

An Analysis of the Story

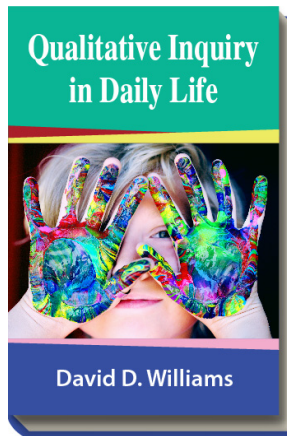
What was going on here? What did the participants learn from this experience? What questions were they asking? What was each person hearing, seeing, thinking? How aware were they of what was going on from their own and others' perspectives? What records were kept about this experience? What was there to share about this experience with others? Under what assumptions were the participants operating? What standards did the participants have for judging the quality of their experience?

Of course, there are many possible answers to these questions and several other questions that could be asked about this event. But in this book, I would like to point out that whatever else they were doing, the participants were conducting a form of qualitative inquiry while they were learning and teaching. We were not consciously following a linear process, but all of us - Sid, Cheryl, Jack, Steve (and the other students, though we will not examine them as closely just now), and I - were all conducting our own inquiries, learning from the process, and sharing our learnings with others.

I used to believe that people needed to be taught a process and certain activities for conducting inquiry using a qualitative orientation. But experiences like the one described in this story have convinced me that most learners are already engaging in many inquiry activities naturally. And I believe that teachers who are busy learning in natural ways are going to exemplify that learning for their students and find better ways to share

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what they are learning through their inquiries. I would like to support teachers and other educators in their inquiry efforts by inviting you to expand your natural learning activities to include more of what are commonly known as qualitative inquiry activities.



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