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Master's-Level Counseling Students' Experience of Expressive Arts Techniques in a CACREP Multicultural Counseling Course

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Master's-Level Counseling Students' Experience of Expressive Arts
Techniques in a CACREP Multicultural Counseling Course

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education

by

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ABSTRACT

Counseling governing bodies have defined what should be prioritized in multicultural counseling courses, including students' multicultural knowledge and awareness; however, best practice regarding how to teach these multicultural concepts has largely been left up to the counselor educator. Counselor educators have begun implementing expressive arts techniques in the classroom, but very little literature exists related to using such techniques in a multicultural course in a manner that positively influence counseling students' multicultural competency.

The purpose of this study was to explore master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques utilized during their multicultural counseling course. Ten student participants took part in this study. Transcendental phenomenological inquiry guided the research design. Using phenomenological reduction, findings were synthesized into thematic labels, individual textural and structural descriptions, and a final essence of the participants' lived experience. Thematic labels resultant from data analysis included process over product, comfort in discomfort, connection, emotional evolution, experiential process, identity, and multiculturalism. The findings reveal implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs. Recommendations for future research are also included.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my participants, thank you for your willingness to be vulnerable and take risks in class with me so that we could all grow together. I was honored that you allowed me into your worlds. Your openness enabled me to be a part of your counseling journey, as you were part of mine.

To my family and friends, I have been in school for a long time. Thank you for your patience and understanding during times when I had to prioritize academics over spending quality time with you. I look forward to making up for all of those missed connections and cannot wait to share a celebratory dance with each and every one of you.

To my partner in all things, Brittany, you have supported and loved me in a way I have never known. This is not only impressive because I know so many wonderfully loving and supportive people, but because you did so amidst your own doctoral studies. During the most difficult period of my life, you helped me keep going. To me, you are a superstar, the bee's knees, and so much more. Words could never fully convey how appreciative I am for your presence in my life so I suppose I will just have to show you while you work through you own dissertation process during the next year.

DEDICATION

To the counseling students who need to remember to play and partake in self-care as they strive to change the world, one client at a time. To the counselors working to make this world a safer place for all humans by filling it with empathy and spreading acceptance. To the counselor educators who prioritize life-long multicultural competence to help ensure equitable counseling services for all. To all of those seeking to genuinely understand the experiences of others.

To Dr. Joshua Magruder who gently told me at the end of my master's program, "We need good counselors, but we also need good counselor educators" and quickly followed with, "So when are you filling out your applications?"

Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to those who have unconditionally accepted me in all of my diversity and throughout the long journey I have traversed. I am forever grateful.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUTION

The purpose of this initial chapter is to introduce the problem to be addressed by the study and the study's overall purpose. Additionally, the central research questions are outlined, relevant terms are defined, and a brief overview of the proposed dissertation is provided.

Statement of the Problem

Expressive arts are used as a medium for both counseling and education with numerous populations. Expressive arts encourage connection to parts of oneself with which one might not normally be in touch; these techniques prioritize self-exploration and self-expression (Degges-White, 2011). When counseling children and adolescents, playful and creative counseling techniques are often implemented because developmentally these populations have a decreased capacity to express themselves verbally in the manner that an adult might (Landreth, 2012; Seymour, 2016). Counselors and counselor educators have begun to adapt expressive arts techniques to use with adult populations and in the counselor education classroom as well, offering an education experience outside of didactic pedagogy (Henderson & Malone, 2012). While much consideration has been given to what material should be included when teaching master's-level counseling students, how this material can best be presented in counseling classrooms in order to maximize student competence and awareness has received much less attention (Bongaardt, 2013; Granello & Hazler, 1998; Kim & Lyons, 2003).

The rationale for using expressive arts techniques in the classroom is the same for the rationale for using expressive interventions with clients or in supervision. The use of these methods assists with generating new insights related to self and others, provides an opportunity to take on different perspectives, and provides an opportunity to learn experientially as opposed to cognitively (Gladding, 2016; Henderson & Malone, 2012; Smith, 2011). With reference to

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counselor educators specifically, using the expressive arts helps to connect the more cognitive left-brain used in analytical thinking and logic to the primarily emotional right-brain more often used in the realm of counseling (Badenoch, 2008). Using expressive arts in counseling is a primary way to guide individuals to becoming more integrated and connected because of the participatory nature of such interventions (Gladding, 2016). Incorporating the arts also requires the generation of new behaviors, the processing of emotions, focus and creativity, and concreteness, lending itself to increased perspective-taking, awareness of self, socialization and cooperation (Gladding, 2016). Lastly, the expressive arts are based in visual, auditory, and/or other sensory stimuli and provide flexibility in terms of multicultural awareness and issues (Gladding, 2016). For the very same reasons the expressive arts have been cited for use in counseling, the researcher is interested in the use of expressive arts in counselor education and how students experience the implementation of expressive arts in the counseling classroom.

The American Counseling Association (ACA, 2014) definition of multicultural competency requires that counselors "gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, dispositions, and skills pertinent to being a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse client population" (p. 8). Similarly, the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) outlines criteria for the ethical practice of professional counselors. These include but are not limited to: (a) the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's view of others; (b) the effects of power and privilege; and (c) strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and process of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination (CACREP, 2016). In addition to both the ACA (2014) and CACREP (2016) standards, the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-

McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2015), endorsed by the ACA, provides a framework for counselors in relation to theory, practice, and research in order to "highlight the intersection of identities and the dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression" (p. 3). For these reasons, it is imperative that multicultural competency be a priority for counselor educators and students alike. Therefore, the firstly researcher seeks to understand graduate students' experience of the use of expressive arts in the classroom. Secondly, the researcher seeks to determine how the use of expressive arts affects the process of graduate students attaining or increasing their multicultural competence, multicultural awareness, and ability to empathize.

A search through both the multicultural literature and expressive arts literature revealed that counselor educators have begun to explore the world of expressive arts, particularly within the context of the supervision, practicum, and internship experiences of counseling students (Anekstein, Hoskins, Astramovich, Garner, & Terry, 2014; Perryman, Moss, and Anderson, 2016; Shepard & Brew, 2013). However, there is a gap in the research when it comes to implementing expressive arts in counselor education in general but especially in graduate-level multicultural counseling courses. The current study was designed to assist in addressing this gap in the literature and make recommendations for further research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques in a class geared towards increasing their multicultural competency. The researcher hoped to provide clarity concerning how master's-level counseling students experience experiential teaching methods in a graduate-level multicultural course. Furthermore, the researcher was interested in qualitatively learning about the meaning master's-level counseling students ascribe to the terms "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural

competence" and how this meaning does or does not evolve after taking a course that utilizes experiential learning.

The expressive arts, defined below, make up a portion of the pedagogy within the realm of experiential learning. In particular, the use of experiential learning is intended to encourage students to take responsibility for their competency, allowing counselor educators to act as facilitators to this learning rather than merely content deliverers (Swank, 2012). Kolb (1984) described experiential learning as a holistic process grounded in the interaction between individual and environment. While this experiential learning process may involve tension or conflict, ultimately it results in creating new knowledge and awareness during counselor development (Keller-Dupree & Perryman, 2013).

Research Questions

To guide a qualitative study, phenomenological research methods call for a fundamental research question from which sub-questions are created (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The following research questions guided the current study:

1. How do master's-level counseling students experience the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework?

    a. How do master's-level counseling students describe their experience of experiential teaching methods?

    b. How do master's-level counseling students experience the concepts of "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural competence" before, during, and after they are taught about the concepts via expressive arts techniques?

Definition of Terms

Experiential learning- learning that focuses on process rather than content; knowledge stems from transformative experience (Kolb, 1984).

Expressive arts- visual arts, imagery, painting, sculpting, music, sound, dance/movement, improvisational drama, journal writing, poetry, meditation, and other creative media (IEATA, 2017; Rogers, 1997).

Multicultural competence- an individual's ability to recognize the impact their worldview has on relationships, with particular regard to multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness (Ceballos, Parikh, & Post, 2012).

Multicultural issues- issues relating to dynamics such as power, privilege, and oppression that influence personal and professional identity (Ratts et al., 2015).

Traditional teaching methods- lecture, discussion, PowerPoint, or other forms of content delivery that are non-experiential or content-focused (Hickcox, 2002).

Researcher Position in the Study

The researcher identifies as a member of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ+) community and concedes that their personal experience with diversity and multicultural populations have played a part in the proposal of this study. As an LGBTQ+ identifying person, the researcher has their own ideas and personal experiences related to multicultural issues. The researcher acknowledges that each individual in the study will have distinct identities and experiences (or lack thereof) with the LGBTQ+ community and with multicultural issues in general. The researcher recognizes that it is imperative to approach the study from an inquisitive position and remain open and willing to understand the unique experiences of each participant.

Additionally, the researcher has been on the receiving end of expressive arts techniques facilitated both in the classroom and in supervision. The researcher has also trained in expressive arts techniques in the supervisory and classroom settings while a doctoral student. The researcher has utilized expressive arts techniques when teaching and supervising master's-level students and while facilitating groups both on and off campus. The researcher acknowledges that these experiences, too, have influenced the current study. The researcher recognizes that participants will have their own thoughts, beliefs, and experiences surrounding expressive arts in general and the idea of experiential techniques utilized specifically for teaching purposes. In an effort to reduce bias throughout the duration of the study, the researcher will rely on feedback from an external auditor and participant member checks, as well as researcher reflexivity and memos.

Assumptions

Firstly, the researcher assumed by acknowledging their position in the study the data would more accurately reveal participant experience and minimize researcher bias. Secondly, the researcher assumed participants would partake in expressive arts activities with an open mind and attitude geared toward learning. Third, the researcher also assumed participants would honestly respond to journal prompts and interview questions, willing to share of their experiences. Lastly, the researcher assumed the data yielded by the study would generally benefit those working to infuse experiential learning with traditional aspects of academia and specifically benefit counselor educators.

Brief Dissertation Overview

This study is separated into five distinct chapters: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and conclusion. Chapter I serves as an introduction to the purpose of the study and initial biases, assumptions, and limitations. Chapter II summarizes current literature

related to counselor education, expressive arts, and multiculturalism and includes a brief discussion of the neuroscience that supports the combination of all three fields. Chapter III comprises an explanation of the specific phenomenological methodology, transcendental phenomenology, implemented to complete this particular study. Chapter III also describes the methods used for participant recruitment and data collection. Chapter IV discusses details of the data analysis process and resultant findings. Lastly, Chapter V discusses the results of the researcher's synthesis of the data and consequential limitations, implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature relevant to this study. The discussion surrounds counselor education, expressive arts, and multiculturalism and involves neuroscience literature supporting the combination of these domains. This research will inform counselor educators seeking to learn about master's-level counseling students' experiences of expressive arts techniques in a multicultural counseling class, in addition to learning how their experience of multicultural concepts such as competency and awareness is or is not influenced as a result of participating in such a class.

Counselor Education

Counselor education involves the education of students in the field of counseling to a degree that they are considered competent enough to work with clients in an appropriate and ethical manner. Throughout their coursework, counseling students attain new skills, experience personal growth and diversification of perspective, and engage in new areas of study (Lloyd, Feit, & Nelson, 2010). Counselor education is significant to the field of mental health because it offers a humanistic approach as opposed to utilizing a medical model. The discussion surrounding counselor education includes an argument for the significance of effectively teaching multicultural competencies within counselor education (Johnson & Lambie, 2013; Reynolds & Rivera, 2012). Multicultural competence includes two primary aspects: multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness (Ceballos, Parikh, & Post, 2012). While a lot of attention has been given to what information should be included when teaching in counseling classrooms, how this information can best be presented to counseling students in order to maximize learning and insight has received much less attention (Bongaardt, 2013; Granello & Hazler, 1998). Recent findings in neuroscience-related literature have begun to inform this dialogue and assist

clinicians and educators in answering the question of "how" (Badenoch, 2008; Field, 2014; Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019). Key aspects of counselor education relevant to this study include concern for ethical, multicultural, and accreditation standards, purposeful training of students to achieve competence in the field, and selective choice of teaching methods in order to address the aforementioned concepts.

Counselor Education Programs

The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs CACREP (2016) was developed as a result of collaboration between the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) and the American Counseling Association (ACA) in 1981 with the purpose of conducting voluntary accreditation of counseling programs across the United States (Shin et al., 2011). In its current form, CACREP (2016) is an agency that sets the nation's standards in terms of counseling program curriculum, faculty, administration, and institutions, promoting the standard for professional preparation of counselors and counselor educators, including adequate multicultural competence.

There is little research exploring the representation of diversity in CACREP (2016) accredited counselor education programs. What research exists in this specific area indicates a lack of consistency in gathering participant demographic characteristics (Shin, Smith, Goodrich, & LaRosa, 2011). Very few studies within counselor education research report student demographic data. Due to this, Shin et al. (2011) compiled a table comparing demographic characteristics of the U.S. population, the population of undergraduates in the U.S. and current counselor education research that reported demographic data (p. 116). With regard to diversity representation among CACREP (2016) accredited master's programs, the researchers found, in terms of racial diversity, counselor education programs lack in representation of Asian

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Americans but African American representation appeared representative of the broader U.S. population across most study samples. Shin et al. (2011) also found that data concerning diversity in sexual orientation and ability status was also underreported and the populations underrepresented. Ultimately, this lack of data and general underrepresentation of diverse populations within counselor education research is preventing the field from best practice. The existence of diverse student populations in mental health training programs is imperative to effectively serve an increasingly multicultural, internationally born client base in the U.S. (Maton, Kohout, Wicherski, Leary, & Vinokurov, 2006).

Traditional versus Experiential Teaching Methods

Traditional educational methods, often referred to as didactic teaching, are typical in counselor training curricula (Granello, 2000; Sexton, 1998). These methods refer to a type of instruction focused primarily on cognitive or intellectual strategies such as reading, writing, lecture, and Socratic discussions (Kim & Lyons, 2003). In contrast, experiential teaching methods, which include expressive arts techniques, afford flexibility and creativity in the classroom but may also be helpful in processing abstract or difficult material (Bell, 2018). Students enrolled in a graduate-level course based in multicultural issues often already feel vulnerable; processing this information and student reactions through expressive arts is a non-threatening way to enhance student learning and development (Lawrence, Foster, & Tieso, 2015; Perryman et al., 2016). Kim and Lyons (2003) suggest using experiential teaching methods in conjunction with didactic teaching methods to enhance the multicultural competence of counseling students, providing trainees the opportunity to observe, practice, and apply what they have read about and learned via traditional methods.

Experiential activities provide alternative methods to stimulating new perspective-taking and multicultural competence (Bell, 2018); such methods help individuals confront and overcome bias (Pederson, 2000). Additionally, Heppner and O'Brien (1994) looked at the counselor trainee perspective of helpful and hindering events within a multicultural counseling course; they found experiential class activities significant to student learning. Overall, the literature suggests the incorporation of experiential learning enhances the development of multicultural competence (Dietz et al., 2017), lending itself to improve students' understanding of self and others (Lawrence, Foster, & Tieso, 2015).

Benefits of using creativity in counselor education. Expressive arts are engrained in all cultures over time and has a lengthy history. The arts were first combined with the field of psychotherapy in the 1940's and expressive art therapy associations began to emerge in the 1950's (Johnson, 1999). According to Johnson, the music therapy association was established in 1951, followed by the dance therapy association in 1966, the art therapy association in 1969, and the drama and poetry therapy associations in 1979. During the mid-1970's the National Expressive Therapy Association was established (Johnson, 1999); since that time these and other expressive arts associations have joined together as the National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations (NCCATA). Furthermore, expressive arts therapies were globalized in 1994 with the establishment of The International Expressive Arts Therapy Association (IEATA). More recently, the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC) was established in 2004 as a subdivision of the American Counseling Association (ACA) to further support and enhance the connection between creativity and counseling.

The use of creativity and expressive arts has also long been present in the counseling process (Carson & Becker, 2004; Gladding, 2016; Smith, 2011). Natalie Rogers, daughter of

Carl Rogers, took her father's person-centered work and adapted it for the purposes of creative and expressive arts and founded the Person-Centered Expressive Therapy Institute in 1984 (Sommers-Flanagan, 2007). Rogers (2004) viewed the use of expressive arts as a cyclical therapeutic process that unfolds as we engage with ourselves and with our expressive medium of choice. As our feelings surface via our artistic expression, we gain further self-understanding, are more open to creativity, and find new means of connecting with oneself and with the surrounding world (Rogers, 1997). For these reasons, expressive arts serve as an appropriate supplement to counseling, as well as an appropriate avenue for teaching in the field of counselor education.

Rogers (1997) argued that in order to gain compassion for others, one must first seek self-awareness and acceptance. By becoming more attuned to oneself, the counselors can better attune to the cognitive and affective experiences of another (Bodenhorn & Starkey, 2005). Through this process of self-understanding and attunement, empathy for others can be achieved and counseling concepts such as multicultural awareness and multicultural competence can be worked towards (Bell, 2018; Bodenhorn & Starkey, 2005). The expressive arts provide wide-ranging means for counseling students to being seeking self-awareness and acceptance so that they can then work towards understanding and gaining compassion for others. Rogers (2004) outlined eleven principles of person-centered expressive arts:

1. Personal growth, higher states of consciousness, and a sense of wholeness are achieved through self-awareness, self-understanding, and insight.
2. Self-awareness, self-understanding, and insight are attained by delving into our emotions. The feelings of grief, anger, pain, fear, joy, and ecstasy are the tunnel through which we must pass to get to self-awareness, understanding, and wholeness.

3. Our feelings and emotions (the grief, anger, pain, fear, joy, and ecstasy) are a source of energy, which can be channeled into the expressive arts to be released and transformed.

4. All people have an innate ability to be creative.

5. The creative process is healing in itself. Although the product of creative expression supplies important messages to the individual for useful insights, the process of creation, itself, is profoundly transformative.

6. The expressive arts — including movement, art, writing, sound, music, and imagery — lead us into the unconscious and allow us to express previously unknown facets of ourselves, thus bringing to light new information and awareness.

7. When we move, it affects how we write or paint. When we write or paint, it affects how we feel and think. During the creative connection process, one art form stimulates and nurtures the other, bringing us closer to our innermost core or essence, which is our life-force energy.

8. This expressive arts process offers us the opportunity to be aware of, face, and accept, our shadow aspect — that part of self which we have repressed or denied — which in turn can bring us to a deeper self-acceptance. Self-acceptance and self-esteem are basic to becoming whole persons capable of caring for others and receiving love.

9. Such personal growth takes place in a safe, supportive environment that is created by facilitators (teachers, therapists, group leaders, parents, colleagues) who are genuine, warm, non-judgmental, empathic, congruent, and caring.

10. A connection exists between our life-force — our inner core, or soul — and the essence of all beings.

11. Therefore, as we journey inward to discover our essence or wholeness, we discover our

     relatedness to the outer world. The inner and outer become one. (pp. 130-132)

Each of these principles supports the use of expressive arts within therapy, and the researcher sought to apply the same dynamics that result from these ideas and awarenesses to the student experience in the counselor education classroom.

     Creative approaches to teaching parallel the creative counseling process, encouraging student insight and growth (Gladding, 2016; Paisley & Young, 1998). Through art and personal expression, counselor educators have begun to adapt techniques often used with clients in order to use them alternatively within the classroom (Wilson & Ziomek-Daigle, 2013). Not only might this allow counseling students to more effectively take on the point of view of the client, but also explore their own emotional reactions to difficult subjects and experience safety and support while on their educational journey. Partaking in expressive activities allows the resultant art to reflect, mirror, and even amplify one's internal states (Chong, 2015).

     Additionally, active learning engages students with the content, whether through application, interpretation, creation, or evaluation, and deepens student understanding of the material while improving self-efficacy (Osborn & Costas, 2013; Tolleson, Grad, Zabek, & Zeligman, 2017). The use of expressive arts techniques allows counseling students to partake in active learning, while simultaneously modeling their use for work with clients. Such experiential teaching methods cater to the non-threatening processing of sensitive or difficult material (Perryman et al., 2016), encouraging appropriate risk-taking in the classroom and helping to decrease student anxiety (Lawrence et al., 2015; Tolleson et al., 2017), allowing students to fully immerse themselves in the experience. Gladding (2016) summarizes the benefits of using creativity in counseling:

The creative arts in counseling are, as a group process, oriented, empowering, authentic, parsimonious, multicultural, and insight focused. They energize individuals and help connect them with positive aspects within and outside of themselves while fostering a new sense of self. By engaging in the playful, cooperative, and communicative dimensions of art, individuals recognize more clearly the complexity and simplicity of their lives. (pp. 20-21)

Equally important to the history of expressive arts in the field of counseling is the use of creativity and expressive arts techniques to the future of counseling (Gladding, 2016; Lawrence et al., 2015). In the same way that expressive arts can positively affect the counseling process, so too can they influence counseling students in all of the aforementioned ways. This not only benefits individual students but also benefits all future clients of the student counselor.

Counselor educators are tasked with more than the sole translation of knowledge and content through lecture or other traditional methods of teaching. They have the responsibility of taking students past the point of basic competency and into the territory of ethically applying theory to practice while also avoiding any harm to the client (CACREP, 2016; ACA, 2014). Furthermore, counselor educators must teach the skill of empathy, a skill that may not come naturally for many people. Because of the wide-ranging duties of the counselor educator, "…a variety of educational experiences may be necessary to help facilitate counselor growth" (Hoffman, 2008, p. 348). For educators, this requires proper attention and preparation to course materials and the expectation that students will be doing more than sheer regurgitation of information.

Counseling professors need to be equipped to vary teaching methods and integrate experiential classroom activities, perhaps utilizing creative or expressive techniques, to ensure that their students are ready to enter the field. Counseling students can benefit from the use of creative expression and experiential learning during their graduate studies even though creativity and academia are often distinctive in terms of personal growth (Shepard & Brew, 2013).

Students may better achieve interpersonal communication, increase their self-awareness, improve their capacity for empathy, be willing and able to take risks that they will ask of their future clients, receive feedback from their peers, and consistently perform self-care when such techniques are thoughtfully done with intentional learning objectives in mind (Smith, 2011). There are numerous benefits to employing expressive and creative techniques within counselor education and development. The ways in which these techniques are used is similarly limitless.

Overview of types of creative educational techniques. There are many creative teaching practices currently implemented and researched within particular contexts, such as in the classroom, within supervision, or during practicum and internship experiences. Most techniques will fit nearly any counseling-related context with small adjustments or alterations. This is the beauty of the expressive arts and creativity within higher education: flexibility. As Swank (2012) made clear, "CACREP (2016) does not designate how the specified areas of knowledge and skills are taught, developed, and assessed within accredited programs…counselor educators are only constrained by the limits of their own creativity" (p. 400). Below are outlined brief examples of a number of expressive arts techniques researched for implementation in the counseling classroom. These examples relate to counselor education topics such as supervision, diagnosis, case conceptualization, self-awareness, multicultural empathy, and interpersonal dynamics. Refer to the referenced articles below for more detailed descriptions of each technique and "how to" explanations of the sample interventions provided.

Visual case conceptualization. Visual case conceptualization is one of many creatively based options for counselor educators. During supervision and within other counseling courses, counselor educators must explore and facilitate client case conceptualizations with their students. Shiflett and Remley (2014) found that adding a creative spin to this procedure might help

facilitate student insight, enhancing the overall process and encouraging meaningful discussion, specifically during the supervision process. In their study, Shiflett and Remley (2014) combined Ishiyama's (1988) visual case processing method with Amundson's (1988) metaphoric drawing technique to create a four-step creative case conceptualization procedure. Within this model, supervisees (1) reflect on a clinical case, (2) generate metaphors and imagery surrounding the client's presenting issues, (3) draw the case, and (4) present the case within supervision (Shiflett & Remley, 2014). Art materials used may include paper, pastels, markers, crayons, or similar media. The use of this combined process encouraged deeper client understanding, stimulate the client-counselor relationship, and improve both case conceptualization and case presentation skills (Shiflett & Remley, 2014). The researchers note that supervisors may need to attend to supervisee anxiety surrounding the creation and sharing of artwork, as well as be willing to adapt the technique to unique student or classroom needs. Providing clear direction, allowing the student a practice session before applying the technique to an actual client, and/or emphasizing the process over the product, may benefit the supervisee (Shiflett & Remley, 2014). As effective as visual case conceptualization can be, this serves as merely one example of the varying opportunities expressive arts techniques afford in the counseling classroom.

Role-play. Within counselor education, role-play has been widely used in the classroom setting to teach counseling skills and model how to apply theory to practice (Fuqua & Gade, 1982; Seligman, 2009; Shepard, 2002; Walter & Thanasiu, 2011). This method of pedagogy has been effective because it is a form of experiential learning that allows for experimenting, observing, and translating fundamental skills into practice (Smith, 2009). Within the realm of counseling, role-play occurs when one student takes on the role of clinician and one or more students take on the role of client(s) in order to create a mock clinical environment. The student

who acts as the client should be encouraged to "assume mannerisms, gestures, tone of voice, and posture of the client" (Smith, 2009, p. 131). Furthermore, role-play scenarios videotaped within the counseling classroom allow students to watch and critique themselves, provide feedback to their peers, or receive constructive comments from instructors. Based on the effectiveness of role-play for counseling students, Smith (2009) encouraged the use of role-play within group supervision to further inspire counseling students' skill refinement, exploration of transference and countertransference, and consideration of counselor-client dynamics. Ultimately, a major goal of using role-play within supervision is to help supervisees gain self-awareness in order to better empathize with and understand their clients' perspectives (Bodenhorn & Starkey, 2005). Grant (2006) noted that, in this way, students could build emotional stamina by discussing their unique reactions to different clients and scenarios. Because there exists a lack of research concerning how to use role-play within counseling supervision, see Smith (2009) for two case illustrations detailing the process.

Sand tray. Sand tray therapy is often associated with counseling children and adolescents. The method is credited to Margaret Lowenfeld for first introducing the concept of therapeutic sand tray interventions in the early 1900s (Anekstein et al., 2014). The therapeutic goals of sand tray therapy most often include the formation of a trusting counselor-client relationship, creating a safe atmosphere, bringing unconscious thoughts to awareness, and catharsis (Anekstein et al., 2014). While sand tray therapy is primarily used with younger clients, Anekstein et al. (2014) have outlined a model of supervision for which sand tray has been adapted. Within this model, supervisors ask their supervisees to creatively display their clients' presenting problem in a sand tray. This method removes some of the pressure surrounding the need for new counseling students to be able to express themselves accurately and verbally,

allowing the learning process to take place in a less intimidating manner (Perryman et al., 2016).

Supervisees are still able to work on case conceptualization, self-awareness, and empathy for

their clients, but with the use of manipulatives in the sand as opposed to speaking or writing.

This process may be particularly helpful to those students who enjoy visual and/or tactile

learning. Counselor educators/supervisors will need to remain aware of any intense emotional

reactions as students partake in this activity. The supervisor should complete appropriate sand

tray training and read the literature before commencing the procedure.

Games. Integrating games within the classroom is a useful way to assess knowledge and

skills, as opposed to providing examinations or nerve-wracking assessments. Because anyone

can create a game, or mold an existing game to suit their purposes, games apply to a variety of

instructional methods, turning them into experiential learning opportunities instead of requiring

course content memorization (Swank, 2012). According to Reid (2001), game play within

education can be broken down into five parts. Games are goal-oriented, encourage healthy

competition, involve some type of interpersonal interaction, require clear rules, and promote

cognitive ability – all characteristics that also come into play within counseling. Additionally,

students are not only interactive but oftentimes must work collaboratively with their peers in

order to successfully complete a game, providing an opportunity for them to learn from one

another rather than solely from the professor. Students become more responsible for their

learning while faculty serve as facilitators (Swank, 2012). For counseling students, the ability to

problem-solve and practice social skills in a constructive manner is key. The use of educational

games should always be purposeful, with intent clearly communicated to students, and faculty

should leave room to make adjustments when necessary. Within her article, Swank (2012)

provided multiple examples of counselor education games to be used as is or adapted for specific use that help to develop counseling students' skills and self-awareness.

Guided imagery. Guided imagery is the implementation of all or some of an individual's senses via directed thoughts and suggestions with the goal of leading that individual toward an imagined state that enhances his or her ability to focus and attend (Kress, Paylo, Adamson, & Baltrinic, 2014). Kress et al. (2014) have recently suggested this technique as a means for teaching contextual sensitivity within counselor education. In their example, the authors explained how to use this intervention to explore complicated topics such as the use of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fifth Edition* (DSM-5) with counseling students (APA, 2013). The goals of this technique are to enhance self-awareness, multicultural empathy, decision-making abilities, and overall case conceptualization (Kress et al., 2014). For example, the DSM-5 is a thick and somewhat daunting text for the student counselor; therefore, implementing a technique such as guided imagery can help to ease student comfort, increase relaxation, and bolster confidence. Kress et al. (2014) pointed out that "knowledge cannot be separated from contexts such as ethnicity, social class, and gender;" therefore, the use of guided imagery can be effectively used to encourage counselors in training to be able to take on new perspectives (p. 278). The cited authors provided modified scripts for use with various diagnoses and contexts. They also suggested that not all students would be comfortable with the notion of guided imagery, so counselor educators are responsible for adequately preparing the students and helping them ease comfortably and safely into the guided imagery.

Music. The therapeutic use of music has become more widespread in recent years, and translated for implementation in the counselor education classroom as well (Potkay, 1982; Silberman, Allender, & Yanoff, 1972). For example, Louden-Gerber and Duffey (2008) suggest

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how to use music, specifically song lyrics, to teach counseling students about the Enneagram. The Enneagram is a personality assessment used to identify the "core desires, fears, and basic needs that influence our capacity for relational connection… or strategies that disconnect us from meaningful relationships with others" (Louden-Gerber & Duffey, 2008, p. 321). Louden-Gerber and Duffey's (2008) pedagogical tactic involves the creation of song compilations by each counseling student in order to describe and paint a picture of the nine personality types specified by the Enneagram. Within their classroom intervention, students were encouraged to consider the motives and key traits of each personality type, as well as their strengths and weaknesses; through this method counseling students were able to practice the skill of insight as well as define and address specific thoughts and behaviors associated with each personality type (Louden-Gerber & Duffey, 2008). Having a concrete illustration (such as song lyrics) of complex concepts supports increased self-awareness for students, keeps classroom discussion lively, and can be easily supplemented with other mediums. Ultimately, students combined their chosen songs and created a compact disc/compilation of each personality type. Using music in this way may be beneficial because it helps students to relate the complex course material to their own lives, simultaneously increasing retention and comprehension (Leck, 2006).

   Letter writing. Counselors have used letter writing as a therapeutic intervention for many years, primarily through the mode of narrative therapy (Monk, Winslade, Crocket, & Epston, 1997). Research and clinical application suggests that receiving a letter from a counselor can significantly affect the experience of clients, personalizing the counseling session outside of the therapeutic environment and opening up an alternative means of communication (Pyle, 2006). Hoffman (2008) proposed that counselor educators might incorporate the use of "narrative-therapy-style letters …to facilitate reflective thinking outside of the classroom" (p. 347). Such

letter writing might also help to develop strong relationships between faculty and students. Hoffman (2008) posed three types of letters for the counselor educator to write for the benefit of the student: a welcome letter, a between-class letter, and a closing letter. The welcome letter sets the tone, provides an idea of what will be expected of the student, explains how to best participate, and encourages active participation and responsibility for classroom learning. Between-class letters point out observations made by the counselor educator such as student strengths and weaknesses as well as important contributions made by the student during class discussion. The goal of these letters is to encourage reflective thinking. Lastly, the closing letter acts as a summary of the student's overall development throughout the semester, including feedback, closure, and suggestions for future growth (Hoffman, 2008). Hoffman (2008) also emphasized that the letters should be intentionally and genuinely written, as well as personalized and addressed to each individual student.

Fairy tales. CACREP (2016) and the ACA's (2014) *Code of Ethics* both outline the need for counseling students to receive adequate ethical instruction. Teaching students how to approach ethical dilemmas can often be a trying task due to the lack of explicit instruction on how to teach ethics in accredited programs (Jordan & Stevens, 2001). Without proper consideration by the counselor educator, cases may appear daunting and overly complex, particularly for beginning counseling students. One approach to teaching ethics that will transcend the classical use of the case study is the use of fairy tale characters and characters from popular media to teach case conceptualization (Henderson & Malone, 2012). Using fairy tales as creative case examples allows for students to better process and understand the progression of ethical decision making in a non-threatening context. Within their article, Henderson and Malone (2012) provided examples of the application of original fairy tales to pertinent counseling ethical

dilemmas. The examples they created include an analysis for use by counselor educators to process the ethical dilemma. Forester-Miller and Davis's (1996) ethical decision-making model was used to complete the analyses. The combined used of fairy tales and ethics is merely one example of how creativity can be implemented within the counseling classroom as the purposeful adaption of expressive techniques is ultimately limitless.

Summary. The examples provided offer a variety of options for counselor educators to involve students effectively in the educational process in a deeper, more meaningful way. Experiential learning is cited as an effective pedagogical approach to promote students' multicultural competence (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002; Johnson & Lambie, 2013). Dietz et al. (2017) called for the incorporation of experiential pedagogy in counselor education curriculum to enhance student understanding and development. To facilitate ethical practice on the part of all counselor educators, as well as to prioritize student well-being, faculty may also consider the use of informed consent, voluntary participation, debriefing, and facilitation of process in relation to each of the aforementioned experiential activities (Warren, et al., 2012). Furthermore, educators utilizing expressive arts techniques should always abide by the ethical guidelines outlined by IEATA (2017) to ensure the highest standards of professional practice. This code of ethics, explicitly created for use by registered expressive arts therapists, includes: responsibility, competence, moral and legal standards, public statements, confidentiality, welfare of the client, collegial relationships, and special considerations for expressive arts therapy work in non-ordinary states of consciousness (IEATA, 2017).

Counseling itself is a creative, on-going process; therefore, implementing creatively based experiential learning activities within the counseling classroom can parallel the counseling process in many ways. Doing so helps to emphasize the need for counseling students to be

adaptable, not only within the classroom setting but also with the multitude of clients from various backgrounds with whom they will work over the years. Allowing students to explore their ability to express themselves authentically encourages self-reflection, which has the potential to increase empathy. As a result, counselors-in-training will be better able to connect with their peers, faculty, and future clients.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a vast topic, covering much more than merely ethnicity or race. Currently, additional research is needed in the field of counselor education to help determine best practice concerning effective multicultural teaching strategies (Hill, 2003; Johnson & Lambie, 2013). Not only do most counselor education programs have a single core course in multiculturalism (Hill, 2003), but in order to attempt teaching such a massive amount of information, counseling texts for this course often include one chapter per major American ethnic group (Asian Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, Latin Americans) leaving out other cultural populations (Hays, 2016). Oftentimes, in order to learn more about other cultural populations or concepts, particularly those that lie outside the realms of ethnicity or race, one must seek out an entirely separate text (e.g., children and adolescents, older populations, LGBTQ+ clients, clients who have disabilities, etc.) (Hays, 2016).

Many counselor education programs have begun shifting from a mono-cultural to a multicultural model to represent the multicultural paradigm shift that has occurred within counseling accrediting bodies and in the larger American society (ACA, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Hill, 2003). Inspired by this cultural separation trend, Hays (2016) formulated a model to encourage practitioners to see their clients more holistically and as persons who ascribe to not one but multiple identities simultaneously. In this way, Hays (2016) proposed that clinicians

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might better serve their diverse clientele and the complexities of their identities; this thoughtful and holistic approach to counseling is also imperative within counselor education. Comstock et al. (2008) stated, "By being aware of the psychological impact of oppressive cultural contexts, counselors can more effectively help clients identify, establish, and expand their potential to realize growth-fostering relationships that promote resilience" (p. 285). For these reasons and with the intention of helping counseling students attain and maintain multicultural awareness and competence, the researcher used the ADDRESSING framework to guide the design of this study.

The ADDRESSING Framework

Hays (2016) outlined a framework for counselors dealing with the cultural complexities of working with diverse clients. The framework is an acronym to help practitioners remember the influence individual and macro culture plays in identity and is broken down as follows: **A** stands for "age and generational influences;" the letters **DD** stand for "developmental or other disability;" **R** stands for "religion and spiritual orientation;" **E** stands for "ethnic and racial identity;" **S** stands for "socioeconomic status;" the second **S** stands for "sexual orientation;" **I** stands for "indigenous heritage;" **N** stands for "national origin;" and **G** stands for "gender identity" (Hays, 2016, p. 9). The ADDRESSING framework is a practitioner-oriented guide focused on two primary areas: 1) counselor self-exploration and growth, 2) counselor self-education about clients' cultures (Hays, 2016, p. 5). By attending to these areas, including the influence of contextual and sociocultural challenges, clinicians begin the process of becoming culturally responsive practitioners and are better able to participate in growth-fostering relationships (Comstock et al., 2008; Hays, 2016; Hill, 2003). The different categories are guidelines for the counselor to use in both self-assessment and assessment of the client. Hays

(2016) explained that by taking part in self-assessment the counselor has the opportunity to gain personal insight and, in turn, become a more culturally responsive practitioner.

If one seeks to be able to respond ethically and helpfully to a diverse range of multicultural clients, it is also imperative to recognize the contemporary state of society (Hill, 2003). Hays (2016) pointed out that the once assimilation-focused North America has begun to move more toward valuing cultural differences. The idea of absorption and the American "melting pot" has been outdated since the end of the 1970s (Belik, 2014) but is particularly so in this contemporary age of globalization and technology. This melting pot metaphor characterizes a diverse society as uniform or homogenous, encouraging national cohesion, when in reality this myth contradicts the reality of American culture (Smith, 2012). Considering the wide-range of cultures represented in present-day society, it is evident that individuals now have access to a larger variety of unique cultures than ever before, and clinicians have a duty to educate themselves in order to respond to and communicate with non-dominant cultures in ethical ways.

Many individuals simultaneously identify with more than one cultural identity (Hays, 2016). Root (1996) noted how common bi-ethnic or multi-ethnic identity is in contemporary civilizations; furthermore, persons identifying as cultural minorities may identify strongly with the various identities of their parents and grandparents as well as their own unique personal identities. The complexity of a counselor's many cultural identities encountering layers of client identities suggests that the use of a purposeful model such as ADDRESSING would benefit both counselor and client. Ultimately, the potential complexity of culturally responsive therapy requires some system of organization (Hays, 2016). Although counselors need not necessarily ask about each individual piece of the ADDRESSING framework, they would be wise to consider each category's relevance to their client and be proactive about becoming more

knowledgeable about the influences and identities that seem most significant to the client (Hays, 2016). This type of self-education includes concern for clients' unique sociocultural context and challenges relevant to multicultural and social justice movements at the community and larger societal levels (Comstock et al., 2008).

As a result of being more culturally conscious and responsive, the counselor more fully enters the client's world with increased genuineness and nonjudgmental understanding (Hays, 2016). Developing this type of multicultural competence is no longer optional (ACA, 2014; CACREP 2016), and ultimately, this enables the counselor to better connect with and more effectively enter into relationships with diverse clients (Dietz et al., 2017). At a basic level, the ADDRESSING framework is a systematic way to consider the possibility of identities that may be relevant for any given client (Hays, 2016). An important note, Hays (2016) mentioned that merely knowing a client's self-identification does not equate a deeper understanding of that identity. Rather, what is crucial is the meaning of these identities to the client and that the counselor seeks a sincere knowledge of this underlying meaning (Brown, 1990). Thus, the role of the counselor educator is to help students move from simply identifying multicultural concepts and issues to being able to understand clients' lived experiences and the consequences of those multicultural concepts and issues.

Multicultural Competence

Multicultural competence is imperative for students in counselor education (Dietz et al., 2017). Competence is not an end-goal or a state of stagnation; it is an active and lifelong process, requiring consistent and intentional maintenance on the part of the practitioner. The concept of multicultural competence is ever fluctuating and changing as cultures, languages, and societies evolve. Rather than becoming overwhelmed by the responsibility of having such knowledge,

Hays (2016) encouraged practitioners to "commit to the ongoing process of learning about cultures of which they are not a member" (p. 15) and rise to the challenge of addressing multicultural complexities in practice. This begins by acknowledging the intricacies involved in multicultural issues and accepting that individual predilections and/or personal characteristics may affect one's capacity to attain multicultural competence (Reynolds & Rivera, 2012). When counselors understand that multicultural competence involves keys aspects of both multicultural knowledge and multicultural awareness, there exists potential for personal growth, creativity, and deeper human connections (Hays, 2016). The call for multiculturally competent counselors derived in direct response to the needs of a growing population of culturally diverse clients in the United States (Hill, 2003). Therefore, being able to acknowledge and understand the effect of oppressive factors on clients, many of which are out of clients' control, enables practitioners to tailor counseling to client needs and to effectively advocate for clients (Ceballos et al., 2012).

Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies (MSJCC). Professionals in the field of mental health are increasingly recognizing the need to not only increase multicultural competence, but also to understand principles and attitudes related to social justice (Chang, Crethar, & Ratts, 2010; Ratts et al., 2015a). Within the broader scope of multicultural competence are the aspirational competencies, divided into four primary categories: attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2015a). The Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), a branch of the ACA, outlined these categories in their recently updated Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (Ratts et al., 2015a). Embedded in these competencies are four developmental domains: counselor self-awareness, client worldview, counseling relationship, and counseling and advocacy interventions. These competencies and domains work systemically

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rather than linearly, intermingling and influencing one another. Ratts et al. (2015b) offered a

visual conceptualization of how to practice counseling from a place of multicultural

consciousness, reflecting on both oneself and on the client in terms of privilege and

marginalization (Figure 1). The outermost ring of this framework includes the aforementioned

aspirational competencies with the four developmental domains being central to the praxis. This

figure illustrates the complex interaction that occurs between counselors and clients in the

context of multicultural and social justice concepts. (Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-

McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., & McCullough, J. R. 2015b).
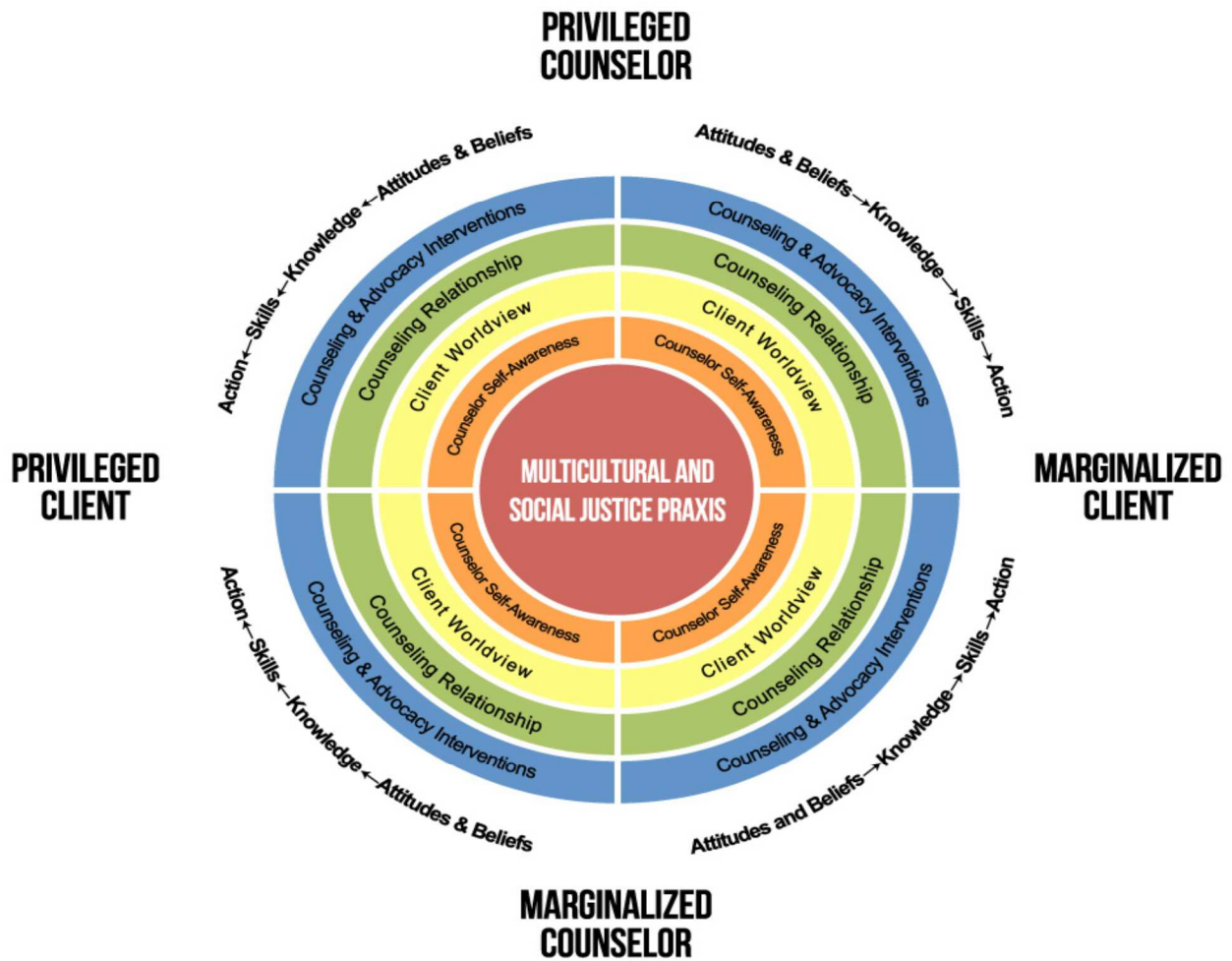
Figure 1. Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies praxis.

Multicultural knowledge. Accrediting bodies such as ACA (2014) and CACREP (2016) have stressed the importance of counselors being culturally responsive. This crucial knowledge involves the counselor's understanding of the human tendency toward bias, categorization, and generalization; the development of social bias, prejudice and stereotypes; and knowledge of concepts related to power such as privilege and cultural dominance (Hays, 2016). Counselor educators and students alike can further increase their multicultural knowledge by seeking diverse sources of information and implementing critical thinking while keeping defensiveness to a minimum (Hays, 2016). Competent and ethical counselors need not only have multicultural knowledge but also must be able to convey this knowledge and understanding to their clients. However, multicultural knowledge is only one portion of multicultural competence, and attaining this type of knowledge is often much simpler than gaining multicultural awareness.

Multicultural awareness. Within the field of counseling, multicultural awareness occurs when clinicians seek to be mindful of their cognitive beliefs and affective reactions while interacting with culturally diverse clients (Dickson, Jepsen, & Barbee, 2008). According to Hays (2016), the ADDRESSING framework requires counselors to understand the complex impact of diverse cultural influences on their own worldviews. This certainly requires some form of identity exploration on the part of the clinician. This concept seems particularly important for Euro-American counselors, who research indicates often do not identify with a particular culture because they are in the majority (Pack-Brown, 1999). Hays (2016) suggested that this fact means, counselors' "judgments may be affected by influences of which they are unaware" (p. 10). This indicates that counselors not only require multicultural knowledge and awareness of others but also thorough, consistent self-awareness. This type of awareness, in concert with multicultural knowledge, is fundamental to understanding self, others, and society (Hill, 2003).

The counselor must therefore constantly be self-reflective and open to processing their own cultural experiences in addition to understanding the lived multicultural experiences of others.

Additionally, practitioners should be considering the notion of privilege when working with diverse cultural populations (Hays, 2016). Firstly, clinicians should reflect on concepts related to privilege, including stereotypes, prejudice, and bias, because when an individual ignores these concepts then that individual is more likely to partake in oppressing others simply as a result of their decreased awareness (Pedersen, 2000). Secondly, considering one's privilege is a necessity because the counselor will have a greater knowledge of and more personal experience with "those areas in which one is a member of a nondominant group" (Hays, 2016, p. 6). For example, a middle-class Euro-American lesbian counselor would more likely be aware of sexist and heterosexist stigma against her LGBTQ+ identifying clients, but would not necessarily hold any special awareness, knowledge, or experience concerning other multicultural issues or minoritized groups (Smith, 2016), such as people of color, people who have disabilities, or people of lower socioeconomic status (Hays, 2016). This counselor would need to remain aware that she likely has privilege and power in terms of her ethnicity, education, and professional status in comparison to many of her clients (Kivel, 2002). By being highly aware of one's privilege in this way and the power dynamics that could result from such privilege, practitioners can more genuinely know themselves and their clients, cause less unintentional harm, and be more therapeutically effective.

Teaching Multiculturalism in the Counselor Education Classroom

Teaching multiculturalism in the counselor education classroom is no easy task. Both students and counselor educators alike must abide by ACA (2014) ethical codes and CACREP (2016) standards concerning multicultural and diversity issues and considerations. This requires

a large amount of information be covered regarding numerous unique cultural populations, often attempted in the span of a single semester. While this is a large order, research has revealed that emphasizing multicultural education increases helping professionals' aptitude for self-reflection and awareness (Constantine, 2002), increases pluralism while decreasing racism (Pedersen, 2000), and promotes counselors' continued education and personal development (Arredondo et al., 1996; Hill, 2003).

Multiculturalism and Counseling Ethics

The ACA (2014) ethical code makes clear how imperative it is for clinicians, educators, supervisors, and students to not only consider multicultural and diversity issues, but to actively maintain adequate competence so as not to cause harm as the cultures of the world continually evolve. There are numerous ethical codes specifically outlined for counseling students, as opposed to counselor educators, that touch on aspects of diversity (ACA, 2014, A.2.c., A.10.e., A.10.f., A.11.a., B.1.a., B.5.b., C.2.a., C.5., E.5.b., E.8., E.9.a., H.2.a., H.5.d.). Though not as plentiful, there are also specific ethical codes identified solely for counselor educators teaching multicultural and diversity-related concepts (ACA, 2014, F.2.b., F.7.c., F.11.). These are the minimal ethical requirements by which counselor educators and counseling students must abide; however, CACREP (2016) and AMCD's recently update of the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies acts as a supplement to our basic ethical requirements for providing service to and teaching about multicultural populations (Ratts et al., 2015a).

In addition to the minimal standards outlined by governing bodies in the counseling field, a recent ethical dilemma has arisen that further emphasizes the importance of adequate multicultural education of counseling students. Beginning in 2016, the state of Tennessee made passed a law allowing counselors to "opt out" of serving clients whose "goals, outcomes, or

behaviors" somehow violate their "sincerely held principles" (An act to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 49 and Title 63, relative to conscientious objections to the provision of counseling and therapy, 2016). An excerpt is provided below:

> No counselor or therapist providing counseling or therapy services shall be required to counsel or serve a client as to goals, outcomes, or behaviors that conflict with the sincerely held principles of the counselor or therapist; provided, that the counselor or therapist coordinates a referral of the client to another counselor or therapist who will provide the counseling or therapy. (An act to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 49 and Title 63, relative to conscientious objections to the provision of counseling and therapy, 2016)

The law now protects counseling professionals from civil lawsuits, criminal prosecution, and state licensing board sanctions should they refuse service in its name as long as the counselor refers the client to another counselor who would serve them. The only exception to the law is a provision that a counselor cannot refer "when an individual seeking or undergoing counseling is in imminent danger of harming themselves or others" (An act to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4; Title 49 and Title 63, relative to conscientious objections to the provision of counseling and therapy, 2016).

Following this, a number of other states have passed similar laws, including Arkansas, even though ACA (2014) called the move discriminatory. Not only could this type of optional discrimination cause severe harm to a wide variety of clientele and prevent many from seeking counseling, it also opens the door to even more gray area when it comes to providing and advocating for multiculturally competent services.

Neuroscience and Multiculturalism

A large portion of gaining multicultural competence and awareness involves factual knowledge of various cultures, identities, and concepts such as privilege and bias (Vasquez, 2007). However, in terms of the student counselor, they also need to gain self-knowledge and

awareness and be able to empathize and seek understanding of cultures different from their own (Coll, Doumas, Trotter, & Freeman, 2013). By better knowing oneself, including one's biases and misconceptions of other cultures, clinicians can work more effectively with multicultural populations by increasing the quality of the therapeutic relationship and promoting client growth and development in an environment of safety and understanding (Coll et al., 2013). A novel way of helping counseling students gain this type of self-knowledge and awareness is to supplement counselor education with neuroeducation (Fishbane, 2013).

Leaders in the field of neuroscience have found that the brain is hard-wired to make connections with other brains and to engage in interpersonal relationships (Siegel, 2001). Additionally, neuroscience researchers have begun to understand how the brain plays a part in that connection via empathizing with others through mirror neurons (Field, 2014; Gallese, 2003; Siegel, 2006). Neuroscientists' exploration of a specific type of neuron relevant to the field of counseling, mirror neurons, shed light on how the brain receives and inputs information based on our interactions with and experiences of others (Siegel, 2006). When we come into psychological contact with others, there is a reciprocal interpersonal process during which individuals both give and receive information (Hudspeth & Matthews, 2016; Siegel, 2001). This interpersonal give-and-take influences the regulation of the body and our emotions (Badenoch, 2008) and plays a part in the creation of self-awareness (Siegel, 2006) and empathy (Gallese, 2003). When we observe others, our mirror neurons activate and this system directly contributes to one's capacity for experiencing attunement to another (Siegel, 2006). This neural knowledge is helpful to any counselor but could be particularly helpful to clinicians working with multicultural issues or populations who seek to connect with and better understand those different from themselves.

Siegel (2001) stated, "Basic relationship components include collaborative communication, reflective dialogue, interactive repair, coherent narrativization, and emotional communication" (p. 90) and argued that interpersonal experiences involving these concepts offer respect for the subjective experience of others. Therefore, if counselor educators integrate neuroeducation (Fishbane, 2013) into their courses to promote the concept of interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2006), counseling students can learn how to positively influence the quality of their interpersonal contact with clients (Field, 2014). This is particularly imperative for clinicians doing multicultural work. Not only can neuroeducation be implemented in the counseling classroom, but neurocounseling (Montes, 2013) can also be used in session to help clients understand the neurological reasoning behind their feelings and reactions, which helps to normalize their experiences (Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019). CACREP (2016) also has standards specific to neurological development and knowledge, further supporting the inclusion of concepts such as neuroeducation and neurocounseling in counselor education.

Neuroplasticity is another of the many important concepts relevant to contemporary clinicians. Neuroscientists have found the structure of the brain to be pliable in terms most simply defined by Miller (2016) as "the brain's capacity to change in response to experience" (p. 105). This plasticity can occur throughout one's lifetime, offering hope to clients of all ages dealing with a variety of mental health concerns (Russell-Chapin, 2016). Siegel (2006) also supports this idea stating, "The mind develops across the lifespan as the genetically programmed maturation of the nervous system is shaped by ongoing experience" (p. 249). Providing this type of neuroeducation to counseling students and current practitioners promotes confidence in the profession, and offering this information to clients encourages a sense of empowerment (Badenoch, 2008). Equally important, the concept of neuroplasticity offers hope to counselor

educators and students alike who are either struggling to teach or struggling to learn new information surrounding multicultural issues. The concept of neuroplasticity suggests that even persons with severe biases and stereotypes can gain awareness, learn about other cultures, and resist oppressive or discriminatory ways of thinking and behaving.

Neuroscience research has also clarified the functions of certain parts of the brain and how this neurological knowledge can specifically be applied in the field of counseling (Siegel, 2006). The left hemisphere of the brain is associated with rational, logical, and conscious thought while the right brain hemisphere is responsible for unconscious social and emotional learning, including experiences such as empathy, flexibility, creativity, and intuition (Field, 2014). This calls for counselor educators to have knowledge of and give special attention to the right hemisphere, particularly when teaching about multicultural concepts. Field (2014) stated, "Right hemisphere functions are crucial to the development of a strong counseling relationship" (p. 24) because approximately 60% of communication is nonverbal (Burgoon, 1985) and verbal ability lies in the left hemisphere. Additionally, connecting right-brain to right-brain enhances one's ability to become attuned to another (Badenoch, 2008); via this interpersonal interaction, individuals are able to integrate feedback from other people and regulate the body, balance emotions, and create self-awareness (Siegel, 2006). Ultimately, the right hemisphere is significant to the field of counseling and significant to human development in general because it is at the core of interpersonal neurobiology and neural integration. From this neurological viewpoint, interpersonal connections create the self, and as the self integrates, individuals become more whole and more congruent (Siegel, 2001).

While the right hemisphere of the brain is key to emotional processing, empathy, and creativity (Field, 2014), lateralization between the two hemispheres is pertinent to neural

integration (Hudspeth & Matthews, 2016; Badenoch, 2008). Counselor educators, counseling students, and clients can all benefit from knowing the specialized functions of each hemisphere of the brain but can particularly benefit by learning why and how the brain works at its fullest capacity as an integrated whole (Siegel, 2006). Effective counseling requires processing of both the right- and left-brain (Field, 2014). Understanding how the two hemispheres work in tandem with one another justifies the use of experiential and expressive techniques as a supplement to traditional therapy or traditional teaching methods, both of which rely heavily on verbal communication. When neural integration occurs via lateralization between brain hemispheres, individuals not only experience increased congruence of self but also integrate knowledge, such as multicultural awareness and cultural consciousness, more effectively (Field, 2014; Siegel, 2001; Siegel, 2006).

The brain also naturally categorizes or creates "files" in order to make sense of the surrounding environments; this includes making sense of other humans (Krieglmeyer & Sherman, 2012). Due to this predilection, these pre-existing categories influence individuals' first impressions of others; such "files" inform biases that are held towards various groups (Krieglmeyer & Sherman, 2012). Oftentimes, this natural process unintentionally leads to discrimination via the activation and application of stereotypes. Stereotype activation is considered automatic (Devine & Monteith, 1999) and usually occurs outside one's awareness (Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 2001). However, Krieglmeyer & Sherman (2012) clarified, "Stereotype activation does not inevitably result in application of the stereotype in judgments" (p. 205). In fact, there are known strategies to combat the influence of stereotype activations on judgment (Devine & Monteith, 1999). Knowing about the existence of these neurological

processes can inform counselors working with diverse clients to help prevent unnecessary and unintentional harm to clients by giving counselors a means to correct or adjust perceived bias.

Neuroscience and the Expressive Arts

Quite a large amount of literature supports the use of expressive arts techniques and creative modalities within counseling and counselor education (Chong, 2015; Badenoch, 2018). Chong (2015) noted numerous neuroscience-based benefits of implementing expressive arts as a therapeutic intervention: provides an externalized channel for nonverbal communication; safely offers a tangible, visual, and sensory experience; allows for the emergence of unconscious emotions; and provides an opportunity for later reflection and insight. Although society highly values one's capacity for verbal communication (Chong, 2015), Siegel (2001) noted that the principal manner in which emotion is communicated is via nonverbal behavior, strengthening the argument for the use of expressive arts techniques in counseling. The expressive arts hold further communicative importance because they encourage right hemisphere brain activity; instigating right-brain activity is significant because it allows access to the specific functions of the right hemisphere, including attunement and empathy, somatosensory activity and flexibility and creativity (Chong, 2015; Field, 2014; Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019). Triggering these right hemisphere functions in a classroom setting positively influences interpersonal dynamics and has capacity to influence students' integration of material.

Not only do the expressive arts encourage right-brain activity, they also involve a mind-body interaction (Lusebrink 2004). In the neuroscience literature, this mind-body interaction is referred to as vertical integration (Schore, 2011). While bilateral (or horizontal) integration refers to the integration of the left and right brain hemispheres, vertical integration involves the linking and working together of the body with the brain (specifically, the limbic region and cortex) (van

der Kolk, 2014). Siegel (2006) states, "By focusing awareness on the input from the body, our affective states, and our range of thoughts and ideas, the counselor can encourage the first steps toward vertical integration" (p. 251). Individuals who achieve vertical integration experience increased bodily awareness and can use this self-attunement to avoid dysregulation when feeling a wide range of emotions (Badenoch, 2008). By implementing experiential and expressive techniques, clinicians help clients to connect their minds with their bodies. In this same vein, counselor educators can assist students in gaining knowledge of concepts such as bilateral and vertical integration and help students apply this knowledge to self in the classroom. This could be particularly beneficial for students struggling to decipher multicultural concepts and issues and figuring out how to apply in-class knowledge and awareness to clinical practice.

Another major benefit of using expressive arts in a multicultural class is that such expressive activities can help increase the window of tolerance (Siegel, 2010) of participants. Being aware of the window of tolerance is significant because it is the "span of tolerance in which we can function optimally" (Siegel, 2010, p. 51). Counseling students learning about multicultural issues can experience fatigue or feel overwhelmed; therefore, educators need to recognize students' window of tolerance and their capacity to integrate information effectively before reaching a stage of exhaustion. Participating in and processing expressive arts techniques allow for this window to remain open for longer spans of time (Chong, 2015; Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019), allowing counselors-in-training to do the work they need to do to achieve adequate multicultural knowledge and awareness.

Neuroeducation in the Counseling Classroom

As the field of neuroscience continues to infiltrate the realm of counseling, counselor educators and clinicians are learning about the physiological underpinnings of numerous mental

health issues at a neural level (Russell-Chapin, 2016). The rapid growth in neuroscience literature offering evidence of the brain's capacity to change over time, as well as how and where memories and emotions are stored, calls for counselors and counselor educators to consider how their theoretical frameworks are supported by and can implement neuroscience knowledge (Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019). Clinicians who have received neuroeducation report greater client empowerment, and rather than merely "trusting the process" by way of first-hand experience, counselors are now able to literally see the effects of the counseling process through technology such as brain imaging (Miller, 2016). These perceptions combined with the innovations in neuroscience are likely to influence the field of counseling and guide the types of techniques used to work with clients in the coming years.

Neuroscience literature offers an objective lens through which counselors can conceptualize their clients' experiences and behaviors. Counselors not only benefit from learning neuroscience concepts, but they can also share this information with their clients, ultimately enhancing therapeutic growth (Miller, 2016). Neurocounseling can also benefit the client via neuroeducation, helping them to create an internal locus of control and normalizing their reactions and experiences (Russell-Chapin, 2016). In addition to counselors and clients, Field (2014) emphasized the importance of counseling students attaining knowledge of neuroscience. By opening themselves up to the neuroscience literature, novice counselors and students are not only given an opportunity to do research-informed work and to choose interventions with neurologic justification (Field, 2014), but they can also gain awareness regarding the root of the biological effects that they and their clients experience (Perryman, Blisard, & Moss, 2019). Furthermore, Siegel (2001) argued, "The patterns in the flow of energy and information, the essence of the mind, are a product of both bodily (neurophysiological) processes and

interpersonal interactions" (p. 70), making the argument for experiential learning in counselor education even stronger.

Knowing this information, it is imperative to begin implementing neuroeducation in the counseling classroom for the benefit of counselor educators, counseling students, practicing clinicians, and clients. Accrediting bodies including ACA (2014) and CACREP (2016) have clearly stated that counselors should use modalities that have an empirical foundation and are evidence-based, and as the literature pertaining to neuroscience, neurocounseling, and interpersonal neurobiology continues to develop, counselor educators would be remiss not to consider, teach, and implement neuroeducation in counseling programs. Similarly, educators utilizing expressive or experiential techniques within their classrooms should also prioritize reading and applying current neuroscience literature. By understanding concepts such as interpersonal neurobiology, the neuroscience of learning, and the benefits of lengthening individuals' window of tolerance before implementing expressive techniques, counselor educators can more effectively teach and increase students' ability to integrate and process learned material.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodology used to perform this study. The discussion of research methods includes an outline of steps taken to obtain data and details concerning the data analysis process. The findings of this study will inform counselor educators teaching master's-level counseling students in multiculturally based courses, as well as counselor educators utilizing expressive arts techniques in the classroom environment. The researcher sought to learn about counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques on their multicultural competency. The researcher hoped to provide clarity concerning how master's-level counseling students experience experiential teaching methods in comparison to traditionally used teaching methods. Furthermore, the researcher was interested in qualitatively learning about the meaning master's-level counseling students ascribe to the terms "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural competence."

Introduction

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is the national accrediting body for masters and doctoral degree programs in counseling. Graduate-level counseling students in CACREP-accredited programs are required to gain multicultural competence prior to graduation (CACREP, 2016). Counselor educators' primary means of achieving this goal is through teaching in the classroom. Traditional teaching methods, such as the use of textbooks supplemented by lecture or PowerPoint, are fantastic tools for sharing factual knowledge with others. Counseling students, however, are required to acquire emotional insight in addition to factual knowledge. For many, this type of emotional intelligence, which may involve concepts such as self-awareness, reflection on personal biases, and empathic capability, is often more easily gained through experience as opposed to didactic learning (Kim

& Lyons, 2003). Furthermore, partaking in experiential learning requires consideration of context and new perspective taking on the part of the student (Arthur & Achenbach, 2002). Therefore, the researcher proposed this study to explore how experiential learning influences graduate-level counseling students' individual sense of multicultural competence and awareness. The researcher sought to do this through phenomenological inquiry to evaluate counseling pedagogy with intent to enhance counselor educators' understanding of how different teaching approaches influence counseling students' learning processes (Wilkinson & Hanna, 2014).

The primary research question of the current study considers how master's-level counseling students experience the use of expressive arts techniques within a multicultural counseling course. Additional research questions and relevant terms are defined below. A detailed description addressing the problem and an outline of the goals of the study are included. Following this is a description of the data collection and analysis methods utilized. Lastly, there is an outline of the steps necessarily taken to ensure the current study's trustworthiness and rigor.

Phenomenology

Phenomenological study is based in the concept of experience. The goal of the phenomenological researcher is to gather the combined experiences of participants and condense the whole of these lived experiences to a central meaning or core idea (Heppner & Heppner, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). The primary drive of phenomenological research is geared towards reducing collective individual experiences with a particular phenomenon into a description of the phenomenon's universal essence (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Transcendental phenomenology was described by Moustakas (1994), as a "knowledge that emerges from a transcendental or pure ego, a person who is open to see what is, just as it is, and to explicate what is in its own terms" (p.

41). The focus of transcendental phenomenology is primarily on the description of participant experiences as opposed to focusing on the researcher's interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The researcher chose transcendental phenomenology as the qualitative method of inquiry for this study for several reasons. This particular methodology takes the sum lived experiences of one phenomenon and reduces that to a single essence; this task requires rich descriptions and a detailed understanding of participants' experiences. As a counselor, the researcher is interested in the lived experiences of others and easily recognized that a qualitative dissertation better suited the researcher's academic interests related to multicultural concepts than a quantitative study. Moreover, the researcher recognized the parallels between their research interests and the structural guidelines for conducting transcendental phenomenological inquiry. Additionally, expressive arts are experiential and subjective in nature, aligning well with the phenomenological notions of intersubjectivity, self-insight, and identity enhancement (Moustakas, 1994). The findings from this phenomenological study assist in establishing appropriate variables for further study to provide empirical documentation of the effectiveness of expressive arts techniques with multicultural concepts and within counselor education in general.

Conceptual Framework

Maxwell (2012) described the framework as a piece of the study's design from which the researcher can conceptualize their understanding of what is being investigated. This includes the context of the interrelationship between the individuals, events, and processes under analysis (Maxwell, 2012). The following section describes the theoretical lenses and contexts through which the researcher viewed all aspects of the current study.

Interpretive Paradigm

For this study, the researcher applied social constructivist concepts to qualitative, phenomenological inquiry. Social constructivists believe in a subjective reality that is based on individual experience and personal context; meanings derived from subjective experiences are considered varied, multiple, and complex (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The social constructivist researcher seeks to understand the world while also recognizing that this understanding may involve multiple realities or interpretations that are influenced and shaped by one's background, previous lived experiences, and interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Social constructivism is not only an appropriate paradigm for use with multicultural concepts in a classroom setting but is also relevant to the subjective experience of individuals who partake in expressive arts activities.

Person-centered theory, developed by Carl Rogers (1957), also guided this study. Person-centered theory is a relational model that emphasized interpersonal connection, empathy, and understanding and posits that change and insight stem from relationships based in genuineness and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957). Person-centered theory is an appropriate supplement to research that surrounds multicultural and social justice concepts because it is a humanistic approach that emphasizes the necessity of striving towards self-awareness, the human tendency towards growth, and respect for the subjective experiences of others (Corey, 2016). Person-centered theory focuses on relational connectedness, empathy and attunement, and reflective practice to increase awareness, all of which supplement students' working to understand social, economic, political, and cultural factors (Rogers, 1979). According to Rogers, the occurrence of meaningful change is dependent upon remaining open to others and participating in authentic vulnerability during interpersonal interactions; growth and development occur when we are in relation with others rather than in isolation (1979). Therefore,

person-centered theory offers an appropriate conceptual framework for counselor educators concerned with students' multicultural counseling competence which is based in being able to connect, empathized with, and understand others from all backgrounds and cultures.

Lastly, the researcher applied ideas from the field of neuroscience when interacting with participants during data collection and during the data analysis process. The researcher reflected on key concepts based in emerging neuroscience literature, such as the neuroscience of learning (Miller, 2016) and interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2006), to both better facilitate the in-class expressive arts interventions as well as more effectively teach, challenge, and process with the student participants. Cozolino and Sprokay (2006) listed five necessities to attaining deep learning from a neurological perspective:

1. A safe and trusting relationship with an attuned other.

2. Maintenance of a moderate level of arousal.

3. Activation of both thinking and feeling.

4. Language of self-reflection.

5. Co-construction of narrative that reflects a positive and optimistic self-evocation of emotion and interpersonal connection. (p. 12)

The researcher designed the current study with these components in mind and strongly felt that the aforementioned neuro-based components aligned with and supported both social constructivism and person-centered theory, as well as the use of expressive arts techniques.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How do master's-level counseling students experience the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework?

a. How do master's-level counseling students describe their experience of experiential teaching methods?

b. How do master's-level counseling students experience the concepts of "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural competence" before, during, and after they are taught about the concepts via expressive arts techniques?

Definition of Terms

1. *Experiential learning*- learning that focuses on process rather than content; knowledge stems from transformative experience (Kolb, 1984).

2. *Expressive arts*- visual arts, imagery, painting, sculpting, music, sound, dance/movement, improvisational drama, journal writing, poetry, meditation, and other creative media (IEATA, 2012; Rogers, 1997).

3. *Multicultural competence*- an individual's self-awareness and ability to recognize the impact his/her worldview has on relationships in terms of attitudes/beliefs, knowledge, skills, and action (Ratts et al., 2015).

4. *Multicultural issues*- issues relating to dynamics such as power, privilege, and oppression that influence personal and professional identity (Ratts et al., 2015).

5. *Traditional teaching methods*- lecture, discussion, PowerPoint, or other forms of content delivery that are non-experiential or content-focused (Hickcox, 2002).

Goals of the Study

The overarching goal of this study was to learn in-depth about how students experience a graduate-level multicultural course in which the counselor educator integrates expressive arts techniques. Furthermore, the researcher was interested in participants' general experience of experiential teaching methods and how this experiential aspect of class influenced participants'

conception of multicultural awareness and multicultural competence. This topic is significant to the field because governing counseling bodies such as ACA (2014) and CACREP (2016) propose that graduate-level counseling students must attain a certain level of competency to ethically work with multicultural populations and their respective issues. In particular, CACREP-accredited multicultural courses call for counselor educators to address topics such as ethical concerns, counselor bias, and attaining self-awareness. The researcher was interested in how students experience multicultural competence and awareness as a result of exploring the cultures of others and their own cultural identities more closely via experiential learning. The outcomes of this study are expected to offer counselor educators an alternative method of teaching graduate-level multicultural counseling courses that is evidence-based. Providing counselor educators experiential means to broach sensitive subjects in a manner that increases students' self-awareness, processing skills, and ultimately, enhances their ability to empathize with those that are other than themselves, results in producing more culturally aware and ethically responsible practitioners.

Participants

Demographics and Eligibility

Participants were purposively sampled. The primary criterion for selection was based on participants' enrollment in a CACREP-accredited, master's-level multicultural counseling course at a public university in the southern United States. All students enrolled in the course were provided an informed consent document (Appendix C) and told about the goals of the study, as well as what would be required of participants. The researcher provided a deadline for participants to turn in a signed informed consent for students who were interested in participating to ensure pre-course interviews could be completed in a timely manner. The researcher collected

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data from ten student participants. Further details concerning sample size and sampling

procedure can be found below. Participant demographic information is detailed in Chapter IV.

Recruitment Strategies

Participants were recruited from a 5-week multicultural course in a single counseling

program. Permission to recruit students from this course was obtained from the primary course

instructor. Upon receiving IRB approval (Appendix A), an email announcing recruitment

(Appendix B) accompanied by a consent form was sent to all students enrolled in the course two

weeks prior to the commencement of the class. Additionally, the researcher made an in-person

announcement about the study during the initial meeting of the multicultural course for the sake

of transparency. Whether students chose to participate or not, their grade in the course, standing

in the program, and relationships with instructors and the researcher were not affected. This was

further emphasized by the fact that the researcher, who solely facilitated all aspects of the current

study, did not partake in any grading or evaluation of students. The primary course instructor and

co-instructor were responsible for all grading of students assignments.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The purposive sampling specifically used for this study was a mixture of criterion

sampling and convenience sampling. Purposeful sampling describes the researcher's selection of

participants and sites based on their ability to lend an increased understanding of the research

questions and phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The criteria required of

participants was to be a master's-level counseling student enrolled in a CACREP multicultural

counseling course. Criterion sampling is appropriate when all individuals in the study have

experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The sample was of convenience to

the researcher because the students were recruited from the master's program in the department of counseling in which the researcher was working to complete their doctoral degree.

Participation was done on a volunteer basis; student grades were not be influenced by participation or lack thereof. Ten participants were observed over the course of one summer semester, for a period of five consecutive weeks, in a graduate-level multicultural counseling course. The class met four days a week for an hour and a half each day, totaling 20 class sessions or 30 in-class hours. In addition to the 5-week course, pre- and post-interviews took approximately one week each to complete with all ten participants; therefore, the entire data collection period lasted seven weeks in total. This prolonged engagement with the students provided the rich information required for a qualitative study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004). Prolonged and persistent engagement was important for such qualitative inquiry because it helped to establish trust-filled relationships between the researcher and participants (Shenton, 2004). This type of rapport was particularly helpful when facilitating the in-class expressive art techniques so that participants felt comfortable and safe as they tried on new behaviors and took on new perspectives. Below is an outline of the procedural specifics for this study.

Throughout the progression of the semester, participants partook in various experiential learning activities that fit under the scope of expressive or creative arts. Five expressive art interventions (one per week) were completed with the participants as a part of the course's requirements; students were asked to make a journal entry following each intervention. Participants were provided predetermined weekly journal prompts (Appendix G). In addition to the participants' five expressive arts artifacts and five correlating journals, data collection for the current study was also be done through pre- and post- interviews. The only different between

non-participant students and participating students were the pre- and post- interviews, along with the corresponding member checks later completed following transcription and data analysis.

Each participant completed two interviews, both of which were approximately an hour long. The researcher conducted one pre-course semi-structured interview (Appendix E) and one post-course semi-structured interview (Appendix F) with each student participant. This was done intentionally in hopes of attaining richer and more reflective responses from participants due to researcher-participant rapport developed over the length of the semester. Following the completion of all interview transcripts, participant member checks helped to ensure accurate representation of participant experiences. An external auditor and peer debriefer were utilized throughout the duration of the study. The researcher details these processes later in this chapter.

Bracketing

Bracketing is an important concept in transcendental phenomenology that calls for the researcher to set aside their own experiences and interpretations of others' experiences. The ultimate goal is for the researcher to arrive at the most accurate essence of participants' experiences possible. Achieving this requires self-reflection on the part of the researcher, as well as acknowledgement of the subjective nature of qualitative research (Patton, 2015). This is considered the first step in phenomenological reduction, and while seldom fully achieved because of the human nature of the researcher, suspending preconceived ideas and personal experiences encourages a more accurate understanding of participant experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994).

Epoche

Moustakas (1994) considers epoche as the first step in the phenomenological reduction process. Epoche is the notion of refraining from judgment or presuppositions that individuals

might naturally make (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) stated, "In the Epoche, the everyday understandings, judgments, and knowings are set aside, and phenomena are revisited, freshly, naively, in a wide open sense, from the vantage point of a pure or transcendental ego" (p. 33). With this goal kept in mind, the researcher was responsible for remaining self-aware and reflective throughout the entire study. The researcher partook in this step of the qualitative process via researcher memos, peer debriefing, and external auditing during the data collection and data analysis portions of this study.

Reflexivity

Qualitative research requires consistent reflexivity on the part of the researcher to facilitate rigor. Researcher reflexivity is the purposeful assessment of one's identity and biases, as well as an active awareness of how one's personal experiences could influence the research and resultant findings if not kept in check (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The researcher prioritized researcher reflexivity and regularly reflected on the subjective and interpretive nature of humans to assist in ensuring rigorous, valid research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Reflexivity was particularly important within this study because the researcher had a dual relationship with participants as one of the co-teachers for the multicultural counseling course from which the researcher collected their data. More specifically, the researcher taught approximately one-third of the course; the teaching assistant taught the remainder of lessons along with a variety of guest speakers. All five expressive arts activities were facilitated and processed solely by the researcher. By teaching a major portion of the class, the researcher participated in prolonged and persistent engagement with the students. This built rapport and trust in the classroom, ultimately encouraging genuine and honest participation in the expressive arts activities and subsequent discussions.

Qualitative researchers must maintain reflexivity and remain aware of their position in the research, including researcher biases, privilege, and previous experience, in order to be considerate of how the researcher might inadvertently impact the way in which the data is interpreted. Both the academic experiences and personal experiences of the researcher were important to acknowledge. Academically, the researcher has been a student in two CACREP-accredited multicultural classes (one master's-level and one doctoral-level course), both of which were taught without an experiential learning piece. Furthermore, in terms of academic training, the researcher has experienced and been trained to use expressive arts in their own supervision, used expressive arts techniques when supervising master's students as a doctoral student, and also facilitated expressive arts counseling groups. These previous academic and clinical experiences played part in inspiring this study and continued to influence the researcher's strong belief in the power of expressive arts techniques throughout the duration of the study.

The researcher's personal experience and identity as both a counselor and counselor educator also informed this research. As a practitioner, the researcher primarily ascribes to Carl Rogers' (1979) person-centered theory, which stems from the humanist approach to counseling. The theory prioritizes congruence and the empathic understanding of others and is phenomenological and nondirective in nature, making it a proponent for use with expressive arts techniques (Luke, 2011). The researcher also implements aspects of Gestalt theory when appropriate, which is a phenomenological experiential approach that focuses on present moment awareness and supports the use of expressive arts techniques (Mistler, 2011). Due to these theoretical influences, the researcher looked for key components in the experiences of the participants such as congruence, countertransference, and self-awareness, both physiological and psychological.

In order to maintain reflexivity related to the researcher's personal cultural identities, the concepts from the ADDRESSING framework (Hays, 2016) were also kept in mind throughout the study. The researcher acknowledged that their age, developmental and disability status, spiritual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ancestral heritage, national origin, and gender could influence researcher-participant interactions and how data was interpreted. Furthermore, the researcher recognized that they are privileged in terms of educational background and considered this during researcher-participant contact. Lastly, as an LGBTQ individual, the researcher has a minoritized identity and knows that these experiences could have also been influential in terms of researcher-participant dynamics. Recognizing the difference in education levels, privilege, and other areas of identity between the researcher and participants is significant to minimize researcher bias and judgment, as well as to increase the researcher's empathic understanding of participants' experiences throughout the study.

Applying the ADDRESSING framework (Hays, 2016) and considering the researcher's identity was pertinent because an individual's experiences and various cultural identities inform how they see the world and how they interact with others. The researcher wanted to maintain reflexivity to not only complete quality and evidence-based qualitative research, but also to prevent their identity, values, and previous experiences from negatively impeding on the researcher-participant relationships and overall classroom dynamics throughout the study. Without researcher reflexivity, the participants would have been more likely to feel judged or unsafe in the classroom. Participants may not have felt that they could be themselves or openly struggle with the concepts introduced in class; in the worst-case scenario they would have been harmed by the researcher imposing their experiences and values onto participants. This would have defeated the purpose of a transcendental phenomenological study, which is meant to focus

on the lived experiences of participants and requires that the researcher attempt to see things just as they are without the filtered lenses of personal experience and ego.

<div align="center">**Data Collection Procedures**</div>

A basic questionnaire was given to all participants in order to collect individual participant demographic information (Appendix D). Participants were also given an IRB-approved informed consent (Appendix C) prior to the first interview explaining the purpose and goals of the study. Also prior to the first interview, the informed consent was reviewed. Throughout the duration of data collection and analysis, the researcher wrote reflective memos.

Researcher Memos

Ravitch & Carl (2016) suggest that researchers consider completing pre-coding memos. The precoding process allows the researcher to engage with data before formally coding anything with the goals of becoming more familiar with the collected data, considering potential codes and themes, determining whether or not the study's design needs to be revised, and re-consulting the literature if necessary (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Participating in the pre-coding memo process was the researcher's first step towards immersive engagement. The researcher also wrote memos during coding and post-coding; this is further discussed later in this chapter.

Data Collection

This study took place within the scope of a CACREP-accredited counseling program and abided by the standards of the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics. Additionally, the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2015a), endorsed by the ACA governing council, acted as a frame of reference throughout the completion of the study. Data collection took place via three primary activities in order to achieve adequate triangulation (Shenton, 2004): two audio-recorded interviews with

each individual participant, one reflective journal for each of the five expressive arts interventions per participant, and five expressive arts artifacts created by each participant. See Figure 2 for a visual representation of the data collection process.

In-class interventions. Expressive arts interventions took place five separate times during the course of the class and were created based on group stages as established by Corey (2016). There were two introductory activities, two working stage activities, and a single termination activity facilitated over the course of the 5-week semester.

Expressive arts activity 1. The initial introductory activity was two-part. First, students were provided an array of sand tray figures and prompted to choose one. They were then asked to use this figure to introduce themselves to the class. Secondly, participants were prompted to decorate and collage a folder meant to hold the journals they completed following each expressive arts activity. As students worked on this portion of the activity, the researcher briefly discussed the purpose of the study and how the journals should be used throughout the duration of the course. The journals were meant to encourage reflection and self-awareness, as well as acceptance of feelings to enhance comfort in sharing those feelings with others (Perryman et al., 2007). The researcher provided all necessary materials for the activity. Following the processing of the expressive arts activity in class, participants completed the journal entry outside of class.

Expressive arts activity 2. The second introductory activity utilized was the Circle of Life Mandala. The researcher chose this due to the mandala's abstract and globular nature (Diaz, 1983) to continue to help ease students into the experiential aspect of the course. The activity used for the purpose of this study was modified by Perryman et al. (2007). This activity was used to encourage participants' free-flowing reflection on culture, including feelings surrounding cultural identity development, cultural strengths, and cultural biases. Participants could use

words, images, colors, and various materials to express these concepts as they saw fit. The researcher provided all necessary materials for the activity. Following the processing of the expressive arts activity in class, participants completed the journal entry outside of class.

Expressive arts activity 3. The third activity, Feet in Two Cultures, was used to facilitate student awareness (Goodyear-Brown, 2004). The activity used for the purpose of this study was modified by Perryman et al. (2007). Participants divided poster board in half to represent two of their differing or conflicting cultural identities, one on each side. For example, a biracial individual could use each side of the poster to represent how they culturally identify with each of their ethnicities; a person exploring their spiritual beliefs could represent the religion (or lack of) they grew up with in opposition to their current religious or spiritual views; or an LGBTQ individual could represent their culture as it relates to their sexual orientation or gender identity in contrast with other aspects of their personal culture. The activity was flexible concerning what the participants wanted to use as their two "feet," as long as each side of their poster board represented some part of their individual cultural identity. The researcher provided all necessary materials for the activity. Following the processing of the expressive arts activity in class, participants completed the journal entry outside of class.

Expressive arts activity 4. Inside-Outside Masks served as the fourth activity and were used to allow participants to represent how they present themselves to the world externally (outside of the mask) versus how they feel about themselves internally (inside of the mask) (Kaduson & Schaefer, 2001). The activity used for the purpose of this study was modified by Perryman et al. (2007). This activity was chosen to encourage self-awareness, reflection upon what others might be keeping internalized or private, and consideration of the various reasons why individuals choose to keep some aspects of self to themselves while choosing to share

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others. Students were prompted to consider concepts such as congruence and empathy. The researcher provided all necessary materials for the activity. Following the processing of the expressive arts activity in class, participants completed the journal entry outside of class.

Expressive arts activity 5. The termination activity was two-part. Firstly, the researcher prompted students to discuss their growth over the course of the semester using the same sand tray figure they each respectively chose from the very first class meeting. This was verbally processed with the class as a whole. Following this, the primary portion of the termination activity was a Wheat Paste Painting (Withrow, 2004). The activity used for the purpose of this study was modified by Perryman et al. (2007). The researcher began the activity with a guided meditation to encourage participant reflection on the multicultural course as a whole and their experiences with all previous expressive activities. They were given very little direction otherwise and told that they could relate their overall class experience as abstractly or specifically as they choose. Students were given three small portions of poster board on which to use color and form to represent their experiences. The researcher further modified the activity to use a variety of paints (finger, acrylic, watercolor, paint pens) as opposed to solely using wheat paste paint. After processing the activity, students combined their wheat paste paintings will others' to create one larger, unified collage. The researcher provided all necessary materials for the activity. Following the processing of the expressive arts activity in class, participants completed the journal entry outside of class.

Journals and artifacts. Participants completed one journal for each of the five in-class expressive arts interventions they experienced. The researcher created a weekly journal (Houin, 2018) with five open-ended questions to encourage reflection by participants (Appendix G). Questions prompted students to consider 1) what they took away from each activity, 2) how they

felt emotionally and physically, 3) how the activity might affect them during the remainder of the day and/or week, 4) what they might change about the activity and why, and 5) additional comments. Upon submission of all five journals for each participant, the researcher analyzed journals for themes and coded them before submitting the researcher's findings to the external auditor for credibility purposes. To ensure confidentiality, participant journals and artifacts were kept in a locked cabinet once collected by the researcher.

Interviews. The researcher conducted one semi-structured interview with each individual participant before the start of the class and prior to implementing any in-class expressive arts interventions. The second semi-structured interview took place the week following course completion. The researcher chose to use semi-structured interviews to allow participants flexibility in what they expressed and shared. All interviews were audio-recorded in a private location. The researcher transcribed approximately half of all interviews before an injury impeded complete transcribing of all data. Following this, the researcher paid to have the remaining interviews transcribed. No identifying information was provided during this process, and each interview was labeled solely by participant code to ensure confidentiality. Once all transcripts were completed, participants were sent a copy for the purpose of member checking before the researcher began data analysis.

Figure 2. Data collection process.

Data Analysis

For the purposes of this study, the researcher utilized qualitative data analysis. Upon completion of a multicultural course in which experiential activities were used to teach multicultural knowledge and process multicultural awareness, the researcher combined all collected data for analyzing. This included interview transcripts, participant journals, researcher field observations and memos, and feedback from the external auditor. Throughout this process, the researcher adhered to a transcendental phenomenological approach.

Throughout the data collection and synthesizing process, the researcher implemented Ravitch and Carl's (2016) approach to analysis (Appendix H). The authors' three-pronged process involves data organization and management; writing and representation of the data; and immersive engagement with the data. This data analysis process encouraged the researcher to not solely view analysis and synthesis as a linear process but to consider it as cyclical and ongoing so the fruits of analysis remained as true to the initial data as possible (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

To further the rigor of the current study, the researcher also chose to implement Maxwell's (2005) interactive model of research design (Appendix I). Using this design helped ensure all aspects of the study supported and strengthened one another. This model involves five primary categories, including a study's goals, conceptual framework, research questions, methods, and trustworthiness. Maxwell's (2005) design is based on the premise that each of these five units influence and are influenced by the others; hence, they must all be coordinated. Using the design assisted in clarifying the study's purpose from start to finish, ensuring that the researcher thoroughly reflected on all aspects of the study to increase trustworthiness.

Phenomenological Reduction

Using Moustakas (1994) to guide phenomenological reduction, the researcher utilized horizontalization while sorting through the emergent data in order to narrow horizons into clusters of meaning during which the researcher clustered participant statements into meaningful units and removed repetitive or overlapping statements. By clustering horizons, forming invariant constituents (Moustakas, 1994), the researcher was able to formulate initial thematic labels in order to create individual and composite textural descriptions. Textural descriptions derived from the first steps of phenomenological reduction and enabled the researcher to write about *what* individual participants and participants as a group experienced (Creswell & Poth, 2018). See Figure 3 for a visual representation of the data analysis process based on Moustakas' (1994) qualitative method of phenomenological reduction.

Imaginative Variation

The next step in the phenomenological data analysis process is imaginative variation (Moustakas, 1994) during which the researcher wrote structural descriptions, both individual and composite. Writing structural descriptions allowed the researcher to address *how* the phenomenon was experienced by individual participants and as a whole (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During this portion of data analysis, the researcher also sought to consider possible alternative conclusions to the findings and reflected on the different perspectives and frames of reference relevant to the phenomenon at hand (Moustakas, 1994). Upon completing the structural descriptions, the researcher used an external auditor to help verify all interpretations and conclusions before moving to the final step of synthesizing meaning and essence.

Synthesis

The final goal of phenomenological reduction was to understand the essence of participants' experiences in a textural and structural manner in order to achieve a unifying

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synthesis (Moustakas, 1994). To arrive at this invariant essence the researcher unified the

textural (*what*) and structural (*how*) descriptions into an integrated statement of the experience of

the phenomenon or essence that characterizes participants' experiences in the study (Creswell &

Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Formulating this essence is not to merely explain or describe a

single phenomenon, but to represent the experience of "a particular time and place from the

vantage point of an individual researcher following an exhaustive imaginative and reflective

study of the phenomenon" (Moustakas, 1994, p.100). The researcher's end-goal for this study

was to provide readers with as accurate a representation and understanding of the participants'

lived experiences as possible. Upon completion of synthesis, the researched utilized an external

auditor, their methodologist, and this dissertation's chair to confirm final themes and findings.
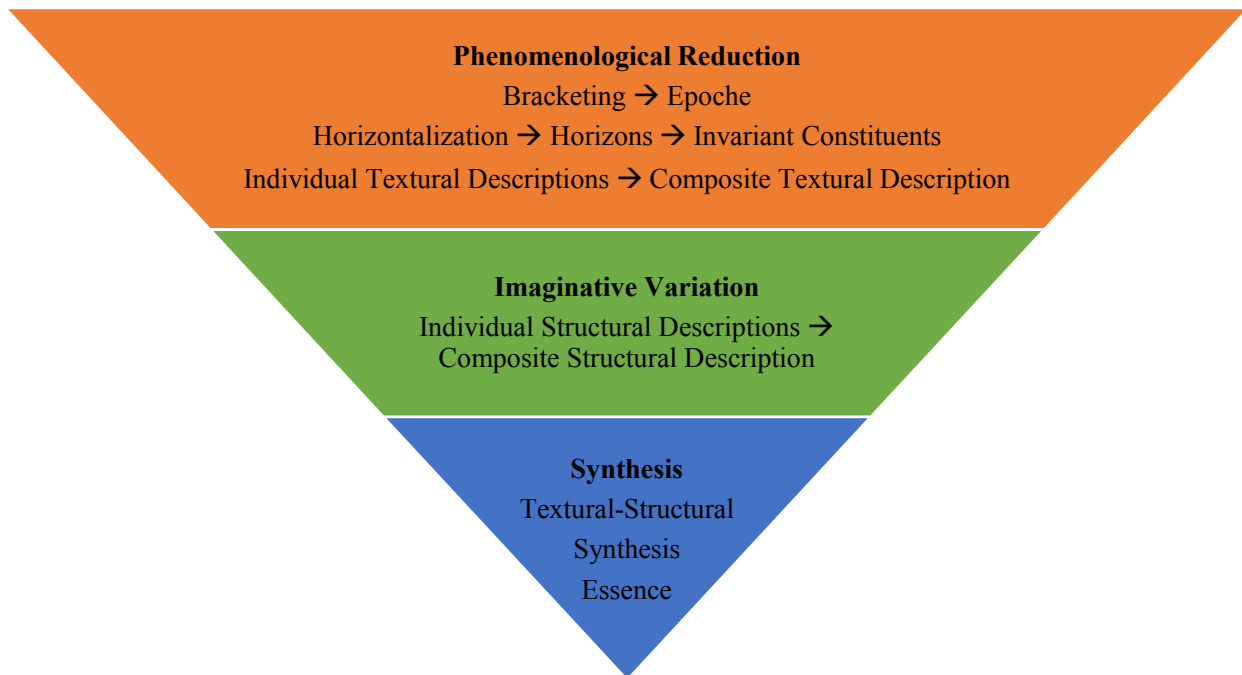
Figure 3. Data analysis process.

Addressing Trustworthiness

Numerous authors have written about the necessity of methodological rigor and

analytical defensibility (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Kline, 2008; Lincoln & Guba,

1985). Within a qualitative study, these concepts are particularly important to demonstrate a study's trustworthiness. Eisenhart & Howe (1992) suggested certain criteria to ensure the validity of a study. Most importantly, they discussed the significance of confirming reciprocity amongst a study's research questions, data collection procedures, and analytic techniques. Researchers are strongly encouraged to concern themselves with thoughtfully choosing techniques for collecting and analyzing data; being cognizant of the researcher's prior knowledge, experiences, and bias; considering the study's internal and external limitations; and assessing the comprehensiveness of the study (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992; Kline, 2008). Tending to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability helps ensure qualitative trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

To increase the credibility of the current study, the researcher used the following strategies for validating data: triangulation, strategic sequencing of methods, dialogic engagement, thick description, multiple coding, and structured reflexivity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Additionally, credibility was derived from prolonged and persistent engagement in the field, researcher memos and debriefing, member checks, and external auditing (Shenton, 2004).

Triangulation. Triangulation was achieved via a comprehensive literature review, already existing relevant data, pre- and post-course semi-structured interviews, participant journals, and researcher observations, field notes, and memos. Triangulation was also achieved through participant member checks, frequent peer debriefing and debriefing sessions with the dissertation chair, as well as the use of an external auditor. In this way, the researcher sought to lessen the risk of researcher bias when reporting the results of the study.

Member checks. To help ensure credibility, interview transcripts were provided to participants to confirm an accurate representation of each individual's experience. Upon completion of Chapter IV, the findings were also provided to participants for member checks so that they could approve the synthesis of themes and help prevent researcher bias from influencing the findings of the study.

Peer debriefing. The researcher debriefed with the dissertation chair on a weekly basis in addition to debriefing with a peer doctoral student also trained in utilizing expressive arts techniques. During these debriefing sessions, discussions surrounded the researcher's experiences and perceptions, investigated appropriateness of research design, recognized researcher bias, and considered alternative interpretations as the researcher begins data analysis (Shenton, 2004). Researcher memos were used to prepare for these debriefing interactions.

External auditor. In addition to debriefing with the dissertation chair, the researcher utilized an external auditor to enhance credibility. This step was particularly important for this specific study because the researcher previously taught, supervised, or academically interacted with some of the students in the class. The external auditor was chosen specifically because they were familiar with transcendental phenomenological methodology due to completing their own research related to counselor education using this same approach.

External auditing occurred three separate times throughout the study. After initial coding of the first semi-structured interviews, the researcher provided preliminary inferences to the external auditor to help ensure credibility. The researcher did this a second time upon course completion following initial coding of participant journals and artifacts. The researcher used the external auditor a third time following the second semi-structured interviews. Discussions with

the external auditor assisted the researcher in maintaining reflexivity and implementing negative case analysis with consideration of the dual relationship the researcher had with participants.

Transferability

Transferability was achieved through a thick description of participant experiences, participant interview transcripts, and transparency regarding sampling procedures and choice of expressive arts techniques used during the course. However, the researcher acknowledges that everyone's experience is unique; therefore, the experience of the participants within this study could be different from those in future, similar studies based on participant demographics, researcher theoretical lens, the length of the course, or other factors.

Dependability and Confirmability

The researcher's use of Maxwell's (2005) interactive model and Ravitch and Carl's (2016) process of data analysis provide evidence of the study's dependability, showing clearly the processes and procedures utilized for data collection. Confirmability was done via data triangulation, the aforementioned external auditing process, and consistent researcher reflexivity. This is the final criterion for establishing trustworthiness and helped verify the study's findings were shaped by participants' experience as opposed to researcher bias or knowledge.

<div align="center">

Conclusion

</div>

This chapter presented details of the purpose and rationale of the research methodology used for the current study. Included was the researcher's justification for a phenomenological approach, particulars about the conceptual framework and interpretive paradigms that guided the study, and specifics concerning participants' recruitment and involvement. The chapter also outlined details regarding researcher reflexivity, the data collection and data analysis processes, and issues related to qualitative trustworthiness.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques in a class constructed to increase their multicultural competency. The researcher believed that gaining a better understanding of this phenomenon would provide clarity concerning how master's-level counseling students are impacted by experiential teaching methods in a multicultural course and how participants' relationship to the concept of multicultural competence evolved after taking a course that utilized experiential learning.

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which were obtained via two semi-structured individual interviews with each of the ten participants, five journals and artifacts per participant, and participant member checks. All individual interviews were audio recorded by the researcher; approximately half of the interviews were transcribed by the researcher with the other half transcribed by a third party. Participant confidentiality was prioritized throughout the duration of data collection and data analysis. The primary research question and two sub-questions are reviewed below. To address these research questions, the study's findings are presented from each participant's perspective by way of conceptualization of individuals' experiences and participant quotations supporting these conceptualizations. Participant demographic information is also included.

Following the researcher's epoche or personal bracketing, phenomenological reduction begins with the collection of significant statements into clusters of meaning (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This enables the researcher to take the next step in phenomenological reduction process and write textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon experienced by participants in the study; the synthesis of these textural and structural descriptions generates the essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This chapter includes an analysis of the textural descriptions for

individual participant data, as well as a composite textural description. Following these individual and group textural descriptions are individual and composite structural descriptions based on participant experiences. The researcher then provides a synthesis of the textural-structural descriptions. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

Research Questions

The following research question and sub-questions were addressed:

1. How do master's-level counseling students experience the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework?

    a. How do master's-level counseling students describe their experience of experiential teaching methods?

    b. How do master's-level counseling students experience the concepts of "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural competence" before, during, and after being taught about the concepts via expressive arts techniques?

Participant Data

All student participants were master's-level counseling students enrolled in a single counseling program in the southern United States. Seven of the participants identified as White/Caucasian, with two identifying as Hispanic/Latinx and one as Black/African American. Two of the ten participants identified as male and the remaining eight identified as female; participant age ranged from 23-43 years old. Participants had completed anywhere from one to six full semesters of CACREP graduate coursework before the commencement of this study. Religious/spiritual affiliation among participants was somewhat varied while sexual orientation was much more homogenous. Table 1 summarizes participant demographic data based on the demographic questionnaire given to participants at the start of the pre-course interview.

Following this and throughout the remainder of the text, participants are referred to via pseudonyms randomly assigned by the researcher.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Matrix

Participant Code	Age	Ethnicity	Gender	Sexual Orientation	Highest Degree Earned	Marital Status	Religious/ Spiritual Affiliation	Completed Semesters of CACREP Graduate Coursework
1	43	White/Caucasian	F	Straight	MEd	Divorced	Slightly Buddhist	3
2	24	Hispanic/Latinx	F	Heterosexual	BA	Engaged	Christian	6
3	24	White/Caucasian	M	Straight	BA	Single	Atheist	2
4	26	Hispanic/Latinx	F	Straight	BA	Married	Mormon	2
5	38	White/Caucasian	F	Heterosexual	BA	Married	Atheist	2
6	23	White/Caucasian	F	Heterosexual	BA	Single	Christian	2
7	30	White/Caucasian	M	Straight	BA	Married	Christian	6
8	23	White/Caucasian	F	Straight	BA	Single	n/a	2
9	36	White/Caucasian	F	Mostly Heterosexual	PhD	Married	none	1
10	23	Black/African American	F	Heterosexual	BA	Single	Christian	2

Participant 1

Sadie was a 43-year-old White/Caucasian female with a Master of Education. She identified her sexual orientation as "straight" and her religious/spiritual affiliation as "slightly Buddhist." She also disclosed her marital status as divorced, and she had completed three

semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 1, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 3 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 1.

Participant 2

Christi was a 24-year-old Hispanic/Latinx female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as heterosexual and her religious/spiritual affiliation as Christian. She also disclosed her marital status as engaged, and she had completed six semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 2, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 4 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 2.

Participant 3

Jeffrey was a 24-year-old White/Caucasian male with a Bachelor of Arts. He identified his sexual orientation as "straight" and his religious/spiritual affiliation as Atheist. He also disclosed his marital status as single, and he had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 3, *what* he experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 5 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 3.

Participant 4

Mollie was a 26-year-old Hispanic/Latinx female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as "straight" and her religious/spiritual affiliation as Mormon. She also disclosed her marital status as married, and she had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for

Participant 4, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 6 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 4.

Participant 5

Nola was a 38-year-old White/Caucasian female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as heterosexual and her religious/spiritual affiliation as Atheist. She also disclosed her marital status as married, and she had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 5, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 7 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 5.

Participant 6

Gracie was a 23-year-old White/Caucasian female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as heterosexual and her religious/spiritual affiliation as Christian. She also disclosed her marital status as single, and she had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 6, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 8 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 6.

Participant 7

William was a 30-year-old White/Caucasian male with a Bachelor of Arts. He identified his sexual orientation as "straight" and his religious/spiritual affiliation as Christian. He also disclosed his marital status as married, and he had completed six semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 7, *what* he experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 9 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 7.

Participant 8

Maggie was a 23-year-old White/Caucasian female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as "straight" and her religious/spiritual affiliation as "none." She also disclosed her marital status as single, and she had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 8, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 10 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 8.

Participant 9

Brittany was a 36-year-old White/Caucasian female with a doctoral degree. She identified her sexual orientation as "mostly heterosexual" and her religious/spiritual affiliation as "none." She also disclosed her marital status as married, and she had completed one semester of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 9, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 11 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 9.

Participant 10

Zoe was a 23-year-old Black/African American female with a Bachelor of Arts. She identified her sexual orientation as heterosexual and her religious/spiritual affiliation as Christian. She also disclosed her marital status as single, and she had completed two semesters of CACREP-accredited graduate coursework prior to the start of the study. Textural descriptions for Participant 10, *what* she experienced during the course of the study, are outlined below. Following this, Table 12 provides examples of corresponding data for Participant 10.

<div align="center">**Thematic Labels**</div>

As a result of the phenomenological reduction process, the researcher identified seven thematic labels under which participants' invariant constituents were organized. Five of these primary themes also had sub-themes, which served to help the researcher further organize the data. The conceptual framework discussed in Chapter III guided the theme labeling process by addressing social constructivism, person-centered theory, and neuroscience literature. Table 2 includes a complete list of these themes and sub-themes derived from participants' interviews, journals, and artifacts. These themes represent the participants' report of their collective experience as master's-level counseling students who completed a CACREP multicultural counseling course that utilized expressive arts techniques. The thematic labels are discussed in detail below.

Table 2

Thematic Labels

Primary Theme	Sub-Themes
1. Process over product	a. Micro b. Macro
2. Comfort in discomfort	
3. Connection	
4. Emotional evolution	a. Safety

5. Experiential process	a. Catharsis
	   i. Child-like play
	b. Integration
	   i. Neuroscience

6. Identity	a. Personal b. Professional
7. Multiculturalism	a. Knowledge and awareness b. Competence

Process over Product

The data revealed students' concerns related to perfectionism and meeting expectations. Participant reported anxiety stemming from both micro and macro pressures. At a micro level, students experienced self-imposed pressure to produce a certain product artistically and please instructors academically. At a macro level, participants experienced acute awareness of their peers and reported frequent peer comparisons. Initially, students had anxiety related to preconceived notions of what expressive arts entail and experienced a high level of evaluative thinking towards both self and others in terms of multicultural competence. Initial expectations of evaluation and judgment by both peers and instructors transformed into focus on the process of holistic learning and perspective taking instead of an end product. Participants experienced less evaluation of self and others and acknowledged the creation of a perfected product was not the goal of the class or expressive activities.

Comfort in Discomfort

Students initially reported struggling with the non-directive aspects of the course. Participants expressed discomfort with the ambiguity of both the expressive arts activities and the notion of achieving competence. They sought directive-ness from the instructors and expressed discomfort related to the vulnerability they experienced processing multicultural issues as well as discomfort regarding their general lack of experience with expressive arts in a classroom setting. Participants described movement from this discomfort to increased comfort experiencing vulnerability, appreciation for the freedom of nondirective-ness, and decreased concern for perfectionism. At the study's conclusion, participants felt prideful of their work and growth over the course of class and offered self and others compassion and acknowledged the positive effects of discomfort and vulnerability.

Connection

Participants made frequent reference to feeling the need for connection and, when able to genuinely connect with others, the vicarious learning, perspective taking, and empathy that resulted. Initially students yearned for safe interpersonal interactions with both peers and instructors but recognized their struggle to be open, vulnerable, and allow sincere connection to occur. This transformed into participants valuing consistent interpersonal connection based in empathy, vulnerability, and genuineness. They reported recognizing and better understanding that these connections influenced both their processing of difficult multicultural concepts and the processing of their experiences with the expressive arts activities.

Emotional Evolution

The data exposed participants' emotional journey throughout the course of the study. Feelings were discussed frequently and were generally of an intense nature, playing a large part in students' ability to learn and interact during class. Emotional responses were generated by both the content of the course and the experiential activities. Students expressed a range of "negative" or difficult feelings and "positive" or enjoyable feelings. Ultimately, participants recognized the significance of this emotional evolution, but made it clear that safety was crucial for students to experience this evolution in a way that increased their capacity to learn and process class material as well as to participate authentically in the activities.

Experiential Process

Participants indicated that the experiential portion of the course provided catharsis, an opportunity for child-like play, and novel means for integrating class material with their personal worlds. Students expressed newfound understanding of the purposes and uses of experiential learning and in-class expressive arts activities. Experiential effects noted by participants included

integration, sense of play and freedom, and shift in both physical energy and general mindset pre- and post-activities. Movement occurred from anxiety surrounding experiential activities towards appreciation for experiential opportunities. Participants also connected experiential aspects of class to neuroscience knowledge they either had prior to or gained during the course.

Identity

Data pertaining to participants' identities was two-fold. Identity concerns vacillated between personal identity of the student participant and professional identity of the student counselor. In regards to personal identity, participants gained insight to self and struggled with concepts such as vulnerability, authenticity, and congruence. Personal reflection stimulated acute awareness of participants' privilege or lack thereof. This type of reflection also encouraged students to reflect on their respective familial influences, decipher their individual cultures, and experience increased empathy for others after making these types of personal connections. In terms of professional identity, students worked to identify and solidify their roles as multiculturally competent counselors. They reported recognizing the relevance of multicultural knowledge, awareness, and competence but struggled with how to maintain that awareness and knowledge in order to work towards achieving competence. Gaining a clearer clinical role, participants conveyed increased confidence and motivation to attain the necessary disposition, knowledge, and awareness for ethical diversity work. Ultimately, students connected their personal identities and individual class experiences to the real-life consequences of multiculturalism, helping to solidify their ideas around clinical application and their role as current counseling students and future professional counselors.

Multiculturalism

Participants gained multicultural knowledge and awareness and conveyed a sense of incongruence between what they thought they were knowledgeable about or aware of and what they were actually knowledgeable about and aware of regarding multiculturalism. Students experienced movement from this incongruence of self-concept towards a sense of increased congruence combined with self-compassion. Participants also reported feeling overwhelmed by the notion of multicultural competence due to the vastness of multicultural and diversity concepts. This began with participants expressing they were unsure how to clearly define multicultural competence and found it difficult to talk about with others although they recognized the importance of this. Towards the end of the study, participant concerns were more geared towards dissemination of their new knowledge and awarenesses; motivation for continued education; recognition of the tendency for multicultural concepts and issues to evolve; and ideas related to the importance of and how to advocate for others. Whereas recognizing concepts such as intersectionality and the spectrum of privilege initially felt overwhelming, participants expressed that their newfound awareness of the real-life consequences of multicultural issues offered them purpose and a sense of hope for their future work as counselors.

Textural Descriptions

Following the initial steps of phenomenological reduction, including epoche, horizontalization, and the production of invariant constituents, the researcher constructed textural descriptions of the phenomenon to capture *what* was experienced. Textural descriptions derive from the data and include "verbatim examples from the transcribed interview" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). The following section provides these examples from the data for each participant.

Individual Textural Descriptions

Textural descriptions were developed using the invariant constituents and thematic labels as a guide and have been arranged by participant. The thematic labels discussed in more detail above were used to help the researcher organize this data. The textural descriptions include excerpts taken from participant interviews and reflective journals. Descriptions begin with a general discussion of their experience throughout the course of the study, beginning with the pre-course interview, moving next to the journals completed following in-class experiential activities, and ending with post-course interview. Following each textural description written by the researcher, a corresponding data summary table follows for each individual participant.

Participant 1

Pre-course. Sadie had an attitude of humility. This participant had a unique perspective compared to others due to their previous teaching background abroad but still recognized despite her previous experience and knowledge she felt:

> Grateful for the experiences that I've had, grateful for the perspectives that I've been able to get, grateful for the awareness that I've got, but also very humble in the sense that I still don't know everything, I still have blind spots, I still have areas to learn. (Participant 1, pre-course interview)

In terms of prior experience with expressive arts in a classroom setting she stated, "I haven't really done much in the classes" before this one. She also described being aware of feeling anxious about her ability to be creative citing, "…any time I get to visual stuff I freeze up." She also described being curious and unsure about the integration of experiential techniques with the coursework. She questioned, "How is it going to fit in? What is it going to look like? What's going to come up? How am I going to deal with it?"

During the initial interview, Sadie also recognized her white privilege but juxtaposed this with her identity as a "third culture kid" and described her experience growing up as "outside of

mainstream U.S. culture." Additionally, because she spent many years teaching outside of the U.S., she felt aware of what it was like to have assumptions made about her and who she is solely based on her looks (i.e. white and female). She described the value of "relating to people on an individual level as opposed to coming at it with an idea of I know who you are and what you are because I can see all of these things about you."

During the course. Sadie reported feeling very aware of her aptitude for creativity. She stated, "Until recently I have found all forms of visual creativity to be anxiety inducing." She was able to recognize, "I have resisted… I used to believe that I just did not have the talent." Following the first expressive arts activity Sadie explained, "I am now more comfortable with collages but still have difficulty with other types of creativity." She admitted, "I experienced anxiety not knowing how to decorate my folder with markers and was relieved and happy when you pulled out the magazines" because this was in her comfort zone. Upon completing the first activity she expressed mixed feelings about the activity's non-directive nature, "As a teacher, my thought would be to be more directive at the beginning, but I am not sure that is necessary."

Following the second experiential activity, Sadie explained, "I feel like I am at a very low level of personal and creative development when I look at what I am able to create compared to others." She felt that this particular activity brought "awareness to the parts of ourselves that have been repressed." In comparison to the introductory activity, Sadie stated, "During the second activity I was more quiet and reflective of what was coming up in me personally." She also seemed to experience less evaluative thinking, "I decided to be colorful and not confined to what I thought it should look like and just go with the flow and not look around at what my classmates were doing." While she confirmed, "I was not always happy with how it looked," she also seemed to feel a sense of freedom and said, "…we are beautiful in our 'messiness.'"

This sense of freedom was also evident following the third expressive arts activity. Sadie expressed, "It was interesting to let myself go" even though she admitted, "I started out with some anxiety over what I would do." This student discussed how the activity helped her make connections for herself and applied this insight to her future clients. She stated, "The pictures were trying to tell a story... It seemed to be telling a tale of integration." Then she explained, "That is what we will be doing with our clients… helping them integrate their experiences and thoughts and feelings and gaining a deeper level of conscious and peace."

During the fourth activity she was aware that, "It again tapped into my anxiety surrounding visual creativity. Sadie seemed to regress slightly from the sense of freedom she felt in previous weeks and reported, "I couldn't figure out what I wanted to do, and I kept looking around at my classmates with envy." While this activity brought about some evaluative thinking and self-inflicted pressure, she also admitted, "It was very interesting to hear what my classmates' experiences were and a good reminder of the rich internal lives of others."

Following the final experiential activity, Sadie stated, "This was my favorite activity." Even though she "still experienced a bit of anxiety… the fact that we had no choice but to paint was liberating in itself." She allowed herself to have "no specific plan." She also mentioned the power of peer connection, "It was not until I talked to [redacted] and explained my paintings that I saw a theme through them." She had an awareness that, "That is the way my brain synthesizes information" and explained, "I had a theme of… discomfort… growth… freedom." In the end, she expressed feeling hopeful and a sense of closure, "Dealing with multicultural issues was partly my own journey, but also seeing the progression of those around me as well… it is beautiful to see how we are all changing and growing."

Post-course. Sadie described really enjoying the set-up of the class when it came to teaching students about a various multicultural concepts, identities, and experiences:

> I really the different perspectives from the different speakers that we had. Instead of just one instructor saying this is what this person's, you know, these group's experiences are. Actually having a representative from the group was really, really good and added another depth to it. (Participant 1, post-course interview)

Sadie continued to discuss the importance of the interpersonal aspects of the class and frequently referenced the notion of "human contact" and the "need to feel connected." Additionally, she expanded on the concept of humility she mentioned during her initial interview and discussed how recognizing one's "blind spots" is not sufficient but that we must also "be willing to be educated on them."

Sadie also referenced her initial discomfort and anxiety at the start of the class and cited a slight change in perspective. She said, "…sitting with discomfort is a good thing… you don't want to necessarily always make people feel comfortable… safe, yes, but you don't always want it to be comfortable." Specifically with regard to the expressive arts activities she stated:

> I felt less and less anxious as I did them. I let go of them needing to look perfect. I let go of need, like really tried not to look at my classmates and all of their beautiful thoughts and designs. (Participant 1, post-course interview)

While she reflected on her experience of the experiential activities, the researcher prompted Sadie to talk about the value of directive versus nondirective pedagogy. She described directive techniques as being less effective for experiential activities "because then you're thinking about how do I do this specifically to please the person that gave me the directions. You're thinking about completing the task." Ultimately, she felt the activities created "space for connection, vulnerability, and integrating the material."

Organized by thematic label, Table 3 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 1.

Table 3

Data Summary Table: Participant 1

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"...being visually creative brings out a lot of anxiety in me. It just freaks me out, like for my whole life I've said, I am not visually creative."
	
	"I looked around and I was like, oh everyone else's looks so nice and mine's like just this mess."
	
	"...there's no grade, there's no possible critique or something that you've done wrong or bad. It's just doing it and getting the thoughts out there."

2. Comfort in discomfort	*"...as a teacher I want things to be a little bit more prescriptive"* *"Without the boundaries of knowing where I am going to be approved of and where I am I not going to be approved of, and how do I get to that place of, I got your approval. And when there's no boundaries and there's no... you kind of have to sit with that discomfort of not knowing if it's approved or not."* *"It was uncomfortable, but I really appreciated it."*

Table 3 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
3. Connection	*"Relationally in the class I think it's really good because some of the stuff that we're talking about is so heavy, that it's really good to have that moment of just kind of being together, maybe interacting, maybe not interacting."* *"I was just feeling a need for connection, like a really deep need to just connect with people. Not to take away the discomfort but just to recognize each other's humanity…"* *"I think that it creates a space for connection. It creates a space for being together with a specific purpose, without any specific direction. I think it creates a space for conversation and for vulnerability."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"When you get that level of connection… there is that safety and trust. There is that sense of we have a contract that we are going to do this, we are going to work on this, and we are going to get this thing done because we're all in it together."* *"I think the expressive arts activities definitely increased the level of sense of safety and community. Especially when we're being vulnerable doing, like some of us were feeling a sense of anxiety surrounding being visually creative."* *"The times that we were sitting and getting information that was really heavy, without a chance to talk about things or without a chance to connect to each other, without a chance to find common ground, those were the times it didn't feel so safe."*

Table 3 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
     i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
     i. Neuroscience
	"...we're connecting in a different way, and I think it increases the feeling of safety in class and we get that moment to just play together and not talking about heavy topics that we're worried if someone's judging us or not."
	
	"Like in the moment, when I was doing it, I didn't necessarily have a lot to say about it, but then when we had to talk about it after we had done it that was when I actually understood what I had just done."
	
	"...the nondirective allows for the time to synthesize all the stuff that you think because you don't even know all the ways in which the information that you're getting is going to be synthesized inside of you. ...also the right brain/left brain thing... it's going to all integrate and become more."

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"To have immediate results from something that I learned in class was really, really wonderful."
	
	"...the curiosity to continually be educating yourself and the willingness to recognize their own blind spots when confronted with them... just the willingness to see another human being for who they are. Like kind of slowly learning how to take those lenses off, those filters off, and just saying, 'I see you.'"
	
	"People know when they're being seen."

Table 3 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
7. Multiculturalism a. Knowledge and awareness b. Competence	*"It's really, really crazy to watch people not see their blind spots, but then turn around and find out you've got your own."* *"I think it's okay that we have those feelings of discomfort because I mean, the populations that we're talking about are living with those types of discomforts, and I think it's okay that we sit with the fact that our blind spots have just been ripped away and it is really uncomfortable."* *"...our first interview I was saying it was layered, and now I feel like it's more just like a kaleidoscope."*

Participant 2

Pre-course. Christi described looking forward to the setup of the class knowing that it was going to be highly discussion based. She said, "I do a whole lot better when I have different perspectives shared with my peers or with my professor than just whatever I gathered from the information" and "I remember discussions more than I remember whatever fact I learned on the page."

Christi talked about and around the concept of multicultural competence but struggled to concisely define it on her own. She stated, "The breadth of it… there is just so much" and said:

> Essentially, being competent in all areas of culture and diversity and what really encompasses a human as opposed to some of the more biological things you might learn from science or something like that. There are differences in different humans and there are similarities, but when it comes to culture, you're getting all the aspects that just make up a person in and of themselves. (Participant 2, pre-course interview)

Additionally, she also spoke about her own multicultural awareness and said she was looking forward to "being aware of things I wouldn't have known." She explained, "I think I have a

really tiny taste of just a little bit of it. Not really a good awareness" and "If you had asked me before, like how competent do you think you are… at the beginning of this program, I probably would have rated myself decent." Continuing to talk about the notions of competence and awareness, she described what she thought students should take away from the course upon its completion:

> I think just the knowledge of how important it is, to walk away and be impacted with how important this is because I think that's what would drive me to continue to educate myself because I won't learn it all. To be affected by the course would mean that I would have some kind of interest in learning more later. (Participant 2, pre-course interview)

Specifically in relation to the idea of experiential learning via expressive arts techniques, Christi stated she was "excited" and thought "this is a cool element that we get to incorporate and learn something that is pretty tough to learn." She also said, "this is really neat because it's going to give us a chance to do something with what we're learning" and "it's a cool way to process information."

During the course. Christi discussed her experience of the initial activity, "At first the activity seemed simple, but once I began I realized there was more to it." She admitted this, "Reminded me to go in with an open mind." She also discussed feeling anxious and stated, "I was very aware that other people were around me and could see… I felt self-conscious." The activity seemed to prompt reflection for this participant. She explained wondering, "A recurring thought during the activity was, 'As a member of the majority, how do I ever become comfortable advocating or speaking on behalf of minorities?'"

The second expressive arts activity surprised this participant. She stated, "I was prepared to feel heavy during the activity, but I felt totally comfortable" and "I enjoy painting more than I thought." She experienced a decrease in an anxiety from the previous week, "I felt very

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comfortable and at ease being in my own space today" and recognized she was "calm, less anxious than the first activity." Furthermore, she reported, "I wasn't as concerned with everyone else and what they might think" and "There seems to be less pressure on myself…" She also described feeling more free, "I painted with my fingers and felt silly only for a minute." "It was fun, and I liked that it wasn't going to be perfect." Ultimately, she expressed, "I was full of appreciation for my effort and less critical of what I looked like. I was just happy with what I made" and "I could just be... and not have to be so aware of my cultural competence or lack of competence… it was a moment of peace."

Concerning the third activity, Christi felt she gained personal insight, "After the activity I realized I have a bit more integration to do." She continued, "There were many emotions present during the activity, which tells me I should revisit this again." Emotionally, she said, "I felt disgruntled, maybe even frustrated with myself that I felt such a divide between my identity before and after the program." She also offered herself some compassion, "On the other hand, I felt happy to recognize the changes that have been occurring" and "I am proud of myself for being open to change… I hope to be kind to myself for the difficulty of change." She ended up reflecting on the awareness she gained from the activity and expressed, "I think the hardest part of the change is the fact that important people in my life aren't necessarily changing, too. I feel this need to bring them along for my journey."

Christi reported feeling the most emotional during the fourth activity. She stated, "I was anxious trying to decide how open I wanted to be during this activity… so I struggled with how I wanted to express…" On the one hand she said, "I appreciated that I could take my time and be as abstract as I wanted;" however, "I felt vulnerable explaining to my peers some of the ways in which I feel anxious, shame, etc." She explained the activity "brought to mind some of the

pressures I place on myself to appear a certain way." She recognized, "This awareness has the potential to help me alleviate some of the pressure and to accept the many different parts of myself." Christi described, "The biggest theme I saw emerge… what I want to show people is this very filtered version of myself" and struggled with the question, "Where does true acceptance come from if I only accept the bad on the condition that I'll change?"

For the final expressive arts activity, this participant acknowledged, "The visual was powerful" and "Everyone in the class took away something different, it seemed." Emotionally and physically she explained, "I felt lighter doing this activity compared to ones before." She also discussed vastness and depth of her class experience, "The entire class had felt heavy on my heart and there had been so much to process… Being able to complete multiple pieces of art felt good. Not one piece had to capture my entire feelings or emotions." The participant stated, "This activity provided some closure" and "It felt uniting, reminding me that I had experienced and learned with others and we had all been affected…" Upon completion of the final activity, Christi reported, "I realized how much more I wanted to talk about the experience and what I had learned."

Post-course. Christi described her experience as "heavy" but overall positive. She recognized that she was introduced to plethora of new information:

> It was a great experience. It was heavy. It was a lot of processing. A lot of really new information… that I didn't know before. That kind of surprised me… a lot of facets of multiculturalism that I didn't really consider to be part of it until the class. Really educational, which it should be. (Participant 2, post-course interview)

She also expressed that vulnerability and safety were key to her learning and indicated, "Everything was powerful because everyone was coming from such a vulnerable place… they talked about something that was clearly important to them" and "I thought it was a really safe

environment considering what we talked about." Additionally, she explained that the common experience of all students helped increase this sense of safety and stated, "We're doing this together and none of us feel super comfortable… so I think it made us more cohesive in a way" because "we're all doing it."

Vulnerability and safety appeared particularly significant to this participant because she discussed the concepts multiple times during the post-course interview. She elucidated, if one person was "being disrespectful or anything everyone would've felt unsafe and no one would've shared" and "I think we had a group of people who were willing to be vulnerable" so "people were able to learn together." She also mentioned the power of modeling and thoughtfully facilitating the class and activities:

> The leadership… the people who did speak… they were so vulnerable. You can't help but think they're being open and willing. I think that's what the expectation was, to be open and willing to kind of put yourself out there, and luckily there was no judgment when you did. So when the presenters were able to kind of model, this is vulnerability, this is me being real and authentic and really sharing personal intimate things with you, that helped show the class that is permissible in this room. I think it was modeled by them… in a way that facilitated respect. The facilitating was just done with the expectation that this is a safe space, and that's what I expect, so if you're going to speak or respond to someone that's how you should do it. (Participant 2, post-course interview)

Additionally, Christi specifically discussed the notion of privilege and referred to her struggle with how to utilize her knowledge of the concept. She questioned, "How do I exist with something that I didn't really choose in some ways?" She cited recognizing that some "people who have privilege… are empowering and using it for good" and determined "I have the privilege so I better be going to make a difference. That's what I'm taking from this." She also clarified that she felt most of her learning stemmed from "becoming aware of either my own privilege or just my own cultural background, something maybe I hadn't thought of as an

influence" and her acknowledgement of "where I lay on the spectrum of privilege." She

continued to speak about the call to be an ally and advocate as a person of privilege:

> And to not close your eyes to all of it, which is like for me what convicted me the most is, you were aware of a lot of this, but kind of shut your eyes to it, kind of didn't say anything because it was easier and because no one else was saying anything. So is it my place? Should I do it? And It's 100% my place because I am in privilege. That's what I got out of it. It's always my place because I have a voice and people listen. (Participant 2, post-course interview)

> In reference to the experiential aspects of class, Christi stated she "loved" it and felt

particularly appreciative of the reflective journaling experience that followed each activity:

> I think it was a really cool way to process it on your own because we journaled outside of class, and so it gave me a chance to kind of think about how I was feeling because the questions were so pointed, and… really made me think about like, what am I taking away from it? How was I feeling when I did this? And how am I feeling right now after having learned this stuff? (Participant 2, post-course interview)

She stated that initially she thought "I should have an end result when I'm done with this… so

how do I get to this end result?" and "I don't know how to do it well because everything has to

be done well. So you're like, how do I not care?" Upon completion of the course she admitted,

"…this was like really the first time that we're being asked to create and really just care about

the creative process." She recognized, it's "All about process" and "It really doesn't matter what

you've made at the end" but "it's just weird to not care about the end" as a graduate student. She

made a comparison for example:

> That's kind of where we're always going… How's this paper going to turn out? Not, how does it feel when I'm writing it? No one asks you that. How do you feel writing the paper? It's like, terrible. It's like they just want the finished paper. (Participant 2, post-course interview)

This participant also recognized the cathartic affect of the activities and journaling process and

said once she got to "process it," "by the time I came in Monday I was ready for it again. I had

somehow been able to kind of let those emotions go, put them somewhere." Ultimately, she described it as "a good self-care piece" that enabled her to "stay present in the course."

Participant 2's final take-away from the class had to do with her professional identity as a multiculturally competent counselor. She stated, "You cannot counsel without this" and questioned, "How are you meeting somewhere they are without taking into consideration all these aspects of them?" Furthermore, the course was motivating for her and she exclaimed, "I want to tell everyone about it." Specifically, in reference to the initial incongruence she felt in relation to her lack of multicultural knowledge and awareness she described feeling increased self-compassion and inspired to turn her knowledge and awareness into action:

> And I don't have to be stuck in this, 'Oh no, I'm on the bad team because I'm part of the majority.' I don't have to be on the bad team. I just have to be aware that if I'm on this team, what am I going to do about it? (Participant 2, post-course interview).

Organized by thematic label, Table 4 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 2.

Table 4

Data Summary Table: Participant 2

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
    a. Micro
    b. Macro
	"'I have to produce some kind of art?' I think that's where I have a little bit of anxiety…"
	
	"It's uncomfortable… I don't know if people are looking, but being out of my comfort zone creating art and being around so many people."
	
	"I was very aware of how it's going to look or how people are going to view it. I wish that level of anxiety could've been taken down so I could've been a little more free when I was painting or creating."

Table 4 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
2. Comfort in discomfort	*"I felt like it was a really good way to be able to kind of wrap up what I had felt for the week, and then go into the next week with feeling kind of put back together after being split open a little bit."* *"I wasn't pushed to feel a certain way or go through it in one specific way. It was tailored so I could experience it how I wanted to."* *"...that final project taught me... we've all experienced something, but it was so different. Why did I need for my experience to be the same? Or my journey to be the same? I didn't have to have the same experience of other people. Clearly didn't. You're like, 'Wow, we all took something out of it, but it was so different.' So I think if I had been able to have that perspective at the beginning maybe it would've lessened my anxiety a bit."*
3. Connection	*"It's a really intimate experience... brings people closer together because you're sharing that experience... and we're all feeling something, we're having a shared experience of having done something together even if it was individually."* *"I think it would be hard to do on your own because I think it keeps me in check being with peers and people who are different from me. If it was just me learning about it and not being able to process it with anyone else, that would be hard... hard to think of me just growing like this all by myself one day."* *"It was so neat getting to hear what other people were thinking and feeling throughout it because it normalized my feelings, but then also sometimes I'd say something like, 'Oh, I didn't even think about that. That totally applies to me, too, I just hadn't thought of it that way.'"*

Table 4 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"Create a shared experience that we get to share in the classroom, which is cool because that, I think, brings a level of trust and safety…"* *"It was a really safe environment. It could have gone totally different had it been set up in a way where there was judgment… People could've come in there with a lot of judgment or assumptions, and I don't feel like that's how the class was set up."* *"I feel like it was really safe and open, and every piece of it was just like, this is a process, this is learning, and this is really delicate. And so everyone was really respectful of that… that we were all in a really messy place trying to figure out these topics and everything."*

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"Then remembering what you learned is integrated in different ways because it's like, 'Oh, I can physically remember what it felt like, and I can emotionally remember what it felt like…"
	
	"…help you process in a new way… when I have different aspects of how to learn and how to process all this information, it's always the more the better in my experience. Different ways of learning always make me gain the material and have new perspectives on it."
	
	"I appreciated the moment of reflection and getting to do something that's different with our hands and just accessing a different part of our brain in order to learn."

Table 4 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"...learning more about yourself in those areas, too, so you can identify with who you are and then you can also be able to learn who other people are"
	
	"It's just being able to appreciate the differences of people and taking them for what they are and not just what we expect them to be or what we think they should be. We get to actually know people. Like, meet them where they are, and understand who they are."
	
	"What does my role look like as a counselor? What does this mean specifically to me?"

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"I think it can drive and change our behavior and the way we interact with people, the way we treat people, and really it's like, it's what drives our understanding and ability to empathize with others… It's what gives us the ability to do that, I think."
	
	"Then you're thinking, 'Oh my gosh, I'm going to keep learning this forever…"
	
	"I feel like I just barely scratched the surface. I have a lot more questions now that I've taken this class. I didn't expect to be like, "Wait, I don't feel like I'm filled in this area yet."

Participant 3

    Pre-course. Jeffrey discussed previous experiences in his counseling program related to his white, male privilege. He explained that the topic would come up and "…for a while I always took it as a personal attack on myself" particularly due to "being the only male in the cohort." He talked about wanting to be aware of his privilege but also feeling a sense of incongruence related to how his privilege caused his peers to see him or make generalizations about him:

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I think of, like, white privilege and just being exposed to the idea that because I'm a white male that has made my life much easier than anyone who is not a white male. At first it was a very distressing thought and I got defensive, but just being exposed to that kind of planted the seed for me to really think it over and eventually get to the point where I could recognize that it is a real thing that's been in my life. (Participant 3, pre-course interview)

In addition to discussing the concept of privilege, Jeffrey also expressed concern around the appropriate use of language. He described his language-based anxiety as an impediment to his genuineness and authenticity. "I don't want to say anything to offend them. So I'm always really on guard about what I say instead of just being myself around them." While recognizing this anxiety, he also appeared hopeful about becoming more comfortable with using appropriate and non-offensive language in the context of multicultural interactions:

I think the more familiar I become with, you know, the 'right' thing or the right way to phrase things or just have more experiences with people from those different groups, it's a little bit easier for me to be less on edge or I can be more myself around them. So I think that's another benefit to the class. (Participant 3, pre-course interview)

Jeffrey also talked about incongruence as a major apprehension going into the course. He explained, "I always want to feel like I have the answers to everything or I'm at least knowledgeable about everything" and simultaneously recognized, "But such a vast topic that covers so much different stuff, I know that I'll never fully have a good, complete grasp on it." He expanded on his concerns and stated, "I think another tough part of it is just recognizing the biases that I may have even if I don't want to." He spoke about feeling pulled in two opposite directions and vacillating between an urge to withdraw and feeling driven to check his biases, "…it kind of just makes me shut down and try not to think about it. So I think it can motivate me at times, but other times it's not, it's more just push it away instead of use it."

When prompted to discuss his thoughts surrounding the use of expressive arts in class he explained, "I don't have a ton of experience" and "I'm not completely familiar with what falls

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into the category of expressive arts." He said he felt both "excited" because it offers "A different way to spend class time" and "unsure" because "I kind of know what that means, but also I don't completely know what we'll do or what it'll entail." Ultimately, he felt open to the notion of experiential learning and stated, "I think it'll make whatever kind of lesson we learn that day… it'll make it stick a little better… and be more memorable."

During the course. Following the first experiential activity, Jeffrey stated, "I hadn't done anything creative like this in a long time, and it was a good reminder how much I enjoy doing creative activities." He recalled, "I felt very present and focused" and "I could tell that I entered a flow stated." Generally, he said, "I was having fun and felt happy" and recognized, "I think it was a good way for me to recharge and feel re-energized."

Jeffrey described his experience during the second expressive arts activity, "It was very relaxing to do this, and it made it much easier to discuss personal thoughts with those around me." He elucidated, "When discussing my anxiety… I found myself not feeling as uncomfortable with being transparent" and "I noticed… I would be forthcoming... It wasn't like I was filtering my thoughts, making sure I wasn't saying anything wrong. I was being very myself, so that was always a really cool experience." He described feeling a sense of flow again, "I felt relaxed and fully immersed in the activity." Following the activity he recognized the value of connecting with his peers, "It also helped remind me of the benefit of being open with others."

The third experiential activity was the first to elicit difficult emotions from Participant 3, "It was a good reminder of the negative parts of being an atheist. It also showed me that my privileged white male identity conflicts in many ways with my atheist identity." He explained, "I was feeling sad and melancholy" because "It was tough to revisit the negative experiences I've

had, and it made me want to withdraw." However, he also acknowledged, "Sharing with my partner helped me open back up" and concluded, "I need to make sure I do some self-care."

Expressive arts activity four seemed to challenge Jeffrey more so than the previous activities, "…made me focus on the fact that being artistically creative is difficult for me." He stated, "I felt very stuck and unsure of myself" and "I was getting a bit frustrated initially, but by the end I stopped worrying so much and accepted that I was just doing my best." By offering himself some compassion he recognized, "I think that it'll help me have patience with myself if I'm not able to do something well" and admitted, "I wish I wouldn't have been so concerned about my ability to be creative." He also explained his awareness that, "It reminded me that there are things about myself that I like to hide from others."

Jeffrey reported enjoying the final experiential activity, "Today was a good way to wrap up the entire course and reflect on everything we've discussed." He explained, "It brought up some prior emotions from the class (frustration, sadness, contentedness), and I felt an overall sense of satisfaction when it was all done." Lastly, he stated, "It made me feel appreciative for this class, and I think it helped me recognize the importance of sharing what I've learned going forward."

Post-course. Jeffrey felt that he gained "really good insight" but also recognized that he still had concerns related to appropriate use of language. He explained:

> I was just also able to recognize how much I still have to learn about several different groups, and how much I don't want to walk on eggshells and make sure I wasn't offending anyone during different conversations. And so, I think I'll need to work on becoming more comfortable with discussing issues like that, and not feeling like I need to kind of tiptoe around certain things. I think it's that I don't want to mess up the language because I don't want to come off as insensitive and offend the other person… (Participant 3, post-course interview)

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Parallel to his language-related worries, Jeffrey also expressed anxiety around wanting to

disseminate his newfound knowledge and awareness gained from the class in the most effective

way possible. He discussed how much he felt context was part of his struggle and stated:

> For me, it's been applying it to people I know outside of the program. Just
> because living in [redacted], it is generally very conservative and a lot of
> conservative people are not as open-minded. That's not always the case, but…
> trying to find an organic way to bring it up to family and friends… and not to
> present it in a way to where it doesn't feel like I'm kind of lecturing them or
> talking down to them. I think that's been difficult for me because I think the class
> does make me feel more driven to share the information with people because I
> think it's important that people are exposed to it. But, it's tough to share with a lot
> of people who haven't even begun to consider looking at the world in that way.
> (Participant 3, post-course interview)

In reference to the experiential aspect of the class, Jeffrey said, "every week I had kind of

a different reaction." He mentioned achieving a "flow state" multiple times while participating in

the expressive arts portion of the course and that he experienced a "wide range of emotions" over

the course of the five weeks. As previously discussed, this participant felt anxious about

language but described the expressive activities as helping him "focus less on saying the right

thing or wanting to sound smart or sound culturally sensitive… it helped me be more genuine."

"…that was a good way to process… good time to just kind of decompress and let everything

just kind of settle." Not only did this participant believe that the expressive activities helped him

open up and be more genuine in the moment with his peers, he also reported, "It was a good way

to get back in touch with what some of the general feelings of being in a minority group could be

like." Additionally, he expressed being grateful for the reflective journals that provided means

for "time to process everything in our own unique way." He stated, "I think they were helpful…

in a different way than class discussion."

This participant also described feeling more confident in his understanding of the concept

of intersectionality after being able to connect the term to examples of real-life consequences:

I think when [redacted] spoke, he talked about three sections of each part of his identity and how I think it was stereotype, how that affects legislation, and then how it affects his actual life. That was really cool, because I don't know, I guess I've always never been able to connect to why the negative stereotypes can, or how broad-reaching their impact could be. That was a really big 'aha' moment for me… it really helped me understand intersectionality better. (Participant 3, post-course interview)

He continued to discuss the value of vicarious learning and perspective taking and confirmed, "I think that's always one of the more beneficial ways for me to learn about something; just try to consider it from a bunch of different viewpoints."

Organized by thematic label, Table 5 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 3.

Table 5

Data Summary Table: Participant 3

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"There was always an initial feeling of 'Okay, I just need to get over the fact that I'm not good at art."
	
	"…I kind of felt more self-conscious about my creativity and artistic ability more than anything else."
	
	"I was getting frustrated initially… feeling stuck."

Table 5 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
2. Comfort in discomfort	*"I think comfort is a big part of it. You may not feel completely comfortable working with every single person, but just recognizing that that's bound to happen… and so just learning to be comfortable with that discomfort and still be able to put your best foot forward for a client, even if it's difficult."* *"It was challenging some days, but overall I think it was a really good experience. It was tough at times, but in a good way."* *"I think whatever we were doing for the day, it's going to come out. What was the thing that was heaviest on our mind would come out and would kind of help us focus on what we needed to work out the most."*
3. Connection	*"Hearing what everyone had to say during the discussions was really insightful. I think it's always good to just get out of what my own thoughts about everything are, and to see how other people are perceiving things."* *"…made people more willing to talk and open up because I think it makes people feel more at ease doing something creative and expressive like that. I found myself do it."* *"…it gave us the opportunity to process tough stuff… and kind of tap into some feelings that I didn't even realize I may have been having."*

Table 5 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"...the biggest thing is just creating a safe space... if I felt like people weren't going to take it seriously, or they were just going to make a joke out of it, I don't think I would have been willing really to get into it."* *"I was surprised at how emotional I was."* *"...the last week, it was kind of a good wrap up of bringing back up a lot of those feelings from previous weeks, but they weren't as intense. They were just kind of a reminder, and then just feeling content overall with the work that we'd all put in for the entire class."*

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"I would kind of get to a point where I would completely lose, it'd be kind of like a 'flow' experience. I'd just kind of lose myself."
	
	"I think I master something a lot better from more experiential-type learning, just because I feel like I get a better understanding of what I truly do and do not understand if I'm forced to put it into practice."
	
	"...going off of left versus right brain, I think it'd just be a different pathway for the brain to kind of integrate it and make it part of the knowledge base."

Table 5 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

6. Identity
  a. Personal
  b. Professional
	"I want to consider myself an open-minded person. So when I find myself just making snap judgments and generalizations about a person it's not a good experience for me to have to realize…"
	
	"…challenge people to reevaluate the values they hold or just become aware of different things that have affected their lives that they might not have even realized."
	
	"…being able to sit with someone who comes from a multitude of different backgrounds, and being able to relate and understand on some level the type of experience that person may have. And then also whenever I can't fully understand that experience, being willing to still put in the effort to try to get as deep in their experience as I possibly can and try to understand it more."

7. Multiculturalism
  a. Knowledge and awareness
  b. Competence
	"I think recognizing that I don't think you'll ever be fully multiculturally competent, and having to accept that and just learning to have the humility…"
	
	"I think if nothing else, if we can change the attitude that a person has to where they kind of value multiculturalism, it'll become something more important to them and then, you know, hopefully they can take that into their future careers and can continue to build upon that knowledge base."
	
	"…each person has a part of themselves that is going to make up their unique identity… taking that knowledge and recognizing that a person's experience is going to be different from mine, and as a counselor it's my job to do my best to see through their lenses and understand their experiences with that information in mind."

Participant 4

　　Pre-course. Mollie expressed, "I think learning from others' perspectives really helps me to just open up my mind to things that I just hadn't thought about before." She also discussed the value of humility:

> Being able to learn and accept that your own society could benefit from other cultures… So it's not just the factual knowledge of other cultures but also respecting those cultures, not judging them, not saying one is better than the other, and also saying, 'How can we learn from other cultures?' too. (Participant 4, pre-course interview)

She also described the human tendency toward judgment, "I think that there's always something that is blocking us from being non-judgmental. I feel like as human beings, it's not our place to judge others, but it's like the easiest thing that comes." However, she expressed hope, "I think people can try to be empathic, and when you're willing that genuineness will come out" while also acknowledging the struggle of "…learning how to still believe in the things you believe in but also respect" others.

　　Mollie referred to her family throughout the study. She stated, "I was talking to my husband yesterday and was like 'I totally wish that we could take classes together.' …and then decide how we want to raise our family with all these things." She explained, "I feel like if we are learning about these things here we all are able to go home and teach it to the next generation because we obviously know there are many who aren't open to different perspectives." She said she feels an obligation to recognize and talk about diversity as opposed to pretending it is not significant, "Well, no, there are different things, which is good, because we all need to learn from one another." She continued to describe the importance of not only recognizing other cultures but also knowing one's own:

> I think being aware of first your own culture and understanding 'Okay, this is how I see it,' and being aware that you do have some type of bias, whether you like it

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or not, and then being aware that those around you don't have the same culture. (Participant 4, pre-course interview)

In addition to this, she expressed awareness of her minority status in the classroom, "…being one of the minorities in the class… I think there are two black girls, and I'm the Hispanic, and the one Muslim… for me, I am very aware that I am very different from others." She explained:

> I've been in those conversations of going home and being like, 'This happened today, that hurt my feelings, blah, blah, blah.' Where I think for others, this could be some of their first times exploring that and exploring that racism and stereotypes are not just something on the media and stuff. That happens on a daily basis. (Participant 4, pre-course interview)

She elucidated, "…it kills me when people are so disrespectful to a group of other people; it destroys me inside" and so "seeing that they're human and that they have their own story. I think that's something we should take away." She also emphasized the importance of continued education, "I think understanding that when this class is over there's still more that we need to learn is important to know." She continued to describe the humility necessary when seeking further multicultural education:

> I could see how I could easily say, 'Oh, well I had this diversity class so I've heard about all these different things. I'm good. Let me teach you.' When in reality it's like, no, let the world, let the people teach you in their traditions and their cultures. (Participant 4, pre-course interview)

Mollie recalled her previous experience with expressive arts in a classroom setting during a different master's-level course in the counseling program. She explained, "I love them" and felt "like it contributed to so much to my self-care." She said, "…it's a different activity to do to take care of yourself other than the 'let's just talk. Let's talk about your feelings.'" She elaborated, "…sometimes personally when people tell me 'Okay talk about your feelings,' there's a point when I don't want to anymore." She continued, "I don't think that works for everybody and

maybe not all the time. You need to switch it up." She recognized that in this way expressive art activities provide "different pathways to communicate."

She stated that her previous involvement with experiential techniques provided opportunity to gain awareness of things "we just wouldn't see verbally but we see it through paper." She described those experiences as surprisingly interesting because "there was just things that I learned about myself that I think my soul was trying to tell me." She also talked about her previous class being much smaller than the multicultural class and recognized "it's a bigger group" so it could be "harder to process." The processing piece of the experiential activities seemed important to her as she explained, "There's many times where I realize something as I'm talking" and imagined, "If we would discuss… and everybody would be able to talk about their art, I think there would be moments where I'm sharing what I think I felt, but I'm actually feeling something else." She also stated in terms of her peers and their future experiences with the activities, "I hope they remember more of their feelings rather than the actual art itself."

During the course. Mollie talked about the initial expressive arts activity and expressed concern for the subsequent activity, "I need to make sure I pick the right color." She described herself as "not the greatest at being creative out of thin air" and felt "Frustrated because I couldn't think of anything I other people's folders looked nice and cool." She even decided, "I'm going to get another folder because I'm not satisfied with my work."

The second experiential activity seemed like a more positive experience for this participant even though she felt "anxious." "full of reflection," and experienced "A lot of emotions coming up." She explained on the one hand, "I really enjoy coloring. It is very relaxing, peaceful." However, she described, "…definitely learning I'm not the greatest with colored pencils, glue, and paper." She talked about yearning for something more prescriptive or

directive because that would "…take off the stress of coming up with something creative." Considering some of her aforementioned frustrations, she still exclaimed, "Love this class!"

Following the third activity, Mollie said, "It was my favorite one so far" because "I liked how it pushed me to see two different sides of myself and seeing how others described themselves as well." She enjoyed the activity so much she felt called to share her experience, "It gave me something to share with my husband and have him see how I see myself." Additionally, she explained being aware that she was in a good place and said, "I feel like if I was going through a hard moment it would look different."

By activity four, Mollie felt more comfortable with the non-directive aspect of expressive arts techniques. She took some pressure off of herself and recognized, "I need to just start with art and then later try to connect things I've done with how I feel about myself." She also described the activity as "Very relaxing" and said, "I like it a lot" because it "Made me reflect on how others see me" and offered her an increased sense of self-awareness.

During the final expressive arts activity, this participant was "Relaxed and reflecting on the whole class." She show increased comfort with the experiential aspect of the class and even stated, "It was cool that this week had the focus on only using paint." She felt she utilized this time "to tie everything I've learned in a positive way." She also expressed enjoyment and appreciation, "It was nice to get messy with paint… it was very child-like play that I think is good for adults."

Post-course. Mollie was confident, "I think it's been the class where I've grown the most" because "I've had to kind of just reflect on what I believe personally and then just discover new things." She stated, it "helped me grow a lot and be more empathic towards other people." This was significant to her because she felt "…awareness is so essential. I think the first

step is knowing your own culture… knowing where your family comes from…" She explained, "I think when working with other people, it's hard to learn about others when you don't know about yourself." She clarified, "…being able to work with other backgrounds" in both an "appropriate and respectful" manner is "…not necessarily always pointing out that there's something different, but embracing the different aspect of someone." However, "…you kind of have to know yourself before knowing others." This entails "Not reflecting just on what others, like their struggles and stuff, but going back and thinking, 'Oh, okay. This is how I think. This is how I see myself. These are the things that I struggle with.'"

Along the same lines, she continued, "…you obviously can't know struggles of other groups when you don't understand your own privilege. And not necessarily focusing on guilt, but just being aware, and then turn that awareness to advocacy for others." She said, "I think this class has helped me kind of see everything like it's just a big population trying to survive type of thing" and "I think we need to embrace the different backgrounds but also accept that we're very much the same. And our hearts are the same." She explained that somewhere along the way we forget this sentiment and become much more evaluative of others, "…as we grow up we start seeing people with those, I guess, lenses with like, 'Oh, that's good. That's bad.' You know, positive/negative type of thing."

She recognized gaining self-awareness during the course, "I've struggled with my biases" and "I learned how I was privileged." She specifically admitted, "When I'm like on a one-to-one interaction, I see them as a person, but then when I step back and I see them as a group, I see myself thinking those things. Which I don't want to." She described realizing that incongruence, "And that was like a huge, I'm like, 'Oh my gosh, here I am judging them.'" She acknowledged, "It sucks when you realize that you're privilege and all these things and you feel bad about it, but

don't stay there." She suggested, "Not staying focused on 'Oh, I feel bad because I have all this' but going to 'Oh, I'm learning about other culture.'" She continued to talk about her newfound awareness:

> "…that was really cool for me to learn… just knowing that I do have biases and prejudices and how those get in the way. I like to think that I'm still a very open person… but we do fall into those mistakes where we're like, 'Oh, yeah. I'm judging you thinking that I'm perfect.'" (Participant 4, post-course interview)

She elucidated, as humans, "We're stubborn. We're very stubborn." She explained too often people are rigid, "No, this is how I think human beings are built, and this is what I do" as opposed to remaining open and flexible.

Mollie also said, "Some of what I've gained the most is probably on a more spiritual level. There was things that were hard for me, not to accept, but hard for me to know where I stand with certain things." She had an awareness that she was "trying to mesh two worlds together." She expressed, "It was very confusing because I feel like… I'd always have two different perspectives of things." However, "It was cool because we always talk about, when you struggle with something you go and try and find it. And this class challenged me to do that."

With regard to the course instructors and guest speakers, Mollie stated, "I really loved the diversity of those who were presenting." She liked how, "It wasn't based on textbooks and what three people wrote about but about what 30 of us thought." She discussed the value of vicarious learning and perspective taking, "I think at times it's good to speak up and share what you believe, but I think at times we also need to be quiet and have others speak." This varied representation of course instructors and guest speakers afforded the opportunity to "…get a different mentality than your own, so I think it is very important to the counseling field because we will always face someone who is completely different than us or sees a similar situation in a different perspective." She also said, "I honestly think that having it taught by a white professor,

a black woman, and someone who is LGBTQ like really helps in presenting different perspectives" and "I think that really does help, having the right representation teach." She felt that in this way "It just gave the time and respect to each group that was discussed."

Concerning the expressive arts activities completed during the course she stated, "It can be a very heavy class... very intense. I think art kind of balances that out." She described her experience, "…it's like a break to our brains in a way when sharing emotion. I think we're taught sharing emotion is through words and sitting down, and so it's just different. I think it's very refreshing to the body." She also recognized, "…it was very nostalgic… and it was relaxing" but again emphasized, "Like if I was personally going through a really hard situation, my feelings would be different. Not in a bad way, but it would be more intense I think."

She continued to describe the value of the experiential activities, "…you are given that time to express yourself without being interrupted." This felt important to her because she stated, "I can't always say exactly what I'm saying. So sometimes it's hard to say, like, a perfect sentence and 'Yes, that's what I mean.'" Therefore, "I think when expressing your art, and it's done in an effective way, I think you're given time to reflect and say what you want to share and how you want to share it." She explained, "So I think as you're speaking you're still reflecting, and I really do think that pondering lightens the soul…" She also recognized:

> "I think in school we're taught art just… for talent or presentation or whatever. But we're never really taught to connect it with emotions, and so later on as we grow up it is different to our body when putting those two things together." (Participant 4, post-course interview)

Additionally, this participant connected her experience related to the purpose and uses of expressive activities to her future clients:

> I really like it, and I think it pushes us to be creative with our counseling because, again, we're going to have, not only will we be different from our client, but our clients will vary a lot. And I think every person progresses differently

emotionally, and I think it's our job to understand them as a person and understand what is best for this client. So the more we learn to be creative I think that will push us to use different stuff. (Participant 4, post-course interview)

Regarding peer connections and interactions she stated, "I really enjoyed the going back and forth type of thing." She explained, "For me it was kind of the thing in class that helped me learn about myself when learning so much about others… I think those two should go together." She continued, "It felt really good, too, when sharing what I learned with my family" She further clarified, "…having a baby soon, just thinking about how I want to teach her to embrace her different cultures… and kind of just knowing how I want culture to be a part of our home."

Organized by thematic label, Table 6 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 4.

Table 6

Data Summary Table: Participant 4

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
    a. Micro
    b. Macro
	"I'm not great at it when it comes to grab a piece of paper, glue, and some scissors and make something out of it. I'm like 'Uh, I need some more direction,' but I really love it."
	
	"I know the first time I that I did it I tried so hard to have it perfect…"
	
	"Like, why is there a right or wrong way? You're just expressing yourself."

Table 6 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
2. Comfort in discomfort	*"...it was hard for me at the beginning because I'm like hesitant. I'm like, 'Well, I don't know what to draw.' But the more you do it, the more you're not so fixated on 'Oh, I need to make this look pretty.' It's more just like, 'Well, whatever comes out comes out.'"* *"I don't think I'm a creative person, but I feel like as a human population we were created to be creative, if that makes sense."* *"I honestly think that there's more, there's a lot more good that's going to come out of this class than the negative part."*
3. Connection	*"I feel like I was able to understand her a little bit better. Yeah, and they shared things that, I mean, I didn't know about them… so I think it really does help for just a set of people… connecting."* *"...even though there's people who are still working or still learning about their culture and might be biased, I think, one, our field of counseling, we decided counseling because we want to help others. So we have a little sense of wanting to be empathic."* *"I feel like expressive art is such a personal thing, and if you're willing to share some very intimate things about yourself then that only makes you more vulnerable in a sense, more humble. And I think when there's a feeling of pureness and genuineness within a room, you get more of that genuine human interaction."*

Table 6 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"I liked how if someone felt uncomfortable, that the professors were also attentive to that… making someone feel like it was a safe place. I think that also helped with how we were educated in the classroom."* *"I remember someone next to me in the class was like, 'Man, I just feel like I can't really… I'm scared. I'm scared to speak up because somehow I'm going to offend someone.'"* *"…if there was any negative, it would've, I think it turns to positive when expressing vocally your art. Or you trying to put words together with what you drew. And I think it obviously would look different for everyone. May that feeling of positive wouldn't come right away as you're expressing. It could take time. But I think it's on its way to feeling positive."*

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"It's been really cool how your body responds to different techniques. So I thought it was really cool that we'd do it, and it's obviously nostalgic because when's the last time you opened up a color box and started coloring?"
	
	"I think the journals were a part of how we discuss and express ourselves… talk about our expressive art… instead of just doing it and putting it in your closet. I don't think I would've had that exploration without the art and then also without the reflection on it."
	
	"…it's like our souls and our bodies can kind of connect at times where maybe we didn't realize something before, but as we're speaking it's like, oh I have an emotional reaction to that or that settles my heavy heart…"

Table 6 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"...it seems mind boggling for me to think of a counselor who isn't open to other peoples' life stories. I feel like it would be really, really hard to do your job and to do it genuinely..."
	
	"I feel like I've seen personally others who have opened up and been more aware of maybe their privilege or been aware of things that they've personally struggled with that they just didn't think of before."
	
	"...learning about myself and about my own culture and reflecting back on how we think, and because I'm a minority, thinking back on all the stuff I have gone through personally... and writing about how I have become."

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"...not necessarily meaning that you agree with everything that other people choose to do in their life, but it's respecting that and, you know, being able to be open to learning from their perspective and applying it to your life."
	
	"...there is a point where you're aware of different cultures and you're more knowledgeable, but I don't think that you ever reach a point where it's like okay, I know all I need to know."
	
	"100% understanding I think that is hard because I know for me, you know, there's topics that although I want to understand, my own personal experience is like, 'Oh, I just don't get it.'"

Participant 5

Pre-course. Prior to the start of the course Nola appeared nervous during the interview and provided very succinct answers to most of the question prompts. She generally described multicultural competence as when "You step into their world." She elaborated some:

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I think it's just one more step to give us some more self-awareness to examine our own biases that we don't realize we might have. And just reflecting more or less that we can grow and check ourselves before we're sitting across from someone and it happens in a session. And just learning to be empathic with whoever's in front of you because we're all so different. (Participant 5, pre-course interview)

She also recognized the vastness of multiculturalism and described the counselor's role, "…realizing there's so much more to it, and just keeping aware, the intersectionality, just the different layers… and that you can't know everybody's story." She clarified, "You can try to understand them the best you can though."

Regarding the use of expressive arts in a graduate-level course she stated, "This class is my first experience with it all." She described some trepidation, "I know it's supposed to be fun, but yeah it is definitely anxiety provoking." Even with her initial fears she stated, "…the only con I can think of is having to look at your own stuff and process it and go through, kind of wade through the muck to get to the other side, but it's one more way to understand."

During the course. Nola discussed her initial thoughts after the first experiential activity, "I need to stop overthinking the activity and just 'do.' I need to stop trying to plan and just 'feel' what is in front of me." She explained, "I understand the need for and power of expressive arts; however, I do get a bit of anxiety at the thought of participating." More specifically, she said, "Every time we have an art activity I feel a rush of panic. 'Where do I start? What do I make? Ugh, I can't draw.'" She also recalled, "I calmed a bit once I got into it" and acknowledged, "I have to work on not comparing my results to others'." Nola admitted, "I honestly had to put my folder away so that I didn't compare it to others. However, once I got home I realized it's not so bad and I feel it represents me." Following the activity she felt, "It was nice sharing materials, space, and thoughts while we were working" and stated, "I think this will be a nice breather each week to help alleviate the heaviness." She also recognized, "I feel that safety and compassion are

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key components" because "We are all here to help others and that requires helping ourselves and owning our 'stuff.'" She clarified, "Unpacking, sorting, and letting go of baggage is hard, often dirty, work. But it's going to be rewarding, and I feel safe moving forward with this group of instructors and classmates."

Following the second expressive arts activity she disclosed, "I didn't realize how much emotional release is involved in expressive arts. I had been very emotionally charged all week, and I feel as though some of that was released. She elucidated, "I cried all the way home, but I felt better afterwards." She simultaneously feeling emotional, Nola also expressed, "I felt a bit more relaxed about this activity. I don't know if I just needed this outlet… but I felt calm and at peace for a moment." She felt, "It had a positive impact" and also thought, "I am slowly getting better at not overthinking the activity." She revealed, "This week was especially difficult because I was dealing with stuff outside of class relevant to diversity. I learned some things about my family that made me angry and sad." She stated of the activity, "I was really struggling, but this helped somehow." Ultimately, she said, "Every time I look at the heart in the center of my mandala, I am reminded that their hate is their own. I choose love."

Regarding the third activity Nola explained, "I'm definitely taking more away from this versus the lecture-notes-test. That's just regurgitate it and get rid of it" because "The activity provided a visual representation…" of her learning. Concerning her discomfort with the class's experiential aspect she stated, "I felt less anxious about this activity. I felt very 'into' it" and "I think it allowed me to process some of the less pleasant aspects of my self-image." She also explained, "I felt a sense of calm and peace when I finished it and processed it with my classmates." Furthermore, she was able to recognize, "I am growing, and I am improving" and "I am not where I want to be, but I've come a long way from where I was."

Upon completion of the fourth activity this participant expressed, "I think my anxieties and my fears were much more prominent in this activity" and "I was very emotional during this activity." She said, "I cried; I felt my heart pound a bit" but "Ultimately, I am happy that I did the activity and processed the feelings." She continued, "I have learned that sometimes you need to be vulnerable… I need to show my personal face and not hide behind the strong public face" and "I have to move forward knowing… there is no shame in it." She offered herself some compassion and had a sense of pride, "I also learned that I was stronger than I realized, at least in some ways." Following the activity, she seemed to feel a sense of closure, "…there was at least some congruence. I don't feel like two different people, but rather, multi-layered."

After the final experiential activity Nola stated, "I think we never know what feelings we are dealing with until we start accessing them in some other form" and talked about feeling "a lot of emotions" that were "sometimes difficult to put to words." She continued, "I felt very reflective during this activity" and "My emotions are all over the place with this class, both positive and negative." She described, "I am angry, sad, disappointed, and exhausted. However, I have not lost all hope that we can make a difference. At least, I am trying to hold on to that idea." She elaborated, "If someone can be raised by such a hateful family and turn away from that and choose to love others, then maybe there is still hope for others." Nola also admitted, "I am going to be balancing these conflicting feelings for a while." She expressed the activity, "really brought to the surface this conflict, especially seeing the contrast in art form." She stated, "I am not much of a painter and tried to focus on expressing myself through color rather than form;" however, "That is one thing that I have learned through the various activities. There is no right or wrong, just do what feels right" and "It's not about what everyone else is doing. It is not for anyone but me. It is for me to process what I am feeling." Following the completion of the course she said,

"My eyes are open a little wider since taking this class." She seemed to resolve, "Seeing is the only way to move toward change."

Post-course. Nola called the course "enlightening" and "eye-opening" and admitted that she learned "a lot of language I didn't know, that I'm glad I know now." She explained she was challenged by "Really having to dig into… some of this stuff, some of those snap judgments, snap stereotypes…" and "Just recognizing your own stuff." She provided a specific example:

> I know when we did the activity when you wrote the names of different countries or different things on the board and asked, 'What's the first thing that comes to mind?' And unfortunately some of the first things that pop in there I know are wrong, and I don't truly think that. If we're being honest about what first popped up I was like, 'That makes me feel like crap' because they weren't all good. (Participant 5, post-course interview)

In terms of this participant's emotional experience she stated, "I enjoyed the class. It was hard; it was emotional. I feel like I gained a lot from it." She further explained the course "…stewed that anger a little bit about how unfairly people are treated." She discussed what she felt students should take away following participation in the class, "should be angry. They should want to be an ally" and be able to recognize the "intent versus impact" of their actions.

She discussed the benefit of having guest speakers and how appropriate representation led to greater ability for perspective taking, "I think it's easier to learn from someone who has actually had the experience" because "…you can hear somebody lecture about it and they may have a lot of experience, but it's just not the same as hearing it from someone who's lived it." She explained, "…the firsthand experiences I think are so much more impactful than just kind of reading and regurgitating." Nola also talked about the importance of "…being aware of our own stuff and what we may project and what we may or may not know." The clarified the role of the counselor is "being aware of the differences, aware of the microaggressions, being aware of our

stereotypes, and doing our best to check on them and learn more." Personally, she said, "I feel…that stuff is sticking. It's working." "…something's keeping my eyes more open."

Concerning the expressive arts activities, she expressed anxiety because "this was the first big expressive arts anything that I've done." In particular, she felt her "anxiety about how does it look compared to everybody else's seemed to wane…" She admitted, "I didn't realize I had some stuff in there to process." She described it as "part of my self-care" and also that "…it felt like a group self-care." She said participating in the activities encouraged her to "really sit and think about it and stew on it" and "…helped to be able to process stuff." She also noted, "The energy seemed calm… in the midst of the activities." This type of "forced self-care" seemed to aid students "…to close off that week and start fresh on the next week." Regarding the class as a whole she said, "I think if we hadn't had that, it might have just been too much and too stacked." She elaborated and described this type of catharsis as "necessary" because there was "a lot of heaviness." She explained, "…when I would get done, I would feel it after, and I could look back at some of the pieces and, I don't know, just feel differently."

She recognized the power and potential of the experiential activities, "I think there's a lot of emotion that can be conveyed in artistic expression" and "…even though I'm not really good at art, I tend to have a very emotional reaction… they really elicit some stuff." She elucidated, "I feel like something had let out that I didn't know was tied up, knotted up in there." "Sometimes you don't understand why it's happening." Nola seemed comforted to "know it's going to be there." She clarified that when she felt heavy or overwhelmed she would think, "You can just make it through the week. We're going to have this at the end." After participating in the activities she reported feeling "lighter" and "like a weight was lifted." She said, "I don't think it would have felt the same if we hadn't done the activities because I know clearly I felt different

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on those days when I got home." Her final thought regarding the expressive arts activities was a

recommendation about safety and intentionally choosing when to use such techniques in a

counselor education program with regard to student development. She explained:

> I have to feel safe to do it. I don't know that I would do it with an incoming class,
> new cohort, nobody knows anybody, they don't know the professors. If I'd done
> this as my very first class… I'd be very uncomfortable to be really raw.
> (Participant 5, post-course interview)

Organized by thematic label, Table 7 provides additional participant data to support the

above textural description for Participant 5.

Table 7

Data Summary Table: Participant 5

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"I don't know what to do. I'm not artistic. I can't do this and freaking out about I don't have enough time, and I don't know what I'm doing. That seemed to drop off."
	
	"...you've got to try not to compare yourself to others."
	
	"...can't get in the zone and let it flow even though you know the purpose behind it."

2. Comfort in discomfort	*"Even for someone like me. I'm not good at this stuff, I'm not good at painting, drawing, that's not my thing. It's hard for me to just let go and let it do, but it was necessary. I think it would have been a lot harder without it."* *"I finally had to give myself the grace that being aware… was at least a step in the right direction…"* *"For me personally, even though it kicked me out of my comfort zone, it was necessary."*

Table 7 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
3. Connection	*"I think it's one more way to connect. It's one more way to do that. Because not everybody can verbally say what they need to."* *"Even though we were doing individual stuff… you could kind of feel the energy, everybody kind of regulating together."* *"…hearing somebody's experience, you can't look away from that or pretend they're not right there. I think that is the difference. Having someone there that's like, 'Hey, I lived this. Hey this is me, this is my life.' I took much more with me those days."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"I'm just trying to take in everything and learn as much as I can about everything and try not to let the shock and awe get to me because everything you think you know, you're pissed off about it if you learn something else. You're like 'Ah.'"* *"Absolutely terrified. I do not consider myself artistic. I'm like, ' I don't want to start.'"* *"I'm just more aggravated and sad… and I'd rather sometimes just be ignorant… but yeah, it's worth it in the end."*

5.   Experiential process
    a. Catharsis
       i. Child-like play
    b. Integration
       i. Neuroscience
	"I was processing more than I realized… I could physically tell that I felt better."
	
	"It's… better to understand now neurologically what the point is and how it works…"
	
	"…when I took my art piece out and it was something visually, I could just see it there, and I was getting ready to file it away. I was like, 'No, it needs to stay there' because I somehow connected feeling better at the end of that class with this piece. And it kind of helped, I don't know, it kind of helped me get through the muck…"

Table 7 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

6. Identity
  a. Personal
  b. Professional
	"Checking your own stuff, I mean your own biases. The things you didn't realize you had until you see an example, or like microaggressions. I mean, we all kind of had to look at each other, 'Well these one's we've done. We didn't do it with intent to harm.' And that feels gross. But it's part of it."
	
	"...a lot of digging through your own stuff, and some of those icky automatic stereotypes and things like that that you know better, but they still are bad, that automatic. It's not fun."
	
	"...understanding some of the issues that other people have been going through so that you've got a client in front of you that doesn't look like you and maybe they see you, you embody the oppressor."

7. Multiculturalism
  a. Knowledge and awareness
  b. Competence
	"I had to make that snap decision to get vocal and... be as much of an ally to the person... as I could... I left thinking, 'Should I have done more? Should I have said more?'"
	
	"And realizing that there's a lot more to it than what you can see... you can't make assumptions about someone just because the person sitting in your chair kind of looks like you. You have no idea. It's your job to just kind of be aware of that."
	
	"If something comes up new, then it's your job to go and read, do whatever you can to learn about this group of people or this even that has influenced people, whatever it may be, rather than wait until the client is in front of you."

Participant 6

      Pre-course. Gracie was not bashful about sharing her thoughts and feelings prior to the course. She identified herself as a white, middle class female but expressed frustration with being put in a box, "…my ethnicity… that's not the only piece of me. And I hate that judgment." She questioned, "…what else do I have to say to get you to see the real me?" However she also recognized, "But that's nothing compared to what some people go through."

      She shared her thoughts about the relevance and purpose of the class, "Diversity is just so important and it makes who we are and influences what we think" but also had an awareness of feeling "naïve." She explained she felt "Hesitant" and "a little fearful" but also recognized a sense of responsibility, "…we all have a responsibility to each other, to respect one another, to validate that person… their experiences, and just continue educating yourself." She elaborated:

> When I think of being competent it's having a good understanding and it's not allowing yourself to just say, 'Well, I don't know' or 'I'm not going to learn or to try.' And so when I think of someone being competent… they just want to learn more or understand better and be able to apply that to the real world. Because you say 'Sure, I know how to respond to somebody who identifies as a different gender' or things like that, but it's, like, how do you genuinely respond to that and take that to the real world. (Participant 6, pre-course interview)

She continued to discuss her thoughts surrounding counselors' professional responsibility to disseminate multicultural knowledge and awareness, "I think we as counselors are more important than maybe we even realize… we have a job to educate those who maybe aren't multiculturally aware and understanding of other cultures."

      This participant felt particularly "challenged" when considering the possibility of future interactions with those whom she has different beliefs or values:

> So just having those tough conversations and understanding, like, I can still respect them as an individual. I can respectfully disagree with what they're maybe saying, but understanding they have their thoughts and views for a reason, and they're still human. So I think it's important as counselors that we can do that,

even with clients who we may not agree with, the way that they think about different cultures. (Participant 6, pre-course interview)

She continued to describe feeling that students "should take away a struggle" from the class, and if they do not "leave feeling convicted in some kind of way then I don't think you're honest with the process and yourself." She suspected in that case, "I think they're trying to maybe protect themselves..."

Gracie also expressed trepidation about "saying the wrong thing." She said, "I'm so afraid that sometimes my ignorance might show when I'm trying to learn and somebody might misinterpret my ignorance." She clarified she did not "want to offend anyone;" rather, she wanted others to know she was "…coming from a place of love" and intended on "making sure that person knows I care about them and I want to know more, so that I could understand them better and validate them as a human." She talked about needing to "Let go of the fear that you're going to say something wrong. I mean, be aware… don't say something stupid, but don't let that fear hold you back from, like, having these tough conversations or allowing yourself to grow."

Concerning previous experience with expressive arts in a classroom setting, Gracie reported having a small amount but described it as "really powerful." She explained, "…even if you are not artistic in certain areas it can still be relaxing" and that it helped "calm me down" and "feel more at peace." She also described it as an opportunity for "…allowing people to see you through a different lens." She elaborated, "…you're allowing me to see this… and how it represents you, and so I'm getting to see that person in a different light." Additionally, Gracie felt processing "in another way without subconsciously realizing it I think is really powerful." However, she recognized, "…tapping more into that side, right brain… tapping more into that feels natural to me" and suggested, "I could see for those who are more left brain you become more of a centered person when you tap into that."

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During the course. Gracie discussed how she felt during the first experiential activity, "Once I got started I find myself again kind of relaxing and just being like, you know, what does it really matter what I make." She explained, "We just get so egocentric and caught up in our head" that it is sometimes a barrier to "the letting go process." Additionally, she said, "We live in a society where it's very black or white in some cases" but there's "not right or wrong" when it comes to expressive arts. Therefore, she reminded herself, "It's important to allow yourself to be free and just do whatever feels comfortable and right for you."

Upon completion of the second expressive arts activity Gracie talked about the challenge for graduate students who have been in school for so long and accustomed to being evaluated, "…we're taught in school you have to do it a certain way." She explained, "And so being able to be expressive… however you want… is so different." She expressed struggling with ambiguity of some of her expressive arts experiences, "I appreciate non-directive but then sometimes I'm thinking 'No tell me exactly how you want this or tell me what I am doing exactly.'" She stated, "If I have guidelines of 'This is what you're supposed to do' then I know I can do my best."

After the participating in the third activity, Gracie was still struggling with the same theme she discussed in her previous journal. She explained, "I'm a perfectionist at heart and the only child in me wants to be my best and excel." She admitted, "I found myself comparing to what other people were doing" while also recognizing, "But that's not what it's about. It's more about the process and not the product." She seemed confident that "…you can't grow if you stay in your comfort zone" but also reported, "I see what I want it to be and it's not happening so sometimes I would get frustrated." She seemed to console herself by stating, "But that's part of the process." Ultimately, she discussed how she needed to offer "a little kindness, a little compassion" towards herself going forward.

Following the fourth activity she confessed, "I feel like every day I'm just so amazed at what we're learning" and "I'm learnings things I didn't even know about." She continued, "…intersectionality? I did not even think about that; I didn't even realize there was a word for that." She recognized, "I'm just pretty naïve, but I can admit that." "I think about high school [redacted], and I'm like 'Girl, some of the stupid shit you used to say.'" She elaborated:

> I'm embarrassed. I genuinely want to call people from my high school and say
> 'I'm so sorry, the girl I was then is not the woman I am today.' But it's okay. It's
> not okay to stay like that, but it's great to learn from it and just be aware of it.
> Recognize it and just keep growing. (Participant 6, journal excerpt)

Upon completion of the fifth and final experiential activity, she elaborated on the value of her experience and related it to her knowledge of neuroscience, "tapping into the right brain… being able to express yourself or communicate what you're feeling or thinking without maybe even realizing it is super healthy." Overall, her experience of the class was positive and involved a sense of catharsis, "I left at the end of the class… feeling really grateful for the course. It kind of felt like a weight was lifted…" Additionally, she explained, "I really loved how in our last class we shared where we were at the beginning versus at the end." She said, "I felt like over the course of five weeks so much happened… a lot of self-reflecting. 'Okay, this is where I'm at right now in my life' and just really being challenged to do more self-care." She summed up her expressive arts experience, "At first I thought, 'What the hell am I going to create today?' because I'm not that creative. And then by the end of it, it created itself, if that makes sense."

Post-course. Gracie expressed, "I feel like I was really challenged in that class." While she felt her the five weeks were "really intense" she also described the time as "an eye-opening experience." She said going into the course, "you are comfortable with what you know" but "This whole class challenges you to get out of your comfort zone." She explained she "Came in nervous, left feeling really appreciative and I now have a newfound responsibility, not just as a

counselor, but just as a human in general" to "raise awareness about these issues and diversity

and to not be afraid to speak the truth." She also felt her entire time in the course was valuable:

> I knew I couldn't just come in and be like, float around. You had to be pretty
> present for the class, every class. Because it's like if you tuned out for five
> minutes you were going to miss something important or something that could
> really impact you or just make you stop and think. (Participant 6, post-course
> interview)

Gracie also expressed surprise as she recalled her initial fears before the class started:

> I had it more, I don't know, in my mind that it was going to be guns blazing and
> being at each other's throats with some other people. I thought maybe that's how
> it would go, just from other people sharing their past experiences. But I left
> feeling really grateful of everybody being really vulnerable and sharing their
> experiences and their thoughts. (Participant 6, post-course interview)

Concerning the built-in connection she experienced with peers she stated, "I like it. I

appreciate that I get different perspectives" and "learn how to have a respectful, meaningful

conversation." She admitted she had to remain "…open to meeting in the middle… or just

understanding where they come from." She explained it was "…really refreshing hearing people

share…" She continued, "I loved hearing that firsthand experience" and "I think human

experiences are more valuable than anything you're going to learn in the textbook." She stated,

"I learned how to appreciate other people's perspectives even if I don't necessarily agree with it"

because "I can appreciate that they took the risk of being vulnerable." She elaborated:

> I did appreciate just when we would be in a circle and share or just take the time
> to hear everybody and their thoughts and opinions. I mean, sometimes it was
> frustrating hearing other people's thoughts and you just think, 'Why do you think
> this way?' But I have to respect it because that's their story and that's their life
> and their perspective. So yeah, I like more of that non-directive approach.
> (Participant 6, post-course interview)

In addition to perspective taking and valuing the vulnerability of others, Gracie

explained, "I think you have to be aware of your own culture and your own values, your own

biases that you have. And if you think you don't have one, you're lying to yourself. Are you

kidding?" She elucidated, "It's not a bad thing to have them, but it's more to be aware of them.

Because if you're unaware then that can really influence how you treat other people." She

expanded on the necessity of being able to recognize personal values, "It's like being aware of

others', being aware of yours, and then somehow mixing the two together in a sense so that you

can serve." She stated:

> They used to say, 'Don't let your values influence you.' But how can you not?
> But being aware of them, you can hold on to those, because that's who you are,
> but not letting it hinder you from serving people who could be different from you.
> (Participant 6, post-course interview)

She continued, "I think that's something I was challenged on." She felt "Acknowledging your

ignorance, your bias… being humble… and having to be honest with yourself and others in that"

was "sobering" and explained, "…being called out sometimes doesn't feel good." She admitted,

"…my first instinct was like, 'F this,' like get defensive. But then I left and I was like, 'No, I

really got to own that and take responsibility for it.'" She provided a specific example:

> I think that was definitely a bias I had and wasn't aware of against men until this
> course or this five weeks. I was like, 'Oh, shit. I really project some of my anger
> and my frustration on men from other men in my life and put them in this box.'
> And I'm doing them a disservice, and I'm hurting myself in the process, too, in
> way of that relationship. (Participant 6, post-course interview)

This participant also connected her classroom experience to how she might influence her

future clients, "I mean, what if I made a joke about male privilege and that really hurt him?" and

"he's like, 'You're not seeing me as a human and as a person and who I am. You're just seeing

me as your experience or what society has told you that I am.'" This encouraged Gracie to

further consider the value of sincere and "active" listening. She explained:

> I feel the best way to do it is when you have someone come in and share their
> experience, allowing yourself to be open and vulnerable and listening. Because
> it's so easy, like when someone is sharing their experience or telling you
> something that they've been through… to go on the defense or go on the attack in
> a way. And we don't listen; we just kind of come up with our response to

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something… instead of just stopping to listen and hear the experience that that individual is going through. (Participant 6, post-course interview)

She also discussed what it was like to recognize the depth of her privilege, "I didn't even know that intersectionality was one word. So that was like, 'Oh, there's layers upon layers in this.'" She continued, "That was really heavy on me and I thought, 'Wow, I really got to step it up.' Here I am saying, 'I want to be an ally' but… I know a very small amount compared to what I should know." Again, she connected her learning and applied it to future clients, "…sometimes for a person in their most vulnerable state coming into counseling, that's not the time that they want to be teaching" about their culture. She expressed, "I think guilt is a huge thing… I felt in some aspects. I feel really guilty that I'm so privileged." "So there's some guilt, but instead of letting that guilt turn into shame, I think you should turn it, at least I'm processing and turning it into responsibility." As opposed to feeling overwhelmed, she channeled her guilt into motivation and stated, "I have a responsibility to do what I can to be an ally or an advocate…"

Regarding the expressive arts activities she expressed initially feeling "super anxious." She explained her change in outlook, "At first, like 'Ugh, art. I'm not good at this.' Instead I'm like, 'No, it's more about the process and how I am feeling.'" She elaborated, "So when you're not good at it, or you're comparing yourself to other people, you get in your head. But as time was going on, I was like, 'It's not about how good my art looks. It's about my experience.'" At some point in the course she recognized it was about "…being able to translate that art into a therapeutic moment." The participant stated, "At first I was apprehensive and then as time was going on I actually looked forward to it." She would tell herself, "I'm going to relax into this, and it's okay if it doesn't turn out" because "Sometimes my experiences aren't pretty, just like my artwork."

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She found additional value in the experiential activities because "I think it was a way for people to share a part of themselves that they maybe didn't even realize that they needed to share." She clarified:

> I found a lot with the expressive arts, I'd be creating it and when I was just enjoying the process I'm like, 'Wow, some ish is coming up.' Things I didn't even think about or things I thought that I'd already processed. So it's almost like a way to be vulnerable without outright saying it. It's just a way to expressive whatever you're feeling or thinking or physically, all those components. (Participant 6, post-course interview)

In the end she stated, "I feel like it added something for sure." She explained, "For me as a counselor-in-training, learning how effective expressive arts is and that I might have clients who would really benefit from that…" felt valuable. She elaborated, "If we just talked about diversity it would have been a good class, but adding the expressive arts added another layer to it."

Organized by thematic label, Table 8 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 6.

Table 8

Data Summary Table: Participant 6

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
1. Process over product a. Micro b. Macro	*"Sometimes at first I'm, like, looking around to see what other people are doing, and I'm such a perfectionist, so I'm, like, I want to do this right…"* *"…when you said 'expressive arts' I thought 'Oh no… I'm not good at this' and the perfectionist tendency kind of comes out."* *"First I was like 'Oh shit, what are you making me do?' Because I want to be the best."*

Table 8 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
2. Comfort in discomfort	*"...the hardest part is just taking that first step… being sensitive and being vulnerable with others and with yourself."* *"It's just allowing yourself to, like, let go."* *"It's just a process and enjoying the process."*
3. Connection	*"I would definitely stress the importance of being vulnerable with yourself and with your classmates."* *"...getting to hear from our peers and learning from the instructors, and like, what they've experienced has just taught me more than I think any textbook really could."* *"I like when I hear from my peers, especially hearing from peers who don't always speak up all the time because I value their opinion. And I like, in a way, it feels like the instructors trust us with the process."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"...there's this risk of, oh I don't really know what you think and what if we differ on something and how are we going to approach that subject?"* *"It takes kind of trusting the audience or your classmates or your teacher that they're going to be receptive to your art."* *"So instead of my kneejerk reaction being like, 'I feel angry and upset about all these social injustices' it's like now I feel more at peace. Not with what's going on, but at peace knowing that there are people in this program who care, and we want to do something about it."*

Table 8 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"It's different but I definitely do appreciate it more this way. I'm just so used to from undergraduate, it was all lecture-based and the PowerPoint and read the textbook and take the test. I mean, I was good at that, you know to get the grade. But I don't think I really processed and took things to heart."
	
	"And so especially after having a tough, difficult conversation in the classroom, doing expressive arts I have found really centers me in a ways. It helps me calm down."
	
	"Art… is like a language for them, that they can share, this is how I'm feeling, this is what I'm thinking, you know, this is how I'm processing everything."

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"If you're not aware of different cultures and your own biases and judgments towards them, then you're not going to be an effective counselor. You're selling yourself short, you're lying to yourself, and you're doing a disservice to your future clients."
	
	"You know I'm someone who's like 'Here's my intention' and we talked about not always necessarily your intention but the impact and being aware of that impact."
	
	"If I'm not able to be aware that certain cultures may not respond well to that, or if that's not comfortable for them, then I can't serve that client to my best ability."

Table 8 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"I think I felt overwhelmed at times when I thought I'm going to have to know every single culture and every single topic."
	
	"It can be almost overwhelming to the point where you don't even want to approach it. Because you think, 'It's too much for me to take on.' But at least taking the stride and taking the steps and understanding other cultures, learning from other experiences of other people, asking questions."
	
	"The idea that we don't want to be aware of different cultures and acknowledge them and give them respect I think is a really dangerous thing."

Participant 7

Pre-course. William talked about why he thought the course was relevant and explained that relationships were pivotal to diversity work and having multicultural competence could help improve the strength of a counseling relationship:

> Relationships are everything. It doesn't matter really what theory you run from or even skill you have, it really depends on the relationship, because if there's no trust, there's not openness, warmth there, that unconditional positive regard… then it doesn't matter how good of a counselor you are. If you don't have the relationship, it doesn't work. (Participant 7, pre-course interview)

He continued to discuss how he felt he should approach relationship-building with clients, "I can't assume automatically… that'd be ignorant of me." He explained, "I want them to assume I'm on the same page as them" because "if I cannot connect with that individual then it's not going to help the counseling sessions."

When prompted to share what he thoughts students should take away from the course he said, "a better understanding of all populations or at least how to seek out knowledge of those

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populations" because "by… learning it and integrating it with all of our techniques and our theories and stuff like that we have a better chance of having a positive effect on the individuals that are walking through the door." He clarified that this awareness began by, "basically taking off the blinders and looking around you at not only the people but also the society."

William explained, "I've actually never done any expressive arts in counseling… but within the classroom, with this program, there's one or two classes in which we've done an expressive arts thing." He noted, "I'm seeing it more from the doc students that do it in the classroom." He felt that his experience with expressive arts up to that point had been "positive." He continued, "I actually enjoy it… because I really enjoy drawing" and "I don't take enough time to do it." He said, "I've noticed not only does it help me think about whatever information I'm taking in… but I've also learned that physiology wise, I find myself, I'm regulating my breathing more. I'm feeling more relaxed." He felt this cathartic result was significant because:

> …there's some people, they'll leave that classroom and they'll be like, 'That's going to weigh on me all day long, and I'm going to think about it,' and I wouldn't doubt that there's some people that, they need to express that so they stay attuned to the information that's coming in. (Participant 7, pre-course interview)

In addition to expressive arts helping participants gain awareness of "the physiological side" and helping to "relax the class, too," William felt the activities would afford students an opportunity to "relate to others" and "generate cohesiveness amongst the class." He stated the experiential aspect could provide:

> …a chance to have better discussion. Because when people take those risks to present whatever they have, and some of those things can mean a lot to people, right? Other people get to reflect and they get to really do that linking. They'll say, 'I've dealt with that, too' or 'That does mean a lot to me, too. I didn't put it on paper, but that means a lot to me, too.' (Participant 7, pre-course interview)

He elucidated:

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With that cohesiveness, I think you'll have better instruction within the classroom, especially if you're teaching with open discussions, because you're going to have people be more honest, more open during those discussions, and you'll bring forth really the nitty gritty stuff that you need, especially with things like human diversity, right? That's what we need. (Participant 7, pre-course interview)

During the course. William shared his thoughts following the initial expressive arts activity and explained, "I feel like I'm becoming more self-aware of populations I really need to look out for and really advocate for." He noted the experienced "…changed my perspective" and seemed to comfort himself by stating, "People are able to change. They're able to change their logic or change their perspective."

After the second experiential activity, he felt creating art brought "insight to myself to things that I might not have seen from that perspective." He explained that in addition to the creative aspect, "open discussion provided more insight and created concreteness in how the subject matter relates to you." He expressed the value he saw result from the activity, "In general, I think anyone can do the techniques. But when you're actually integrating an understanding of the information… you come to a better understanding of that other individual and it becomes easier to have that empathy towards the other."

Following activity three, William recognized that he experienced a "visceral reaction" during class and was reminded, "…not to become too rigid in my ideology and how I see the world and the community." The in-class discussion prompted him to reflect during the activity, "I think when I was raised I thought things were okay, and they were really not… I think that's the hardest side is becoming aware, taking those blinders off." He explained:

> I was basically ignorant to it. I work with people all the time… but I've never actually engaged in the thought process of how do they live their life and how do they view the world? And why do they make the decisions that they do and how do they feel about those things? So it's an entire different realm of honesty. (Participant 7, journal excerpt)

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Upon completion of the fourth experiential activity, this participant seemed focus on the necessity of "continuous evaluation" to "gain a better perspective on the reason why people do things." He stated, "because… there's an evolution… within the world and our society," "Continuous education" is imperative and involves "continuously learning to adapt." He also spoke of the significance of "…being able to educate ourselves without you guys having to teach us always." He explained:

> There's no doubt that we have to do C.E.'s down the line, but we cannot just put all of our chips into that basket to teach us… we can't just believe that ACA's going to put out one presentation and we're all going to learn the same way. (Participant 7, journal excerpt)

Ultimately, this participant shared his overall feelings towards the experiential aspects of the course and stated, "I was pretty happy about it just because I enjoy it." He clarified, "…as long as we're doing these with intent, not just to do them. I think that's the biggest thing." He saw value in the expressive activities because, "It gives us another chance, another angle, to work with someone" and "I think it really does creative a positive atmosphere. I think it creates openness and acceptance within the classroom." He continued, "People can reflect off each other and they can get rid of some of those negative feelings, put them on paper" and explained, "We talk about the name it to tame it kind of thing. Sometimes there's something there, but we just can't name it. It's the same thing as if we're able to put it on paper, I think."

Post-course. William summed his experience of the course as "pretty eye-opening." He stated, "I'll be honest, actually what's interesting about this class in general… it's not even just the counseling side of things. It's applicable to so many other things." He felt, "if you left that class and not had an 'aha' moment then you probably just weren't paying attention." He also

expressed having a clearer understanding of multicultural competence, "It's not just general interacting with people from diverse backgrounds, but really seeing how they see the world."

Additionally, William discussed his thoughts on the class format, "The teaching methods were kind of a mixture… and it was pretty well blended… chained all together… kind of a continuous learning method." He expressed, "It was really great for group dialogue" and "really good to hear from different individuals presenting… hearing the differences inside our own student body… getting to hear so many perspectives." He explained that the class felt cyclical, "You're kind of in the continuous, you start to ground yourself, and then you're trying to take in more information. You're kind of very fluid, basically." When prompted to talk about what was most beneficial to his learning he stated:

> I would say the content itself, how diverse it was, and how we were kind of hitting a little bit of everything. But also I would say the overall theme of the class that I think was really put into our heads over time, which is we're only going to be able to teach so much in this class. And you being a new counselor down the line, it's important for you to learn the method in which saying, 'Okay, maybe I don't know as much as I should about so and so or this population' and finding out basically the means in order to do that. (Participant 7, post-course interview)

This participant in particular showed great concern for his role as an advocate and an ally. In regard to some of what he learned and became aware of during the course he expressed, "Honestly it really upset me… you kind of lose hope. And it's just upsetting." He seemed to channel this energy, "So I'd think about what I could do as an individual to help advocate and bring forth change." He explained, "I think that's the biggest one, honestly, the biggest impact." He stated, "I need to do something down the line" because "It's important that we advocate to others" and "I'm the one taking these courses, but the average person is sitting out here, they may not experience that. They may not know."

William also gained knowledge and awareness of some of the real-life consequences of intersectionality. He more accurately defined the concept, "It's a web… it's not linear" and recognized it is "…not just understanding that there's different kinds of people out in the world, but understanding the inter-workings of how everyone relates to each other as a society, how they interact with each other." He said, "And if I don't bring that… I'll never be able to generate a proper relationship with that individual." He continued, "…all too often we just want to label people and label all the things we don't like about them" but "…people don't have to fit a mold anymore. They can just be themselves. And I think these populations… are ostracized over time." Therefore, he explained, "we have to have the law basically kind of catch up to civilization… if we are going to protect these people." He elaborated, "It's kind of short and sweet, but I think that's what it is… you're supposed to be able to apply it within the real world down the line." He stated, "I think that's what the goal was of the class… I think the objective, and I think it was met."

Concerning the experiential activities, William claimed, "I like it a lot, especially after taking this course… because I feel like I've been able to integrate more honestly on a deeper level rather than just on a surface, logical level" and "I felt like it was a really good component to help with the material." He said, "I felt like I gained quite a bit from my participation… definitely my journals." He recognized, "It helped ground me" and acknowledged the activities were "…regulating that right side a little bit." Furthermore, he explained, "I really found that I don't take enough time to do creative activities anymore" and "I've actually been doing it a lot more since this class… it was really great to get that kind of inspiration again."

He described the non-directive nature of the expressive arts activities, "It was very open to whatever we want to do and there was just so many options" with regard to resources. He felt,

"The more options, the more chance that someone's going to buy into it" because "Someone will go with what they're comfortable with and then explore from that line." He also noted, "I think that's the curve ball to expressive arts is people that haven't engaged in something like this before I think they have a harder time with it." However, with this class he felt, "I think we all picked up on it eventually." In particular he felt the activities "…created more active engagement for the classroom and more discussion" He explained because "it's not anyone really leading; it's almost like passing a ball around. Everyone just kind of got a turn" and "I think that's the reason why to me I thought the class was very successful is because of how much engagement we had." He expressed, "As a group we had really good rapport… I think that's the reason why we were able to talk through a lot of those things." He continued, "It was interesting how we were all in this chaos at one moment and had all this energy, and we were able to focus all that energy into one thing." He summarized the course experience, "I think we learned a little bit more about ourselves and about others. And we were able to use our art work basically to express that."

Organized by thematic label, Table 9 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 7.

Table 9

Data Summary Table: Participant 7

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"And this happens a lot with college education anyways. We're used to 'Hey, I need you to do A, B, and C.' And you're like, 'Okay, ABC' rather than thinking about it."
	
	"I'm trying to… not worry about doing something, does something feel perfect. No, just do it."
	
	"I know there was a few of them that were kind of struggling because they're like, "I don't do this. I don't know what I'm doing. I just kind of put something on there."

2. Comfort in discomfort	*"I found myself referring back a lot to drawing because that's what I was comfortable with."* *"I think we saw at the very beginning of the class, I think everyone was kind of just treading on eggshells. And I think after a while people got more comfortable."* *"With the way these are being presented, it's an open canvas and 'These are your resources you do with what you want.' Then I'm able to do what I know and what I like, and then integrate whatever else I want to."*

Table 9 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
3. Connection	*"Removing that human aspect so much, like you're trying to just read a book and learn about people, really doesn't do a lot. It's when you actually experience life with them. That's when you learn the most."* *"...it's not like a linear situation which we're just learning from an instructor and stuff... because after someone says something, it's like, 'well I didn't think about that. But what about this?' So I think that was a really key point of that open discussion, open forum to kind of find out that human experience of what everyone's having."* *"...we all want the same thing. We all want to feel loved."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"I think everyone had a few moments where it got real deep and stuff and muddied. And it's a good thing. Sometimes we have a view of the world, of what we think it is, and I know I did. And mine kind of got shook up a bit. And now I'm kind of just putting the pieces back."* *"...this is such a hard subject... whether or not is it safe to say these things... and the instructors did such a good job of ensuring that this was a safe environment, free to ask those questions. Because the last thing you want to do is get out there practicing and start asking those questions then."* *"...a little bit of anxiousness... and you feel like you should already have it all figured out and you should already have that road map to help guide them through and walk with them. I feel like there's always this expectation..."*

Table 9 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"We're processing the information, and we're also processing how we feel about the information. I felt like because of that grounding that I was able to kind of force that negative energy, those feelings out, and focus on something as I kind of concentrate on something that I can control. I was able to process that information better."
	
	"It was kind of really good to just focus that energy on something else. I really enjoyed that… it was an outlet."
	
	"We all just like to regurgitate stuff on lecture and on screen, but we have to bring forth what's emotionally attached to the logic that we have, and I think that's the great part about the expressive arts."

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"There's no doubt that I think I did have a little bit of blinders on… but it's not something I normally saw. So I thought everything's hunky dory and everything, but it really isn't."
	
	"The human diversity side of things for this class really kind of let me see how to approach it from a counseling point of view and also bring a little more of enlightenment on how to really kind of see through those people's lenses."
	
	"It's one thing to interact with somebody and be respectful or keep your judgment to a minimum. It's another thing to try to understand their experience in the world."

Table 9 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"I think it's really learning about the life and the background of individuals and certain populations, but also with that little asterisk at the side saying just because this individual fits in these categories doesn't mean this is who they are."
	
	"It's not just who comes in through the door, but what we can do to advocate for the populations within our community."
	
	"Because if I'm going to be a competence counselor, let's say ten years from now, I'm not going to have you guys always around to help me along the way."

Participant 8

    Pre-course. Regarding preference for teaching methods, Maggie clearly stated, "I can tell you what I don't learn from, is just lecture." She clarified, "I feel if I'm not engaged in the conversation in some way, like interactive, whether that's writing about the experience or talking about it, just being engaged I guess, will help things." She felt that consciously interacting with the class material "definitely helps me retain…"

    When prompted to share her thoughts surrounding multicultural competence she said, "I don't know if you're ever fully competent" because "…things change in society, especially with all the changing policies" but it involves "…striving to become more aware of other people's differences and what makes everyone who they are." She explained, "It's vital to be aware of who's sitting in front of you." Additionally, she expressed, "I don't think you can step into a counseling session without having some sort of cultural competence, because if you don't, I think it's detrimental not only to the person you're counseling but to your whole practice." In

contrast she explained, "Being aware is like you're aware that there's different cultures from you and you're aware that there's a need to become competence, but I don't think that necessarily means you are competent" and questioned, "I think that's maybe the initial stage?" She continued, "I don't think you'll become competent in one course" but "I think the awareness might be there."

After clarifying that she participated in expressive art activities in one graduate class previous to this course, she stated of her past experience, "I was really appreciative of it." She recognized, "At first, I didn't think it was anything that needed to be processed. I did it, and I didn't really think anything of it." In the end, "It actually was a really emotional experience for me, so I think that really opened my eyes to how powerful it can be and how good of a tool it can be." She elaborated, "I think you learn a lot about yourself, even if you don't mean to." In regard to utilizing such techniques with future clients she explained, "Expressive arts is so personal... I think maybe it would help understand on a more individual, one-on-one level, who a person is."

She also referred to the fact that expressive activities afford students an opportunity to "externalize it," whatever they might be feeling or experiencing. She stated, "I think that's really cathartic and therapeutic but… it's also a very personal experience and you're sitting beside people that are also doing it" so "it can be a little invasive." At the same time she acknowledged, "I do think that could also be a benefit, too, getting your vulnerability out there." She continued, "I think it does bring you closer in the end, especially in this type of safe environment." Maggie noted, "…how to utilize it in a way that is beneficial, that's just as important as the activity itself, I think." Based on her previous experience, ultimately she believed, "I think it's just a great way to experience their experiences and to grow as a class together."

During the course. Maggie expressed an awareness of feeling "intolerant of intolerance"

during class and reflected on this concept while working on the initial activity. She recognized,

"Being able to have conversations with others who do have different views and not getting to a

heated place is difficult for me" and acknowledged, "If someone was closed minded… that

would be really difficult for me to sit across from that person."

Upon completion of the second activity Maggie enjoyed the non-directive nature of it

and stated, "I liked that there were no rules in the activity. I feel like my life is very structured

right now, and I really appreciated being able to do anything I wanted." She continued, "I really

enjoyed just doing whatever came to mind and not thinking about it. It was very cathartic for

me" and "I felt really free at the time." She explained that the activity was particularly helpful

because "I have been feeling a bit stifled by homework and tasks at my job so I felt really

uninhibited at the time." She elaborated, "…wasn't the prettiest piece of art, but it really showed

my need for spontaneity."

Following the third expressive arts activity, this participant reported, "I felt very

emotional" and she felt the experience was "…incredibly insightful." She described feeling

"especially shameful for my part in perpetuation of discrimination" in reference to avoiding

having difficult conversations with others. However, she explained, "I processed that with

another student who felt the same way as me, so I think we connected in that way." She

continued, "I think as a group we would be angry about certain stuff but then feeling guilty.

While she felt that "It was a lot" she also seemed comforted by the common experience, "We all

shared a lot of the same emotions, I think."

By the completion of the fourth experiential activity, Maggie resolved, "I think I will

definitely engage in uncomfortable conversations because I realize it is my obligation to do so"

as someone in a position of privilege. Again she expressed, "I felt a mix of emotions." In particular she explained, "I felt sad for those that don't have access to counseling services" and "I really felt disappointed over the last few days in our system."

As she reflected on the final expressive arts activity, Maggie recalled, "I didn't love it initially, but once you get where you can just create something and not worry about it, I think most people find it cathartic." She also clarified that participation in the activities was "definitely a form of play." Additionally, she expressed, "I would have loved to have diversity as a full semester course" as opposed to it being confined to a 5-week summer semester.

Post-course. During the second interview Maggie again expressed, "My main concern was it wasn't longer… I really want to delve deeper into certain topics that, just for time purposes, you can't talk about as in depth." Otherwise, she explained, "I think the integration of all different teaching methods… diversity among the instructors… I feel like it was a well-rounded mix." Regarding perspective taking and vicarious learning she also stated, "I think hearing from other people, that was really valuable to me as well." She continued, "It was a more diverse class than I'm typically in" so "learning from my classmates… people that are living these experiences was really beneficial."

After initially feeling "intolerant of people who were intolerant of others," she felt "more open-minded in the opposite direction." She recognized, "You're doing exactly what they're doing. It's not helping the situation." She elaborated, "You can't be unbiased. That's not something you can really achieve, but you can have that awareness when it comes up." She also acknowledged that she did not know as much as she thought she did when she entered the course, "I thought I was pretty woke, I guess." However, she said, "I felt really informed afterwards." In particular she enjoyed, "Looking at actual policy and stuff like that… how those

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stereotypes and biases can really effect that" and valued connecting the dots between the experience of discrimination with real-world consequences. Furthermore, she recognized that attaining multicultural competence "isn't linear" but "it's something you should just constantly strive for."

Maggie recognized she experienced an emotional evolution throughout the duration of the course, "I think I started the course being really angry learning about some of this stuff." She explained, "That was always a safe spot for our family. We're lashers. We lash out, which is why conversations can be really difficult… Like I can be angry about it but it's because I just feel so strongly about this stuff…" Simultaneously she acknowledge, "No one's going to hear that and no one's going to want to be around me if I'm talking like that." She continued feeling frustrated with:

> …my individual people, not understanding why this stuff is important or understanding my point of view, and I would get really angry. I was angry before and then starting out it just made me angrier because I was like, 'Yeah, I'm being invalidated.' This is stuff that is important. As the course went on, even though it was only five weeks, I'm in such a better place, and the anger has kind of dissipated. It's more about doing your part and if you think about it on such a grand scale it gets really overwhelming. I'm really trying to focus more on the individual experiences I have with others. I had a decent conversation with my dad, and it really felt like he might have heard me for a second, and I heard him. (Participant 8, post-course interview)

Her anger seemed to dissipate and morph into increased understanding and empathy, "As I have reflected on it, it's more about hearing them, too, and being okay with who they are… that you understand why they may think that, but not being okay with it at the same time." She remembered, "They're not in this program. They grew up a lot more confined than I did." She also noted, "I was in therapy throughout this whole summer so that probably helped" and said, "I would really recommend someone taking this course to be in therapy while you're taking it."

When prompted to discuss her experience of the expressive arts techniques she explained, "You're all doing the same thing, some are great pieces of art and some are not. So seeing other people that maybe look more like yours, I think that helped me be okay with what I was doing." While she struggled with making peer comparisons and feeling self-conscious about her art she elaborated on the benefit of the experiential activities, "Just in general, it puts people in a more vulnerable spot to really talk about these hard, difficult things" and "I think it carries over to discussion." This participant also liked that the activities provided an opportunity to "…integrate what we're talking about in a way that… you're not writing it, you're not verbalizing it…" "You don't always initially know what it is, and you don't have to know. I think it just helps." Maggie continued:

> I think once I let go I can really gain a lot from it. If I don't, if I still have that in my head when I start it, I'll be like, 'I can't make things look pretty. It's not going to be what my neighbor is doing.' Once I let that go, I think I can really process it in a real way. Without that, it's not as beneficial for me. (Participant 8, post-course interview)

She also discussed the various ways she felt the expressive arts activities positively influenced the class, "It's part of the integration process in a way that's more emotion based than a lot of the other things we do." She also explained the safety they afforded, "We're not worried about offending anyone and it's just literally you on the paper or whatever we're using." Furthermore she recognized, "…some things can't always be verbalized." She expressed, "I think it personalizes it for each individual…especially doing the journals afterwards." She specified, "I would always do it a couple of days afterwards" because she felt it helped her better integrate the content with her emotions. Additionally, she admitted, "Even when I was like, 'I don't think this means anything' it always did in some small way." She elaborated:

> Putting it initially on paper, like processing it, assessing it yourself, and then being able to share your experience… I know for me, a lot of the expressive arts I do is

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very after the fact. I'm like, 'Oh wow, yeah. Okay that makes sense. Of course I drew that.' Or, 'Yeah, of course that was the colors I was feeling at the time.' Just being able to have your own experience, process it, and then it helps you share your experience with others. I know that helped me. (Participant 8, post-course interview)

She explained it helped "Understanding I'm not a detail-oriented person when it comes to that. I'm not going to make something like a masterpiece" but also expressed, "Not trying to is a big thing." She acknowledged, "A lot of mine look a little abstract." In reference to valuing process over product she said, "Once I got that idea, it was a much more beneficial experience for me." In the end she stated, "It was a good class. I learned a lot."

Organized by thematic label, Table 10 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 8.

Table 10

Data Summary Table: Participant 8

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"…have some anxiety because… I'm not artistic… this is going to be really upsetting because I feel like it's not something I'm strong at… also the vulnerability, sitting side by side with someone… it is a vulnerable spot to be in… and that can be kind of invasive."
	
	 "If I'm being honest, [redacted] were both very artistic. So my stuff doesn't always look like theirs. But being okay with that and knowing that, that's me and what I'm creating is me, even though it's poorly put down. That's staying authentic to that and not so much trying to make it good and pretty."
	
	 "I don't really know what I'm doing while I'm doing it. I think that's the point. Then processing… I'm like, 'Oh yeah, that's why that's on there, because of this.' Gaining the insight after the fact…"

Table 10 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
2. Comfort in discomfort	*"It's part of the experience… I think letting go and understanding that's not what it's about… I think once I let that go, I really gained a lot from it."* *"I think in a class that big you don't, it's sometimes a natural feeling of not wanting to, not necessarily look dumb, but look like you're not as educated… asking tough questions that may be uncomfortable, but I think being able to ask those more and feeling comfortable. It was a safe environment. It was just… my own feelings about not wanting to look culturally unaware… or offensive."* *"I'm sure my first client is going to be the most intolerant person ever."*
3. Connection	*"I think in general it just makes everyone closer… just hearing people's own process and having people be so vulnerable and open, including myself."* *"I really had some good conversations with people in class… it's really not great to just be like, 'Well, I just can't talk about that with them.' That's doing yourself a disservice and them a disservice."* *"I'm trying really hard to not avoid, such as with family members or friends that have different views and values, not avoid those conversations but not letting them go to a place that we can't come back from either, where neither one of us can hear it."*

Table 10 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"I think it's making me more angry... because the people I'm with in this class is such a small population of who I actually interact with on a daily basis. So I think it's making me angrier knowing more about it and know how big of a deal it actually is and what's actually going on. And then no one else knows because no one else is taking this class."* *"I felt safe. It was a good experience for me, was great, and I felt a lot closer to people in the class because they were so accepting of me."* *"Definitely safety, knowing you're not going to be judged, and you're not going to be looked at differently through the art you're creating... especially for those who are artistically challenged like me."*

5. Experiential process
  a. Catharsis
    i. Child-like play
  b. Integration
    i. Neuroscience
	"I had no idea why I was doing what I was doing, but then after processing it later with the journal I was like, 'Oh, maybe it was chaotic and messy because my life feels a little chaotic and messy right now.' It's good to just let that out and put that somewhere."
	
	"I think you can gain a lot from it... it's a more cathartic experience than anything... you get what you need."
	
	"Doing the activities, I maybe wouldn't initially know what I was doing. Then by the end I would have a clear picture of really, like, why that was the way."

Table 10 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"I grew up in a not very open minded home… I have those initial kneejerk reactions to people who are different from me. I hate them as I become more aware about them, so that's difficult going in, really trying to morph what has been ingrained in you for so long with your family and knowing it's not right."
	
	"Me personally, like a lot of Caucasian or White people, it's hard to even first pinpoint a culture that I feel. I've got to really think about it; whereas, someone who is very immersed in their culture and it's talked about a lot… I think you know who you are a little bit more, in a sense."
	
	"It doesn't always feel fair or just, particularly if you know somebody is being harmed by certain things. But if we're not willing to let go and be tolerant of everybody, then how can we ask that of others?"

Table 10 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

7. Multiculturalism
 	
    a. Knowledge and awareness
    b. Competence
	""There's been so many different, I don't like to call them labels, but labels out there that you have to become competent in that you may not have had to 20 years ago. A person who was culturally competent at that time, may not be at this time."
	
	"I want others to learn from what I learned, but it is so much. Putting it in a way that's first of all validating what they're saying, but also in a way that makes people listen. If a person doesn't want to listen, they don't want to listen, but just taking it and planting seeds, I guess... Not getting angry, because I feel angry."
	
	"I don't think that I'll necessarily ever feel fully competence because society changes all the time and you can never be too educated on things. I think it was a good starting point... really helped me see the areas in which I'm not as competent."

Participant 9

    Pre-course. Regarding her preferred teaching methods Brittany expressed, "I think that I need a combination of different things. I'm definitely not just an audio learner, so I need visual types of stuff as well." She also acknowledged, "I don't know that any of my learning has really intentionally been experiential."

    Brittany spoke of multicultural issues primarily "in terms of religion and culture." She also referred frequently to the importance of considering context, "I think it would be easy for a therapist who isn't really multiculturally competent to look at somebody's issues but only in the context of their own culture... and that I think can be really detrimental to a client." She suggested by the end of the course students "should definitely walk away with… the importance

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of cultural competence and kind of the relevance of that for the field of counseling" and "I hope a passion to continue to work on their multicultural competence."

Brittany also talked about prioritizing humility and curiosity, "I wouldn't assume, 'Oh yeah, I know all about your culture' kind of thing. It's still their individual experience… and important for them to share their actual experience." Furthermore, she stated, "I think you can be aware and not competent." She explained, "Awareness… is more like surface level… not necessarily caring enough to go deeper into it" while "Competence requires going more in depth… a conscious effort… to understand… to empathize with people and meet them where they are and understand their context, as opposed to just 'Yeah, I know that exists. I'm aware.'"

As this participant discussed the expressive arts portion of the course she expressed she was "actually really nervous about it." She stated, "I hadn't really been exposed to it before." She elaborated:

> …some people I would assume have been really nervous about the content of the class" but "I haven't been super nervous about that. So this happened to be the thing that I was nervous about, but I would expect that other students were super excited about it. (Participant 9, pre-course interview)

She also admitted, "I am putting a lot of pressure on myself" because "I haven't done any of this kind of stuff before so it is very new." She explained when she first learned of the experiential aspect of the course she "felt like, 'Oh shoot, these expressive arts things are going to be the hard part of the class for me, the part that I maybe don't like as much, or the part that's just harder for me.'" She also expressed concern "that someone just looking at my end product would assume, 'Oh, I didn't really put in a lot of effort; I didn't really care about this.'" She acknowledged her "over concern about the end product" but did not know how to let go of this concern.

She elucidated, "It's super nerve wracking for me because then I would be, I feel like it would be whatever I came up with as the idea would be judged, as like, an assignment" which

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made the notion of the expressive arts activities "very anxiety producing" for this participant. Even amidst her anxiety she also recognized potential resulting from the activities, "I'm very cognitive… but this allows me to think about it in a different way." She continued, "…different than kind of learning content material all the way to the end of the lecture, every single day, or the end of the class time, every single day. And feeling, 'Oh my gosh, I need to retain all this.'" She also stated, "I think that allowing students to have that time in the classroom, still in the context of learning, to process that information I think will be super beneficial."

During the course. Brittany described her experience of the initial activity, "I know I am not very artistic, so I was a bit nervous during it." She admitted, "I thought a lot as I was choosing pictures, colors, and words to include." Overall, she explained, "I was pretty relaxed, physically, and it was peaceful to sit with others to work on it."

After the second experiential activity this participant stated, "One of the things I noticed was how different each person's product was." She recognized, "I was more excited about this activity than the last and less nervous" but "I was still concerned about my product positively reflecting my thoughts." She also shared, "I did continue to think about and reflect on this activity through the weekend." During this time she explained, "I was reflecting on how concerned I was about my activity product… then I realized that the activity is not about the end product but the process and reflection of doing it."

During the third expressive arts activity Brittany noticed, "I was excited to work with someone I hadn't previously talked to much, and it felt really nice that she called me over to work with her." She said, "It was good learning about someone new" and "I was in a good mood the rest of the day because of the positive experience during this activity." She described her process, "I kept thinking about other "sides" of myself. I tried to represent my professional self

and my 'home' self and that I'm trying to bring these worlds into better congruence." She then tried to connect her experiential to clinical practice and shared that she had been"…thinking about how this might apply to clients and how they are not unidimensional either, that they may be experiencing conflicting selves." She felt a sense of peace when she recognized, "It's nice that even the harder or maybe more negative side could be represented artistically" because this "made it seem 'less bad,' if that makes sense."

The fourth activity encouraged this participant to acknowledge, "Many people are very good at hiding." Again, she made connections between her reflections and clinical practice, "As therapists we ask people to take off their mask and show us the inside." She expressed feeling "introspective" because previously she "focused on communities we had learned about for these activities" but "this was the first time that I really focused on myself and looking inward." While she felt introspective she also added, "At the same time, other than the anxiety about my artistic skills, this was a comfortable activity for me." She continued reflecting after class and explained, "I thought a lot after class about assumptions we make about others based on the mask they wear."

Brittany had a lot to share about the culminating expressive activity and the growth she experienced over the course of the class. She acknowledged, "How much I have grown in regard to these activities and the value of processing the course content in a different (i.e. not left brain) manner." She stated, "I enjoyed this activity the most of all of them" and "I liked seeing everyone's paintings on the board and the commonalities and differences between them. There were definitely some themes among them." She also reported, "I appreciated the opportunity to reflect on the whole experience of the class and felt very positive overall about it." She said, "I left the classroom feeling good about everything we've covered and learned during the course

and excited to continue my journey." She also admitted that prior to this course she "wasn't inclusive of other types of minority groups" other than religion and culture. She stated, "I've kind of opened my mind a bit more to it being about any kind of minority status. And particular groups that maybe don't fit in our stereotypical norm." She continued, "We don't live in a vacuum… in a society that is context free, so the issues that each client is dealing with need to be thought of and kind of dealt with in the context of their daily lives." Additionally, she expressed, "I feel like I'm maybe improving my art skills." She explained, "Initially, I did feel a little bit like, 'Am I doing this right?'" because of the "broad non-descriptive instructions that were given" but ultimately, she found the experiential activities "lighten the mood and help people… continue to process whatever they're feeling at the time, whether it's about content, processing their emotions, or self-care if they're feeling overwhelmed." She continued, "It kind of is an opportunity for students… it allows for more processing of the material, and I think in this kind of class that processing is particularly important."

Post-course. Brittany spoke about her overall experience, "I really enjoyed it, to be honest, and was really, I think it opened my eyes to a lot of things that I hadn't thought about in terms of multiculturalism." She clarified:

> When I thought about multiculturalism, I thought about religion and race and those kinds of things but hadn't thought about all of the other types of populations that we talked about… So I think that it really opened my eyes to that, and I think that's super helpful in terms of training to be a counselor, because I hadn't really thought about those people and thought about the different realities of their lives and how important it is to consider those when you're in a therapeutic environment with them. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

She also confessed:

> So I think in my mind, I was kind of thinking, 'I got this. I know about this stuff.' And I can't remember exactly what it was that somebody said, but I had one of those automatic assumptions in my head. And then somebody said something and I was, caught myself. And I was like, 'Oh, you are not immune to all of this. You

do not know all about these kinds of things. You are still susceptible to judging what other people say.' (Participant 9, post-course interview)

Additionally, she felt that she gained awareness and offered herself some compassion regarding biases and stereotyping:

…as much as I don't actually believe that, that is just a thought that sometimes automatically comes into my head. I need to do some work to combat that. So I think that kind of sharing of other people in the classroom was helpful to not punish yourself and not feel really badly about having those automatic thoughts and knowing… you weren't the only one sitting there, like, 'Oh god, am I a terrible person?' (Participant 9, post-course interview)

She continued to elaborate:

You're going to have clients who don't think the same way that you do and aren't totally open and accepting, and their feelings and their thoughts about things are just as valid as mine are. And I think that was a moment that I was really, 'Yeah, this is about the individuals that I will work with and meeting them where they are at. Not about an agenda to get people to think the same way I think. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

Brittany acknowledge, "That was really a moment of realization that… I have a lot of learning to do in this particular field and that there are going to be some times where it is challenging for me."

I think in my mind I thought, 'Well, I'm so open and accepting that this is going to be easy.' And then I was like, 'Oh yeah, I'm open and accepting if people are buying into my ideal of being open and accepting.' But open and accepting also means being open and accepting to the people who are not open and accepting. And that was me realizing, that was me judging somebody else for not being open and accepting. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

She was able to recognize and admit, "I'm telling people or thinking you shouldn't judge people, and then I automatically judged this different perspective, and that was really eye opening."

Brittany also found that the multiple viewpoints shared between the instructors, students, and guest speakers were "really helpful." Specifically concerning the guest speakers she stated, "They've got way more knowledge and experience to talk from" and "…it makes a lot more of

an impact." She continued, "We know for sure that personal experience with somebody in a particular group makes you so much more open, kind of open-minded to that group" so that was "…a really rich part of the classroom experience."

She expressed that multicultural competence feels like a "big responsibility… so that makes it a little anxiety provoking" and "…challenging, but honestly I think it'll be really rewarding, too." Overall, she felt "excited to learn." She also seemed to gain confidence and said, "Maybe I am cut out for this." She acknowledged, "I want those skills. I want to be able to be introspective and to think about my impact before I say something and to be able to genuinely help people." Therefore, "It was just a reassuring kind of experience…. That I can do this and I want to do this." With regard to multicultural competence she explained, "I think it's a lot more nuanced than I maybe thought that it was before." She elucidated:

> I think that I realize a bit more now that it's just as much about being present with that one client and being competent to them as an individual, not just, 'Oh, I have knowledge about this whole group that they belong to, so, thus, I must be multiculturally competent.' But because of all the intersectionality and all the different identities and unique experiences that people, even if they are part of a particular group, will have had, that being competent is about getting them, as an individual and as a human and yes, knowing some of the terminology that they might use and what it means and those sorts of things will help me not be ignorant. But that isn't sufficient. Knowing the language and that sort of things isn't sufficient because people are going to have individual experiences. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

Brittany realized "awareness is not enough. It's the start, but it's the very beginning." She also admitted, "I think maybe the gap between awareness and competence has almost grown for me… it's not even close to being equivalent." She stated she plans to "Continue to evolve. Continue to learn about it. Continue to listen to people's experiences." She added, "I think the competence, too, will continually evolve as well, because society will change." She recognized,

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"It's a life-long learning kind of thing and a life-long effort to stay and be competent," particularly "…if you're going to be ethical."

She explained striving for competence is difficult because "You can't take a test that says, 'Stamp of approval. You're multiculturally competent.'" She said, "So I think that puts us at risk for feeling like there's always something more we should be doing." She acknowledged, "Because I'm so future-oriented and end-goal oriented, there isn't an end goal of multicultural competence. And so trying not to get discouraged" will be a priority for her, in addition to "just kind of being okay in the moment, doing what you can… continuing to be open to learning more in the changing times." She persisted, "I see competence now as sort of that process and not an end goal." "I think it's more of the being okay with the constant-ness of it… living in that space, I think is the challenge."

Brittany also talked about intent versus impact and stated, "that just totally drives it home." She commented, "I think it's important… for students to be able to reflect and say, 'What was my impact of whatever I said or whatever I did?' Regardless of what your intent was." She clarified the counselor's role, "I think that assessing your impact and acting then, in accordance to your impact, not your intent. Not just saying, 'Well, I didn't intent it that way.'" "And not even just as a reactive thing, but as a proactive sort of thing as well." She elaborated:

> Being able to kind of catch yourself and think, 'What might the impact be?' And then if you have an unintended impact, 'Okay, how do I mitigate this now? How do I help this person now that I've just had this unintended negative impact?' I think that sort of skill is something that's really important for students to develop. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

She also talked about the assurance she felt as a result of her newfound multicultural knowledge and awareness:

> I think I also gained some confidence about, 'Yeah, I can do this.' And I think that comes from learning about and seeing some of those tools of the experience

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of catching myself and being like, 'Shit, I was just judging someone and think that people shouldn't be judged.' Those kind of experiences made me kind of able to think, 'Okay, but I can realize that, and then I know how to do something about it.' I know how to catch myself. I know that I am susceptible to that. I know that I have to work on not doing that kind of stuff. Participant 9, post-course interview)

Additionally, Brittany recognized that much of the awareness she gained stemmed from the "collaborative learning experience." She admitted, "I very consciously was like, 'Okay, don't raise your hand every single time, even if you have something to say. Listen to what other people have to say, too.'" She explained, "I really benefited from hearing that person's story or their perspective."

She felt this collaborative learning also spilled over into the expressive arts portion of the course, "It was a very experiential kind of class... so much reflection and discussion and sharing of personal experience" that "...really made it real, really made it an experience as opposed to just a class." She claimed, "I think it worked really well with this kind of content" and "made it more an experiential kind of learning than just a knowledge-based learning... I think that I learned more about people's feelings of their thoughts, and those are important things. Those are what people come to us for." She said of the experiential facets, "...this just impacts you and that stays with you so much more than reading about something in a textbook and just memorizing a fact." She felt it "...definitely impacted retention... and understanding of the information." She also argued, "It would've been very different if we did the exact same project but took it home with us to do." "I think that being in the same room together make it a together kind of experience."

In addition to the connections and collaboration that occurred via the experiential learning, she said she recognized an "energy change" and things "went from feeling sort of

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chaotic or really just negative, sometimes heavy, to a calmness." She continued to discuss the value of the activities:

> It helps you to process through it… because I think that a lot of the kind of chaotic-ness was, 'Oh my god. All this information. How do I feel about it? And I feel icky that this happens to people. What is my role in trying to make it better? And how do I contribute to this maybe?' And I think that all of those different kind of things, this gave you the opportunity to process it and then get it out. (Participant 9, post-course interview)

She also suggested that the activities "…need to be done purposefully and thoughtfully to have it be a meaningful experience" so that students would not "…just kind of take it for doodle time and not really reflect about the content or about how they were feeling." Additionally, she explained that safety is key, "If you think you're going to be judged or somebody's going to say you're dumb… then people won't do it." She continued, "But there was genuinely none of that. And that's what helped it become much more comfortable for someone like me." She felt "grateful that our class bought in as much as they did and were willing to go there."

Brittany felt like this buy-in from students was made possible because "It wasn't like you just came in on the days that you 'needed something' from us." Furthermore, "it wasn't just a side thing we were doing because you have a dissertation to do. It was part of the learning of the class." She elaborated, "Your engagement with the class I think made a big difference… the class mattered to you" and suggested, "I think that helped people to buy into, 'This has been planned because it's going to help with our learning.'" She stated, "It wasn't just… we're going to end up having some time at the end of class so we'll do some crafts. It was purposeful." She felt a significant part of utilizing experiential techniques was "Knowing how it relates to your learning, or at least knowing that it does relate to your learning."

Brittany admitted, "I was pretty nervous to start out with. And I actually noticed on the last one, I was excited to do it." She explained, "I think that part of that was me letting go of it being about the final product and really just experiencing the process." She decided, "I need to do that more… in life… just be present more and experience the process as opposed to always thinking about the end product." She continued, because "I have that futuristic kind of focused thinking" the experiential aspect "helps me realize that I could benefit from a better balance of just being in the moment." Furthermore, she stated, "I also learned I maybe still wouldn't label myself as a creative person, but I have a little aspect of that in me." She elaborated, "I'm maybe not as totally hopeless in that as I thought I was. And I think that helps to kind of open me up to being more of a holistic kind of person." In the future she wants to work on "…allowing myself to recognize… even if I'm not like quote-unquote 'good at it,' it doesn't mean that it's not still part of me. I can still do those things" because she "Recognized that I am more of a whole person than I was giving myself credit for."

Organized by thematic label, Table 11 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 9.

Table 11

Data Summary Table: Participant 9

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"I typically describe myself as having zero creative abilities whatsoever. I can't paint… draw… sing… write poetry… play any instruments. So to me, anything with the word 'creative' I'm like, 'Shoot. That is not me.'"
	
	 "So I feel like if my end art product isn't good, does that really represent that I feel positively about the things we're talking about? Or that they're important to me? And if the end product isn't good, are people going to feel like, 'Oh, well she doesn't really care about these kinds of things.'"
	
	 "[Redacted] sits right next to me, she is super artistic and very comfortable and just, like, no problem, picks up something and starts drawing and starts. And I'm just like, 'Oh gosh, I am so not good' especially compared to someone who has that kind of talent."

2. Comfort in discomfort	*"The non-descriptive instructions allow for more interpretation… allows students to do whatever they need at that moment."* *"I definitely had some anxiety around, 'Am I doing this right? Am I doing the right things here?' Then after the second project I started to feel like if there was something specific that [redacted] wanted from this, they would give us more descriptive instructions, and I would know by now that I'm doing it wrong."* *"Not every activity has the same sort of purpose… It's whatever you're feeling at the time. So that… was nerve wracking at the beginning, but the more I've thought about the purpose of it… of not having specific instructions, the more I've reflected, 'Okay, this has multiple different opportunities to do what feels right at the time.'"*

Table 11 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
3. Connection	*"It seems so minuscule, but we share materials, scissors. Not everybody has scissors so you get to borrow scissors and share materials and things like that. So that allows for some more of that communication, even though it seems so meaningless. It gave me an opportunity that I didn't necessarily have before."* *"We're all working on the same sort of thing so it feels very much more like a collective activity, even though you are doing individual things."* *"I really liked the discussion-based kinds of things and people sharing their thoughts and sharing their stereotypes and things like that. I think that was probably hard for people to admit that those are the things that immediately come to your mind. But I think that is so eye opening in the classroom because you realize that you're not the only one."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"I think I've got a lot of work to do in learning about all of those different kinds of cultures. And so I think that's kind of the difficult or overwhelming thing for me. I think that's the thing that I worry about the most."* *"...very hard for me to let go of. And so I think that's a lot of where the nervousness came from is that, 'I'm not good at this. How is this going to impact how people see me?"* *"It felt like it just calmed everyone and grounded us. Here's our safe space again. Here's something like, kind of playful, that you have control over. You kind of get to choose where you go with it because they were really non-directed activities."*

Table 11 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

5. Experiential process
   a. Catharsis
      i. Child-like play
   b. Integration
      i. Neuroscience
	"I enjoy the time that we have to do it and the opportunity to process in a different way. Even if I don't think that my end product are great, I don't have to look at them again. I still appreciate that opportunity to process it in a different way. I think that's what is meaningful for students."
	
	"I feel in the room everybody get a little bit more relaxed when we start to do it. And a little bit more lighthearted. And I think that works really well in this particular class because we're talking about some really deep stuff. I think that it helps to kind of allow students to process in a little bit of a different way."
	
	"So it's pushing me outside of my left brain, which I think is good, but it's a little nerve wracking."

6. Identity
   a. Personal
   b. Professional
	"I think I kind of fell into the problem I would say now of not really even thinking for myself. I'm not, I don't have a religious affiliation, I'm White, I grew up in [redacted]. I kind of was like, 'I don't really have a culture.'"
	
	"If you aren't aware of culture, if you aren't familiar with cultures other than your own as a therapist, you're not going to be able to understand those issues in the context of what that individual is coming to you with."
	
	"...in order to truly be competent in helping clients... I need to know a lot more than I do right now."

Table 11 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"...it's a continual process. Because culture changes, it's not static… it's constant work and… the real work comes after in continuing to practice."
	
	"I think competence is really being able to meet somebody where they're at. And not being ignorant to the issues that they're facing or to those issues within the context of their culture."
	
	"I think you can passively come across awareness but competence requires some active effort and kind of a conscious decision to understand it and to learn about it more."

Participant 10

      Pre-course. Zoe expressed enjoying classes that are "Discussion based… because I get a chance to verbalize what's been going on in my head and… just to hear other people's perspective on it." She clarified, "When you just lecture, you're just hearing their perspective, but when we get to talk, we get to hear everybody." She likes this mode of teaching because "It's up to you how much knowledge you're taking in."

      When prompted to talk about the notion of multicultural competence she stated, "I think it means you are someone who is devoted to seeking training in different areas of life from people of different backgrounds." This includes "Being open to their experience" because "We need to be ready to handle them in the best way and give them the best care." She explained, "We can get blinded…" She also acknowledged, "Awareness is a great starting point for becoming culturally competent, but I don't think you can be multiculturally competent without

being aware." She recognized her own need to attain awareness and stated, "I'm trying to figure my own culture out, so this is helpful to me. I feel like I'm starting at ground zero."

Zoe felt that students taking the course should be able to "walk away with more of a comfortability" about multicultural topics. She explained, "I feel like a lot of us are so nervous to even take the course." Additionally, "They should gain a feeling of interest in others, I think, and an interest that they're going to seek out to learn more" because "we're not going to be able to necessarily talk to someone from every single different facet of human diversity."

Regarding the expressive arts activities Zoe said, "I was excited." She continued, "I have a bit of experience… I work at a therapeutic recreation and behavioral hospital." Simultaneously, she recognized she did not have knowledge "in the basis of them and how they actually help and how they can be utilized inside." She suspected they would provide "time to really think or process everything that just happened or everything that was just said;" whereas, she explained "I usually just journal." She acknowledge, 'This gets me out of my comfort zone.'" She also stated, "I wanted to tap into more creative things, so it was perfect." The participant suspected, "It's definitely going to be a more memorable class since we don't do this in any other class" and explained, "I don't get to use paper and glue and scissors, so I will definitely remember this class."

She continued discussing the experiential portion of the course, "Hopefully that will help us stick some of the concepts that we learn" especially due to "journaling after it." She said, "Journaling is pretty nice because you're forced to remember and to process what you did and how you felt about it." She also mentioned, "I like that expressive arts are so complex in themselves when you create them and you use different materials, and I think that's what culture is." She elaborated, "I think it's a good point to use, a good tool to use in explaining your own

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culture and experiences." For example, "When I think of mine, it's so complicated that I just don't have words for sometimes. I think having materials… helps us put words to how we're feeling" and "you're able to see very authentically through expressive arts someone creates."

During the course. Zoe stated, "I really enjoyed being able to be creative" following the introductory activity. She explained, "As adults we don't get many opportunities to create unless we are very intentional about seeking out different avenues." She also appreciated, "looking around at everyone else's and seeing all of our unique takes on the activity." She recognized, "this activity changed my mood for the better" and "I was able to relax… I felt emotionally unencumbered." She noticed, "I wasn't worried about my finished product. I just wanted… to slow down and create something that was completely in my control." She also realized, "I felt physically lighter as well; I didn't have as much tension in my shoulders." She described it as "a chance to zone out and detach from everything else going on around me" because "I wasn't worried about a grade or a 'right' way to decorate." She admitted, "I was really happy we got to personalize our folders. It's as if we have a safe place to hold our thoughts that is uniquely ours."

Upon completion of the second experiential activity this participant noticed, "Though we all had the same resources to use to… so many different types of mandalas were made," and "I also liked how crafty everyone got when the resources became more limited and scattered about the room." She also recognized, "Once I began creating, I began to feel immediately at ease." She elaborated, "The tension in my body escaped as I began to dive deeper into my creativity." She also described the activity as giving her "time to reflect on… how I hold space in the world." She stated the activity was "…a good reminder for me to take time to express myself creatively."

Following the third expressive arts activity, Zoe felt relieved, "Sometimes it's hard to put into word what you are experiencing. With expressive arts you don't always have to." She

expressed, "I didn't know where to begin. I felt emotionally torn between multiple ideas, but then I realized that was part of the activity and channeled that energy into the activity." She also explained, "It definitely got me thinking… helped me open up a discussion with myself I didn't know I needed to have." Due to this she "really enjoyed the activity" and also acknowledged, "Hearing what others were making and hearing their input on mine was extremely insightful."

Zoe stated, "I took away new insight about the 'masks' I choose to present to the world" from participating in the fourth activity. She elaborated, "I like to think of myself as someone always trying to better integrate the different sides of myself; however, through this activity I was able to see the things I still choose to remain inward or outward." She recognized, "Even though I was creating by myself, I still felt kind of vulnerable and exposed." She also admitted, "I noticed myself rushing on decorating the inside of the mask as if not to fully face everything I've been keeping inside." She explained, "It brought about awareness to me, and I expect this new insight to shape some of my interactions with others," and was hopeful that "now I can now be able to identify when my mask begins to present itself and get in the way of authentic interaction."

Concerning the final activity, this participant felt "it was a great way to visualize everyone's different processing…" of the experience. She disclosed, "I felt more relaxed than when completing the other expressive arts activities," and "I felt comfortable creating because I finally grasped that there is no right or wrong way to express oneself through art." She said, "I knew this fact when coming in but physically I was still tense and worried when creating initially. This time I felt light." She expressed, "I felt strangely proud of my kindergarten-type quality art. I also feel more integrated within myself." She felt "this was the perfect way to end

the semester." Overall, Zoe said, "I like the time to just really reflect after class" and "I think it ties in really well."

Post-course. Zoe stated, "It was unlike any other class I've ever taken… the content… how experiential it was." She took away "a lot of new insight," "…respect for humanity," and "awareness." She shared, "I like hearing other people's perspective, and was surprised that "it was actually a pretty diverse class." She enjoyed "hearing from all the different guest speakers… and you got to hear from a different person every day." She felt that this "kept you on your toes and excited to come to class because the teaching style was different almost every time" and students were introduced to "…variety of backgrounds and ideas…" daily. Furthermore she reported the "…non-directive, the teaching style" was "most beneficial."

She admitted, "I gained tons that I was ignorant towards." Regarding multicultural competence she disclosed, "I didn't know much about the term before the class," but now "I'm thinking it's really just a commitment to lifelong learning. It's a commitment to admitting not knowing a lot of things about a lot of people and not feeling okay with sitting in your ignorance." She said this should include "…being aware of the intersectionality of everyone… recognizing that there are different layers to them" while also respecting that "…they're the expert of their own life." She described it as a "kind of an acknowledgement, like, 'I see you.'" She said the ultimate goal is "…just to be able to actually see people for who they are, not who you want them to be…"

Zoe also spoke about her awareness of being one of two Black individuals enrolled in the course and explained the discomfort she experienced as a result:

> I wanted to be seen as an individual, but I felt like if I spoke up sometimes it would just be from that perspective, like this voice speaking for all. I just feel like that's a huge responsibility, and I know that I can't keep that from me sharing myself, but it was just a huge barrier for me. I just want to be respectful of

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everyone's experience. I know some people may not have the same experiences. I don't want them to think that this is everything or sound just beat down by the world. Like, no, I'm having a good time. I don't know. (Participant 10, post-course interview)

With regard to the experiential activities, this participant stated, "I like the expressive arts… that was one of my favorite parts just because you actually got time to reflect… You'd surprise yourself with what you could create and process." In addition to the opportunity for "reflecting inwardly," she said, "I really liked the different resources I got to use… paint, markers, colored pencils… whatever was there." She continued, "It really tapped into some old childhood stuff that we don't do anymore; we don't give ourselves time to do anymore, which we should." Furthermore, she explained, "I liked in the journals how you could reflect on your physical response to it, because I could notice my body relaxing when I could actually do it." Not only did Zoe note feeling "a different energy" during and after the activities, but she described them as helpful for "integrating the material in a more holistic-type style." She also appreciated that the activities were non-directive because "everyone gets to choose their own materials they want to work with." She further explained, "You get to do things in your own way… what's best for you." She expressed that because "You created that after an emotional event," "I think it's going to help us remember what happened with each other and what we talked about."

For those students who struggled with the non-directive activities she felt, "I think next time when they do anything like that since they had that experience, I feel like it'll be easier. We just don't have those experiences." She continued, "I think it definitely opened the door for a lot of people to be like, 'You know what? This is my creation.'" She also suspected, "some people were probably looking for validation in their creations" so this participant chose to "keep my

comments more about what I'm getting from the art instead of if it's good or I like the way it looks or color choices. I don't think any of that matters really." She elaborated:

> I think as time went on everyone gained a better sense of play, and I don't think it was a s tense at the end as it was in the beginning. I think others were able to just relax and actually have true conversations while they were creating as time went on. The longer we got… everyone was a little bit more open to sharing how they felt. People were very encouraging… and just there and holding space for each other… (Participant 10, post-course interview)

Zoe spoke of the expressive arts activities from a neuro-informed perspective, "Just the right and left side of the brain were able to come together when we were talking and creating at the same time… made the class more memorable… was just really powerful." She stated, "It was so experiential. It moved. You got to have some kinesthetic learning as well." She clarified, "Since the classes were so heavy, sometimes it was just like a relief to be able to put everything that was going on inside of you on that canvas and just have it there for a moment." She explained recognizing the benefit of externalizing of her emotions and relief that she did not, "have to hold it right now." Her final thoughts included recommendations. Firstly, "It's truly non-directive, so you have to be open to allowing that." Secondly, "Safety, respect, and empathy" are key. If you don't have empathy, I guess you just really wouldn't learn anything."

Organized by thematic label, Table 12 provides additional participant data to support the above textural description for Participant 10.

Table 12

Data Summary Table: Participant 10

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

1. Process over product
   a. Micro
   b. Macro
	"People were taking it seriously. I was like, 'This is not too serious. It's just you. It's your reflection. This is your time.'"
	
	"I really was just free to make whatever. Not being graded internally or by you guys."
	
	"You could really just create whatever you wanted to. I encouraged myself to just go with whatever and not dislike anything that I created, but it was just an extension of myself, whatever I made."

2. Comfort in discomfort	*"...overcoming that little bit of vulnerability inside to even speak up in class sometimes about your own experience. It's so easy to listen to others. I think it was really hard to share, especially for myself... which I was creating that barrier."* *"I went with everything. I never started over. I just kept it going, and it was really cathartic. Whether it was good looking stereotypically or whatever to the world, I was like, 'This is just what I made.'"* *"...overcoming my own fear to expose my different identities and how I feel in the world."*

Table 12 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data
3. Connection	*"…a lot of people seemed like they really had a lot to share. I didn't feel that strong urge sometimes so I wanted to give others that space. But sometimes taking space for myself just so they can have their moments, which are important, too… just needed to maybe talk more."* *"Even just sharing the supplies with each other, how everyone was sharing them so easily. It felt very community based. I really liked that. It was like we're all creating together."* *"During one of the expressive arts… I just didn't have the words for how I was feeling. The person next to me explained what a drew to a T. It was like a lightbulb went on, and that's how I knew how important those assignment and activities could be. That definitely stuck out to me."*
4. Emotional evolution a. Safety	*"The non-judgment piece of the class, it was really good."* *"Part of me has a fear that I don't want people to think I'm speaking from a Black perspective, and I'm speaking for all people. I don't know where I got that from, but I just always feel like I don't want someone to take this like, 'Oh, this is everyone's experience.'"* *"Even having to talk to different people sometimes, being instructed to get out of your comfort zone, go find someone across the room that also generates more safety and knowing the people that you're there with a little closer. It's kind of like an icebreaker, the expressive arts, to do that with someone because you don't have to look straight at them, but you can still be with them in the same space."*

Table 12 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

5. Experiential process
  a. Catharsis
    i. Child-like play
  b. Integration
    i. Neuroscience
	"From a student to student basis, it gives us more of a calm environment to digest what we just learned, what happened in class and do that together and socialize on maybe another level."
	
	"It's easier to tap into deeper things through arts… and being able to see everyone else's and people willing to share about it, it's pretty awesome."
	
	"I think it changes the aura of the room and the environment… you become your own teacher and in charge of your own self-care."

6. Identity
  a. Personal
  b. Professional
	"I understood more about my own culture… I didn't even know what my culture was before I came here, and now I have a couple of ideas."
	
	"I can't look at some things the same... fear of accepting my own experiences aren't always the best."
	
	"Taking off your lenses and wiping them off clear and being able to evaluate that for yourself. Understanding that you do have your own lenses on before you even start, and then just letting the client be the teacher sometimes… respecting the phenomenology of everybody that walks in your room and having a basis of what they're talking about."

Table 12 (Cont.)

Thematic Labels	Participant Data

7. Multiculturalism
   a. Knowledge and awareness
   b. Competence
	"...gaining an insight of just how deep multiculturalism actually is and what that means and how it can mean something completely different to someone else."
	
	"Just being aware of different populations and their struggles would be different than being competent in that area. You can know about it without actually being proficient in working and feeling comfortable working with that population."
	
	"The most difficult part is knowing that you're never going to be completely competent, and even though that is at play, continuing into your knowledge to grow more."

Composite Textural Description

The composite textural description summarizes participant experiences and were developed from the combination of the above individual textural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). The composite textural description below highlights participant experiences over the course of the study including pre-course, during the course, and post-course.

Participants initially felt acutely aware of judgments, whether that of their own or of others. Internally, participants harshly evaluated their artistic abilities and frequently compared their expressive arts capabilities and artifacts to their peers. The novelty of utilizing expressive arts techniques in a classroom setting combined with the physical proximity and requirement of sharing resources forced participants to experience a unique type of discomfort and vulnerability. These experienced usually entailed students telling themselves they were not artistically talented or creative and that their lack of talent or creativity negatively reflected on them, which

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heightened feelings of self-consciousness and insecurity. In addition to placing value judgments on themselves regarding the experiential activities internally at a micro level, participants also judged themselves and made comparisons to others in relation to their multicultural competence, or lack thereof. In a parallel manner, students felt shaken at the start of the course by the realization that they indeed had less multicultural knowledge than they previously thought and did not feel as multiculturally aware of self or others as they formerly believed. Participants consistently judged themselves and feared the judgment of others.

During the course participants continued to struggle with their insecurities, both related to their capacity for creativity and their ability to attain multicultural competence. While these themes were persistent throughout the entirety of the five weeks, some participants were able to release some of the pressure they placed on themselves sooner than others. One by one participants started to recognize that much like the expressive arts activities' significance stemmed primarily from the process of creation and integration as opposed to the final end product, their attainment of multicultural competence was more about the process of gaining knowledge and awareness over the lifespan as opposed to achieving a stagnant, permanent state of competence. Most participants either recognized the value of process over product within the experiential activities or as it relates to multicultural competence but did not show much awareness concerning the parallel between the two concepts.

Upon completion of the course, students were still evaluating themselves, but it was much less harshly and with greater compassion and patience. Their focus moved from placing judgments on self to noticing and valuing the large amount of perspective taking and vicarious learning that occurred throughout the course. They began to value this type of learning more than they felt self-conscious about their multicultural knowledge and awareness or their artistic

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abilities. While they still made some peer comparisons, these comparisons largely changed from negative and self-degrading to positive and prideful or encouraging of others. The majority of participants expressed that they would take a different approach or have a different attitude if given the opportunity to partake in a similar class so as to fully benefit from the opportunities for perspective taking and vicarious learning as opposed to dwelling on judgments, insecurities, and comparisons.

Externally and at a more macro level, participants expressed concern regarding how to meet expectation whether their own or that of the course instructors. The majority of students admitted to perfectionistic tendencies. All participants who referred to perfectionism seemed aware that their need to meet expectations stemmed from years of being in school systems that lauded students who met or exceeded expectations and punished students who failed to do so. These concerns were closely related to the aforementioned struggle between process and product; however, this struggle stemmed less from internal insecurity and more so from external pressures that had been internalized over the years.

Throughout the course, students began to recognize that they would not be evaluated in the same way that they had in previous classes due to the sensitivity of the material presented and the subjective nature of expressive arts activities. Some students were able to recognize this early on, prioritize process over product, and be more present than others during the course. These participants presented as freer than others, both in regards to the expressive activities and class discussions. Other students struggled with the external pressure to perform and nonexistent expectations through the entirety of the five weeks. However, even these students reported eventually understanding that valuing process over product was more conducive to holistic learning and the self-imposed pressures acted as a hindrance to their learning and growth.

Students began the course wanting clarity about what the class would entail, guidelines for how to complete the experiential activities appropriately, and structure for the course in general. All participants spoke about feeling out of their comfort zones and being challenged in new ways. They described feeling vulnerable due to the lack of structure and frustrated with the ambiguity and non-directive nature of the expressive arts techniques. Students explicitly asked for more direct instruction, particularly those who lacked experience with non-directive methods of teaching and processing. While participant discomfort was clearly evident at the start of the course, movement towards feeling some comfort amidst their discomfort began to appear intermittently throughout the course as students starting taking healthy risks and dipping their toes into non-directive water. This seemed to be a result of participants either feeling safer within the classroom setting and with their peer students and because they slowly gained a sense of confidence and comfort with each week that passed.

By the conclusion of the course, students ceased seeking directive-ness. They no longer lacked experience in relation to expressive arts activities and seem to come to a place of acceptance that both experiential activities and gaining multicultural knowledge and/or awareness involve ambiguity and vulnerability. Their newfound comfort with discomfort was evidenced by a sense of freedom in the non-directive aspects of the course as opposed to their initial frustration. Participants showed movement from rigidity toward an ability to "let go." The majority of students expressed feeling prideful of the work they had done over the previous five weeks, both emotionally and artistically. Though most of them struggled with being fully comfortable with the non-directive course characteristics, they acknowledged recognizing the value of ambiguity, vulnerability, and freedom in a course that emphasized subjective experience because it helped them practice self-compassion and empathy for others' struggles.

All participants referred often to interpersonal interaction, whether it related to processing and connecting with peers or being connected to humanity outside of the class as a result of learning from and being challenged by the course instructors and guest speakers. Initially, students reported yearning for interpersonal connection. Sometimes this stemmed from wanting to learn about others or share about self; other times students expressed feeling safer when connecting with others because this helped to normalize their thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Due to the serious nature of the course's content, students vacillated from week to week regarding how much interpersonal contact they wanted or sought out. Some participants reported strongly wanting to connect with others but acknowledged some barrier to their ability to make these connections. Other students enjoyed being able to connect with others when they chose but also being allowed to have their own time and space if that is what they wanted.

By the end of the five week period, participants showed movement from merely wanting to connect with others to feel a sense of safety or discuss the content of the course on a surface level; instead, participants sought out interpersonal connection with the goal of in-depth processing. When they were able to achieve this goal, students raved about the benefits of feeling safe enough to be vulnerable with others in the context of their learning. Many of the participants reported feeling more authentic and genuine when connecting with their peers than they had in previous classes. A small portion recognized their struggle to connect for one reason or another right up until the very end of the class. These students expressed regret and disappointed concerning this, but were also gentle with themselves and seemed to have appropriate or understandable reasons for struggling to connect. Overall, participants described a sense of cohesiveness that formed due to the sharing of space, the vulnerable nature of the course content and expressive arts activities, and the daily interpersonal processing and class discussions.

Participants reported a wide range of emotional responses over the course of the study. Initially students expressed feeling anxious, nervous, unsure, fearful, vulnerable, discomfort, and isolation, but also reported feeling excited, curious, and interested at the start of the course. Throughout the five weeks participant emotions seemed to ebb and flow as they began feeling safer in the classroom. Following the first two activities students began reporting more "positive" than "negative" emotions even though many of them still experienced anxiety, discomfort, and a sense of vulnerability. By the completion of activities three and four most participants were hit again with a wave of difficult emotions and expressed feeling melancholy, hopeless, guilty, shameful, angry, and frustrated but simultaneously began to feel a sense of motivation to be a better ally and advocate. Each participant moved through this emotional evolution at their own rate, which seemed largely related to whether they had previous experience with expressive arts techniques and/or whether they had a dual relationship with one or more of the course instructors. Additionally, this emotional movement also appeared linked to how safe students felt in the classroom; oftentimes this correlated with the individual participant's sense of privilege.

Upon course conclusion and following the final experiential activity, participants described feeling were less inwardly focused and explained feeling called to action. Participants overwhelmingly shared more "positive" emotions than "negative." Students who reported "negative" emotions acknowledged the value and purpose of these feelings and were not overwhelmed by them as they had felt during the early stage of the class. The post-course "positive" emotions included feeling excited, compassionate, motivated, happy, empathic, and hopeful. Participants explained again that safety was pivotal to experience an emotional evolution; had they not felt safe they would not have participated at the same level of engagement or with the same willingness to be vulnerable and open to others.

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Prior to the course approximately a third of participants reported having some type of previous experience with experiential activities, whether it was due to a previous course in their counselor education program, based on work experience, or simply because they personally enjoyed such activities. Those with prior experience described feeling interested, curious, or excited about the prospect of expressive arts activities being implemented during their coursework. Students without prior experience felt interest and curious, as well, but this was dwarfed by their feelings of anxiety, discomfort, and doubt regarding their creative abilities.

In addition to some students thinking they had a basic understanding of the various uses and purposes of expressive arts techniques, a handful of participants also referenced neuroscience concepts such as integration and left brain versus right brain tendencies prior to the start of the 5-week course. Students who referred to these spoke about them with surface-level understanding and cited a previous graduate class or professor as their informant. Most participants did not initially mention any concepts related to neuroscience. As the course progressed. students began individually deciphering how neuroscience might serve as a part of their current and future counseling practice

During the course, all participants stated they felt a sense of catharsis during some or all of the activities. No matter their initial feelings at the start of the activity, they noticed their thoughts slowing and focusing on the task at hand by the end of the activity. All participants described feeling more relaxed after partaking in the expressive activities and most of them noted a shift in their physical energy. Examples of this physiological awareness included recognition of a slowed heartbeat, changes in breathing, and experience of less tension in the body. Many students reported feeling a sense of play during some of the activities, noticing that they felt free and unfettered. Most participants also experienced a sense of nostalgia, referred back to their

younger, more playful selves, and proposed doing more creative or expressive activities on their own time in the future. By the end of the course, students across the board spoke of the expressive arts activities as a form of their self-care and/or stated that they recognized they needed more self-care in their lives as a result of participating in the activities.

At the course's end, all participants had made reference to feeling a sense of integration. This reported integration was primarily in reference to left brain-right brain lateralization; however, some participants referred to feeling more integrated with their bodies as well. Students were able to talk about the numerous uses and purpose of expressive arts activities more in-depth and reported have a greater understanding of the neuroscience basis for utilizing expressive techniques. Students experienced movement from their initial trepidation towards newfound appreciation for the opportunity to participate in experiential learning. All participants suggested that the activities positively influenced classroom dynamics and their ability to integrate course material. Additionally, nearly all participants hoped their future graduate coursework would incorporate experiential activities. Lastly, most students felt that without the sense of catharsis and play that the activities afforded, this class would have been overwhelming and less conducive to students' ability to intake and apply new knowledge and awareness.

Going into the course participants expected the class to inform their professional identities as a result of gaining multicultural knowledge and learning how to apply this knowledge to practice. While students seemed aware that this multicultural course was significant to their graduate studies, they struggled to concisely talk about the idea of multicultural competence and were not entirely sure what the concept entailed. Participants reported that multicultural considerations were mentioned during some of their previous coursework but that it was brief and surface-level. Students felt unsure of how to apply their pre-

existing multicultural knowledge to their work with clients other than being aware that they should not discriminate, impose their personal values, or neglect or cause harm to clients based on stereotyping, whether purposefully or not. Prior to the start of the course, most participants did not discuss their personal identities; those who did mention that their personal identity might influence their professional role as a counselor appeared confident that they knew themselves, felt strongly about their beliefs and values, and showed little to no awareness of the reciprocal relationship between professional and personal identities of counselors.

During the course students described expecting to gain factually-based multicultural knowledge, but participants were consistently surprised during the five week period as they gained consciousness of multicultural awareness about began learning about the subjective experiences of others. Their multicultural awareness also increased regarding their personal identities. Students reported feeling very reflective as they began to recognize the discrepancies between their personal identities and professional counselor identities. Most participants acknowledged that they felt a sense of incongruence. Students expressed gaining just as much personal insight as they did professional. Personal reflection described by participants included consideration of familial influences and the influence of their past experiences on their present selves; seeking to define their unique individual culture as they integrated concepts such as intersectionality into their worldviews; and an increased sense of empathy and understanding for other cultures, populations, and belief systems. Students also felt an acute sense of privilege, or lack thereof, in some instances. With regard to their personal identities, participants experienced personal growth and movement towards congruence of self. Participants also described feeling less vulnerable than they did at the start of the class and more authentic or genuine.

After the course, participants recognized that increased awareness of their personal identities influenced their capacity for and ability to grow in terms of professional identity development. Students stated time and again that multicultural competence could not be attained without multicultural awareness; knowing oneself was the initial and necessary step before striving for competence. Participants used their newfound personal awareness to inform and redefine their thoughts surrounding multicultural competence and its relevance to the field of counseling. They felt that by gaining insight to self they could more effectively gain insight to others. They also reported a clearer vision of their role as a multiculturally informed counselor. They discussed how to maintain multicultural knowledge and awareness and spoke about these facets of competence with confidence and a sense of motivation. Students suggested their ability to gain a clearer idea of their clinical role stemmed from connecting their class experiences and newfound consciousness to real life experiences and consequences. Participants also changed their thinking about multicultural competence from a more linear model with a clearer end point to a cyclical or fluid model that focuses less on a specific end point and more on lifelong learning, including professional knowledge and personal reflection or awareness.

Throughout the duration of the course participants gained multicultural knowledge and awareness on a micro level, relating this learning back to their individual experiences and paradigms. Students discussed feeling the importance of multicultural knowledge, awareness, and competence, but struggled to succinctly define the concepts and explained that were unsure as to how they could or should converse with others about multicultural issues or considerations. Participants began to acknowledge feeling incongruence between their self-concepts regarding their knowledge and awareness and their propensities to make judgments, stereotype, or apply biases to others. As students were able to recognize the existence and application of

intersectionality, concede to the vast spectrum of ways in which privilege can be experienced, and make connections between the aforementioned concepts to the real-life consequences that often result, participants were able to move towards more personal congruence and increased self-compassion. Participants reported that this allowed them to continue to learn and be impacted by the class in a way that improved their outlook as future counselors.

Upon completion of the course, students were applying the multicultural knowledge and awareness they attained on a micro level to how they could utilize this information and insight on a macro level as counselors striving to be multiculturally competent. Participants still acknowledged the sheer vastness of multiculturalism, but rather than being overwhelmed by its enormity and unsure of how to discuss the concept with others, students felt they could more clearly speak to the relevance of recognizing multiculturalism both for individual clients and the larger society as a whole. Participants ended the course with a sense of purpose and hope for the future. They were excited to share their learning with others and discussed the important of purposeful and empathic dissemination. Students also spoke more clearly about the need for continued education across the lifespan, particular due to evolutionary nature of societal norms and multicultural knowledge. Lastly, participants described being called to advocate and serve as an ally. While many of them would have said prior to the course that they knew this was part of the role of a multiculturally competent counselor, following the course experience students had a distinct picture of what an ally and/or advocate truly is and how they can utilize their knowledge, awareness, and privilege to serve in these roles as professional counselors.

Structural Descriptions

Following the steps of phenomenological reduction, the researcher constructed individual textural descriptions of the phenomenon to capture *what* participants experienced (Moustakas,

1994). The researcher then used the composite textural description to move into the imaginative variation portion of analysis to create structural descriptions. Structural descriptions summarize *how* participants experienced the phenomenon, including the context that activated participant thoughts and feelings connected with the phenomenon and what conditions evoked the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Individual Structural Descriptions

Structural descriptions for each participant provide supporting evidence for the experience of the phenomenon. Individual structural descriptions were developed by utilizing imaginative variation. These have been arranged by participant and the study's research questions were used to help the researcher organize the data. Below are the structural description for participants in the current study.

Participant 1

Sadie was a White female who felt humbled by her class experience. She expressed feeling grateful for new awareness concerning her blind spots that she gains via others sharing their experiences and perspectives. She was the only participant with extensive world travel. She admitted that for as long as she could remember her anxiety around creating visual arts felt debilitating. She was challenged to "let go" of initially wanting the experiential activities to be more directive. Though she experienced anxiety throughout duration of the course, it dissipated with time. Previous negative group experiences left her feeling unsafe at the start of the course. She expressed wanting to connect with peers but feeling she struggled to do so. As her comfort increased, she felt the expressive arts activities encouraged connection amidst the class and helped her be more open and vulnerable with others.

Concerning Sadie's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework she was initially uneasy about lack of boundaries and direction as a former teacher, but she ended up expressing gratitude for this time to synthesize the vast amount of information and intensity of feelings. This participant's experience of the experiential teaching methods moved from extreme discomfort to appreciation for the challenge of discomfort. Sadie's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques was positive because she recognized immediate results in regards to increased perspective taking and vicarious learning, she sorted through her experiences of privilege, and acknowledge the "kaleidoscope" of intersectionality.

Participant 2

Christi identified as a Hispanic/Latinx female on paper, but otherwise spoke about herself as part of the dominant culture because she "passes" as Caucasian and generally identifies with the dominant culture as opposed to her Hispanic/Latinx heritage. As a "member of the majority" she felt a heavy responsibility to employ her privilege for the benefit of others. She also wondered how she can learn to fully accept others when she does not currently fully accept all aspects of herself.

Regarding Christi's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework, she described it as positive but heavy. She was grateful for the opportunity for catharsis because of this heaviness. She also felt the experience was positive primarily because of the modeling done by course instructors that facilitated respectful discourse. Christi described her experience of the experiential teaching methods as comfortable overall, and she generally appreciated the ambiguity and non-directive nature of the activities. She believed this was made possible because of the safety she felt as a result of the dual relationships she had

with the course instructors. Christi's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques moved from initial shock, turned to guilt and shame, but ultimately ended in motivation and increased sense of responsibility. She felt prideful of her journey over the course of the class.

Participant 3

Jeffrey identified as a White male and was very concise compared to other participants. He was open and willing to recognize and own his varying degrees of privilege, but he also admitted to struggling with feeling defensive during times when he felt he was seen only through the lens of his ethnicity and gender. This participant was very sensitive; he was consistently cautious and wary of offending others. He expressed disappointment in the incongruence between his self-concept and his actual multicultural knowledge and awareness.

In relation to Jeffrey's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework he felt it helped him discuss difficult topics and connect with peers when feeling vulnerable instead of withdrawing and isolating himself. This participant's experience of the experiential teaching methods largely related to his feeling a state of "flow" while creating his art. Jeffrey's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques reminded him to have patience with himself as he would with others, gave him increased confidence with regard to multicultural language, and provided him with access to multiple viewpoints that he felt were powerful.

Participant 4

Mollie identified as a Hispanic/Latinx female and labeled herself as the only one in class even though Mollie also identified on paper as a Hispanic/Latinx female. She frequently to her family and to her religion. She initially expressed that she wished we could see and emphasize

the common humanity in all of us as opposed to categorizing and labeling people; however, she later acknowledged the value of recognizing individuals' unique experiences.

Participant 4's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework was helpful in terms of balancing the heaviness of the course content. She felt it influenced her ability to learn about herself as a result of learning about others. Mollie described her experience of the experiential teaching methods as nostalgic. She loved participating in this portion of the class and felt the activities contributed to her self-care. She also described them as helping her to gain insight to things she could not put words to. Mollie's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques challenged her to work towards a achieving congruence between her spiritual world and her role as a multiculturally competent counselor. She claimed this class is where she has experienced the most growth during her graduate coursework.

Participant 5

Nola identified as a White female. While she was very succinct in both interviews and fairly quiet in class, she was extremely expressive and thoughtful within her reflective journals. She expressed a high awareness of her automatic assumptions and biases, though she never articulated feeling defensive, only challenged. She also experienced a large amount of anger, frustration, and disappointment regarding her family and her upbringing as she gained more multicultural knowledge and awareness.

Nola described their experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework as comforting. She explained that they helped her feel lighter, as if a weight had been lifted. This participant's experience of the experiential teaching methods aided her in wading through the "muck" that came up for her. She appreciated the opportunity for

emotional release and said the activities often felt like group self-care and influenced her

integration of self. Nola's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being

taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques resulted in a few different conclusions.

Personally, she felt strong and persevering being open to growth and having achieved what she

considered improvement, even though she was not where she eventually wanted to be regarding

multicultural competency. She also concluded that representation matters in a classroom setting.

Ultimately, she experienced a sense of hope that if she can "choose to love" those whom she

struggles to understand or accept, so too can others.

Participant 6

Gracie identified as a White female and readily recognized her privilege but also

expressed frustration with previous experiences of only being seen for her ethnicity and gender.

She also voiced concerned about offending others but recognized the benefit of taking that risk in

order to show vulnerability, connect with others, and learn via perspective taking. She felt naïve

for all she did not know and expressed remorse related to the person she was prior to entering the

counseling program.

Concerning Gracie's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their

multicultural coursework, she saw value in students getting out of their comfort zones because

she believed that is where growth occurs. Gracie described her experience of the experiential

teaching methods as initially frustrating due to her perfectionism. She sought direction so she

could do her best but simultaneously recognized the value of process over product. Overall she

felt comfortable completing the activities and described herself as naturally "right-brained."

Gracie's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about

concepts via expressive arts techniques morphed from feeling somewhat overwhelmed to feeling

challenged to consider how to appropriately and ethically interact with those who have varying beliefs and values. Ultimately, she thought students should take away a struggle from the class and have an awareness of the influence of our values on all that we do.

Participant 7

William identified as a White male and seemed bothered by his ignorance of the vastness of multicultural topics and issues. He prioritized focusing on the continuous evaluation of self as the world evolves and changes around us. He valued being able to take difficult emotions and externalize them via the expressive arts activities. He also expressed appreciation for the diversity of perspectives the class afforded and described his learning as fluid.

Regarding William's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework was positive. He felt the activities regulated his right brain so he could keep learning, making him able to integrate material on deeper level than just the surface. This participant's experience of experiential teaching methods largely surrounded the physiological effects that resulted from his participation. He also felt a sense of nostalgia while creating. William's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques focused greatly on his concern surrounding the real-life consequences of intersectionality, prioritized advocacy and continued education, and charged counselors to take action based on our knowledge and awareness. Ultimately, he felt hopeful that people are able to change and acquire new perspectives.

Participant 8

Maggie identified as a White female. She acknowledge her tendency to avoid difficult or uncomfortable situations and conversations. She had previous experience with expressive arts activities in a classroom setting, which she said she enjoyed and felt was powerful; therefore, she

looked forward to that aspect of the course. She also explained that expressive arts activities felt safer to her than mere class discussion because she did not have to verbalize everything or fear that she would offend. She wished the course could have been longer so she could learn about certain multicultural topics more in-depth and increase her awareness.

In relation to Maggie's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework, she had an emotional and insightful class experience. She felt comforted by the common experience of all students' struggle throughout the course. Maggie described her experience of the experiential teaching methods as very vulnerable. She explained they were somewhat invasive but she valued the resultant catharsis and described the classroom environment as safe. Furthermore, she explained her life is generally so structured so the non-directive nature of the activities was welcome. Maggie's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques began with anger towards others for their intolerance. She then recognized that she was intolerant of others' intolerance and experienced some guilt and shame; upon further reflection, she eventually felt motivated to go out and partake in difficult conversations with others and prioritize interactions that were respectful and reciprocal.

Participant 9

Brittany identified as a White female. Initially, she described herself as very product-oriented and always focused on an end-goal. She has a doctoral degree making her the most highly educated of all participants. Because of this, she tried to prioritize listening to others over speaking and sharing her thoughts and feelings. She expressed feeling somewhat immune initially to experiencing bias and stereotyping others; this resulted in a humbling experience that she is indeed susceptible to judging others.

Brittany's experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework felt like unfamiliar territory. She explained she was much more confident with the content of course compared to other students, but much less confident with the expressive arts portion. This dynamic aided her in offering self-compassion as she worked to acknowledge the incongruence she felt between her self-concept and the reality of her knowledge and awareness. This participant's experience of experiential teaching methods revolved greatly around the fear of being judged by others. She admitted to a large amount of self-imposed pressure and peer comparison initially; however, she ended up relaxing into the idea of process over product. Brittany's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques began as a very narrow view of multiculturalism but quickly changed into recognition of her lack of inclusion. Ultimately she felt that multicultural competence was a big responsibility but seeking it as a professional counselor would be both challenging and rewarding.

Participant 10

Zoe identified as a Black/African American female. She was aware that she was one of two Black/African American females in the class. She expressed not wanting to unintentionally represent the experience of all Black people or all Black females during class discussions. She felt like this was a barrier to her in-class participation and inhibited her ability to with others. She also admitted that she struggled to acknowledge she has not always had positive experiences when it comes to multicultural issues. She was the only participant who reported regularly journaling outside of class prior to the start of the study.

Zoe described their experience of the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework as challenging. However, she explained being forced to examine her

own culture encouraged vulnerability and authentic interaction. She also felt it was powerful getting to create and express after an emotional event such as gaining new multicultural knowledge and awareness. Zoe described her experience of the experiential teaching methods as memorable. She expressed gratitude that they got her out of her comfort zone. She felt like that was a good thing because it inspired creativity, and she thought they made the class and material "stick." She also noticed the activities allowed her some physical release and improved her mood. Zoe's experience of multicultural concepts before, during, and after being taught about concepts via expressive arts techniques began with feeling overwhelmed. She said it was difficult knowing true competence is not a static state and can never truly be globally achieve. She had mixed feeling when she recognized that she cannot look at some things the same; however, in the end she felt sense of pride in her work and growth.

Composite Structural Description

The composite structural description derived from the composite textural description, individual structural descriptions, and the use of imaginative variation to describe the experience of the participant group as a whole (Moustakas, 1994). This composite structural description provides a means for understanding *how* participants experienced *what* they experienced (Moustakas, 1994). The composite structural description highlights the group participant experience over the course of the study.

Students recognized the value of process over product, experienced increased comfort in discomfort, and acknowledged the power of interpersonal connection. Participants also experienced an emotional evolution due to feelings of safety, recognized the value and relevance of experiential learning and processing, and were challenged to assess and clarify both their personal and professional identities. Lastly, students acquired an appreciation for

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multiculturalism by gaining new multicultural knowledge and awareness and struggling with how to maintain these concepts in order to strive for multicultural competence over the lifespan.

Participants were able to experience this vast amount of growth and learning due to a number of factors. The researcher, in concert with the other course instructors, purposefully planned all topics to be covered during the course, carefully chose when and which guest speakers to invite, and intentionally scheduled the expressive arts activities to increase learning and integration of materials for all students. The course instructors also modeled vulnerability and genuineness as they facilitated the group discussions and experiential activities so that participants felt safe enough to participate similarly.

The non-directive and non-evaluative aspects of the expressive arts activities enabled students to the value of their learning process or journey as opposed to emphasizing an end product that all students should achieve by the course's end. Interpersonal connection was encouraged during the experiential activities and during class time in general, creating a sense of group cohesion and support. This encouraged participants to partake in healthy risk-taking and openly question and challenge one another. This, in turn, influenced the development of students' personal and professional identities.

Participants' emotional evolutions were made possible because students were encouraged to apply their newfound multicultural knowledge in a way that increased their multicultural awareness. This was a challenging and intimate process; the in-class experience of participants included a large amount of openness and exposure of areas of growth. Students willingly arose to the challenge of exploring difficult and sometimes taboo multicultural concepts via experiential activities and were able to cognitively, emotionally, and physiologically integrate their individual experiences in the classroom.

Textural-Structural Synthesis

A textural-structural synthesis integrates *what* participants experienced with *how* participants experienced the phenomenon into a single essence of participants' group lived experience and is considered the final step of Moustakas' (1994) model of phenomenological research. The conceptual framework for the current study, outlined in Chapter III, guided the following synthesis. The conceptual framework addresses social constructivism, person-centered theory, and interpersonal neurobiology, as well as the neuroscience of learning. The synthesis of the data addresses the phenomenon of the lived experiences of master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques in a CACREP multicultural counseling course.

Essence of Participants' Lived Experience

According to Moustakas (1994) the essence is a combination of participants' composite textural description with participants' composite structural description. The essence of the lived experience of master's-level counseling students in a CACREP multicultural counseling course that utilized expressive arts techniques is described below. The essence of the phenomenon focuses on the collective experience of the current study's participants. The discussion of the essence of the phenomenon, found below, is followed by how the essence of participants' lived experience can be linked back to the researcher's conceptual framework in order to contextualize these study's findings.

Enrolling in a multicultural counseling course was anxiety provoking, particularly upon learning that the course would utilize expressive arts activities as one of its major teaching components. Experiential activities feel ambiguous, and their lack of direction is unlike typical graduate-level classes which involve more structure, clearly defined expectations, and evaluation

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throughout and upon completion of courses. The non-directive nature of the expressive arts activities and the vagueness involved with attaining multicultural competence caused discomfort.

Tackling the vast realm of multiculturalism felt overwhelming. Being expected to create expressive arts artifacts felt like an additional pressure and the connection to the multicultural aspect of the course was not initially clear. Trusting the process and the expertise of the course instructors was a big part of being able to move forward amidst doubt and nerves. However, this was coupled with excitement to learn more and become a multiculturally informed counselor. As unfamiliar as the non-directive experiential activities felt at first, they soon offered an opportunity to play, experience catharsis, and sometimes even felt like a form of self-care.

Worries regarding peer judgments and comparisons, as well as concerns about creating the right kind of expressive arts artifact or a "good" end product did not feel so severe after trying to let go and focus on the journey as opposed to the destination. Connecting with peers also came more naturally and even provided important insight. Learning happened most when listening to others because perspective-taking and vicarious learning inspired empathy. Emotional reactions occurred more readily and more intensely. Many of the emotional responses had to do with the state of the society and the discrimination that others face while a surprisingly large amount of the emotional responses hit closer to home and related to past and present individual experiences. With every new multicultural concept or issue learned and conquered, another something seemed to follow; competence felt further away than when class commenced.

As uncomfortable as it was to feel both emotionally charged and somewhat incompetent, the challenge of learning of self and others was rewarding. Class discussions and processing the expressive arts activities with peers normalized feelings and made the struggle feel more okay. There was a sense that theentire group was in this together and that as different and unique as the

students were, there was also commonality. Safety increased as the course progressed and the initial sense of vulnerability morphed into authenticity and the beginnings of congruence. The experiential activities were more cathartic than they were anxiety-provoking, and they offered an outlet and aided in integrating the course material.

Participating in this experiential class clarified the roles and responsibilities of multiculturally knowledgeable and self-aware counselors. Gaining insight regarding personal identity and how we become who we become or why we value what we value was a difficult road to traverse but seemed definitely worth it. Having a more distinct understanding of personal identity helped to make clear the muddy waters of professional identity, including their various roles as counselor and how to maintain their newfound multicultural knowledge and awareness over the course of their careers. Guidelines for how to maintain multicultural knowledge and awareness were provided and included consistent self-reflection, continued education across the lifespan, and using privilege to empower others. The overwhelming sense of never being able to fully achieve multicultural competence shifted to feelings of hope for the future and motivation to serve as an ally and advocate.

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism describes the notion that individuals live within and make sense of the world via subjective realities based on past experiences and interactions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The idea is that no person's subjective reality is any less valid than another's, which makes the theory an appropriate pairing for use with multicultural concepts. Entering the course, students came from various backgrounds and brought different experiences and levels of privilege to the table. As they learned to accept one another unconditionally by prioritizing listening and empathy over judgments and attempting to notice and stifle biases and stereotypes,

they too began to apply those concepts to the various cultures and populations about whom they learned. They recognized that every future client they will come into contact with will move about the world in their own unique context. As they accepted this concept, students were able to move forward with how to approach the subject and the ambiguous in as ethical and informed manner as possible.

Person-Centered Theory

Person-centered theory emphasizes the power of relationships. Simply put, relationships inspire growth (Rogers, 1979) and culture informs relationships. Cultural contexts and sociopolitical privileges and/or barriers influence an individual's capacity to participate in relationships that foster growth and development. Connection, empathy, and practicing awareness are key components of person-centered theory (Corey, 2016; Rogers, 1957). These chief tenets were obvious themes of participants' lived experience. By connecting with one another, experiencing genuine empathy, and prioritizing reflective practice when interacting with peers during class, students were able to recognize the value of relationships that inspire progress and evolution of self. This firsthand relationally-based understanding allowed students to recognize the parallels between their overall class experience and practical application with future clients.

Neuroscience

The neuroscience of learning (Miller, 2016) and the concept of interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2006) also informed participants' experience. By understanding basic neurological function regarding how information is most effectively processed and integrated, students were able to appreciate the purpose and rationale for the experiential teaching methods utilized during the course. Furthermore, student understanding of concepts related to Siegel's

(2006) interpersonal neurobiology, such as bilateral integration, vertical integration, and the window of tolerance (Siegel, 2010), allowed for an appreciation of participants' awareness and ability to integrate course material, emotional reactions, and physiological responses (Badenoch, 2018; Chong, 2015). This left students feeling a greater sense of congruence and increased comprehension regarding why experiential activities were used.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings of this phenomenological study that consisted of semi-structured interviews pre- and post- course, expressive arts artifacts created during the 5-week course, and corresponding journals for each artifact created. The following research questions were reviewed:

1. How do master's-level counseling students experience the use of expressive arts techniques within their multicultural coursework?

    a. How do master's-level counseling students describe their experience of experiential teaching methods?

    b. How do master's-level counseling students experience the concepts of "multicultural awareness" and "multicultural competence" before, during, and after being taught about the concepts via expressive arts techniques?

Thematic labels established were process over product, comfort in discomfort, connection, emotional evolution, experiential process, identity, and multiculturalism. Textural descriptions for each individual participant were included and evidenced by corresponding data from participant interviews and journals. A composite textural description derived from the individual textural descriptions to summarize *what* participants experienced. Individual structural descriptions were included and referenced the study's research questions. A composite structural

description was created to summarize *how* participants experienced the phenomenon. The researcher concluded data analysis with a synthesized statement of the composite textural description and composite structural description, capturing the essence of the shared lived experience of all participants. This synthesis allowed the researcher to depict the essence of participants' experience of the phenomenon.

CHAPTER V: LIMITATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of master's-level counseling students in a CACREP multicultural counseling course that utilized expressive arts techniques. The researcher felt that gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon would assist counselor educators in deciphering best practice when teaching multicultural concepts, help guide counselor educators on how to use evidence-based teaching methods, and provide counselor education programs with clarity regarding student experiences of experiential learning. The chapter includes a discussion of the study's limitations, implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs, and recommendations for future research.

Limitations

The current study had various limitations, which are briefly noted here and will be outlined in more detail below. Limitations included the subjective nature of qualitative inquiry, the voluntary nature of the study, the sampling procedure for participant recruitment, participant sample size and demographics, and the sensitivity participants may have felt towards multicultural issues and/or quality and quantity of previous experience with expressive arts techniques upon entering the course. The dual relationships between course instructors and students could also be a limitation. Additionally, while the expressive arts implemented in the classroom promote communication and even allow nonverbal clients to meaningfully participate (Gladding, 2016), limitations to using these methods also exist, such as time, space, prior experience, and access to resources.

Subjective nature of qualitative inquiry is important to recognize. The current research study was designed and implemented using the transcendental phenomenological approach, which prioritizes minimizing researcher bias and data analysis and interpretation pure of ego

(Moustakas, 1994). The voluntary nature of the study is a potential limitation as well. The study's ten participants only made up one-third of the entire class. Students who volunteered may have been more comfortable with multicultural topics, had more or recent experience with expressive arts techniques than others, or volunteered solely based on a dual relationship with one of the course instructors. If the entire class were used as the sample for this study as opposed to the ten volunteer participants, the results of the study might have been different.

Sampling procedure, sample size, and participant demographics also served as limitations. Purposive sampling was used back on convenience and the criterion that participants had to be master's-level counseling students enrolled in their CACREP-accredited multicultural counseling course. The sample size was considered appropriate for qualitative inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018); however, this small sample size makes generalizability of participants' lived experience difficult. While the researcher feels that the data collected from participants and analyzed for the purpose of this study reached saturation, the data still only represents the experiences of ten students. Furthermore, participant demographics limited the study as not all ethnicities, genders, orientations, and affiliations were represented and because all participants were gathered from a single southern, public university.

Participants' prior experience and/or sensitivity towards multicultural issues could have also limited the current study. Multicultural topics are often difficult to discuss amongst large groups of people and are sometimes considered taboo. If participants felt particularly sensitive about multicultural issues in general or about specific multicultural topics, the data could have been influenced as a result. This sensitivity could have stemmed from previous multicultural experiences or participant bias. Although the researcher took steps to minimize researcher bias, this, too, could have influenced data collection and analysis. In a similar vein, participants'

sensitivity to and/or previous experience of expressive arts or experiential learning activities could have influenced data outcomes. This might have included the quality and/or quantity of participants' previous experience, or the lack thereof, upon entering the course.

Another potential limitation to the study was the existence of dual relationships between students and course instructors. The primary instructor of the multicultural counseling course was the program coordinator for the counselor education program from which participants were recruited. Although the teaching assistant, researcher, and guest speakers did the majority of teaching and facilitation of class discussions and activities, the primary course instructor was present during each class and provided the final grade to all students upon completion of the course. Some participants also had this instructor serve as the professor for some of their previous master's-level coursework. The teaching assistant was a doctoral student who had previously co-taught other master's-level courses in the counseling program; she also served as a doctoral supervisor for some master's students. While only one participant mentioned that they had a dual relationship with the teaching assistant, other participants could have simply left out this detail. The researcher aided in co-teaching the class and facilitated the expressive arts activities, and had previously taught and/or supervised some participants. Therefore, power dynamics between the researcher and students might have resulted from the previously described dual relationships and could be considered a limitation of the study.

Minor issues arose related specifically to the expressive arts activities that could be considered limitations to the study, including access to space, availability of resources, and time constraints. Due to the large class size, number of instructors, and frequent presence of guest speakers, access to space during the experiential activities was a commodity. Participants reported that the close physical proximity was sometimes challenging when it came to creating

artifacts because it sometimes produced feelings of vulnerability or self-consciousness, lending students to make peer comparisons. Resources and art media provided to students for the purpose of the expressive arts activities were paid for out of pocket by researcher; while the researcher did their best to provide an array of options for students to work with, ideally there would have had a wider range of media available to participants so as not to stifle their creative expression.

Due to the fact that the study took place during a 5-week course during which students met for 1.5 hours each day, some participants felt there was not always sufficient time to complete their activities and also process them satisfactorily before the end of class. Preferably, students would have had time complete their creations, process their experience with a partner(s), and then share their experience of creating and process with the larger class for open discussion. Some days this ideal was achieved while other days class time ran out before students could hear from everyone in the class and enjoy the different perspectives shared. Lastly, a limitation of the study could simply involve the fact that there exist people who do not actually like art or do not experience any benefit from participating in the expressive activities. Additionally, those who already identify as artists, individuals who prefer highly structured cognitive processing, and those who are either overly passive or overcritical may have been particularly challenged by an expressive arts approach (Gladding, 2016).

With regard to the pre- and post-interviews, there was inherent risk that participants responded to the semi-structured questions in a way that they believed the researcher preferred, especially because of dual relationships existent between the researcher and some of the participants. The reflective journals provided to students to complete following each expressive arts activity included predetermined prompts; free journaling might have provided a different journaling experience for participants. Lastly, the evaluative aspect of the course could have

stifled participation of some individuals even though it was made clear to student participants that their grades would not be effected by participation in the study, lack of participation, or on the basis of their expressive arts artifacts and journals.

Implications

Implications derived both from the aforementioned limitations of the study, as well as from participant feedback via pre- and post- interviews and reflective journals. The implications have been separated into three separate sections including implications for counselor educators, implications for counselor education programs, and additional findings.

Implications for Counselor Educators

While ACA (2014) discourages dual relationships in clinical practice unless doing so is unavoidable or would be harmful to the client, the data suggests students' dual relationships with the course instructors increased participants' feelings of safety during class discussions and while partaking in the experiential activities. Therefore, counselor educators should keep in mind the positive power of dual relationships within the classroom setting and take note that students brand new to counseling programs or students from other departments who have no prior relationship with the course instructor are less likely to feel the sense of safety reported participants from the current study. Although experiential activities encourage healthy risk-taking for students, all participants are entitled to feel safe while partaking in expressive arts; furthermore, counselor educators would be smart to remember that feeling safer as opposed to less safe is more conducive to student learning.

Expressive arts techniques must always be done with intent and purpose. However, sometimes counselor educators do not have control over certain aspects of the classroom experience. Before choosing to implement expressive arts techniques in a classroom setting,

counselor educators should consider access to space, time, and resources. Sufficient space and time are needed in order for student participants to fully immerse themselves in the experiential process. Limiting class sizes might be one way counselor educators can provide student sufficient space. Enough space should be given that students feel comfortable creating alongside others; however, space should not be so vast that students cannot partake in interpersonal connection either during or after the activities. Processing with others is a major component of experiential learning and the data from this study suggests that interpersonal processing positively influences both classroom dynamics and students' ability to integrate course material.

With regard to time, counselor educators should plan for ample time for students to create and process their expressive arts activities. Courses with a strong emphasis on experiential learning might be better suited for full term semesters (traditionally during the fall and spring) as opposed to summer semesters or intercession classes occurring between full semester classes. Depending on the activity and class size, some experiential activities may need to be created and/or processed over multiple class periods. In this case, counselor educators should plan accordingly so that students can experience the full benefits of experiential learning.

Artistic media and resources are not always readily available to counselor educators. Prior to planning experiential classroom activities, counselor educators need to consider the number of participants for which resources will need to be provided and the range of media they want students to have access to decipher the cost of all necessary resources. Counselor educators can advocate for resource funding from their programs and departments by offering administrators evidence-based research that clarifies the benefits of experiential learning. Counselor educators can also seek out grant opportunities to help provide funds for artistic media and other necessary resources.

Counselor educators should also be wary that not all individuals are comfortable with participating in expressive or experiential activities; therefore, resistance may occur. Students with previous classroom experience of expressive arts activities appeared more open to the concept and willing to dive in initially, trusting the process. Students who had little to no experience with such activities felt much more hesitant and unsure of how the activities would benefit their learning. Counselor educators who choose to implement expressive arts activities should keep in mind where students are in their development and take students' previous experience into account. Expressive arts activities offer flexibility and range in media; therefore, counselor educators can tailor the activities to the developmental needs and comfort of the class. Furthermore, counselor educators must be sure that they or the facilitator of the experiential activities has ample training to implement such methods to maintain ethical practice and reduce risk of harm to participants.

Grading and evaluation of counseling students is certainly an important aspect of gatekeeping in the field. However, if counselor educators decide to utilize expressive arts within the classroom setting, they should consider keeping the experiential portion of the class out of students evaluations so as not to discourage participation or cause unnecessary pressure for students who are self-conscious or anxious about their expressive abilities. By making utilizing a participation point system or a pass/fail system, counselor educators can give course credit to students who participate in experiential activities without evaluating the students' process or end product. This helps ensure participant safety and encourages freedom and flexibility. Another way of reducing participant apprehensive related to grading and evaluation is to have a non-grading facilitator for all expressive or experiential activities.

The data suggests that students greatly benefit from hearing a variety of perspectives in a multicultural counseling course. Counselor educators should give consideration to this and attempt to include varied representation amongst instructors and guest speakers to offer multiple perspectives and increase student learning. One way to go about this is for counselor educators to get involved with local and state communities. By getting to know representatives of various cultures and populations in the community, counselor educators can bring in guest speakers who can share firsthand experiences and examples to enhance student learning. This should be done thoughtfully to facilitate deeper understanding and also to reduce the possibility of unintentional harm occurring to either students or guests.

Lastly, counselor educators who choose to implement experiential techniques in the classroom setting should have prior personal experience with the activities and be well-versed in how to process with students following the completion of the activities. When facilitated in a way that prioritizes respect and listening over judgment or making assumptions about others' experience, the data from the current study suggests the power of counselor educators modeling vulnerability. By modeling appropriate listening skills and respectful discourse, counselor educators can help encourage safe interpersonal interactions amongst students, even amidst the most difficult topics.

To create an environment conducive to the experiential learning process, counselor educators could reflect on the themes outlined in the current study. Educators could utilize them to help explain to students the various challenges and benefits that might result from their participation in the experiential learning process. Emphasizing that the process should be prioritized over the product and that discomfort is acceptable and even expected could help students relax into the experience. Facilitating connection amongst students and a safe

environment so that they can fully experience an emotional evolution as they absorb information and grow via integration could further enhance students' experiential learning process. Additionally, counselor educators could assist students in delineating between personal and professional identity as they work toward congruence and model for students how to attain and maintain knowledge and awareness regarding the subject matter, helping students to continue their education upon completion of the course or graduating from the program.

Implications for Counselor Education Programs

In order to support counselor educators interested in implementing experiential activities in the classroom to enhance student learning, counselor education program should consider providing the funding necessary to attain the needed resources. If counselor education programs do not have direct access to funding that can be used by counselor educators for the purpose of experiential activities, counselor education programs should consider assisting counselor educators in seeking funding options for the necessary resources.

According to the study's participants, the multicultural counseling course triggered a variety of emotional reactions. Furthermore, the expressive arts activities encouraged right brain emotional processing of left brain course content, further enhancing the range and depth of emotions experienced by participants. Due to the sensitive nature of multicultural topics and the power of experiential activities, counselor education programs should consider requiring students to be in individual counseling while enrolled in their programs or formulate a protocol to recommend counseling to students who might benefit from it., such as Roberts and Franzo (2013) have done. If individual counseling is inaccessible to students, counselor education programs should somehow require students to seek out and partake in additional self-care. This

would be an ethically appropriate way and help to ensure the emotional safety of students, prevent burnout related to emotional fatigue, and reduce the risk of harm occurring to students.

Participants of the current study suggested the use of a cohort model could make emotionally difficult classes, such as a multicultural counseling course, feel safer for students from the start because they would enter the course already feeling connected to their peers. Counselor education programs that do not utilize a cohort model should take time to consider alternative ways of providing a sense of safety and connection to students enrolled in process-based courses. Furthermore, participants reported that having a prior relationship with course instructors could encourage additional safety and comfort for students. Based on the data, counselor education programs should avoid using adjunct professors to teach multicultural courses or facilitate experiential activities.

Counselor education programs should purposely consider the timing of the multicultural counseling course within students' overall program of study. Participants felt such an intensive course would not be appropriate for counseling students in their first semester of graduate work. Similarly, placing students in a highly experiential class such as the one from this study during the first semester of their counselor programs may not be appropriate, assuming instructors want students to get the most possible out of the class experience. Counselor education programs should consider timing and student development before recommending courses.

Additional Findings

The researcher chose to outline Rogers (2004) within the literature review in Chapter II (p. 12) to enhance the argument based around the benefits of using creativity within counselor education. As the founder of the Person-Centered Expressive Therapy Institute, Rogers (2004) delineated eleven principles of person-centered expressive arts. These included 1) personal

growth via self-awareness and insight, 2) awareness and insight are attained by exploring our emotions, 3) when we channel our emotions via expressive arts they can be released and transformed, 4) all people are able to be creative, 5) the creative process is healing, 6) expressive arts help connect us to the unconscious and in turn instigates newfound awareness, 7) thinking and feeling and moving all affect and stimulate one another during the creative process, 8) the expressive arts process offers opportunity for deeper self-acceptance and greater self-esteem, 9) such personal growth is made possible via a safe environment, 10) a connection exists between our innermost selves and all other beings, and 11) as we discover our inner selves through the expressive arts process we also discover our relationship to the outer world (Rogers, 2004). While the researcher felt that these eleven principles provided a substantial rationale for use of expressive arts in the counseling classroom, they did not expect all eleven factors to be so blatantly apparent within the data. All ten participants unknowingly made reference to these eleven principles either in their journals or during one or both of their interviews. This finding further justifies the use of expressive techniques within counselor education.

The researcher chose the five expressive arts activities to utilize for the purpose of this study, purposefully selecting two introductory stage activities, one working stage activity, and two terminating activities to facilitate ethical practice and to help ease students in and out of the experiential portion of the class. While the carefully chosen activities purposefully paralleled the stages of the group counseling process, the researcher did not expect for the experiences of participants to similarly correspond to the group stages. The data from the current study suggested that participants experienced Yalom's (1995) eleven therapeutic factors necessary for individual change throughout the 5-week class. Multiple factors were evident within each theme, strengthening the relevance of the data and its implications for educational use.

This lived experience of participants was made possible due to the presence of Yalom's (1995) eleven therapeutic group factors necessary for individual change through the duration of the multicultural counseling course. These factors include 1) instillation of hope, 2) universality, 3) imparting information, 4) altruism, 5) the corrective recapitulation of the primary family group, 6) development of socializing techniques, 7) imitative behavior, 8) interpersonal learning, 9) group cohesiveness, 10) catharsis, and 11) existential factors (Yalom, 1995). These eleven therapeutic group factors necessary for individual change were evident within the data and are categorized by theme below in Table 13.

Instillation of hope refers to the participants' experience of hope as they witness changes in self and others. Universality refers to not feeling alone or in isolation during the struggle to learn and grow. Imparting information describes how taking on new knowledge and motivates and encourages members to change. Altruism describes how participants provide insight and assistance to one another, increasing confidence and efficacy. The corrective recapitulation of the primary family group refers to when a participant experiences countertransference by relating to another participant as they would with a person from their family of origin. The development of socializing techniques refers to learning new social skills that assist in making connections with others. Imitative behavior describes how participants' experience of modeling helps them learn how to deal with difficult emotions and encourages trying on new behaviors. Interpersonal learning describes how participants learn about relationships, communication, and giving or receiving interpersonal feedback. Group cohesiveness refers to a sense of belonging, which increases safety and encourages vulnerability. Catharsis refers to the release of powerful emotions, which is more easily done in a safe and nonjudgmental environment. Lastly,

existential factors concepts such as time and loss begin to surface, motivating participants to

support one another and work towards acceptance of such factors.

Table 13

Evidence of Yalom's (1995) 11 Therapeutic Group Factors

Thematic Label	Corresponding Group Factors
1. Process over product	a. Imitative behavior b. Interpersonal learning c. Group cohesiveness
2. Comfort in discomfort	a. Instillation of hope b. Imitative behavior c. Group cohesiveness d. Existential factors
3. Connection	a. Universality b. Altruism c. Corrective recapitulation d. Imitative behavior e. Interpersonal learning f. Group cohesiveness g. Catharsis
4. Emotional evolution	a. Instillation of hope b. Corrective recapitulation c. Group cohesiveness d. Catharsis
5. Experiential process	a. Altruism b. Development of socializing techniques c. Imitative behavior d. Group cohesiveness e. Catharsis
6. Identity	a. Imparting information b. Interpersonal learning c. Existential factors
7. Multiculturalism	a. Universality b. Development of socializing techniques c. Interpersonal learning

The second unexpected additional finding based in the data was a best practice model to guide counselors seeking multicultural competency. See Figure 4 below for a visual representation of this best practice model. Counselors working to attain multicultural competence should 1) strive for congruence, 2) practice continued education, 3) recognize privilege and intersectionality, and 4) serve as advocates and allies. When striving for congruence, counselors must identify incongruences within their lives, including their value-based biases and stereotypes. Those practicing continued education must do so across the lifespan and never become stagnant or satisfied with what they know because of the fact that all cultures fluctuate and evolve. The multiculturally competent counselor should recognize the concepts of privilege and intersectionality, be aware of where they lie on those spectrums, and be willing to acknowledge the real-life consequences of the concepts, both personal (i.e. microaggressions) and professional (i.e. laws/rights). Lastly, counselors have a duty to serve as advocates and allies. These roles not only include dissemination of multicultural knowledge but also modeling counselor dispositions such as authenticity, vulnerability, nonjudgment, empathy, and genuine curiosity and openness to understand others' perspectives and experiences.
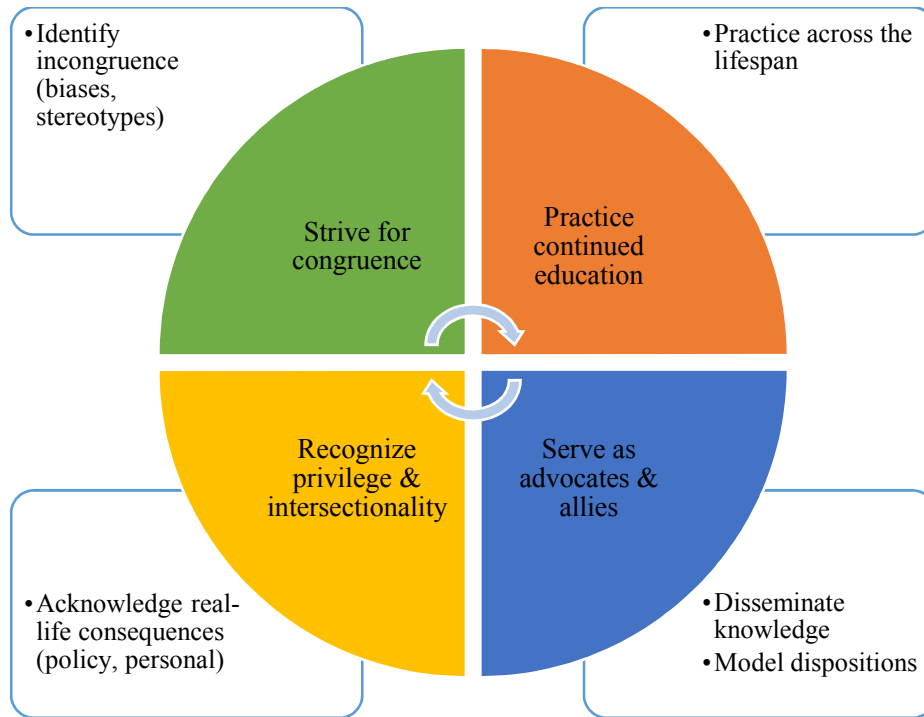
Figure 4. Best practice model for the multiculturally competent counselor.

The third and final unexpected additional finding of the current study was a best practice

model for implementing ethical and effective experiential teaching. See Figure 5 below for a

visual representation of this best practice model. The model is made up of seven interrelated

facets that educators should use as a guide when designing and implementing expressive or

experiential activities within the classroom. At the center of the model is intention and purpose.

Educators need to consider how their chosen activities relate to what students are meant to learn,

why they are choosing to utilize an experiential activity, and whether neuroscience or other

literature supports the use of the techniques. Following the chief concern of intention and

purpose are the remaining six facets, including 1) time, resources, and space, 2) non-evaluation,

3) promotion of safety, 4) normalizing discomfort, 5) modeling vulnerability, and 6) encouraging

bodily awareness. Facilitators of expressive or experiential activities need to ensure there is

adequate time for both the activity and processing of it, a variety of choices in media or

modification of activities to suit all participant needs, and enough space for the activity to comfortably be completed but not so much space that interpersonal connections cannot be easily made. Facilitators should also ensure that activities are non-evaluative and do not effect participants' grades so that process can be prioritized over product; grading and evaluation activities might negatively impact class dynamics or student willingness to partake. Safety is key to students fully immersing themselves mentally, emotionally, and physically in the activity without fear of judgment. By facilitators normalizing discomfort, they acknowledge for participants that it is normal for experiential activities to push one out of one's comfort zone because it is different than the norm. Facilitators can emphasize that this is how we grow and this is what counselors ask clients to do; therefore, it is important that counselors in training to so as well. Facilitators can also model vulnerability for participants, showing them that vulnerability is permissible and even encouraged for them to experience the full benefits of the activity. Lastly, facilitators need to emphasize bodily awareness; noticing one's body in addition to recognition of one's thoughts and feelings offers participants a more holistic experience.
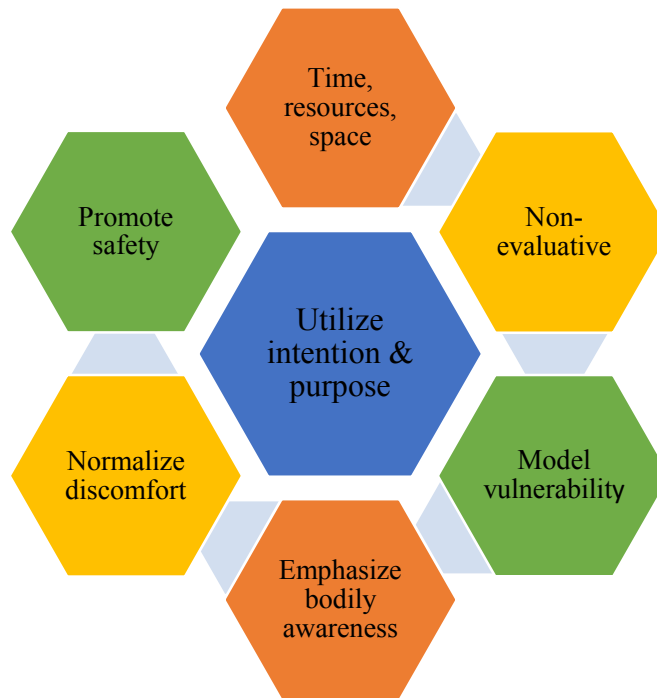
Figure 5. Best practice model for ethical and effective experiential learning.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendations for further researcher are based on the lived experience of the participants, the limitations of the study, and implications derived from these. The findings highlight numerous areas relevant to counselor educators and counselor education programs that would benefit from further study. These suggestions are detailed below.

Repeating a similar study to the current one that utilizes the exact same course set-up but taught during a full-length semester could further inform counselor educators and counselor education programs of the effectiveness of experiential learning, as well as best practice for how to teach master's-level counseling students multicultural knowledge and awareness.

Similarly, the same course set-up could be used to teach an entirely different class than the multicultural counseling course. For example, teaching a core counseling course such as Counseling Theory or an applied clinical course such as Counseling Practicum or Internship

could further inform counselor educators and counselor education programs of the impact of experiential learning or update best practices for how to most effectively teach such courses.

A comparison study of a control class and experimental class could also be beneficial in advising counselor educators and counselor education programs. For example, the control class would utilize traditional teaching methods, such as lecture and textbook readings, while the experimental class would implement experiential teaching methods, such as the ones used in the current study. An analysis of students' experiences and/or a measure of students' increased competence using a cultural competence scale such as the Quick Discrimination Index (QDI) (Ponterotto et al., 1995) or the Multicultural Counseling Knowledge and Awareness Scale (MCKAS) (Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Riger, & Austin, 2002) could further inform counselor educators and programs.

Lastly, not only is the type of experiential teaching used in the current study significant to the depth of learning for master's-level counselors-in-training, but experiential learning could benefit doctoral students who are counselor educators-in-training. The expressive arts techniques and discussion-based course set-up could be implemented in doctoral programs to further assess the impact of experiential learning on student integration of new information. In addition to utilizing experiential learning or expressive techniques with doctoral counseling students, such concepts might also be incorporated into a higher education in general. By implementing experiential learning or expressive arts pedagogy within related fields, researchers would have the opportunity to create and inform interdisciplinary study.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques on their multicultural competency

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as defined by ACA (2014) and CACREP (2016) standards. Moustakas' (1994) transcendental phenomenological approach guided the design of the study, participant recruitment, data collection, and data analysis. Participants were recruited from a master's-level multicultural counseling course, which took place over a 5-week period. The researcher implemented multiple methods of data collection to analyze participants' experiences, including semi-structured interviews, in-class interventions, reflective journals, and subsequent field notes and observations. During this process, trustworthiness and rigor were prioritized through researcher reflexivity and theoretical triangulation. Individual and composite textural descriptions informed the creation of individual and composite structural descriptions, which guided the researcher in explaining the phenomenon at hand. Analysis of participant data incorporated existing literature and research, person-centered theory, and social constructivism. The researcher considers the findings of this study an accurate representation of the essence of the individual lived experience of master's-level counseling students in a CACREP multicultural course that utilized expressive arts techniques.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

To:	Cameron Bailey Houin GRAD 117
From:	Douglas James Adams, Chair IRB Committee
Date:	07/11/2018
Action:	**Expedited Approval**
Action Date:	07/11/2018
Protocol #:	1802099646
Study Title:	Master's-Level Counseling Students' Experience of Expressive Arts Techniques in a CACREP Multicultural Counseling Course
Expiration Date:	06/17/2019
Last Approval Date:	

The above-referenced protocol has been approved following expedited review by the IRB Committee that oversees research with human subjects.

If the research involves collaboration with another institution then the research cannot commence until the Committee receives written notification of approval from the collaborating institution's IRB.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date.

Protocols are approved for a maximum period of one year. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without Committee approval. Please submit continuation requests early enough to allow sufficient time for review. Failure to receive approval for continuation before the expiration date will result in the automatic suspension of the approval of this protocol. Information collected following suspension is unapproved research and cannot be reported or published as research data. If you do not wish continued approval, please notify the Committee of the study closure.

Adverse Events: Any serious or unexpected adverse event must be reported to the IRB Committee within 48 hours. All other adverse events should be reported within 10 working days.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, study personnel, or number of participants, please submit an amendment to the IRB. All changes must be approved by the IRB Committee before they can be initiated.

You must maintain a research file for at least 3 years after completion of the study. This file should include all correspondence with the IRB Committee, original signed consent forms, and study data.

cc: Kristi Leann Perryman, Investigator

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter

Greetings,

My name is Cameron Houin, and I am a doctoral student in the Counselor Education & Supervision program at the University of Arkansas. I am seeking to collect data for my dissertation, and I need your help.

My research is about master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques while in their CACREP-required diversity or multicultural counseling course. You are receiving this email because you are currently enrolled in the CNED 5513 Counseling and Human Diversity class for summer 2018 and may be interested in participating in my study.

I am seeking students who are:

- willing to explore multicultural issues from a creative perspective, including the exploration of the student's own unique culture, biases, and privilege

- open to experiencing and processing expressive arts activities

- enrolled in CNED 5513 Counseling and Human Diversity for summer of 2018

With as busy as graduate students are, my goal is to make the participant experience as meaningful as possible while also as convenient as possible. Participants will be asked to:

- complete a brief online demographic questionnaire

- complete five journals during the course of the semester based on in-class activities

- attend one pre-course interview and one post-course interview (both held on campus for your convenience; each interview will be approximately 45-60 minutes in length)

- review each interview transcript for accuracy and further comment (via email)

Participation in the study is voluntary, and you can choose to stop participating at any point. If students choose not to participate, their grade in the course, standing in the program, and relationships with instructors and the researcher will not be affected.

You can contact me with questions at cbhouin@email.uark.edu or reach out to my dissertation chair, Dr. Kristi Perryman, at klperry@uark.edu.

I am extremely grateful for your consideration.

Thankfully,

Cameron B. Houin, M.Ed., LAC, NCC

Doctoral Candidate, University of Arkansas

Appendix C: Informed Consent

Master's-Level Counseling Students' Experience of
Expressive Arts Techniques in a CACREP Multicultural Counseling Course

Informed Consent

Investigator: Cameron B. Houin, M.Ed., LAC, NCC
University of Arkansas
479-575-6808
cbhouin@uark.edu

Faculty Advisor: Kristi Perryman, Ph.D., LPC-S
University of Arkansas
479-575-6521
klperry@uark.edu

Description: The purpose of this phenomenological study is to master's-level counseling students' experience of expressive arts techniques in their CACREP multicultural counseling course. As part of your participation, you will be asked to sit for two separate semi-structured interviews with questions pertaining to your individual experience of the expressive arts techniques implemented in class. Each interview should take approximately 1-2 hours. The first interview will be scheduled before the start of the course; the second interview will be scheduled following the completion of the course. All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed using the participants' code. The audio recordings of participants' interviews will be destroyed upon the completion of the dissertation defense, which is estimated to take place during the 2019 Spring semester. Additionally, you will complete a weekly journal that addresses issues related to multicultural competence and your experience of participating in and processing expressive arts techniques. Demographic information will also be collected including age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, educational background, marital status, religious/spiritual affiliation, and completed semesters of graduate coursework. Participant responses will be collected via paper survey.

Risks and Benefits: Potential risks include an increased awareness of areas of struggle within your multicultural knowledge, awareness, and/or competence. In the extreme case that you experience distress as a result of your participation in this study, a referral will be made to a Licensed Mental Health Professional. Benefits include becoming more self-aware of the conditions unique to your multicultural knowledge, awareness, and competence.

Compensation: Compensation will not be offered for participation in this study.

Voluntary Participation: You are free to refuse to participate in the research or to stop participating at any point during the semester. A decision not to participate will bring no negative consequences to you.

Confidentiality: Your responses to this study (weekly journals, interview transcripts, demographic information) will be collected and stored in a secure location. All identifying information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy. In all reports of the collected data, participants' confidentiality will be protected via the use of a participant code.

Questions: If you have any questions about the research, please feel free to contact me through the email listed above. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University's IRB Coordinator, Ro Windwalker, 109 MLKG Building, 479-575-2208, irb@uark.edu.

I have read and understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature: _____   Date: _____

Investigator's signature: _____   Date: _____

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire

1) Age: _____

2) Ethnicity: _____ American Indian or Alaska Native   _____ Asian American

   _____ Black or African American   _____ White or Caucasian

   _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander   _____ Hispanic or Latino

   _____ Other (please specify: _____)

3) Gender identity: _____

4) Sexual orientation: _____

5) Highest degree earned: _____ Technical/vocational   _____ Specialist

   _____ Associate's   _____ Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., J.D, etc.

   _____ Bachelor's   _____ Master's

   _____ Other (please specify: _____)

6) Marital status: _____ Married   _____ Life Partner

   _____ Single   _____ Widowed

   _____ Divorced   _____ Other (please specify: _____)

7) Religious or spiritual affiliation: _____

8) How many semesters of graduate coursework in a CACREP-accredited counseling program

have you completed? _____

Appendix E: Semi-structured Pre-course Interview Protocol

Preliminary script: "This is [interviewer's name]. Today is [day and date]. It is _____ o'clock, and I am here in [location] with [participant ID]."

1. Have you ever taken a graduate-level multicultural course?

    a. If yes, describe the teaching methods that were used

    b. If no, describe the teaching methods that are most often used in your graduate-level courses.

2. Describe how do you find that you best learn (teaching methods-wise) in terms of your graduate studies.

    a. Could you provide a concrete example?

3. What does "multicultural competence" mean to you?

    a. What purpose do you think the concept serves in counseling/counselor education?

4. What does "multicultural awareness" mean to you?

    a. What purpose do you think the concept serves in counseling/counselor education?

5. What do you think should be gained from a multicultural graduate-level course?

6. What do you think is the most difficult part about attaining multicultural competence and/or awareness?

7. Tell me about your experiences with expressive arts and counseling or counselor education.

8. Describe your experiences thus far with expressive arts in your graduate-level coursework.

9. Tell me about how you think implementing expressive art techniques might influence the dynamics in a class.

a. Tell me about how you think implementing expressive art techniques might influence the way in which students integrate the course material.

10. Tell me about your reaction to the idea of your instructor(s) using expressive arts techniques in your graduate-level multicultural course.

   a. What pros/positives do you foresee resulting from the use of expressive art techniques in a multiculturally focused class?

   b. What cons/negatives do you foresee resulting from the use of expressive art techniques in a multiculturally focused class?

11. Do you believe it is possible to teach about culture or cultural experiences through expressive arts techniques in order to increase counseling students' multicultural competency/awareness?

   a. Are there certain identities that would be more challenging to teach via this method than others?

   b. Whether yes or no, tell me about the reasoning for your answer.

12. Are there any remaining topics you would like to talk about that we have yet to discuss?

Appendix F: Semi-structured Post-course Interview Protocol

Preliminary script: "This is [interviewer's name]. Today is [day and date]. It is _____ o'clock, and I am here in [location] with [participant ID]."

1. Tell me about your experience taking a graduate-level multicultural course.

    a. Describe the teaching methods that were used and how you experienced these.

2. Describe what was most beneficial to your learning (teaching methods-wise) in this course.

    a. Could you provide a concrete example?

3. Tell me what "multicultural competence" means to you and how your take on this concept this has or has not changed since taking this course.

    a. What purpose do you think the concept serves in counseling/counselor education?

4. Tell me what "multicultural awareness" mean to you and how your take on this concept this has or has not changed since taking this course.

    a. What purpose do you think the concept serves in counseling/counselor education?

5. What do you think should be gained from a multicultural graduate-level course?

    a. Tell me about what you have gained from this course.

6. What has been the most difficult part about seeking to attain multicultural competence and/or awareness?

7. Tell me about your experiences with expressive arts in this course.

8. Tell me about how you think implementing expressive art techniques might influence the dynamics in a class.

    a. Tell me about how you think implementing expressive art techniques might influence the way in which students integrate the course material.

9. Tell me about your reaction to the idea of your instructor(s) using expressive arts techniques in future graduate-level courses.

    a. What pros/positives did you see result from the use of expressive art techniques in this course?

    b. What cons/negatives did you see result from the use of expressive art techniques in this course?

10. Do you believe it is possible to teach about culture or cultural experiences through expressive arts techniques in order to increase counseling students' multicultural competency/awareness?

    a. Are there certain identities that would be more challenging to teach via this method than others?

    b. Whether yes or no, tell me about the reasoning for your answer.

11. Are there any remaining topics you would like to talk about that we have yet to discuss?

Appendix G: Weekly Reflective Journal

Activity: _____

Please respond to the in-class activity by reflecting on the following questions:

1) What did you take away from today's experiential activity?

2) How did you feel during this experiential activity (emotional, physical reactions, etc.)?

3) How might this activity affect the rest of your day and/or week?

4) What might you change about the activity if you used it in the future to teach about concepts

such as "multicultural awareness" and/or "multicultural competence" and why?

5) Additional comments:

Appendix H: Three-Pronged Data Analysis Process

Ravitch and Carl (2016)

Data organization and management:

- Develop a plan for data organization and management
- Consistently organize and name/level all data sources
- Develop a rationale for the use of (and decisions surrounding) transcription
- Engage in pre-coding of the data before formally beginning coding process
- Create a timeline

Writing and representation:

- Writing occurs continuously throughout the entire research process as a way to make sense of and systematically interpret (analyze) data
- Memos used extensively throughout analysis for theoretical and personal reflection
- Develop representations (visual and written) of the data and your interpretations

Immersive engagement:

- Conduct multiple readings of the data
- Engage in data analysis strategies including coding, connecting strategies, and dialogic engagement
- Generate themes and categories
- Subject these themes and categories to scrutiny through validity strategies and multiple readings
- Look for alternative explanations
- Participate in dialogic engagement exercises

Appendix I: Interactive Model of Research Design

Maxwell (2005)

Goals:
- Learn how effective counselor educators are when teaching graduate-level multicultural courses through the use of expressive arts
- Offer counselor educators an alternative method to tradition teaching pedagogy that is evidence-based, applicable to all learning styles, and broaches sensitive subjects such as personal culture
- Increase graduate-level students' self-awareness, processing skills, and ability to empathize with those that are other than themselves

Conceptual Framework:
- Prior research on/personal experience with multicultural competency
- Prior research on/personal experience with the expressive arts
- Constructivist theory
- Person-centered theory
- Transcendental, phenomenological approach
- ACA and CACREP scope of practice, including the MSJCCs
- Humanist approach
- Neuroscience lens

Research Questions:
1. How do master's-level counseling students experience exp. arts techniques within their multicultural coursework?
   a. How do master's-level counseling students describe their experience of experiential teaching methods?
2. How do master's-level counseling students experience the concepts of "multicultural awareness and competence" before, during, and after they are taught about the concepts via expressive arts techniques?

Methods:
- Sampling: purposive
  - Convenience, criterion
- Participants: graduate-level counseling students at the University of Arkansas taking the CNED 5513 multicultural course, offered annually
- Data Collection:
  - Qualitative – semi-structured interviews (pre- and post-semester), observation of participants via prolonged engagement, field notes, participant reflective journals

Trustworthiness:
- Credibility: prolonged engagement, triangulation, and member checks
- Transferability: thick description/quotes from interview transcripts, purposive sampling, and field notes
- Dependability: Maxwell's (2005) model and Ravitch & Carl's (2016) process
- Confirmability: triangulation and structured reflexivity
- Theoretical validity: lit. review
- Limitations: participant demographics, sample size, and researcher bias due to 'Native' role & personal experience