



Peter Lang

Rupert Clive Collister

# A Journey in Search of Wholeness and Meaning

This book is the culmination of ten years of post-compulsory education combined with the social, cultural, vocational, educational, and spiritual experiences of my life. It represents my current thinking about the concepts of, and synergies between *Community*, *Adult Learning*, *Meaningful Work*, and *Sustainability*. The inquiry that led to this book was prompted by the observable marginalisation of individuals, communities, cultures, and the environment by the structures and institutions of the Western worldview and the individuals and organisations that support it. It was also prompted by the concept that there is inherent wisdom, insight, and praxis within ways of knowing and ways of being which originate in non-Western cultures and traditions that might be utilised to reverse this marginalisation.

My purpose in writing this book was to Investigate a harmonious way of being which could facilitate the conditions for holistic, transformative ways of knowing within the structures of communities and organisations, with a view to creating a sustainable future for all beings. To that end it:

- explores the concept that the reality which is created by the consciousness inherent in the Western worldview is exceptionally limiting and probably unsustainable,
- documents my personal journey in search of wholeness and meaning,
- suggests that the wisdom, insight, and praxis contained within the meta-narratives of Holism, Indigenous cultures, and Eastern traditions are manifestations of a holistic consciousness,
- explores the concept that a shift to a holistic consciousness is required in order to redress the imbalance in all humanity's relationships,
- suggests that such a shift in consciousness would have deep implications for the concepts of community, adult learning, meaningful work, and sustainability. These implications include:
  - the physical, emotional, and spiritual health and well-being of every individual;
  - the role of learning and its connection to shared consciousness and shifts in consciousness;

- the way human beings interact with each other within their families, communities, organisations, and societies;
- the role and responsibilities of individuals, communities, organisations, and societies, the activities they undertake, and their approach to leadership; and
- the roles and responsibility of humanity within the immediate context of the Earth and the greater context of the Kosmos.

This book contains four sections. The sections build on each other and the content is grounded in a diverse body of trans-disciplinary, trans-cultural, and trans-temporal texts, wisdom, insight, and praxis from non-Western cultures and traditions, meta-narrative inquiry, collaborative conversations, self-reflection, reflective praxis, and emerging holistic, transformative ways of knowing. This layering and complexity reflects the iterative manner with which the inquiry emerged, the book developed, my understanding became fuller, and my insight deepened.

This book describes my journey in search of wholeness and meaning. Each person's journey is unique and yet we are all journeying together, co-creating this reality we call life. I hope that sharing my journey will help you think more deeply about your own.