the plunge and then learn much of the rest while doing it. Of course, intellectual preparation and studying are part of what enables the plunge. At the same time, one will always need to take the plunge without all of the preparation one could wish.

Still, magic formulae sometimes can help focus one's attention and intention and provide what one needs to jump over hurdles and survive confusion. Following, drawn from a number of sources and traditions, especially the competent traditions of mindful inquiry, is a mixture of ideas that you can use, as magic formulae or just basic principles, if and when you are confused or disoriented while engaging in inquiry or research. By the way, you may find that some of these formulae contradict one another or reflect opposing viewpoints. In that case, you will have to come up with your own individual resolution of that conflict. That is the way it is with magic formulae.

■ Intend to Learn

Jordan and Margaret Paul (1983) identify two basic intentions that accompany and shape communication in intimate relationships—the intent to learn and the intent to protect. The intent to learn is a genuine openness to exploration and discovery, to go beyond existing boundaries in order to find out something about

Conclusion

the other, which may sometimes involve personal discomfort. The intent to protect is an intention to defend one's existing boundaries, feelings, and self-definitions and, in effect, to avoid taking in anything about the other that does not fit in with one's own preexisting feelings, beliefs, values, and ideas. The intent to learn and the intent to protect affect not only what we are open to finding out about others, but what we are open to finding out about ourselves. In intimate relationships, as in other aspects of life, our relationship to others—or to otherness in general—is intertwined with our relationship to ourselves. Being open to another, or to otherness, may involve us in going beyond our own boundaries and self-definitions. By giving up complete control of our own boundaries, we experience novelty, but we may also experience discomfort, anxiety, or confusion. We may have to take seriously ideas and phenomena that make us uncomfortable or that may seem to threaten parts or aspects of our selves.

Many of us often feel that, ideally, we would like to let ourselves be governed by the intent to learn, because communication motivated by the intent to protect is often boring, repetitive, and shallow. In effect, it verges toward pseudo-communication, because the intent to protect usually keeps us from communicating some important aspect of what is really going on with us as well as from taking in information about the other person. Yet, often people do not feel free to exercise the intent to learn, through some combination of fears about the present situation, past experiences that have punished communicative openness, and the existential choice to protect one's boundaries and keep a distance from the other person. If we have spent much of our lives, or our communicative experiences, feeling that we needed to protect ourselves from openness to the other, we may not even have an experiential sense of what it is to be open to learn, or we may not believe that we have the capacity to be that way. Furthermore, one can be confused about one's own intent. People often believe that they are communicating with an intent to learn, when in fact they are being affected by an intent to protect and only come to discover their intent indirectly, by its impact on others. Part of this communication model is that others always respond to one's intent, and we may perceive the other as intending to protect when she believes she is intending to learn. Sometimes it is only when the other reflects back to us her perception of our intent that we discover it ourselves. Intent to learn and intent to protect are probably ideal types. In reality, they can be mixed together. A person may have the intent to learn at a certain level, or at a certain time, while still protecting herself at some other level, or at another time. Nevertheless, the pair of concepts is a useful one.

It seems to us that a research project, such as a master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, or professional research project, is also governed at root by one of these two underlying intentions: the intent to learn or the intent to protect. In an ideal situation, a research project would be governed by the intent to learn, to go beyond the boundaries of the already known, understood, and believed in order to discover something currently unknown, something perhaps surprising

and even uncomfortable. Yet in reality, even while trying to find out about the world, many people often do so in the mode of intending to protect, of trying simply to confirm their existing beliefs or to reaffirm what they think they already know or to close themselves to new ideas. Part of mindful inquiry is trying to become aware of one's intent to protect and the reasons for it, in order to let one's research be shaped by a more genuine intent to learn.

■ Surrender and Catch

The sociologist Kurt H. Wolff, who comes out of the traditions of phenomenology and continental sociology and philosophy, has developed a principle that he calls "surrender-and-catch" (1995). Surrender-and-catch refers to a process that is cognitive-intellectual on the one hand and existential on the other. In surrender-and-catch, one abandons one's self to something that one is studying—indeed, it can initially be something that one encounters without having thought of studying it. In so surrendering, one catches something of the other (person, thing, artwork, community, natural object, event) to which one surrenders. Through surrendering in this way and catching in this way, one becomes different from what one was at the start. Depending on the context, that to which one surrenders may also become different.

The notion of surrender-and-catch is, in a way, related to the notion of intent to learn. For if one is intending to protect, one cannot really surrender, and therefore cannot catch anything. This points to the peculiar aspect of inquiry, that for one's self to acquire knowledge, one may need to surrender one's self in order to encounter that which leads to knowledge. For if one does not become other than one was, how can one know anything different from what one already knew?

■ Conjecture and Refute

Conjectures and Refutations (Popper, 1965) is the title of an important book on the nature of science and critical thinking by the philosopher Karl Popper, who comes out of the traditions of philosophical analysis of the natural sciences and of the positivist tradition, although he has been a major critic of positivism. This title is also the summary of Popper's influential model of the nature of scientific inquiry. Popper's model turns some fundamental principles of prior epistemology on their head. The prior view is very close both to the conception of the scientific method that many people are exposed to in high school and to positivism. In that view, science consists of using rational thinking and analysis to come up with a hypothesis, which we then corroborate or verify through experimentation and testing. Popper argues that both of these ideas need to be reversed.

Conclusion

We always start processes of inquiry with notions about how something in the world is structured or works. But these notions are conjectures, and it does not matter if they are arrived at in rational, scientific ways or not. What matters is that they can be tested in some way. But we do not test them to verify them or to prove them true because we can never arrive at final truth through scientific inquiry. Even when our conjectures are corroborated, they are eventually replaced by other ideas. We do not try to verify ideas; we try to falsify (or refute) them. If we can refute a conjecture, then we have gained a valuable piece of knowledge. If there is no possible way to refute a conjecture, then we do not gain or learn much from it. Popper's idea of conjectures and refutations is a valuable reminder to us to focus our inquiry not on proving things that we already believe but on disproving them, because it is usually possible to devise some way of convincing ourselves that what we believe is true. The challenge is to convince ourselves that it might be false. Popper's idea is also a reminder that we always start an inquiry into something with some idea about it, some conjecture, and that we should try to choose or tailor conjectures in such a way that they can be refuted. That way we might learn something about reality that does not fit into our ideas about it.

■ To the Things Themselves

"To the things themselves" was a slogan of Husserl and the early phenomenologists. The basic idea is to focus on our actual experience of things rather than on received ideas or mental models or cultural prejudices that we have about them. We believe that most of us, most of the time, have only slight contact with either the things of the world or our own experience. For most of the time we use habitual or cultural categories to describe both our inner and outer experience. To take the sort of example beloved of phenomenologists, we look at a coin. If someone were to ask us to describe what shape we see, we are most likely to say that we see a circle. But we are likely to be looking at the coin from an angle in which what we see is not a circle but an ellipse. Nevertheless, we describe what we perceive as a circle. We have substituted an idea for our own perception. Our substitution of ideas and conventions for perception and experience occurs constantly, even more so in the realm of our experience of other people and society than in our visual perceptions. It can even occur in our relation to our own experience. Adorno described certain people as "not being able to tell a lie without believing it themselves" (Adorno, 1974, p. 110). A similar idea is expressed in the title of the recent book *Hello, He Lied* (Obst, 1996). The phenomenological goal of going "to the things themselves" is an attempt to break with convention and preconceived ideas to arrive at genuine knowledge of the world, of society, and of ourselves. We can do so by focusing rigorously on what we and others actually experience instead of adopting conventions and preconceived ideas.

■ Let Everything Human Be Spoken to You

The hermeneutic philosophers Heidegger and Gadamer have placed great emphasis on the way in which our understanding and knowledge is mediated by and through language. Not only the realm of cultural and social experience but our own sense of ourselves is something to which we have access through language. And the concepts and terms through which we describe and order the natural world are linguistic. Our construction of reality, our attribution of Being to things, our knowledge that they "are," our knowledge of Being, occur in and through language. Understanding, interpretation, meaning, and language are intertwined. For the inquirer in the human and social sciences, this means that openness to human phenomena and our ability to understand them are intimately connected with our ability to interpret. Our inability or unwillingness to interpret may be an expression of an intent to protect. That is why being an inquirer involves our development as interpreting beings. And our openness to what is human requires us to be attuned to the languages and symbolisms in which human existence and human meaning express themselves and speak to us. That is why Gadamer writes that "we should let everything human be spoken to us" (1976).

■ Regard All Things as They Present Themselves From the Standpoint of Redemption

The tradition of critical theory asks us to be aware of the ways in which ourselves, our lives, our relationships, our society, and the things of the world are distorted and deformed by economic, social, political, cultural, and psychological oppression, domination, exploitation, violence, and repression. An important implication of this approach is the idea that, because of oppression and domination, we do not encounter people and things as they truly are. For people and things are not what they could be if it were not for oppression and domination. We have all experienced this in one form or another. If someone is trying to sell you something, neither you nor the other person can experience each other as a full human being. You experience the other as someone with a vested interest, and he experiences you as someone to get something out of or "close on," as some salespeople say. In a relationship of power with a "superior," it is hard to reveal yourself fully as yourself. There is always the danger that if you do, you will be punished, abused, fired, put down, demoted, or humiliated for some aspect of yourself. If a natural environment is turned into either a tourist trap or a source of minerals to be exploited, it is hard for it to be what it otherwise was, and hard for us to experience it in its natural beauty. Adorno enjoined us to "regard all things as they present themselves from the standpoint of redemption" (1974, p. 247). By *redemption* he means whatever historical, social, or political

process would eliminate the domination and exploitation that keeps things from being in accord with their potential and thereby would "free" people and things to be what they truly are. The inquirer is reminded to see things in terms of their potential and of their undeformed, undistorted nature. The standpoint of redemption is something that one can adopt deliberately in inquiry, in order to see this nature.

■ Cultivate a Boundless Heart Toward All Beings

A profound and amazing aspect of Buddhist doctrine is the way it links nonattachment and love. In the Western tradition, love is often associated with intense involvement and with loss of awareness. Much of the romantic tradition describes love as a state in which one loses one's consciousness. Presumably, one does so to give up one's self to the other. You abandon your self by submerging it in the other person. The problem with this notion is that, if there is no self, then there is no one left to be aware of the other. Thus the selflessness of love can turn into selfishness, as one abandons not only one's self as self but the other as other. The other can become a mere means for one's self. But because one's self has by this time abandoned itself to unconsciousness, the other has become a means, not for one's conscious self, but for one's unconscious self.

Buddhism, too, preaches the ultimate unity of all beings and the illusion of duality—of the distinction between self and other, even of the existence of self at all. But this unity is attained through increased mindfulness rather than mindlessness. It can be said that the Buddhist notion of Nirvana is a kind of mindlessness; but it is one that is attained through mindfulness and through compassion for and love of all beings. The Buddha said, "Just as a mother would protect her only child even at the risk of her own life, even so let one cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings" (Rahula, 1974, p. 97). With regard to inquiry, this can be taken to imply that love and compassion are the underlying attitude that we should take toward all beings: that our knowledge should be generated from within such an attitude. It is particularly noteworthy that this advocacy of love occurs in a passage devoted to the attainment of calm. It is followed almost immediately by the statement "whether one stands, walks, sits or lies down, as long as one is awake, one should maintain this mindfulness" (Rahula, 1974, p. 98).

■ Look Diligently at Your Own Mind

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus is known for his profound and sometimes obscure pronouncements. Among them is his statement, "I have looked

diligently at my own mind" (1979). This is the first historical record of the act of self-consciousness. Because of this and our belief in inquiry as an extension of philosophy, and of our emphasis on mindfulness in inquiry, we want Heraclitus's record of self-consciousness to have the last word. We hope that in all your inquiry and research, you will be aware of your own mind and that, especially at moments of confusion, doubt, disappointment, or despair, you look diligently at your own mind.

In summary, here are the magic formulae that we encourage you to remember and to recite whenever you find it useful:

- Intend to learn
- Surrender and catch
- Conjecture and refute
- To the things themselves
- Let everything human be spoken to you
- Regard all things as they present themselves from the standpoint of redemption
- Cultivate a boundless heart toward all beings
- Look diligently at your own mind

A P P E N D I X

Glossary

Being-in-the-world A concept of twentieth-century philosopher Martin Heidegger that focuses attention on the actual nature of human existence bounded by the physical environment at a particular time and place with a physical body that has a biography and history and a being who exists in a linguistically infused world.

Cognition The active process of knowing by which knowledge is produced. Cognitive science seeks to explain all thought, knowledge, and understanding in terms of brain functioning and its evolution.

Community of inquirers—investigators—researchers—scientists—scholars Each research tradition is carried on by researchers or scholars who operate a shared network that includes a shared language.

Critical theory A body of thought developed by a group of scholars associated with the University of Frankfurt in the 1930s. Critical theorists, such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Leo Lowenthal, blend the thinking of Marx and Freud into cogent and incisive analyses of culture. They contended that cultural forms, such as music, law, art, and the mass media, exercise a force on culture just as economic forms and psychological forms influence culture. Critical theory is dedicated to human and world emancipation from humanly created forms of oppression, such as fascism.

Culture of inquiry A way of knowing, with a shared set of assumptions, language, and understandings about appropriate ways of conducting research.

Epistemology The study of valid knowledge, its status, and its conditions. In the modern period, with Descartes and, especially, with Kant, epistemology has concentrated especially on the way in which features of the knowing human mind shape, structure, and set conditions for anything that we can know. The underlying idea of modern epistemology is that, because all knowledge is produced by the human mind, and because the mind is a more or less subjective thing, we need to understand how the mind can arrive at more or less objective