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The Lived Experiences of Counselor Educators Using Mindful Teaching Approaches

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Abstract

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MS, Walden University, 2010

BS, Arcadia University, 2005

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Researchers have indicated that mindful teaching approaches support students and educators throughout the learning process. The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. Relational-cultural theory (RCT) was the conceptual framework. Relational cultural theory concepts of relational connections and disconnections were used to explore the participants' lived experiences implementing a mindful teaching approach. Purposeful sampling yielded 10 participants who participated in semi-structured interviews. Using an inductive approach, the data were analyzed to identify essential themes. Thematic analysis was conducted by hand using literature-based codes and lean coding. Findings extracted from the literature review were used to pinpoint level one themes. Lean codes, or emergent themes, were then placed under each literature-based theme. The literature-based themes included: mindfulness practices, contemplative practices and the experience of educators, mindfulness competencies, interconnectivity, treatment outcomes, therapeutic presence, relational empathy, awareness and acceptance, self-care, and critiques. The emergent subthemes included: a mindful attitude, evaluation, modeling for students, creativity in the classroom, mindful orthodoxy versus personal experiences, authenticity, and cultural awareness. Findings may be useful for counselor educators who seek a greater capacity for awareness, acceptance, empathy, self-care, creativity, and presence when working with diverse students in the classroom. Implementing a mindful teaching approach can contribute to counselor educators meeting the needs of their diverse students.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to mindful educators everywhere.

Unleash your compassionate mind,

Your curious mind,

Your aware mind,

Your empathic heart,

Because learning is love,

And love is the only thing that will pass through the illusion of separation.

May all beings be at peace.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank my family and friends; it takes a village to raise a doctoral student. To my loving husband and best friend Robert, I am absolutely sure there is no other CAD drafter on this earth that knows as much about mindfulness and relational-cultural theory as you; a true testament that the best ideas are grown out of loving relationships (and your perfectionist editing and grammar skills were an added bonus). To my dad, thank you for all our research conversations and your sage wisdom along this journey. To my mom, thank you for all your loving-kindness that helped to keep me on this journey. To my brothers, your kindness, your laugher, and your computer technical skills have helped to keep me grounded and motivated.

Obtaining a PhD is an emotional and intellectual roller coaster ride. I am forever grateful I had such good people along with me for this ride. I would like to thank the larger Walden community. I obtained both my masters and PhD through Walden, and I am positive I have become the best version of myself because of having the privilege to be a member of this amazing community.

Finally, A *bodhisattva* is the Sanskrit term that means one that understands great compassion, and has reached enlightenment, but has come back to teach others this path. The deepest gratitude and thank you to my committee members, Dr. Laura Haddock, Dr. Jason Patton, and Dr. Kelly Coker; you are my bodhisattva's. Thank you for showing me *the way*. Each of you and many more I did not mention here helped to hold me up and extended your hand as far as you could on this journey with me. Now I cannot wait to do the same for my students. "Happy Teachers Will Change the World." –Thich Nhat Hanh

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

I sit comfortably, back straight, head up, and hands gently resting on my lap. The sound of the meditation bell rings to signal the beginning of practice. Breathing in, I am breathing in. Breathing out, I am breathing out. I continue to focus on my breath, while noticing the nature of my automatic thoughts without judgment. I continue to breathe. *May I be peaceful, may I be happy, may I be safe, and may I be free from all suffering. May all beings be peaceful, may all beings be happy, may all beings be well, may all beings be safe, and may all beings be free from suffering.* I continue to repeat this phrase, noticing my sensory experience, while continuing to focus on my breath. I pause between phrases to allow the intention of the compassion mindfulness practice to become all that I am and experience in the moment. And then, I enter the classroom—

It seems fitting to begin an introduction on a study exploring the lived experiences of counselor educators with mindfulness practices in a first-person narrative of my lived experience. Zajonc (2013) referred to the incorporating mindfulness practices into pedagogy as the "quiet revolution" (p. 83). According to two studies findings, performing even short periods of contemplative practices can improve attention and cognitive flexibility (Jha, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007; Moore & Malinowski, 2009). In the United States, many people learned about mindfulness due to the popularity of mindfulness-based stress reduction (Allen, Chambers, & Gullone, 2009). Because mindfulness was introduced into the American mainstream culture via psychology, many studies in the psychological literature explored mindfulness efficacy as a therapeutic treatment. Additional research studies demonstrated positive outcomes for counseling

clients who sought ways to treat stress and a wide variety of psychological disorders (Baer, 2006; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Kristella, Sheets, & Wolever, 2013; Lau et al., 2006).

In addition to the growing interest of mindfulness practices in a therapeutic setting, there is a growing interest in mindfulness in educational settings (Babezat & Bush, 2013). Educators have used mindfulness practices across a wide variety of disciplines. including psychology, counseling, education studies, social work education, music education, and nursing education (Beddoe & Murphy, 2004; Chugh & Bazerman, 2007; Dyebye, Thomas, & Shanafelt, 2006; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Hess, 2013; Hutcherson, Seppala, & Gross, 2008; Jennings, 2008; Kahane, 2009; Lazar et al., 2005; Lynn, 2010; Roberts-Wolfe, Sacchet, & Britton, 2009; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bronner, 1998; Shippee, 2010; Wenger, 2013). According to studies exploring mindfulness practices with counseling students, regular mindfulness practice supports self-regulatory skills and the development of compassion and empathy (Buser, Buser, Peterson, & Seraydarian, 2012; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Greason & Cashwell, 2009; McCollum & Gehart, 2010). Counselor educators have incorporated mindfulness as a pedagogical tool to increase self-care, develop therapeutic presence, and increase students' capacity for compassion and empathy (Greason & Cashwell, 2009; Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). (Pedagogy and andragogy are used interchangeably in this study. For a further explanation, see Definitions.)

The development of socioemotional dispositions, such as compassion and empathy, are essential in providing multiculturally competent, inclusive, education. Despite the emerging data on the efficacy of mindfulness as a pedagogical approach, little is known about the experiences of educators who engage in a daily mindful teaching. Of the few studies that have explored the experiences of educators, Biegel et al. (2012) found that mindfulness-based teacher training

supported teachers' sense of well-being, self-efficacy, and ability to manage difficult classroom behaviors.

The lack of literature examining educators' experiences with mindfulness-based teaching approaches is confounding because one of the main assumptions underlying mindfulness-based pedagogy is that the teacher would use his or her own mindfulness practice for ongoing growth and development. Currently, most of the literature on pedagogy in counselor education is derived from a developmental-constructivist paradigm. Findings from this study did provide an additional multiculturally relevant andragogical approach for counselor educators. The goal of this study was to explore the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice and their experiences with culturally diverse students in the classroom. In Chapter 1, I provide (a) an overview of the research on counselor educators' attitudes, perceptions, and experiences with mindfulness-based andragogy; operational definitions; theory; research questions; the nature of the study; assumptions; limitations; delimitations; and the significance of the study.

Background

Few studies have explored the impact of contemplative practices on the educator. Most of the current research on the use of mindfulness in the classroom has focused on the experiences of counseling students rather than the experiences of the counselor educator. However, studies designed to explore the experiences of students have demonstrated positive outcomes. For example, McCollum and Gehart (2010) conducted a qualitative study that explored whether teaching mindfulness meditation supported beginning marriage and family therapists in learning therapeutic presence. They used opportunistic sampling, identified various themes and

subthemes, and completed a thematic analysis using a social constructionist framework. They asked students to keep journals while learning mindfulness meditation and then analyzed the data from the journals and interviews. They conducted this study twice over 2 years and then compared the data. McCollum and Gehart found that mindfulness meditation helped students learn what it means to be *present in the moment*. Students also reported that this heightened awareness of the present moment supported the development of their therapeutic presence. Students also reported a greater sense of awareness of their inner experience (thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations) and that by engaging in a regular mindfulness practice, they felt they had a deeper awareness of their client's experience in the session.

Christopher, Chrisman, Mathison, Schure, Dahlen, and Christopher (2011) found similar outcomes in their qualitative study. The authors' study explored the long-term impact of learning mindfulness meditation while in a master's level counseling program. The authors interviewed 16 former students ($N = 16$, 13 female, 3 male) who were enrolled in the researchers' counseling program 4 years prior to the study and were then practicing counselors. Christopher et al. conducted semistructured phone interviews and used content analysis to determine essential themes. Two themes emerged: (a) the impact of learning mindfulness meditation on the counselors' personal well-being, and (b) the impact of learning mindfulness meditation on their professional practice. Of the 16 students interviewed, 9 students continued using mindfulness to support their physical, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal well-being following completion of their degree program. In addition, all of the participants reported that learning mindfulness in their master's counseling program has influenced their awareness of their own presence in the

room while with clients, the clinical interventions they choose, and how they conceptualize their clients' concerns.

Counseling students have not only found that having a daily mindfulness practice improved their self-care and increased their awareness of therapeutic presence but also that it improved their level of efficacy and attending skills. Buser et al. (2012) conducted a quantitative study that explored the impact of mindfulness practice incorporated alongside a 5-week counselor skills training model on the students' counseling skills development. Another purpose of their study was to compare two groups of students: one group that completed five brief mindfulness sessions and one group that completed 11 practice sessions. A total of 59 students participated in this study; one group (n = 20) served as the control group, one group received the brief intervention (n = 19), and one group served as the intervention group (n = 20). The dependent variable was counseling skills development. The authors used the Counseling Skills Scale (CSS) to measure the students' abilities to engage in basic counseling techniques. The CSS "measure consists of six subscales, which correspond to four helping stages (Showing Interest, Encourages Exploration, Deepens Session, and Encourages Change) and two global conditions of effective counseling (Develops Therapeutic Relationship and Manages Session)" (Buser et al., 2012, p. 25). A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the groups on age and number of credit hours completed in the counseling program. The authors found no significant differences between the groups on any of these variables ($P > .05$). Buser et al. found mindfulness practices contributed to improvements in counseling students' attending skills and levels of self-efficacy.

Greason and Cashwell (2009) conducted a quantitative exploratory study that examined whether or not a relationship existed between mean scores of mindfulness, attention, empathy, and counseling self-efficacy using a path analysis. A path analysis is a set of statistical regression methods used to evaluate relationships among variables (Greason & Cashwell, 2009). The authors also explored the relationships between mindfulness, attention, empathy, and counseling self-efficacy within a path model that specifies a relationship between mindfulness skills and counseling self-efficacy mediated by attention and empathy. Greason and Cashwell (2009) conducted a preliminary examination of the relationships between mean scores of the Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire, the Counselor Attention Scale, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, and the Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scale. As the authors hypothesized, the Person product-moment correlations between pairwise mean scores were all statistically significant at $p = .01$. These researchers concluded that mindfulness training may be an important tool for cultivating the internal skills that are fundamental to the counseling relationship.

While most of the literature on using mindfulness in the classroom has focused on student experiences, studies have provided some insights about the experiences of the educators. Rothaupt and Morgan (2007) conducted a qualitative study that explored the mindfulness practices of counselors and counselor educators who identify as being mindful with their work. The study included six participants; all the participants were counselors, and four of the six participants were counselor educators. These researchers used a constant comparative method, which allowed them to collect data and engage in an analysis of their findings continually throughout their research process. Three essential themes emerged: (a) an overarching theme to be present in the moment, (b) the use of a variety of tools to support mindfulness in their daily

lives, and (c) the outcomes of their mindfulness practices (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). The authors noted that counselor educators who participated in the study valued having a variety of mindfulness tools, making it easier to develop a personalized practice. They also noted counselor educators reported that having a mindfulness practice allowed them to choose how they wanted to be in the moment, rather than reacting to it. Finally, counselor educators also noted that they had a greater degree of intention when in the classroom environment.

In a first-person narrative, Shippee (2010), a music educator at a community college, reported that integrating contemplative practices into his classroom deepened awareness of his music and deepened his interactions with students. He discussed how the integration of contemplative practices supported the deepening of his awareness with his music as well as his interactions with students in the classroom.

Jennings, Snowberg, Coccia, and Greenberg (2011) developed the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) program, which was designed to reduce stress and increase performance for teachers in kindergarten through Grade 12 settings. The authors conducted a quasi-experimental pilot study with 74 urban school teachers and found that 88% of the participants strongly agreed that this program should be provided as an in-service training for all teachers. The researchers also found that teachers noted experiencing less emotional reactivity and an enhanced sense of well-being, which the teachers felt positively influenced their classroom climate.

While emerging data support the use of mindfulness pedagogy in counselor education, a notable gap exists in the literature examining any potential negative outcomes (Rocha, 2014). Shapiro (1992) explored the adverse effects of meditation with 27 long-term meditators. Shapiro

found that 62.9% of these mediators reported experiencing adverse effects such as anxiety, increased tension, boredom, pain, or depression while engaging in insight meditation. Since there is an increasing interest in using mindfulness as an andragogical approach, there is a need to examine the gap in the literature: the experiences of counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice and their classroom interactions with diverse students.

Problem Statement

Mindfulness meditation, a contemplative practice, has a well-established record as a therapeutic intervention (Baer, 2006; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Kristella, Sheets, & Wolever, 2013; Lau et al., 2006). Counselors use a variety of mindfulness-based approaches such as dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR, Allen, Chambers, & Gullone, 2009; Baer, 2006). More recently, counselor educators using a developmental-constructivist pedagogy have sought to incorporate the contemplative practice of mindfulness-based meditation into the counseling classroom. They have successfully incorporated mindfulness into the supervision classroom to support counselors in training who are learning self-care in order to prevent vicarious trauma, enhance the learning of attendingskills, and to promote empathic abilities (Buser et al., 2012; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Greason & Cashwell, 2009).

Barbezat and Pingree (2012) wrote that "Contemplative pedagogy uses forms of introspection and reflection allowing students the opportunity to internally and find more of themselves in their courses" (p. 180). Current research on contemplative pedagogy in other disciplines such as psychology, education studies, social work education, music education, nursing education, philosophy, and religious studies has shown that it can support increased

concentration and attention, well-being, social connection, generosity, creativity, and insight, as well as deepen one's understanding of course work (Chugh & Bazerman, 2007; Dyebye, Thomas, & Shanafelt, 2006; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Hess, 2013; Hutcherson, Seppala, & Gross, 2008; Jennings, 2008; Kahane, 2009; Lazar et al., 2005; Lynn, 2010; Beddoe & Murphy, 2004; Roberts-Wolfe, Sacchet, & Britton, 2009; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bronner, 1998; Shipee, 2010; Wenger, 2013). While most of the available literature has concentrated on the impact of contemplative practices on the students' experience, emerging research explores the experience of mindfulness and contemplative practices for educators. Biegel et al. (2012) suggested that the use of mindfulness with teachers who work in kindergarten through Grade 12, in urban school settings, has demonstrated several cognitive, social, and psychological benefits: Mindfulness skills support teachers' sense of well-being, self-efficacy, and ability to manage difficult classroom behaviors (Biegel et al., 2012). While research findings on the impact of mindfulness-based interventions with teachers in kindergarten through Grade 12 are emerging, a gap still exists in the literature on the lived experiences of postsecondary educators who practice mindfulness and their interactions with diverse students in the classroom. This data could be important for counselor educators because a growing body of research has already demonstrated that, for counselors in training, mindfulness in the classroom contributes to the learning experience (Buser et al., 2012; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Greason & Cashwell, 2009).

Purpose

The purpose of this hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. Interview data were analyzed to determine themes. Mindfulness

meditation has demonstrated outcomes as a pedagogical tool for counseling students (Buser et al 2012; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Greason & Cashwell, 2009; McCollum & Gehart, 2010). But there is a gap in the literature on the experiences of counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice and their classroom interactions with multiculturally diverse students. A qualitative approach was necessary to learn more about the nature of this approach (i.e., is it a distinct, common, or shared lived experience?).

Research Questions

Creswell (2013) noted that qualitative researchers are focused on questions in their research, as opposed to goals or hypotheses. In qualitative research, there is one overarching central question, typically followed by five to ten subquestions. Subquestions support a greater depth of investigation (Creswell, 2013).

The central question is followed by three subquestions:

What is the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students?

1. How does a counselor educator who works with diverse students understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom?
2. How does a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice understand cultural background as it relates to establishing relationships with his or her students?
3. What does it mean to be a counselor educator who practices mindfulness in pedagogy?

Conceptual Framework

Relational-cultural theory (RCT) is a theoretical framework that concentrates on the centrality of relational connectedness in human beings (Cannon et al, 2008; Miller, 1986). The theory was developed by for Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver & Surrey (1991) and grew out of Miller's work in the 1970s analyzing women's developmental process. Miller and her colleagues noted that traditional counseling theories of human development seemed inconsistent with the central focus on relationships in women's lives (Miller, 1976; Miller, 1986). Early human development models centered primarily on the importance of individuation, autonomy, and separation (Jordan, 1997). Yet, these human development models were not reflective of neuroscience findings that humans are hard-wired for connection (Banks, 2011). Miller (1976) also recognized that, in the 1960s and 1970s, feminist and multicultural theorists were beginning to draw attention to the gap in the literature on the contextual and relational experiences of women and people of color.

Several theoretical concepts provided the foundation for RCT, which is informed by the feminist and multicultural idea that relational disconnection can occur on an individual and societal level (Cannon et al., 2008; Miller, 1986). In addition, RCT recognizes that relationships are developmental, and ongoing, as well as central to an individual's developmental process (Miller, 1986). The theory also draws from neurological research, which has confirmed that human nervous systems want to connect with other human beings (Banks, 2011; Miller, 1986). For example, mirror neurons are located throughout the brain and help humans read the feelings and actions of other people (Banks, 2011; Miller, 1986). Furthermore, RCT is also influenced by the humanistic view that it is important to cultivate meaning throughout one's life (Cannon et

al., 2008; Miller, 1986). Finally, RCT is informed by the constructivist assumption that the perception of reality is subjective in nature (Miller, 1986).

Based on these assumptions, Miller (1986) identified five aspects of growth-fostering relationships: (a) increased zest or energy, (b) an increased ability to take action or become empowered, (c) an increase in clarity as about one's self and the other person in the relationship, (d) an increased sense of worth, and (e) a desire to develop more connections. Miller (1986) stated that these five aspects promoted growth-fostering relationships and led to a sense of relational empowerment and empathy. (A more detailed explanation of RCT is provided in Chapter 2.) Therefore, RCT can provide a framework to explore the empathic and relational awareness of the counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice and their culturally diverse students. Additionally, RCT provides a context for exploring the counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in terms of their relational connection to or disconnection from their diverse students.

Nature of the Study

Phenomenology explores the essence of the first-person experience (Creswell, 2013; Kafle, 2011; Patton, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Hermeneutic phenomenology is a subtype of phenomenological research. Using this approach, the researcher describes the experience of the participants but then also interprets the experience while concentrating on the context of the experience (Kafle, 2011). Data analysis in hermeneutic phenomenology is an iterative process focused on identifying emergent themes and then engaging in triangulation with literary works and artifacts collected to seek interpretation or meaning (Kafle, 2011). When using a phenomenological approach, the researcher concentrates on explaining how individuals make

sense of their world by explaining their perceptions in terms of personally developed meanings and their lived experience.

Operational Definitions

This section defines key terms used throughout this study that may otherwise have multiple meanings.

Co-participant: In hermeneutic phenomenology, participants are referred to as co-participants. I use the term participant and co-participant interchangeably (Patterson & Williams, 2002).

Pedagogy: Most of the current literature within counselor education uses the term pedagogy, rather than the correct term andragogy. Pedagogy means to lead children whereas andragogy means to facilitate adult learning (Kearsley, 2010). I use the terms interchangeably.

Andragogy: To facilitate adult learning (Kearsley, 2010).

Contemplative pedagogy: Contemplative is the term most often used in the research on mindfulness-based pedagogies, which suggests the inclusiveness of practices that support states of mindfulness (Babezat & Bush, 2013).

Assumptions

Several assumptions guided this study.

- First, there is a phenomenological bias that lived experiences can be reduced to their essence.
- There is an interpretivist assumption in hermeneutics that all experiences must be understood by examining the interrelationship of lived experiences and cultural contexts.

- My personal bias as a counselor educator who has a daily mindfulness practice has influenced my belief that having a daily mindfulness practice may influence how counselor educators interact with diverse students in the classroom.
- I relied on the assumption that my co-participants would form a working alliance that would make them feel comfortable to share their lived experiences with me.
- The findings of this study would lead to identifying an additional andragogical approach.

These assumptions are critical to acknowledge because transparency and context of experiences influenced all aspects of the design and processes of the study.

Scope and Delimitations

This study used purposeful sampling. All of my co-participants had to meet certain criteria to participate; these criteria are covered in detail in Chapter 3. Additionally, no more than 10 participants were sought to support rich, thick descriptions of data. Developing rich, thick descriptions and using purposeful sampling are necessary aspects of determining transferability (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). I also took great care to explore my personal bias (see Researcher Bias). A study is only worth the effort the researcher engages in to make sure it is rigorous. To increase trustworthiness I used the following interventions to support credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability: (a) triangulation of data sources, (b) member check, (c) rich, thick description, (d) purposeful sampling, (e) an audit trail, (f) a code-recode method, and (g) reflexive art journaling.

Limitations

A sign of rigor in research is the ability of the researcher to be transparent by stating the limitations of the study. For this study, my bias as a counselor and adjunct counselor educator with a daily mindfulness practice was a limitation. To address this, I intentionally explored my own research biases (see Researcher Bias). All participants self-identified as counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice. Counselor educators who participated in this study were sought from across the United States; however, the lack of geographic specificity could be viewed as a limitation. Phenomenological research is an ongoing process (Husserl, 1965; Moustakas, 1994). Thus, this study provides a snapshot of a possible larger experience.

Significance

Counselor educators who actively attend to cultural dimensions in the classroom must be able to engage in a reflective process that ensures the recognition of multiple perspectives (Guiffrida, 2005). The skills needed to support counselor educators working with diverse students are enhanced when they can observe and recognize the interconnectedness of global communities, and supporting global social justice and social change without acting on feelings associated with experiences of cognitive dissonance, or immediate emotional reactions. The potential significance of this study for counselor education is a greater understanding of how a regular contemplative practice supports counselor educators in the classroom, and whether or not there it affords the potential to improve counselor education outcomes, such as increased emotional regulation, stronger development of metacognitive awareness, greater ability for reflection, and perspective shifting. The skills that are developed when one engages in

contemplative exercises—such as attention, focus, compassion, a nonjudgmental stance, the ability to see alternative view points, and reactive awareness (Greason & Cashwell, 2009; Jennings, 2008)—are all skills that would support counselor educators working with diverse students in counseling.

Summary

While several studies have documented positive outcomes of counseling students using mindfulness in the classroom, little is known about the experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice and their experiences with diverse students in the classroom. Use hermeneutic phenomenology, the goal of this study was to explore and interpret the lived experiences of counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students using a RCT lens. This study could benefit the counselor education field by shedding light on educators' lived experiences, and by providing an additional andragogical approach to use with culturally diverse students in counseling.

Chapter 2 discusses the foundational literature for the study. In Chapter 3, I present my research methodology. Chapter 4 focuses on the study findings, and Chapter 5 provides interpretations drawn from the data analysis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There is a growing interest in using mindfulness practices as an andragogical intervention to support counselors in training. Research on mindfulness meditation in therapeutic settings has demonstrated several positive outcomes (Baer, 2006; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Kristella, Sheets, & Wolever, 2013; Lau et al., 2006). While most of the published research literature has focused on the impact of contemplative practices on the students' experience, there are new findings examining the experience of mindfulness and contemplative practices for educators. Biegel et al. (2012) suggested that the use of mindfulness with teachers who work in kindergarten through Grade 12, in urban school settings, has demonstrated several cognitive, social, and psychological benefits. The impact of mindfulness-based teacher training is improved well-being, self-efficacy, and ability to manage difficult classroom behaviors (Biegel et al., 2012).

While there is new research on the impact of mindfulness-based interventions with teachers in kindergarten through Grade 12, there is still a gap in the literature on the lived experiences of adult counselor educators who practice mindfulness and how they interact with diverse students in the classroom. This study used a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to learn more about the nature of this impact (i.e., is it distinct, common, or a shared, lived experience?) on counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice and are working with diverse students. In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of the relevant literature used as the framework for this study. I present a critical analysis of the key concepts of mindfulness, RCT,

hermeneutic phenomenology, contemplative pedagogy, andragogy in counselor education, and mindfulness in counselor education.

Search Strategies

I used multiple databases to identify journal articles: Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost Research, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, SocINDEX with Full Text, Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC), Google, Google Scholar, and EBSCO. I also located articles with the help of two websites: Contemplative Mind in Society and the American Mindfulness Research Association. I obtained information by attending professional conferences such as The International Symposium for Contemplative Studies, hosted by the Mind and Life Institute; The Summer Contemplative Pedagogy Intensive, held by The Contemplative Mind in Society; The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision conference; and the American Counseling Association conference.

Keywords

The following keywords were used for this study: *contemplative pedagogy, counselor education and andragogy, counselor education and pedagogy, mindfulness, mindfulness education, mindfulness and higher education, mindful inquiry, contemplative inquiry, mindful teaching, mindful learning, mindful classroom, mindfulness in counseling, mindfulness in counselor education, mindful training, relational-cultural theory, relational-cultural therapy, relational mindfulness, meditation, multiculturalism, multicultural pedagogy, phenomenology,* and *hermeneutic phenomenology*.

Conceptual Framework Relational-Cultural Theory

Relational-cultural theory (RCT) is a theoretical framework that focuses on the centrality of relational connectedness in human beings (Cannon et al., 2008; Miller, 1986). Unlike traditional psychological theories that primarily regard human development as a trajectory that moves from dependence to independence, RCT views relational connection as the primary motivator for human beings (Jordan, 2010; Miller, 1976; Miller, 1986). The theory rests on the assumption that relational connection is needed in order for humans to flourish, and that isolation and relational disconnection are a major cause of suffering for people (Jordan et al., 2010). The framework also provides a lens for exploring how sociopolitical ideals can create disconnection and isolation (Miller, 1976).

Jordan, one of the developers of RCT, discussed how many Western developmental and clinical theories are built on the idea of a separate self. The idea of a separate self rests upon the idea that autonomy and individuation are signs that one has developed a healthy level of maturity. These assumptions support the idealization of individualism and competition with others. Yet, RCT challenges these assumptions by noting that growth occurs when connections are developed and interconnected. As Jordan (2010) stated, "RCT sees the ideal of psychological separation as illusory and defeating because the human condition is one of inevitable interdependence throughout the life span" (p. 3). Thus, a counselor using a RCT lens would seek to cultivate growth-fostering relationships. According to RCT, there are five aspects of a growth-fostering relationship: " (1) an increase in energy; (2) increased knowledge and clarity about one's own experience, the other person, and the relationship; (3) creativity and productivity; (4) a greater sense of worth; and (5) a desire for connection" (Jordan, 2010, p. 4). Human beings seek

mutual empathic and authentic connection when in a growth-fostering relationship. In their book, *The Healing Connection*, Miller and Stiver (1997) stated, "The goal is not for the individual to grow out of relationships, but to grow into them. As the relationship grow, so grows the individual. Participating in growth-fostering relationships is both the source and the goal of development" (p. 22). This type of relationship—one that includes mutual empathy, care, and empowerment—is seen as being able to heal the pain that some people can experience from unhealthy, empathically void relationships from early childhood (Jordan, 2010).

The emphasis of RCT in placed on an understanding that growth-fostering relationships and mutual empathy does not mean one would avoid conflict. On the contrary, RCT recognizes the importance of embracing conflict or concerns that could cause relational disconnection (Jordan, 2010). What makes relational-cultural theory different than many other Western psychological theories is that when counselors are confronted with conflict in a session, they may not withdraw into a privileged place of power using objectivity as a way to control, distance, or avoid conflict with a client (Jordan, 2010). Furthermore, RCT seeks to explore how disconnection that can occur due to societal systematic inequalities contributes to one's sense of isolation. Mature development and functioning develop as a result of mutuality, rather than separate functioning (Jordan, 2010; Miller, 1986). Thus, RCT recognizes that relationships are embedded in culture and interconnected in nature. Cultural narratives are interwoven into relational interactions, creating mostly unacknowledged relational closeness or distance.

Authenticity. Authenticity is an essential component of RCT and is defined as the capacity to be fully oneself in relationships (Duffy, Haberstroh, & Trepal, 2009; Jordan, 2004; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Being truly authentic relationally may prove difficult for many who have

experienced oppression, prejudice, or discrimination. However, RCT refers to this experience as condemned isolation (Jordan, 2010). Miller and Stiver (1997) stated that this occurs from "being locked out of the possibility of human connection" (p. 72). This can lead to feelings of shame, isolation, or a sense of defeat that has been pathologized within some traditional theories of psychology (Comstock et al., 2008; Jordan, 2001).

Mutual empathy and relational growth. From a RCT perspective, mutual empathy is needed in order to engage in a relationship that allows for growth and development (Jordan, 2004; Miller & Stiver, 1997). The goal of RCT is to develop a growth-fostering relationship that supports resilience, mutual empathy, and empowerment, rather than individualism and a sense of separateness (Jordan, 2010). Through the mutual empathy exchange, the people involved can more easily engage in change and learning, as well as become more aware of the present moment. Human beings are motivated by relational connections where growth and development are essential to lived experiences (Jordan, 2010).

Relational images. Relational images are the set of mostly unconscious beliefs a person develops about how to define a relational experience based on early relationships (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Relational images not only determine an individual's expectations and beliefs about what and how a relationship should look and feel, but they also impact on the development of one's self-concept (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). If an individual had a negative relational experience early in life, it can lead to maladaptive coping skills chronic disconnection, or negative relational images (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Ideally, relational images are flexible in nature; they change and adapt over one's lifespan. Therapeutic change is sought and focused on developing mutually empathic, growth-fostering relationships in order to heal and

change negative relational images. Miller (1986) developed the term condemned isolation, which is used to describe the pain, hopelessness, or powerlessness that can occur from chronic disconnection or negative relational images.

As RCT evolved, it extended the idea of relational images to include societal images that are used to control, disempower, and isolate marginalized individuals. Jordan (2010) noted the work of sociologist Patricia Hill Collins (2000), whose work explored the images society creates in order to shame or disempower groups. Jordan (2010) noted that it can be hard for individuals to develop mutually empathic relationships when they are surrounded by so many distorted, oppressive, and controlling images. The worldview of RCT recognizes the importance of discussing the many systematic influences that can create chronic relational disconnection.

Connections and disconnections. Applying RCT assumes that moving in and out of relational connection and disconnection is a normative part of any relationship (Jordan, 2010). Relational disconnection may occur with miscommunication, or experiences with invalidation, humiliation, or exclusion (Jordan, 2010). Ongoing disconnection can occur within any relationship. This is particularly true when the power in a relationship is unequally balanced. Relational connections can be strengthened when the person in the relationship with more power responds with a caring, conscious awareness of the power differential (Jordan, 2010). Yet, if the individual in the relationship who has less power is not allowed to voice one's own pain, he or she will learn to suppress the pain from the relational interaction (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Thus, the individual or group with less power may express themselves with less authenticity in order to conform to the individual or group with more power (Jordan, 2004; Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). This may be experienced as shame or self-blame; RCT

refers to this as disconnection strategies. These disconnection strategies are seen as survival strategies (Jordan, 2004; Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Some individuals may also experience a sense of disempowerment, immobilization, and isolation that can lead to a state of chronic disconnection and fear, which can be have an all-encompassing impact on the person's relationships (Duffey, Haberstroh, & Trepal, 2009). When this occurs, RCT refers to the experience as the central relational paradox (Jordan, 2010).

Relational resilience. Resilience is a term typically synonymous with overcoming adversity. However, according to the RCT worldview, resilience is explored from a relational standpoint. To understand the difference in applying an RCT-informed understanding of resilience, Jordan (2004) stated the following key aspects of RCT:

1. From individual "control over" dynamics to a model of supported vulnerability;
2. From a one-directional need for support from others to mutual empathic involvement in the well-being of each person and of the relationship itself;
3. From separate self-esteem to relational confidence;
4. From the exercise of "power over" dynamics to empowerment, by encouraging mutual growth and constructive conflict;
5. From finding meaning in self-centered self-consciousness to creating meaning in a more expansive relational awareness. (p. 32)

Source of Theory

Attention to RCT began with Jean Baker Miller's book, *Toward a New Psychology of Women* (1976), and was further developed by scholars working with the Jean Baker Miller Institute,at the Stone Center in Wellesley College. The theoretical origins of RCT stem from

psychodynamic, feminist, multicultural, and social justice movements in psychology. In Miller's text, *A New Psychology of Women* (1976), Miller explored what influenced the idea of a separate self and how power differences could inhibit growth-fostering relationships. Miller—along with Irene Stiver, Judith Jordan, and Janet Surrey (2010)—began uncovering the limitations of traditional theories of psychological development for women. As more research emerged demonstrating the devastating impact of social inequality on individual and relational development, RCT evolved to explore how systematic power differentiation can influence one's experience with social isolation and relational disconnection (Jordan, 2010). As RCT continued to evolve, emerging research in neuroscience on mirror neurons, which demonstrated that human beings are hard-wired for empathic-relational connection, was integrated into the theoretical framework (Jordan, 2010).

Feminist and multicultural influences. During the time that Miller began to explore the limitations of traditional psychological theories on women's development, Carol Gilligan—noted as one of the founders of feminist theory—began to explore the limitations of moral development theories based on women's experiences. Gilligan (1977) was the first to speak out against developmental models that regarded women's relational thinking bias as a hindrance in moral judgment. Miller was influenced by Gilligan's work and the work of other feminists in the 1970s, which spoke out against models of development that overemphasized autonomy, individuation, and separation. Miller (1976) recognized the importance of understanding contextual issues that influence the definition of psychological well-being. She, like many other feminist and multicultural theorists, recognized the cultural context that led many in the psychological field to pathologize women and marginalize people (Jordan, 2010). Therefore,

RCT reflects the foundational assumptions of feminist and multicultural theories because it recognizes the sociocultural context, oppression, shame, and systematic social injustices that make it challenging for marginalized individuals to develop mutually empathic, growth-fostering relationships (Cannon et al., 2008).

Rogerian influences. Various aspects of RCT also draw from Carl Rogers's ideas about the importance of empathy in therapeutic healing. Rogers believed that when counselors can experience the client's subjective experience, and still maintain a sense of separateness, therapeutic change is likely to take place (Corey, 2009). According to RCT, relational growth-fostering exchanges occur due to an intentional and thoughtful process that involves anticipatory empathy. Anticipatory empathy involves thinking about how a client will be impacted by the way a counselor responds (Cannon et al., 2008). This is akin to what Rogers described as accurate empathy. The experience of accurate empathy involves experiencing the clients' emotions as if they were the counselor's own feelings, without getting lost in the experience (Corey, 2009). However, RCT parts from the traditional Rogerian idea that empathy is a one-way process; RCT recognizes empathy as a mutual experience that must be co-created in order for growth and development to occur (Jordan, 2010). Developing co-created growth-fostering relational experiences involves intentionally being authentic and vulnerable, particularly when discussing difficult material. Cannon et al. (2008) discussed four ways in which RCT expanded on Rogerian theory:

1. Extending the one-way concept of empathy espoused in Rogers's counseling theory to a two-way process referred to as mutual empathy;

2. Describing relational movement that occurs in all relationships, including the counseling relationship, which involves inevitable periods of connection and disconnection;
3. Resisting and eradicating sociopolitical factors that operate as the source of relational disconnections among many individuals in diverse and marginalized racial/cultural groups who are discouraged from naming their own reality and authentically expressing many of their thoughts and feelings;
4. Serving as a theoretical framework from which to promote the concept of mutual empathy as key to healing. (p. 281)

Psychodynamic influences. The founders of RCT were all trained in psychoanalytic and psychodynamic approaches (Jordan, 2010). Thus, some of RCT's concepts reflect the psychoanalytic origins. For example, Jordan (2010) noted that as a therapeutic approach, RCT is described "as a theory and practice that centers on talk therapy" (p. 13). In addition, RCT supports the idea that the development and experience of early relationships impacts current and future relationships (Jordan, 2010). Furthermore, expectations for relationships are unconscious, yet influence behavior. RCT developed the concept of relational images. Relational images, as discussed above, are the set of beliefs and expectations about relationships from one's past that influence current relationships (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Although RCT does not use the terms transference or countertransference, Jordan (2010) noted that relational images have much in common with the concept of transference. Corey (2009) defined transference as "the client's unconscious shifting to the analyst of feelings and fantasies that are reactions to significant others in the client's past" (p. 71). If one had dysfunctional early relationships, this may lead to

the development of relational images that provide an unconscious bias for relational disconnection or a sense of hopelessness.

Where RCT parts from its psychodynamic roots is that it extends the idea of relational images to include the images and racist stereotypes that impact relationships (Jordan, 2010). For example, the stereotypical image of the welfare queen has been used to support a prejudicial worldview. There has been extensive research demonstrating how this racial stereotyping is used to support systematic racial inequality (Collins, 2000; Jordan, 2010; Walker, 2004). These stereotypes can become part of one's relational images and thus contribute to distortions that support internalized oppression, which can lead to relational disconnection (Jordan, 2010; Walker, 2004). Jordan (2010) noted the impact that shame can have on the development of strategies for disconnection. Shame is often used as a way to silence or disempower marginalized groups.

Neuroscience influences. RCT has incorporated neuroscience research demonstrating that human beings are "hard-wired to connect" (Jordan, 2010, p. 20). Jordan (2010) pointed out that humans arrive in the world ready to engage with others, as survival depends on it. Babies who are not responded to can have severely stunted emotional, physical, and neurological growth (Jordan, 2010). Indeed, relationships are as key to human survival as air, water, and food (Eisenberger & Lieberman, 2004; Jordan, 2010). In mutual relational exchanges, for example, between a mother and her baby, both the mother and baby's brain benefit from the relational interaction. The discovery of mirror neurons has demonstrated that human beings are built for empathic connections. Mirror neurons fire from watching the actions or emotions of another (Goleman, 2006). For example, when one person sees another person fall in pain, the observer

also experiences pain. There is now research to demonstrate that relational interactions change the brain (Goleman, 2006; Jordan, 2010; Schore, 1994; Siegel, 1999).

Critical Remarks

There are some criticisms and critiques of RCT. Some therapists reported uneasiness with the loss of therapeutic neutrality, as well as a fear that professional and relational boundaries were not clearly defined (Jordan, 2010). Others feared RCT's emphasis on authenticity might lead to inappropriate self-disclosure by the therapist and possible ethical or legal violations on the part of the therapist (Jordan, 2010). Jordan (2010) argued that the idea of authenticity and mutual empathy had been misinterpreted. The author noted that the counseling relationship is not an ordinary relationship; counselors and clients have different expectations and obligations. Jordan further responded that traditional psychological theories represented a worldview that supports the illusion of a separate self, rather than a sense of interconnectedness. However, RCT clearly defined that the therapist has a responsibility for the well-being of the client. Others have criticized RCT for overemphasizing women's relational skills (Jordan, 2010; Walsh, 1997; Weskott, 1997), whereas Sharf (2008) stated that RCT was theoretically weak due to the fact that much of the research on RCT was qualitative in nature.

RCT in Current Research

Researchers have used RCT to explore relational connection and disconnection in a variety of settings. For example, Duffey, Haberstroh, and Trepal (2009) conducted a grounded theory study to explore "relational competencies and creativity as they are related to counseling practice" (p. 94). The authors invited all of the members of the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) listed as active (n = 1048) to participate in a survey. A total of 131 members

responded to the survey, which was composed of the following open-ended questions exploring how they would describe via their perceptions and experiences:

> (a) relationally competent individuals, (b) growth-promoting relationships, (c) conflict, disconnections, and connection strategies, (d) mutual empathy, (e) authenticity, (f) power in relationships, (g) inauthenticity, (h) creativity in their professional lives, and (i) how relational strategies and experiences influence their creativity in counseling. (p. 95)

Each of the authors reviewed the data independently to identify initial codes; they used open and axial coding.

Through analyzing the themes that emerged, the authors found that growth-fostering relationships allowed counselors to be creative in their work. Participants noted that relationally competent individuals were able to be mutually aware of themselves and others in relationships. Another theme that emerged, which is also emphasized in the mindfulness tradition, is the idea of letting go. This was one of the subthemes that emerged during the data analysis. In the context of this study, one the participants reflected that a relationally competent person would "recognize when a mutual growth-fostering relationship is not likely, for a variety of possible reasons, and work to achieve as comfortable a relationship as possible, without forfeiting all their own needs, and without disregarding the needs of others" (p. 100). The authors noted some limitations of the study. The sample consisted of all volunteers and thus may not represent all the relational or creativity competencies that counselors could provide. The authors also did not mention how they knew they had reached saturation or redundancy in their findings.

In addition, RCT has been used in group counseling settings. Cannon, Hammer, Gillian, and Reicherzer (2012) discussed the application of RCT in group counseling. The authors

explored the use of the RCT curriculum, which allowed for the participants to explore the impact of social stratification within their own social circles as well as supported authentic expression and the development of growth-fostering relationships. The authors conducted group sessions with five adolescent girls who had been the victim of, or engaged in, cyberbullying. The group met for 6 weeks, with each week focused on an aspect of RCT (Cannon, Hammer, Gillian, & Reicherzer, 2012). For example, the guiding framework for week 2 was to concentrate on connection and disconnection. The group members sought to cultivate engagement, authenticity, mutual empathy, diversity empowerment, and mutual empowerment. In practice, the participants were broken down into dyads and asked to discuss times when they had experienced disconnections in relationships that were important to them. As a result of the group experience, participants were able to explore what the best type of female connection is and how it is impacted by connection or disconnection; the group members also felt safe to work through conflict. Cannon and colleagues' work provided an example of using RCT with a group of people exploring relational awareness, connection and disconnection to study the social justice implications that can occur within a setting where there is a stratification of power between leader and participants, similar to the relational dynamics between students and professor in a classroom setting.

Edwards and Richards (2002) applied relational-cultural theory to social work education. discussed the importance of moving away from the assumptions of pedagogy, and moving toward andragogical methods that seek to cultivate mutuality between educator and student, and within the learning process itself. In applying RCT concepts to the classroom the authors noted the importance of establishing a connection with students, being present, and being able to

communicate with students in a way that supports mutual engagement. For these researchers, this meant connecting with students both personally and professionally.

As Miller and other RCT scholars have noted, mutual empathy is critical in creating growth-fostering relationships (Jordan, 2001; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Edwards and Richards (2002) stated that "the teacher's ability to be present, to facilitate, and tolerate hearing student reflections, provides the mental freedom necessary for growth" (p. 40). To establish this approach in the classroom, facilitators seek to cultivate a learning environment that is nonhierarchical, safe, respectful, and open to hearing students' comments. Social work educators using RCT in the classroom are mindful of the subconscious need of the educator to embrace the feelings of idealization that are created from power-over-cultures, instead of working to create power-with-cultures (Edwards & Richards, 2002; Miller & Stiver, 1997). In addition, RCT educators explore the ways in which humiliation is used as an educational tool to support power-over-relationships. The instructors seeking to support mutual empowerment discloses their own professional struggles (Edwards, 2002). The authors suggested that mutual empathic and growth-fostering relationships are needed for an andragogy that prepares students for counseling in a way that not only develops the self, but the self-with-others.

Surrey and Kramer (2005) discussed the concept of relational mindfulness by first defining relational mindfulness as "the practice and cultivation of mindfulness in an engaged, person-to-person relational context" (p. 94). The authors explored the use of insight dialogue, a relational meditation practice developed by one of the authors, to deepen the practice of counseling. Mindfulness meditation practice is known in Buddhist psychology as the "factor of awaking" (Surrey & Kramer, 2005, p. 98). Mindfulness practices are used to develop a sense of

awareness that alters dualistic thinking, advancing from a self or other focus. The author noted that counselors can lose a sense of harmony or balance by being exclusively other-focused, while meditators who practice primarily on their own can be become too internally focused. Surrey (2005) noted that engaging in a regular relational mindfulness practice has "[o]pened my heart and mind to receive her (client's) nonverbal cues more vividly—with greater awareness, compassion, and understanding" (p. 102). Figure 1 illustrates the similarities and differences in the assumptions that underlie RCT and mindfulness.

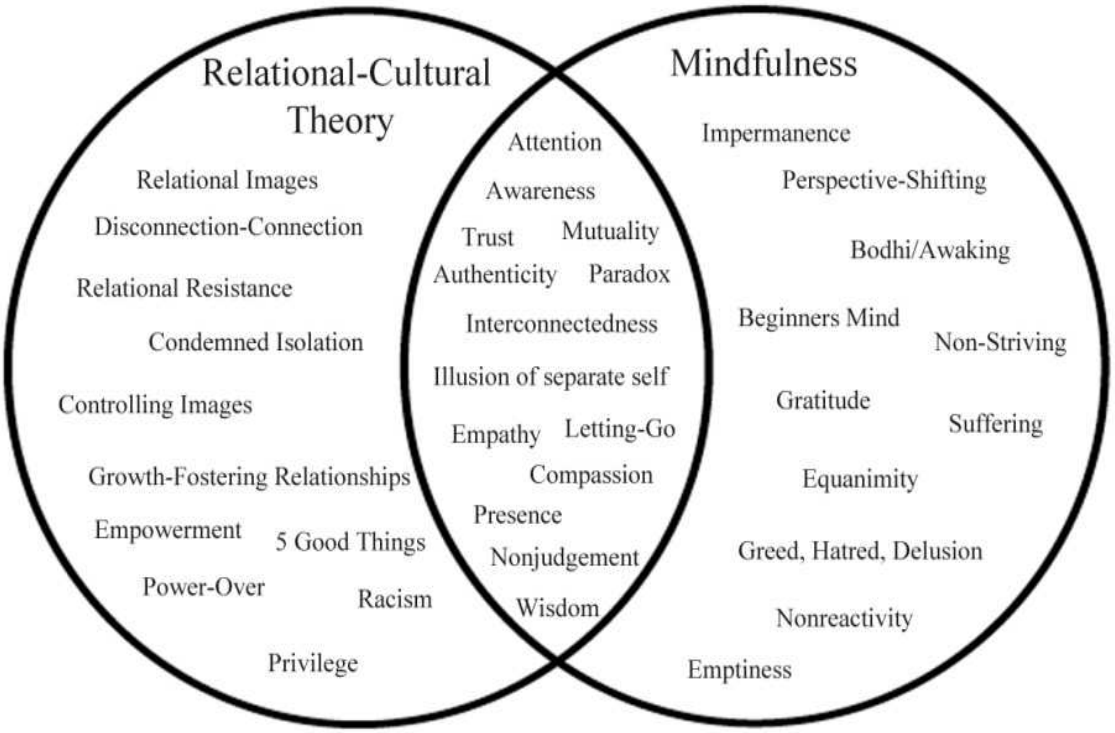

Figure 1. Venn diagram of RCT and mindfulness.

Furthermore, Burrows (2011) conducted a relational phenomenological study analyzing whether or not relational mindfulness could help educators maintain a sense of calmness, or equanimity, in emotionally charged classroom and school environments. Eight educational

leaders, half of whom had experience with mindfulness practices and half of whom did not, met for six 90-minute meetings over 10 weeks to share methods and experiences from implementing relational mindfulness in their classrooms. Participants were asked to engage in body scanning and grounding meditation each week, as well as to engage in weekly journaling of their experience. Five themes emerged: (a) the felt experience of relational mindfulness, (b) a supportive group environment, (c) professional (counseling) supervision, (d) and an experienced mindfulness teacher and guide (Burrows, 2011).

The participants discussed the phenomenological experience of being with others while engaged in mindfulness meditation (Burrows, 2011). The participants reported that this enhanced their mindfulness practice (Burrows, 2011). Burrows also reported that the participants felt that the emphasis on relational awareness created a supportive group environment, as well as a greater degree of connection with their students. The participants noted that they experienced stress relieve from engaging in mindfulness meditation; however, they felt that some counseling training would be beneficial for someone seeking to implement relational mindfulness in an educational setting. All the participants discussed the importance of having a regular mindfulness practice outside of the educational environment (Burrows, 2011). The educators' daily practice helped with implementing a relational mindfulness approach in the classroom (Burrows, 2011). However, some limitations to this study included the author did not mention receiving Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or how she addressed ethical considerations. Furthermore, the author made no mention of the data analysis process used or how she reached saturation or redundancy in her collected data.

Rationale for RCT

Applying RCT allows the researcher to explore the lived experience of the educator while simultaneously providing a framework for cultural contextual issues. Its focus on attention, awareness, compassion, and empathy aligns with core epistemological assumptions that underlie the construct of mindfulness. Furthermore, RCT allows for exploration of the interpersonal and intrapersonal relational elements of a student-teacher relationship in the classroom. Since there was evidence suggesting the quality of the relational connection and learning experience can be connected to the teacher's social-emotional regulation and awareness, RCT can provide a lens to explore the empathic and relational awareness as well as the emotional resonance of the counselor educator with a daily mindfulness practice and their culturally diverse students in the classroom. Additionally, RCT provides a context for examining counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice and the relational connection or disconnection from their diverse students. Furthermore, RCT allows the researcher to explore the lived experience of the educator while simultaneously providing a framework for cultural contextual issues.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

While details about the research design is provided in Chapter 3, it is worth noting how phenomenology fits within this literature review. Phenomenology, an interpretivist tradition, explores the essence of the first-person experience. Phenomenology seeks to describe in words something which cannot be translated linguistically (Van Manen, 1984). Van Manen (1984) noted that phenomenological descriptions are representative of one's experience, influenced by the time, place, and context of that moment. Similar to engaging in a mindfulness practice, another time, place, or context could lead to different thematic discoveries. Phenomenology

embraces subjectivity as a part of all human experience (Creswell, 2013). How phenomenology is used as a method may change based on the phenomenon being studied. Participants in phenomenology are considered co-participants (Creswell, 2013). When using a phenomenological approach, the researcher concentrates on explaining how individuals make sense of their world through explaining their perceptions in terms of personally developed meanings and their lived experience. To explore the essence of an experience, the research seeks phenomenological reduction (epoche), or bracketing the world, suspending judgment, and noticing what is pre-judgment (Van Manen, 1990). The mindfulness practitioner seeks to also explore consciousness via mindfulness meditation. In this way, a phenomenological approach supports exploration between the phenomenon and consciousness. This research study used a subtype of phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology. Using this approach, the researcher describes the experience of the participants but then also interprets the experience while focusing on the context of the experience (Kafle, 2011). Hermeneutics also allows the researcher to "play with language [and text] in order to allow the research process of textual reflection to contribute to a person's pedagogical thoughtfulness and tact" (Van Manen, 1990, pp. 1-2). In order for my hermeneutic interpretation to be of value to this research study, I had to be clear about my own assumptions. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989) noted that in the Arc of Reflection that there is an opportunity to explore one's own biases and prejudices. Thus, not only may the descriptions and interpretations found in this study be noteworthy, but the research process itself may provide valuable insights.

Mindfulness as a construct. Mindfulness originates from Buddhist traditions. The term mindfulness is an English translation of the Pali word *Sati* (Germer, Olendzki, & Siegel, 2008).

Pali is the original language in which the Buddha's teachings were recorded (Germer, Olendzki, & Siegel, 2008). Mindfulness has gained popularity because many studies have demonstrated positive outcomes for therapeutic interventions such as mindfulness-based stress reduction (MSBR). Mindfulness is both a psychological practice and a technique (Allen, Blashki, & Gullone, 2006; Hayes & Shenk, 2004; Hayes & Wilson, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Zinn (1990) defined mindfulness as focused intentional awareness of moment-to-moment experience, without judgment; his definition of mindfulness is the most commonly referenced definition within the psychological literature. Also commonly noted is Bishop et al.'s (2004) two-component definition of mindfulness as follows:

> The self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment. The second component involves adopting a particular orientation towards one's experiences in the present moment and orientation that is characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance. (pp. 232-233)

The definition of mindfulness has evolved as mindfulness practices have been adapted for secular beliefs and environments. Mindfulness as a construct is more than only intentional focus on awareness; it is a tool that is being used to end personal and global suffering (Germer, Olendzki, & Siegel, 2008; Silananda, 1990; Thera, 1962). Mindfulness practitioners seek to maintain equanimity, balance, and peacefulness in one's state of mind (Germer, Olendzki, & Siegel, 2008). Mindfulness is also a function used to cultivate relevant mental qualities, such as concentration, compassion, empathy, presence, nonjudgement, witnessing, openness, and

acceptance to intentionally relieve suffering, particularly in the face of difficult mental states such as greed, envy, or anger (Bishop et al., 2004; Germer, Olendzki, & Siegel, 2008).

Mindfulness critiques. It is worth noting that the definition of mindfulness has evolved over time within different contexts. Some criticisms of mindfulness in educational settings are that the use of mindfulness practices in a secular setting loses aspects of the original intention of the practice. McDonagh (2014) noted that mindfulness is derived from a Buddhist tradition; without this supporting ideological framework, it is uncertain whether the outcomes of a daily mindfulness would produce the same lived experience without the same underlying assumptions guiding an individual's practice. McDonagh (2014) further argued that mindfulness is a religious practice in itself and could never truly be viewed or practiced from a secular stance. Additionally, the author discussed that not everyone is ready to explore their inner self.

Dr. Willoughby Britton, a researcher at Brown University Medical School working on the Dark Night Project, has conducted research dedicated to exploring some of the negative psychological outcomes of mindfulness meditation. Long-term mindfulness practitioners reported times during their meditation when they experienced intrusive thoughts and awareness of repressed memories that, now in awareness, lead to long periods of depression (Rocha, 2014). Rocha (2014) interviewed Britton on her ongoing research on some of the negative outcomes of long-term mindfulness practices. Britton recognized that the idea of meditation being purely focused on stress reduction is more a reflection of American values than a reflection of mindfulness practice or its origin. Britton is currently reviewing historical texts on the negative outcomes of contemplative practices. She discussed finding a Buddhist sutra (sutra is a Buddhist

teaching) describing monks who meditated on death, and then later committed suicide (Rocha, 2014).

Mindfulness is now being used in large corporations, such as Google, as a mental training activity (Rocha, 2014). Britton stated that traditionally mindfulness meditation practice is about developing a sense of awareness to explore three aspects of the lived experience: impermanence, dissatisfaction, and no-self (Rocha, 2014). Processing these insights can cause psychological distress for the practitioner. Britton further acknowledged a resistance to exploring the negative outcomes of mindfulness practices, which has left a gap in the research literature on these experiences. Ron Couch (2013), an insight meditation teacher who has worked with Britton, stated he was glad that current applications of mindfulness in counseling concentrated on relaxation and self-care because more traditional forms of vipassana (a form of mindfulness meditation focused on exploring impermanence, dissatisfaction, and no-self) would cause psychological damage to someone who was suffering from psychosis. The author noted that this is why it is important for psychological helping professionals to have their own mindfulness practice; they might not realize, or know how to deal with, difficult experiences that can happen as a result of engaging in mindfulness practices (Couch, 2013).

Mindfulness practices. One aspect of mindfulness that can cause confusion is the definition of the construct versus the practices used to cultivate the state of being. There is no single practice one would use to engage in a contemplative practice. Mindfulness involves conscious awareness of one's mental states (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Mindfulness meditation practices are used to cultivate mindfulness. These practices may focus on the breath, awareness of sensations, on an object or part of body, or involve intentional movement. Mindfulness

practices draw from a variety of approaches and Buddhist lineages (Brown, Creswell, & Ryan, 2007). The most commonly noted practices used in counselor education classrooms are primarily focused on breathing meditation or hath yoga (Gehart & McCollum, 2010, Kramer et al., 2008; Schure et al., 2008).

Mindfulness in a therapeutic context. Mindfulness became popular in therapeutic communities with the introduction of MSBR, which is a therapeutic intervention developed by Jonn Kabat-Zinn and originally developed for the treatment of chronic pain (Bishop et al., 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985). Mindfulness meditation now has a well-established record as a therapeutic intervention (Baer, 2006; Davis & Hayes, 2011; Kristella, Sheets, & Wolever, 2013; Lau et al., 2006). Currently, MSBR is used with a variety of populations experiencing both physical and emotional-behavioral disorders (Kabat-Zinn, 1998). There are also now well-established therapeutic interventions that incorporate mindfulness practices, such as dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT).

Contemplative pedagogy. With the growing interest in mindfulness practices, more research is emerging that incorporates mindfulness as a pedagogical and andragogical approach. Contemplative pedagogy has been defined as involving "teaching methods designed to cultivate deepened awareness, concentration, and insight" (Vanderbilt University, 2012). Some educators, who have a daily mindfulness practice use contemplative practices within their classrooms as teaching interventions or pedagogical tools. Mindfulness practices and contemplative practices drawn from other traditions that support a state of mindfulness have been used in classroom settings. In the classroom, contemplative approaches concentrate on developing attention,

introspection, empathy and compassion, connection to others, critical thinking, creativity, emotional regulation, social awareness, delaying gratification, resiliency, and social awareness (Association for Mindfulness in Education, 2009). Mindfulness or contemplative practices have been used as experiential exercises; discussion, lecture, literature review, and self-reflective exercises (such as journaling) are used to promote self-awareness (Vaughan, 2005; Brubaker, Puig, Reese, & Young, 2010). Some examples of contemplative exercises being used include reflective or non-focused journaling, beholding, lectio divina, meditation, yoga, mindfulness meditation, and mindfulness-based activities (Vanderbilt University, 2012; Repetti, 2010). Beholding is a contemplative teaching intervention in which the student engages in a reflection and awareness exercise by observing a singular object, sound, or painting for a period of time (The Contemplative Mind in Society, 2013). Another contemplative teaching intervention called lectio divina occurs when students read short passages and reflect deeply on what they have read. Hatha yoga and Qigong, two mindfulness practices focused on breath and movement, have been used with counselors in training (Schure, Christopher, & Christopher, 2008). Various mindfulness meditation practices such as body scan, breathing-focused, and movement meditation have been used in counselor education as andragogical tools.

One unique aspect of contemplative pedagogy is that it concentrates on the personal transformation of the teacher as well as the student. In fact, an essential component of contemplative pedagogy is that the teacher engages in their own ongoing contemplative practice. Schoeberlein (2009) noted several benefits for teachers who use the practices in the classroom: strengthening teachers' focus, awareness and emotional regulation skills; reduced stress; improved well-being; and enhanced classroom affection. Dray and Wisneskim (2011) discussed

the importance of teachers continually self-evaluating their own attributions that can contribute to communicating with students in a prejudicial manner. Contemplative practices such as mindfulness practices could support educators' self-reflection and enable an examination of their cultural frame of reference and their communication style with students (Dray & Wisneskim, 2011).

Counselor educators who continually bring mindful awareness to their self-reflection process in communicating with students may have greater sensitivities in their own behaviors and communications. Hass and Langer (2014) conducted a study to explore if mindfulness increased the regulation of interpersonal synchronicity. The authors paired 92 participants between the ages of 18 and 40 years (49 female, 41 male). In this two-group design, one group of participants received mindfulness instruction before being asked to engage in a 15-minute conversation with a partner who had not received mindfulness instruction. Hass and Langer (2014) found that the partner who was mindfully primed reported enjoying the conversation more, as well as feeling more comfortable dialoguing with their partner.

The use of mindfulness practices in the classroom for students improves their receptivity to the content presented, strengthens their academic performance, supports their emotional regulation skill, and supports their social-emotional learning as well as their holistic well-being (Schoeberlein, 2009). Barbezat and Pingree (2012) noted that contemplative pedagogy "uses forms of introspection and reflection allowing students the opportunity to focus internally and find more of themselves in their courses" (p. 180). Current research on contemplative pedagogy in other disciplines such as psychology, education studies, social work education, music education, nursing education, philosophy, and religious studies has shown that it can support

increased concentration and attention, well-being, social connection, generosity, creativity, and insight, as well as deepen one's understanding of course work (Beddoe & Murphy, 2004: Chugh & Bazerman, 2007; Dyebye, Thomas, & Shanafelt, 2006; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Hess, 2013; Hutcherson, Seppala, & Gross, 2008; Jennings, 2008; Kahane, 2009; Lazar et al., 2005; Lynn, 2010; Roberts-Wolfe, Sacchet, & Britton, 2009; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bronner, 1998; Shippee, 2010; Wenger, 2013).

While most of the research literature currently available on contemplative practices in education has focused on the impact of these practices on the students' experience, there is emerging research exploring the experience of mindfulness and contemplative practices for educators. Biegel et al. (2012) suggested that the use of mindfulness with teachers who work in kindergarten through Grade 12, in urban school settings, has demonstrated several cognitive, social, and psychological benefits (Biegel et al., 2012). The impact of mindfulness-based teacher training is that mindfulness skills support teachers' sense of well-being, self-efficacy, and ability to manage difficult classroom behaviors (Biegel et al., 2012). The Tree of Contemplative Practices demonstrates the many intentional practices used by educators who wish to bring their mindfulness orientation into the classroom (Figure 2).

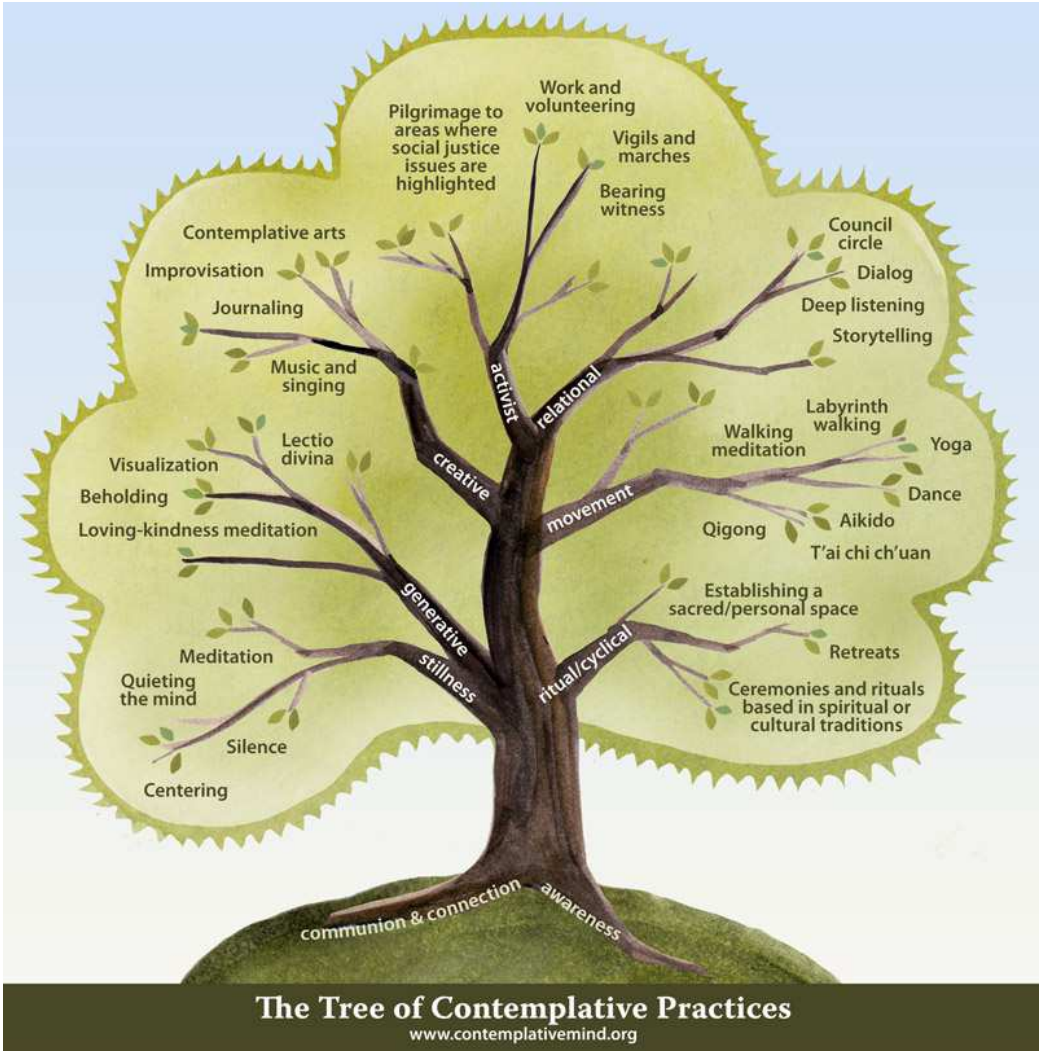

Figure 2. The Tree of Contemplative Practices, which demonstrates the many contemplative practices used by educators. From The Contemplative Mind in Society website. Copyright 2015. Reprinted with permission of The Contemplative Mind in Society.

Contemplative pedagogy in higher education. Mirabia Bush (2011), a leader in the contemplative pedagogy community, discussed the movement in higher education to use first-person educational strategies. Naropa (2011) stated that "scholars who advocate for the inclusion of contemplative methods (first-person) in the classroom contend that the current accepted way of knowing (third-person) limits what we can know by limiting the ways in which

we know" (p. 65). This movement has occurred concurrently with research emerging on the use of mindfulness in a variety of therapeutic and educational settings (Bush, 2011). An increasing number of educators in higher education are learning about mindfulness practices and are seeking not only to incorporate various mindfulness practices into their classroom, but to use the core assumptions that underlie mindfulness in an andragogical approach. This is true across disciplines in higher education. For example, Murphy (2004) conducted a pilot study with 16 baccalaureate nursing students to explore the effects of an 8-week MBSR course. Since nursing is recognized universally as a stressful occupation, it is no surprise that nursing educators were some of the first educators in a higher education classroom to explore the use of mindfulness in educating pre-nursing students (Murphy, 2004). The author found that engaging in MBSR helped to reduce the nursing students' stress and improve their overall mood. The author also stated that the nursing students reported a decreased tendency to take on others' negative emotions. Shippee (2010), a music educator at a community college, provided a first-person narrative of integrating contemplative practices into his music education classroom. Shippee (2010) discussed that the integration of contemplative practices supported the deepening of his awareness with his music as well as his interactions with students in the classroom. Norton, Russell, Wisner, and Uriarte (2011) explored how implementing reflective teaching practices affected social work educators and found that using contemplative practices and participatory action research supported social work educators' learning and applying reflective teaching practices. The new junior faculty members who participated in this study reported feeling empowered (Norton et al,, 2011). The entire faculty involved reported they felt they had an easier time transitioning in academic culture having participated in this study. Naropa

University, established by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, uses Buddhist mindfulness practices and principles to guide every aspect of administrative and educational experience. Ellen Langer (2000), who has researched mindful learning extensively at Harvard University, noted that current teaching methods often unintentionally encourage mindlessness by presenting information from a position that disregards this perspective. Dan Siegel (2007) discussed five dimensions of mindful learning: (1) an alertness to distinction, (2) sensitivity to context, (3) the ability to hold multiple perspectives, openness to novelty, (4) awareness to subtleness, and (5) a focus on being present in the moment. Across disciplines, educators are seeking to bring mindfulness into the class.

While there has been increasing evidence to support the inclusion of contemplative practices as pedagogical and andragogical interventions, some researchers have raised concerns about the increasing focus on the therapeutic functions of education (Hyland, 2009). Ecclestone (2004) raised concerns that the concentration on personal and social skills in education may lead to people being more focused on developing an individual sense of self-esteem, which could later lead to complacency in work environments that devalue them. In essence, the need to be validated and liked could influence people to not challenge the status quo. With an emphasis on postmodernist relativistic values, rationality and objectivity might no longer be embraced as readily by the learner. Yet, as Hyland (2009) noted, there are many areas in which the intentions and processes in teaching and therapy overlap, including a focus on "knowledge, values, emotions, understanding, reason, skill, experience and insight" (p. 125). Hyland further explained there may be tendency to dismiss mindfulness as a passive inner experience. He also

stated that it is important to explore mindfulness in depth to understand its possible impact on the educational process.

Counselor Education and Andragogy

Current literature on andragogical approaches to counselor education has centered on meeting the needs of diverse students and how to best prepare counseling students to work with a multiculturally diverse audience. Minton, Morris, and Yaites (2014) conducted a 10-year analysis of journal articles focusing on pedagogy in counselor education. The authors found that of the articles grounded in learning theory (n = 34), four major theoretical groups emerged: (a) constructivist, social, and situational learning theories, (b) critical pedagogy theories such as transformative learning, liberation pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and multicultural education, (c) motivational and humanistic learning theories, and (d) instructional methods not grounded in theory such as service-learning and multimedia. The authors only found one article that focused attention on cognitive learning theory. The authors noted in their review that the largest portion of articles reviewed (n = 103) were grounded in counseling literature and theories instead of learning theories. Guiffrida (2005) also noted that most of the counselor education pedagogies that exist are mostly derived from modernist or developmental-constructivist paradigms. Clearly, there is an increasing interest in both meeting the needs of culturally diverse students in the classroom and the need to support the type of metacognitive awareness required to encourage perspective shifting, which is an essential element of multiculturally informed teaching and practice. The social constructivist approach recognizes the importance of students finding themselves in their work and developing an awareness of their meaning-making process within a larger societal systematic context. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related

Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016), the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014), and the Multicultural Counseling and Development Multicultural Cultural Competencies (2015) all speak to the importance of culturally competent counseling practice.

To engage in multicultural competent counseling, counselors need an awareness of their own personal biases, values, and assumptions that make up their worldviews so they can actively work to understand the worldview of their clients (Arredondo et al., 1996; Sue & Sue, 2008). What about the personal development and multicultural competence of the counselor educator? Counselor educators are charged with preparing counseling students to work with multiculturally diverse clients. While the current CACEP (2016) standards speak to these content-focused competencies, how can a counselor educator develop the beliefs, attitudes, and values needed to support their interactions with diverse students in the classroom? Perhaps mindfulness is one tool that could support their work with diverse students in the classroom. Mindfulness-based practices focus on the present moment, developing insight, recognizing multiple viewpoints from a nonjudgmental stance, developing compassion and empathy, and decreasing stress and anxiety while supporting a sense of calmness (Jennings, 2008). How might this mindfulness practice influence the andragogical approach of a counselor educator? A review of the current literature examining mindfulness in counselor education is provided below.

Mindfulness in Counselor Education

Most of the literature that explores mindfulness and its use in counselor education has concentrated on the experience of counselors in training and their lived experiences. The literature has been organized into themes that have been identified as aspects or outcomes of a mindfulness practice in counselor-educational settings.

Self-care. Research on the use of contemplative interventions has focused on using mindfulness meditation with counseling students in the classroom as an andragogical intervention. In a qualitative study, Grossenbacher and Parkin (2006) explored the perceptions of six undergraduate college students' awareness after being taught how to meditate; Grossenbacher is an undergraduate psychology professor at Naropa University, which is a university founded on the Tibetan Buddhist education system. This type of educational system seeks to support all learning using mental skills involved with mindfulness and developing present-moment oriented awareness (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). The authors interviewed eight students using the Naropa University Meditation Questionnaire Battery, which includes 164 questions analyzing the experience while meditating. Six of the eight students also completed a questionnaire on the effects of meditating. This study focused on collecting verbal response data from the questionnaires. The verbal responses were categorized into themes. The authors allowed for many categories to be derived to guard against findings that may overlap in their meaning, which constitute different lived experiences. The emergent themes included: (1) meditation affects awareness content and frame, (2) meditation affects attention, (3) meditations affects worldview, and (4) meditation affects communication style. The authors found that all six students reported that mindfulness meditation gave them a greater awareness of their bodily experience, their physical surroundings, their thoughts and feelings, and other people, as well as increased awareness of their individual needs. All six of the mediators reported that mindfulness meditation impacted their understanding of reality. Two of the students reported that meditation influenced the quality of their presence; they felt as though they noticed a "more nuanced experience of reality" (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006, p. 9). Five of the six students reported

that meditation gave them a greater sense of openness when communicating with others. One student noted that he or she feels more receptive to other's emotional needs when communicating. One of the limitations of this study included no mention of transferability of results. Furthermore, the authors did not discuss their data analysis process for developing their themes or if their sample produced saturation or redundancy in their data. Additionally, Naropa is a university where the mission of the institution—supporting contemplative education—is embedded in every course and the larger institutional community. Thus, it is unclear whether or not the authors would find similar results in a secular institution. However, mindfulness meditation has begun to make its way into secular institutions.

Christopher et al. (2011) conducted a qualitative study researching the long-term impact of learning mindfulness meditation while in a master's level counseling program. The authors interviewed 16 former students ($N = 16$, 13 female, 3 male; all European American) who were enrolled in the researchers' counseling program 4 years ago, and were then practicing counselors. The authors (2011) conducted semistructured phone interviews and used content analysis to determine essential themes. Two main themes emerged: (1) an impact of learning mindfulness meditation on the counselors' personal well-being, and (2) an impact of learning mindfulness meditation on their professional practice. Of the 16 students interviewed, nine were still using mindfulness to support their physical, emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal well-being. In addition, all of the participants reported that learning mindfulness in their master's counseling program has influenced their awareness of their own presence in the room while with clients, the clinical interventions they choose, and how they conceptualize their clients concerns. The authors also questioned participants about whether or not they had any negative

consequences or outcomes from engaging in the mindfulness practices. Nine of the participants reported experiencing difficult emotions while engaging in their mindfulness practices. As a result, some participants sought counseling to process the difficult emotions that came up for them during their practice. One participant noted that when she used mindfulness practices in her counseling sessions, some of her clients found it painful to sit for long periods of time and to spend long periods of time in self-reflection. One of the participants reported being criticized by a colleague because he or she was a Christian; the participant's peer felt Christians should not be using meditation or yoga. While the study was methodologically well developed, the author did note several limitations to the study. First, all of the participants chose to participate so there could be self-selection bias. The study was carried out at one rural Western university, which indicated most of the participants were from the geographical area of the university. Most of the participants identified as female and European American. All of the participants were from a master's level counseling program so the results may not apply to a doctoral-level student. However, the authors noted that the results of this study were consistent with their previous qualitative study conducted at the end of a 15-week course (Chrisman, Christopher, & Lichtenstein, 2009; Christopher et al., 2006; Schure et al., 2008).

Awareness and acceptance. Schure et al (2008) conducted a 4-year qualitative study examining the significance of teaching graduate counseling students about Hatha yoga, meditation, and Qigong. A total of 33 graduate students who were first- and second-year master's-level graduate counseling students were enrolled in a 15-week elective graduate course. The curriculum focused on teaching students various mindfulness and contemplative practices that were significant to the fields of counseling as well as tools for engaging in self-care.

Students meet twice weekly for 75 minutes to learn and practice mindfulness practices such as Hatha yoga, meditation, and Qigong (a Chinese movement meditation). Students were also provided relevant course readings and were asked to keep journals reflecting on their experiences (Schure et al., 2008).

Schure et al. (2008) noted that at the end of the course, students who participated answer questions in a final journal entry exploring their experience. For example, these questions included how did the practices influence their life, which practices were they drawn to, and would they consider using these practices in their counseling work? Student responses were analyzed using NVivo software. The data were analyzed inductively, allowing for emergent themes. To strengthen reliability, the course instructor did not code the data. Five general themes emerged from the question prompting students to reflect on how their life has changed over the course of the semester: (a) physical changes, (b) emotional changes, (c) attitudinal or mental changes, (d) spiritual awareness, and (e) interpersonal changes (Schure et al., 2008). Students reported that by engaging in a regular mindfulness practice they were motivated to reflect and evaluate their belief system and values. Interpersonally, several students reported that they engaged in less reactive behaviors in situations where they might act negatively (Schure et al., 2008).

When prompted to explore how the mindfulness practices affected the students (in particular, mindfulness meditation), students reported an increase in awareness and acceptance of emotions and personal concerns, increased mental clarity and organization, increase in tolerance of physical and emotional pain, and an increased sense of relaxation (Schure et al., 2008). Students also stated that engaging in a regular mindfulness practice helped them deal with

silence in counseling, increased their attentiveness to the therapeutic process, and that they were more apt to invite clients to use the techniques to address presenting concerns (Schure et al., 2008). The authors reported no notable differences in the participants' responses when they analyzed the themes over the span of 4 years. One of the limitations noted by the authors is the use of self-reported information. However, one of the benefits of using a qualitative approach is that future researchers can use the emergent themes within a quantitative study to see if these findings can be found in other groups and settings. Another limitation of the study was the reliance on self-reported information. In addition, students had to respond to questions about their experience as part of their coursework. Thus, students may have felt pressured to provide positive responses. Finally, the authors did not collect any demographic information (Schure et al., 2008).

Relational empathy. Greason and Cashwell (2009) conducted a quantitative exploratory study that examined if there was a relationship between mean scores of mindfulness, attention, empathy, and counseling self-efficacy. Additionally, the authors explored the relationships between mindfulness, attention, empathy, and counseling self-efficacy within a path model that specifies a relationship between mindfulness skills and counseling self-efficacy mediated by attention and empathy. A total of 59 students who were enrolled in a CACREP-accredited master's program and a three-credit Introduction to Counseling course participated in the study. The class met weekly for 2.5 hours. One class served as a control group (n =20), along with a brief intervention group (n = 19) and a final group that received an extended intervention (n = 20). Greason and Cashwell (2009) used a posttest-only comparison group and a quasiexperiential design. The authors conducted a preliminary examination of the relationships between the mean

scores of the Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire, the Counselor Attention Scale, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index, and the Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scale. As the authors hypothesized, the Pearson product-moment correlations between pairwise mean scores were all statistically significant at $p = .01$. Greason and Cashwell (2009) concluded that mindfulness training may be an important tool for cultivating the internal skills that are fundamental to the counseling relationship. Some limitations with this study were that convenience sampling was used, thus weakening the external validity; participants were not randomly assigned to groups; and most of the participants were from CACREP-accredited counseling programs in the southern part of the United States. Additionally, limitations inherent to survey research were identified, such as differences among the participants who chose to participate and those who declined, social desirability bias, and self-reported data.

Buser et al. (2012) conducted aquantitative study that explored the impact of mindfulness practice that wasincorporated alongside a 5-week counselor skills training model on the students' counseling skills development. Another purpose of their study was to compare two groups of students, one group that completed five brief mindfulness sessions and one group that completed 11 practice sessions. A total of 59 students participated in this study. One group ($n = 20$) served as the control group, one group received the brief intervention ($n = 19$), and one group served as the intervention group ($n = 20$). The dependent variable was counseling skills development. The authors used the Counseling Skills Scale. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the groups on age and number of credit hours completed in the counseling program. The authors found no significant differences between the groups on any of these variables ($P > .05$). Buser et al. (2012) found mindfulness practices contributed to improvements in the counseling students'

attending skills and levels of self-efficacy. Limitations to this study included the use of convenience sampling and the internal validity of the study was compromised because participants were not randomly assigned to groups. In addition, participants were not evaluated beforehand to see if there was variation in their baseline knowledge of counseling attending skills (Buser et al., 2012).

Therapeutic presence. McCollum and Gehart (2010) conducted a qualitative study that explored whether or not teaching mindfulness meditation supported beginning marriage and family therapists in learning therapeutic presence. Using opportunistic sampling, 13 practicum students (seven men and six women ranging in age from 22 to 60 years) participated in this study. Demographically speaking, one participant identified as gay, one participant identified as American, one participant identified as Latino, and the rest of the participants were White. Unlike past studies that have developed a course solely focused on mindfulness, the authors sought to integrate mindfulness into an already existing practicum course. Students enrolled in their practicum courses were just beginning their clinical work with clients. Students enrolled in McCollum and Gehart's (2010) practicum courses were provided with literature on mindfulness, conducted mindfulness practices in and outside of class daily, and were asked to keep journals or logs of their experiences. Both instructors of the course had practiced mindfulness meditation and yoga for 20 years (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). The researchers asked students to keep journals and reflect on their experiences in learning meditation during the duration of the course and to note if they thought engaging in mindfulness practices impacted them personally or professionally. For their data analysis, the authors used a social constructivist framework and thematic analysis. All identifying information was removed before the first author engaged in

data analysis. Three overarching themes were identified: (a) being present, (b) effects of meditation, and (c) shift in mode compassion and acceptance (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). The first theme, being present, had multiple dimensions. For example, students reported an easier time tending to their inner experience while balancing their awareness of their client's needs in the session (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). Students also reported an easier time remaining calm, letting go of inner chatter, and remaining centered when presented with difficult material in the session (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). Remaining centered also helped students maintain an awareness of the pace of their work, which helped them to maintain their awareness of slowing down the pace of the session when necessary. McCollum and Gehart (2010) reported that the students also had a greater ease with maintaining boundaries. Students noticed that the change in their presence—namely, being comfortable just being with their client—positively affected their clients. Finally, students reported repeatedly that engaging in a daily mindfulness practice allowed for a sense of compassion and acceptance. Participants reported feeling a greater sense of compassion and acceptance for themselves and a greater degree or sense of commonality or shared humanity between their experience and that of their clients (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). For example, one student wrote,

> At my fieldwork site, the clients are struggling to function on a very basic level. What they don't need are heavy judgments about material wealth and success. The meditation is helping to guide me toward a non-judgmental acceptance of them and myself. (McCollum & Gehart, 2010, p. 356)

McCollum and Gehart (2010) concluded that mindfulness meditation helped students learn what it means to be present, attend to their inner experience, and gain a deeper awareness

of their client's experience including their interactions with their client. Some limitations of this study were that only the students who volunteered their journals were reviewed (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). The authors noted it could be argued that only those who benefited were willing to share their journals, or that students wrote what they thought their instructors would want to hear. To counter this limitation, the authors asked students to write about both good and bad aspects of their experience (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). However, criticisms or critiques offered by students were not mentioned in the authors' article.

Treatment outcomes. Bachler, Grepmair, Loew, Mitterlehner, Nickel, and Rother (2007) conducted one of the few randomized, double-blind, controlled studies examining the outcomes of psychotherapists trained in mindfulness and how this influenced their treatment outcomes. The authors examined 18 psychotherapist interns who were trained in mindfulness and were treating 124 inpatient clients. The interns were randomly assigned to one of two groups; one group practiced Zen meditation (experimental group; $n = 9$) and one group did not practice Zen meditation (the control group; $n = 9$). Patients who were treated by the interns were then provided with the Session Questionnaire for General and Differential Individual Psychotherapy (STEP), the Questionnaire of Changes in experience and behavior (VEV), and Symptom Checklist (SCL-90-R). The STEP and the SCL-90-R displayed high measures of internal consistency as evident by their Cronbach's alpha values ranging from $r = .71$ to $r = .91$ (Bachler et al., 2007). Patients who were treated by the psychology interns trained in Zen meditation scored significantly higher on their assessment of individual therapy than the interns who were not trained in Zen meditation (Bachler et al., 2007). Based on the results of this Global Severity Index (GSI) and 8 SLC-90-R scales, it was found that the experimental group displayed

more statistically significant results in regards to symptom reduction while, on the other hand, the experimental group and the control group did not show statistically significant differences in regards to both their perception of distrust as well as the feeling of being used. (Bachler et al., 2007).

Patients treated by the psychology interns who were trained in Zen meditation scored significantly higher on their assessment of individual therapy than the interns who were not trained in Zen meditation (Bachler et al., 2007). These authors reported that "the linear mixed-effects model showed a significant ($p < 0.01$) treatment-by-time effect in the 2 STEP scales clarification and problem-solving perspectives" (p. 336). Based on the results of these GSI and 8 SLC-90-R scales, the researchers found that the experimental group displayed more statistically significant results in regards to symptom reduction (Bachler et al., 2007). However, Bachler et al. noted that the experimental group and the control group did not show statistically significant differences in regards to both their perception of distrust as well as the feeling of being used.

Interconnectivity. Rothaupt and Morgan (2007) conducted a qualitative study that explored the mindfulness practices of counselors and counselor educators who identified as being mindful with their work. The study had six participants (three men and three women), all of which were members of the Rocky Mountain Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors. Data were collected using semistructured interviews, which were taped, transcribed, and checked by interviewees to increase reliability. The researchers used a comparative method to allow for themes to be identified as the study progressed. Three overarching essential themes emerged: (a) an overarching theme to be present in the moment, (b) using a variety of tools to

support mindfulness in their daily lives, and (c) the outcomes of their mindfulness practices (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). The authors found that body awareness was a crucial aspect to the participants' experience of mindfulness meditation. By engaging in mindfulness practices such as walking meditation, participants felt they had a clearer understanding of their current state of being, how to better support their wellness and self-care, and a way to bring themselves back to the present moment (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). Several participants noted that mindfulness meditation provided a way to engage in being in a world they felt is filled with constant demands to do. Participants also spoke about the importance of feeling connected to others. This sense of connection relates to the Buddhist idea of interconnectivity (Kabot-Zinn, 1990). The participants also reported "valuing connections to others, to a higher power, and to nature" (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007, p. 49). For example, one of the participants, Jeremy, spoke in depth about how having a mindfulness practice gave him a greater sense of connectedness to others: "As I meditate I send positive energy to all people. I send a deep respect for all people—a deep love" (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007, p. 49).

Furthermore, the participants spoke to how they invite others to engage in mindfulness (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). Several of the participants spoke about directly inviting students, clients, and supervisers to engage in mindfulness practices such as body scans, breathing exercises, and developing a nonjudgmental attitude. For example, one participant shared that she invites her students to take a moment to become centered and present in the classroom (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). The authors noted several limitations to the study, including the use of a small sample size and the authors did not identify which mindfulness practices were related to which outcome (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). The authors also did not identify whether there was a

necessary amount of time or practice needed to receive the positive benefits of engaging a mindfulness practice.

Mindfulness competencies. Stauffer and Pehrsson (2012) conducted a quantitative study to explore whether or not experts in the field of mindfulness agreed on a set of mindfulness competencies. The study included 59 participants ($N = 52$, 23 females and 29 males) and used a survey design. The researchers used descriptive analysis to address the central research question about evaluating a proposed set of 16 mindfulness competency statements. The overall mean rating was 4.03, with the rating for individual statements falling between 3.71 and 4.38 (Stauffer & Pehrsson, 2012). The authors found that for clients to receive competent training in mindfulness approaches, the counselor or psychotherapist needs to have specific training on how to use mindfulness with specific clients and particular psychological disorders (Stauffer & Pehrsson, 2012).

Contemplative Practices and the Experience of Educators

Few studies have focused on the experience of educators who engage in mindfulness practices. Jennings et al. (2011), however, sought to change the lack of research concentrating on the experience of educators by engaging in a large-scale study exploring the experience of mindfulness with kindergarten through Grade 12 educators. Jennings et al. (2011) developed the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) program, which was designed to reduce stress and increase performance for teachers in kindergarten through Grade 12 settings. The authors conducted a quasiexperimental pilot study with 74 urban school teachers and found that 88% of the participants strongly agreed that this program should be provided as an in-service training for all teachers. In order to conduct their analysis, the authors conducted an ANOVA on

all of the self-reported measures in which the pretest scores were used as the covariate in question. Based on the results of the ANCOVAs, the researchers found that statistically significant effects were observed in all of the major scales of Well-Being, Efficacy, Burnout/Time-Pressure, and Mindfulness, indicating the CARE program was perceived as successful among the teachers (Jennings et al, 2011).

Critiques

Although the research on mindfulness has primarily focused on the benefits gained from the practice, few studies have specifically examined on negative experiences and outcomes of mindfulness practices. Shapiro (1992) explored the adverse effects of meditation with 27 long-term meditators. Shapiro found that 62.9% of the long-term meditators reported experiencing adverse effects such as anxiety, increased tension, boredom, pain, or depression while engaging in insight meditation. Goyal et al. (2014) identified and reviewed randomized clinical trials with active controls for placebo effects. The authors reviewed 18,753 citations, which included 47 trials and 3,515 participants. The authors found that mindfulness meditation was associated with moderate evidence of improvements in anxiety, depression, and pain. The authors also found low evidence of improvements in stress reduction and mental health-related quality of life. As someone who engages in a regular mindfulness practice and has participated in weeklong meditation retreats, I have observed that some meditations are more suited for different personality types. For example, some mindfulness practices that focus on long periods of sitting in silence can be very difficult for high-energy extroverts. Mindfulness practices can also release strong emotional material for practitioners. I have attended retreats in which participants are quite tearful throughout the mindfulness meditation sessions.

Summary and Conclusions

Emerging research has demonstrated many positive outcomes of using mindfulness practices in therapeutic and educational settings. Based on the literature review for this study, current research on contemplative pedagogy in other disciplines such as psychology, education studies, social work education, music education, nursing education, philosophy, and religious studies has shown that it can support increased concentration and attention, well-being, social connection, generosity, creativity, and insight, as well as deepen one's understanding of coursework (Chugh & Bazerman, 2007; Dyebye et al,, 2006; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Hess, 2013; Hutcherson et al., 2008; Jennings, 2008; Kahane, 2009; Lazar et al., 2005; Lynn, 2010; Murphy, 2004; Roberts-Wolfe et al., 2009; Shapiro et al., 1998; Shippee, 2010; Wenger, 2013). Yet, little research has explored counselor educators who have a mindfulness practice and their interaction with diverse students in the classroom. The skills that are developed when one engages in contemplative exercises—such as attention, focus, compassion, a nonjudgmental stance, the ability to see alternative view points, and reactive awareness (Greason & Cashwell, 2009; Jennings, 2008)—are skills that could support counselor educators working with diverse counseling students. The methodological orientation of this study is described in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. I chose hermeneutic phenomenology because it allowed for a detailed description of the distinct, common, or shared lived experience of counselor educators who had a daily mindfulness practice and were working with diverse students. Additionally, the method allowed for the interpretation of findings. This chapter provides an overview of the hermeneutic phenomenological method and the steps I took to complete this study.

Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research is interpretative in nature (Creswell, 2013). By using multiple means of data collection, the researcher can develop a holistic description of complex phenomena (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative approaches are also exploratory in nature and allow the researcher to define an issue (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Qualitative methods can provide a framework for understanding how perceptions, feelings, and values influence behavior.

While there is emerging evidence to the support the use of mindfulness practices with counseling students, a gap exists in the literature on the lived experience of educators. A qualitative method was chosen over a quantitative approach because of this lack of knowledge on the lived experience of counselor educators with a mindfulness practice. If a quantitative approach were used at this point without a full explanation of the lived experience, I could inadvertently engage in imposed etic or impose a cultural bias. Van Kaam (1966) stated in reference to quantitative methods “that statistical methods may distort rather than disclose a

given behavior through an imposition of restricted theoretical constructs on the full meaning and richness of human behavior" (p. 14).

Hermeneutic Phenomenology

Hermeneutic phenomenology was the qualitative method used for this study. In order to add depth to a study, a hermeneutic phenomenology method seeks to both explore the lived experiences of co-participants and engage in the interpretation of the experience (Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 1990). While phenomenology focuses on providing descriptive insight into a lived experience in terms of pre-conscious awareness, hermeneutic phenomenology is based on the assumption that this approach is impossible; all research is reflective of a particular context and worldview (Flowers, Larkin, & Smith, 2009; Moustakas, 1994; Patterson & Williams, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). There is no way to be in this world and be completely free of all capacity for interpretation. Before approaching the research process, the researcher explores how his or her cultural identity and past experiences influence their worldview (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Departing from traditional phenomenology, the researcher does not engage in bracketing, which is regarded as an impossible task (Patterson & Williams, 2002).

Hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on the interpretation of a text and seeks to understand an experience or phenomenon as part of a larger whole. The sum of the experience cannot be understood without knowledge of the parts, and vice versa. The process for exploring the interrelationship between the parts of an experience and the whole is referred to as the hermeneutic circle (Flowers et al., 2009; Moustakas, 1994; Patterson & Williams, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). Hermeneutic epistemology views the development of consciousness as a relationally interconnected process (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Experience is defined by co-

created knowledge between the researcher and co-participant. In hermeneutics, the cocreated interpretative process is referred to as the fusion of two horizons (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Each person's perspective and meaning-making process are their horizon. Thus, a researcher using hermeneutics takes great care to explore one's horizon of meaning (bias) and the structure of one's knowledge (referred to in hermeneutics as the forestructure of understanding).

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to explore lived experiences using qualitative methods. Researchers using hermeneutic phenomenology may examine many different sources of data, but interview data are the most commonly used method for gathering lived experience data. Qualitative inquiry seeks to democratize power relations between the researcher and the participants (Karnieli-Miller, Pessach, & Strier, 2009). Unacknowledged power and hierarchy could have influenced the level of intimacy I established with my co-participants (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). Karnieli-Miller at al. stated that one way this is achieved is by using rapport-building interventions. I used humanistic oriented interviewing skills, active listening, and nonjudgmental-empathic presence to create a compassionate holding space for my interviewees to verbalize their experiences. To further support the development of an egalitarian relationship, I used a semistructured interview, which enhances the collaborative nature of the research interview (Creswell, 2013; Flowers et al., 2009). In hermeneutic phenomenology, the interviewee or co-participant is the expert, setting the rules and times for the interview and providing the narrative of their experience (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Thus, not only is it important what is said, but how it is said.

Hermeneutic phenomenology, similar to mindfulness, seeks to explore the space in between conscious thought and experience, as well as explore how this is reflective of a greater

whole or interconnective way of being in the world. Through engaging in a mindfulness practice, the practitioner is able to note his or her state of being in the moment, feelings, sensations, and thoughts that influence his or her consciousness. A mindfulness practitioner seeks to observe this experience with nonjudgment through regular mindfulness practice. The longer one practices mindfulness, the more one develops a sense of knowing that there is an interrelationship between one's inner psyche experience and what is happening in the external world. By exploring the data and their interrelationship with lived experiences, I supported a holistic understanding of the phenomena and the development of rich, thick descriptions. Moustakas (1994) stated that "interrelationships of science, art, and history is at the heart of hermeneutic design and methodology" (p. 8).

Research Questions

The central question for this study was as follows: What is the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students? I asked three subquestions to add depth:

1. How does a counselor educator who works with diverse students understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom?
2. How does a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice understand cultural background as it relates establishing relationships with his or her students?
3. What does it mean to be a counselor educator who practices mindfulness in pedagogy?

Role of Researcher

Observer-Participant

The role of researcher in hermeneutic phenomenology is reflective of a qualitative research tradition in which the researcher embraces the concept of *researcher as instrument* (Flowers et al., 2009; Moustakas, 1994; Patterson & Williams, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). This concept reflects the value qualitative research places on recognizing the subjective nature of the researcher's worldview in the data collection and analysis process. The concept also reflects an interpretivist paradigm often used in qualitative research. The interpretivist paradigm rests on the assumption that all analysis is reflective of a particular worldview (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Hermeneutics places value on recognizing researcher bias. Hermeneutic phenomenology recognizes the power dynamics between the interviewee and the interviewer. A researcher using this approach seeks to support the development of a relationship with participants that is equalitarian in nature (Flowers et al., 2009; Patterson & Williams, 2002; Van Manen, 1990). This is an essential quality of the role of the researcher using hermeneutic phenomenology as their methodology. Thus, interviewee and the term co-participant will be used interchangeably. In my role as researcher, I sought to create an open, safe, and inviting holding space for my co-participants to share their experiences. To support this process, I engaged in mindfulness practices that concentrate on compassion before and after interviewing my co-participants. Langer (2000) and Siegel (2011) have both engaged in research demonstrating the value of mindfulness in supporting emotional synchronicity and attunement.

Researcher Bias

Hermeneutics, mindfulness, and RCT all emphasize the constructivist notion that, behind the guise of objective positivist analysis, a structure of experience reflects a particular stance or interpretation. Hermeneutics departs from traditional phenomenology in the belief that one cannot seek to understand an essence of an experience pre-judgment; the mere acknowledgement of a particular phenomena or experience is an interpretation (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Rather than seeking to distance oneself from an individual's reality, a hermeneutic researcher views the acknowledgement of conscious interpretation as central to understanding a lived experience. Thus, a researcher using this approach must work to thoroughly explore his or her own potential bias and worldview.

When I first read the definition of contemplative pedagogy, noted by Vanderbilt University (2012) about how "involve(s) teaching methods designed to cultivate deepened awareness, concentration, and insight," I was drawn to it (p. 1). I felt an intuitive sense of knowing when I heard the last three words: *awareness, concentration, and insight*. These words resonated with me and what I understood to be true about the process of education. As someone who has exposure to a variety of learning environments, both as a student and teacher, I felt a sense of knowing that awareness, concentration, and insight, when intentionally created in the classroom, were at the core of positive learning experiences. While I was drawn to the processes that a teacher would seek to cultivate using this teaching approach, it was not clear to me from the beginning what was meant by the term contemplative pedagogy. Through my research I came across the organization called The Contemplative Mind in Society. I saw an image on their website named The Contemplative Tree of Practices, which had many different types of

reflective practices that are drawn from a variety of traditions. As I continued with my research, I came to understand that the word contemplative was used instead of mindfulness to support the inclusion of contemplative practices across cultures that sought to cultivate the states of being associated with mindfulness (Babezat & Bush, 2013). From this perspective, mindfulness was not only a way to engage in self-care, but a way to intentionally develop the attitudes of mindfulness: compassion, empathy, and nonjudgement.

Contemplative pedagogy places a value on both the technical and intuitive nature of learning and teaching. So much of learning and teaching approaches today lean toward the technical nature. This may make it easier for educators to measure outcomes, but there is then a missed opportunity to develop the student's inner reality. Recently, research findings on interpersonal neurobiology have demonstrated that inner-psyche intuitive experiences are created as a result of an interrelationship between people. Counselors are expected to become experts in unconditional positive regard. There is a large focus on the didactic teaching of attending skills that convey compassion. Yet, compassion cannot be fully experienced without compassion for one's self. Mindfulness practices, such as the one described in the introduction of Chapter 1, are used to cultivate compassion in the practitioner.

For some people, mindfulness practice becomes a conduit for social justice. I am a counselor and counselor educator who would identify as having a social-justice orientation. As I began to develop my own mindfulness practice, I started noticing my interactions with my students with acute detail. With an open sense of awareness, I began to notice subtleties in my own bias. Whiteness and White privilege are so embedded in American culture; it can be difficult to notice subtler forms of internalized prejudicial views. As my level of internal

reactivity was lowered, I noticed more about my interpersonal experiences with students because I allowed myself to observe my experience and my students without judgment. Noticing subtler forms of privilege I had as a White counselor educator was painful, but I was more open to exploring this experience because I knew I did not need to react to the affective experiences; I could just take the time to notice and explore the experience.

Methodology

Sampling and Recruitment

Multiple factors influence sample size in qualitative research. For example, researchers have to make decisions about what the setting will be, how they will gain access to their participants (gatekeeping), and whether they will observe or interview their participants (Huber, Miles, & Saldana, 2014). Patton (2002) stated that sampling can be influenced by a number of factors, such as the focus and purpose of the study, what the researcher wishes to do with the collected data, time, resources, and credibility. All of these factors can influence sample size. If a study seeks to learn more in-depth information, is exploratory in nature, and generalizing is less of a concern, then having a single participant may be an appropriate sample size. However, if the research question is examining an experience that may be more common and there is less time for in-depth interviewing, then a larger sample may be be needed. It is worth noting the debate in the literature about "how many" participants are enough for a qualitative study (Curtis et al., 2000). What is consistently noted is that sampling in qualitative research should be purposeful (Huber et al., 2014; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Creswell (1998) suggested the researcher seek 10 to 15 participants in the data collection for a phenomenological study. However, once the data are saturated, which may be possible with less than 10 participants, then data collection

should cease. For this study, I sought 10 participants; however, I had also planned on expanding the number in order to achieve saturation.

I used combination or mixed purposeful sampling. Combination or mixed purposeful sampling allows for the use of more than one sampling method. For this study, criterion sampling and opportunistic or emergent sampling were used. Snowball sampling was considered because individuals who are interested in mindfulness practice often attend conferences, workshops, and retreats solely centered on engaging in mindfulness practices. For this study, I used criterion sampling because I was seeking a specific sample in that participants must (a) have a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology, (b) must currently be teaching in a master's or doctoral level counseling program, and (c) currently identify as having a daily mindfulness practice. Finally, I used opportunistic or emergent sampling to take advantage of unexpected leads during the data collection process. Just as mindfulness is about truly *being* in the moment, opportunistic or emergent sampling is about being flexible and taking advantage of what is unfolding in the moment.

Based on my sampling methods, I sought participants in the following ways. First, I obtained participants by calling or sending e-mails seeking participation from counselor educators who have publications on the use of mindfulness in counselor education. The invitation by e-mail can be found in Appendix C, and the phone call invitation script can be found in Appendix D. The publications included peer-reviewed counseling journal articles, websites, or professional newsletters that have a focus on the use of mindfulness in counselor education. Second, I obtained participants by calling and sending e-mails to counselor educators who have presented at professional counseling conferences on the use of mindfulness in

counselor education. Third, I sought to obtain participants by using CESnet listserv, the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) listserv, the Mindfulness in Education Network listserv, the American Mindful Research Association listserv, the Pennsylvania Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors listserv, and The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE) listserv. The listserv invitation that I used for this study can be found in Appendix B.

I sought previously published conference itineraries to locate presenters who focused on the use of mindfulness in counselor education. Then I sought to locate their contact information from the internet. For example, if I found a counselor educator who had presented on the use of mindfulness, I looked to find their contact information from their institution's website. I then sent them the e-mail invitation that can be found in Appendix C. When I sent e-mail invitations to counselor educators who have published on mindfulness, I used the e-mail or phone number listed as the preferred contact in the journal article. Furthermore, since I am a member of the CESnet listserv, the ASERVIC listserv, the Mindfulness in Education Network, The Mind and Life Institute listserv, the American Mindful Research Association listserv, the Pennsylvania Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors listserv, and the ACMHE listserv. I posted invitations on these listservs using the listserv invitation that can be found in Appendix B.

The schedule for listserv announcement was once every 3 weeks. I did not post more than three times on any one listserv. The procedure for e-mail and phone calls followed this schedule: Once a potential participant was identified, on day 1 I sent out an e-mail invitation to the potential participant. If this person did not respond by day 7, then my plan was to I send a second e-mail invitation on day 8, followed by a phone call invitation on day 10. But I did not

need to do this. I found 10 participants before I reached the need to send a second e-mail. Since I used an emergent design, I sent e-mails to potential participants who I found through my research. Once the interview was complete, I sent a follow-up e-mail asking the participant to complete a member check. See Appendix E for the member check e-mail. After the completion of the member check, I thanked the interviewee for his or her willingness to participate in the study.

Sources for Data Collection

The goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to explore lived experiences using qualitative methods. Thus, interview data were a crucial component to this study. The researcher using this method takes great care to use a humanistic oriented interviewing style. Researchers using qualitative methods need to continually reflect on how the structure and context of relational interaction are influenced by structures of power and privilege. The role of the researcher is to capture the essence of the lived experience. I took an approach that acknowledged social-cultural and contextual factors that influence power dynamics between myself and my co-participants. The interview process was a collaborative, cocreated, and emergent process. In hermeneutic phenomenology the researcher embraces the idea of self as an instrument. Semistructured interviewing was used to enhance the collaborative nature of the research interview. Patterson and Williams (2002) noted several advantages of preplanned interview questions. For example, preplanned questions can serve as a guide for the interviewer and interviewee. Some preplanned questions assure the researcher that all relevant topics will be covered. Developing some preplanned questions can reveal hidden bias or assumptions (Charmaz, 1991; Patterson & Williams, 2002). Thus, I developed an interview protocol that can be found in Appendix A.

However, overcommitting or rigidly adhering to a set of questions can disrupt the interview process. I could have begun to make assumptions about how the interviewees would answer their questions or ask leading-probes. Hermeneutic phenomenology is an emergent process so findings from previous interviewees will guide subsequent interviews (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Thus, my interview questions served as a guide, rather than a rigid protocol. All interview data were transcribed in order to review the data several times and engage in the hermeneutic circle. Additionally, as a way to enhance my reflexivity, I engaged in mindfulness practice before each interview that seeks to support a beginner's mind, namely, a mind open and curious, an enthusiastically analytically and innovative mind, a mind dedicated to the exploration of ideas and committed to the care and feeding of the research process.

Interview data were sought via face-to-face interviews, the use of video conferencing, and telephone. With the permission of the participants, all interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. The researcher used books, The Contemplative Mind in Society website (http://www.contemplativemind .org/), and e-mail to study multiple views. Website information such as The Tree of Contemplative Practice (http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree) or research articles (http://www.contemplativemind.org/resources/higher-education /recommended-reading) were used during triangulation. When I conducted my member checks, if the interviewee provided additional information via e-mail—whether images, text, or video files they wanted to include—then the e-mail data were analyzed. I hand-coded my data and used Excel software as a log.

Depending on timing, space, and distance, I determined what type of interview approach to use. For example, if geography presented a problem for an in-person interview, I used the

phone or an internet-based video-conferencing software program of the participant's choice. I needed to make sure I had adequate recording procedures and a protocol in place. To record a phone call, I used a software application on my phone. I used a digital recorder if the interview was conducted in person. Additionally, I used screen recording software for any video-conferencing interviews, as well as a pen and paper to write down responses. All efforts were made to interview participants when and where it was convenient for them. I kept the digital files on flash drives as well as handwritten notes in a locked cabinet in my home office. Only I had access to the data so I and could provide the data to my dissertation committee upon request. All of the interview data will be kept for 5 years in the locked cabinet, at which point all the interview data will be destroyed.

Data Analysis

Hermeneutic phenomenology data analysis begins with an in-depth analysis of individual interviews. The goal of the data analysis process is to determine frequently occurring themes and seek to intentionally organize, interpret, and present findings. Data analysis in hermeneutic phenomenology is not a prescribed process (Patterson & Williams, 2002). Thus, researchers using this process seek an organizing structure. Patterson and Williams (2002) offers the following organizing structure that I followed for data analysis: (a) transcribe interviews to support engagement in the hermeneutic circle, (b) decide on an index system, (c) review interview data, (d) identify meaning units, (e) begin to develop thematic labels (f) develop visual aids to help organize themes and to support identification of their interrelationships, (g) write an interpretative discussion, and (h) take time and reflect on each subsequent interview to review and reflect on relevant findings. Following this process, I used Transcriptionstar.com, a Health

Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)-compliant transcriptionist. I then indexed my data using emergent concepts and logged them in Excel. I organized the themes by hand to support identification of their interrelationships. To further support identification of themes, I created concept maps. I also engaged in reflexive art journaling after the interview process and during the process of identifying themes. Finally, I used mindfulness practices before and after interviews and engaged in contemplative writing process. In Chapter 5, I provide an interpretative discussion.

Issues of Trustworthiness

There is no greater concern in research than attending to the rigor of the research process. Guba (1981) identified four concerns that require attention by every researcher: (a) How can a researcher have confidence in their findings? (b) How can the researcher know if his or her findings are applicable in different settings? (c) How does the researcher know if the outcome findings would be consistent if the study were repeated with similar participants and context? and (d) How does the researcher know if the investigation was influenced by one's personal bias? These questions provide the framework for establishing rigor in one's research. In qualitative research the researcher seeks to find ways to support the trustworthiness of one's process and findings. To address trustworthiness concerns, a qualitative researcher must address how he or she will support credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Below I present a detailed description of how rigor is established.

Credibility

Credibility supports the researcher knowing if there is consistency between their findings and the lived experiences of their co-participants (Patterson & Williams, 2002). To ensure this

aspect of trustworthiness, I engaged in triangulation using multiple sources of data. Triangulation is a way to ensure that multiple perspectives and interrelationships have been explored (Patterson & Williams, 2002). I gathered multiple forms of data such as my transcribed interviews, images, articles, books, and website information. Additionally, I identified my researcher bias and used member checks. Member checks are a critical method for ensuring credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks also help to eliminate researcher bias. Once my co-participants provided a member check and determined that the transcription was accurate, I began my data analysis.

Transferability

Transferability refers to how well the findings in this qualitative study can be found again if a researcher were to repeat this study with similar participants and contexts (Flowers et al., 2009). To ensure transferability I provided rich, thick descriptions and used purposeful sampling. Rich, thick descriptions help to ensure that another researcher could replicate the study under similar conditions (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002). Thus, the research process and data analysis process were highly detailed. Purposeful sampling identifies key informants for the study as well as provides in-depth findings (Anney, 2014).

Dependability

Dependability is concerned with demonstrating consistency in findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To establish dependability, I provided rich, thick descriptions and identified my researcher bias, as well as provided limitations and delimitations of this study. I also used triangulation and audit trails. Furthermore, my dependability was strengthened by having seasoned researchers as part of my team of verifiers.

Confirmability

Confirmability is used by qualitative researchers to establish trustworthiness (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Confirmability is centered on how well the research findings could be corroborated by other researchers. From an interpretivist perspective, confirmability is established by demonstrating that the researcher did not invent or misrepresent their data (Mason, 2002).To establish conformability I used an audit trail that included all raw data, notes, documents, and artifacts. I also used reflexive art journaling to explore my own beliefs and thoughts about the study.

Ethics

It was important to build rapport and develop trusting relationships with my participants. I provided all of my participants with informed consent. The informed consent included a statement that let the participants know they could drop out at any time. I informed the participants that if they choose at any time to discontinue their participation, they would not be treated differently for making this decision. I also informed participants that they may skip any question and may request to keep their answers confidential. The informed consent was used for this study, which all participants were asked to sign.

Each participant was assigned a number, and no reference to any identifying information in any reports for this study. I used Transcriptionstar, a transcription service that is HIPAA compliant. See Transcriptionstars.com Confidentiality Disclosure Statement in Appendix F. All of my material will be stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. After 5 years, all material related to the interview will be destroyed. Finally, I also needed to identify and

acknowledge my beliefs and assumptions about the utility of contemplative pedagogy in counselor education.

Summary

In this chapter**,** hermeneutic phenomenology philosophical assumptions and methodological steps were established to explore the nature of this approach (i.e., is it distinct, common, or shared lived experience?) for counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice and are working with diverse students. Researcher bias was stated to emphasize transparency and context as an essential component of this study. 10 participants were sought. Combination or mixed purposeful sampling was used to identify the participants. Ethical and trustworthiness of data were also addressed. In Chapter 4, I present my findings.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. I used hermeneutic phenomenology to identify the essence of the counselor educators' lived experiences. I chose hermeneutics, a subtype of phenomenology, so I could use the current research literature as a way to provide a lens to interpret the participants' lived experiences. Following Moustakas (1994) recommendations to develop rich, thick descriptions, I interviewed 10 counselor educators using a semistructured interview process. I used that data to engage in the hermeneutic circle, as well as to answer the research questions for this study. The central question for this study was as follows: What is the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students? I asked three subquestions to add depth:

1. How does a counselor educator who works with diverse students understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom?
2. How does a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice understand cultural background as it relates establishing relationships with his or her students?
3. What does it mean to be a counselor educator who practices mindfulness in pedagogy?

In Chapter 4 I present the data from interviews with 10 counselor educators who reported having a daily mindfulness practice and who were currently working with diverse students in the classroom. I also present the details about the setting, demographics, data collection, data analysis process, evidence of trustworthiness, and results of this study.

Setting

I began sending invitations to recruits on February 10, 2016, when I received IRB approval (No. 02-10-16-0127744). Data collection began on February 12, when I sent the initial round of invitations to the following listservs: (a) the CESnet listserv, (b) the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) listserv, (c) the Mindfulness in Education Network, and (d) The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE). Within 2 days, six individuals reported that they were willing to participate and met the criteria. After waiting another 7 days, I sent another round of invitations on the same listservs and recruited two more counselor educators who were willing to participate and met the criteria . I then sent individual e-mail invitations to counselor educators who had presented or published on the use of mindfulness in counselor education.

I interviewed 10 participants— 8 through using the CESnet listserv and others from the 25 individual e-mail invitations. I conducted all interviews over the phone at the participants' chosen time.

Demographics

In order to participate in this study, participants signed an informed consent, which confirmed they meet the following criteria: (a) had a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology, (b) were currently teaching in a master's or doctoral level counseling program, (c) were currently identified as having a mindfulness practice, (d) had the ability to access a phone, the internet, and e-mail, (e) were available to commit to a 60- to 90-minute interview at a time of their choosing, and (e) could provide follow-up information after the interview. As stated in the Chapter 4, 10 participants participated in this study. The participants

were geographically located all over the United States. I asked my participants four demographic questions as part of the semistructured interview: (a) How long have you been a counselor educator? (b) Do you work for a secular or religious institution? (c) How do you define your gender? (d) How do you define your racial-ethnic background?

The participants had varying amounts of experience, ranging from 9 months to 25 years. Five participants identified as female, and five participants identified as male. Participants identified their cultural backgrounds in the following ways: (a) White, Euro-American (10 participants), (b) Jewish (3 participants), and (d) part Native American (1 participant). All of the participants were currently working at universities that they identified as secular. Three of the participants noted teaching in distance-based online counseling classrooms. However, one participant noted that the program he worked within had an emphasis on holistic approaches to counseling and spirituality. Interviews were 30 to 90 minutes in length. I conducted one to two interviews each week over a period of 6 weeks.

Participant Profiles

Each participant was randomly assigned a pseudonym. Below is a participant profile for each participant who participated in this study.

P.C.: This participant has been a counselor educator at the post-doctoral level for 3 and a half years and is currently working for an institution in the southern part of the United States. P.C. presented as knowledgeable, both in her work as a counselor educator and her discussion of her mindfulness practice. Her research focuses on exploring mindfulness practices. Her discussion of her mindfulness practice and use of mindfulness in the classroom reflect a scholar-practitioner model. When she discussed her own mindfulness practice, she noted both mindfulness practices

and a mindful attitude that she seeks to cultivate. For example, she described her personal definition of mindfulness as follows: "it really is awareness, an intentional sort of paying attention to the present moment, but bringing a lot of that warmth and friendliness and compassion, curiosity and openness to that attention, that's what it is, yeah." She is influenced by Kabat-Zinn's work, and she also likes the five mindfulness skills of observe, describe, act with awareness, non-react, and non-judge, which are described in the Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire.

P.P.: This participant had been working as a counselor educator for 2 years. I felt a deep sense of warmth, kindness, and humility while speaking with her. When discussing her definition of mindfulness, she stated,

> I tend to really embrace aspects of John Kabat-Zinn's mindfulness definition which is along the lines of paying attention on purpose with non-judgment and that to me is really the essence of mindfulness and I guess I would add in like with gentleness.

She noted that she previously worked in student affairs counseling. Additionally, P.P. discussed that her mindfulness practice has helped her to develop compassion for herself and others. She seeks to cultivate a mindful attitude and enjoys bringing mindfulness practices in her counseling classrooms.

P.E.: This participant identified as a Caucasian and Native American male who works for a secular state university in the southwestern part of the United States. At the time of the interview, P.E. had been a counselor educator for 9 months. His intonation was kind, and when he speaks about mindfulness and how it has influenced his life and his classroom experience, I felt a sense

of interconnectedness in his experience. His definition of mindfulness was holistic in nature. P.E. stated,

> For me mindfulness is… it's more than just a technique for me to use with my clients or my students mindfulness really is something that is to be lived. How you, , acknowledge those parts of you and whether it's physical, spiritual, emotional, mental and the role that they play in your life; I think mindfulness really is about staying grounded in your senses and knowing that it's more than just events that happen around you because there is, an interaction there. And with mindfulness I can take responsibility for what is my role in this, how can I change it if it's something that's uncomfortable.

P.W.: This participant identified as a Caucasian female who works for a secular online university and has been a counselor educator for 22 years. She was kind and self-assured in what she shared during the interview, a reflection of her many years of experience as a counselor educator. Her definition of mindfulness centered on present-moment awareness and creativity. She stated,

> I think the present and the moment and the awareness of thought processes is important, because when you are aware of them we can change them or not judge them and let them go. But you know like being really present with every moment. It's hard because our minds are so busy, but the more mindful we are in the present the more effective I think, we can be more creative.

P.M.: This participant had been a counselor educator for 2 years. She identified as a Caucasian female and worked for a secular, liberal arts college in the northeast part of the United States. P.M. was raised in a Christian household but was converting to Judaism. She reported seeing

many aspects of mindfulness within Judaism. As I listened to her experiences, I felt a deep sense of compassion and empathy from her. She spoke with energy about her mindfulness practice and how her mindfulness practice influenced her classroom experience. When describing her definition of mindfulness, she stated,

> that's a good question because it's such a broad topic and a lot of ways to conceptualize it, but for me the way I try to live it is just, attempting to be aware and present in the present moment free of distractions and perseverations, thoughts, and things like that. And at the same time though, it's not possible to always be free of distractions and thoughts and so an awareness of possibility for those and the acceptance of that.

P.D.: This participant identified as a White male and worked for a research institution in the northeast part of the United States. He has been a counselor educator for 15 years. He also spoke with a sense of kind self-assuredness, possibly reflective of his years of experience as a counselor educator. Participant P.D. was introduced to mindfulness through Kabat-Zinn's work. When he was experiencing back pain, he began to read Kabat-Zinn's work 10 years ago. When asked how he defined mindfulness, he stated, "So I love to—when I read about it or present about it or talk about it, I always use Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition. Paying attention on purpose in the present moment, non-judgmentally."

P.T.: This participant identified as a White male and worked for a secular institution. P.T. has been a counselor educator for 1 year, but noted that he had been a counselor and clinical supervisor for several years before becoming a counselor educator. His answers to the semistructured interview questions were thoughtful and intellectual in nature. While discussing how he defines mindfulness, he noted,

> So when I'm thinking of mindfulness as a researcher, I think, also in my own personal practice too, I have a much narrower definition than what I see a lot of people have, and the conceptualization of mindfulness coming more out of neurobiology. And I see mindfulness is just leading a form of attention that is—that focuses on present moment experiences while adopting a sense of acceptance of whatever those experiences may be. When I talk about mindfulness in that concept with a lot of people, I like to make some distinctions about, , this is a just a way of paying attention that differs from being on auto-pilot where you're engaged in the present moment activity but your thoughts cannot adopt that activity or multitasking. It differs from perseverations where you're just noticing the thought and then, continually engaging or on the spot as opposed to letting it pass and seeing what else comes up based on the present moment.

P.Z.: This participant identified as White, Jewish, and male. He worked for a secular university, but noted that the counseling program for which he taught has a holistic and spirituality-based component to it. He has been a counselor educator for 6 years. He discussed his experience with mindfulness in his own life and with his students with a loving-reflective quality. When defining mindfulness he stated,

> I define mindfulness as bringing one's attention to your rising and passing of everything. Yeah the rising and passing of all phenomenon basically and it's a very phenomenon externally, felt phenomenon internally. And as long it's simply shared, but not simply done type of experiences.

P.K.: This participant identified as a White female and worked for a secular online university. P.K. received her PhD in counselor education in 2009. She also worked as a minister before

becoming a counselor. She had a joyful and kind disposition. When reflecting on her mindfulness practice, she stated, "The practice or ability to engage in deep breathing and seeking to focus on whatever is in front of me."

P.A.: This participant identified as a White male and works for a secular online university. He had been a counselor educator for 10 years. Additionally, he had been practicing mindfulness for over 20 years. P.A.'s mindfulness practice was influenced by his study and practice of Buddhism. P.A. also taught mindfulness outside of counselor education. He noted that mindfulness was defined differently depending on the community. For example, he stated,

> So I'm – some of the different ways, I think one is that mindfulness is just – there is technical terms for it, there's research terms. There's how specific communities refer to it and a certain word has its meaning and basis in what the community [reasons with that], so with different communities you get slightly differently.

Table 1 provides a summary of the participants' demographic information in this study.

Table 1

Summary of Participants' Demographic Information

Participant Identifier	**Participant Description**
P.C.	White/Caucasian, female, Jewish; works for a secular, state university in the southern part of the United States. She has been working as a counselor educator post-doc for 3 and a half years.
P.P.	White/Caucasian, female; works for a secular, state university in the southeast part of the United States. Currently in her second academic year as a counselor educator.
P.E.	Caucasian, Native American, male; works for a secular state university in the southwestern part of the United States. He has been a counselor educator for 9 months.
P.W.	Caucasian, female; works for secular online university and has been a counselor educator for 22 years.
P.M.	Caucasian, female, works for a secular, liberal arts college in the northeast part of the United States. Has been a counselor educator for 2 years. She is currently converting to Judaism.
P.D.	White, male; works for a research institution in the northeast part of the United States and has been a counselor educator for 15 years.
P.T.	White, male; works in a secular institution. He has been a counselor educator for 1 year.
P.Z.	White, Jewish, male; works at a secular university but the counseling program where he teaches has a holistic and spirituality-based component. He has been a counselor educator for 6 years.
P.K.	White, female; works for a secular online university. She received her PhD in counselor education in 2009. She also has previously worked as a minister.
P.A.	White, male; works for a secular online university and has been a counselor educator for 10 years. Has been practicing mindfulness for over 20 years. Influenced by Zen tradition. Also teaches mindfulness outside of counselor education.

Data Collection

I conducted the interviews by telephone. I recorded these phone calls using the phone application Automatic Call Recorder. The recorded interview sessions lasted anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes in length. Having received such a strong response with my first two invitations to participate in this study, I was able to record and transcribe eight of the interviews quickly. In the beginning of conducting my interviews, I uploaded my audio files immediately after I engaged in reflective journaling about the interview. I uploaded the audio files to Transcriptionstar.com, a transcription company that provides HIPPA-compliant transcription (see Appendix F for documentation of Transcriptionstar's HIPPA compliance).

I uploaded the audio files to transcriptionstar.com and received transcribed files within 5 days. As soon as I received notice that my transcribed file was available, I reviewed each file. After this initial review, I e-mailed the participants the transcribed interview for member checking. All of the participants were offered the option of having the transcribed interview e-mailed or mailed to them. All of the participants requested that I send their transcribed interviews to them via e-mail. It took participants an average time of 2 to 4 weeks to return their member checked file to me by e-mail.

After conducting the first eight interviews, I was able to complete the last two interviews within a 2-week period. I completed all 10 of the interviews within 6 weeks of the initial e-mail invitation which took place on February 11, 2016. I chose to have these last two interviews transcribed at the same time. When I went to upload my recorded files to the Transcriptionstar.com website, I realized my audio files had corrupted. I was not able to recover the audio interview data. After consulting with my dissertation committee, I sent an e-mail to the

two participants whose audio files corrupted and asked if they would be willing to re-conduct the interviews. Both participants kindly offered to re-conduct the interviews with me. Completing the two interviews again allowed for added depth in the participants' responses. Both participants restated what they shared during the initial interview, but they also added some additional insights that they did not share during the first interview. I needed an additional 2 weeks to re-conduct the two interviews I had lost. Thus, I was able to collect the interview data from 10 participants within 8 eight weeks of the initial e-mail invitation. I finished interviewing all the participants in this study by April 5, 2016. It took additional three weeks to receive the final member check transcription files from the last two participants. The data collection process was complete by the end of April, 2016.

Data Analysis

Hermeneutic interpretation is a dynamic and cyclical process; it allows for relevant literature to guide the thematic analysis while also seeking to identify emerging themes and then exploring the emergent themes within the context of relevant literature, which is referred to as engaging in the hermeneutic circle. To begin engaging in the hermeneutic circle, I had each interview transcribed by Transcriptionstar.com, a HIPAA-compliant transcriptionist service. Once the service transcribed the interview, I sent the transcription to the participant for member check. Once the member check was completed, I began to read over the transcribed interview, noting repeating terms, major concepts, and ideas, and I made reflective notes to make sure I understood both the parts and the whole of the transcribed interview. After this process, I began lean coding the data in a Word document. Creswell (2016) noted that lean coding is "a process of forming a smaller number of codes rather a larger number of codes in my analysis process"

(p. 155). After I reviewed all of the transcribed interviews, I created a Word document in which I copied the headers from my literature review for this dissertation study found in Chapter 2. I used the literature headers as my level one theme. I then placed the lean codes (emergent themes) under each literature-based theme. Under each theme I then placed major ideas, concepts, and quotes from the transcribed interviews. To keep track of page numbers associated with the themes, I kept an Excel spreadsheet as a log.

Thematic Analysis

Theme 1: Mindfulness Practices

Counselor educators who participated in this study draw from a wide variety of mindfulness practices. The practices described by the participants were both formal and informal in nature. However, all of the participants noted that they engage in some type of daily mindfulness practice. The participants for this study seemed to fall on a spectrum of consistency related to the amount of time spent engaging in their mindfulness practices. Participants noted varying comfort levels with mindfulness meditations that required long periods of sitting. The participant's worldview and cultural background had an influence on the time, consistency, and type of mindfulness practice. For example, one participant who identified as Jewish reported that Jewish prayer was an integral part of his mindfulness practice. P.Z. stated, "I do breath awareness and I guess I started sitting in like a Jewish meditation context which is basically like the Vipassana, insight meditation from the Buddha subscribed put into a Jewish context."

The most common mindfulness practices participants discussed were sitting meditation and focused attention on the breath. For example, P.E, shared the following comments:

> And I will tell you: I probably don't have a specific type of meditation. I do try in the evenings, especially when I am at that point where I am just trying to disconnect with technology and turn everything off, I usually will sit for about 15 to 20 minutes. I have a candle that I light just to help kind of set the mood. And I just sit with my thoughts and allow that to kind of process the day out for me.

P.T shared a similar practice:

> I do sitting meditation. But, , sometimes things come up. But sitting meditation, I usually do—I try to do it first thing in the morning when I wake up. I try to sit for 10 to 15 minutes. If I can't get it in there, I'll try to do it sometime around noon.

Other formal practices that participants noted included visualization meditation, Vipassana (also referred to as insight meditation), Zen meditation, paying attention to and letting go of thoughts, and yoga. Participant P.K. discussed doing a combination of practices:

> Mindfulness (breathing) practice is probably the main one, would be kind of to keep breathing and seeking to focus on whatever is in front of me, would be the primary one, from a personal perspective. And sometimes it's easier to do that or work on it when I'm at the gym or doing yoga. So sometimes it's combined with exercise. So I think that would probably be the main one.

Some participants noted spiritual-based mindfulness practices such as prayer, chanting, Jewish prayer, and Christian contemplative meditations. All of the participants reported they have been practicing mindfulness for at least 5 years and noted that everyday experiences offered opportunities to engage in mindfulness practices. Some of these daily practices included baking

bread, playing with children, driving, disconnecting from technology, slowly tasting food, listening to relaxing music, being in nature, and being in one's own presence.

Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the mindfulness practices noted by these participants.

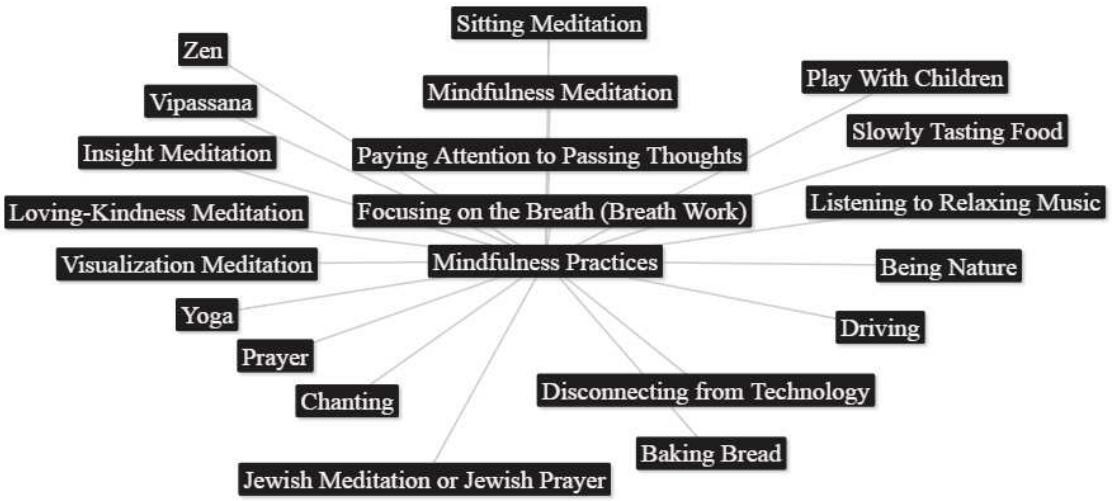

Figure 3. A visual representation of the participants' mindfulness practices.

Mindfulness practices for the classroom. Participants expressed varying ways in which they incorporated mindfulness into the classroom, but all of the participants noted using mindfulness practices in some way within the classroom environment. The classes that counselor educators incorporated mindfulness practices into varied, although counseling attending skills and practicum were noted repeatedly. Participant P.M, stated:

> Right or an internship or what have you and they're always so worried that they're not going to say the right thing or what have you and I remember saying to them, "Really? Often times, you just need to shut up, we don't do that in this culture; we just don't." They were just not listening to each other and you just need to wake up and be with them.

Participant P.K. also noted that practicum and internship were ideal times to introduce mindfulness and shared the following comments:

> I know when I—when—in some of the classes, it's easier to teach or talk about it, like a practicum or an internship. Some of the students do use it in their work with their clients, so it's brought up during their case studies or during class times, when we discuss what works, what doesn't work, what's your theoretical orientation, that type of thing. Do introduce some of those, the techniques of mindfulness in the class. So that would primarily be the ways that I use it as a counselor educator with students.

Participant P.Z. discussed the value of mindfulness practices in providing counselors who are learning attending skills with a language to talk about their skill development. P.Z. stated,

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. But the work, I feel like nourished…to impress upon students is that you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. So and for me you know a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me…not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence. So actually it just gives a language, it helps you with like a language to talk about these skills that you know the additional positive regards, to be genuine and to be you know have empathy so for me there's so much of that, the basis of that is

mindfulness. So I could kind of talk to students about that and have a language in my practices and things like that.

Participant P.T. reflected on the value of mindfulness during his own experience in practicum. During this time, he was also drawn to learning about mindfulness. He had been given some feedback from his professor about being overly analytical while working with clients. He stated,

> I grew up in a very rural community in Texas. And I think, the certain point I was just curious about other ways of thinking, other ways of thinking on religion and spirituality and I think in exploring those Buddhism was one of the area that I kind of just did a lot of intellectual study on and if I was, let's try this mindfulness thing. You know, I think it was just kind of reading books. I mean, there weren't you know, temples or meditation centers where there was an opportunity to get formal training or even informal training. And it was this pessimist thing with me is I wasn't quite sure what I was doing but there would be times that I notice I felt calm and felt good and felt some, like, I was more focused. And I guess, you know, when I was, I don't know, I think my mid-20s, I kind of fell away. But then when I was doing my practicum with counseling students, one of the things my professor kept telling me, it was like, "P.T, you got to get out of your head, your being analytical, just be in the room." And there was a third or fourth session with this client, and I think my first or second client, where she was doing feedback and I don't know exactly what I did but it felt different and I have this idea like, "Huh, this kind of reminds of being mindful," which kind of went back to focusing on the student. And then the feedback in that session was, like, "Interviewee, you seemed much more comfortable

> and present. You didn't seem like you were in your head as much." And, so, I think I planted this little idea about, "Okay, huh, you know, that when I recalled mindfulness practices, it really reminds me of this experience of being with this client" and being that way with the client, it seemed to be more of what I should be doing.

The participants noted other counseling classes that included theories, multicultural counseling, substance abuse, and group counseling. Participant P.E. discussed the use of mindfulness in his substance abuse class:

> You know for me a lot of that really does depend on the student and where they are at. I try to let my class know at the beginning of classes that I like to incorporate a lot of mindfulness techniques and throughout the semester and hopefully they will be able to see that as we go through. But it really, a lot of that depends on the student and where they are at as well as course content. When I am teaching substance abuse classes for substance abuse counseling I tend to incorporate a lot more as far as mindfulness techniques because my background working in substance use definitely tends to aid that because I know the mindfulness techniques that I have incorporated in the practice and how this will help you know in this area or that area. Same thing when I am doing a class on working with kids in trauma I tend to incorporate a lot more mindfulness stuff there.

Participant P.A. also noted the value of using mindfulness in theories and practicum with these comments:

> So I'm not—some of these are like, oh, mindfulness is everything. It's not, but it has a place inside our traditional theories and our traditional practices and especially if you're training new counselors because sometimes people will have really—not really work

> very much on the mental hygiene. It seems to me that there is, you know, schools really focus on academic improvements to the mind, so knowing things. But not necessarily always about how our mind works, sometimes, it's even working on helping students gain, have better memory, or have better recall, or process math or something faster, but not always about skills and things like that, to pay attention, or to let go of things mentally.
>
> So many times, it shows up on the master's program, so I don't really know how to be silent, I don't know how to just sit with my thoughts and not do something physically, some of my students in practicum—I might do some exercise and you know, give them some materials about here's where we can go to this really great .edu, and body scan some of the other practices, here's some resources.

All of the participants noted that they reflected on whether or not their students would be receptive to engaging in mindfulness practices before they decided to use any mindfulness practices in the classroom. Some counselor educators intentionally incorporated mindfulness practices each class. Others noted that they would only bring it in if they felt their students would have an interest or to support their students' wellness while learning. For example, P.E, noted:

> You know there are times where we have a 3 hour lecture night, for most of our classes. So you know if we had a class that's real heavy on a topic and about halfway through I can tell people are becoming fidgety or you know they are tired, they have been there, 3 hours is a long time. You know that might be a moment where I decide you know hey let's practice a technique real quick, because it gives them something to be aware of how

they are feeling and what's going on with them. And it also kind of breaks the lecture part you know so it is kind of in the moment beneficial at times.

Seven of the participants reported they include mindfulness as a regular part of class. For example, P.P. noted that she decided that for her counseling attending skills and short-term strategies class (a class she noted unique to her university) she would begin each class with a mindfulness practice. She shared these comments:

> My first class that I taught was, this class that is unique to my university. It's one of the things where I am like, "I don't know where this fits in the CACREP standards." Okay. Yeah, yeah. It's called short-term strategies, and we look at like shorter term interventions—like we look at motivational interviewing and REBT and, I mean just, anyway…It didn't really matter. So, I started doing mindfulness at the beginning of that class because it was the first class I was teaching and like, you know, Monday of classes, and I was like, "I know that." I need to settle down, so, I am sure they are too, I mean, this could be a faculty member, a second year masters students that were in internship and like, "Who is this new lady?" Everyone's rushing from internship to come to class and trying to be on time, and they're just like, "We're going to do that." And, you know, one of the students approached me afterwards and, you know, confessed his mindfulness practice, which was really fun.
>
> Interviewer: That is fun.
>
> P.P: Yeah, it was really funny. And then that student I ended up working really closely with. He and I actually—he needed three extra credits to graduate. So, I created an independent study for him, and called "Michael is in Counseling" where he developed

> 16 audio recordings for me to use in my skills class. So, at the beginning of each of our skills classes called "Models and Techniques" or "Counseling at the Beginning of Each Model and Technique Class," and you know, we would have as my students started calling him "Mindfulness Brandon." I would say Mindfulness Brandon. And now, my students are, you know, last year like one of their first classes that they take, they were like immediately, they were being exposed to it. And immediately they are connecting with us. And one of—it's funny because couple of my students that I don't have in classes this semester, but were in my class last semester, will decide to randomly stop by my office or, you know, be in the hallway and, you know, tell me how much they miss that, and like could I get some of those tapes or whatever?

P.P. also discussed a time when she was short on time in class, so she decided she was going to skip the usual mindfulness meditation that she would typically begin each class with. However, she said her students insisted on using some of their class time to engage in the mindfulness exercise. The class was going to take a test that day, and they felt their own test anxiety would interfere with their outcome if they did not engage in a mindfulness meditation first.

P.E, noted, while reflecting on any concerns he thought there would be about bringing mindfulness into the classroom, that he chose to bring a variety of mindfulness practices into the classroom because he wanted to find ways for students to have a variety of things that they could potentially use comfortably with their future clients. P.E. stated,

> You know I don't know if I would say that there are any concerns or issues, I think my greatest advise would be you know to be the person what you bring into the classroom

> and you know one day I maybe giving a mindfulness technique where I have people you know tasting different candies just to be aware of their senses where another one maybe you know, actually listening to some relaxation music and being aware of their thoughts. It's about trying to find what's going to give our students, our future colleagues a variety of things that they can do and be comfortable with.

P.D. also found that when he actively sought to teach and incorporate mindfulness practices into the classroom, students worried less and had a greater ease learning difficult material. Students expressed a greater ease in dealing with uncomfortable emotions or states of being that might cause discomfort during the learning process.

P.D. also noted that new counseling students are highly anxious and can be fearful of judgments from their peers and faculty. He discussed that his students reported less anxiety and fear of judgments from having an opportunity to learn and use mindfulness practices in the classroom. In addition, P.W. discussed the importance of students being open to learning about mindfulness. She noted that when counselor educators bring mindfulness practices into the classroom, some students could potentially find the practice difficult. P.W. said,

> So it's currently fad and I think it can be very powerful and very connective. If they are resistant or they have religion but feel like it's not the right way to do things and instead of being really mindfully pray or you do something different you know like you had an organized prayer. I think they can be put off or feel challenged, but we have to meet them where they are.

Theme 2: Contemplative Practices and the Experience of Educators

A mindful attitude. When I asked counselor educators several interview questions to reflect on mindfulness and their classroom experience, they responded with the most common answers that included the following words: being present, awareness, acceptance, and empathy. Participants noted that having a mindfulness practice holistically impacted their life. As P.D. stated, "So you know, being mindful permeates every part of life." Several of the participants also mentioned Kabat-Zinn's definition of mindfulness as well as his seven attitudes of mindfulness. (Kabat-Zinn's [1990] seven attitudes are: nonjudgment, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go.) While I found some variation in whether or not counselor educators choose to introduce mindfulness practices in the classroom, all of the participants noted an influence of their mindfulness practice in their andragogy. Participants noted an intentional concentration on the present moment as well as on developing an awareness of their own feelings and bodily sensations while teaching and engaging with students in the classroom. For example, P.D. stated:

> And I think just in general being more present, focused, aware makes you better at everything or at least more engaged which I think often leads to being better. So as a teacher you know we are often very hurried with people and we need to slow down. I think sometimes as teachers we get a tendency to be annoyed with the people that aren't getting it right away or are asking things that are difficult of us or causing us more time than we would like to spend on things. And being more mindful brings me back to the reason I do this. It allows me to see everyone. It provides a better opportunity I should say for me to see everyone for who they are.

Five of the participants discussed being aware and mindful of their students' energy levels and the influence of their students' well-being on the classroom environment. The participants discussed adapting their teaching approach based on their assessment of their students in the moment. For example, P.E. shared these comments:

> You know, I always try to be aware of the physical changes of my students. I can tell you the students who when they come in they are automatically going to be the type that shake their legs because they don't like to be sitting still for long. I can tell you when I have the students that you know this was a student, he is normally pretty calm and they are not so relaxed tonight so something is going on, because I think it's important to be aware of with our students. And you know mindfulness helps to give you that awareness as this isn't the normal classroom tonight, something is going on.

Evaluation. Several of the counselor educators noted evaluation of their mindfulness practice was a process that directly influenced their andragogy. Participants discussed several ways in which their mindfulness influenced their evaluation process. P.W. noted that while she reviewed dissertations, she would seek to create a mindful state of being as well as meditate on the material she was reading. She shared these comments:

> When I used to read dissertations I would meditate with them and I'm like, you know, please help me see the key points—and it worked. The points would just jump out of me. Well when it says read that 100-pagedissertation, you know, the things that were important would come out. And so I really just trust kind of my intuition or spirit to help me kind of get through all this stuff, it's really evolved nicely that way.

Several participants noted that they used mindfulness when reflecting about how to provide feedback to students. They used an intentional focus on reflecting about how students would receive feedback. For example, P.M, said, "And so, yeah, okay so mindfulness and feedback, when I give, feedback to students, I try to be aware of how it comes out, I guess, like how what I say it might come off to some people." P.P. also noted that her mindfulness practice influenced her evaluation process. She spoke of how her mindfulness practice helped her as she tries to understand what it is like to have never learned the material before and then to receive feedback from someone who is considered by many to be at an expert level. She said,

> I think that it is like part of who I am and it's part of my way of being, and it's, you know, it's imperative in my work and my life to approach the world from a mindful place. I think as counselor educators, it's even more imperative right because if you think about, you know, in Buddhism and in mindfulness like there's a focus on beginners mind, right, it's like being, you know, trying really hard to see things as though it's the first time you're doing something. And I think that can be really helpful for us as we teach courses, you know. When you have advanced teaching like in advanced education like a Ph.D, it's really easy to have that expert lens and, you know, tend to perhaps get frustrated with students or get frustrated with other people of, "Why aren't you doing these things?" Like, "How didn't you not understand this?" or what have you and recognizing that. Well, people are just starting out and there are different points in their journey. And so, I think I have a daily practice of sitting, meditation, or guided imagery or walking or eating, mediation, or something. But I also I think it's the way that I

> approach things for at least the way I hope I approach things. And do I fail at it? Of course.

P.W. noted that having a mindfulness practice helped her to evaluate her students "from a place of acceptance and empathy." I detected some internal tension for the counselor educators with a mindfulness practice in wanting to provide feedback in a way that helped their students grow, but also demonstrated care and concern for the students. P.D. noted that he was able to get departmental support to not use a grading system as the evaluative component of the class. He discussed that this decision was intentionally related to having a mindfulness practice. He said,

> Yeah I think what I would say to that is it's taught me that if I can develop the person and then have them be more mindful, all the other stuff is much easier. People are not open at present distance, worry about judgments. They're not going to be engaged in learning the way I want them to be, whether it's multicultural or anything else. So the other thing I should add I don't give grades in my classes and that's a direct reflection of my mindfulness affiliation and belief. Luckily I am at a place where they've allowed me to do that, not all places allow it.

Modeling for students. Eight of the participants discussed the importance of modeling what it means to be a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice. Participants noted that having a mindfulness practice and using mindfulness practices in the classroom allowed them to model counseling behaviors, self-care skills, acceptance, and empathy, which were seen as essential to a mindful andragogy. Participant P.W. stated,

> how can I help students come to a place of acceptance and empathy, you know, with different kinds of situations. The only way to do that is to do that. So if you cannot model it – it's not probably going to work.

P.Z. noted a similar idea and stated,

> I started recently just like a few minutes before class starts, just at the beginning. And then the students will just come in and some of them will sit with me and some of them will just kind of whisper quietly to each other. And so for me that's like modeling. It's just giving you a little bit more opportunity to practice. It's helping me to kind of set of stage sort of like how I want to bring my awareness to class.

It appears that participants' mindfulness practice provided a platform to communicate or model these essential counseling skills.

Creativity in the classroom. Participants noted the way in which their mindfulness practice allowed them to be more creative in the classroom environment. Having a method to be present in the moment with their students allowed the space necessary for the counselor educators to be spontaneous and more readily address the needs of their students in that moment. Their mindfulness practice provided a method to slow down the mind, which was noted by P.W. as essential to engaging in a creative process. For example, P.W. stated,

> Well I think the present and the moment and aware of thought processes, because when you are aware of them we can change them or not judge them and let them go. But you know like being really present with every moment. It's hard because our minds are so busy, but the more mindful we are in the present the more effective I think, we can be more creative.

P.D. noted a similar idea when he stated,

> So I am at a research institution so writing is a big part of what I do. Being mindful as mindfulness has been really helpful in when I am trying to write, and want to tap into things that are more creative. It keeps me out of that *got to get things done*. It got to be a good mindset. It helps me tap into the more creative side of myself I think without feeling all the pressure of getting those done quick and not going to be great and so forth.

P.P. also made a similar point with these words: "You may not call it that, right. They might call it, I don't know whatever, you know, intensive prayer or chanting or what have you but I mean that's what it is—creative mindfulness."

Mindful orthodoxy versus personal experiences. All of the participants reflected on spirituality as it related to having a mindfulness practice. I learned that there seemed to be a continuum of experience in relating mindfulness to the participants' spiritual beliefs. The continuum begins with the mindfulness practice being a part of the participants' religious practice. These participants viewed mindfulness as a part of all religious and spiritual traditions. Following the continuum, participants noted that they had no formalized religious or spiritual practice, but that having a mindfulness practice filled a spiritual or existential void. I identified at the end of the continuum were participants who viewed mindfulness from a secular lens, relating their mindfulness practice to clinical research findings.

Some of the participants found their mindfulness practice connected them to their religion of origin. For these participants, their mindfulness often became part of their spiritual practice. For example, three participants discussed how Jewish prayer was a regular part of their daily

mindfulness practice. P.M. said she is currently converting to Judaism and recently moved to a new area:

> I have made some friends here that were Jewish and I realized, oh my gosh, this is very, very mindful and very, you know it gels much more with my beliefs and values and a lot of the things that I do in that regard I think are ways to be mindful. And I think the purpose of a lot of like the prayers and blessings that people say and things like that, is not so much because God or anybody like that wants us to do any of that, I don't think anybody cares, you know in the great beyond, whether we pray or not or attend services or do other things like that. I think it's more for our own benefits of remaining mindful and aware of the present moment and connected to, I guess a sense of the divine in our life and the sense that our life isn't just a random you know, what am I trying to say, I am not sure what the word is, but we are not supposed to just be going around and multitasking. It's more that life is sacred in a way and all of the things that I do in my like practice of Judaism is aimed at, for me anyways aimed at staying mindful of the present moment and connected to like the sanctity of life and the just, I guess sort of the sanctity of the present, things like that.

Four participants noted that their mindfulness practice reflected a Buddhist lineage. Some participants felt developing a daily mindfulness practice supported them in moving past suffering they experienced from being raised in dogmatic religious home environments; their mindfulness practice came to fill this spiritual or existential void. For example, P.D. stated,

> Well I was born and raised Catholic. And then like a lot of us of my generation sort of pulled away from that when there was a lot of stuff going on in the Catholic Church that

> people were very unhappy with. And so I've just sort of floundered for a while without any religious grounding. Well I had to break away you know and my children aren't raised as Catholics. They weren't even baptized. And so I think in some ways that maybe I was more open to it than some of the folks who you know feel that it crosses over religious—firm religious boundaries that I have. So with someone who didn't have a lot of any religious affiliation and probably fill the void for me as well, a spirituality void. It just may be made me more open to trying and engaging in it.

P.W. shared a similar idea about not having a formal religious practice, but that mindfulness filled an existential void. She noted that conversation about mindfulness and exploring larger issues about life's purpose became a way that she built connections within her academic community. She said,

> Yeah I think that's why we are close because we have the same kind of values that way and we can talk at a really deep level. And some of it like one of my colleagues it's a very, we have very deep existential conversations, which is you know mindfulness and meaning in life and what's important. And so those conversations are—can be really I mean such a great—a great thing to have conversations like that and be able to then transfer that into teaching and learning, ensure that with colleagues and other students.

Yet, others felt that mindfulness was truly a secular practice. For example, P.T. shared these comments:

> So I guess when I'm thinking of mindfulness as a researcher, I think, also just in my own personal practice too, I have a much narrower definition than what I see a lot of people have and the conceptualization of mindfulness really coming more out of neurobiology.

And I see mindfulness is just leading a form of attention that is—that focus on present moment experiences while adopting a sense of acceptance of whatever those experiences maybe. When I talk about mindfulness in that concept with a lot of people I like to make some distinctions about, you know, this is a just a way of paying attention that differs from like being on auto-pilot where you're engaged in the present moment activity but your thoughts cannot adopt that activity or multi-tasking. It differs from like perseverations where you're just noticing the thought and then, continually engaging or on the spot as opposed to letting it pass and seeing what else comes up based on the present moment. I also like to make another distinction about mindfulness that comes up in the literature. And I know a lot of people like to gravitate towards conceptualizations of mindfulness based on different assessment instruments that are out for mindfulness and I think of big one is like the bypass of mindfulness questionnaire. But when you look at that instrument or a critique of it and I think a very valid one, a recent one article where the author acknowledges in some of her writings is that it was developed through, it kind of an assessment driven model not a theoretically driven model. And many of the staff that they come up I don't think really represent mindfulness. I think they represent constructs that come about as a result of being mindful. So I don't think acting with awareness is the mindful. I don't think it's the same thing. I think when you are mindful you are in a better position to act with awareness. They're not the same thing. It's kind of like chewing and digestion are not the same thing. One is going to precede the other, but they're not the same construct. Because that—and I like this point because I do see mindfulness in—it is in a lot of domain even outside of counseling, becoming this

generic catch all for anything that's good and anything I like and then, to call it mindfulness, because it sounds a little bit mysterious or mystical, we'll call it mindfulness and I personally like the much narrower conceptualization of mindfulness.

Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the emergent codes that supported the second theme of this study.

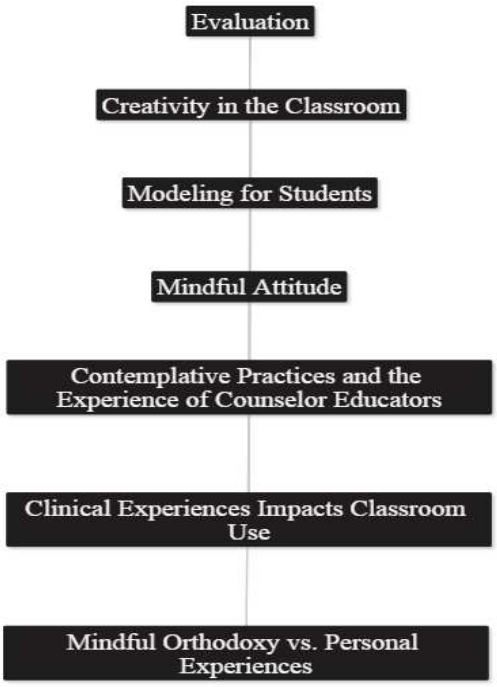

Figure 4. Contemplative practices and the experience of educators.

Theme 3: Mindfulness Competencies

Several of the participants reflected on the level of training one needs if interested in using a mindfulness-based andragogy in counselor education. P.P noted that "mindfulness is deceptively simple." Participants reported a full range of responses with regards to how much training one needs to have if interested in using mindfulness practices in the classroom. P.D. and P.K. felt mindfulness meditation was about engaging in breathing exercises; they felt anyone

could use the practices in the classroom and should not be deterred from a lack of formal experience. Yet, the majority of participants noted that counselor educators interested in using mindfulness in the classroom should have experience with the practice themselves. Therefore, I found variations in how much training participants felt counselor educators should have.

P.C. stated,

> But that's part of our training, but I think to make you more effective from a teaching standpoint if you're going to be talking about mindfulness, doing mindfulness exercises, I think you just need to have some depth of understanding so that you can field the range of experiences that may come up for students in an effective way. And I think if you have kind of no personal experience with it you have less to draw on in your responses like I don't think that—you can't just read everything about mindfulness from a book, you really do have to have some experience with it.

P.D. noted a similar concern:

> So I just started integrating it after playing around with it myself. But you know I did a lot of reading, watching videos that kind of stuff, but I am definitely no expert. But I found a way to integrate it into the class in a way that works. And I just assumed everybody else could do the same thing. And you know one of the things we're learning now is mindfulness has exploded over the last you know six, seven, eight years. People are doing this who don't know what they are doing, doing it for different reasons that aren't necessarily good for students or you know it can cause some problems for people. I have never seen anything that says it could cause problems in the way I use it in sort of short-term classroom-based. This is to help you as a counselor trainee type of

> environment. But people are integrating it into these more intensive seminars and retreats and stuff who are either using it with folks who are not stable enough to handle it or using it in ways that aren't appropriate. And so I am seeing there have been some problems popping up. And you know people who don't know mindfulness really well I think can misrepresent the concepts.

P.T. noted the importance of counselor educators understanding issues with students who may see mindfulness as a threat to their religious beliefs. P.T, stated,

> I know Shapiro and Carlson wrote a book the Art and Science of Mindfulness, I think. It's been a couple of years old. But they have a chapter on proscribe the reasons for—proscribe issues about introducing mindfulness practices to clients that I think apply to students. And, you know, I am going to list some of them but there are things like consider religious beliefs about the students. You know, I think just within the mindfulness community and something probably you're going to run into I would imagine in your research if you haven't already is that people will to varying degrees associate mindfulness with a religious practice, a spiritual tradition, a non-denominational practice or way of interacting that's common to all spiritual traditions or completely secular or some ramification of how these secular practices are really just secular to kind of express their religious experiences.

P.T, similar to P.C., noted the importance of being able to address difficulties that students raise about engaging in mindfulness practice. He further stated,

> The other thing I would want to recommend to anyone who's wanting to introduce these practices into classroom and teaching this that they need to have their own practice. And

they have been engaged in their own practice for some substantial amount of time. And I don't really know how long is long enough but it's been a very—I think starting a practice can be very confusing because I think a lot people make this assumption that that like, "Well, it's supposed to clear my mind. So if I'm having a thought, I'm not doing it right." Oh, I have this idea of, "Okay, well, the goal is for me to sit here for 20 minutes and you never have my attention wander." "Well, not really, the goal is to notice if your attention wandered. So it may wander twice, it may wander 2000 times, but neither one of those is better, so did you notice it? And when you noticed it, could you just simply move your attention back to your breathing?" If the teacher is not aware of that, they haven't gone through that experience of wrestling with yourself about am I doing this right? Is this what's supposed to happen? I think it can be very hard for them to read their students through those kinds of questions about, "Oh, I cannot be this because I can't, you know, clear my mind." And can we then have that conversation and bring in that experiential piece about, you know, there can be a misunderstanding here that the experience you're having is normal, if the teacher doesn't have that, I think it's going to be hard for them to guide the students through.

P.A. also noted the importance of being able to address students concerns when bringing mindfulness into the classroom. He stated,

Now, we can have slowed down thoughts and have a really deep relaxation of the body. But the mind is an organ and it produces thoughts just like whatever. So someone who's new, might miss, they might instruct and kind of miss a lot of the wisdom that comes along with the practice and it has to do with actually seeing the mind, meta-cognition,

> you know, for example, pain that might come from sitting, knowing the difference between when there's pain because you really should be adjusting, or pain because there's something in the mind that's pinching the muscles, etcetera, how to help people relax deeper, have a good ergonomic posture, or in an office setting, doing seated meditation, there's a lot of technical parts that are important in a lot of also like ways that people can start doing the practice differently than—anything that you'd do over and over and over repetitively you have to be very cautious about.

Theme 4: Interconnectivity

Participants noted the importance of having a sense of interdependence or interconnectedness of all lived experience. For example, P.M, in discussing one's lived experience of mindfulness practice, noted that "I am almost more aware of my whole life as being like that, like the hour or the half hour of meditation is a microcosm for like your whole lifetime." Participants consistently reflected about their own experience, that of their students, and how these experiences were a part of the interconnectedness of all life and experience. For example, P.C. stated,

> I think for me—I think because of all the preconceived notions, the biases, all of the things that we all walk around with just because we are socializing beings that, you know, we are affected by our environment. I think there's always accountability to ourselves to be aware and so I think that no matter how much you think, you know, about diversity, you're still a part of your environment and you are still going to have biases into what you do. And so I think for me personally working with diverse students and diverse in every respect, you know, being able to be some of the elements of mindfulness

> that are in the literature that I do like also is just being able to be aware and act with awareness and not be reactive and not be judging of whatever is happening in the present moment in my own experience, allows me to be more open to whatever the experience is and that allows me to be more open hearted to every student. And so I think that it—and it helps me sort of be more patient and curious rather than reactive to something that a student might do or say or express that, you know, might involve kind of a more automatic reaction from me.

In the classroom, participants noted an awareness of the interrelationships between their emotional reactivity and how it impacted the self, as well as how this impact then influenced their students and their students' future clients. For example, P.A. noted,

> That attention—attending is the right word in this awareness, but I think the mindfulness practice has helped people get there to put stuff aside and actually really be an active listener. So it not only helps me as a practitioner, work with diverse students. I think it also helps the diverse students I work with, help work with their diverse clientele, in the future.

Theme 5: Treatment Outcomes

Participants noted that several counseling modalities that have a mindfulness focus or that have mindfulness practice as a component to several counseling approaches are now available. The participants noted the influence of their current or prior counseling practice as it related to their counselor education andragogy. Several of the participants discussed working with clients in their counseling practice who have a trauma history. Due to this fact, participants were aware that when they introduced mindfulness into the classroom, they would allow students not to

participate or to choose not to close their eyes. Two of the participants noted that aspects of their mindfulness practice were based in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), which was a modality they had formerly used in their counseling practice. For example, P.M. discussed that she formerly used DBT in her counseling practice and now seeks to come to class with a "wise mind", which is a DBT concept in which the client seeks to balance the intellectual and emotional parts of the mind (Linehan, 1993). P.E. noted that he incorporates mindfulness practices into his substance abuse class because he previously worked with this population as a counselor. P.E. stated,

> When I am teaching substance abuse classes for substance abuse counseling I tend to incorporate a lot more as far as mindfulness techniques because my background working in substance use definitely tends to aid that because I know the mindfulness techniques that I have incorporated in the practice and how this will help you know in this area or that area. Same thing when I am doing a class on working with kids in trauma I tend to incorporate a lot more mindfulness stuff there.

P.T., in discussing how he defines mindfulness, noted how his counseling work with children influenced his interest in mindfulness. He stated,

> Sometimes I was working with the treatment center with children and adolescent, it's mostly was working with abuse and neglect. And I was getting very interested in a lot of the interpersonal neurobiology and about sort of the neurologically basis of understanding trauma, that's what they're going to call for these guys. And this thing of mindfulness kept coming up just on the fringes of their work and then Daniel Siegel's work where they are really being predominant and then, you know, of course talking

> about certain field, you know, it went from the mindfulness—mindful brain to the mindful neurobiology and it just feel like, "You know, I think there's something to this." And, you know, from the neurobiological stuff, there's this experiential pieces that people do talk about these concepts being related, we're beginning to understand, you know, some cognitive and affective processes even through neurological process is how we can understand this phenomenon that, you know, counselors who meditate have.

Theme 6: Therapeutic Presence

Participants noted how their mindfulness practice supported or influenced their presence in the classroom. Participants noted that focusing on the quality of their presence in the classroom helped them to be present in the moment with their students in the classroom environment. Participants noted a connection between the quality of presence they were able to provide and the type of learning they sought to support in the classroom. For example, P.W. noted,

> Well one thing I would add is when I approach a situation I need to say, how can I do this in the most loving way. And how can I be that sort of presence to help them understand and grow, because if I come off and it persist me—if I come off from a place of arrogance, or knowing it all, I won't connect you know and it worked pretty well. I've had a lot of mentees in my career that are now colleagues and friends and have always surpassed me. And it's been really a rewarding career that way and making deeper connections.

P.D. also discussed how mindfulness supports his presence in the classroom. He reflected on how his years of experience, his knowledge of the counselor development literature, and his mindfulness practice help him to facilitate difficult moments in the classroom. He stated,

> I think I mean with experience you can push someone, and in a way that you weren't comfortable before and see them come of it at the other end better. And so that's just give me more confidence to do it. I get more credibility to do it too because I can say this happens all the time. It's normal. It's okay plus I mean I am really familiar with counselor development literature. And so I can—I've them read it. I can say things like, this was highly consistent with what all counselors go through that kind of thing. But without the mindfulness practice I don't think I've the presence to be able to pull it off.

P.Z. also discussed how mindfulness influences his ability to be aware of his presence when relating with others. He stated,

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. I impress upon my students is that you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. So and for me you know a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me support not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence.

It is worth noting that P. W. experienced her presence differently for a land-based then for an online classroom. She shared,

> Well, you are missing the actual presence when you're doing writing in the online environment. But the way that I have found it works for me is I – when I'm reading posts of papers I imagine I'm having a conversation with the student. So and I respond to every student every week in the course, and so they know that my presence is there and it's not just, you know, kind of just, you know, I really – I take it seriously, I want them to learn and grow and – and I respond from the heart not just reference based posts you know from the text book. I try to have them go deeper in their experience. So it's different in that I don't get that energy in the student as much as I would, you know, while at class. But when I sit with their writing I still can give probably a 75% field, I am missing that 25%.

Theme 7: Relational Empathy

All of the participants noted that their mindfulness practice influenced their relational connection with their students. Participants discussed how engaging in mindfulness practices inside and outside the classroom increased their empathy and compassion for their students. Participants who chose to incorporate mindfulness practices into the classroom discussed how engaging in the mindfulness practices with their students deepened their connection to their students. P.Z. stated,

> I would say there's some moments of real connection honoring—even I'll use the word love that happens. It's really not necessarily me and the students but between the people in the room which happens to be that one person and other people are students. But I think there are moments of real connection and seeing each other and you know like I am pretty vulnerable in my teaching. You know I don't act like I had it all together. I share

> like I've been doing a private practice just for a few years. And this is coming up in my work that I am struggling with that I am working on I am not sure how it's going to land. And that seems to resonate a lot with students more than pretending that I've it all together and they all have it all together. And I think that's informed by my mindfulness practice knowing that there is no state of perfection that trying to get to perfect is suffering. And so you know I think there's kind of those like values of insight to meditation that are that helps it to be more real and just connective. And I think when those—there are those moments that I sometimes feel like oh like there is this transcendent experience in the classroom where there is this really bonding that happened in that. And so that's nice to have people.

P.P. discussed how sharing with her class that she had an interest in mindfulness supported students who practiced mindfulness feel safe to share this part of themselves in the classroom environment. She noted,

> And then some students have a mindfulness practice and they feel safe to then kind of come out of the mindful closet, right, and say, "Yes, I practice mindfulness too," or you know, a lot of students do yoga which has been really helpful.

Authenticity. The participants noted that the ability to be authentic and transparent with their worldview and their teaching approach was essential to supporting relational empathy with their students. They regarded being inauthentic as interfering with the counselor educator's ability to engage in relational empathy. P.M. stated,

> Like that sort of the ideal that I am always trying to strive for and I've become—I am becoming more aware of when I am inauthentic and not really myself. I think if there

> weren't, you know as in for the mindfulness aspect, I wouldn't be as aware of when I am not being authentic or true to myself, but I have noticed there have been times when I have either been interacting with students or with faculty members like coworkers or I have noticed like, oh this isn't really me, you know I am talking like this because—or interacting this way because I think it's how people want me to be. I guess is that, I am aware and maybe if I weren't in the mindfulness I wouldn't be aware, I probably wouldn't be. I am aware of that the fact that I am keeping myself out of relationships for the sake of being in relationships, for the sake of keeping my relationships.

Theme 8: Awareness and Acceptance

The participants continually noted the awareness and acceptance of their lived experience as counselor educators with a mindfulness practice and the awareness and acceptance of their physical, emotional, spiritual, and interpersonal experiences as essential to their mindfulness practice. When discussing the quality of their awareness, several participants noted the importance of having a *beginner's mind*. For example, P.C said,

> And so that beginner's mind and that trust and that openness and I'll talk about mindfulness and so I don't necessarily do the same amount of like mindfulness activities in that class as I do with the basic counseling skills class but I will talk about it, I will describe it, we will take a mindfulness moment. I will take a mindfulness moment in model in front of the class when I feel like I need to just connect with what's happening within myself to kind of guide me and where the class needs to go and they observe that. And so it kind of goes into all of my class cultures that way, the diversity one I probably give it a little bit more time to it because I describe how it can bring up a lot of strong

> feelings and we can sense and want to react and not necessarily respond mindfulness to ourselves or to one another and so I do talk about it a little bit more in that classroom.

P.P. discussed how she works to have a beginner's mind when the classroom discussion unfolds in unexpected ways. Engaging in beginner's mind to this participant meant having total acceptance, as well as being aware in the moment. P.M. noted that the counselor educators' mindfulness practice not only helped them to be aware, but their practice supported them in accepting when they struggled with being present or aware with their students in the classroom. P.M. stated,

> …for me I guess the way I try to live it is just, attempting to be aware and present in the present moment free of distractions and you know perseveration, thoughts, and things like that. And at the same time though, it's not possible to always be free of distractions and thoughts and so I guess an awareness of possibility for those and the acceptance of that.

Cultural awareness. All the participants agreed that awareness of one's self and others was essential to their mindfulness practices. Participants noted that their mindfulness practice supported an awareness of differences between people. Participants also noted that their mindfulness practice was useful when self-awareness was difficult to engage in. Having a mindfulness practice was noted as a way to create safety in exploring emotionally charged discussions about cultural difference—differences that have been used to justify oppression. For example, P.E. stated,

> Mindfulness isn't about getting rid of the feeling, mindfulness is trying to figure out, okay now that I know how I feel where does that come from, what is the foundation for

it. And when we talk about that in class, I have noticed especially when I've got a classroom with a lot of diversity in it, people tend to be more apt to talk about things like cultural discrimination that happen maybe not to them but to others they know and how they didn't really think about how much they still held on to that until we start practicing some mindfulness techniques because it gives that safety to be able to go, okay. So you are telling me, you are still feeling like this, where is the foundation for it? How do we express it and how do we really look at wow, I didn't realize I still have that or I am feeling that? Now where is that coming from?

And sometimes you know that comes from being able to self disclose my own experience with mindfulness. And you know how you use it and it's okay even as a counselor educator to have our own feelings and you know we still get angrier or sad or happy and you know we've got all that still in us. And I think that's part of the mindfulness, that we are human and it's okay.

P.D. made similar observations about mindfulness supporting his multicultural competence when working with students who are culturally different in the classroom. P.D. stated,

And you know I think being mindful is because you know as a white male professor teaching about this, there can be a lot of baggage that we bring in, a lot of fears, nervousness. You know and I think mindfulness has really helped me to settle into my role there with an understanding of how I can push everybody to be a better you know be more culturally competent at the end of the class without worrying about people think, what they think about me. I think that's such a big thing. Mindfulness helps you not

> worry about what anyone thinks of you because none of it matters in the end. All that matters is what the students learn. And as you know anything mindfulness-based, the paradox is the less you care about what people think about you and the more you focus on the learning, the better they think of you.

P.D. further reflected on mindfulness as an intervention to support his students learning about cultural differences and further stated,

> Well I think mindfulness is kind of, I view it as a unifying concept that is relevant across all our cultural differences. Students don't always see that at first. But as we get into it, because I do a lot of mindfulness work with students in my classes. I think it's something that helps bringing us all together. I think it's a core counseling concept whether it be for diversity or any other form of what we need to do to train and be aware of ourselves in the training process. I think people introducing the concepts of mindfulness even in say a course where diversity is salient like the multicultural course allows students to really be self-aware be more comfortable struggling with things that can be very difficult emotionally.

P.M also discussed how mindfulness helps him embrace difficult emotions. His mindfulness practice allows him to observe his students' emotional state and intentionally pause to explore their lived experience with that emotion. P.A. stated,

> So one of the fruits of the original practice is just to start stepping into life and start meeting whatever one meets in life in a little bit more of an open way as much as possible. So you know, as far as diversity goes, when I practiced this, I think it does impact how I come into—it impacts like for example the practice of sitting with different

> emotions. I worked with like groups of students and I walk in and I have some nervousness around meeting any group of people and how they'll feel and I like to talk about diversity right at the get go, and start sharing, have the group share about diversity and difference, so that we can really focus on everybody feeling comfortable who they are, and what culture they are even if we have difficult feelings.
>
> So for me, my own practice of feeling difficult, helps me to encourage them that our emotions are wonderful, our emotions are there to inform us. So you just have to watch them and listen to them and see where we're afraid of others, see where we—kind of watch the cognitions come up and see where there's a story that's there, and we have work to do, see where we have places where we need to move beyond, or listen to ourselves more deeply.

P.A. also observed that mindfulness supported a quality of awareness that allowed him engage in active listening with his students. P.A. felt by engaging in active listening that was supported by his mindfulness practice, he could support his diverse students working with diverse clients. P.A. further stated,

> That attention—attending is the right word in this awareness, but I think the mindfulness practice has helped people get there to put stuff aside and actually really be an active listener. So it not only helps me as a practitioner, work with diverse students. I think it also helps the diverse students I work with, help work with their diverse clientele, in the future.

P.T. also found that his mindfulness practice supported him working with diverse students in the classroom and stated,

> So when I'm confronted with a student who is different than me, which—if I'm not being mindful and I'm going into this situation thinking about how it should go, whether just being present with whatever—and comfortable accepting with whatever, however it does go, if I'm okay with not knowing, just being present in these moment, I'm much more likely to be curious when the students confront me with something different. I think I'm more likely to notice if a student's worldview is challenged. And I think if I'm being mindful, I have that space between my experience and my reaction that will allow me to be curious or sit with the student and try to help them be curious with what's going on right now for you. And I think that curiosity piece makes space for understanding and processing the, you know, cultural differences, gender differences, spiritual differences whereas if that's not there and I'm not being mindful and making the assumption of how they should go—I'm going to minimize cutoff or not notice those experiences and those potential opportunities for learning and exploring but it could've come if I was able to maintain that space to be curious as opposed to responding in terms of anxiety. And shutting that out or changing it or glossing over that student's opportunity to do that.

Theme 9: Self-Care

All of the participants noted that they used their mindfulness as a form of self-care or as a way to deal with difficult emotional states that occurred while in the classroom. Having a mindfulness practice allowed the participants to accept what was occurring in that moment; both the counselor educators and their students were able to observe how internal and external stimuli were influencing the classroom experience. For example, P.C. stated,

> But I think talking about mindfulness at the very beginning it helps to even in some of those moments I say, wow this is really intense in here? Like I'll tell I need to take a deep breath, I can feel my body getting tight, why won't we all check in with ourselves for a moment.

Participants also noted that having a mindfulness practice may support anxious faculty who may be struggling with stage fright. P.D. said,

> I mean those are some—what I think are some of the deeper aspects of it. But just simply you know being more engaged when you're presenting for example, I mean there is a whole literature on how mindfulness is good for you know people who get nervous about presenting. I have been doing this so long it doesn't bother me anymore at all to talk in front of people. But I think for those who do get nervous in front of groups, being mindful helps deal with stage fright and anxiety related to that.

Additionally, participants noted that their mindfulness practice helped them to deal with difficult colleagues. Eight of the participants noted that they teach mindfulness to their students to support their students in engaging in regular self-care. P.E. stated,

> Because mindfulness is, just being aware. So you know when we do practice different theories or different techniques you know for me mindfulness is also about self care. And I am a big, I am a big educator when it comes to self care as a counselor and mindfulness is a great opportunity to be able to incorporate that into your practice and maintain your own health and your own state of mind as you are helping the client. So I really do try to incorporate mindfulness as much as I can into my classroom.

P.W. discussed some mindful resources that she encourages students to read as a way to support their self-care. She said, "I'll often encourage students to be in the moment and I recommend the book Radical Acceptance, a lot for clients and students and The Art of Extreme Self-Care to people." The participants who taught practicum and internship discussed how stressful it is for new counselors working with clients for the first time. For example, P.P. shared,

> And I think that a lot when I'm working with students that are you know, like in practicum or internship of what have you and they talk about how hard it is, you know. I mean because we all remember how nerve-racking it is to meet with our first client.

Bringing mindfulness into the classroom for practicum and internship students allowed these counselor educators to teach and support a skill for students that they could financially afford and use at anytime to deal with difficult emotions.

Theme 10: Critiques

Despite a lack of literature examining any negative or concerning outcomes about using mindfulness in the classroom, several of the participants offered concerns or cautions that they thought would support a counselor educator seeking to use a mindfulness-based andragogy. P.A. noted that he was conscientious about teaching mindfulness from a mental health context as a way to avoid ethical concerns related to mindfulness practice roots coming from Buddhism. Several of the participants noted concerns about a counselor educator using mindfulness practices in the classroom if they did not have a practice themselves. Participants noted that difficult emotions can come up for students and counselor educators when they are sitting, focused on their breath and observing their thoughts. P.W. shared,

> No, I mean. Yeah, I mean I think, I mean this is my opinion, of course. I think what's really, really, really important—if you're going to use mindfulness intervention in classes—is to be a practitioner yourself, right, because if you're not, you may not be aware of what kind of feelings can come up for people when they're doing mindfulness practices and that could be scary if you don't know. And if you just assume that you're going to just prepare and focus on your breath and it's going to be lovely and then you as the instructor start having reaction. That can be really hard.

Another participant shared about using mindfulness in her clinical practice. P.M. noted that her client really struggled with the idea of observing her thoughts without judgment; her client reported that the focus on nonjudgment challenged her in a way that made her too uncomfortable to continue engaging in the mindfulness practice that was part of her treatment. P.M used this is as an example to illustrate difficulties that can come up when someone engages in a mindfulness practice who may be under significant psychological distress, which points out the importance of a counselor educator who wanted to incorporate mindfulness into the classroom having one's own practice. P.M. discussed another time when she facilitated a mindfulness lesson that centered on observing emotions. One student noted that before the exercise this person did not realize how much sadness he or she was experiencing until regularly sitting in mindfulness observing her emotions. Other participants discussed the level of vulnerably one might feel when in engaging a mindfulness practice, particularly if someone has a trauma history. Participants discussed that they always give their students an alternative to closing their eyes, making this part of the practice optional.

The participants noted this was not a reason to avoid the use of mindfulness practices in the classroom but pointed out why it is essential that if counselor educators want to incorporate mindfulness practices in the classroom, they should have their own practice outside of the classroom. P.D. stated,

> People are doing this who don't know what they are doing, doing it for different reasons that aren't necessarily good for students or you know it can cause some problems for people. I have never seen anything that says it could cause problems in the way I use it in sort of short-term classroom-based. This is to help you as a counselor trainee type of environment. But people are integrating it into these more intensive seminars and retreats and stuff who are either using it with folks who are not stable enough to handle it or using it in ways that aren't appropriate. And so I am seeing there have been some problems popping up. And you know people who don't know mindfulness really well I think can misrepresent the concepts.

P.T noted that when counselor educators do not have a regular practice, they may also misrepresent mindfulness. He stated,

> And I know a lot of people like to gravitate towards conceptualizations of mindfulness based on different assessment instruments that are out for mindfulness and I think of big one is like the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire. But when you look at that instrument or a critique of it and I think a very valid one, in some of her writings is that it was developed through, it kind of an assessment driven model not a theoretically driven model. And much of the stuff that they come up I don't think really represent mindfulness. I think they represent constructs that come about as a result of being

> mindful. So I don't think acting with awareness is the mindful. I don't think it's the same thing. I think when you are mindful you are in a better position to act with awareness. They're not the same thing. It's kind of like chewing and digestion are not the same thing. One is going to precede the other, but they're not the same construct. Because that—and I like this point because I do see mindfulness in—it is in a lot of domain even outside of counseling, becoming this generic catch all for anything that's good and anything I like and then, to call it mindfulness, because it sounds a little bit mysterious or mystical, we'll call it mindfulness and I personally like the much narrower conceptualization of mindfulness.

P.D. discussed the importance of being asked to answer questions about mindfulness and its religious origin and stated,

> There's some tough questions that students can ask about the relationship between this and religious practice and other things. That if you are not prepared to deal with it, I could see the whole thing you know sort of not being real helpful to the counselor education process. It's become so mainstream that perhaps there are people who aren't real well grounded in it or just thinking about it as relaxation training for example, that might misrepresent it.

P.D. also noted that he thought it was fine to experiment with mindfulness in the classroom, as that is what he had done, but that counselor educators should be honest with their students about their level of training they had received and share with their students that they were new to bringing mindfulness practices into the classroom.

Discrepant Cases

One area of the emergent data with discrepancies was the degree to which participants ascribed to formal or informal interpretations of mindfulness practice. I identified this finding as a subtheme, Mindful Orthodoxy vs. Personal Experience, which I regard as part of the larger theme of Contemplative Practices and the Experience of Educators because it was a pattern of difference between the individual participants. Additionally, one of the participants discussed that she experiences her own presence differently when she is in a land-based classroom then when she is teaching for an online class. She felt she experienced her presence less in an online class. This discrepant case I regard as part of the theme of Presence.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

My attention to trustworthiness was an ongoing process throughout this study. I used several methods to support the trustworthiness of my data including I asked the participants to member check their transcribed interviews, read through the transcribed interviews several times, reached saturation, and kept an audit trail. I provide the following discussion about how I addressed the aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in this study. I made every effort to support the rigor of the research process.

Credibility

In qualitative research, addressing credibility, or internal validity, means seeking confirmation of my findings with the lived experiences of my co-participants (Patterson & Williams, 2002). To address this aspect of trustworthiness, I engaged in triangulation of sources. Qualitative researchers seek to triangulate using multiple perspectives. I reviewed multiple perspectives found in the mindfulness andragogy literature. Then I used different authors'

findings as a lens to examine my own findings. I sent all transcribed interviews to my co-participants to be member checked. Throughout my data analysis process I engaged in the hermeneutic circle, consistently exploring my transcribed interviews and then exploring the findings based on the current literature. I also consistently looked for divert cases. In addition, because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative research, I spent time examining and stating my own bias. More information about my exploration of personal bias was provided in Chapter 2. Patton (2002) also noted that researchers can strengthen their credibility by discussing the conditions under which the study took place. I sought to be transparent throughout my research process. I stated where and how I gained access to my participants in Chapter 3, and none of the participants received any gift for participating. I also used a semistructured interview (Appendix A), thus further supporting transparency. As an expression of appreciation for participating in this study, I sent each participant a summary of the results from this study.

Additionally, Patton (2002) discussed the importance of time spent interviewing and developing strong relationships with participants as a sign of credibility. I spent time in relationship building with each participant, which included engaging in small talk before and after interviews to strengthen the relational connection between the researcher and the participant. If I was unclear about any information a participant provided, I reached out to the participant via e-mail to make sure I was interrupting his or her feedback correctly.

Transferability

To ensure transferability, a researcher must implement strategies that ensure another researcher could complete a similar study within a similar context (Flowers et al., 2009). To address transferability, I provided rich, thick descriptions. I used purposeful sampling. All of my

participants had to meet certain criteria to participate in this study. I also started to reach saturation in my data by the sixth interview, but continued to interview another four participants to see if any more divergent cases would emerge, and they did not. Throughout my research process I provided detailed information about the current literature and my research process, as well as my subsequent research findings and data analysis process. I also used member checking to support transferability (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Furthermore, I reviewed literature on the use of mindfulness pedagogy in multiple academic disciplines. I then explored my findings from this study to see if they were consistent with research findings in other academic disciplines within secondary education and higher education settings. I learned that the findings from this study were consistent with the findings in both qualitative and quantitative studies conducted on mindful pedagogy in counselor education and within different academic disciplines in higher education. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed the importance of *fittingness* in exploring the degree of transferability. Fittingness is the idea that findings from this study can be applied to everyday realities. I made sure to describe the results in this study in enough detail so that other counselor educators can evaluate and try the practices and approaches discussed in this study in their andragogy and classrooms.

Dependability

To address dependability, qualitative researchers must look for consistency in their research findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To address dependability, I provided rich, thick descriptions and stated my research bias. I also engaged in triangulation and kept an audit trail, thus keeping my research process transparent. I also strengthened my dependability by having seasoned researchers serve as part of my team of verifiers. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999)

noted that perspective triangulation is a process in which researchers use multiple perspectives to examine and interpret the data. My dissertation committee provided perspective triangulation by providing feedback throughout this study, as well as more focused feedback during the data analysis phase of this study.

Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) also noted that triangulation of sources is used to examine the consistency of findings through one method, which can be done by engaging in triangulation at different points throughout the data analysis process (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1999). I engaged in triangulation of sources by seeking consistency in my findings compared to different sources and engaging in the hermeneutic circle as soon as I conducted my first interview, and then continually throughout the process as I conducted the other interviews. Additionally, I collected interview data, as well as relevant images, books, websites, and research on mindfulness-based pedagogy. Even before beginning my data analysis, I developed an Excel spreadsheet to keep a log of all my collected information. I continued this audit trail process using the Excel log during my data analysis phase of this study. This approach created transparency in the process because I documented each step of my data analysis, which could potentially be reviewed for future research.

Confirmability

Confirmability supports trustworthiness in research by demonstrating transparency in research findings. To address confirmability, the researcher takes step to establish the quality of their results. To strengthen the confirmability of the results in this study, I engaged in the hermeneutic circle during the interpretation phase of this study. In Chapter 5, I present an analysis of the findings of this research study and how the findings relate to the other findings in

the literature review I conducted for this study. Additionally, I used audit trails and engaged in reflexive art journaling to explore my own beliefs relating to the study. I chose to use reflexive art journaling to support reflexivity. Additionally, I used image making, which is one way for me to express myself that is aligned with my authentic nature. I conducted the journaling after a brief period of mindfulness meditation that followed the conclusion of each interview. The images demonstrated the same themes found in the thematic analysis.

Moreover, I kept an Excel log and documented my research process in Chapters 3 and 4 as part of the audit trail. My dissertation committee consisted of researchers who had expertise in both counselor education andragogy and the use of hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodological approach. Additionally, I included the review of this study by an outside researcher as part of the research process at my institution. My outside researcher who reviewed this study has expertise in the area of counselor education andragogy. She and I had previously worked together in my role as a graduate assistant and on scholarly presentations. Her role is valuable to note because she could not only maintain a level of objectivity that comes from reviewing a study in which she was not involved in the day-to-day development, but she also had previous knowledge of my worldview and working style. Patton (2002) noted the importance of obtaining an expert auditor because researchers are challenged when they find an expert who can apply an appropriate critical eye. An appropriate critical eye is defined as one who can critically examine research results and interpretations, both through the eyes of an expert, and attempt to take on the lens of the researcher who is engaged in the data analysis.

Results

In this research study, I explored one central question as well as three subquestions. My central question focused on exploring the lived experiences of the counselor educators who participated in this study as counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. I developed subquestions to add depth and dimension to the central question. I present the results of each question below.

The Central Question

The central question of this study was to explore the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. While engaging in the data analysis process, I identified several emergent themes (see Appendix G). Figure 5 provides a visual representation of the themes that emerged during this study.

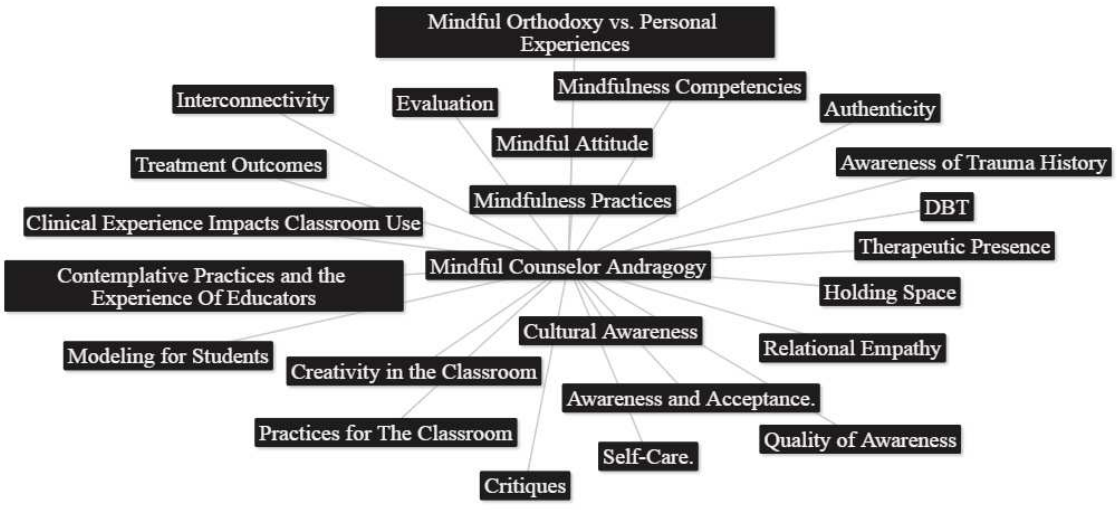

Figure 5. A visual representation of emergent themes and codes for a mindful counselor andragogy.

To begin, counselor educators who have a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students are educators who have a self-designed mindfulness practice. This self-designed mindfulness practice reflects the personal preferences and cultural worldview of the counselor educator. For example, counselor educators who adhere to a more formal or orthodox mindfulness practice discussed engaging in the following practices within their personal lives: visualization meditation, insight meditation, Jewish meditation, prayer, Zen, Vipassana, loving-kindness meditation, focusing on the breath (breath work), yoga, and mindfulness meditation. Some of the informal practices that counselor educators practice included baking bread, playing with children, driving a car, disconnecting from technology, slowly tasting food, listening to relaxing music, paying attention to passing thoughts, being in nature, and being in one's own presence.

Counselor educators with a mindfulness practice are individuals with a focus on developing their awareness, acceptance, and empathy, as well as being present in the moment with their culturally diverse students in the classroom. Such educators recognize their mindfulness practice holistically influences their life. Counselor educators with a mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students have a mindful attitude; they seek to cultivate the seven attitudinal factors defined by Jon Kabat-Zinn. Taking a mindful attitude allows the counselor educators to holistically assess the needs of their culturally diverse students in the classroom.

Counselor educators' mindful attitude extend from assessment to the counselor educators' evaluation process. These counselor educators seek to understand their own process for evaluating student work. They also seek to understand how their students will perceive their

evaluative feedback. For example, P.P. reflected on her level of expertise as someone with a PhD and noted the importance of being able to develop a beginner's mind so that she can understand how her students will perceive the information that she is providing them. P.W. also discussed her desire to cultivate a mindful paradigm when she is evaluating dissertations so that she can evaluate her student's work, "from a place of acceptance and empathy."

Counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students seek to model mindfulness practices within the classroom environment. Being able to model mindfulness practices in the classroom allows these counselor educators to demonstrate counseling behaviors such as self-care skills, acceptance, and empathy. These counselor educators also seek to cultivate creativity in the classroom. Participants discussed how their mindfulness practice helped them to stay connected to their creativity, which then supported them dealing with the pressures of working in an academic environment. Their mindfulness practice also allowed for a slowing down of their lived experience in the classroom with their culturally diverse students. By being able to slow down in the moment in the class with their students, these counselor educators found they were better able to be present in the moment within their classroom environment.

Counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students believe someone with this approach should have experience with mindfulness practices; since a counselor educator cannot learn everything about a mindful teaching approach through reading texts, the person needs an experiential component to the mindfulness practice. Additionally, these counselor educators recognize the interconnected nature of all experience. For example, P.E. shared, "I am almost more aware of my whole life as being like that, like the

hour or the half hour of meditation is a microcosm for like your whole lifetime." Participants discussed recognizing the connection between their own self-awareness of their emotional experience, being able to reflect on this knowledge, and how having an awareness of their emotional experience influenced their students learning and could then potentially influence how their students would work with their future clients.

All of the counselor educators were or are practicing counselors. The participants all value mindfulness-based counseling approaches within their own counseling work with their clients. The counselor educators also recognized how their presence influenced their classroom experience. The participants noted that focusing on the quality of their presence in the classroom supported the counselor educator in being able to be present in the moment with their students in the classroom. The participants also reported that their mindfulness practice influenced their relational connection with students. The counselor educators noted that engaging in a daily mindfulness practice increased their empathy and perceived connection with their students. Furthermore, participants noted that being authentic and transparent about their worldview and teaching style supported their relational empathy and teaching approach. They regarded being inauthentic as interfering with the counselor educators' ability to engage in relational empathy. Counselor educators with the daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students noted an awareness and acceptance of their physical, emotional, spiritual, and interpersonal experiences as essential to their mindfulness practice. Several participants discussed the importance of having a beginner's mind in their work and personal lives, which extended to valuing cultural awareness. Counselor educators with a mindfulness practice seek an awareness of self and awareness of other people; they regard this awareness as essential to their

mindfulness practice. When reflecting on their classroom experience, participants noted that practicing mindfulness provided a way to address emotionally charged discussions about cultural difference.

Counselor educators also discussed using mindfulness practices as a way to teach active listening, which they regarded as essential for new counselors to learn in order to work with diverse clients. Some participants regarded mindfulness practices as a form of self-care, an intervention that would reduce affective experiences related to difficult emotions. They indicated that mindfulness practice also allowed the counselor educator to notice how internal and external stimuli influenced their classroom experience. Being a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students influenced how and when they decided to introduce mindfulness into the classroom. For example, one participant discussed making sure to teach mindfulness from a mental health perspective. Other participants noted the importance of counselor educators having their own practice because of the difficult emotions that arise during a mindfulness meditation.

Subquestions

I developed the following three subquestions to add depth to the research findings:

1. How does a counselor educator who works with diverse students understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom?
2. How does a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice understand cultural background as it relates establishing relationships with their students?
3. What does it mean to be a counselor educator who practices mindfulness in pedagogy?

Subquestion 1. The first subquestion explored how the participants saw mindfulness manifesting in the classroom. The counselor educators who participated in this study understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom by first developing their own mindfulness practice. All of the participants expressed how their formal and informal mindfulness practices had come to have a holistic influence on their lives. Based on their own worldview, their experience with mindfulness, and their counseling practice, counselor educators make creative decisions about whether to bring mindfulness practices into the classroom environment, to take more of a mindful attitudinal approach, or a combination of both. These participants further understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom by focusing on the present moment, the quality of their awareness, their presence in the classroom, and their interpersonal interactions with their diverse students.

Counselor educators further understand mindfulness to manifest in the classroom by how they model what it means to be both a counselor and counselor educator with a mindfulness practice. This understanding includes using mindfulness with diverse counseling students to support their learning counseling attending behaviors, self-care skills, acceptance, and empathy. Additionally, the participants saw the need for counselor educators to have some experience with mindfulness themselves so they are prepared for student questions about its origins. Additionally, these counselor educators perceive all experiences as interconnected in nature, and thus their own mindfulness practice is essential to their teaching approach.

Subquestion 2. The second sub-question for this study focused on exploring how a counselor educator with a mindfulness practice understands cultural background as it relates to establishing relationships with their students. The participants discussed the importance of being

aware of how their background influences their teaching style and subsequent connections with their diverse students in the classroom. They valued an understanding of developing self-awareness with mindfulness practices and engaging in a self-awareness process with their students. These participants sought to understand how their students perceived them based on their students' cultural background, which included the counselor educators being aware of their cultural privileges. They also valued diversity and recognizing how mindfulness can aid discussions about cultural difference. For example, P.E. shared,

> You know the only other thing that I would put out there just as an educator I think mindfulness helps me be aware of my reactions to diversity, because I think just like clients students will bring things into the classroom whereas an educator I might go, I don't get that or what's going on. And I think mindfulness really helps me as an educator anyway to be able to go, okay why did I have an internal reaction to that. You know is it a lack of knowledge, is it because I somehow had just a personal reaction as a sense to it, what was it that caused my emotional you know, triggers to go at and now how do I rectify that and change it. And I think that's where mindfulness really becomes a good tool when it comes to working with diverse students so.

P.D. shared a similar idea:

> And so like even you know some of the toughest groups to work with are folks that who have you know you know religious beliefs that they don't value different kinds of diversity or racist attitudes that they are struggling with.…And you know I think being I think mindfulness has allowed me to be really patient and understanding with those students in a way that doesn't cause me to be an enemy, right.

Having a mindfulness practice supported the participant dealing with his own internal reactions; this practice helped him to not lash out with emotional reactivity, which could harm the relational connection between himself and his student. Thus, the participants reflected an understanding that responding to diverse students in an emotionally reactive manner will hinder their ability to establish relationships with their students in the classroom. The participants further understood that students may share less of themselves or be inauthentic if they didn't openly address cultural differences in the classroom.

Subquestion 3. The third subquestion sought to explore what it means to be a counselor educator who practices mindfulness in pedagogy. The participants discussed seeking to understand their own experience, the experience of their diverse students, and how these experiences are interconnected. This reflective process involved in using mindfulness in pedagogy provides a holding space for the educators to develop an awareness of what they can do in the classroom environment to support the needs of their diverse students. These educators value modeling being present, aware, as well as demonstrating acceptance and empathy, as part of their andragogy. They appreciate the value of a pause or break, while in the process of teaching, to reflect and focus on their internal and external experience. Participants also value using mindfulness practices to engage in this process with their students. They regard creating a classroom environment that supports the development of awareness, connection to the breath, increased self-care, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy as conducive to positive learning outcomes for counselors in training as well as essential to their andragogy.

Summary

Counselor educators with a mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students value being in the moment, awareness, acceptance, empathy, creativity, and compassion in their andragogy. They have self-designed mindfulness practices that have supported their own self-development, and they see mindfulness as valuable in the classroom with culturally diverse students. These counselor educators recognize the interconnected experience between the educator and the student within the classroom environment. While their practices are diverse, their mindfulness practice supports modeling self-care, empathy, dealing with difficult emotions, and teaching counseling attending skills.

Chapter 5 presents an interpretation of the findings and an exploration of the study's limitations, recommendations, and implications for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative, hermeneutic phenomenological study was to explore the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. Hermeneutic phenomenology is a subtype of phenomenology that allows for interpretative discourse on lived experiences. Current literature on mindfulness in counselor education andragogy provided the foundation for this study. Based on emerging data that mindfulness or contemplative-based andragogy can support counselors-in-training learning, I sought to interview 10 counselor educators who fit the following criteria: (a) they had a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology, (b) they were currently teaching in a master's or doctoral level counseling program, (c) they currently identified as having a mindfulness practice, (d) they had the ability to access a phone, the internet, and e-mail, (e) they were available to commit to a 60- to 90-minute interview at a time of their choosing, and (e) they could provide follow-up information after the interview. A semistructured interview was used (Appendix A) to gather information about these counselor educators' lived experiences. All of the participants provided rich and detailed information of their lived experiences employing mindfulness-based andragogy in counselor education.

As stated in the beginning of this study, emerging research has explored mindfulness practices with counseling students who engage in a regular mindfulness practice in terms of supporting the development of self-regulatory skills, compassion, and empathy for counselors in training (Buser et al., 2012; Christopher & Maris, 2010; Greason & Cashwell, 2009; McCollum & Gehart, 2010). However, the dearth of research that explored the use mindfulness in counselor education did not focus on the experience of counselors in training. I sought to fill a gap in the

literature by exploring the experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students.

Key Findings

Key findings that emerged during analysis included the identification of 10 literature-based themes and eight emergent subthemes, as a summarized below. In addition, a visual representation of the identified themes is provided in Table 2 and a table of the identified themes, with examples, is provided in Appendix G.

Table 2

List of Mindful Andragogy Themes and Subthemes of the Study

Literature Theme 1: Mindfulness Practices
- Emergent Subtheme 1: Mindfulness Practices for the Classroom

Literature Theme 2: Contemplative Practices and the Experience of Educators
- Emergent Subtheme 2: A Mindful Attitude
- Emergent Subtheme 3: Evaluation
- Emergent Subtheme 4: Modeling for Students
- Emergent Subtheme 5: Creativity in the Classroom
- Emergent Subtheme 6: Mindful Orthodoxy Versus Personal Experiences

Literature Theme 3: Mindfulness Competencies
Literature Theme 4: Interconnectivity
Literature Theme 5: Treatment Outcomes
Literature Theme 6: Therapeutic Presence
Literature Theme 7: Relational Empathy
- Emergent Subtheme 7: Authenticity

Literature Theme 8: Awareness and Acceptance
- Emergent Subtheme 8: Cultural Awareness

Literature Theme 9: Self-Care
Literature Theme 10: Critiques

Summary of Themes and Subthemes

Theme 1: Mindfulness practices. Counselor educators draw from a wide variety of formal and informal mindfulness practices. All of the participants in this study noted engaging in some type of daily mindfulness practice. They noted the most common mindfulness practices

were sitting meditation and focused attention on the breath. Formal practices included Vipassana (also referred to as insight meditation), Zen meditation, paying attention to and letting go of thoughts, and yoga. Several of the participants noted that mindfulness influenced all facets of their lives. Thus, the participants regarded their daily activities as opportunities for informal practice. The participants in this study discussed the following informal daily practices: baking bread, playing with children, driving, disconnecting from technology, slowly tasting food, listening to relaxing music, being in nature, and being in one's own presence.

Subtheme 1: Mindfulness practices for the classroom. All of the participants expressed varying ways in which they incorporate mindfulness into the classroom. The participants were most likely to incorporate mindfulness practices into counseling attending skills, practicum, and internship classes.

Theme 2: Contemplative practices and the experience of educators. Participants mindfulness practice supports them engaging in a mindful attitude, evaluation, modeling, and engaging in creativity in the classroom. Participants interpret mindfulness on a spiritual to secular continuum.

Subtheme 1: A mindful attitude. The participants noted that having a mindfulness practices influenced their lives holistically. The most common words they used to describe their experiences were being present, awareness, acceptance, and empathy. Several participants noted Kabat-Zinn's seven attitudes (nonjudgment, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting-go) as influencing their classroom experience. All of the counselor educators reported that their mindfulness practice influenced their andragogy.

Subtheme 2: Evaluation. The participants noted that having a daily mindfulness practice influenced their evaluation approach, which included developing a mindful quality of mind when reviewing student work and reflecting on how to provide feedback to students from a *beginner's mind* and from a place of acceptance and empathy.

Subtheme 3: Modeling for students. Participants discussed that having a mindfulness practice and using mindfulness practices in the classroom allowed them to model counseling behaviors, self-care skills, acceptance, and empathy, which they regarded as essential to a mindful andragogy.

Subtheme 4: Creativity in the classroom. The participants reported that when they choose to bring mindfulness into the classroom, it allowed them to be spontaneous and creative, as well as provided a method to be present in the moment with their students.

Subtheme 5: Mindful orthodoxy versus personal experiences. The participants reported a continuum of experience, beginning with mindfulness practice being a part of the participants' religious practice. These participants viewed mindfulness as a part of all religious and spiritual traditions. Following the continuum, participants noted that although they had no formalized religious or spiritual practice, they felt that having a mindfulness practice did fill a spiritual or existential void. At the end of the continuum were participants who viewed mindfulness from a secular lens, relating their mindfulness practice to research findings.

Theme 3: Mindfulness competencies. Participants reflected on the level of competency a counselor educator needs to use a mindful andragogy. The majority of participants discussed the importance of counselor educators having some experience with mindfulness practices.

Theme 4: Interconnectivity. Participants discussed having a sense of interconnectedness with all lived experience.

Theme 5: Treatment outcomes. Participants introduced particular mindfulness practices based on their prior counseling experiences.

Theme 6: Therapeutic presence. Having a daily mindfulness practice influenced the quality of the participants presence in the classroom.

Theme 7: Relational empathy. Having a daily mindfulness practice influenced the quality of relational connection with the participant's students in the classroom.

Subtheme 7: Authenticity. The participants reported that they valued being authentic and transparent with their worldview and their teaching approach. They regarded being inauthentic as interfering with the counselor educator's ability to engage in relational empathy.

Theme 8: Awareness and acceptance. The participants reported that they valued developing awareness and acceptance as part of their mindfulness practice, which included developing a quality of mind known as a *beginner's mind*.

Subtheme 8: Cultural awareness. The participants reported that awareness of one's self and others was an essential component of their mindfulness practice. Mindfulness practices were useful when participants were having difficulty engaging in self-awareness.

Theme 9: Self-care. The participants reported that having a daily mindfulness practice can support self-care. They believed mindfulness practices can support both students and educators when difficult emotions arise in the classroom.

Theme 10: Critiques. Counselor educators need to be conscientious about teaching mindfulness from a mental health context. Counselor educators need to have their own mindfulness practice so they can respond to difficult student questions.

The findings from this study provided knowledge about the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. I will discuss research findings in the following.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section I will discuss how findings from this study confirm, disconfirm, and extend knowledge about mindful andragogy in counselor education. First, I will analyze relevant literature to compare and contrast research findings from multiple theoretical and empirical perspectives. After providing an analysis of my findings using the literature reviews as an interpretive lens, I will then analyze and interpret my findings in the context of my theoretical framework. The theoretical lens for this study is RCT (see Chapter 1 for more information about this theoretical lens).

Confirming Findings

I learned that several findings from this study reflect the research findings in the literature I reviewed for this study. To aid in the analysis of confirmed findings based in the literature, I used the literature-based themes for confirming the findings.

Mindfulness practices. Participants in this study discussed a variety of formal and informal mindfulness practices they engage in. Additionally, during the thematic analysis, I identified a continuum of experience with adherence to spiritual versus secular practice. The continuum of lived experience for these participants began with mindfulness practice being a

part of the participants' religious practice. These participants viewed mindfulness as a part of all religious and spiritual traditions. Following the continuum, participants noted that although they had no formalized religious or spiritual practice, they believed having a mindfulness practice did fill a spiritual or existential void in their lives. At the end of the continuum were participants who viewed mindfulness from a secular lens, relating their mindfulness practice to clinical research findings. Thus, I found the evolution of mindfulness, moving from its Buddhist heritage to a secular interpretation, among this group of participants, as demonstrated in Figure 6.

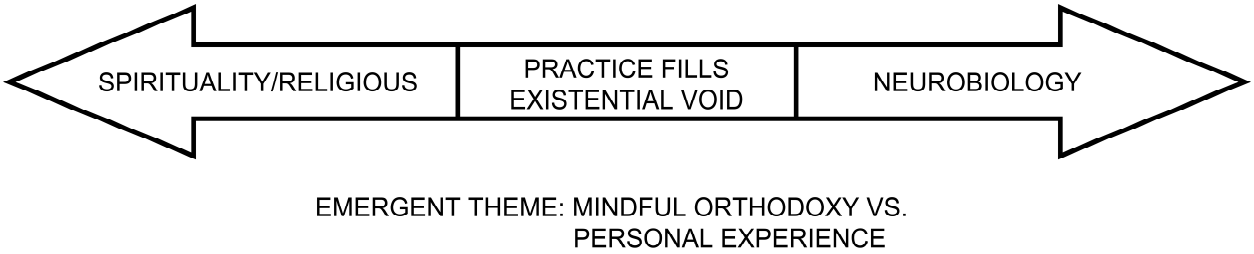

Figure 6. A visual representation of the participants' continuum of mindfulness experience.

Chapter 4 provided further discussion relating to this continuum within the emergent theme called mindful orthodoxy versus personal experiences.

While I found variations in the way the participants' approach their mindfulness practices, I was able to identify a pattern in the way the participants referred to their mindfulness definitions, which can be found in the literature review section of this study in Chapter 2. Two of the most referenced definitions of mindfulness included those provided by Kabat-Zinn (1990) and Bishop et al.(2004). Kabat-Zinn (1990) defined mindfulness as focused intentional awareness of moment-to-moment experience, without judgment, and Bishop et al. (2004) defined mindfulness as

> The self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment. The second component involves adopting a particular orientation towards one's experiences in the present moment and orientation that is characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance. (pp. 232-233)

Contemplative practices and the experience of educators. Jennings et al. (2011), however, sought to change the lack of research focusing on the experience of educators by engaging in a large scale study exploring the experience of mindfulness with kindergarten through Grade 12 educators. Based on the results of the ANCOVAs, these researchers found statistically significant effects that were observed in all of the major scales of Well-Being, Efficacy, Burnout/Time Pressure, and Mindfulness, indicating the CARE program was perceived as successful among the teachers (Jennings et al., 2011). The counselor educators in this study also reported similar findings. P.D. discussed how his mindfulness practice helps him to slow down, despite the pressures related to difficult colleagues and pressures to publish. Several of the participants also noted that their mindfulness practice helped them to support their self-care practices. Findings from this study appear to confirm the findings in the study by Jennings et al. (2011).

Mindfulness competencies. Some debate exists among scholars in the field about the level of competence needed to engage in a mindful andragogy. Stauffer and Pehrsson (2012) conducted a quantitative study to explore whether or not experts in the field of mindfulness agreed on a set of mindfulness competencies. Participants in this study also explored the level of training that a counselor educator needs to engage in a mindful andragogy. The participants

expressed some variation in terms of the level of skill needed, but all of the participants noted it was important for educators to have their own practice first, which reflects the findings in Stauffer and Perhrsson (2012) study.

Interconnectivity. Rothaupt and Morgan (2007) qualitative study explored the mindfulness practices of counselors and counselor educators who identify as being mindful in their work. Three themes emerged: (a) an overarching theme to be present in the moment, (b) the use of a variety of tools to support mindfulness in their daily lives, and (c) the outcomes of their mindfulness practices (Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). Participants in Rothaupt and Morgan (2007) study reported that their mindfulness practice supported their self-care, awareness of their current state of being, and being able to stay in the present moment in a holistic manner. In this study participants also reported that their mindfulness practice recognized that their practice influenced their self-care, awareness, and ability to stay in the moment in a holistic manner. For example, Participant P.M shared, "I am almost more aware of my whole life as being like that, like the hour or the half hour of meditation is a microcosm for like your whole lifetime." P.M. shared a similar comment. He shared,

> That attention—attending is the right word in this awareness, but I think the mindfulness practice has helped people get there to put stuff aside and actually really be an active listener. So it not only helps me as a practitioner, work with diverse students. I think it also helps the diverse students I work with, help work with their diverse clientele, in the future.

Treatment outcomes. Another point of confirmation based on the literature reviewed for this study included the influence of mindfulness viewed through a therapeutic lens. Participants

noted how their past or current counseling practice influenced their decision about how and when they choose to introduce mindfulness to their students. The participants noted they used mindfulness-based stress reduction (MSBR) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) as specific mindfulness-based therapies, as well as using mindfulness with clients who need substance abuse treatment. This point of confirmation from this study illuminates the findings of a qualitative study by Christopher et al. (2011) that explored the long-term impact of learning mindfulness meditation while in a master's level counseling program. The emergent themes for their study included (a) an impact on the counselors' personal well-being, and (b) an impact on their professional practice. Participants in this study had an opportunity to learn mindfulness practices while in their master's counseling program, which influenced their decision to incorporate mindfulness-based practices into their counseling practice once they graduated from their counseling program. Participants in this study also noted the influence of their mindfulness practice played a role in supporting their overall well-being. Also, as a result of experiencing positive changes with mindfulness for themselves, they reported that this experience then influenced what practices they chose to teach to their counseling students to use with future clients.

Therapeutic presence. McCollum and Gehart's (2010) qualitative study explored whether or not teaching mindfulness meditation supported beginning marriage and family therapists in learning therapeutic presence. Three themes emerged: (a) being present, (b) effects of meditation, and (c) shift in mode compassion and acceptance (McCollum & Gehart, 2010). Students in this study developed a greater awareness of their therapeutic presence, compassion,

and acceptance. Participants made several comments that reflect the findings of McCollum and Gehart's study, yet for counselor educators. For example, P.W. shared:

> Well one thing I would add is when I approach a situation I need to say, how can I do this in the most loving way. And how can I be that sort of presence to help them understand and grow, because if I come off from a place of arrogance, or knowing it all, I won't connect you know and it worked pretty well. I've had a lot of mentees in my career that are now colleagues and friends and have always surpassed me. And it's been really a rewarding career that way and making deeper connections.

P.Z. shared a similar reflection:

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. I impress upon my students is that you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. So and for me you know a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me support not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence.

Relational empathy. Greason and Cashwell (2009) conducted a quantitative exploratory study that examined if there was a relationship between mean scores of mindfulness, attention, empathy, and counseling self-efficacy. The researchers found that mindfulness training may be an effective tool for cultivating the internal skills that provide the foundation to the counseling

relationship. Participants in this study also noted that mindfulness provided an opportunity to talk about the building blocks to engaging in unconditional positive regard. For example, P.Z. stated,

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. But the work, I feel inspired to impress upon students is that you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. So and for me you know a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me…not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence. So actually it just gives a language, it helps you with like a language to talk about these skills that you know the additional positive regards, to be genuine and to be you know have empathy so for me there's so much of that, the basis of that is mindfulness. So I could kind of talk to students about that and have a language in my practices and things like that.

Participant P.M. also noted a similar anecdote:

> So I'm not—some of these are like, oh, mindfulness is everything. It's not, but it has a place inside our traditional theories and our traditional practices and especially if you're training new counselors because sometimes people will have really—not really work very much on the mental hygiene. It seems to me that there is, you know, schools really focus on academic improvements to the mind, so knowing things. But not necessarily always about how our mind works, sometimes, it's even working on helping students gain, have better memory, or have better recall, or process math or something

> faster, but not always about skills and things like that, to pay attention, or to let go of things mentally.
>
> So many times, it shows up on the master's program, so I don't really know how to be silent, I don't know how to just sit with my thoughts and not do something physically, some of my students in practicum—I might do some exercise and you know, give them some materials about here's where we can go to this really great .edu, and body scan some of the other practices, here's some resources.

Buser et al.'s (2012) quantitative study explored the impact of mindfulness practice when incorporated alongside a 5-week counselor skills training model on the students' counseling skills development. The researchers found mindfulness practices contributed to improvements in the counseling students' attending skills and levels of self-efficacy. Participant P.T. also provided an example of how his mindfulness practice supported his self-efficacy while he was working toward his master's degree in counseling:

> I grew up in a very rural community in Texas. That was, you know, predominantly fundamental question. And I think, the certain point I was just curious about other ways of thinking, other ways of thinking on religion and spirituality and I think exploring Buddhism was one of the area that I kind of just did a lot of intellectual study on and if I was, let's try this mindfulness thing. You know, I think it was just kind of reading books. I mean, there weren't you know, temples or meditation centers where there was an opportunity to get formal training or even informal training. And it was this pessimist thing with me is I wasn't quite sure what I was doing but there would be times that I notice I felt calm and felt good and felt some, like, I was more focused. And I guess, you

know, when I was, I don't know, I think my mid-20s, I kind of fell away. But then when I was doing my practicum with counseling students, one of the things my professor kept telling me, it was like, "P.T, you got to get out of your head, your being analytical, just be in the room." And there was a third or fourth session with this client, and I think my first or second client, where she was doing feedback and I don't know exactly what I did but it felt different and I have this idea like, "Huh, this kind of reminds of being mindful," which kind of went back to focusing on the student. And then the feedback in that session was, like, "Interviewee, you seemed much more comfortable and present. You didn't seem like you were in your head as much." And, so, I think I planted this little idea about, "Okay, huh, you know, that when I recalled mindfulness practices, it really reminds me of this experience of being with this client" and being that way with the client, it seemed to be more of what I should be doing.

Awareness and acceptance. Schure et al. (2008) conducted a 4-year qualitative study examining the significance of teaching graduate counseling students in Hatha yoga, meditation, and Qigong. The emergent themes included: (a) physical changes, (b) emotional changes, (c) attitudinal or mental changes, (d) spiritual awareness, and (e) interpersonal changes (Schure et al., 2008). Students reported that by engaging in a regular mindfulness practice they were motivated to reflect and evaluate their belief system and values. Interpersonally, several students reported that they engaged in less reactive behaviors in situations where they might act negatively (Schure et al., 2008). I found several similar implications in the results from this study. For example, P.C. told me how she seeks to approach her students with a beginner's mind.

She also reflected on the importance of engaging in a beginner's mind so she can more easily understand the perspective of her students. She commented,

> And so that beginner's mind and that trust and that openness and I'll talk about mindfulness and so I don't necessarily do the same amount of like mindfulness activities in that class as I do with the basic counseling skills class but I will talk about it, I will describe it, we will take a mindfulness moment. I will take a mindfulness moment in model in front of the class when I feel like I need to just connect with what's happening within myself to kind of guide me and where the class needs to go and they observe that. And so it kind of goes into all of my class cultures that way, the diversity one I probably give it a little bit more time to it because I describe how it can bring up a lot of strong feelings and we can sense and want to react and not necessarily respond mindfulness to ourselves or to one another and so I do talk about it a little bit more in that classroom.

P.E. also provided an example of how mindfulness practice can provide support during difficult conversations:

> Mindfulness isn't about getting rid of the feeling, mindfulness is trying to figure out, okay now that I know how I feel where does that come from, what is the foundation for it. And when we talk about that in class, I have noticed especially when I've got a classroom with a lot of diversity in it, people tend to be more apt to talk about things like cultural discrimination that happen maybe not to them but to others they know and how they didn't really think about how much they still held on to that until we start practicing some mindfulness techniques because it gives that safety to be able to go, okay. So you are telling me, you are still feeling like this, where is the foundation for it? How do we

> express it and how do we really look at wow, I didn't realize I still have that or I am feeling that? Now where is that coming from?
>
> And sometimes you know that comes from being able to self disclose my own experience with mindfulness. And you know how you use it and it's okay even as a counselor educator to have our own feelings and you know we still get angrier or sad or happy and you know we've got all that still in us. And I think that's part of the mindfulness that we are human and it's okay.

P.E.'s comments reflect the findings of Schure et al. (2008) that one's mindfulness practice provides a way to deal with emotional reactivity. Participants used mindfulness because they found it created a level of safety or openness that supported students in evaluating their belief system and values.

Self-care. Several of the articles reviewed for this study noted educators and students have reported that their mindfulness practice supported their self-care (Christopher et al. 2011; Greason & Cashwell, 2009; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Rothaupt & Morgan, 2007). Participants in this study also noted ways in which their mindfulness support their self-care, including being able to model to students how to engage in self-care. For example, P.Z. shared:

> I started recently just like a few minutes before class starts, just at the beginning. And then the students will just come in and some of them will sit with me and some of them will just kind of whisper quietly to each other. And so for me that's like modeling. It's just giving you a little bit more opportunity to practice. It's helping me to kind of set of stage sort of like how I want to bring my awareness to class.

P.C. provided an additional example:

> But I think talking about mindfulness at the very beginning it helps to even in some of those moments I say, wow this is really intense in here? Like I'll tell I need to take a deep breath, I can feel my body getting tight, why won't we all check in with ourselves for a moment.

Critiques. Some of the participants noted concerns about misrepresenting mindfulness, or not being informed enough about possible adverse reactions that can occur. This point of confirmation reflects Britton's (2014) research that is currently exploring the negative experiences of long-term meditators. Some of the negative outcomes noted in the literature for long-term meditators included physical discomfort, intrusive thoughts, and an awareness of repressed memories that lead to depression (Rocha, 2014). Participants also noted some potential pitfalls of teaching mindfulness when the counselor educator is not well-trained in the method. Participants discussed some examples, which included students becoming conscious of unexplored emotional experiences, students presenting mindfulness only as an intervention for self-care, and students potentially not being receptive to engaging in a mindfulness practice because of their religious beliefs. For example, P.D. shared the following comment:

> There's some tough questions that students can ask about the relationship between this and religious practice and other things. That if you are not prepared to deal with it, I could see the whole thing you know sort of not being real helpful to the counselor education process. It's become so mainstream that perhaps there are people who aren't real well grounded in it or just thinking about it as relaxation training for example, that might misrepresent it.

Disconfirming Findings

This group of counselor educators did not critique mindfulness from a perspective that mindfulness lost something by using mindfulness in a secular educational setting, unlike one of the few critiques made in the larger body of literature exploring potential concerns when using mindfulness based pedagogy in the classroom. Goyal et al. (2012) identified and reviewed randomized clinical trials with active controls for placebo effects and found low evidence of improvements in stress reduction and mental health-related quality of life. This critique was not reflective of the information shared by participants for this study. Participants noted their daily mindfulness practice supported their self-care and helped to reduce worry and anxiety.

Ecclestone (2004) noted concerns that an increased focus on social skills in education could support students in developing a complacent attitude so that students may then not seek to challenge the status quo. The participants in this study did not share this concern; they seemed more inclined to address and challenge the status quo. The CACREP (2016), the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), and the Multicultural Counseling and Development Multicultural Cultural Competencies (2015) all stated the importance of counselors and counselor educators being able to engage in multiculturally competent practice. Perhaps the emphasis on multicultural competence in the counseling profession influenced this disconfirmed finding. Few participants noted any disconfirmed findings in this study. It is important to note that all of the participants for this study were ethnically the same. Berila (2016) discussed that many contemplative spaces are socioeconomically, racially, and racially homogeneous. This factor could have influenced the lack of divergent or disconfirming cases that emerged during this study.

Extending Knowledge

Studies reviewed in Chapter 2 of this study for the literature include outcomes that demonstrate that mindfulness supported attention, well-being, social connection, creativity, and insight, as well as deepened an understanding of coursework for students (Beddoe & Murphy, 2004: Chugh & Bazerman, 2007; Dyebye, Thomas, & Shanafelt, 2006; Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006; Hess, 2013; Hutcherson, Seppala, & Gross, 2008; Jennings, 2008; Kahane, 2009; Lazar et al., 2005; Lynn, 2010; Roberts-Wolfe, Sacchet, & Britton, 2009; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bronner, 1998; Shippee, 2010; Wenger, 2013). Similar findings were confirmed through the data analysis process for this study. The findings of this study extend knowledge as it appears these qualities not only apply to student learning, but also to the educators' experience. Counselor educators reported an increased understanding of the work they were evaluating, an increase in insight while teaching and a strengthening of their ability to hold their students' attention, as well as a feeling that they were more creative in their work.

Biegel et al. (2012) conducted one of the few studies exploring educators' experiences with mindfulness. They found mindfulness training supported a teacher's sense of well-being and self, as well as the ability to manage difficult classroom behavior. The population for Biegel et al.'s study (2012) was kindgarten through Grade 12 teachers. I found similar findings for counselor educators in this study. Thus, it appears that Biegel et al.'s findings extend to educators in higher education settings as well.

Norton et al. (2011), who were social work faculty, engaged in a participatory action research study on learning and applying reflective teaching practices. The new junior faculty reported feeling empowered by the experience. Participants in this study noted how mindfulness

practices may support newer faculty dealing with anxiety and help them deal with difficult colleagues. Additionally, several of the counselor educators who participated in this study were newer faculty members. Thus, findings from this study seem to reflect the findings found in Norton et al. (2011) and also extend the findings to counselor educators.

In Grossenbacher and Parkin's qualitative study (2006), four themes emerged that demonstrated the perceptions of six undergraduate students in learning meditation: (a) meditation affects awareness content and frame, (b) meditation affects attention, (c) meditation affects worldview, and (d) meditation affects communication style. The researchers' study was conducted at Naropa University, a university that embeds mindfulness and contemplative practice into the mission, values, and classroom. The counselor educators in this study all worked at secular institutions, and yet still reported a similar experience.

Emergent themes from the data analysis confirm and extend findings from the literature review. Participants draw from a wide variety of mindfulness practices in their personal and professional lives. The participants experience changes in their attention, awareness, emotional regulation, well-being, and presence. Their mindfulness practice holistically influences their lived experience. Most of the current literature focuses on the experience of counseling students learning mindfulness. Findings from this study demonstrate that counselor educators have similar experiences with mindfulness in the classroom as counseling students. Finally, participants disconfirm that having a mindfulness practice had little influence on stress reduction and their ability to address and challenge the status quo.

Relational-Cultural Theory as a Lens

During the creation phase of this study, I created a Venn diagram illustrating the shared mindfulness and relational-cultural theory concepts/constructs (Figure 1). Table 3 shows the shared concepts within RCT and mindfulness, which were ideas that emerged during the data analysis process. I have chosen to use these shared terms as themes to explore the results of this study from an RCT perspective.

Table 3

RCT and Mindfulness as Shared Concepts

Attention and awareness
Trust
Disconnection-connection
Compassion and empathy
Growth-fostering relationships
Mutuality
Paradox
Authenticity
Interconnectedness and the illusion of a separate self
Presence
Nonjudgment and letting go

Discussion of Shared Concepts

Attention and awareness. According to Jordan (2010), RCT asserted that human beings grow through and toward each other. Counselors who are examining relationships through this lens regard their clients as not only developing relationships, but developing good quality relationships, as defined by Miller's five good things, across the life span (Jordan, 2010). According to the findings from this study, participants reflected on how the quality of their attention and awareness supported the quality of their relational experiences. For example, P.Z. noted:

> I think we need to help students and clients have a language for paying attention. And so you know saying to someone what are you experiencing in your body that could be a very terrifying question and a very confusing question. So coming up with like a sensation lists for first you know how what different senses we've like itching and numbness, pain, loosening and you know tenderness, openness you know all these different words to sort of like build language I think is an important stepping stone. Because then the students and you know clients ultimately are understanding what you are asking for. So I think it's important to like pay attention to those building blocks as well in terms of building a language to talk about what's happening in the mindfulness.

Participant P.A. also noted how the quality of one's attention and awareness may influence the quality of the relationship formed in this comment:

> So I think that ability also to pay attention, I've noticed that it comes up in a lot of ways that one might not consider, for me, and this is my personal perspective when someone—has a native language is—from a different language, when I'm hearing them talk, there's some part that I notice that gets after deciphering and having intention and curiosity for a bit, that my mind starts to wear down into translation, so as you get tired, and I start hearing messages of like, or start feeling distracted because I'm a little bit worn, and that attention helps me come back, come back and keep going forward and say, you know, they're doing a great job of you know, maybe even help me see my thoughts and say, we need to refocus here again, or just ask for clarity of how do I—it actually helps me problem solve because I am listening to myself a little better.

P.E. also reflected on the quality of his awareness in relation to his student's experience:

> You know I always try to be aware of the physical changes of my students. I can tell you the students who when they come in they are automatically going to be the type that shake their legs because they don't like to be sitting still for long. I can tell you when I have the students that you know this was a student, he is normally pretty calm and they are not so relaxed tonight so something is going on, because I think it's important to be aware of with our students. And you know mindfulness helps to give you that awareness as this isn't the normal classroom tonight, something is going on.

The participant's comments provide an example of what relational cultural theory refers to as *radical respect*; an ability to empathize with the conditions that created suffering for another human being (Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, 2016). Additionally, Miller (1997) noted in discussing her five good things, that when a growth-fostering relationship is present, the people involved in the relationship experience a sense of zest, clarity, worth, or empowerment, there is a desire for more relationships and an increased desire for more productivity. Perhaps, as seen in the examples quoted above, the quality of attention and awareness one engages in through mindfulness supports Roger's idea that when a counselor can experience their client's subjective reality, there are greater opportunities for an empathetic exchange and developmental growth (Corey, 2009). Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between mindfulness practices and growth-fostering relationships.

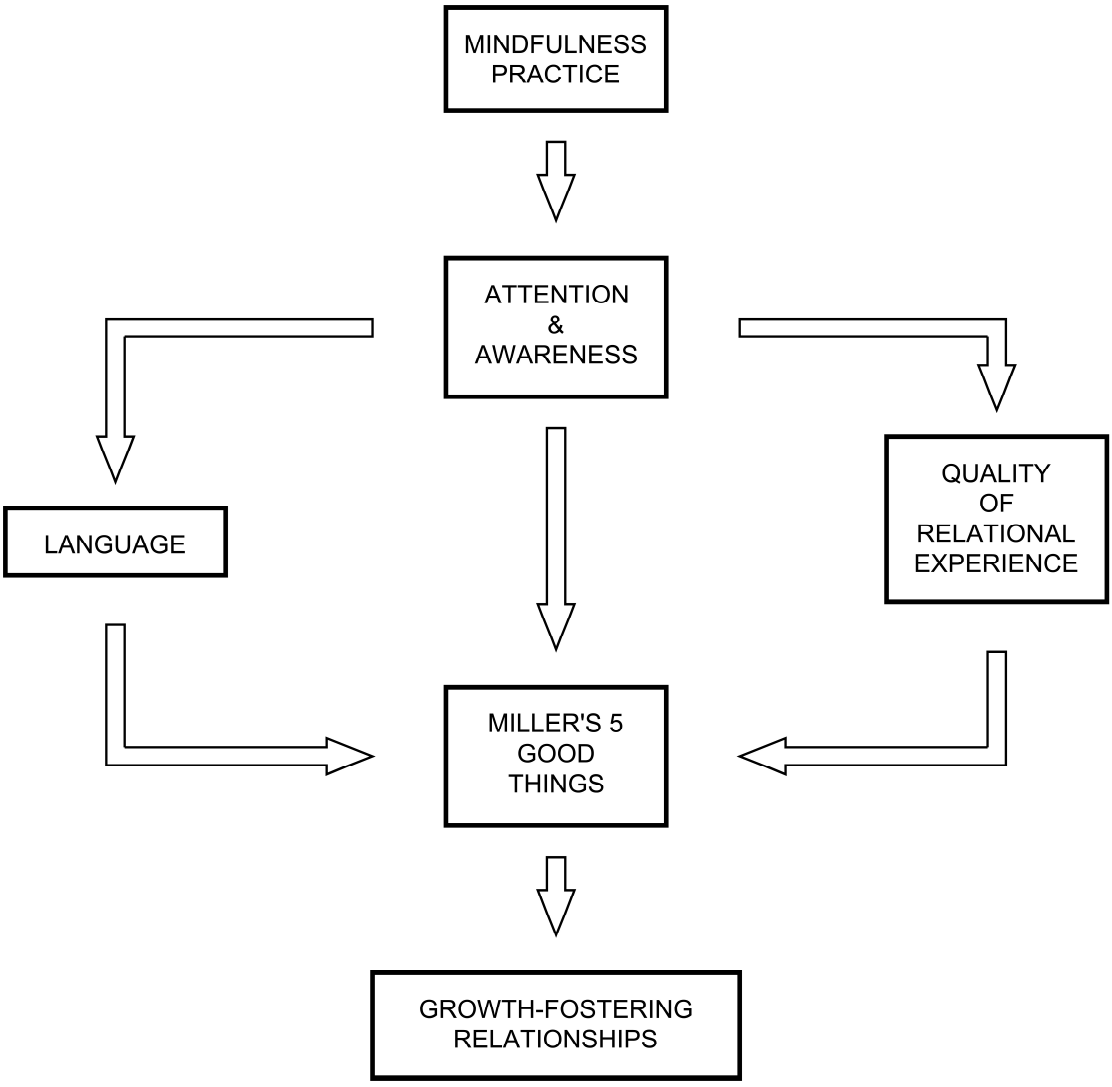

Figure 7. How mindfulness practices support growth-fostering relationships.

Several of the participants noted that while humanistic theory helps counselors to recognize the importance of unconditional positive regard within a counseling relationship, Rogers did not provide skills for engaging in unconditional positive regard. Participants discussed that mindfulness practice provides an actual intervention to teach counseling students on how to engage in unconditional positive regard with their clients. For example, P.T., while

reflecting on his definition of mindfulness, noted that one seeks a quality of attention that is different than only allowing preservations to unfold in the mind:

> So I guess when I'm thinking of mindfulness as a researcher, I think, also just in my own personal practice too, I have a much narrower definition than what I see a lot of people have and the conceptualization of mindfulness really coming more out of neurobiology. And I see mindfulness is just leading a form of attention that is—that focus on present moment experiences while adopting a sense of acceptance of whatever those experiences maybe. When I talk about mindfulness in that concept with a lot of people I like to make some distinctions about, you know, this is a just a way of paying attention that differs from like being on auto-pilot where you're engaged in the present moment activity but your thoughts cannot adopt that activity or multi-tasking. It differs from like perseverations where you're just noticing the thought and then, continually engaging or on the spot as opposed to letting it pass and seeing what else comes up based on the present moment.

P.Z. also noted the importance of being able to break down the concept of unconditional positive regard into skills to better support learning and to engage and support a relationship built on the foundation of unconditional positive regard:

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. But the work, I feel like the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. So and for me you know

> a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me…not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence. So actually it just gives a language, it helps you with like a language to talk about these skills that you know the additional positive regards, to be genuine and to be you know have empathy so for me there's so much of that, the basis of that is mindfulness. So I could kind of talk to students about that and have a language in my practices and things like that.

When these participants were able to avoid becoming lost in their own preservations, and simultaneously accept preservations as part of their human experience, they experienced a greater ease with shifting their attention back to their students. This ability to influence their lived experience in the classroom allows these counselors educators to support and engage with their students in a way that supports *the five good things* that Miller noted as essential building blocks for growth-fostering relationships.

Trust. While in engaging mindfulness practice, the practitioner trusts the process of engaging in the practice. As the participants noted in this study, mindfulness can cause discomfort. Practitioners may become aware of emotions they were experiencing that they were not consciously aware of having. However, practitioners know to trust the process, despite the discomfort. This approach of trusting the process provides an experiential opportunity to metaphorically explore relational experiences in the counseling classroom. Counselor educators are supporting their students in learning how to engage in relationships with their clients that may cause discomfort for both the counselor and client. Yet, as discussed in terms of RCT, this discomfort can lead to stronger and more rewarding connections. According to RCT and

mindfulness, discomfort can provide opportunities for stronger connections. For example, P.E. discussed how mindfulness can support counselor educators and counseling students in dealing with difficult emotions that may come up in the classroom. He shared:

> You know for me I think mindfulness gives yourself permission to have those feelings. And that's something that you know working with students when we talk about mindfulness part of what I tell them is, it's okay to feel what you feel. Mindfulness isn't about getting rid of the feeling, mindfulness is trying to figure out, okay now that I know how I feel where does that come from, what is the foundation for it. And when we talk about that in class, I have noticed especially when I've got a classroom with a lot of diversity in it, people tend to be more apt to talk about things like cultural discrimination that happen maybe not to them but to others they know and how they didn't really think about how much they still held on to that until we start practicing some mindfulness techniques because it gives that safety to be able to go, okay. So you are telling me, you are still feeling like this, where is the foundation for it? How do we express it and how do we really look at wow, I didn't realize I still have that or I am feeling that? Now where is that coming from?

Engaging in daily mindfulness practice has the potential to support the building of distress tolerance skills by reducing the influence of uncomfortable emotions. Therapeutic approaches such as DBT and MBCT use mindfulness practices to reduce affective experience. RCT stipulates that disconnections can occur when difficult emotions arise (Jordon, 2010). Relational disconnections can evolve into stronger connections. These disconnections can change to be even stronger connections that promote learning when people involved in the

relationship can move through their impasse. If counselor educators and their students are more able to tolerate distress that may arise from the learning process, perhaps then they also have an opportunity to have a strong relational connection, which could lead to a greater degree of learning and understanding.

Connection-disconnection. According to RCT, relational disconnections, or empathic failures, are unavoidable. However, if awareness, trust, and authenticity are present, then there is the possibility more stronger relational connections (Jordan, 2010). Several of the participants noted ways in which their mindfulness practice supported their ability to maintain healthy connections with themselves, their work, their students, and their colleagues. For example, P.W. reflected on the importance of engaging in mindfulness practice in order to model what it means to have a practice:

> How can I help students come to a place of acceptance and empathy, you know, with different kinds of situations. The only way to do that is to do that. So if you cannot model it – it's not probably going to work.

P.D. noted that mindfulness was useful in supporting counselor educators with difficulties related to working with difficult colleagues and the pressure to publish. P.C. commented on how she uses mindfulness to support self-care within the classroom environment:

> But I think talking about mindfulness at the very beginning it helps to even in some of those moments I say, wow this is really intense in here? Like I'll tell I need to take a deep breath, I can feel my body getting tight, why won't we all check in with ourselves for a moment.

While counseling techniques and interventions can be taught in class, students do not usually have their first experience with actually counseling a client until the end of their program during practicum and internship. When counselor educators engage in mindfulness practice with their students, they are able to provide an opportunity to truly experience an intervention for change with their educator. Applying RCT recognizes the influence of power dynamics as it relates to building growth-fostering relationships. When the relationship has the quality of a *power-over* relational connection, there is a diminished ability to engage in a growth-fostering relationship (Cannon et al., 2012, Jordan, 2010). Engaging regularly in a *power-over* relationship could then potentially lead to chronic disconnection, or the *central relational paradox* (Cannon et al., 2012, Jordan, 2010). The professor-student relationship has traditionally been defined as power-over dynamics which may lead to a diminished capacity in both educator and student learning. P.P. provided an example when she noted the importance of engaging in a beginner's mind:

> I think that it is like part of who I am and it's part of my way of being, and it's, you know, it's imperative in my work and my life to approach the world from a mindful place. I think as counselor educators, it's even more imperative right because if you think about, you know, in Buddhism and in mindfulness like there's a focus on *beginners mind*, right, it's like being, you know, trying really hard to see things as though it's the first time you're doing something. And I think that can be really helpful for us as we teach courses, you know. When you have advanced teaching like in advanced education like a Ph.D, it's really easy to have that expert lens and, you know, tend to perhaps get frustrated with students or get frustrated with other people of, "Why aren't you doing

these things?" Like, "How didn't you not understand this?" or what have you and recognizing that. Well, people are just starting out and there are different points in their journey. And so, I think I have a daily practice of sitting, meditation, or guided imagery or walking or eating, mediation, or something. But I also I think it's the way that I approach things for at least the way I hope I approach things. And do I fail at it? Of course.

P.D. discussed how his mindfulness practice supports him when discussing multicultural issues in counseling:

And you know I think being mindful is because you know as a white male professor teaching about this, there can be a lot of baggage that we bring in, a lot of fears, nervousness. You know and I think mindfulness has really helped me to settle into my role there with an understanding of how I can push everybody to be a better you know be more culturally competent at the end of the class without worrying about people think, what they think about me. I think that's such a big thing. Mindfulness helps you not worry about what anyone thinks of you because none of it matters in the end. All that matters is what the students learn. And as you know anything mindfulness-based, the paradox is the less you care about what people think about you and the more you focus on the learning, the better they think of you.

Figure 8 shows how engaging in mindfulness practice can support growth-fostering relationships. When growth-fostering relationships are cultivated, there is an opportunity for deepened learning experience.

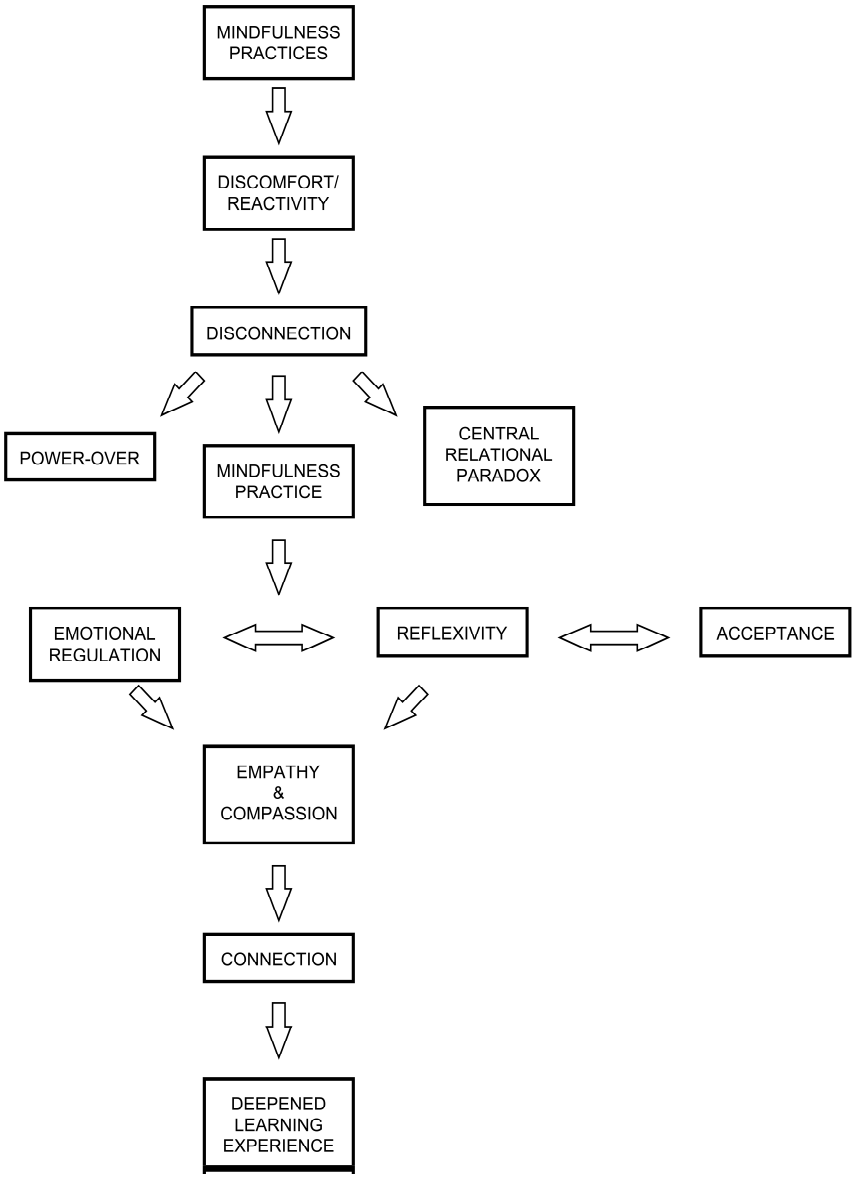

Figure 8. How mindfulness supports growth-fostering relationships and learning experiences.

However, a potential caveat is that some counseling students could be challenged by counselor educators with a mindful andragogy when they choose to bring their mindfulness practice into the classroom. P.W. provided this example:

> So it's currently fad and I think it can be very powerful and very connective. If they are resistant or they have religion but feel like it's not the right way to do things and instead of being really mindfully pray or you do something different you know like you had an organized prayer. I think they can be put off or feel challenged, but we have to meet them where they are.

P.P., P.D., and P.W made comments that illustrate how mindfulness practice has the potential to either diminish the influence of power-over relationships or potentially support power-over dynamics. Students who find value in mindfulness practice may more readily experience the five good things Miller noted about growth-fostering relationships. These examples speak to the importance of counselor educators taking time to intentionally introduce the history of mindfulness practice within a mental health context. If counselor educators choose not to intentionally introduce mindfulness practices in their classroom, there is the potential for the students to experience chronic disconnection, which could then result in the five outcomes of disconnection: diminished energy, diminished action, confusion, diminished sense of worth, and avoidant of relationships (isolation) (Jordan, 2010).

Yet, relational disconnections can become the glue that supports deepened connections. If silence is the glue that supports oppression, engaging in authentic dialogue can support empowerment. Several of the participants, when reflecting on any potential concerns a counselor educator should be aware of if they are interested in a implementing a mindful andragogy, noted the importance of engaging in some type of mindfulness practice first. This approach would then support the counselor educators if their students had tough questions about mindfulness practice and its origin. For example, P.D. stated:

There's some tough questions that students can ask about the relationship between this and religious practice and other things. That if you are not prepared to deal with it, I could see the whole thing you know sort of not being real helpful to the counselor education process. It's become so mainstream that perhaps there are people who aren't real well grounded in it or just thinking about it as relaxation training for example, that might misrepresent it.

P.T. noted a similar idea and commented:

And I know a lot of people like to gravitate towards conceptualizations of mindfulness based on different assessment instruments that are out for mindfulness and I think of big one is like the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire. But when you look at that instrument or a critique of it and I think a very valid one, in some of her writings is that it was developed through, it kind of an assessment driven model not a theoretically driven model. And much of the stuff that they come up I don't think really represent mindfulness. I think they represent constructs that come about as a result of being mindful. So I don't think acting with awareness is the mindful. I don't think it's the same thing. I think when you are mindful you are in a better position to act with awareness. They're not the same thing. It's kind of like chewing and digestion are not the same thing. One is going to precede the other, but they're not the same construct. Because that—and I like this point because I do see mindfulness in—it is in a lot of domain even outside of counseling, becoming this generic catch all for anything that's good and anything I like and then, to call it mindfulness, because it sounds a little bit mysterious or

mystical, we'll call it mindfulness and I personally like the much narrower conceptualization of mindfulness.

Perhaps exploring mindfulness practice origins with counseling students before engaging in a mindfulness practice could help heal or negate any relational disconnection from students who may have concerns about engaging in a mindfulness practice based on their religious beliefs. As Salzberg (2010) discussed, mindfulness and contemplative breathing exercises exist within many spiritual and religious traditions. Examining this aspect of mindfulness practice may then come to strengthen the relational connection between a counselor educator with a mindful andragogy and his or her students who have concerns about the origins of mindfulness in Buddhism.

Compassion and empathy. As noted in Chapter 2, RCT rests on the assumption that mutual empathy is needed in order to engage in a relationship that allows for growth and development (Jordan, 2004; Miller & Stiver, 1997).Several of the participants discussed their mindfulness practice as being either focused on cultivating compassion and empathy or that they experienced a greater sense of compassion and empathy as a result of engaging in daily mindfulness practices**.** The participants focus on compassion then had an influence on their didactic decisions. The participants made changes to their classroom environment to support their student's well-being. Also, participants engage in self-reflection about how their students would perceive their evaluative feedback. For example, P.M. said, "And so, yeah, okay so mindfulness and feedback, when I give, feedback to students, I try to be aware of how it comes out, I guess, like how what I say it might come off to some people." P.W. noted that having a mindfulness practice helped her to evaluate her students "from a place of acceptance and

empathy." The counselor educators in this study recognized the value of mindfulness practices in supporting compassionate learning. As P.D. noted,

> Yeah I think what I would say to that is it's taught me that if I can develop the person and then have them be more mindful, all the other stuff is much easier. People are not open at present distance, worry about judgments. They're not going to be engaged in learning the way I want them to be, whether it's multicultural or anything else. So the other thing I should add I don't give grades in my classes and that's a direct reflection of my mindfulness affiliation and belief. Luckily I am at a place where they've allowed me to do that, not all places allow it.

Additionally, the participants noted that mindfulness was a tool to model counseling behaviors, self-care skills, acceptance, and empathy. P.W. stated:

> How can I help students come to a place of acceptance and empathy, you know, with different kinds of situations. The only way to do that is to do that. So if you cannot model it—it's not probably going to work.

RCT draws from neurological research that one's nervous system health is supported by having healthy relationships. Engaging in mindfulness practices supported the counselor educators having compassion and empathy for themselves and their students.

Growth-fostering relationships. Miller's five good things provide a lens to assess the quality of a relationship. At the core of RCT is the belief that the individuals involved in relationships need to be able to be authentic (Cannon et al, 2008; Jordan, 2010). Yet, how can these five good things be cultivated and taught? How can counselor educators teach what it means to be authentic? P.A. noted that colleges provide many venues to learn different topics,

but not necessarily on how the mind works or how to attend to mental hygiene. For P.A., engaging in mindfulness practice is one way to teach students about how the mind works:

> So I'm not—some of these are like, oh, mindfulness is everything. It's not, but it has a place inside our traditional theories and our traditional practices and especially if you're training new counselors because sometimes people will have really—not really work very much on the mental hygiene. It seems to me that there is, you know, schools really focus on academic improvements to the mind, so knowing things. But not necessarily always about how our mind works, sometimes, it's even working on helping students gain, have better memory, or have better recall, or process math or something faster, but not always about skills and things like that, to pay attention, or to let go of things mentally.
>
> So many times, it shows up on the master's program, so I don't really know how to be silent, I don't know how to just sit with my thoughts and not do something physically, some of my students in practicum—I might do some exercise and you know, give them some materials about here's where we can go to this really great .edu, and body scan some of the other practices, here's some resources.

This shared experience provides an opportunity for a shared sense of empowerment that can then support increased energy, clarity, a desire for more relationships, and a motivator for counselor educators and their students to want to maintain these qualities while learning other counseling related material. Figure 9 visualizes how mindfulness practices support growth-fostering relationships. P.P. provided an example when she shared comments about developing

mindfulness training videos with one of her students that she then used in the attending skills classroom:

> Yeah, it was really funny. And then that student I ended up working really closely with. He and I actually—he needed three extra credits to graduate. So, I created an independent study for him, and called "Michael is in Counseling" where he developed 16 audio recordings for me to use in my skills class. So, at the beginning of each of our skills classes called "Models and Techniques" or "Counseling At The Beginning of Each Model and Technique Class," and you know, we would have as my students started calling him "Mindfulness Brandon." I would say Mindfulness Brandon. And now, my students are, you know, last year like one of their first classes that they take, they were like immediately, they were being exposed to it. And immediately they are connecting with us. And one of—it's funny because couple of my students that I don't have in classes this semester, but were in my class last semester, will decide to randomly stop by my office or, you know, be in the hallway and, you know, tell me how much they miss that, and like could I get some of those tapes or whatever?

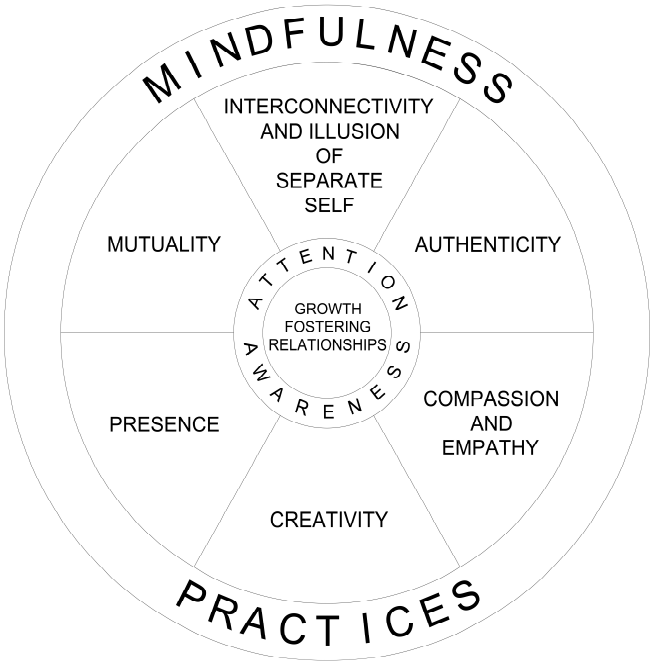

Figure 9. Key elements of mindfulness practices that support growth-fostering relationships.

P.P. noted her students were motivated enough to seek out the resource again, outside of the classroom experience. P.P shared this experience with energy and joy in her voice, noting that she, too, was inspired by the mutuality of the experience. Both P.P. and her students grew through the experience and toward their relationship.

Mutuality. Participants in this study discussed how their past counseling experiences had an influence on their choice of mindfulness practice selected for student learning. This sharing of experiences provided an opportunity for a sense of mutuality and shared experience. According to RCT, this sense of mutuality can help to strengthen and deepen relational connections. Participants in this study noted the importance of modeling this approach for their students. Engaging in modeling mindfulness practice may also support their students in learning the

essential components to building a connective relationship. P.W. provided an example of this sense of mutuality:

> How can I help students come to a place of acceptance and empathy, you know, with different kinds of situations. The only way to do that is to do that. So if you cannot model it – it's not probably going to work.

Furthermore, engaging in the mindfulness practice together can provide a shared language, a crucial component of a skilled counselor. For example, P.Z. stated:

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. But the work, you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. For me you know a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. So it offers me…not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence. So actually it just gives a language, it helps you with like a language to talk about these skills that you know the additional positive regards, to be genuine and to be you know have empathy so for me there's so much of that, the basis of that is mindfulness. So I could kind of talk to students about that and have a language in my practices and things like that.

Paradox. Applying RCT illuminates how power dynamics in relationships can influence the quality of relational connection. When power differentials are based on political and cultural inequalities, there can be a detrimental influence on human development and subsequent

relationship building. This power dynamics can lead to the central relational paradox—a relationship in which the person involved cannot fully be authentic and thus experiences a sense of disconnection or disempowerment. P.M. provided an example of this paradox:

> Like that sort of the ideal that I am always trying to strive for and I've become—I am becoming more aware of when I am inauthentic and not really myself. I think if there weren't, you know as in for the mindfulness aspect, I wouldn't be as aware of when I am not being authentic or true to myself, but I have noticed there have been times when I have either been interacting with students or with faculty members like coworkers or I have noticed like, oh this isn't really me, you know I am talking like this because—or interacting this way because I think it's how people want me to be. I guess is that, I am aware and maybe if I weren't in the mindfulness I wouldn't be aware, I probably wouldn't be. I am aware of that the fact that I am keeping myself out of relationships for the sake of being in relationships, for the sake of keeping my relationships.

The participants noted several ways in which their mindfulness practice supports having authentic interactions with their students. Several participants expressed their belief that mindfulness provides a tool for discussing what is involved in an empathetic exchange. For example, P.Z. stated:

> Well I think you know students want to know how to be successful therapists. And that's one of those kind of like impossible things to teach you know like maybe like giving over a formula. But the work, I feel like you know the more self awareness they have, then the more awareness they bring to their surroundings and their interactions you know that's really the best skill building for being a therapist, to being a counselor. For me you know

> a lot of that learning is embodied in my mindfulness practice. It offers me…not in terms of executing but using in terms of talking about relating, you know what it means to be aware of my presence. So actually it just gives a language, it helps you with like a language to talk about these skills that you know the additional positive regards, to be genuine and to be you know have empathy so for me there's so much of that, the basis of that is mindfulness. So I could kind of talk to students about that and have a language in my practices and things like that.

Perhaps using a mindfulness-based andragogy provides a way to observe and speak about relational connection in a way that can also highlight relational power-dynamics, the source of disconnection and disempowerment, more apparent.

Authenticity. Cultivating an authentic nature is critical to both RCT and mindfulness practice. Thus, examples that demonstrated the importance of authenticity to a mindful andragogy emerged repeatedly. Yet, RCT adds a further dimension to the idea of an authentic nature by exploring the capacity to be fully one's self in relationships (Duffy et al., 2009; Jordan, 2004; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Authenticity for individuals and groups who have experienced oppression may prove difficult. One way of having a mindful andragogy that supports authenticity in relationships is through community building. For example, P.W. noted:

> Yeah I think that's why we are close because we have the same kind of values that way and we can talk at a really deep level. And some of it like one of my colleagues it's a very, we have very deep existential conversations, which is you know mindfulness and meaning in life and what's important. And so those conversations are—can be really I

> mean such a great—a great thing to have conversations like that and be able to then transfer that into teaching and learning, ensure that with colleagues and other students.

P.Z. also shared how being authentic leads to a deeper sense of relational connection in the classroom:

> I would say there's some moments of real connection honoring—even I'll use the word love that happens. It's really not necessarily me and the students but between the people in the room which happens to be that one person and other people are students. But I think there are moments of real connection and seeing each other and you know like I am pretty vulnerable in my teaching. You know I don't act like I had it all together. I share like I've been doing a private practice just for a few years. And this is coming up in my work that I am struggling with that I am working on I am not sure how it's going to land. And that seems to resonate a lot with students more than pretending that I've it all together and they all have it all together. And I think that's informed by my mindfulness practice knowing that there is no state of perfection that trying to get to perfect is suffering. And so you know I think there's kind of those like values of insight to meditation that are that helps it to be more real and just connective. And I think when those—there are those moments that I sometimes feel like oh like there is this transcendent experience in the classroom where there is this really bonding that happened in that. And so that's nice to have people.

When discussing the quality of their awareness, several participants noted the importance of having a beginner's mind. For example, P.C. said,

> And so that beginner's mind and that trust and that openness and I'll talk about mindfulness and so I don't necessarily do the same amount of like mindfulness activities in that class as I do with the basic counseling skills class but I will talk about it, I will describe it, we will take a mindfulness moment. I will take a mindfulness moment in model in front of the class when I feel like I need to just connect with what's happening within myself to kind of guide me and where the class needs to go and they observe that. And so it kind of goes into all of my class cultures that way, the diversity one I probably give it a little bit more time to it because I describe how it can bring up a lot of strong feelings and we can sense and want to react and not necessarily respond mindfulness to ourselves or to one another and so I do talk about it a little bit more in that classroom.

These comments are examples of how when authenticity is an essential characteristic in mindful andragogy, the five good things—zest, clarity, sense of worth, desire for more relationships, and productivity—emerge by actively attending to one's authentic nature.

Interconnectedness and the illusion of a separate self. Interdependence or interconnectedness is a construct reflected in both mindfulness and RCT in that RCT and mindfulness regard the idea of a separate sense of self as a false notion (Jordan, 2010). This idea sets RCT apart from other theoretical models of human of development and, perhaps for this reason, helps to break down assumptions based on individualism that may lead to a devaluing of other cultures that value interdependence. Several participants noted a sense of interconnected experience. For example, P.M. shared these words: "I am almost more aware of my whole life as being like that, like the hour or the half hour of meditation is a microcosm for like your whole lifetime."

P.C. shared another example:

> I think for me—I think because of all the preconceived notions, the biases, all of the things that we all walk around with just because we are socializing beings that, you know, we are affected by our environment. I think there's always accountability to ourselves to be aware and so I think that no matter how much you think, you know, about diversity, you're still a part of your environment and you are still going to have biases into what you do. And so I think for me personally working with diverse students and diverse in every respect, you know, being able to be some of the elements of mindfulness that are in the literature that I do like also is just being able to be aware and act with awareness and not be reactive and not be judging of whatever is happening in the present moment in my own experience, allows me to be more open to whatever the experience is and that allows me to be more open hearted to every student. And so I think that it—and it helps me sort of be more patient and curious rather than reactive to something that a student might do or say or express that, you know, might involve kind of a more automatic reaction from me.

P.M noted an awareness of the interrelationships between her emotional reactivity and how this influenced her students' future clients:

> That attention—attending is the right word in this awareness, but I think the mindfulness practice has helped people get there to put stuff aside and actually really be an active listener. So it not only helps me as a practitioner, work with diverse students. I think it also helps the diverse students I work with, help work with their diverse clientele, in the future.

P.E also made these comments:

Mindfulness isn't about getting rid of the feeling, mindfulness is trying to figure out, okay now that I know how I feel where does that come from, what is the foundation for it. And when we talk about that in class, I have noticed especially when I've got a classroom with a lot of diversity in it, people tend to be more apt to talk about things like cultural discrimination that happen maybe not to them but to others they know and how they didn't really think about how much they still held on to that until we start practicing some mindfulness techniques because it gives that safety to be able to go, okay. So you are telling me, you are still feeling like this, where is the foundation for it? How do we express it and how do we really look at—"Wow, I didn't realize I still have that or I am feeling that. Now where is that coming from?

P.D. also discussed how his mindfulness practice supported reduced emotional reactivity. He shared:

And you know I think being mindful is because you know as a white male professor teaching about this, there can be a lot of baggage that we bring in, a lot of fears, nervousness. You know and I think mindfulness has really helped me to settle into my role there with an understanding of how I can push everybody to be a better you know be more culturally competent at the end of the class without worrying about people think, what they think about me. I think that's such a big thing. Mindfulness helps you not worry about what anyone thinks of you because none of it matters in the end. All that matters is what the students learn. And as you know anything mindfulness-based, the

paradox is the less you care about what people think about you and the more you focus on the learning, the better they think of you.

Using a mindful andragogy allows the participants to regulate their internal and external experiences. Participants can then cultivate their awareness and attention in a way that interdependently supports their mindfulness practice and growth-fostering relationships with their students. This can be seen in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10. How mindfulness and RCT concepts interrelate and support each experience.

Presence. Unlike many modern approaches to counseling, RCT does not contain a set of interventions to follow. Counselors who use RCT are changing their attitude and understanding of their client, rather than using a prescribed set of interventions (Jordan 2010). Behind this approach is the core belief that the responsive presence of the therapist can help support the client through a change process (Jordan, 2001; Jordan, 2010). P.W. provided reflections on how

intentional awareness of her presence when working with students influences her ability to connect with her students:

> Well one thing I would add is when I approach a situation I need to say, how can I do this in the most loving way. And how can I be that sort of presence to help them understand and grow, because if I come off and it persist me—if I come off from a place of arrogance, or knowing it all, I won't connect you know and it worked pretty well. I've had a lot of mentees in my career that are now colleagues and friends and have always surpassed me. And it's been really a rewarding career that way and making deeper connections.

P.W.'s comments reflected the RCT assumption that responsive presence will influence the quality of relational connection. Providing responsive presence can prove difficult at times. Yet, mindfulness supports emotional regulation, which may support counselor educators as they continue to be aware of their presence, even when it is difficult. P.D. provided an example of responsive presence with these words:

> I think I mean with experience you can push someone, and in a way that you weren't comfortable before and see them come of it at the other end better. And so that's just give me more confidence to do it. I get more credibility to do it too because I can say this happens all the time. It's normal. It's okay plus I mean I am really familiar with counselor development literature. And so I can—I've them read it. I can say things like, this was highly consistent with what all counselors go through that kind of thing. But without the mindfulness practice I don't think I've the presence to be able to pull it off.

Nonjudgement and letting go. Applying RCT involves exploring how sociocultural messages can influence the quality of relationships that people experience, depending on the degree to which they have internalized the cultural stereotypes. Higher education has its own controlling relational images. Faculty must publish or perish, and most institutions still maintain a hierarchical organizational structure that supports power-over relational connections. Several of the participants noted that their mindfulness provided a way to let go of their perceived pressures and engage in creativity, free from judgements—their own or those of their colleagues. For example, P.W. stated:

> Well I think the present and the moment and aware of thought processes, because when you are aware of them we can change them or not judge them and let them go. But you know like being really present with every moment. It's hard because our minds are so busy, but the more mindful we are in the present the more effective I think, we can be more creative.

P.D. noted a similar idea:

> So I am at a research institution so writing is a big part of what I do. Being mindful as mindfulness has been really helpful in when I am trying to write, and want to tap into things that are more creative. It keeps me out of that got to get things done. It got to be a good mindset. It helps me tap into the more creative side of myself I think without feeling all the pressure of getting those done quick and not going to be great and so forth.
>
> By engaging in mindfulness to cultivate nonjudgment, then I will have a better starting place to understand the perspective of another.

P.A. noted a similar idea as well:

> That attention—attending is the right word in this awareness, but I think the mindfulness practice has helped people get there to put stuff aside and actually really be an active listener. So it not only helps me as a practitioner, work with diverse students. I think it also helps the diverse students I work with, help work with their diverse clientele, in the future.

Relational-cultural theory provides a lens to explore how mindfulness can support the development of growth-fostering relationships. The lived experiences of the participants for this study suggest that having a mindful andragogy provides a foundation for trust, mutuality, acceptance, and authenticity in the classroom. Trust, mutuality, acceptance, and authenticity allow the participants in this study to experience compassion and empathy for their students, even when it is difficult. These counselor educators are then able to grow connections and repair relational disconnections with their culturally diverse students. Implementing a mindful andragogy may ultimately lead to deeper learning for both counselor educators and their students.

Limitations of the Study

All research studies have limitations. Stating any limitations associated with a research study is a sign of rigor. I did not collect observational data; all of the interviews were conducted over the phone. While some literature presented for this study explored the negative impact of mindfulness, there is a general lack of research literature exploring potential pitfalls of using mindful andragogy. Study participants lived and worked throughout the U.S. geographical distribution was not, therefore, viewed as a limiting factor. Additionally, Moustakas (1994) stated that phenomenological research is an ongoing process; I conducted this study over a

period of 1 ½ years. While saturation of data occurred, perhaps more divergent cases would have emerged with a larger and more culturally diverse population of participants. Finally, another limitation was that all of the participants in this study identified as Caucasian/White. There is no way of knowing if counselor educators of color may have different lived experiences. I would like to see research conducted that highlights the lived experiences of nonwhite counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students.

Recommendations

The use of mindfulness-based andragogy is still in its infancy so many opportunities lie ahead for further research exploring mindfulness-based andragogy. Participants in this study all had personal definitions of mindfulness. There is a need for further research examining how variations in defining mindfulness may influence educational settings. For example, do counselor educators who engage in many hours of mindfulness practice differ in their lived experience from counselor educators who engage in a mindful attitude but in a less than daily practice? I recommend conducting a one-way ANOVA using the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale to look for differences in attention and awareness. I also recommend exploring if using a mindful andragogy positively influences student learning outcomes. One of the themes that emerged from this study was that counselor educators who have a mindful andragogy value interdependence. Based on this finding, recommendations for a phenomenological study on the students' lived experience of working with counselor educators with a mindful andragogy could be considered. One limitation of this study was the lack of ethnic diversity among the participants. Further research analyzing the lived experiences of non-White faculty with a mindful andragogy is needed. Participants in this study also reflected variations in how much training or the level of

competency to engage in a mindful andragogy. Defining and exploring what it means to be competent, both in mindfulness and mindful andragogy, are recommended. Additionally, participants in this study noted the importance of having a mindfulness practice before engaging in a mindful andragogy, which is important because students could potentially have difficult questions to ask about the historical roots of mindfulness. I recommend exploring if the teaching of mindfulness from a historical context supports students being receptive to learning about mindfulness.

Counselor educators in this study noted their mindfulness practice influenced how they interacted with culturally diverse students. It may be valuable to conduct a correlational study to examine the relationship between mindfulness andragogy and the level of cognitive complexity needed to engage in culturally competent andragogy. All of the participants in this study worked for secular higher education institutions. It would also be worthwhile to explore whether or not there are any implications about using mindfulness andragogy in religious colleges and universities. I recommend conducting a quasi experimental study using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire to examine whether or not students are more receptive to learning mindfulness when it is taught from a secular or religious perspective.

Three of the participants in this study worked for online or distance-based universities. One of the participants noted that one experiences his or her own presence in the classroom when implementing a mindful andragogy differently in a land-based classroom than an online classroom. I also recommend more research exploring mindfulness andragogy for online classroom environments. Participants in this study noted that their mindfulness practice supported a nonjudgemental attitude and increased their ability not to engage in emotional

reactivity with their students. While counselor educators in this study had as little as 9 months of experience, two of the participants had 15-plus years of teaching experience. I recommend more studies that explore whether or not counselor educators may have the ability to engage in nonjudgment and respond to students with less reactivity based on the number of years of experience they have teaching counselors in training. Participants also shared that their mindfulness practice supported their compassion and empathy for their students. The multicultural education literature notes that compassion and empathy are necessary to provide multiculturally competent education. Based on the results from this study and current literature exploring what is needed to be a multiculturally competent educator, it is worth exploring whether or not having a mindful andragogy promotes multicultural education and inclusive classroom environments. I recommend conducting a regression analysis to explore the level of correlation between mindfulness practices and multicultural competence.

Additionally, participants in this study discussed how their daily mindfulness practice served as a form of self-care, both personally and professionally. I further recommend studies that explore the long-term implications of having a mindful andragogy on the development of burn-out for counselor educators. I recommend a time series analysis to examine the long-term implications on the relationship between mindful andragogy and the development of burn-out for counselor educators and supervisors. Finally, since I found several overlapping concepts between mindfulness and relational-cultural theory, I recommend conducting a grounded theory study to explore the possibility of theoretical integration.

Implications for Positive Social Change

Ubuntu is an African phase that means: *I am because we are*. The findings from this study have interdependent implications for social change. When I reflect on what I considered the most supportive conditions for learning, the definition offered by The Contemplative Mind in Society inspired me. The participants in this study, by being courageous to authentically share their experiences, provided the food for this seed of inspiration to grow within me. I look forward to community building for counselor educators with a mindful andragogy after the completion of this study. If human beings co-create their experience of reality in an interconnected way, as the participants of this study have described, then this research process has provided a gift: an opportunity for me to know my true authentic self as a teacher and learner who wants to be a part of an educational movement focused on creating deep learning and opportunities for self-actualization for all human beings. If I am then focused on awaking to the light of my true nature and see this is only possible by inspiring others to do the same, perhaps counselor educators and their students can be an integral part in supporting peaceful communities—locally and globally. Recognizing the interconnected nature for positive social change, I have broken down possible implications into biological, psychological, and social categories.

Social Implications

Participants in this study noted that their mindfulness practice supports their ability to be aware, accepting, creative, compassionate, and empathetic with their students. Participants in this study discussed the importance of being able to model these behaviors. Perhaps using a mindful andragogy can support counselor educators in helping their students develop these traits?

Participants discussed how their practice provided them with tools to demonstrate or discuss how to engage in unconditional positive regard. Additionally, engaging in mindfulness practices with students provided a sense of safety to engage in difficult conversations about multiculturalism, privilege, and power. Findings from this study go beyond providing a relevant andragogical approach. There are implications that the counselors trained by these educators could potentially do a better job of providing multiculturally competent education and supervision. Their students may then go on to have an easier time providing multiculturally competent care for their future clients.

Psychological Implications

Thic Nhat Han stated that "happy teachers will save the world." I propose that having a daily mindfulness supported these educators' well-being and provided the conditions necessary for growth-fostering relationships to be established. Mindful andragogy may help to ward off burn-out and decrease anxiety and worry. Having a daily mindfulness practice holistically influenced the lives of the participants of this study. As P.M. stated: "I am almost more aware of my whole life as being like that, like the hour or the half hour of meditation is a microcosm for like your whole lifetime." According to the participants in this study, having a mindful andragogy may influence all aspects of a person's life in the same way. Mindful classroom instruction may lessen learner anxiety and engender greater awareness, acceptance, creativity, compassion, and empathy.

Biological Implications

Recent research findings on mirror neurons have demonstrated that human beings are hard-wired for compassionate relational connections (Jordan, 2010). Participants discussed ways

in which their mindfulness practice allowed them to be authentic and feel compassion for their students. Their mindfulness practices provided these educators with a means to support growth-fostering relationships. Also, the counselor educators in this study discussed how their mindfulness practice supports their well-being and self-care. Thus, the physical health of these educators may be improved. I assert that if all lived experience is interdependent in nature, then the community members who live where these educators reside may also benefit. Thus, society as a whole benefits from these educators' lived experiences with a daily mindfulness practice.

Practical Implications

Counselor educators who are interested in implementing a mindful andragogy can begin by developing their own mindfulness practice. There are now many options for trying out mindfulness. From online resources, to local community classes, engaging in mindfulness meditation is only dependent on learning preference. The Contemplative Mind in Society and the Mindfulness in Education Network are two organizations committed to supporting educators who are interested in mindful teaching. Both organizations offer opportunities for mindful educators to come together, build community, and exchange ideas about ways to implement mindful teaching. In Norton et al., (2011) action research study, social work faculty came together to practice mindfulness and explore their collective experience.

Counselor educators are encouraged to find interested stakeholders in their departments, colleges, or universities to practice mindfulness. The Contemplative Mind in Society, The American Mindfulness Research Association, The Mind and Life Institute, and the 1440 Foundation, are all organizations that offer grants for educators and researchers interested in exploring mindful teaching. Finally, results from this study demonstrate that there are

opportunities for deeper learning for both students and teachers. These findings, and the findings presented in the literature review for this study, can be used to demonstrate and advocate for their inclusion in counselor education.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experience of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. By approaching the lived experience with hermeneutics phenomenology and using RCT as my interpretative lens, the distinct and unique nature of these mindful counselor educators' lived experiences emerged in great detail—in such a way that it was revealed by embracing a qualitative methodology. Engaging in the hermeneutics circle is a spiral process, and thus this study ends where it began. Zajonc (2013) noted the importance of the growing interest in mindful pedagogies, describing this moment as a "quiet revolution" (p. 83). This study serves as one small interconnected piece in this growing revolution. Based on outcomes, I suggest that a mindful andragogy supports counselor educators in developing their awareness, attention, ability to effectively manage discomfort and support their self-care, as well as strengthen their ability to engage in growth-fostering relationships with diverse students in the classroom. Applying RCT postulates that when growth-fostering relationships are possible, there is a greater potential for learning to occur.

Yet, despite these findings, there is still much to learn. Mindfulness-based approaches to teaching and learning are in their infancy. Further research is needed using other qualitative methods, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches that explore the micro to macro systems-level influences of the use of a mindful andragogy. If the classroom serves as a stage for

all human experience, then the potential to understand what is necessary for a peaceful and just society may be found through further exploration of the lived experiences of mindful educators everywhere.

Breathing in, I am breathing in. Breathing out, I am breathing out. I continue to focus on my breath, while noticing the nature of my automatic thoughts without judgment. I continue to breathe. May I be peaceful, may I be happy, may I be safe, and may I be free from all suffering. May all beings be peaceful, may all beings be happy, may all beings be well, may all beings be safe, and may all beings be free from suffering. I continue to repeat this phrase, noticing my sensory experience, while continuing to focus on my breath. I pause in between phrases to allow the intention of the compassion mindfulness practice to become all that I am and experience in the moment. And then, I enter the classroom—

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Below the reader will find interview questions that were created for the semi-structured interviews that will be conducted for this study. These questions were developed using Moustakas (1994) framework for phenomenological interviews. The phenomenological interview is an emergent co-constructed process, and the aim of the interview process is to explore lived experiences. Thus, these interview questions will not be the only questions asked during the interview process. Patton (2002) noted the importance of probes during qualitative interviewing. I will utilize probing questions to seek greater detail, elaboration, or clarification. However, each participant for this study will be asked the interview questions below.

Demographic Information Questions

1. How long have you been a counselor educator?
2. Do you work for a secular or religious institution?
3. How do you define your gender?
4. How do you define your racial-ethnic background?

Main Interview Questions

1. How do you define mindfulness?
2. What type of mindfulness practices do you engage in?
3. What does it mean to be a counselor educator who works with diverse students and has a mindfulness practice?
4. How, if at all, has your mindfulness practice affected your work in the classroom?

5. If you have used mindfulness practices in the classroom, did you see any concerns or issues that you would want other counselor educators to be aware of when seeking to incorporate mindfulness practices into the classroom?
6. Have you always had a mindfulness practice as long as you have been a counselor educator? If not, are there any changes you associate with the experience?
7. What types of feelings are generated by having a mindfulness practice and working with culturally diverse students?
8. What types of bodily changes or states of being are you aware of in the classroom?
9. How does your cultural background influence your experience with mindfulness?
10. How do mindfulness practices influence their teaching decisions regarding multicultural learning?
11. Have you shared all that is significant with reference to being a counselor educator who is working with diverse students and has a mindfulness practice?

Interview Probes:

1. You mentioned _____ in relation to your experience, please share more about…?
2. Please elaborate on what you meant by what you said about…?
3. Tell me more about…?
4. What do you mean by…?
5. Could you describe a time that _____ occurred?
6. What does it mean to you to be….?

Interview Data

The digitally recorded interview files will be uploaded on an encrypted website to a HIPAA compliment transcriptionist. Once I receive the transcribed file, I will print them out on paper to begin the data analysis process. All of my material will be stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office.

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate via Listserv

Below is the email that will be sent out on the CESnet, ASERVIC, ACMHE, and Mindfulness in Education Network listserv's.

Research Study Announcement

Hi all,

My name is Abby Dougherty, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. You are invited to take part in a research study entitled, "**Mindfulness Practices: The Lived Experience of Counselor Educators**". I am currently seeking participants for my qualitative dissertation study that is focused on exploring the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and may withdrawal at anytime. This study has passed the institutional review board (IRB# 02-10-16-0127744).

If you are interested in participating, I would be happy to provide further information on participating in this study.

If the participant responds yes:

I am seeking Counselor Educators who meet the following criteria:

(1) Have a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology
(2) Currently teach in a master's or doctoral level counseling program
(3) Currently identify as having a daily mindfulness practice
(4) Has the ability to access a phone, the internet, and email
(5) Can commit to a 60-90 minute interview at a time of your choosing
(6) Provide follow-up information after the interview

If this is something you might be interested in participating in I would be happy to send you an informed consent document that will discuss everything I went over in detail. Once you have a chance to take a look at the informed consent we will schedule a time to conduct a 60-90 minute interview. The interview will be scheduled at a time and format of your convenience. The interview can be done in person if you're not too far from the Philadelphia area, or by phone or video conferencing. Whichever is easiest for you.

Contacts and questions:

You may contact Abby Dougherty via email (abby.platt@waldenu.edu) or by phone (610-620-4622). If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, you can contact Dr. Leilani Endicott (Walden University representative) at irb@waldenu.edu.

Appendix C: E-mail Invitation

Dear Counselor Educator,

Hi (listserv members),

My name is Abby Dougherty, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. You are invited to take part in a research study entitled, "**Mindfulness Practices: The Lived Experience of Counselor Educators**". I am currently seeking participants for my qualitative dissertation study that is focused on exploring the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary and may withdrawal at anytime. This study has passed the institutional review board (IRB#).

If you are interested in participating, I would be happy to provide further information on participating in this study.

If the participant responds yes:

I am seeking Counselor Educators who meet the following criteria:

(1) Have a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology
(2) Currently teach in a master's or doctoral level counseling program
(3) Currently identify as having a daily mindfulness practice
(4) Has the ability to access a phone, the internet, and email
(5) Can commit to a 60-90 minute interview at a time of your choosing
(6) Provide follow-up information after the interview

If this is something you might be interested in participating in I would be happy to send you an informed consent document that will discuss everything I went over in detail. Once you have a chance to take a look at the informed consent we will schedule a time to conduct a 60-90 minute interview. The interview will be scheduled at a time and format of your convenience. The interview can be done in person if you're not too far from the Philadelphia area, or by phone or video conferencing. Whichever is easiest for you.

Contacts and questions:

You may contact Abby Dougherty via email (abby.platt@waldenu.edu) or by phone (610-620-4622). If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, you can contact Dr. Leilani Endicott (Walden University representative) at irb@waldenu.edu.

Appendix D: Phone Call Invitation Script

Hi (name of participant),

My name is Abby Dougherty, and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. I am currently seeking participants for my qualitative dissertation study that is focused on exploring the lived experiences of counselor educators with a daily mindfulness practice in the classroom with culturally diverse students. You were selected for this study because of research you have published or presented on the use of mindfulness in counselor education. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. This study has passed the institutional review board.

If you are interested in participating, I would be happy to provide further information on participating in this study.

If the participant responds yes:

I am seeking Counselor Educators who meet the following criteria:

(1) Have a PhD or EdD in counselor education or counseling psychology
(2) Currently teach in a master's or doctoral level counseling program
(3) Currently identify as having a daily mindfulness practice
(4) Has the ability to access a phone, the internet, and email
(5) Can commit to a 60-90 minute interview at a time of your choosing
(6) Provide follow-up information after the interview

If this is something you might be interested in participating in I would be happy to send you an informed consent document that will discuss everything I went over in detail. Once you have a chance to take a look at the informed consent we will schedule a time to conduct a 60-90 minute interview. The interview will be scheduled at a time and format of your convenience. The interview can be done in person if you're not too far from the Philadelphia area, or by phone or video conferencing. Whichever is easiest for you.

If the participant responds no:

Thank you for your willingness to speak with me today. I appreciate your time. Have a good day.

Appendix E: Follow-Up Phone Call Invitation Script

Hi (participant name),

I am following up with you to let you know that our interview has been transcribed and is available for you to complete a member check. I can email you a copy of the transcribed interview or I can send you a hard-copy, whichever you prefer. If you could please reply to this email with your preference (a hard copy of the interview or an emailed copy), I will send you the interview data to review. Thank you again for your time and willingness to participate in this study.

Warmly,

Abby Dougherty

Appendix F: Confidentiality Disclosure Statement

HIPAA BUSINESS ASSOCIATE AGREEMENT

This HIPAA Business Associate Agreement ("Agreement") by and between _____ ("Client") and iSource Solutions Inc. ("Business Associate") is effective as of December 01, 2015.

RECITALS

A. WHEREAS Client wishes to disclose certain information to Business Associate, some of which may constitute Protected Health Information ("PHI"), as defined in the federal regulations set forth at 45 C.F.R. §§ 160 and 164 (the "Privacy Rule");

B. WHEREAS Client and Business Associate intend to protect the privacy and provide for the security of PHI disclosed to Business Associate, as a "Business Associate", in compliance with the Privacy Rule;

C. NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises below and the exchange of information pursuant to this Agreement, the parties agree as follows:

1. Definitions.

a. *"Business Associate"* shall have the meaning given to such term under the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.

b. *"Covered Entity"* shall have the meaning given to such term under the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 160.103.

c. *"HIPAA"* or "Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996" is the statute under which the Privacy Rule was promulgated.

d. "*Individual*" shall have the meaning given to such term under the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 164.501, and shall include a person who qualifies as a personal representative in accordance with 45 C.F.R. § 164.502(g).

e. *"Privacy Rule"* is the regulation entitled "Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information," promulgated under HIPAA that is codified at 45 C.F.R. parts 160 and 164, Subparts A and E.

f. *"Protected Health Information" or "PHI"* shall have the meaning given to such term under the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 164.501.

g. "*Required by Law*" shall have the meaning given to such term under the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 164.501.

2. Obligations of Business Associate.

a. *Services* to *be provided by Business Associate*. Business Associate is responsible for all medical dictations to be transcribed and returned to Client within 12 hours from the time of dictation download at its end, unless otherwise agreed in writing by both parties.

b. *Permitted Uses and Disclosures.* Business Associate may use and disclose all PHI created or received pursuant to this Agreement as follows:

i. *To carry out the purposes of this Agreement.* Business Associate may use and disclose all of Client's PHI received or created by the Business Associate (or its agents and subcontractors) in performing its obligations pursuant to this Agreement, solely in accordance with the specifications set forth in this Agreement.

b. *Nondisclosure*. Business Associate shall not use or further disclose Client's PHI otherwise than as permitted or required by this Agreement or as Required by Law.

c. *Safeguards*. Business Associate shall use appropriate safeguards, including, among others, policies and procedures regarding the protection of PHI and the provision of training on such policies and procedures to applicable employees, independent contractors and volunteers, to prevent the use or disclosure of Client's PHI other than as provided for in this Agreement.

d. *Reporting of Improper Disclosures.* Business Associate shall report in writing to Client any use or disclosure of Client's PHI other than as provided for in this Agreement within ten (10) business days of first learning of any such improper use or disclosure. Business Associate shall take prompt steps to cure the breach and take any other action pertaining to such unauthorized disclosure required by applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Business Associate must comply with this provision regardless of any actions taken by Client.

e. *Use of Agents and Subcontractors.* Business Associate shall ensure that any of its agents and subcontractors to whom it provides PHI created or received pursuant to this Agreement agrees to the same restrictions and conditions that apply to Business Associate pursuant to this Agreement with respect to such PHI.

f. *Availability of Information to Client.* Within ten (10) business days of receipt of a request from Client, Business Associate shall make available to Client such information as Client may require to fulfill Client's obligations to provide access to, and a copy of, PHI pursuant to this Agreement in accordance with the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to 45 C.F.R. § 164.524. If the individual making the request requests such information directly from Business Associate, Business Associate must notify Client in writing within ten (10) business days. Business Associate shall not give the individual access to the information unless access is approved by Client. Client shall have full discretion to determine whether the individual shall be given access.

g. *Amendment of PHI.* Within ten (10) business days of receipt of a request from Client, Business Associate shall make Client's PHI available to Client as it may require to fulfill Client's obligations to amend such PHI pursuant to the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to, 45 C.F.R. § 164.526. Business Associate shall incorporate any amendments to Client's PHI into any and all PHI that Business Associate maintains.

h. *Accounting of PHI*. Within ten (10) business days of notice by Client of a request for an accounting of disclosures of PHI, Business Associate shall make available the PHI to Client as required by Client to fulfill its obligations to provide an accounting pursuant to the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to, 45 C.F.R. § 164.528. Business Associate shall implement a process that allows for such an accounting.

i. *Availability of Books and Records.* Business Associate shall make its internal practices, books and records relating to the use and disclosure of PHI created or received pursuant to this Agreement available to the Secretary of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, for the purpose of determining Client's compliance with Privacy Rule.

j. *Record Retention.* Subject to section 5 below, Business Associate shall retain all PHI received from Client, or created or received in the course of performing its obligations under this Agreement, for the duration of the term of this Agreement.

k. *Minimum Necessary Amount of PHI*. Business Associate shall only request, use and disclose the minimum amount of information necessary to accomplish the purpose of the request, use or disclosure pursuant to the Privacy Rule, including but not limited to, 45 C.F.R. §§ 164.502(b), 164.514(d).

l. *Data Ownership.* Business Associate acknowledges that Client is the owner of all PHI.

m. *Security Standards*. Business Associate shall, at its sole expense, comply with the Security and Electronic Signature Standards, promulgated in proposed form under HIPAA at 63 Fed. Reg. 43,242 (Aug. 12, 1998), when it becomes final.

3. Client's Obligations.

a. *Revocation of Permission*. Client shall provide Business Associate with any changes in, or revocation of, permission by Individual to use or disclose PHI, if such changes affect Business Associate's permitted or required uses and disclosures.

b. *Restrictions*. Client shall notify Business Associate of any restriction to the use or disclosure of PHI that Client has agreed to in accordance with 45 C.F.R. § 164.522.

4. Audits, Inspection and Enforcement. Client, at a time convenient to both Client and Business Associate, may inspect the facilities, systems, books, records, agreements, policies and procedures relating to the use or disclosure of PHI pursuant to this Agreement for the purpose of determining whether the Business Associate has complied with this Agreement.

5. Term and Termination.

a. *Term*. This Agreement may be terminated by either party on thirty (30) days' prior written notice.

b. *Termination by Client for Material Breach.* Client may terminate this Agreement immediately upon written notice to Business Associate if Business Associate has acted or failed to act in a manner that constitutes a material breach of this Agreement.

Business Associate acknowledges that any material breach may result in irreparable harm to Client and that Client has the right to seek an injunction and other legal and equitable rights and remedies available under the law.

c. *Cure.* As an alternative to the preceding paragraph, Client may choose, in its sole discretion, to provide Business Associate with thirty (30) business days, written notice of the existence of an alleged material breach, and afford Business Associate the opportunity to cure such alleged material breach. Business Associate must cure such breach or Client may declare a material breach in accordance with section 5(a) above and/or report the problem to the Secretary of U.S. Health and Human Services.

d. *Effect of Termination.* Upon termination or expiration of this Agreement for any reason, Business Associate shall return and/or destroy all PHI received or created pursuant to this Agreement that Business Associate maintains in any form, and shall retain no copies of such PHI; or if return or destruction is not feasible, Business Associate shall continue to extend protections of this Agreement to such information, and limit further use of such PHI to those purposes that make the return or destruction infeasible, for so long as Business Associate maintains such PHI.

6. Disclaimer. Client makes no warranty or representation that compliance by Business Associate with this Agreement, HIPAA, or the Privacy Rule will be adequate or satisfactory for Business Associate's own purposes. Business Associate is solely responsible for all decisions made by Business Associate regarding the safeguarding of PHI.

7. No Third Party Beneficiaries. Nothing Express or implied in this Agreement is intended to confer, nor shall anything herein confer, upon any person other than Client, Business Associate and their respective successors and assigns, any rights, remedies, obligations or liabilities whatsoever.

8. Change in Applicable Laws or Regulations. In the event the laws or regulations of the United States or applicable state law with respect to the subject matter of this Agreement are modified or amended in any material way with respect to this Agreement or Amendment, this Agreement shall not be terminated but rather, to the extent feasible, shall be promptly amended by the parties to operate in compliance with the existing law. The parties acknowledge that their responsibilities under this Agreement and Amendment may be affected and governed by the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (the "Act"), to the extent regulations implementing the Act (the "Regulations") become effective during the Term of this Agreement or any renewal thereof. Both parties agree that, upon the effective date of any such Regulations, this Agreement shall be deemed to incorporate, and impose on the parties, any obligations applicable to each of them under such Regulations pursuant to their responsibilities hereunder. To the extent any amendments to this Agreement shall be necessary to effectuate or clarify the obligations of the parties pursuant to such Regulations, the parties hereby agree to negotiate such amendments in good faith, subject to the right of either party to terminate this Agreement in accordance with its terms.

9. Survival. The respective rights and obligations of the Business Associate under Section 2 herein shall survive the termination of this Agreement.

10. Interpretation. Any ambiguity in this Agreement shall be resolved in favor of a meaning that permits Client to comply with the Privacy Rule.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have duly executed this Agreement as of the date set forth below.

	iSource Solutions Inc.
By:_____	By: _____
Name:	Name: Sivakumar Sadayappan
Title:	Title: COO
Date:	Date: 12/07/2015