



# Teaching Business Students to Care: Perspective-Taking and the Narrative Enabling of Moral Imagination

Kalyani Menon<sup>1</sup>

Received: 6 November 2022 / Accepted: 26 July 2024  
© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Nature B.V. 2024

## Abstract

How can educators equip business students to adopt an ethics of care perspective? An ethics of care perspective requires moral imagination of the self, the other, the self-other relationship, and displacement of motivation towards others. It stands in contrast to the deeply embedded firm-centric managerial perspective in business schools. Without a structured approach, students may struggle to adopt a care perspective. I propose three specifically designed narrativizing exercises that can act as vehicles for moral imagination for care by increasing student awareness of tensions between the self and others and motivating a harmonizing of these tensions. Autobiographical narrativizing surfaces discordance between a student's managerial and non-managerial selves and invites an imaginative recomposition of these selves. Vicarious narrativizing occurs through stories of others, creating pathways between students' self-perspectives and that of others. Embodied narrativizing is a whole body and mind exercise in narrativizing the mental, visceral, and behavioural experiences during preparation for an upcoming interaction with another, along with narrativizing the actual interaction embedded in the other's context. These three forms of narrativizing present complementary risks and benefits and cumulatively enable moral imagination for a care perspective.

**Keywords** Care ethic · Moral imagination · Perspective-taking · Narratives

## Introduction

Scholars have called for a greater humanistic perspective in business education, and to prepare business students, the managers and market actors of tomorrow, to use empathy and care for ethical management (Pirson, 2020). Ethics of care, considered a moral imperative (Noddings, 2013), involves attentiveness, responsibility, competence, and responsiveness to others (Tronto, 2020). It is motivated by an abiding investment in the wellbeing of the other (Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012). To practice care, business students require the ability to understand the experiences of others, and imagine and engage with their perspectives prior to enacting other-centered ways of being (Colombo, 2023; Sadler-Smith & Cojuharenco, 2021).

Understanding and engaging with others' perspectives collides with the predominant pedagogical and substantive focus of business education. Business education focuses on

imparting functional skills and disciplinary expertise (Worline & Dutton, 2022) and assumes that advancing organizational interests are in the interest of societal wellbeing (Colombo, 2023; Sadler-Smith & Cojuharenco, 2021). This can inculcate opportunistic self-centric motivations and outcomes, ignoring motives to engage with the other for the sake of the other (Ghoshal, 2005). While business education is increasingly incorporating values of care, and these efforts can result in effectively socializing students in caring, ethical behaviors (e.g., Haski-Leventhal et al., 2020; Slager et al., 2020), more needs to be done, leading scholars to call for a radical rethinking of business education (Colombo, 2023; Dyck & Caza, 2022).

How can educators equip business students to adopt a care perspective? Perspective-taking requires moving away from the perspective one is anchored in by imagining another's perspective and engaging with it (Ku, Wang, & Galinsky, 2015). Although perspective-taking is necessary for care, it is not sufficient (Moberg & Seabright, 2000). Rather, care will occur if perspective-taking is fuelled by moral imagination of the other, as discussed by philosophers (e.g., Alexander, 1993; Fesmire, 2003), cognitive linguists (e.g., Lakoff, 2016), psychologists (e.g., Moberg & Seabright,

✉ Kalyani Menon  
kmenon@wlu.ca

<sup>1</sup> Lazaridis School of Business & Economics, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON N2L3C5, Canada

2000), and management scholars (Werhane, 1998). Based on John Dewey's pragmatist philosophy, moral imagination is the capacity to critically reflect on the actual, envision multiple alternative possibilities, and evaluate the actual and generated possibilities for the impact on the self and the other (Alexander, 1993; Fesmire, 2003; Johnson, 1993). This paper focuses on how to activate moral imagination for a care perspective in business students. I propose three complementary forms of narrativizing that can, through multiple psychological mechanisms, enable moral imagining of the other and cumulatively enable a movement away from a profit/managerial perspective toward a care perspective.

My work answers calls to embed notions of relationality and self-consciousness in business education to inculcate a post-managerial perspective (Colombo, 2023). Recent scholarship has documented innovative methodologies to enable perspective-taking beyond the profit motive (Dyck & Caza, 2022), to engage with care (Heath et al., 2019), and morality (Berti et al., 2021; Brokerhof et al., 2023). Researchers have discussed the role of course content, experiential learning, service learning, and reflective exercises in inculcating ethical, moral (Berti et al., 2021; Sahatjian et al., 2022), and responsible management capabilities (Dyck & Caza, 2022). I develop a model of instruction based on an integration of literature from ethics (Noddings, 2013; Werhane, 1998), moral philosophy (Johnson, 1993), psychology (Ku et al., 2015), and narrative pedagogy (Michaelson, 2016). I extend our understanding of narrative pedagogy for business ethics from its focus on types of narratives such as short stories, novels, and films (e.g., Brokerhof et al., 2023; Michaelson, 2016) to types of narrativizing and the psychological processes of generating narratives that may enable students' moral imagination and a care perspective. In sum, I present a pedagogical model that can create conditions to encourage ethical caring. In the absence of a structured approach to adopting a practice of care, mere awareness of the imperative to care may be insufficient to counter the deeply embedded profit focus that can impair a care agenda.

I first discuss why and how extant business education may disable care perspectives in business students and then discuss the role of moral imagination in perspective-taking and the aptness of narrativizing as a pedagogical tool. I present a conceptual model describing three complementary narrativizing experiences—vicarious, autobiographical, and embodied—that enable moral imagination and cumulatively move students anchored in their self-as-manager narrative toward caring about others. I draw on my classroom experiences with these three forms of narrativizing to illustrate each type.

## Care Ethics and Business Education

Care ethics speaks to a relational ethic immersed in and motivated by the other's contextual needs (Noddings,

2013). It provides a framework for interpersonal experiences of caring and for how approaches informed by care can impact collective and individual wellbeing (Hawk & Lyons, 2008). Care need not be in response to suffering and pain, nor does it imply dependence (Nicolson & Kurucz, 2019). One can show care toward a colleague in an everyday office context just as one can show care to a colleague in distress. Care requires a visceral experience of and engrossment in the other, a complex weaving of imaginative processes with embodied practices residing in the capacity to feel for another, a displacement of motivation toward the other, that leads to imaginative actions on the other's behalf (Noddings, 2013; Phillips & Willat, 2020).

Currently business education emphasizes the maximization of self-interest, an organization-centered worldview and the use of instrumental rationality as the predominant logic of decision-making at the expense of contextual, care-driven, collaborative decisions (Colombo, 2023). Business students are therefore typically "locked in" to a singular, taken-for-granted narrative that may vitiate against other-focused care. Perhaps for these reasons, while undergraduate students may understand the need for businesses to be socially responsible, they simultaneously value individual advancement (theirs and their firm's) over the collective (Haski-Leventhal et al., 2017), and CEOs with MBAs behave in a more self-serving, short-sighted manner than CEOs without MBAs (Miller & Xu, 2019). In fact, business education may have become conflated with values of individualism and self-enhancement and have generated a self-selection bias with business programs attracting students with pre-existing high levels of self-enhancement and low prosocial values (Arieli et al., 2016).

The pedagogical tools of business education focus primarily on developing students in the image of stereotypical managers, who are in turn expected to be masculinized and invulnerable (Corlett et al., 2019), characteristics that run counter to a care perspective defined as a feminist (as opposed to feminine) perspective of concern and empathy (Borgerson, 2007). The predominance of case-based teaching, which represents a neatly packaged extract of reality, over tools such as learning in social contexts, may minimize opportunities to engage with the contextual "messiness" and uncertainties of other lives (Fotaki & Prasad, 2015). Only 29% of North American and European signatories to the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) integrated learning in a social context into their education and 67% of students enrolled in PRME signatory schools have not participated in any community work (Prandi et al., 2016). This despite PRME signatory schools having publicly indicated an institutional emphasis on engagement and responsibility beyond the corporate sector. Thus, the values, content, and environment in business schools may anchor

students to a unidimensional managerial perspective that is counter to a care perspective.

There are exceptions, of course. Service learning is increasingly adopted in business curricula to inculcate extra-corporate perspectives in students (Sahatjian et al., 2022). The benefits can range from improvements in academic performance to greater empathy for others. Service learning frequently involves engaging with a real-world situation and practicing reflection and reciprocity in information and knowledge sharing with community partners. Thus, while it has elements in common with exercising care, as Noddings (2013) notes, service can be delivered without care. Indeed, evidence shows that while service learning expanded business students' abilities to engage with ethical dilemmas, it did not improve the quality of their engagement with critical causes, their reflection, and decision ethicality (Sahatjian et al., 2022). Other efforts to increase the porosity of business student perspectives and enable greater care include teaching the same topic (e.g., organizational change) through three different lenses—the financial bottom line, the triple bottom line, and a prioritizing of social and ecological goals (Dyck & Caza, 2022); immersing students in a care-receiving and care-giving classroom experience to engage with concrete emotional experiences and destigmatize empathy in a business context (Heath et al., 2019); and experiential exercises to engage with emotions and tacit knowledge (as opposed to a detached cerebral approach) to enable moral imagination when making ethical decisions (Berti et al., 2021).

In sum, there has been increasing awareness of the need to enable business students to adopt a care perspective. A necessary condition for care is the ability for students to engage with others' perspectives, even if these perspectives present a challenge to the received way of business. However, while perspective-taking is necessary, it is not sufficient for care. Rather, care requires perspective-taking fuelled by moral imagination.

### Perspective-Taking and Moral Imagination

Perspective-taking is the process of mentalizing the other (i.e., imagining the other) and making a series of changes to one's perspective to arrive at the other's thoughts, motivations, intentions, and emotions (Ku, Wang & Galinsky, 2015). It decreases the psychological distance between the perspective-taker and the other and may be seen as "expanding the self" (Galinsky et al., 2005). Because the self is generally viewed favorably, decreasing the psychological distance between the self and others could lead to others too being viewed with greater understanding and more favorably. It could lead to a personalization of others' needs, decrease prejudice, stereotyping, and egocentric biases, and increase caring for and acting on behalf of

others (Ku et al., 2015). For instance, perspective-taking of the homeless increased the likelihood of taking actions to address homelessness (Herrera et al., 2018).

However, there is also evidence that perspective-taking may have negative effects. Neuroimaging showed that Machiavellian managers had high affective understanding of the other (Bagozzi et al., 2013). Mentalizing less powerful others can increase one's sense of power over them (Sassenrath et al., 2022). If the other is seen as a member of an out-group that is different in fundamental ways, students may move away from them rather than toward them (Denning & Hodges, 2022). If the other poses a threat to oneself, to one's self-evaluation or goals, perspective-taking can lead to negative interpersonal outcomes (Sassenrath et al., 2016). These scholars point out that "...some gaps are just too big and some people are just too different..." (pp.407), and this stalls positive perspective-taking.

This is relevant in a business school context where the received approach is to focus on the managerial perspective and this focus is linked to success in one's professional life. Thus, it is possible that students may resist perspectives that are not instrumental to a profit and managerial agenda. As a defensive move, they may curtail the movement away from an anchored managerial self toward the other, rationalizing that they have a sufficient understanding of the other (Epley et al., 2004). Thus, while perspective-taking can be positively correlated with moral reasoning (Hui et al., 2022), a meta-analysis revealed that imagining the other does not necessarily increase empathic concern, indicating the need for perspective-taking to be fuelled by moral imagination (McAuliffe et al., 2020).

Based on Deweyan pragmatism, philosophers have elaborated on moral imagination as a force for creative, normative actions (Alexander, 1993; Fesmire, 2003; Johnson, 1993). Humans are instinctively imaginative creatures, and while imagination can be reproductive and productive—i.e., imagination as the facility to reproduce and classify sensations and perceptions—moral imagination identifies multiple theoretically actualizable possibilities for a situation, constrained only by the potential costs and benefits of each possibility for all involved (also Werhane, 1998). Moral imagination is not mired in moral absolutes that constrain possibilities nor does it devolve into extreme moral relativism that may cause agentic paralysis (Alexander, 1993; Fesmire, 2003; Johnson, 1993). Rather, moral absolutes and embedded perspectives are seen as frames that have bounded our thinking and actions in the past (Johnson, 1993). They provide a reference for how one perspective may have come to dominate, and moral imagination explores the history and multiple impacts of such domination, the tensions inherent in such embedded frames, and imagines transformations from such frames to alternatives that reflect new, integrative values focused

on resolving tensions and creating harmonies (Alexander, 1993; Moberg & Seabright, 2000; Roca, 2010).

Consider an example of such moral imagination. Family structures are at the very core of social units, and historically, the family unit is frequently controlled by a father figure. This experience of a “strict father,” through reproductive and productive imagination, is applied to other contexts such as government–citizen relationships and business–stakeholder relationships (Lakoff, 2016; Menon, 2022). The exercise of moral imagination, however, would instead critically evaluate the “strict father” experience and its applicability and multidimensional impact in contexts such as government, business, and indeed family structures. Moral imagination goes beyond “imaging” to understand the actual in light of the possible (Alexander, 1993) to discern other normative possibilities (Werhane, 1998). For instance, the exercise of moral imagination may generate “nurturant parenting” as an alternative to the “strict father” structure to engage with and harmonize the tensions that occur when a strict father structure is applied to business (Lakoff, 2016; Menon, 2022).

The self-reflection, critical review of assumptions and the thought experiments with alternatives and their pros and cons that form the core of moral imagination can be effortful, challenging, and risky. In the absence of explicit motivations and resources, the default position may be to operate from one’s own perspective (Epley et al., 2004). This points to the need for purpose-designed pedagogical tools that can enable the exercise of moral imagination for a care perspective. Narrativizing is an important tool for such an exercise of moral imagination. “Narrative is our most comprehensive form of synthetic understanding. only within a narrative form can we fully understand moral personality (the self) and its actions (Johnson, 1993, pp. 164).” Narrativizing is an instinctive practice that humans use to make sense of their lives and is integral to themes of personal growth (McAdams & McLean, 2013).

### **Narrativizing, Moral Imagination, and a Care Perspective**

Narrative pedagogy is increasingly used in business and other professional education (e.g., medical education) to improve critical self-reflection, empathy, perspective-taking, and ethical and moral reasoning (Brendel, 2009; Brokerhof et al., 2023; Michaelson, 2016). Narratives are stories and narrativizing is a process by which people recall and organize the elements of an experience in story form. Stories draw on and enhance our imaginations, they enable a temporal understanding of how we came to be the way we are, who we want to become, and how we might do so. Accessing, authoring, and co-authoring stories, and inhabiting socially

embedded, contextually driven characters is key to developing our moral selves (Coles, 1989; Johnson, 1993).

Emplotment, the dynamic development of a story, knits together the various elements of an experience—the actors, their circumstances and interactions, their motivations, and outcomes of the actions—to make sense of it all (Sparrowe, 2005). Seemingly disconnected or inconsequential events are situated in contexts and against intentions that imbue the experiences with meaning and make meaningful sense of people (the self and others), their doings, and their interactions (McLean et al., 2007). This process of making connections engages the imagination and creates pathways between experiences, and between the self and others (Hoggan & Cranton, 2015). By “..creating shared realities and increasing relational responsiveness, narrative practice thus has the potential to provide a powerful way of constructing caring relationships...” (Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012, p. 648). Shared vulnerabilities, in particular, can dismantle boundaries and emphasize commonalities (Tronto, 2020).

Narratives are essentially provisional in nature because they are frequently revised and subject to further emplotment as circumstances change and previous stories are revised to reflect these changes (Sparrowe, 2005). This enables ongoing dialog between ways of being, imaginative distancing from established perspectives and consideration of alternative perspectives as needs and circumstances change (Brendel, 2009; Clark & Rossiter, 2008; McLean et al., 2007). Narratives are therefore apt vessels for the enactment of “intellectual disrobing,” empathy, and dramatic rehearsal that Dewey calls for (McVea & Dew, 2022). Thus, equipping business students with a care perspective requires engaging their moral imagination via narrativizing.

### **Conceptual Model**

Drawing on an understanding of criteria for appropriate forms of narrativizing to engage moral imagination for care, I develop a conceptual model presenting three forms of narrativizing. These forms enable students to confront their habits of thought and practice, consciously see the world from another’s perspective, and engage with a different set of values (Von Wright, 2002).

Using Coles (1989) imagery, to enable personal growth, exercises in narrativizing should act like small hammers, continually jarring students “awake” by exposing them to the unfamiliar and uncomfortable, juxtaposing with the familiar and comfortable, highlighting the costs and benefits of cleaving to one and disregarding the other. The core of narrativizing exercises revolves around addressing this juxtaposition and engaging with the contradictions and tensions that emerge. Narrativizing insists on answers to continuously asked questions—who am I, who should I be, how should I be knowing what I now know, what different

paths traverse the distance between these contradictions, how might these paths be traversed, and what help or harm may result? By requiring students to generate as many alternatives as possible, and to reflect deeply on each, we can attempt to prevent default ways of thinking.

Successful narrativizing is typically the outcome of multiple co-dependent forms of the exercise. Multiple experiences with narrativizing and the incremental telling of situated stories in multiple contexts enable a rehearsal of alternative perspectives, thereby potentially increasing a sense of comfort and acceptance of these alternatives (McLean et al., 2007; Taylor, 2005). Using multiple forms of narrativizing with different levels and types of risk can also enable managing risk perceptions that may otherwise stall movement toward care (Sassenrath et al., 2016). Furthermore, successful narrativizing requires the use of multiple complementary psychological mechanisms (Down & Reveley, 2009; Phillips, 2013). For example, complementing narrativizing that emphasizes memory retrieval with narrativizing that emphasizes projections into the future. Or complementing narrativizing that emphasizes intrapsychic cognitive and affective processes with narrativizing that emphasizes behavioral processes. I propose a conceptual model comprising three types of narrativizing that may increasingly draw attention away from the familiar to the unfamiliar, focusing on key aspects of moral imagination for care while engaging multiple, complementary psychological mechanisms (Fig. 1).

*Autobiographical narrativizing* asks students to focus on the juxtaposition of the dominant and less dominant versions of their selves and to critically reflect on these multiple selves. In a business classroom, students are usually asked to think like managers and achieve a level of familiarity and comfort in a managerial role. While the self-as-manager is an active stance in business classes, these same students also possess other versions of their selves. They are employees, consumers, and members of a community that are served/not served/poorly served by business. Activating moral imagination in business students requires an awareness of these multiple versions of the self, as managers and as recipients of managerial decisions that might compromise their wellbeing as consumers/employees/community members. Autobiographical narrativizing asks students to consider such selves, to situate their managerial narratives alongside their non-managerial narratives, and to become aware of the potential discordance between these narratives. Grappling with these tensions enables self-reflection and critical awareness of one's actions and reactions, an understanding of the version of the self in which one is anchored (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019), and this self-awareness is key for moral imagination for care (Johansson & Edwards, 2021; Werhane, 2008). While autobiographical narrativizing can enable the activation of normative versions of the self, it is limited to retelling one's own story and does not explicitly enable movement away from the anchored managerial self toward others' perspectives. Self-awareness primes one for other-care (Lanaj

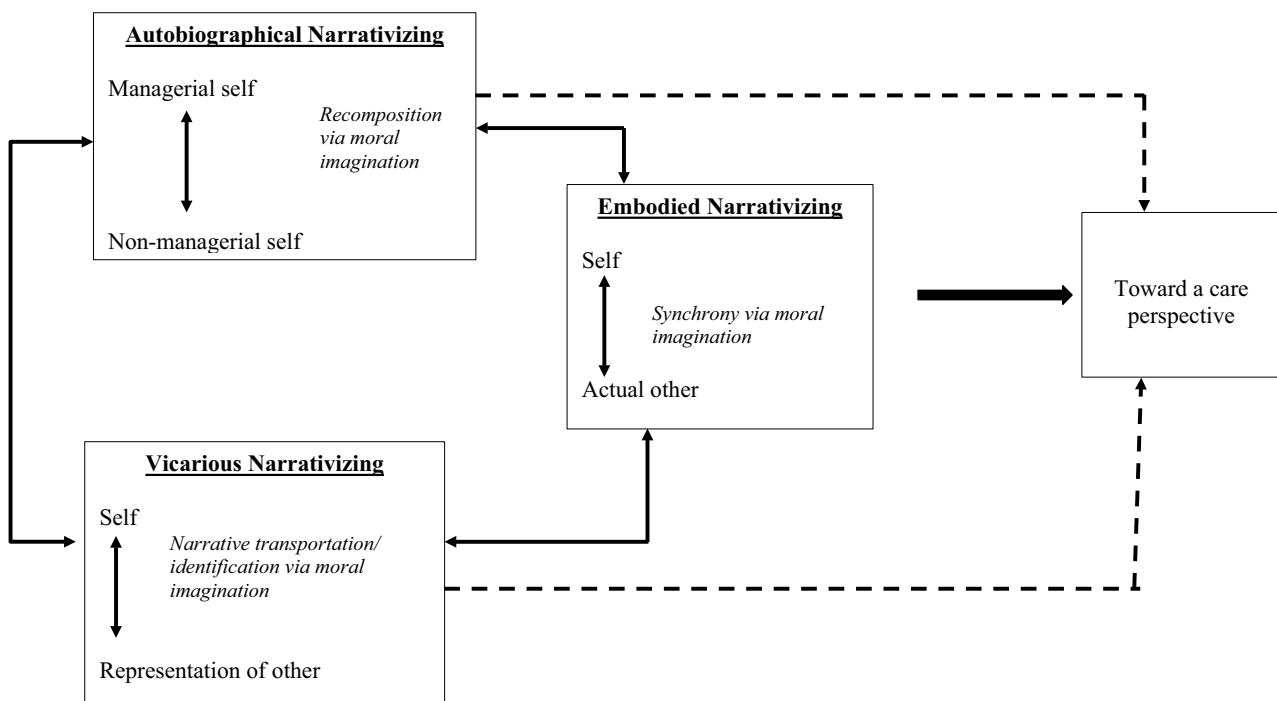


Fig. 1 Conceptual model

et al., 2022), but there is need for complementary narrativizing to enable engagement with others' perspectives.

In *vicarious narrativizing*, students engage with the stories of others as depicted through audio-visual and/or textual form. It enables relative disengagement from the specifics of one's own experience and context and greater engagement with another's experience and context. As students extend their awareness of others via vicarious narrativizing, they build cognitive and affective pathways with another (Wimmer et al., 2021), thereby enabling an understanding of others' needs, values, and circumstances and is a key step in exercising moral imagination (Coles, 1998). Autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing serve to increase awareness of multiple versions of the self and engagement with other personae (as represented in different media), respectively. However, moral imagination for care also requires engagement with actual others and their perspectives as precursor to enacting care (Werhane, 1998).

I therefore propose *embodied narrativizing* as a whole body and mind exercise of one's moral imagination when engaging in-person with an actual other. I define it as an exercise in narrativizing the mental, visceral, and behavioral experiences during preparation for an upcoming interaction with another, along with narrativizing the actual interaction embedded in the other's context. Narrativizing the preparation for the interaction draws on past and present stories and extends these into the future. Narrativizing such preparation and enactment motivates physiological (Palumbo et al., 2017), behavioral (Chartrand & Lakin, 2013), and cognitive and affective (Schacter et al., 2008) pathways with the other. This embodiment, the visceral bodily reaction to another, is integral to care (Phillips & Willatt, 2020).

In my model, I present embodied narrativizing as the most proximal to a care perspective. Empirical evidence

(Phillips & Willatt, 2022) and theoretical arguments (Noddings, 2013) indicate that physical proximity has profound impacts on individuals because the physical experience of another enables connections that transcend the rational, and instead, the other is experienced in our bodies and minds. Physical proximity can be perceived as risky. Therefore, while autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing may involve such visceral experiences, they pose lower risk perceptions due to the absence of an actual other and might be necessary precursors to embodied narrativizing. As shown in Fig. 1, I propose that autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing precede embodied narrativizing, and while all three forms of narrativizing cumulatively enable care, embodied narrativizing may be the most proximal to a sustained and forceful movement toward care (as shown by the solid line versus the broken lines leading to a care perspective). As the bidirectional arrows in Fig. 1 show, I also propose non-recursive relationships among the forms of narrativizing.

I next elaborate on the psychological mechanisms underpinning each type of narrativizing and then present a deeper understanding of the relationships among them. To illustrate these types of narrativizing, I use examples gathered in an elective, fourth-year undergraduate business class on marketing ethics and social responsibility that I taught for several years. I draw from my teaching experience merely to illustrate my ideas and not as empirical support for them. The specifics of the narrativizing exercises varied year-to-year, but the intent of the exercises—to enable narrativizing to ignite moral imagination for care—remained consistent. Students recorded their narratives in journals and followed multiple prompts designed to activate elements of moral imagination. **Appendix A** provides examples of class exercises in narrativizing. Table 1 summarizes the key features of each type of narrativizing.

**Table 1** Features of types of narrativizing for care

Features	Types of narrativizing		
	Autobiographical narrativizing	Vicarious narrativizing	Embodied narrativizing
Primary focus of narrativizing	Engaging with autobiographical narratives of managerial and non-managerial selves	Engaging with representational characters' narratives	Engaging with actual others' narratives
Primary role of imagination	Retrospective imagination	Concurrent imagination	Retrospective, concurrent, and prospective imagination
Mechanism	Imaginative recomposition	Narrative transportation and identification	Physiological, cognitive, behavioral synchrony
Risk perceptions	Low social risk High self-identity risk	Low social risk Moderate self-identity risk	High social risk High self-identity risk
Exemplar exercises	Identify contradictory roles held within the self (multiple selves) and narrativize the tensions between the roles	Narrativize engagement with characters in books and films; Create a character distinct from the self and narrativize the process and experience of developing that character	Immerse the self in the lives of distinct others and narrativize the tensions that surface

## Psychology of Forms of Narrativizing

### Psychology of Autobiographical Narrativizing

Care is inherently relational (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019), and because perhaps the most important relationship is that between versions of the self, autobiographical narrativizing initiates movement toward care for the other by focusing on the relationship between the managerial and non-managerial self. Self-awareness and awareness of a possible compromise in one's self-interest by managerial actions can loosen the dominance of the managerial perspective and reduce tolerance for concomitant managerial behaviors. Autobiographical narrativizing occurs when autobiographical memories are retrieved and linked to the current self through autobiographical reasoning (e.g., making thematic links, extracting meaning, and insight). Autobiographical narratives are structured around change, the motivations for change and emotions around change (McLean et al., 2020). These autobiographical narratives are precursors for who or what we want to be and have a redemptive arc moving toward prosociality (McAdams & Guo, 2015).

The process of autobiographical narrativizing is frequently governed by a need for coherence in the narrative—for the structure, content, overall story, and the past and the present—to make sense (McAdams, 2013). Therefore, the retrieval of discordant autobiographical memories, that is, memories that contradict current narratives, can make salient an undesirable lack of coherence in the autobiographical narrative (Waters & Fivush, 2015). A lack of coherence can activate imaginative recomposition of the retrieved memories and of the current narrative through emplotment, i.e., drawing meaningful links between the discordant components of a narrative and revising narratives to regain some level of narrative coherence (Sparrowe, 2005; Tedder & Biesta, 2009). This act of narrativizing surfaces submerged thoughts and feelings and makes biases explicit—all necessary steps for moral imagination for a care perspective (Clark & Rossiter, 2008; Fesmire, 2003).

Examples: My students faced rising telecommunications prices in a highly uncompetitive industry that imposed high switching costs. They relied on telecommunications for study and work and had no option but to pay exorbitant fees for frequently unreliable service. Such an autobiographical memory disrupted their narrative coherence of being a profit-maximizing, market-driving manager and turned their attention to the consumer-level outcomes of such business decisions. Another example is a student's autobiographical memory of health struggles exacerbated by consuming supersized packs of junk food purchased to save money when living on a student budget. The exercise in autobiographical narrativizing created incoherence because the student's managerial perspective would recommend

promoting value-sized packs of junk food to make it attractive to financially constrained consumers. Yet another example, a student recalled a summer job at a fast-fashion retailer enacting managerial direction to feign personal satisfaction with the clothes being sold when responding to customer queries about fit and quality. Autobiographical narrativizing surfaced moral conflicts that the student had attempted to avoid. In addition to surfacing these conflicts, narrativizing exercises would push the student to consider alternative possibilities for how the self-as-manager relates to the self-as-other and the pros and cons of each possibility, as required for moral imagination (Werhane, 1998).

While autobiographical narrativizing increases awareness of, and care for, multiple versions of the self, this self-focus without engaging with another can lead to the imposition of one's values on the other. For instance, a CEO committed to a healthy lifestyle might enforce behaviors aligned with such a lifestyle on their subordinates without regard to the subordinates' own values (Johansson & Edwards, 2021). Therefore, self-awareness must be coupled with other-awareness.

### Psychology of Vicarious Narrativizing

Vicarious narrativizing is the weaving together of others' stories with one's own stories. Exposure to, and engagement with, others' stories can provide a point of entry into their lives. and by potentially informing one's own story, albeit in an 'experimental' or provisional way, decreases psychological distance from the characters, the persona, in the narrative (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Mar & Oatley, 2008). This is an important stage in exercising moral imagination (Coles, 1998; Werhane, 1998). Immersion in others' narratives enables empathy, growth, a sense of self in relation to others, and perspective-taking of others (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Mar & Oatley, 2008). It is an exercise in identifying shared vulnerabilities and has been used to communicate concepts of ethics and responsible management to business students (Brokerhof et al., 2023; Michaelson, 2016).

Vicarious narrativizing occurs through narrative transportation into others' stories and identification with the characters (Wimmer et al., 2021). Narrative transportation is a mental process that integrates attention, imagery and feelings and essentially getting lost in another's story (Green & Brock, 2000). It is frequently a multisensorial experience that can "startle" us into recognizing new patterns, suspending prior assumptions, distancing from the immediate self, and attaching to the story as it unfolds (Green & Brock, 2002). Being transported into another's story therefore concurrently activates one's imagination of the other and engenders identification with the characters, dissolving barriers between the self and the other, and may enable taking the character's perspective (Brown, 2015; Tal-Or & Cohen, 2015). For instance, narratives about immigrants, senior

citizens, and prisoners told through an individual character's experience with healthcare increased narrative transportation and created greater compassion and more positive attitudes toward the other than did non-narrative versions focused on health care policy with expert quotes (Oliver et al., 2012). When exposed to documentary films on global poverty, the process of narrative transportation explained greater awareness of global poverty and intended action to address it among U.S. audiences (Borum & Feldman, 2017). Thus, exposure to others' stories enables important elements of moral imagination and a consequent care perspective—a decrease in the distance from the other, an immersion in the other, and a willingness to engage with others' needs.

Vicariously experiencing another through identification and narrative transportation can have strong and stable effects (rather than confined to an episode) because of the human affinity for narratives and the integration of affect and cognition that occurs in narrative transportation (Appel & Richter, 2007). There is evidence that this process of transportation and identification occurs at the neural level. Others' narratives activate neural webs that are similar to the neural structures of one's own experience. These mirror neurons—cells in the brain that fire both when an action is observed and when that same action is enacted by the observer—indicate the creation of connections with another (Bal & Veltkamp, 2013; Mar, 2011; Mar & Oatley, 2008). Such engrossment in another is key to moral imagination and a care perspective (Noddings, 2013).

Examples: As previously mentioned, narrativizing that achieves a balance between the familiar to provide a point of access to the narrative, and the unfamiliar which then jolts the audience into moral awareness and sensitivities, is frequently a hallmark of successful narrativizing (Coles, 1998). Consider the example of students watching documentary films depicting characters to whom business students may not instinctively relate. When watching the documentary film *Food, Inc.*, which depicts the adverse impact of agribusiness on individual lives, a student closely identified with the story of the California-based Gonzalez family. The parents in the Gonzalez family juggled multiple jobs to earn just enough to cover the healthcare costs of the father's chronic health conditions. Their severe financial and time constraints led to a dependence on processed, fast foods rather than fresh food, setting them up for further health complications. Despite having no socio-demographic similarities with the Gonzalez family, the student identified with them given his struggles with maintaining a healthy lifestyle and feeling caught in a vicious cycle of eating junk food, feeling awful, and eating more junk food because of the resulting lack of motivation. Viewing the lavish lifestyle of an ultrarich family depicted in the film *Queen of Versailles* caused another student to see similarities with her family, who, despite their more modest means, exhibited the same materialistic behaviors as the

ultrarich, inculcating ingratitude and weakening of family bonds in the younger family members.

### Psychology of Embodied Narrativizing

Physical proximity to another is key to breaking down boundaries as well as transitioning from understanding the other to acting for the other. Embodiment, i.e., physical and visceral actions and reactions during interactions and relationships with another, is an important step in understanding one's similarities with and differences from the other (Phillips & Willatt, 2020). This alignment of minds *and* bodies is key to moral care and has been discussed in contexts such as managing diversity in the workplace (Johansson & Wickström, 2023) and feminist leadership (Pullen & Vachhani, 2021). Such embodiment disrupts preconceived notions and “forces” engagement with that which may be uncomfortable but necessary to care about.

Embodiment may begin during preparation for the interaction. People engage in prospective imagination, creating a plan for a future event and mentally simulating the time, context, actions and reactions, and setting goals for the event (Kvavilashvili & Rummel, 2020). People are motivated to enable “successful” engagement with others and consequently engage in this preparatory exercise in anticipation of an upcoming interaction (Schacter et al., 2017). To imagine a future event, one draws on memories (existing knowledge of similar events) to project into the future. This integration of retrospection and prospection—what do I know, and based on what I know how should I dress, how should I be, how might the other respond—decreases the psychological distance with the other. A large meta-analysis revealed that retrospection, prospection, and perspective-taking all occur within the same structural networks within the brain (Spreng et al., 2009). This neural network allows the brain to draw on previous experiences, project the self into the future, and perspective-take (Schacter et al., 2008). Cognitive tests also revealed that the same cognitive mechanism was involved in recollections of the past, judgments about the future, and perspective-taking (Westerman et al., 2017). This active imagination of others and consideration of different ways of engaging with them reflects empathic responding and dramatic rehearsal that are key to moral imagination and care (Fesmire, 2003; Noddings, 2013; Werhane, 1998).

In addition to the pathways created during the preparatory phase, the actual interaction creates pathways between the self and others through multiple mechanisms—physiological, behavioral, psychological. A systematic literature review revealed evidence for physiological synchrony, which is the interdependence of physiological activity (captured through measures of the autonomic nervous system) during interpersonal interactions across multiple social conditions, and its connection to empathy (Palumbo et al., 2017). In



addition, interpersonal interaction can also cause behavioral overlap or mimicry and create synchrony of experience (Chartrand & Lakin, 2013). A literature review (Chartrand & Van Baaren, 2009) and a meta-analysis (Mogen, Fischer, & Bulbulia, 2017) show that mimicry increases prosociality, empathy and understanding of others.

Such synchronicity occurs intuitively and may have deep evolutionary roots (Chartrand & Lakin, 2013). Across cultures, people adopt dress and mannerisms to show oneness with others and their experiences. Our dress and behavior at a funeral differ from our dress and behavior at a wedding, and these differences reflect an understanding of the other's experience and a desire to communicate that we are engaging in their experience. This increases interdependent self-construal (Redeker et al., 2011), thereby decreasing psychological distance from others. Imagining the other and their needs, adopting signs and props aligned with these needs not only communicates with the other but may also lead to a feedback mechanism in which the external props initiate internal processes that they are meant to represent. For instance, encloded cognition occurs when the symbolic meaning of clothes worn impacts psychological processes and enables perspective-taking of the other (Adam & Galinsky, 2012). Wearing a lab coat associated with a doctor (symbolic of scientific precision) increased attention to tasks compared to when subjects were not wearing a coat and when not wearing a coat with symbolism (Adam & Galinsky, 2012). Experimental participants who wore business attire (versus casual attire) for a management negotiation exercise obtained higher profits, made fewer concessions, and had higher levels of testosterone during the negotiation (Kraus & Mendes, 2014), showing that participants adopted and enacted a stereotypically managerial perspective because of the symbolism of the clothes they wore. The narrativizing of the self by entwining one's narrative with that of an actual other enables seeing oneself as others see us, and as another (Sparrowe, 2005). Successful self-presentation bolsters confidence in one's ability to understand and engage with others (Down & Reveley, 2009), creating pathways between a sense of self and a sense of the other.

Examples: Consider the following example of students engaging with senior citizens about their health and medical needs. Students drew on their memories, experiences, and relationships with their grandparents and anticipated similar interactions with the seniors they had yet to meet. Thus, they created links between their personal experiences and future interactions with unknown others integrating the past and the present to project into the future, and to prepare for their interactions. During the actual interaction, the students reported altering their behaviors by, for example, speaking louder and slower. Consider another example of non-Muslim students assigned to interview recent Muslim immigrants to the West about their banking needs. Students unfamiliar with

Islamic culture described how they drew on media reports to anticipate their interactions and to begin prospective imagining. Embodiment occurred during the actual interaction when, for example, a student reported covering his body tattoos before meeting new Muslim immigrants because he was concerned that tattooing may contravene Islamic tenets. Therefore, prospective imagination about observant Muslims led to a specific enactment of the self, an enactment aligned with the other's perceived perspectives. Other students eschewed business attire, jewelry, and other accessories and downplayed their business education when interviewing financially and socially constrained single teen mothers.

### Interrelationships Among Types of Narrativizing

While each of these forms of narrativizing may individually enable movement toward a care perspective, cumulatively, they meet the previously discussed criteria for successful narrativizing to evoke moral imagination and meaningful movement toward a care perspective. Each type of narrativizing complements the others. Autobiographical narrativizing is self-focused and retrospective, vicarious narrativizing is self-other (a persona or character) focused, and embodied narrativizing is interpersonal with a concrete other. Autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing primarily engage cognitive and affective processes, while embodied narrativizing engages behavioral processes in addition to cognitive and affective processes.

Not only do the three forms of narrativizing activate different mechanisms, but they also each contain different levels and types of risks, therefore using them cumulatively can offset the risks and amplify the benefits in individual forms (Sassenrath et al., 2016). Autobiographical narrativizing presents risks to self-identity via the juxtaposition of managerial and non-managerial versions of the self, while embodied narrativizing can present self-identity and social risks and therefore perhaps is the riskiest.

Each form of narrativizing is also likely to have non-recursive relationships with the others. Autobiographical narrativizing, where specific key events or aspects of one's life are evoked from a retrospective stance, generates an extended timeline where the past is connected to the present. When these internal perceptions are articulated through language, they connect to external perspectives and the perspectives of others (Nelson & Fivush, 2020). Awareness of the self as being vulnerable to managerial actions, as can happen during autobiographical narrativizing, can potentially increase the ability to empathize and engage with others' vulnerabilities to managerial actions (Johansson & Wickström, 2023). Thus, autobiographical narrativizing can feed into vicarious and embodied narrativizing. Vicarious narrativizing, in turn, can activate memories and therefore initiate autobiographical narrativizing. Cues such as watching films

or reading a novel can involuntarily evoke autobiographical details and individuals may relive their past in the context of the cue that evoked it (Coles, 1993). Furthermore, vicarious narrativizing can, through the process of narrative transportation, enable autobiographical and embodied narrativizing by lowering cognitive vigilance against risks to self-identity (Appel & Richter, 2007). Others' stories can provide license to get lost in the story, stepping away from an egocentric anchor and adopting the images, perceptions, and frame of reference of others. Finally, embodied narrativizing requires integrating the past, present, and future and therefore contains elements of autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing. The physiological and behavioral aspects of embodied narrativizing can, in turn, evoke autobiographical memories and an attempt to link them via language to current experiences (Glenberg et al., 2013). Thus, the three forms of narrativizing occur in non-recursive relationships and together can enable moral imagination for care.

## Discussion

I propose that infusing the process of perspective change with moral imagination through three specific forms of narrativizing can enable the transition to a care perspective for business students. Adopting a care perspective can be challenging given the dominance of the managerial perspective in business education. However, given the enormity of moral challenges faced by the business community, educators have a clear responsibility to go beyond exhorting students to care. We must adopt tools to help students transition to a care perspective, without providing them with the tools to adopt care I argue that autobiographical, vicarious, and embodied narrativizing can enable necessary components of a care perspective—greater self-reflection, other-engagement, and critical analysis of generated alternatives to the self and other through a moral lens.

The framework of narrativizing tools I have presented is distinguished by purpose and process while cumulatively enabling a sustained adoption of care. This framework contributes an extension to the literature on narrative pedagogy for business ethics that has thus far focused on sources of narratives such as novels, comics, and short stories (see Brockerhoff et al. 2023), rather than types of narrativizing. While vicarious narrativizing described in this paper relies on such sources of narratives, as I have attempted to show, it is only one way to activate moral imagination. Moral imagination requires the generation of and engagement with multiple perspectives, and therefore, should be engaged in multiple ways. The conceptual model presented here suggests several avenues for further research as well as implications for practice.

## Research Implications

While I have argued for autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing to precede embodied narrativizing, the order in which autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing should occur needs greater thought. There might be an argument for concurrent autobiographical and vicarious narrativizing. This may not increase overall risk perceptions, while the decreased cognitive vigilance of vicarious narrativizing may enhance autobiographical narrativizing, and autobiographical narrativizing may increase the possibility of narrative transportation into another's story and therefore vicarious narrativizing. However, an argument can also be made for a sequential approach with autobiographical narrativizing occurring first because it mirrors the early stages of moral imagination and presents lower levels of social risk than other forms of narrativizing. It might also be argued that vicarious narrativizing can increase the self-awareness required for moral imagination while buffering against social and self-identity risk, and therefore should initiate the sequence.

Related to the above questions, further research is needed on understanding the incremental contribution of each form of narrativizing and the threshold of narrativizing required for a meaningful, sustained transition to a care perspective. While my model proposes all three forms of narrativizing, research is needed to identify boundary conditions. For instance, the extent to which students are anchored in their managerial selves may determine whether a stand-alone exercise in any one type of narrativizing might suffice or whether multiple iterations of each form of narrativizing is required to move toward a care perspective. Or personal characteristics such as high levels of moral self-awareness cause greater distance from unethical behaviors (Xie et al., 2022) and therefore autobiographical narrativizing with its focus on self-awareness might not make a significant incremental contribution to a student's transition to a care perspective. Other traits such as creativity and moral identity can drive or constrain moral imagination (Keem et al., 2018; Whitaker & Godwin, 2013). Moreover, individual traits such as moral identity can interact with institutional characteristics such as ethical climate to impact moral outcomes (Moberg & Caldwell, 2007), and in fact, active community dialog may be key for moral agency (Espedal et al., 2024). Further theoretical consideration is required for us to understand how these institutional and individual considerations might impact the model proposed here.

Researchers have a range of tools to empirically test the conceptual model as well as the questions raised above. One possible empirical study could involve student cohorts assigned to control and treatment groups (with narrativizing for a care perspective embedded in curriculum) and the use of pre – and – post or control

and treatment measures. Narratives could be coded for the degree to which they reveal a change from the baseline narratives of students-as-managers (e.g., Weeks & Pasupathi, 2011). Skoe's (2014) ethics of care interview approach could be adapted where the student-generated narratives are scored for levels of other and self-concern. Because narrativizing is a dynamic process, the coding should capture key turning points within and between narratives (Dunlop, Lind, & Hopwood, 2023). Other empirical measures (see Ku et al., 2015) could be used on their own or to triangulate the coding of the narratives. Empirical tests in laboratory settings can measure neural activity immediately after a narrativizing exercise or at different stages of it to measure changes in perspective (Matsen et al., 2020). For instance, Kanske et al. (2015) propose EmpaToM, an experimental paradigm that studies neural and behavioral outcomes involved in affective and cognitive understanding of others. Such methods, though resource intensive, may provide a nuanced understanding of the progression of student movement from a managerial to a care perspective.

Narrativizing is imbued with emotion (Habermas, 2019; Hermans, 2003). For instance, autobiographical narrativizing can activate emotions of fear and anger if one's self-identity is threatened, sadness and shame if one version of the self is seen as contradicting another, or happiness and pride if multiple selves appear well aligned. Similarly, vicarious narrativizing can evoke a range of emotions in response to the represented other's story. Distinct emotions have distinct effects under different circumstances. For instance, anger and fear can activate prosocial actions or can activate fight and flight, respectively (Lebel, 2017), while sadness can lead to withdrawal, social connectedness, or goal reappraisal (Gray et al., 2011). Embodied narrativizing and the associated emotional, behavioral, and physiological synchrony can activate emotional contagion where students feel like the other as opposed to feeling for the other (Clark et al., 2019). Feeling for the other refers to empathic concern and compassion for the other, while emotional contagion can lead to feelings of distress and a focus on the self rather than on the other, and may be counterproductive to acting for the other (Coutinho et al., 2014). The conceptual model presented in this paper can be further enriched by an understanding of the trajectory of emotions through the narrativizing process and how to structure narrativizing to harness the developmental and minimize the detrimental powers of emotions as students transition toward a care perspective. A related question would be how educators can equip students to self-regulate emotions so that narrativizing does not result in inhibitory processes.

## Practical Implications

While the model presented here is not discipline-specific, its applicability may vary across disciplines. Narrativizing may be easier in disciplines such as management and marketing where the content focuses directly on people—buyers, sellers, employers, employees, and so on—and more challenging in disciplines such as finance and accounting where the content is a few degrees removed from social interactions and affective experiences (Ferguson et al., 2009). The challenge in such disciplines might be to draw attention to the downstream effects on individuals and society, such as studying global supply chains from the perspective of those impacted by these structures rather than through the lens of neoclassical economic theory (Kaufmann, 2022).

Students may find it daunting to adopt a critical stance toward an established, dominant ideology and may resist it (Berti et al., 2021). The ability and willingness to engage in narrativizing varies and there is a risk of inertia or being “caught” in a story (Tedder & Biesta, 2009). Written narratives can help individuals manage perceptions of risks to self-identity and enable effective narrativizing for perspective-taking (Clark & Rossiter, 2008; Shaffer et al., 2019). Written narratives provide a “safe space” to track the evolution of one's stories and can encourage greater openness to examining closely held perspectives (Brendel, 2009), triggering associative processes and further elaboration of the stories, and are a tool for transformative learning (Gray, 2007). Furthermore, integrating narrativizing with structural motivators such as incentives and accountability, which are known to encourage perspective-taking (Ku et al., 2015) may increase the willingness to engage in narrativizing.

To ensure that journal writing addresses risk perceptions and enables openness to different perspectives, the writing process requires careful scaffolding. Careful scaffolding combines free and expressive writing with cognitive and metacognitive prompts to address doubts and threats that emerge during the process (Nückles et al., 2020). Cognitive prompts are organization and elaboration prompts—the what, when, who, why of experiences, and finding links between aspects of experiences. Metacognitive prompts focus on monitoring and regulation—how one reacts to narratives, what might underlie the reactions, challenges, and gaps in narratives, what those gaps mean, and the personal relevance of the narratives. Metacognitive prompts focus on the primary goal of the exercise—imagining and understanding others. It focuses on how the student thinks about others, can surface perceived threats and can enable reflection on how to manage perceived threats given the overarching goal of perspective-taking. These cognitive and metacognitive processes can assist when students are “stuck” in a managerial narrative. Furthermore, metacognitive prompts that guide students to attend to,

critically evaluate, monitor, challenge, and address their reactions can help self-regulation, counter emotional contagion, and instead focus on compassion and concern for the other (Coutinho et al., 2014).

While this paper has focused on how to engage with a care perspective, this is only a first step toward enacting care. Caring *about* the other is a requirement for enacting care *for* the other (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019). It is worth considering how to extend these narrativizing exercises to involve narrativizing actual behaviors of care by the students. Finally, student motivation to adopt and enact moral imagination and care will depend on the ethical environment in schools (Moberg & Caldwell, 2007). Educators might attempt to counter adverse environmental effects by creating a stronger sense of community among the students involved in these exercises (e.g., Roca, 2010) and/or by co-opting ethical headwinds in the narrativizing exercises.

Embedding a sustained care perspective generally requires repeated exercises in perspective-taking and moral imagination over time and in different contexts. This requires a school-wide embrace rather than confining it to a course or an instructor. An additional challenge is that business schoolteachers, as products of an education system that deprioritized care, may not have the requisite skills to guide students through a perspective-taking process toward a care perspective. There may be a case for narrativizing by instructors where they engage in perspective-taking guided by moral imagination to adopt a care perspective toward their students. Mirroring the process that students are experiencing, that is, engaging in narrativizing the self toward the students as the students narrativize themselves toward others, can be a shared experience, a sharing of vulnerabilities, that can dissolve boundaries (Lawrence & Maitlis, 2012; Tronto, 2020) and model the process for students (Heath et al., 2019).

## Conclusion

This paper began by asking how educators can equip business students to adopt a care perspective. I have attempted to “imagine” the use of three forms of narrativizing—autobiographical, vicarious, embodied—that are characterized by complementary psychological mechanisms and risk profiles. Because these forms of narrativizing require imagining and articulating pathways between versions of the self and between self and others through a moral lens, they can enable student access to and engagement with care perspectives. I hope that my “imaginings” serve as a springboard for more ideas to prepare our students to take their rightful place as caring individuals in every role they occupy.

## Appendix A

I developed and experimented with these narrativizing exercises in an attempt to bridge the gap between students’ desire to act in an ethical and moral manner and their challenge imagining another way for business. These exercises are drawn from a fourth-year undergraduate business elective on marketing ethics and social responsibility. I taught this course over several years, and the class sizes ranged from 25 to 45 students. The order in which the exercises occurred depended on practical class requirements and do not reflect any test of my model. None of the student narratives were analyzed from a theoretical perspective. I present some example instructions for each exercise. All exercises were graded.

### Autobiographical Narrativizing

These exercises were embedded in topics such as impact of agribusiness on individual health, and impact of planned obsolescence on consumer satisfaction. Students read cases, articles and chapters and watched documentary films on the subject. Prior to the class on the topic, students submitted a written consumption journal identifying a market behavior that compromised their wellbeing, and then responded to cognitive prompts (e.g., describe the experience, when did it happen) and metacognitive prompts (e.g., how do you understand your reaction) to activate moral imagination of themselves as a consumer. Then using their knowledge as business students, they had to describe and reflect on why the particular business at the focus of their report behaved in a manner that compromised their wellbeing. Students then imagined how they would like to bridge the gap between their managerial and consumer selves. They responded to questions such as “what would you as the consumer have wanted the manager/the company to do differently,” “as a manager what would have motivated you,” “how do you understand your motivation as a manager”? Students were not asked to share their reports with their classmates or discuss it in class (albeit students frequently voluntarily did so).

### Vicarious Narrativizing

Students watched specific films on specific topics, and then submitted a report responding to cognitive prompts asking them to describe their reaction to the film, which character(s) they related to and which they didn’t, and alternative “plots” they could imagine for the characters. They also responded to metacognitive prompts such as

asking how they understood their reaction, and how they felt about their reaction, what other reactions they could imagine.

## Embodied Narrativizing

Students conducted interviews with members of specific demographic groups (seniors, recent immigrants, residents of inner cities who belonged to various community organizations) to better understand how business organizations addressed their needs. Before the first meeting, each student submitted a written report using prospective imagination and responding to cognitive prompts such as how they were preparing for the interaction, their prior notions about the group they'd meet, and what they expected from the meeting. They also responded to metacognitive prompts such as asking them to respond to their prior notions, why they had such expectations, and how they feel about their expectations. After a few interactions with their assigned community group, students described how the interaction unfolded, how they reconciled the interaction with their expectations, what their post-interaction reaction was, how they imagined they were perceived by others, and alternative trajectories they could imagine for the interaction. In addition to written reports, students debriefed in a class setting.

## Declarations

**Conflicts of interest** I declare I have no conflict of interest.

**Research Involving Human and Animal Participants** NA

**Informed Consent** NA

## References

- Adam, H., & Galinsky, A. D. (2012). Enclothed cognition. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*(4), 918–925.
- Alexander, T. M. (1993). John Dewey and the moral imagination: Beyond putnam and rorty toward a postmodern ethics. *Transactions of the Charles S Peirce Society, 29*(3), 369–400.
- Appel, M., & Richter, T. (2007). Persuasive effects of fictional narratives increase over time. *Media Psychology, 10*(1), 113–134.
- Arieli, S., Sagiv, L., & Cohen-Shalem, E. (2016). Values in business schools: The role of self-selection and socialization. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 15*, 493–507.
- Bagozzi, R. P., Verbeke, W. J., Dietvorst, R. C., Belschak, F. D., van den Berg, W. E., & Rietdijk, W. J. (2013). Theory of mind and empathic explanations of machiavellianism: A neuroscience perspective. *Journal of Management, 39*(7), 1760–1798.
- Bal, P. M., & Veltkamp, M. (2013). How does fiction reading influence empathy? An experimental investigation on the role of emotional transportation. *PLoS ONE, 8*(1), e55341.
- Berti, M., Jarvis, W., Nikolova, N., & Pitsis, A. (2021). Embodied phronetic pedagogy: Cultivating ethical and moral capabilities in postgraduate business students. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 20*(1), 6–29.
- Borgerson, J. (2007). On the harmony of feminist ethics and business ethics. *Business and Society Review, 112*(4), 477–509.
- Borum, C., & Feldman, L. (2017). Storytelling for social change: Leveraging documentary and comedy for public engagement in global poverty. *Journal of Communication, 67*(5), 678–701.
- Brendel, W. (2009). A Framework for narrative-driven transformative learning in medicine. *Journal of Transformative Education, 7*(1), 26–43.
- Brokerhof, I. M., Sucher, S. J., Bal, P. M., Hakemulder, F., Jansen, P. G., & Solinger, O. N. (2023). Developing moral muscle in a literature-based business ethics course. *Academy of Management Learning & Education. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2020.0072>*
- Brown, W. J. (2015). Examining four processes of audience involvement with media personae: Transportation, parasocial interaction, identification, and worship. *Communication Theory, 25*(3), 259–283.
- Chartrand, T. L., & Lakin, J. L. (2013). The antecedents and consequences of human behavioral mimicry. *Annual Review of Psychology, 64*, 285–308.
- Chartrand, T. L., & Van Baaren, R. (2009). Human mimicry. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 41*, 219–274.
- Clark, M., & Rossiter, M. (2008). Narrative learning in adulthood. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 119*, 61–70.
- Clark, R., Robertson, M., & Young, S. (2019). “I feel your pain”: A critical review of organizational research on empathy. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 40*(2), 166–192.
- Coles, R. (1989). *The Call of Stories: Teaching and the Moral Imagination*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Colombo, L. A. (2023). Civilize the business school: For a civic management education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 22*(1), 132–149.
- Corlett, S., Mavin, S., & Beech, N. (2019). Reconceptualising vulnerability and its value for managerial identity and learning. *Management Learning, 50*(5), 556–575.
- Coutinho, J. F., Silva, P. O., & Decety, J. (2014). Neurosciences, empathy, and healthy interpersonal relationships: Recent findings and implications for counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 61*(4), 541.
- Denning, K. R., & Hodges, S. D. (2022). When polarization triggers out-group “counter-projection” across the political divide. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 48*(4), 638–656.
- Down, S., & Reveley, J. (2009). Between narration and interaction: Situating first-line supervisor identity work. *Human Relations, 62*(3), 379–401.
- Dunlop, W. L., Lind, M., & Hopwood, C. J. (2023). Synthesizing contemporary integrative interpersonal theory and the narrative identity approach to examine personality dynamics and regulatory processes. *Journal of Personality, 91*(4), 963–976.
- Dyck, B., & Caza, A. (2022). Teaching multiple approaches to management to facilitate prosocial and environmental well-being. *Management Learning, 53*(1), 98–122.
- Epley, N., Keysar, B., Van Boven, L., & Gilovich, T. (2004). Perspective taking as egocentric anchoring and adjustment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*(3), 327.
- Espedal, G., Struminska-Kutra, M., Wagenheim, D., & Husa, K. J. (2024). Moral agency development as a community-supported process: An analysis of hospitals’ middle management responses to the covid-19 crisis. *Journal of Business Ethics, 190*(3), 685–699.
- Ferguson, J., Collison, D., Power, D., & Stevenson, L. (2009). Constructing meaning in the service of power: An analysis of the typical modes of ideology in accounting textbooks. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting, 20*(8), 896–909.

- Fesmire, S. (2003). *John Dewey and moral imagination: pragmatism in ethics*. Indiana University Press.
- Fotaki, M., & Prasad, A. (2015). Questioning neoliberal capitalism and economic inequality in business schools. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 14*, 556–575.
- Galinsky, A. D., Ku, G., & Wang, C. S. (2005). Perspective-taking: Fostering social bonds and facilitating social coordination. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 8*, 109–124.
- Ghoshal, S. (2005). Bad management theories are destroying good management practices. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 4*(1), 75–91.
- Glenberg, A. M., Witt, J. K., & Metcalfe, J. (2013). From the revolution to embodiment: 25 years of cognitive psychology. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 8*(5), 573–585.
- Gray, D. E. (2007). Facilitating management learning: Developing critical reflection through reflective tools. *Management Learning, 38*(5), 495–517.
- Gray, H. M., Ishii, K., & Ambady, N. (2011). Misery loves company: when sadness increases the desire for social connectedness. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 37*(11), 1438–1448.
- Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2002). In the mind's eye: Transportation-imagery model of narrative persuasion. In M. C. Green, J. J. Strange, & T. C. Brock (Eds.), *Narrative impact: Social and cognitive foundations*: 315–341. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79*(5), 701–721.
- Habermas, T. (2019). *Emotion and narrative: Perspectives in autobiographical storytelling*. Cambridge University Press.
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Pournader, M., & Leigh, J. S. (2020). Responsible management education as socialization: Business students' values, attitudes and intentions. *Journal of Business Ethics, 176*, 17.
- Haski-Leventhal, D., Pournader, M., & McKinnon, A. (2017). The role of gender and age in business students' values, CSR attitudes, and responsible management education: Learnings from the PRME international survey. *Journal of Business Ethics, 146*(1), 219–239.
- Hawk, T. F., & Lyons, P. R. (2008). Please don't give up on me: When faculty fail to care. *Journal of Management Education, 32*(3), 316–338.
- Heath, T., O'Malley, L., & Tynan, C. (2019). Imagining a different voice: A critical and caring approach to management education. *Management Learning, 50*(4), 427–448.
- Hermans, H. J. (2003). The construction and reconstruction of a dialogical self. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 16*(2), 89–130.
- Herrera, F., Bailenson, J., Weisz, E., Ogle, E., & Zaki, J. (2018). Building long-term empathy: A large-scale comparison of traditional and virtual reality perspective-taking. *PLoS ONE, 13*(10), e0204494.
- Hoggan, C., & Cranton, P. (2015). Promoting transformative learning through reading fiction. *Journal of Transformative Education, 13*(1), 6–25.
- Hui, P. P., Chiu, W. C. K., Pang, E., Coombes, J., & Tse, D. Y. P. (2022). Seeing through and breaking through: The role of perspective taking in the relationship between creativity and moral reasoning. *Journal of Business Ethics, 180*(1), 57–69.
- Johansson, J., & Edwards, M. (2021). Exploring caring leadership through a feminist ethic of care: The case of a sporty CEO. *Leadership, 17*(3), 318–335.
- Johansson, J., & Wickström, A. (2023). Constructing a 'different' strength: A feminist exploration of vulnerability, ethical agency and care. *Journal of Business Ethics, 184*(2), 317–331.
- Johnson, M. (1993). *Moral imagination: Implications of cognitive science for ethics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Kanske, P., Böckler, A., Trautwein, F. M., & Singer, T. (2015). Dissecting the social brain: Introducing the EmpaToM to reveal distinct neural networks and brain-behavior relations for empathy and theory of mind. *NeuroImage, 122*, 6–19.
- Kaufmann, L. (2022). Feminist epistemology and business ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 32*(4), 546–572.
- Keem, S., Shalley, C. E., Kim, E., & Jeong, I. (2018). Are creative individuals bad apples? A dual pathway model of unethical behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 103*(4), 416.
- Kraus, M. W., & Mendes, W. B. (2014). Sartorial symbols of social class elicit class-consistent behavioral and physiological responses: A dyadic approach. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, 143*(6), 2330–2340.
- Ku, G., Wang, C. S., & Galinsky, A. D. (2015). The promise and perversity of perspective-taking in organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 35*, 79–102.
- Kvavilashvili, L., & Rummel, J. (2020). On the nature of everyday prospection: A review and theoretical integration of research on mind-wandering, future thinking, and prospective memory. *Review of General Psychology, 24*(3), 210–237.
- Lanaj, K., Jennings, R. E., Ashford, S. J., & Krishnan, S. (2022). When leader self-care begets other care: Leader role self-compassion and helping at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 107*(9), 1543–1560.
- Lawrence, T. B., & Maitlis, S. (2012). Care and possibility: Enacting an ethic of care through narrative practice. *Academy of Management Review, 37*(4), 641–663.
- Lebel, R. D. (2017). Moving beyond fight and flight: A contingent model of how the emotional regulation of anger and fear sparks proactivity. *Academy of Management Review, 42*(2), 190–206.
- Mar, R. A. (2011). The neural bases of social cognition and story comprehension. *Annual Review of Psychology, 62*, 103–134.
- Mar, R. A., & Oatley, K. (2008). The function of fiction is the abstraction and simulation of social experience. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 3*(3), 173–192.
- Matsen, J., Perrone-McGovern, K., & Marmarosh, C. (2020). Using event-related potentials to explore processes of change in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 67*(4), 500–508.
- McAdams, D. P. (2013). The psychological self as actor, agent, and author. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 8*(3), 272–295.
- McAdams, D. P., & Guo, J. (2015). Narrating the generative life. *Psychological Science, 26*(4), 475–483.
- McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 22*(3), 233–238.
- McAuliffe, W. H. B., Carter, E. C., Berhane, J., Snihur, A. C., & McCullough, M. E. (2020). Is Empathy the default response to suffering? A Meta-analytic evaluation of perspective taking's effect on empathic concern. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 24*(2), 141–162.
- McLean, K. C., Pasupathi, M., & Pals, J. L. (2007). Selves creating stories creating selves: A process model of self-development. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 11*(3), 262–278.
- McLean, K. C., Syed, M., Pasupathi, M., Adler, J., Dunlop, W. L., Drustrup, D., Fivush, R., Graci, M., Lilgendahl, J. P., Lodi-Smith, J., McAdams, D. P., & McCoy, T. (2020). The empirical structure of narrative identity: The initial Big Three. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 119*, 920–944.
- Mcvea, J. F., & Dew, N. (2022). Unshackling imagination: How philosophical pragmatism can liberate entrepreneurial decision-making. *Journal of Business Ethics, 181*(2), 301–316.
- Michaelson, C. (2016). A novel approach to business ethics education: Exploring how to live and work in the 21st century. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 15*(3), 588–606.
- Miller, D., & Xu, X. (2019). MBA CEOs, short-term management and performance. *Journal of Business Ethics, 154*, 285–300.

- Moberg, D., & Caldwell, D. F. (2007). An exploratory investigation of the effect of ethical culture in activating moral imagination. *Journal of Business Ethics, 73*, 193–204.
- Moberg, D. J., & Seabright, M. A. (2000). The development of moral imagination. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 10*(4), 845–884.
- Nelson, K., & Fivush, R. (2020). The development of autobiographical memory, autobiographical narratives, and autobiographical consciousness. *Psychological Reports, 123*(1), 71–96.
- Nicholson, J., & Kurucz, E. (2019). Relational leadership for sustainability: Building an ethical framework from the moral theory of ‘ethics of care.’ *Journal of Business Ethics, 156*, 25–43.
- Noddings, N. (2013). *Caring: A relational approach to ethics and moral education*. Univ of California Press.
- Nückles, M., Roelle, J., Glogger-Frey, I., Waldeyer, J., & Renkl, A. (2020). The self-regulation view in writing-to-learn: Using journal writing to optimize cognitive load in self-regulated learning. *Educational Psychology Review, 32*(4), 1089–1126.
- Oliver, M. B., Dillard, J. P., Bae, K., & Tamul, D. J. (2012). The effect of narrative news format on empathy for stigmatized groups. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 89*(2), 205–224.
- Palumbo, R. V., Marraccini, M. E., Weyandt, L. L., Wilder-Smith, O., McGee, H. A., Liu, S., & Goodwin, M. S. (2017). Interpersonal autonomic physiology: A systematic review of the literature. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 21*(2), 99–141.
- Phillips, M. (2013). On being green and being enterprising: Narrative and the ecopreneurial self. *Organization, 20*(6), 794–817.
- Phillips, M., & Willatt, A. (2020). Embodiment, care and practice in a community kitchen. *Gender, Work & Organization, 27*(2), 198–217.
- Pirson, M. (2020). A humanistic narrative for responsible management learning: An ontological perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics, 162*(4), 775–793.
- Prandi, M., Martell, J., & Lozano, J. (2016). Learning in a social context. PRME report. <https://d30mzt1bxg5llt.cloudfront.net/public/uploads/PDFs/LearninginaSocialContextReport.pdf>
- Pullen, A., & Vachhani, S. J. (2021). Feminist ethics and women leaders: From difference to intercorporeality. *Journal of Business Ethics, 173*, 233–243.
- Redeker, M., Stel, M., & Mastop, J. (2011). Does mimicking others change your self-view? *The Journal of Social Psychology, 151*(4), 387–390.
- Roca, E. (2010). The exercise of moral imagination in stigmatized work groups. *Journal of Business Ethics, 96*, 135–147.
- Sadler-Smith, E., & Cojuharenco, I. (2021). Business schools and hubris: Cause or cure. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 20*, 270–289.
- Sahatjian, Z., MacDougall, A. E., & McIntosh, T. (2022). Benefits beyond service: The facilitative effects of service-learning pedagogy on nuanced reflection and ethical sensemaking. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 21*(1), 7–34.
- Sassenrath, C., Hodges, S. D., & Pfattheicher, S. (2016). It’s all about the self: When perspective taking backfires. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 25*(6), 405–410.
- Sassenrath, C., Vorauer, J. D., & Hodges, S. D. (2022). The link between perspective-taking and prosociality—Not as universal as you might think. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 44*, 94–99.
- Schacter, D. L., Addis, D. R., & Buckner, R. L. (2008). Episodic simulation of future events: Concepts, data, and applications. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 1124*(1), 39–60.
- Schacter, D. L., Benoit, R. G., & Szpunar, K. K. (2017). Episodic future thinking: Mechanisms and functions. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences, 17*, 41–50.
- Shaffer, V. A., Bohanek, J., Focella, E. S., Horstman, H., & Saffran, L. (2019). Encouraging perspective taking: Using narrative writing to induce empathy for others engaging in negative health behaviors. *PLoS ONE, 14*(10), e0224046.
- Skoe, E. E. (2014). Measuring care-based moral development: The ethic of care interview. *Behavioral Development Bulletin, 19*(3), 95.
- Slager, R., Pouryousefi, S., Moon, J., & Schoolman, E. D. (2020). Sustainability centres and fit: How centres work to integrate sustainability within business schools. *Journal of Business Ethics, 161*(2), 375–391.
- Sparrowe, R. T. (2005). Authentic leadership and the narrative self. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(3), 419–439.
- Spreng, R. N., Mar, R. A., & Kim, A. S. (2009). The common neural basis of autobiographical memory, prospection, navigation, theory of mind, and the default mode: A quantitative meta-analysis. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 21*(3), 489–510.
- Tal-Or, N., & Cohen, J. (2015). Unpacking engagement: Convergence and divergence in transportation and identification. *Annals of the International Communication Association, 40*(1), 33–66.
- Taylor, S. (2005). Self-narration as rehearsal: A discursive approach to the narrative formation of identity. *Narrative Inquiry, 15*(1), 45–50.
- Tedder, M., & Biesta, G. (2009). Biography, transitions and learning in the life course. *Researching transitions in lifelong learning, 76–90*.
- Tronto, J. (2020). *Moral boundaries: A political argument for an ethic of care*. Routledge.
- Von Wright, M. (2002). Narrative imagination and taking the perspective of others. *Studies in Philosophy and Education, 21*, 407–416.
- Waters, T. E., & Fivush, R. (2015). Relations between narrative coherence, identity, and psychological well-being in emerging adulthood. *Journal of Personality, 83*(4), 441–451.
- Weeks, T. L., & Pasupathi, M. (2011). Stability and change self-integration for negative events: The role of listener responsiveness and elaboration. *Journal of Personality, 79*(3), 469–498.
- Werhane, P. H. (1998). Moral imagination and the search for ethical decision-making in management. *Business Ethics Quarterly, 8*(S1), 75–98.
- Werhane, P. H. (2008). Mental models, moral imagination and system thinking in the age of globalization. *Journal of Business Ethics, 78*, 463–474.
- Westerman, D. L., Miller, J. K., & Lloyd, M. E. (2017). Revelation effects in remembering, forecasting, and perspective taking. *Memory & Cognition, 45*, 1002–1013.
- Whitaker, B. G., & Godwin, L. N. (2013). The antecedents of moral imagination in the workplace: A social cognitive theory perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics, 114*, 61–73.
- Wimmer, L., Friend, S., Currie, G., & Ferguson, H. J. (2021). Reading fictional narratives to improve social and moral cognition: the influence of narrative perspective, transportation, and identification. *Frontiers in Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2020.611935>
- Worline, M. C., & Dutton, J. E. (2022). The courage to teach with compassion: Enriching classroom designs and practices to foster responsiveness to suffering. *Management Learning, 53*(1), 33–54.
- Xie, G. X., Chang, H., & Rank-Christman, T. (2022). Contesting dishonesty: When and why perspective-taking decreases ethical tolerance of marketplace deception. *Journal of Business Ethics, 175*, 117–133.

**Publisher's Note** Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Springer Nature or its licensor (e.g. a society or other partner) holds exclusive rights to this article under a publishing agreement with the author(s) or other rightsholder(s); author self-archiving of the accepted manuscript version of this article is solely governed by the terms of such publishing agreement and applicable law.