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Separation From and Reconstruction of Home: A Study of Immigrant Expressive Therapists

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SEPARATION FROM AND RECONSTRUCTION OF HOME:
A STUDY OF IMMIGRANT EXPRESSIVE THERAPISTS

A DISSERTATION

(submitted by)

DANA ALBERT-PROOS

In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

LESLEY UNIVERSITY
July 30, 2015

Dissertation Approval Form



Lesley University
Graduate School of Arts & Social Sciences
Ph.D. in Expressive Therapies Program

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the subject of *home*—specifically separating from and reconstructing home—to better understand the concept of home and its role in the immigration experience and the effectiveness of expressive arts therapy as a treatment method for immigrants.

The literature supported that leaving one's home and recreating another are major parts of the immigration experience. Previous studies found that these experiences can raise fundamental questions about where and what home is (e.g., Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Malone & Dooley, 2006; Philip & Ho, 2010; Wiles, 2008).

This study used qualitative methods to explore the research question: *How do immigrant expressive therapists conceive separation from and reconstruction of home for themselves and for their clients?*

Ten expressive therapist immigrants participated in two semi-structured interviews for the study. The face-to-face interview included artistic exploration of the research subject. Participants could choose any art form and sometimes chose to work with more than one art modality. They were encouraged to complete free-writing following each art-making. A follow-up telephone interview provided an opportunity to review their interview transcriptions and art-making and share thoughts and reflections.

The researcher used art-based methods to conduct this study and analyze data. As part of the analysis, the researcher created a poetic text that combined metaphors, quotes, and experiences the participants shared and from this text, a film that extended understanding of the interview content as a whole.

Three themes emerged: (1) belonging-not belonging, (2) home here-home there; home nowhere-home everywhere, and (3) old me-new me (evolution of identity), and the art connected the themes. Art provided an additional language that reinforced dualities participants sometimes felt, contributed to experiences of reconstructing home, and provided a way to see and express internal experiences in an external form. The participants' own understanding of what makes them feel "at home" furthered understanding of their work with therapy clients through the arts. The study provides valuable understanding of immigrants' emotional and psychological experiences and the effectiveness of using the arts in the therapeutic process, and thus furthers understanding of the role and function of home in the mental health field.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This research study examines the subject of *home*, specifically the experience of separating from home and reconstructing a home for immigrant expressive therapists.

This research grew from my own personal experience as an immigrant and as an expressive arts therapist working with migrants (immigrants and refugees) from around the world for the last decade. Ten years ago, I relocated to the United States from Israel. During the ensuing years, I have gone through a process referred to as *acculturation*, the process of contact between groups of different cultural origins (Lemzoudi, 2007). This process for me included separating from familiar surroundings, adjusting to a new culture with different customs, communicating in a new language, learning new body language and gestures, and adjusting to a new physical climate.

Parallel to this process, the experience of relocation raised deeper feelings of loss, questions about belonging, and issues around identity. My experience and that of others around me was beyond the *culture shock* found in the literature as typically occurring in the immigration experience (Oberg, 2006). Instead, it revealed a much deeper emotional experience that affected my perception of the world, myself, and my ability to feel at home.

Being an immigrant surrounded by other immigrants and working as an expressive arts therapist with adults, children, and families who had migrated to the United States from around the world, I have noticed the concept of home is a psychological theme for many people. I was curious to understand what people mean when they say, “I can feel at home here,” or, “I miss my home.”

I noticed that the idea of home and the experience of longing for home as result of migration could teach us not only about the migration experience, but also about the very nature of people to “feel at home.” I dug deeply into the meanings of home and looked for common phrases that relate to feeling at home: *There’s no place like home; Home is where the heart is; It feels like home; Homesick; Home away from home; Make yourself at home; It has a homey feeling; It struck home.* These phrases emphasize the feeling of longing often associated with the idea of home.

However, once one starts examining the meaning of home, questions arise. To what is the feeling of longing directed? What things make us feel at home? What does home mean for different people? Does feeling at home necessarily connect with a physical place? What kind of emotional fulfillment does feeling at home serve? How is the idea of home expressed both literally and metaphorically? In particular, what role does feeling at home play for immigrants?

Having relocated to the United States from Israel, I naturally was surrounded by other Jewish Israeli immigrants who often discussed their immigration experience. I noticed that the subject of home was present in everyday discussions. Many conversations repeated questions such as *Can I feel at home here?* and *Where is my home?* I became aware that different cultural, ideological, social, and political aspects might be associated with the concept of home. This study expanded from these personal experiences to research how the concept of home may be an emotional-psychological place shared by people from different countries of origin.

I have always used the arts to express myself. I originally concentrated on drama and movement, but in the years after I relocated to the United States, I also found different forms of visual art to be meaningful tools. In my own immigration process and experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home, artistic expression mirrored my internal experiences: mask-making, dramatic explorations, paintings, shadow puppetry, authentic movement, and film making. In an art-based course as part of my PhD studies, I made a short film that discussed the dual homes I felt I have, as well the internal dualities I experienced. Throughout the film, a split screen covered events from my two homes and projected to the internal sense of duality I carried. The arts provided me another language—another way to express my emotions and experiences that I could not always put into words. My artistic explorations bridged my initial feelings of separation of home and my continuing reconstruction of a sense of home. In my professional work, I also found art tremendously helpful for the individuals I worked with who had experiences similar to mine. Art in its different modalities felt like *home* to me. Therefore, it was only natural to use art in my research as well.

Pilot Study

In my pilot study (Albert-Proos, 2013), I interviewed five participants (one male, four female), all expressive therapists who had immigrated to the United States from various countries and had lived in the United States for a minimum of 10 years. I chose these participants because of their understanding of the emotional impact of life changes and the dynamics of therapy. In addition, these therapists used art as a tool to express and work through emotional challenges. Two participants' countries of origin were Switzerland; the others' were Columbia, South Africa, and France.

The hour-long interviews included open-ended questions on the influence of immigration on the participants' sense of home, sense of self, and clinical experience working with migrants. At the end of each interview, I asked the participants to respond artistically to their interview content using any art modality (i.e., music, movement, music, visual art, writing, or drama). Participants could choose from researcher-provided art materials (e.g., collage materials, paint, crayons, and clay) to explore their experiences of the interview's discussion. After each art exploration, I asked the participants about their experiences of the art-making.

The pilot study revealed the participants discussed three main subjects:

1. Definition of home;
2. Separation from home; and
3. Recreation of home.

Home was a central concept for the study participants, but the way participants defined home varied. That is, they defined home both as a physical place (that included country of birth, childhood home, current home, family, and weather) and as an emotional, internal feeling such as familiarity, belonging, or emotional security. The participants spoke about their experiences of internal conflict; feeling different; sensing belonging and feelings of duality; longing and nostalgia; and sensing loss and grief (of language, connections, humor, and parts of self). The participants also shared experiences of recreation of home that included connecting with a community, collecting objects that connect with home, engaging with activities that increase sense of home (such as gardening), and maintaining contact with their countries of origin by video telecommunications (e.g., Skype) or otherwise staying updated with counties of origin.

One theme that kept repeating was the creation of an internal sense of home—the feeling that home does not relate to a concrete physical place and when experienced internally, one can feel home everywhere. The participants shared that the use of the art provided a sense of integration they had lacked and contributed to their “internal sense of home.” They achieved an inner sense of home through art exploration, writing in their native language, and spiritual practices.

Terms and Definitions

“Migration is a difficult concept to define,” claimed Wu (2003, p. 1131), who discussed the subject of migration in the *International Encyclopedia of Marriage and Family*. When reviewing literature for this study, I found no single definition used by all scholars to define individuals who move from one country to another.

Migration/Migrant/International Migration

The *migration* process involves the movement of individuals between countries or within a nation. *Migrants* can be described as people who moved willingly as well as refugees who needed to escape their countries of origin as a result of war, danger, or other difficult circumstances (Wu, 2003). The term *international migration* describes individuals who moved from one country to another willingly or as refugees.

Immigration/Immigrant/Sojourner

Immigration is mostly used to describe the movement of individuals from one country to another (Akhtar, 1995). *Immigrants* are generally individuals who moved willingly to another country with a plan to settle as permanent residents in the receiving country (Wu, 2003). The term *sojourners* differs from *immigrants* in that it describes

individuals who move from one country to another but consider themselves temporary residents.

Migration Versus Immigration in this Study

The choice of terminology for this research became complex. Some scholarly writings used terms that did not necessarily describe the population of this research. For example, one scholar might have used the term *migrants* to describe individuals who moved willingly to another country, which other scholars may have defined them as *immigrants*. In addition, the terms may become vague and unclear within the dynamic experience of migration. For example, some people who become permanent residents may plan to return one day to their country of origin.

Thus, in the literature review (Chapter 2), I defer to the term *immigrants* to describe individuals who moved between countries unless the authors specified other terms with significant bearing on this research. Further, the review will include the circumstances that affected the relocation because the reasons that came prior to the immigration decision can tremendously affect the individual's overall experience.

All participants in this research are voluntary migrants to the United States who decided to stay after their study periods. According to Madison (2006), *voluntary migrants* are immigrants who moved by choice for new opportunities, mainly in higher education. Not all the study participants defined themselves as *immigrants* or expressed their wish to live permanently in the United States, and often times that exact dilemma reflected the complexities that this research offers.

Current Study and Implications

This qualitative, art-based dissertation study grew from the pilot study findings. Through art and semi-structured interviews, ten participants (different from the five who participated in the pilot study) who were immigrant expressive therapists from various countries explored their experiences of separation from home and reconstruction of home in their personal and professional lives. All study participants were voluntary migrants who came to the United States for higher education and stayed after completing their studies.

The purpose of the current study was to examine the participants' experiences and perceptions about their processes of separation and reconstruction of home in their personal and professional lives. I hoped to gain a better understanding of the concept of home and its role in the immigration experience. Moreover, this research examined the effectiveness of the use of expressive arts therapy as a method for treatment for immigrants.

The study gave significant attention to images, metaphors, and symbols through art-making for the participants as well as for me as the researcher. Art was a main method of inquiry in all stages of the research: developing the research topic, collecting information, and analyzing information the participants shared. As part of the process on interpreting and analyzing the experimental sessions with participants, I observed metaphors and images the participants shared and then created a film that provided another layer of understanding the study results.

This study, to the best of my knowledge, was the first to examine the concept of home for immigrants through the expressive arts therapies realm. The dissertation not

only provided an essential observation of the complex experiences immigrants often undergo through the role of home in that process, but also can teach about other psychological human experiences. Home in this study was found to be connected with three dimensions: a physical place, an internal emotional state that relates to one's sense of belonging, and—even more than that—the idea that being at home is a metaphor for feeling complete and whole in the present moment.

This study emphasized the role of the arts as a bridge between the old and the new, between separation and reconstruction of home, and between the external and the internal. It explored how certain art modalities can function as home for certain people or stir feelings of homelessness in others. In either case, art-making was found to be helpful for the participants not only in their personal experiences of separation and reconstruction of home, but also in their capability to create a sense of home for their clients. Perry (2003) explored the role of metaphors and images in the process of creation and said that the journey starts in the place of transition between the physical and the imaginary, between the rational and the fantastic, and between the conscious and the unconscious mind. The results of this study reflected such “between” places and the ability of art to bridge, integrate, and connect the three dimensions of home: physical, emotional, and metaphorical.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

The concept of *home* is complex and its meaning can vary from person to person (Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Smith, 1994; Tucker, 1994). Home not only connects to a certain physical place, but also relates emotionally to a sense of belonging and safety (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009). Some writers claimed that longing and grieving for a lost home and trying to return home—whether metaphorically or in reality—is a universal experience and that understanding the universal need of people to feel at home and to belong is essential in psychotherapy (Akhtar, 1999; Lichtenstein, 2009; Metari, 2005; Seiden, 2009).

Many scholars described the concept of home as a central aspect of the immigrant experience because immigrants leave their homes and need to adjust to a new one (e.g., Despres, 1991; Lichtenstein, 2009; Lydon, 2002; Magat, 1999; Mallet, 2004; Malone & Dooley, 2006; Wiles, 2008). The process of immigration is often followed by a sense of unfamiliarity and estrangement (Hayes, 2007; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). Immigrants may experience unfamiliarity in many aspects of their everyday lives, such as food, music, politics, language, and ways of communication. Further, this unfamiliarity might involve a tremendous sense of loss (Philipp & Ho, 2010). Movement from the familiar to the unfamiliar may leave immigrants with a need to redefine their meaning of home (Ahmed, 1999). For example, Silva (2009) described the home immigrant experience as a “jumbled collection [of] sensory experiences” that become “dearer and more elusive—a form of organized chaos that we try to make sense of as we search for our own sense of self” (p. 694).

The therapeutic experience can function as a home for people (Metari, 2005). Rogers (1993) claimed that therapy can and should create an environment of belongingness and safety and that artistic creation can provide a sense of connection and belonging. In expressive arts therapy, artistic expression bridges language barriers and functions as a powerful method of treatment (Chebaro, 1998). As such, writers have noted that one feels at home when one experiences a sense of belonging (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009)

Concept of Home

Many authors (e.g., Despres, 1991; Gurney, 1997; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Mallet, 2004; Metari, 2005; Seiden, 2009; Silva, 1999; Smith, 1994) noted how early research often took for granted or ignored the complex, multi-dimensional concept of home; lacked empirical studies that examined the concept; or failed to examine the deeper levels of meaning inherent within the concept of home. They then attempted to address the concept in terms of a physical and emotional home, as a place of belonging, and as a metaphor to symbolize the self.

Physical Home and Emotional Home

A house is not necessary a home, claimed Tucker (1994) who undertook a philosophical exploration of the concept of home. Tucker believed that home combines “single-level homes, such as an emotional home, a geographical home, a cultural home” (p. 181). These “single-level” homes differ from person to person and can change throughout life. Moreover, one person can have several of these homes simultaneously. Tucker emphasized the gap between a physical or actual home and an ideal home and the need to create a match between both.

Mallett (2004) collected and reviewed various theoretical writings from the fields of anthropology, sociology, history, philosophy, and psychology. She and others noted that the question of what home means might seem very simple but is actually quite complex (Despres, 1991; Silva, 1999; Smith, 1994).

Home, Mallett (2004) found, has been interpreted as a space, place, feeling, practice, and state of being in the world—and gender, culture, family and the self affect the way it is perceived. Additionally, Kabachnick, Regulska, and Mitchneck (2010) who examined the conceptualization of home by displaced Georgians in Abkhazia stated home can be “constructed on a variety of scales, such as town, a ‘homeland’...or even the entire earth as seen in some religious or environmentalists discourses” (p. 319). Thus, they concluded that home should not be defined merely as a material, physical place.

Smith (1994) examined essential qualities people tend to attribute to a house in order for them to consider it a home and found that feeling at home is not only defined as a physical place. Smith used “the critical incident technique” to examine what people associate with “good or poor” examples of past and present homes (p. 34). After her study participants shared examples, Smith determined which qualities they found essential for the processes of both the home-making process and feeling at home in a place. Eleven couples and one single female from various cultural backgrounds participated in the study. At least one member of each couple was a psychology student at the University of Queensland, Australia. Smith found three categories connected to home:

- Physical (e.g., location and aesthetic aspects);

- Social (e.g., internal and external relationships); and
- Personal (e.g., atmosphere within the house, privacy, freedom, and security).

Smith concluded that the participants frequently defined a place as home when they associated the place with a “positive psychological climate” (p. 43) related to feelings of warmth and care.

Scholars in the field of psychotherapy also examined the idea that the concept of home connects to deep emotional places. For example, the psychoanalyst Seiden (2009) referred to home and longing for home as one major psychoanalytic concept. He collected narratives, theories, and examples from his psychoanalytic work with clients and concluded that “mourning for a lost home, longing, and making real and symbolic efforts to return to one’s idea of home is a universal experience” (p. 191). He shared that raising clinical awareness of the fundamental experience of longing for home would also broaden the understanding of psychoanalytical concepts such as safety, separation-individuation, and attachment.

Lichtenstein (2009), who was also a psychoanalyst, wrote the article “Born in Exile: There is no Place as Home” in response to Seiden’s (2009) article. Lichtenstein agreed that longing for home is a universal element of life that can reveal essential components of the human psyche. However, he also claimed that longing for home can serve as a home itself. “Home is where we find our longing” and a sense of being at home is characterized by a feeling of orientation and groundedness (or, safety and security) that touch “some form of truth” (p. 452). Lichtenstein considered whether this experience of home is real or “our fantasy of its authenticity” (p. 454). For example, he proposed that two people who live in the same house might have a different sense of

home. Therefore, he concluded that home is a “narrative that works to create the idea of safe enclosure” (p. 454) that does not necessarily connect to a real experience.

Home and Sense of Belonging

Feeling at home relates to a sense of belonging (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009)—one of humanity’s basic needs. Maslow (1954) claimed in his “hierarchy of needs” that each person needs to fulfill basic needs to experience self-fulfillment. He saw belongingness as a top need. After physiological and safety needs are positively met, the need to feel a sense of belonging and being loved is the third level in the hierarchy of needs. Maslow addressed how writers and poets described belongingness and how people express the challenging circumstance of being rootless, moving, or “torn from one’s home and family, and friends and neighbors” (p. 43). He claimed that when various life situations prevent achievement of the more basic needs in the pyramid, higher-level needs will be interrupted as well and thus affect the person’s well-being.

Silva (2009) stressed that a sense of belonging has a much wider meaning when connected to home. It is a connection felt in the inner self, identity, and somatic self. Silva focused on the internal, emotional sense of home and noted that for many the concept of home is “a place where no one questions your right to be; a place of belonging that points to your history, your past, an archive of sorts that metaphorically documents a lineage, that marks you as non-alien” (p. 694).

Magat (1999) also noted the relationship between feeling at home and experiencing a sense of belonging. He claimed that home could be a feeling, a symbol, or a structure. He differentiated what he called the “little home” from the “big

home” (p. 120). The little home includes everyday activities; the big home connects to the feeling that one belongs. Magat’s concept of the big home follows Silva’s (2009) idea of home as a locus of belonging: “the place of ultimate return” (p. 120).

Magat (1999) explored the relationship between the cultures of origin and the ability of immigrants from that culture to create a home in a different country. He conducted a qualitative study in which he examined the meaning of home for two cultural groups—Israeli Jews and Japanese—who lived in Canada. Magat found that both the Israelis and the Japanese were strongly attached to their national identity and the association each group had to the concept of home affected their ability to “create home away from their native land” (p. 122). For example, the Japanese associated home with a place that provides their basic needs—a “little home.” However, for the Israelis home meant a place of “belonging and loyalty”—a “big home” (p. 119), and thus “fragmented homes mean fragmented selves” (p. 137). Therefore, if home means having a deep sense of belonging and being integrated fully in the new culture, then the groups differed considerably.

Some scholars have resisted the approach that the meaning of home should be merely a sense of belonging or a haven. For example, Wardhaugh (1999) claimed, “Such perspectives offer an understanding of the home as a source of order and identity, but they neglect a wider social analysis” (p. 96). She examined homeless men and women’s experiences of home and homelessness and interviewed women she defined as “homeless at home” (p. 91) who experienced abuse or violence in their homes. She emphasized that the study participants might connect being at home with feelings of insecurity and fear

rather than a sense of belonging. Wright (2009) also concluded that a person can *be* at home, but not *feel* at home.

Ahmed (1999) discussed the idea of home and belonging in the context of migration. She concluded that in the process of migration the journey itself provides a sense of belonging. “The journey between homes provides the subject with the contours of a space of belonging” (p. 330). This journey and the “narrative of leaving home produces too many homes and hence no home” (p. 330). Ahmed claimed that the experience of migration provides the migrant an opportunity to question deeply the “relationship between identity, belonging, and home” (p. 331).

Furthermore, Ahmed (1999) concluded that a person’s home in the country of origin is not necessarily associated with a sense of belonging. For her personally as an immigrant who relocated from England to the United States, England had never really felt like home. She stated, “Home is not simply our fantasies of belonging—where do I originate from—but that it is sentimentalized as a space of belonging (home is where the heart is)” (p. 341). Therefore, migration can provide a space to examine “the homelessness of migration and exile” (p. 339) and by that identify what home is.

Madison (2006) also discussed the complexity of the concept of home and its relation to a sense of belonging. He conducted interviews as part of his PhD research with “voluntary migrants” (p. 238) who chose to leave their homeland to explore new opportunities. He examined with participants whom he called “co-researchers” (p. 242) the deep complex experiences and meanings that contain contradictions such as “home and not at home,” “belonging and never quite belonging,” and “yearning and loss” (pp. 245-246).

Madison (2006) found that the tension from contradictory experiences, meanings, and perceptions influenced his co-researchers who viewed belonging with “intense ambivalence” (p. 246). For example, he stated his co-researchers not only felt a sense of not belonging in their transitions to a new country, but also unexpectedly had carried a sense of not belonging even before they emigrated. The co-researchers noted that they felt this sense because they felt “different” from others. Moreover, they diminished the society and culture they left behind as being “provincial” and “homogenous” (p. 246).

Similarly, Hayes (2007) examined the extent to which the meaning of home depends on the perception of the self in relation to others. She found a paradox with regard to the sense of belonging for the participants in her study (voluntary migrants). She determined that the actual transition and displacement of the participants provided them with the greatest understanding of their feelings of belonging.

Hayes (2007) stressed how feeling at home is deeply, fundamentally connected to one’s self and developed through a process of “(be)coming one’s self” (p. 6). Becoming one’s self comes from a search for an “ultimate sense of purpose in life” (p. 6) rather than from familiarity or relationships with a place or others. Further, the participants’ meaning of home changed at different stages of their migration process and these stages are in constant transition. Hayes concluded that the process of migration involves a process she called “(be)coming home”—an ongoing internal and external process of “creating and recreating home” (p. 14) that keeps developing and evolving.

Hoersting and Jenkins (2011) found that something people feel they belong to or refer to as home can affect the stages in their lives. The authors were interested in learning the effects on adults of their childhood relocation experiences. Their study

explored the experiences of 475 adults who spent at least two childhood years (under age 18 years) living in different cultures as, for example, children of missionary or military parents. They found that participants who were strongly attached to the culture of the group in which they had grown up (such as so-called “military brats”) tended to have higher self-esteem and lower “cultural homelessness” (pp. 19-20). The authors defined *cultural homelessness* as the lack of connection to any particular culture.

Home as a Metaphor

In his book, *Bait Lanefesh (A Home for the Soul)* Metari (2005) shared from a psychoanalyst’s standpoint the deep emotional impact that sense of home and its absence have on the human psyche. He identified three dimensions in the experience of home:

1. Home as a physical reality;
2. Home as an emotional experience; and
3. Home as a metaphor (the inner self as home).

Metari (2005) believed that home can be an object for emotional needs, desires, and deep wishes and can teach a great deal about the human soul. He discussed that many of his clients repeatedly brought up the idea that one has or does not have *a home in the world*. Metari questioned this idea and wondered why the experience of having a home in the world is often present in therapy and what we can learn from it. He explored both the universality and the uniqueness of the experience of home. Metari claimed that being aware and providing space in therapy for all three levels of home (physical home, emotional sense of home, and home as a metaphor for the human soul) could contribute to clients’ greater inner connectedness and mental health.

Metari (2005) found that *returning home* is an essential human experience that comes up in therapy interaction. He discussed people's basic need to feel they belong and the deep effect that not having a sense of belonging—and no place to refer to as home—can have on the human's emotional being. He found that people expect their homes and environments to provide a place to be *who we are* and *how we are*. Thus, the therapeutic relationship should allow individuals to be who they really are—to *find their home* in therapy as well as in themselves. Similarly to Lichtenstein (2009), Metari discussed the major concept of illusion—the idea of a gap between human fantasies, hopes, and dreams and the reality of life. He believed that one of the most important goals in therapy is to provide internal listening to the process of disillusionment, which provides the client the experience of *returning to home as a return to the authentic inner self*.

The idea of home as a metaphor of the self is also one that Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh (2011) shared in his book *Your True Home*. For Nhat Hanh, true home is the self and the ability to be present in the self in every single moment: “Your true home is in the here and the now. It is not limited by time, space, nationality, or race. Your true home is not an abstract idea; it is something that you can touch and live in every moment” (p. 1).

Silva (2007) claimed that being at home is much more than the space where one feels one belongs; it is also where “identities connected to their somatic self” (p. 697). As Hayes (2007) claimed, it is “to be fixed in time, place, and identity” (p. 4). When observing home in such a way it becomes a metaphor to feeling complete and whole that

does not depend on any external circumstance but connects with a cohesive internal feeling.

Section Summary: Concept of Home

Lichtenstein (2009), Metari (2005), and Seiden (2009) noted that understanding *home* as a major psychological concept can teach us greatly about the human psyche. In their work as psychotherapists, they found that home and longing for home indicated the individual's unique experiences as well as the experience of the universal human need to *find home in the world*. For Metari, understanding one's *home in the world* could relate directly to therapeutic relationships and the ability of therapy to function as home for the client. Moreover, *being at home* not only refers to the physical literal home and the ability to feel or not to feel at home but as addressed by Nhat Hanh (2011) also relates to home as a metaphor for being fully present in the moment with no dependency of physicality and carrying *the home* within.

Emerging themes from the literature about home reflected the ideas that home is not only a physical place but also an emotional space and that feeling at home is associated with a sense of belonging (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009). However, there is a debate in the literature about whether home can be associated with a sense of belonging if the original home had a negative connotation (Wardhaugh, 1999; Wright, 2009).

Ahmed (1999), Hayes (2007), Magat (1999), and Metari (2005) explored the idea that feeling at home relates to one's own fantasies, hopes, and dreams and is a "narrative that works to create the idea of safe enclosure" (Lichtenstein, 2009, p. 454). The concept of home is defined differently from one person to the other but relates to people's need to

have something they can refer to as home. Hoersting and Jenkins (2011) found that adults' sense of self and self-esteem are connected with their ability to have something they could refer to as home even if their actual homes were temporary.

Home in the Immigration Experience

The immigration experience involves two major processes. The first is leaving home; the second is adjusting and entering a new home (Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Malone & Dooley, 2006; Wiles, 2008). The concept of home becomes a central component in the migrant's life. As Silva (2009) theorized, "Home, both as a physical presence—a geographical location—and as a metaphorical place—of comfort and belonging—circulate within the diasporic community as a common thread" (p. 695).

Lydon (2002) investigated the experience of leaving home and adjusting to a new home for thirteen Irish and Scottish immigrants in the United States. He integrated participant quotes and his own data analysis and described the emigration experience as "a profoundly complex experience" (p. 196). He used three interviews that stood out due to their content and the participants' ability to "articulate the emotional nature of their experiences" (p. 186). He analyzed the interviews, giving attention to nonverbal expressions as well as to verbal accounts. One main research finding showed that immigration involved ambiguity of both the old and the new worlds. "There are times when both places feel like home, and times when neither does" (p. 197). The author shared that the participants described themselves as never fully belonging to any group.

In interviews with three individuals who had relocated from Mexico to the United States, Hubard (2011) also explored the sense of ambiguity between two homes. The author was interested to explore how the place they lived affected the participants' sense

of self and what happens when lives “take place in two different homes” (p. 1255). She found that all the participants shared an experience of tension that came into play in many aspects of life such as interaction with others and sense of self. She emphasized the importance to “not to try to eliminate the tension altogether, but to find ways to become more at home in a world of ambiguity and confusion” (p. 1255).

Akhtar (1999) stated that immigrants often deal with the emotional pain of separation from home by idealizing their home in their countries of origin and fantasizing that if only they returned then life would be problem free. Further, he claimed that migrants who left their homeland against their will or to escape might have negative emotions toward the country of origin and therefore would avoid feelings of nostalgia. Silva (2009) concluded that even if the home of origin was problematic, leaving it could remain a challenging and even traumatic experience.

This movement from the familiar to the unfamiliar leaves migrants with a need to redefine their meanings of home (Philip & Ho, 2010). Moreover, it requires the migrant to redefine what home meant in the first place—even before the relocation. “What does it mean to be-at-home?” asked Ahmed (1999, p. 330) in regard to migrants’ narratives. She answered that in the migration experience being at home is “to be in the world...that cannot be any fixed notion or origin” (p. 339). It relates to a deep sensual experience that contributes to the immigrant definition of how “‘homely’ one might feel and fail to feel” (p. 341).

Similarly, Philipp and Ho (2010) claimed that the meaning of home is complex and changes as a response to immigration. They also shared the question of observing whether home “here...[or] there...truly reflects the migrants’ loved experiences” (p. 82).

They discussed how the term *home* changes its meaning in today's globalized society and that "migrants can maintain intensive contacts and multi-stranded relations that link together their societies of origin and destination." They interviewed six women who had emigrated from South Africa to New Zealand to examine the process of "(re)creation of home." The researchers examined the effects that integrating valuable objects from the participants' homes in South Africa, connecting to familiar smells and tastes from their homeland, and buying from a South African butcher can have on their experience of home in New Zealand. The researchers emphasized the complexity of the experience these women went through in order to create home in their new country and the feelings of guilt and distress the participants were experiencing because of the separation from their country of origin. The researchers found that bringing objects from South Africa contributed to the participants' ability to recreate home in New Zealand. Similarly, shopping and connecting with the smells and tastes from South African stores provided nostalgia and connectedness with their country of origin and space to socialize and feel belongingness that slowly incorporated with the country to which they had immigrated.

The migrant often will reestablish a sense of home in his or her new life (Hayes, 2004; Philipp & Ho, 2010). Ahmed (1999) claimed that estrangement and leaving one's home gives an opportunity to forge a new community of strangers who share the same experience and create a new home together. Malone and Dooley (2006) researched Irish migrants in London and found that a sense of community is an essential way to construct a sense of home by those who go through the migration process. The researchers claimed that a sense of community involves a sense of belonging and connection. Moreover,

Ahmed (1999) claimed that immigrants form a community upon a shared experience of “not being fully at home” (p. 345).

Wiles (2008) researched New Zealand migrants living in London or recently returned to New Zealand and claimed that for migrants “home and the idea of home can structure their experience of migration” (p. 117). Wiles found that although all the research participants had full and engaged lives they still identified themselves as New Zealanders and their home as New Zealand. “They constructed their sense of identity, their activities, and many of their interpersonal relationships around the idea of a shared collective imaginary of ‘home’” (p. 134). Wiles concluded that being away from home helped the participants gain a new perspective on their home and on the various relationships they had in their homeland. This new perspective also changed the way they felt about their home in New Zealand once they returned.

Separation and Reconstruction: Emotional and Psychological Implications

The increased migration worldwide has opened discussion and research concerning how both migrants and the receiving countries adapt, termed *acculturation* (Dow, 2011). Coined in the early 20th century, the term refers to contact between groups of different cultural origins (Berry, 1997). Acculturation research has provided essential information about the experiences of immigrants and the factors that affect their levels of acculturation (Lee, 2010; Lemzoudi, 2007; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). For example, researchers found length of time in the receiving country and the circumstances and reasons for migration to be influential circumstances that affect acculturation levels (Abu-Rayya, 2009; Birman & Trickett, 2001). Moreover, the increasing literature on the

acculturation process led to increased inquiry into the “psychology of immigration” (Berry, 2001, p. 615).

One of the first attentions to the emotions that immigrants can experience as result of immigration raised the experience of *culture shock*. Oberg (2006), himself an immigrant, coined the term *culture shock*, which is “precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all the familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse” (p. 142). Oberg claimed that when immigrants enter a new country they feel “like a fish out of the water” and as a result “reject the environment which causes discomfort” (p. 142). Those experiences can create feelings of anger, helplessness, fear, and longing.

Oberg (2006) described four stages that characterize the immigration process. The first is the “honeymoon stage” (p. 143) in which immigrants are excited to be in the new country and feel like tourists—fascinated with the new experiences. The second “aggressive stage” (p. 143) occurs when the immigrants feel resentment toward the new, receiving country. At this point, the immigrants feel as though they do not belong and are misunderstood and they become frustrated toward various parts of life in the new country (e.g., customs, people, and everyday tasks). In the third stage the immigrants are “now on the way of recovery” (p. 143). They have started to develop a better understanding of the receiving culture and become more confident communicating. The fourth stage is one of acceptance in which immigrants adjust more and accept the norms and ways of living of the new culture.

Berry (1997, 2001), and Sam and Berry (2010) widely explored the acculturation process, the contact between groups of different cultural origins, and cultural changes. Berry discussed the psychological effect that results from acculturation, which he referred

to as *psychological acculturation*. Berry (1997) stated that it might create “culture conflict” that could lead to “acculturative stress” (p. 13) similar to Oberg’s (2006) concept of culture shock. *Acculturative stress* describes the psychological influence that results from conflicts that may arise when adapting to the new country (Smart & Smart, 1995). However, Berry (1997) preferred the term *acculturative stress* because it has more theoretical foundation. Moreover, he claimed that the word “culture” does not provide the intercultural aspect that is part of acculturation and the word “shock” is associated with a merely negative experience. Berry (2001) emphasized that the process and the experiences can differ from one person to another and are affected by various factors—even for individuals who share the same culture.

Park and Rubin (2012) researched the effect of acculturation levels and acculturation stress on depression among 500 adult Korean immigrants in the United States and found a connection between acculturative stress and emotional states such as depression. They measured acculturation levels through participant responses to five components from the Suinn-Lew Asian Self Identity Acculturation Scale. The questionnaire measured the participants’ identity from “very Korean” to “very American” (p. 614); English proficiency; close friends; food preferences; and television-viewing preferences. Acculturative stress was measured by the acculturative stress index adapted to Korean culture. The researchers also measured the participants’ depression levels and demographic variables such as age, length of stay in the United States, and gender.

Park and Rubin (2012) found that half the participants experienced depressive symptoms and acculturative stress was the most significant factor affecting their depression levels. The study results showed that more acculturation experience created

less acculturative stress and therefore less depression. However, as the researchers reported, the study included only one cultural group and thus the results could differ when examining other cultural groups. In addition, the researchers noted that the participants' need for approval could have influenced their responses in a self-report survey.

Hovey and King (1996) researched the relationships between acculturative stress, depressive symptoms, and suicidal ideation among Latino adolescent immigrants. The research included 70 participants (40 female and 30 male) aged 14 to 20 years who were part of a bilingual program in a California high school. The participants were asked to complete questionnaires that assessed their levels of depression and stress. The research results revealed that 23% of the participants experienced critical levels of depressive symptoms. Moreover, the participants' acculturative stress positively correlated with depression and suicidal ideation. Unfortunately, although the researchers categorized participants by origin and arrival situation (e.g., first generation), the influence of these variables on the research was not clear.

Ding et al. (2011) measured levels of domains of stress of immigration among 555 first-generation Korean women immigrants who lived in California. The researchers interviewed participants by phone in the Korean language. Participants also completed the Demands of Immigration (DI) scale, which assessed their acculturation stress levels. The factor analysis identified six domains of immigration that created acculturation stress among the participants: language barriers, sense of loss, not at home, discrimination, novelty, and occupation. Language was found to be the variable most closely related to immigration stress. The limitation of this study was its use of a scale originally designed

for other cultural groups (Polish and Irish). In addition, the researchers emphasized that the DI scale did not include some domains discussed in the immigration stress literature such as change in values and beliefs or family stresses. Park and Rubin (2012), Hovey and King (1996), and Ding et al. (2011) also claimed their research showed a connection among acculturation, acculturation stress, and mental health symptoms such as depression.

Awareness of emotional aspects of a response to interactions with another culture has grown. However, the extant research still lacks examination of the internal complex psychological experience that is not only based on interaction with an unfamiliar culture but also concerned with the deep psychological effect the separation itself can have on immigrants.

Loss of Home

Immigration to another country, claimed Akhtar (1999a), creates a “complex psychosocial process with lasting effects” (p. 1051). Grinberg and Grinberg (1984) stated that immigration from one country to the other “can trigger different types of anxieties” (p. 13) for the people who immigrate or including “separation anxieties...superego anxieties...persecutory anxieties...depressive anxieties... and confusional anxieties” and can involve confusing the known and unknown, questioning values and loyalties, mourning, and “feelings of being uprooted, and the feeling of loss” (pp. 13-14).¹ The authors claimed that the psychological impact very much depends on different objective factors such as the freedom of the migrant to choose to transition and the quality of migration.

1. Grinberg and Grinberg’s (1984) definition of *migrants* included individuals who moved from one country to another willingly (i.e., not only refugees), which are termed *immigrants* in this study.

Loss and grief are psychological experiences often associated with the migration process (Akhtar, 1995; Casado, Hong, & Harrington, 2010; Grinberg & Grinberg, 1984) and a sense of unfamiliarity and estrangement frequently follows migration (Hayes, 2007; Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010). Migrants, and presumably immigrants, experience distance from familiar places and “need to consciously search for cues regarding how and what to ‘do’ in order to negotiate their personal and social identity” (Huot & Laliberte Rudman, 2010, p. 75).² They may feel unfamiliar with many aspects of their everyday lives such as food, music, politics, language, and ways of communication (Akhtar, 1999; Philipp & Ho, 2010). This unfamiliarity and the tremendous change in many aspects of the migrants’ life can invoke a sense of loss (Arredondo-Dowd, 1981; Levenbach & Lewak, 1995; Mirsky, 1991).

Arredondo- Dowd (1981) raised awareness of the experience of loss and grief in response to immigration. Herself a daughter of immigrants and a counselor of migrants from diverse cultures, Arredondo-Dowd used Bowlby’s theoretical grief-stages model to reflect upon the immigration process. She saw the immigrants’ grieving and sense of loss as divided into three stages. The first stage includes feelings of shock and estrangement. In the second stage, these reactions may develop into anger, confusion, and helplessness. In the final stage, the feelings can become more hopeful as the immigrant accepts the new life and identifies more with the receiving country. The degree, timing, and manifestation of these stages depend on factors such as the death of a loved one in the home country or the inability to contact family members left behind. Moreover, it is not clear if the grieving process can ever be completed.

2. Huot and Laliberte Rudman’s (2010) use of the term *migrant* did not specifically encompass movement *between* countries.

Henry, Stiles, and Biran (2005) also discussed grieving as part of the immigration process. They researched the mourning and loss processes of Arab immigrants in Europe and North America by studying transcripts of three interviews with immigrants broadcast on an Al-Jazeera network television program that dealt with the subject of immigration. They selected the three study interviews based on the participants' outstanding abilities to integrate in the land of immigration.

Henry et al. (2005) assessed the interviewees' level of assimilation and connection with their country of origin. The study emphasized the existence of an inner dialogue that continues throughout the different acculturation stages and enriches the migrants' lives. The researchers found that the ability to mourn and experience loss was essential in the migration process. They also concluded that cultural elements and resources the migrants carried from their countries of origin helped the migrants adjust to the change and better mourn losses caused by the migration.

Casado, Hong, and Harrington (2010) conducted a validity study of the Migratory Grief and Loss Questionnaire (MGLQ) to assess loss and grief associated with immigration. The study included 150 Chinese immigrants (aged 55 years and over) recruited from two community centers and senior-living facilities in the United States. The MGLQ questions were translated into Chinese. Two factors were determined to be validly measured by the instrument: "attachment to homeland" and "identity discontinuity" (p. 616). *Attachment to homeland* refers to physical and emotional connection with homeland and to feelings of nostalgia and longing. *Identity discontinuity* connects with an attempt to avoid dealing with loss but with a continued "struggle with lost self-identity" (p. 614).

The experience of immigration often includes an experience of longing for home that at times connects to feelings of nostalgia (Lichtenstein, 2009; Seiden, 2009; Tsolidis, 2011). Anyone can experience nostalgic longings in relation to a loss of home but nostalgia is often discussed in the context of immigration (e.g., Silva, 2009). Akhtar (1999) emphasized that nostalgia is a central part of the immigrant's psychic experience and evokes a "mixture of pain and joy" (p. 129). That is, nostalgia is a tool immigrants might use to deal with the loss experienced in migration. "Resulting from a retrospective idealization of lost objects, nostalgia helps the immigrant defend against the aggression resulting from current frustrations" (p. 123). By integrating interviews and literature, Silva (2009) also concluded that the distant home becomes a mythic place of belonging that validates the immigrant's existence. Immigrants often "cling" to memories of home "like a stubborn scent that is ultimately a jumble or collection sensory experiences that over the years becomes dearer and more elusive—a form of organized chaos we try to make sense of as we search for our own self" (p. 694).

Levenbach and Lewak (1995) claimed that individuation and separation are also connected to the loss and grief that immigrants often experience. They stated the immigration process might raise past issues around the migrants' individuation and separation processes, which might bring about "unresolved separation issues" (p. 383). The immigrant's ability to cope with separation is connected to childhood separation-individuation experiences. The authors supported their claims by describing four families they had worked with as clinicians in Israel but they did not provide their data-collection methodology.

Mirsky (1991) stated that deep psychological implications can follow immigration and discussed the need to be aware of the separation-individuation processes that follow the immigrant from childhood. She emphasized that language can carry meanings about separation-individuation. By relying on the nonnative language, the immigrant's distress levels increase as well. She supported her claim by providing a case study that explored art therapy sessions she conducted with an Indian immigrant in Israel. However, her writing also lacked an explicit methodology. Specifically, it described only one case study and thus cannot be inferred to a wider population.

Changes in the Internal Home: Identity

Salman Akhtar (1995), a psychoanalyst and professor at Jefferson Medical College, explored the experience of migration between countries from both his own and his clients' experiences. He discussed different factors that influence the migrant's psychological experience including

- Length of time the migrants stayed in the new country (temporary or permanent);
- Reasons for leaving the home country and options to return;
- Possibility to visit the home country;
- Migrant's age;
- Personal psychological capacity to deal with separation prior to immigration;
- The way the host country received the immigrant;
- Cultural differences between the country of origin and the new country; and
- Migrant's ability to carry on any original roles from the country of origin (e.g., professional identity).

Akhtar (1995) and other scholars (e.g., Ahmed, 1999; Heller, 2007; Lydon, 2002; Silva, 2009) concluded that the migration experience differs from one migrant to the other, but has similar features. Akhtar (1995) stated the immigration process has “lasting effects on an individual’s identity” (p. 1051) and claimed the immigration process starts with an experience of culture shock and mourning over losses the immigrants experience. This gradually creates a “psycho-structural change and the emergence of a hybrid identity” (p. 1051). He theorized that migrants cross geographical as well as new social relations borders. As much as this is a journey between places, he described it also as a journey inside the self and of one’s identity. Seiden (2009) also claimed that in order not to lose a sense of meaning, migrants often go through a search for self. According to Akhtar (1999b), the immigration experience can provide “alongside these losses” also a new opportunity “for psychic growth and alternation (p. 5). Akhtar (1995) called this internal process the creation of *a third individuation*. He concluded that many personal, social, and psychological issues arise from the intensity of the immigration process. In order to cope, he theorized, the immigrant creates a new self that allows him or her to deal with this complex identity change.

Seelye and Howell Wasilewski (1996) explored a process they called *developing self-identity* in the experience of being *between cultures*, stating, “People seem to need to place other people into recognizable slots” (p. 25). Associating with a “group identity” connects with “sense of belonging, of roots, a feeling of continuity” (p. 26). The experience of being between cultures—including the immigration process—raises confusion and fundamental identity questions including the basic question, “Who am I?” (p. 101). The “multicultural person” (p. 93) must use a different language (including

different body language, meanings, tone, and mimicry) and interact with others differently. The writers concluded that the migrant must become an actor and play a role, which can lead to an “authenticity anxiety” (p. 94) and a deep concern of “If I play a different persona in different culture setting, am I being false?” (p. 101).

Willgerodt, Miller, and McElmurry (2002) were interested in the negotiation processes of migrants. They interviewed 15 second-generation Chinese-American women (aged 25 to 40 years) recruited from various social and professional organizations. The researchers recruited six women experts in Asian-American women’s issues to conduct the interviews. After the interviews were transcribed, two case profiles with information redacted from the interview were prepared for each interviewee. The profiles were sent to the participants for review and comments. In addition, each participant’s experience of becoming bicultural was condensed to create a “map of the developmental processes related to living with two cultures” (p. 471).

In their research, Willgerodt et al. (2002) focused on the effect of migration on identity. They found that “leaving home proved to be a critical juncture in their [participants’] lives because the experience exposed them to choices, opportunities, and diversity” (p. 476). This transitioning stage includes acknowledging their difference among others and an ability to construct a “blended” identity (p. 476). The participants discussed the “picking and choosing” (p. 474) process they needed in their young adulthood to negotiate between American and Chinese cultures. All the participants considered themselves a mix of both (American and Chinese) cultures. However, the cultural balance varied with each participant. Unfortunately, the research included a small sample size and excluded demographic information in the data analysis. Moreover,

the research included participants who had immigrated at a young age; therefore, their experiences might have been affected by their ages when have arrived.

De Arbreu and Hale (2011) examined the relationship between immigrants' language sufficiency in the new country and identity development in immigrant adults and their children. This research provided an important examination of the changes that occur in the identity of various members of the family, as well of the dynamics within the family. This research focused on what the researchers called "symbolic activity" that examined the participants' narratives in relation to their "lives between Portuguese and English cultural spaces" (p. 57). The researchers conducted in-depth interviews (30 to 60 minutes) with six Portuguese migrants who had immigrated to England when they were children with their families. The participants included six female students (aged 14 to 17 years) and three of their parents. Their schools had identified the student participants who included both students experiencing difficulties and low achievements and students who were successful and reflecting high achievements in school.

The researchers concluded that the children became the "family language broker" (p. 58), a role that affected the identity of their parents who used to be competent and communicative but due to the immigration needed to depend on their children for communication. The parents shared how their dependency on their children hurt their pride and privacy. Conversely, the students found that their translation role increased their competency levels and that they developed stronger transcultural identities. In addition, the students discussed that being their parents' translators created feelings of being different in their peer surroundings and being important in their families. The study provided an in-depth exploration on the various identity processes immigrants in

various age groups, and who serves different roles in their families go through. However, the research included a small sample and lacked a clear explanation of the questions asked or choice of themes analyzed.

Cooper, Edsall, Riviera, Chaitin, and Linstroth (2009) examined the way first-generation immigrants from Cuba and their children (second-generation immigrants) characterized their sense of belonging and sense of identity in response to their immigration to the United States. Moreover, the researchers examined whether there were differences between the two generations in regards to these characteristics. Six participants took part in what the researchers called “life- stories interviews” (p. 2) focused on three aspects: the experience of leaving, the sense of home, and the perception regarding identity. The researchers found an experience of ambivalence in the participants’ sense of home and sense of identity. Specifically, first-generation immigrants in this study were found to have a conflicted sense of identity in regards to their American and Cuba identities. Moreover, they did not refer to only one place (Cuba or the United States) as home. Further, the study stressed differences between the two generations of immigrants. First-generation Cuban immigrants perceived Cuba as an essential part of their identity and as their home. However, second-generation participants perceived Cuba as a place they would enjoy visiting but did not describe strong emotional connections with Cuba.

Section Summary: Immigrant Experience

The literature established the connection between the concept of home and the immigration process. The immigration process—separating from one home and recreating a new home—leaves the immigrant with fundamental questions about the

homes they left and the new homes they recreate (Despres, 1991; Hayes, 2007; Lichtenstein, 2009; Lydon, 2002; Magat, 1999; Mallet, 2004; Malone & Dooley, 2006; Metari, 2005; Philipp & Ho, 2010; Silva, 2009; Wiles, 2008). This separation and recreation of home also influences what is necessary for immigrants to feel at home (Ahmed, 1999).

The literature has increasingly examined the initial stages of immigration and the unfamiliarity immigrants often experience. Unfamiliarity in various aspects of life can often cause the *cultural shock* (Oberg, 2006)—later termed *acculturative stress* (Berry, 1997)—that is often associated with other psychological distress and mental health symptoms such as anxiety and depression (Hovey & King, 1996; Park & Rubin, 2012.)

Some literature emphasized that immigrants can often experience a deep sense of loss (Arredondo-Dowd, 1981; Casado et al., 2010; Mirsky, 1991; Philipp & Ho, 2010) that also relates to “unresolved separation issues” (Levenbach & Lewak, 1995, p. 383). Another major psychological process relates to the identity transformation immigrants often experience (Akhtar, 1995; de Arbreu & Hale, 2011; Heller, 2007; Lemzoudi, 2007; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Seiden, 2009; Willgerodt, Miller, & McElmurry, 2002). Scholars determined that immigrants’ separation from one home and recreation of another home creates a sense of ambiguity between homes—a feeling that sometimes no place is home and sometimes everywhere is home (Hubard, 2011; Lydon, 2002). Immigrants can experience a deep sense of grief concerning not only physical things they lost but also internal losses such as old identities, roles in the country of origin, and sense of self (Akhtar, 1994; Ahmed, 1999; Lemzoudi, 2007; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Seiden, 2009). Understanding this complex experience of home in the immigration

experience could lead to a greater understanding of other psychological issues immigrants often experience (Magat, 1999; Metari, 2009; Philip & Ho, 2010; Silva, 2009; Wiles, 2008).

Expressive Therapies for Immigrants

Expressive therapies are creative forms of therapy that use movement, visual art, writing, drama, music and expressive arts therapy (a form of therapy that integrates different arts in treatment) as the means to communicate with others and self (Kossak, 2013). Expressive therapies allow the client to “quickly communicate relevant issues in ways that talk therapy cannot” (Malchiodi, 2005, p. 2). Rogers (1993) described how clients are able to expand their self-knowledge through artistic expression in therapy. In addition, clients intuitively understand and acknowledge different parts within themselves. Rogers claimed, “We express inner feelings by creating outer forms” (p. 2) and artistic expression becomes a new language created between the client and therapist. McNiff (2009) emphasized that the art-making not only provides an “expression of inner feelings, but its external structure also stimulates internal transformations” (p. 104).

Artistic Images and Symbols

Images and symbols are main parts of expressive therapies. Carl Jung (1964) was one of the first to explore the role of images and symbols in therapeutic work. McNiff (2004) described how for Jung “images appeared spontaneously as he engaged different types of artistic expression” (p. 173). They function as bridges between states of consciousness and through this integration “a third state of adaptation and change” can occur (p. 173).

McNiff (1992) stated that artistic images “encourage us to look at them and reflect upon their nature, both physical and psychological” (p. 3) and dialoguing with images expands the “ego’s singular vision” (p. 2). McNiff also stated, “It is through others that we discover who we are” (p. 2) and claimed that in art therapy images can function as the “others” by which we can discover unseen parts of ourselves. By learning to observe ourselves as if from a distance, these images can develop into “agent[s] of transformation” (p. 2).

The immigrant’s surroundings often change dramatically. Many once-familiar cultural aspects of life such as customs, norms, and traditions become unfamiliar (Akhtar, 1995). Seelye and Howell Wasilewski (1996) claimed that the use of creativity, metaphors, and images helps “loosen our hold on what we perceive to be reality” (p. 197) and helps provide less analytical expression. The use of images in art might be beneficial in dealing with the immigrant’s challenging transitioning process (Linesch, Aceves, Quezada, Trochez, & Zuniga, 2012). The use of images may help immigrants rediscover themselves in conjunction with all the changes they experience by integrating between the known and unknown. In this way images act “as a bridge between the experience which is inner and private and that which is outer and public” (Schaverien, 1998, p. 168).

Expressive Therapies: Uniqueness and Universality

One mutual benefit of the use of expressive therapies—and its symbolic work in the cross-cultural context—is their ability to express the uniqueness of each individual’s culture and worldview along with touching upon universality and connecting us all as humans. Working with the arts in the cross-cultural context requires an awareness of the

differences each individual brings to the arts, along with awareness of the therapists' own cultural and ideological worldviews (Hocoy, 2011).

Gilboa, Yehuda, and Amir (2009) were interested in examining the use of a music therapy program to promote integration of immigrants in Israel and enhance communication between immigrant and nonimmigrant participants. Twelve undergraduate students at Bar Ilan University in Israel—four born in Israel and eight immigrants—took part in 24 group sessions called “Let’s Talk Music.” The participants had no prior musical knowledge. Throughout the program, the participants were encouraged to use music as a tool for communication and self-expression. Each participant shared music that represented his or her cultural background. Thereafter, the students were asked to complete a music preference questionnaire regarding the music they had heard. In addition, participants were involved in discussions and completed other questionnaires to assess their connections with the Israeli culture and with their culture of origin. The results indicated that the program affected three categories: (1) The “I,” which included an appreciation of the participants’ own music and connectedness with one’s roots, abilities, and strengths; (2) The “you,” which concerned their ability to know the other and “get closer”; and (3) The “we,” which discovered commonalities, working through conflicts, and developing connection. The study found music to be a powerful tool that provided a place for each individual’s uniqueness along with universality and commonality.

Along with the uniqueness the arts provide place to, the arts contains underlining of the “universal physiological and psychological qualities of human experience” (McNiff, 2009, p. 104). McNiff claimed that expressive arts therapy provides a constant

relationship between the particular—culture, language, worldview—and the universal—“sensory qualities of vision, sound, touch, and movement” (p. 104) concealed in every artistic expression. Arts provide a “universal language” that can access the “universal qualities of feeling” (p. 104) all people share.

Expressive Therapies with Immigrants

Linesch, Aceves, Quezada, Trochez, and Zuniga (2012) concluded that art therapy and use of images contribute to participants’ “ability to find universality and recognition of their often-suppressed experiences” (p. 125). They researched Latino families who had immigrated to the United States and discussed how art therapy provided the participants a nonverbal way to interact with their immigration experiences for which they could not find words to express. In their research, eight Latino immigrant families met as individual family units and were asked to share their acculturation process both verbally and by drawing together. The authors claimed the images that came out in their work allowed the participants to communicate in a neutral way. By drawing and interacting around the art-making, family members were able to reveal the complexities and challenges they faced in their acculturation process.

Chebaro (1998), an immigrant art therapist, found that “art is a language that gave me the freedom and the ability to connect to my roots” (p. 232). She expressed the important role art had played in her own immigration process and its function as the connection between both her past and present lives. She concluded that by expressing images that represented her past and present she could observe the cultural connections more objectively and better integrate the two cultures. “This travel in time (past life and present) was a part of

the healing process which I needed to face in order to grieve the loss of my country of origin and accept my new foreign life” (p. 232).

Wong-Valle (1981), similarly to Linesch et al. (2012) and Chebaro (1998) discussed how art therapy—especially working with images through a collage—is an effective method of treatment. Wong-Valle emphasized this method is especially effective for coping with the psychological complexity of the immigration process that often creates feelings of loss and raises childhood separation-individuation experiences. She described her work with immigrants: “Through the arts they recognized their need to keep in touch with their cultural roots and the need to interact with their new society” (p. 48). She found that working with collages and images allowed clients to create visual representations of the two cultures they were experiencing. This external integration provided an internal integration that contributed to her clients’ images that represented the immigrant’s country of origin and receiving country’s cultures and the images created a dialogue between the cultures. Wong-Valle claimed immigrants’ choices of images such as choosing images that only represent the country of origin could also serve as a diagnostic tool for the therapist to understand the client’s stage of acculturation.

Lemzoudi (2007) examined the various identity roles that adolescent immigrants carry in two case studies that examined the experiences of adolescents who had to negotiate between their “home culture and school culture”—two places they often received “contradictory messages and values” (p. 18). Participants were two adolescent migrants who participated in both individual and group art-therapy sessions. Lemzoudi collected her data through her art therapy clinical work with the participants who had raised the issue of cultural identity in the sessions. In addition, the researcher observed

that both participants used the symbol of a house as a representation of the self.

Lemzoudi explored the losses the participants experienced and the effect it had on formation of an integrated identity, which she described as “a central task of the acculturation process” (p. 17). The study involved only two case studies and participants who are adolescents; therefore, the study cannot be generalized to a wider population.

Heller (2007) found creating collages and images benefited immigrants because it promoted integration between their old and new identities. Heller researched the effect art therapy has on constructing a sense of identity among immigrant women. In her dissertation, Heller described her own journey as an immigrant and her need to find her identity within the immigration process. She described how she could explore and be aware of different parts of herself and form a clear and strong identity through the arts. “For me, the answer to the question of identity came from inside as an urge to create. From a distance, I can now identify in my paintings different stages that have led me to a gradual reconstruction of who I am” (p. 10). She examined the effect of art therapy on identity conflicts for a group of six female immigrants and found that images allowed her participants to create a world of symbols representative of the different parts of their identities. She concluded, “The healing quality of the aesthetic experience is conferred by the reconciliation of opposites, a motif that connects the artistic activity to the process of individuation” (p. 277).

Similarly, Rousseau et al. (2005) and Rousseau et al. (2007) developed and examined a drama therapy program to work on identity changes that result from migration (for immigrants and refugees). Rousseau et al. (2005) concluded that drama therapy could provide participants an opportunity to distance themselves from their

personal, complex immigration experiences that, which would eventually allow a closer look at the dual identities they carry and lead to better integration of those identities.

Rousseau et al. (2005) presented the drama therapy program in collaboration with a hospital-based child psychiatry program, a university creative arts therapy program, and a high school. A team of six clinicians from the psychology and expressive arts therapy fields worked at the school for more than three years with immigrants and refugees from countries around the world. The purpose of the program was to contribute to the adjustment of newly arrived migrants and to work on identity issues related to their migration. The researchers noted that the typical adolescence developmental stage is characterized by transition from childhood to adulthood. Identity in this stage forms through “an interplay of group (ethnic, national, racial, religious, gender, etc.) and personal identities” (p. 14). The researchers posited that migration can cause greater confusion about identity and lost sense of belonging for migrants during this stage than it would for nonimmigrant adolescents and could create serious personal and social issues. The authors found that drama therapy provided young migrants a method to express themselves symbolically and nonverbally. It also gave them a safe space to step out of their own real experiences and “allow conflicts and explorations of a variety of avenues that might lead to solutions” (p. 15). The drama therapy program enabled the migrants to express some losses they experienced in the migration process and to construct meaning. The participants could start acknowledging the parts that “overlap” between their “host country and home country” in the dual identities they carried (p. 25). Moreover, students who took part in the program were able to better integrate both identities.

In 2007, Rousseau et al. investigated the effect of the same drama therapy program they had developed at the Montreal Children's Hospital on a Montreal high school with a large number of immigrants and refugees. Their study included 123 newly arrived migrants (aged 12 to 18 years) and two teachers. Subjects participated in weekly sessions in which an experienced team trained as expressive artists and expressive arts therapists acted out the subjects' stories. Sixty-six participants comprised the experimental group; 57 the control group. Student and teacher participants completed a pre- and post-test that evaluated the students' self-esteem, strengths and difficulties, and school performance. Student involvement in the acting and sharing of stories gradually increased over time. The students generated story topics that included migration experiences, issues around belonging and not belonging, and safety. The researchers emphasized that due to limited verbal language the participants could use other means of expression such as movement, music, or voice.

Rousseau et al. (2007) found that the drama therapy program significantly improved the participants' adjustment and decreased the students' perception of their "impairments" (p. 451) that could interfere with their relationship and leisure activities. Moreover, the mathematics performance of students in the experimental group improved to a level greater than did that of the control group.

Pylvänäinen (2008) claimed that migrants often lack an internal connectedness because of dealing with the unfamiliar and confusing and that movement effectively connects the migrant to the body and to familiar internal places. She explored the use of movement therapy with women (both bicultural migrants and immigrants) who belonged to an international community organization in Tokyo. She discussed the challenges these

women experienced due to their migration including anxiety, frustration, fatigue, and feelings of unfamiliarity. These migrants needed to adapt to new ways of communication, gestures, and language in their current lives. These experiences became “stored in the body” (p. 42). In addition, the body often carries the memories and pain of separation and distance. Pylvänäinen theorized, “The body is so involved in adjusting to the new environment” that working with the body is therapeutic. She discussed how rhythm, synchronicity, and symbolic expression help create a personal space for the client and can “enhance the connectedness to oneself” (p. 43).

Subramanyam (1998) agreed that movement therapy is successful for immigrants because it provides a nonverbal means of expression and integration of the mind, body, and spirit. She explored the use of movement therapy along with integration of indigenous movement and music from their countries of origin in her work with South Asian immigrants in Britain. She discussed the sense of difference South Asian immigrants experience when immigrating to Britain and the challenges it creates in their self-expression. In her work, Subramanyam found that integration between the cultural elements the women brought from their countries of origin with the elements of movement therapy and reflection was a powerful way to support their process of change.

Wright (2009) described the use of autoethnography to explore her own first stages of migration, which she termed “transformative experience” (p. 625). She found writing to be therapeutic—functioning as a mirror to her experience—and to help her tremendously in the process of separation and transition to a new country. She kept free-writing, reflective journals, and emails on the first few stages of her transition and migration. She also discussed the meaning of the writing itself and the ability to review

her readings and explore the process through which she had gone. To Wright, writing is a tool that could tremendously help migrants in their migration experience. Although Wright emphasized the value she found in her self-exploration of writing as a method to examine her own immigration process, her conclusions cannot be generalized to a larger population.

Hurtig (2005) also discussed writing and storytelling as a powerful method when working with immigrants. Hurtig found writing, sharing stories, and listening to others' immigration stories to be a way to "recall or 'relive' moments from the past that they never talk or even think about" (p. 260). Over two years, Hurtig led writing workshops with Mexican-immigrant mothers in Chicago. In this program called "Parents Write Their Words," more than 30 women met weekly during the school year to write and read their experiences of migration. They wrote in Spanish and published their writings in both Spanish and English in a magazine called *Real Conditions*. The process provided participants the ability to connect to their own unique migration stories and to connect their past with the present and stressed the commonality in everyone's experiences. Hurtig found that by doing so the participants were able to give a sense of meaning and purpose to their lives in Chicago as well as support their families and community. The writing also contributed to self-esteem, which the losses they experienced in the migration had lessened.

Section Summary: Use of Expressive Therapies for Immigrants

The literature shows that expressive therapies can be an effective method in working with immigrants in five ways:

1. It connects the immigrant to familiar places and creates a connection between internal and external experiences (Linesch et al., 2012; Pylvänäinen, 2008; Schaverien, 1998; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Subramanyam, 1998).
2. It bridges the country of origin to the new country metaphorically and provides an internal integration (Chebaro, 1998; Subramanyam, 1998; Wong-Valle, 1981).
3. It serves as a third language and provides a way of communication when words are lacking (Chebaro, 1998; Linesch et al., 2012).
4. It exposes the uniqueness of each immigrant's experience, as well as the universality all humans share (Gilboa, Yehuda, & Amir, 2009; Hurtig, 2005; McNiff, 1992).
5. The arts contribute to immigrants' identity changes by enhancing an integration of the old and new identities (Heller, 2007; Rousseau et al., 2005; Rousseau et al., 2007).

The literature often provided only speculative explorations without a systematic presentation of evidence. Moreover, none of the studies collected and compared the psychological effects of various expressive therapies methods when working with immigrants. In addition, the researcher found no research studies that explored the use of expressive arts therapy as a method to integrate different art modalities in work with immigrants.

Conclusion

This literature review focused on three subjects: (1) The concept of home and its role in the human experience; (2) Psychological aspects of the immigration experience;

and (3) The use of expressive therapies as method for working with immigrants. Even though a correlation can be made in the literature between these three main areas of this review, there appears to be no writing on a combination of the three. Therefore, this research aims to fill this gap in the literature and by that contribute to the mental health field in general and the expressive arts therapy field in particular.

CHAPTER 3

Method and Research Design

The past two decades have seen an increasing proportion of migration to Australia, North America, and parts of Europe (Giguère, Lalonde, & Lou, 2010). According to United Nations (n.d.) data, more than 200 million people live outside their country of birth. The American Community Survey concluded that 40 million foreign-born people lived in the United States in 2010 and considered 17% of them newly arrived migrants, defined as those who came to the United States after 2005 (Walters & Trevelyan, 2011).

Rationale

In a world that becomes more and more globalized, understanding the emotional and psychological aspects involved in the process of immigration could tremendously contribute to the mental health field and to the support of individuals who immigrate to a new country. This research examined the process of separation and reconstruction of home for immigrant expressive therapists. Findings from this study provide valuable understanding of the emotional and psychological experience immigrants might experience as well as inform the use of art in therapeutic processes. The focus of this research was to provide a wider understanding of immigrants' emotional experiences. This research also explored the ability of the arts to serve as a third language and bridge the external and the internal. Moreover, the study of *home* in relation to the immigrant experience could further our understanding of home as a common human experience.

Developing the Research Question

This research grew from the researcher's own personal and professional experiences as an immigrant and an expressive arts therapist. The researcher developed the research question using various artistic explorations: movement, mask-making, shadow theater, visual art exploration, and film-making. Art explorations provided an examination of personal and professional experiences, which developed into the research subject and research question. The researcher's art-making had included the following projects:

1. *Shadow theater to examine the question of what is home.* In the first year of PhD studies, the researcher explored the question of what is home through shadow art-making. The shadows represented the parts that are carried within each person and not always seen. When examining the question of what is home, the researcher connected to various elements that represented home and better defined the idea of home and the influence of immigration (Figure 1).



Figure 1. The researcher's shadow art

2. Mask-making to examine the idea of duality between two homes. The researcher worked with masks wherein one mask represented how the researcher felt in the United States and a second mask represented who she felt she was in her country of origin, Israel. Each mask represented themes and experiences from both homes. Then, a third mask was made to integrate the two places. (See all masks at Figure 2.)



Figure 2. Mask-making as an exploration of duality between places.

3. Film-making to examine duality and split. As part of a course in the PhD program at Lesley University (Art-Based Research), the researcher created a film that

reflected her own experiences around the subject of home and immigration. The film integrated various experiences the researcher was having but had not yet been able to express fully in words. Similarly to the mask-making, the film explored the sense of duality and split the researcher experienced between two homes. The film reflected the duality and split by using a split screen throughout the film with events running side by side from the two places, Israel and the United States. The split screen reflected an external experience of having two homes as well as the split and duality carried internally. The film was created prior to the pilot study and contributed to the development and understanding of the pilot research question.

4. ***Movement exploration to examine the pilot study results.*** After the pilot study, the researcher used movement to examine the pilot study results and establish the dissertation question. By letting the body move authentically and in an unplanned way, both the experiences of letting go and separation and the ideas of accepting and reconstructing the new came up in the movement. Through the movement, a better understanding of this study's questions evolved. The researcher realized that investigating the experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home, which were found as two main themes in the pilot study, should be the main inquiry in the dissertation.

Research Question

How do immigrant expressive therapists conceive separation from and reconstruction of home for themselves and for their clients?

Method

The methodology for the study was qualitative research focused on both semi-structured interviews and art-based methods.

Qualitative Research Using Semi-Structured Interviews

Qualitative methodology provides an in-depth understanding of the meanings and experiences of the participants and the process rather than the outcome (Bruscia, 2005). As such, a qualitative method is appropriate for this study question, which focuses on immigrant expressive arts therapists' reflections on experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home.

This study examined participants' experiences and conceptions through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The study interviews followed Bailey's (2007) description of semi-structured interviews because it provided a clear framework and flexibility in responding to the participants' reflections. The researcher prepared structured questions to guide the interview; however, the researcher also asked probing questions and used active listening in order to have the participants clarify or expand their responses. In addition, the study provided an opportunity for new meanings to emerge and emphasized "the telling" in the interview, which "is not mere repetition but it is a dynamic process with a new reformulation, thus new meaning may emerge" (Stickley, 2012, p. 62).

Qualitative Research Using Art-Based Methods

As an expressive arts therapist who uses various art modalities in her clinical work and in her own personal way of understanding, the use of art as a main method paradigm in this research was an obvious and natural thing for the researcher. Art can provide deep meanings that words cannot always supply (Leavy, 2009; McNiff, 1998;

2008). Especially when examining the subject of home—a concept whose meanings are sometimes hard to grasp—artistic exploration could catch meanings and experiences that words sometimes cannot provide. Art also functioned as a third language for the participants who came from various countries of origin and therefore communicated for the study in a language other than their mother tongue.

Scholars and researchers have noted the increasing use of art-based research as well as its importance in the social sciences (Barone & Eisner, 2013; Leavy, 2009; McNiff, 1998, 2008, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). According to McNiff (2008), art-based research is:

The systematic use of the artistic process, the actual making of artistic expressions in all of the different forms of the art-making, as a primary way to understanding and examining experience by both researchers and the people that they involve in their studies. (p. 29)

Kossak (2013) claimed that art-based inquiry may provide richness and an additional in-depth understanding of the research because it engages not only parts of the intellect but also creativity, imagination, and all the senses and provides space for “unpredictable states” (p. 22). Leavy (2009) claimed that using art-based research “promote(s) a dialogue,” “evoke(s) emotional responses,” and provides “multiple meanings” (pp. 14-15).

This study, along with examining participants’ existing perceptions regarding separation from and reconstruction of home, aimed to examine the use of expressive arts to provide new meanings of the participants’ experiences. Therefore, the integration of art was inseparable. Moreover, as claimed by Kossak (2013) and Leavy (2009), the art in

this research allowed the participants to connect to the research subject not only from an analytical place but also from more emotional and deeper places.

The art-based method in this research was used in three stages:

1. Prior to research in developing the research question;
2. During the research study when participants were asked to respond to the research subject both artistically and verbally; and
3. During data analysis the researcher created artistic responses to experiences shared in interviews.

Research Design

This study included interviews and artistic expression with 10 expressive therapists who relocated to the United States for the purpose of study. The research questions and the main format of the dissertation proposal were created in response to findings of the researcher's pilot study (Albert-Proos, 2013) and supported by the literature review. The research included two to three hours of face-to-face interviews that including art-making with each participant and then a telephone interview conducted with each participant. The telephone interview provided participants an opportunity to review their first interview transcripts and artistic explorations (visual art pieces and movement or music videos) with the perspective of time and to examine the interview content accuracy. Moreover, the researcher examined the effect the first interview (art-making and verbal exploration) had or did not have on the participant's perception of the research subject.

The participants in this study were asked in the initial stage of the interview to respond artistically to the research subject: separation from and reconstruction of home.

The participants, who were all expressive arts therapists with broad understanding of the use of art as a tool for self-expression, could choose any art modality to express the research subject. The participants' art exploration provided other "ways of knowing" (McNiff, 2013, p. 7) to explore the complex experience of immigration and the idea of home. The use of art also provided participants another language to examine their experiences, which was extremely essential in this study because neither the researcher nor the participants used their mother-tongue language; instead, they used English to communicate. The arts provided the researcher and the participants an opportunity to connect on another level in a language shared by all—the arts.

The participants of the study intentionally did not receive an explanation regarding the purpose and meanings of the inquiry subject—separation from home and reconstruction of home. Gerber et al. (2013) examined the effect of intersubjective use of art inquiry on ways of knowing and found that art inquiry provides "multiple forms of interactive knowledge" and discussed what they referred to as "the unknown creative process" (p. 43). One factor found in their art-making study was the idea of transition between the familiar and known "physical world" and the "unknown and uncertain consciousness of the internal world inherent in the arts process" (p. 43). Their research found this transition from areas of the known to the unknown and back to the known to be both challenging and anxiety provoking, yet adding new understanding. Similarly to the use of art in expressive arts therapy, the participants had freedom to create freely with no preconceptions in order to promote self-exploration that could provide new meanings.

Participants

Ten expressive therapists immigrants (two male and eight female) aged 25 to 50 years currently living in the United States and working as expressive therapists in different facilities or in private practice participated in the study. The participants' countries of origin were Korea, the Czech Republic, Israel, Mexico, Canada, and Argentina (one each); and Taiwan and Japan (two each). The participants lived in the United States for a minimum of two years and came for the purpose of educational study. The two-year minimum was chosen because it potentially provided participants the ability to reflect on their own immigration processes. The researcher recruited the participants through an advertisement in internet expressive arts therapy groups or by word of mouth. The participants were introduced to the research through the informed consent process (see Confidentiality). Each participant met with the researcher individually in a location convenient for the participant such as the therapist's clinic, a classroom, the participants' house, or an office. The participants chose these locations for their privacy.

Confidentiality

The Lesley University Institutional Review Board approved this research. Participants signed consent forms (Appendix A) and the researcher verbally explained informed consent and assured them they were completely free to choose not to participate in the research or to discontinue their participation at any time. In addition, all artistic activities were conducted within the current professional standards of practice and codes of ethics of the American Art Therapy Association. All participants completed consent to use and/or display their art (Appendix B).

As outlined and explained in the informed consent form, participants remained anonymous. Their names and data collected were coded with pseudonyms known only to the researcher who will keep the data for five years after completion of research and then destroy them.

Procedures

The first interview started with the participants providing a general description of their immigration and professional backgrounds. Then the researcher provided the participants a variety of art materials to create art in relation to their experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home. (See materials list at Appendix C.) The researcher informed the participants that they could use other art modalities such as creative movement, music, or poetry.

After completing the artwork, the participants were asked to write their reactions to the pieces. The researcher then interviewed the participants about their perceptions and experiences of the research subject—separation and reconstruction of home—evoked by the art. The questions included:

- What was familiar and what surprised you in your artistic exploration?
- What experiences and feelings came up concerning the art piece/pieces?

The researcher looked for responses that have to do with sense of home and belonging and probed with additional questions to help participants think more clearly about their conception of home. The researcher also asked questions to explore how the therapists' experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home applied in their work with clients. Questions included:

- How is your work as a therapist influenced by your experiences of home?

- What do you find helpful in your work with clients?

In addition to the established questions, the researcher used probing questions as needed. Participants were encouraged to continue to reflect upon the themes and ideas that came up after the interview. Moreover, the researcher asked participants to reflect on the art-making and how it raised their awareness of home. After the interviews were transcribed, the researcher contacted the participants again, sent the interview transcripts and art (visual art pieces or recordings of movement or music art-making) for the participants' review, and scheduled a second (30-minute) telephone interview. In the second interview, the researcher asked the participants questions such as:

- When you reviewed the transcript and your art, what did you feel and think about it?
- Do you think the interview was able to capture your experience?
- Did you feel the interview evoked any experiences?
- Could you share what you thought, experienced, or felt when you looked at your art?

Data Collection

The researcher recorded all interviews and based on participants' approval on their informed consent form (Appendix B) photographed, filmed, or retained the participants' artistic works. Participants decided whether to provide the researcher their art pieces or keep them. All participants consented to show visual art pieces in this dissertation (Chapter 4, Results). To maintain participant confidentiality, movement and music pieces are only described using participant quotes and researcher descriptions.

Data Analysis

The researcher examined transcripts from the two interviews as well as the participants' artworks. In the transcripts, the researcher identified common and repeating themes as well as vignettes that related to the experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home. The researcher included information that might challenge or support the pilot study findings on the centrality of separation from and reconstruction of home. The researcher then examined the use of art for each participant. Lastly, the researcher created an artistic analysis (film) that examined the interview content as a whole, which provided greater and more in-depth understanding of the experiences shared in the study. The film provided another significant way to examine the in-depth meanings shared by all participants and contributed to understanding the research question.

Because this study included interviews with people from different cultures, worldviews, and beliefs, this researcher mostly deferred to the participants' reflection upon their art, giving place to the uniqueness, mutuality, and overall experiences. The researcher intentionally did not provide any definition or share her own experiences about the research subject with the participants. Moreover, in order to let the art speak for itself the researcher did not provide any guidance with regard to what was "expected" of the participants in the artistic exploration. Instead, she allowed the participants to discover through the art new meanings that were not influenced by outer factors. To provide space for *the unknown*, the artistic process remained open and undefined. For some participants, the art-making felt very intimate and challenging; however, most participants found the art-making—and being in the unknown—to be a moving and

interesting experience that provided new understandings. Moreover, the participants commented that the ability to be in the unknown and sometimes express themselves in art modalities that were less natural to them was similar to ways they felt in their immigration experience—and therefore helpful to fully examining the theme.

Reflection

Throughout this study, the researcher used reflexivity to provide the participants an opportunity to reflect on their art-making. The second interview was conducted to allow the participants to reflect on their experiences with the perspective of time and to validate the first interview content. Participant 6 expressed that this was extremely important—the reflection itself provided him with an opportunity to examine his own responses, to see he had responded extremely, and to determine what it meant in regard to the research subject and his experience of reconstruction of home.

Art-Based Analysis

The researcher analyzed the contents gathered from the semi-structured interviews and art-based methods using reflection and art-based analysis. This study examines the “whole work” (Potash, 2014, p. 38) of the art, giving attention to the participants’ emotions, experiences, metaphors, and ideas that came up in the art-making process. Therefore, the analysis was conducted on three levels. The first level was collection of the thoughts, reflections, and experiences from the art-making (including the art modality choice, feelings, and experiences while doing the art and experiences and awareness that came up from having made the art). The second level consisted of the participants’ own observations of their images, movement, and music pieces (expected

and surprising elements). The third level looked at the use of metaphors, images, and symbols the participants used verbally in the interview after the art-making.

Researcher's Film

The researcher examined the results of the study analysis using written and film media (Poetic writing can be found at Chapter 4, Results). Metaphors and images shared by the participants both in their art-making and verbally were collected. Participant 1 had shared a metaphor that became the basis of the researcher's film and evolved into "the film story." Participant 1's metaphor for her experience was a flower taken from the ground and transferred to a vase:

Home is like flowers in the ground, but this home in the United States is like this....in the vase....Ground always gives you water and nutrition, it never ends. Roots. But this one, after a few vases...just gone. You need to refill the water all the time.

The researcher collected quotes, experiences, metaphors, and images that all 10 participants shared and described in the interviews to create the story portrayed in the film. Moreover, the researcher included emotions, senses, and responses she experienced in the interviews in order to work with the content the participants had shared. The film became not a representation of each participant's exact story or personal experience, but an attempt to provide another way to interpret, analyze, and find meaning in the material the participants shared. (A CD with the film is attached to this dissertation).

CHAPTER 4

Results

Participants' artwork processes and their reflections on it are referred to as the first theme, which is described in each participant's vignette (see Art-Making Process) and later integrated in the sections on the three main themes. To maintain confidentiality, the participants are given numbers and features such as their countries of origin are not mentioned relative to specific participants with one permitted exception (Participant 8).

Three main themes emerge from the interviews and art works. Participants describe experiences that are fluid and ever changing.

1. Belonging-Not Belonging
2. Home Here-Home There; Home Nowhere-Home Everywhere
3. Old Me-New Me (evolution of identity)

The material in this section is based on the collected data—including responses to the face-to-face and telephone interviews, participants' artwork, and reflexivity of images and experiences—that arose during and as result of the art-making. Whenever possible, participants' own words and phrases are incorporated in the text (although somewhat restructured because English is not the participants' mother tongue).

The last section of the results concerns common experiences of the art the participants described, as well as the effect they noticed on their professional roles as expressive therapists. All participants found that the art provided an opportunity for reflection, mirroring, and bridging. They felt art modalities that they were familiar with and had previously stirred feelings of home. Unfamiliar modalities, for some participants, stirred the opposite feeling—feeling not “at home”—and resonated with

various experiences they felt in the immigration process. It became apparent from the interviews that the participants' experience of creating and reflecting upon the artwork helped them to accept and further understand their own and their immigrant clients' processes.

Art-Making Processes

The following vignettes describe each participant's art-making process.

Participant 1

Participant 1 used visual art as a means of expression even though it is not her main art modality. The participant chose background music (her main modality) that is meaningful to her. She shared how she brought this kind of (spiritual) music with her on the airplane to the United States when she had "no friends...no cousins, no family" waiting for her and she was "very worried...very afraid." Music and her spiritual belief constantly helped and made her "feel like if I was a fish these were the water[s] I could swim in." She shared that she was able to feel no difference in the work she was doing in her country of origin and in the United States. "It is the same because there was the music and there were the clients; the piano, the instruments are the same." Music provided her safety and it felt home to her. She was able to connect to a sense of familiarity by connecting to the language of music.

The participant created one art piece using paint, paper cuts, feathers, strings, shell, stones, and paper flower (Figure 3). Her art exploration in the study focused on the subjects of old and new, the disconnection between then, and her wish to connect these two viewpoints. She shared how the art-making in the research helped her clearly see "the contrast" between her "old home" and her "new home." She further shared that

when she reflected on her art exploration she realized she could have “two kinds of homes.” Previously the only place she considered as home was her country of origin. In response to her interview experience, she found that she could also have a home in the United States. She said, “That was a huge realization, that I have another home, [a] new home that I have developed since I left my old home.” The art-making and exploration around it contributed to the participant’s ability to experience a connection between the two facets she was carrying—external and internal—and “to adjust to the new land and I think I decided to put my roots in this ground.”



Figure 3. Participant 1’s art piece

In addition, Participant 1 witnessed a change in her professional perception. She mentioned a change in her view toward her clients who had gone through relocation and had similar experiences to her own. She discussed her own realization that she carries two homes and that those two homes have a place inside her. The connection she experienced internally through the art contributed to her ability to understand her clients better and provide a space for them to examine their homes—old and new. She described a process of connection she had in her own experience that she could transform for her clients.

Participant 2

Participant 2 explored the research theme through movement and visual art. The ability to review her experience in the second interview provided her an opportunity to see her reflection as though in a “mirror.” Similarly to Participant 1, the idea of not needing to choose between two places—that is, accepting two homes—came up for Participant 2. She shared:

Maybe I do not need to really go from A to B; I can go back and forth. It is not always like I have to choose Point A or Point B...I know home is there and I can also construct a home here. That is something I carry no matter where I am going. I am here but I know I have a home far away; just that I am not physically there. I [have] provided a physically [sic] home base for myself.

Participant 2 started her artistic exploration with movement (her main modality) and then continued to visual art-making. She discussed how “sometimes words disguise

what I want to say” and shared that her difficulty in the relocation process is to completely express in words what she wants. Movement provides her the ability to express what words lack. It stirs feeling in her and expresses what her “body remembers.” The movement provides a “nonverbal expression to speak how I feel.” The participant shared that in her movement piece she expressed the “contrast” and the “struggle and the tensions” she felt internally. She felt pulled in two directions and the movement helped her work on connecting “the pieces together.”

After her movement piece, Participant 2 felt the “process was not finished.” Images came to her mind that she needed to put into visual art-making. She created two art pieces. In both, she integrated images from collage notebook, oil pastels, paper cuts, and feathers. The first art piece (Figure 4) reflected separation from home. She spoke about the guilt she carries in her decision to live far from her family. She described the image of a door she chose in the first art piece as reflecting her wish on one hand to open a door to her new home and not “be locked in that security home based” in her country of origin. On the other hand, she described also feeling something (guilt and longing) keeping her back. This art piece reflected two sides that are both dark and colorful.



Figure 4. Participant 2's first art piece

The second art piece reflected reconstruction of home. In that piece, the participant spoke about the changes in her identity she feels she had been going through and the need to reconstruct who she is. She shared that the second piece also deals with questions of what is home for her (Figure 5). She shared that throughout creating the visual art piece she was able to not think too much and to let things to flow. She was “surprised” that she expressed in the art exactly what she felt. After the art-making, the participant felt that the experience was “more full, more complete.” Therefore, the transition between the movement to the visual art-making and the writing provided the participant with a three-stage experience that created a great internal connection. First, in the movement (her main modality) she connected to the experience from the body. The

“body remembers,” she stated. Second, she used visual art to create the images that came to her in the movement. Third, she wrote and gave those images and experiences words. Visual art-making is usually hard for the participant, but the ability to use it after movement—when she feels comfortable and natural—helped her transition to the art because the movement stirred images she felt she needed to express in art.

When she referred to the art-making, she found it to function as a “transitional object” that helped her be in touch with confusing parts of herself that she was not able to see because of all the changes she experienced in the relocation. She continued to use the artistic product after the actual interview, sharing that she looked at it, thought about it, and dialogued with it whenever she felt “confusion between separation and reconstruction.”

Participant 2 also expressed that having a new perspective of her own separation from and reconstruction of home from the art expression contributed to her therapy work with immigrants. She described that before participating in this research, she always knew that she experienced separation, but her greatest realization after the first interview regarded reconstruction. She realized that she carries the ability to reconstruct a sense of home for herself and for her clients. This realization affected her understanding that “we do not need to exactly accept everything but we can create our own space that is more familiar with the home we had in the past.” The overall art-making (transitioning from one modality to the other) and the art product made her realize her strengths in the process of separation and reconstruction, which she felt she could also transfer to her clients.



Figure 5. Participant 2’s second art piece

Participant 3

Participant 3, who had relocated several times prior to her relocation to the United States, shared her struggle finding her “voice.” She noted that in those situations of struggle, “music and dance were the only things that really helped me feel alive.” In the artistic exploration of her interview, she initially responded to the research topic by movement (her main modality) and then used visual art and writing. During the first interview, she discussed images that came up unexpectedly and represented both her home in her country of origin and her current home in the United States. These images included a structure she made that looks like her house in the United States as well as

traditional country-of-origin fabric and colors, which represent the wild nature near her house in the United States as well as the clean, minimalistic surroundings of her country of origin (Figure 6). She noted the art-making experience provided integration between these different components of herself.



Figure 6. Participant 3's art piece

In her second interview, Participant 3 shared that when she watched her movement, she found it “familiar” and similar to movement she had done in the past. The movement was a representation of complex situations in which she felt like an outsider. She stated, “Movement is representative of that sort of constantly going and then trying and then falling back a little.” The visual art was new for the participant and

she was surprised it made her feel “happy” and “grounded.” She experienced it as more “stable” and “peaceful” than she thought it would be and reflected that it was about where “I find home.”

Participant 4

Participant 4 shared that art was always an important part of her life and helped her in times of struggle. “Arts really rescued me from the very beginning.” In the research, she chose to use visual art (her main modality) to represent her experiences regarding her separation from and reconstruction of home. She started by working on a piece she referred to as her separation-from-home piece. The participant first discussed the sensory experience she had in relation to the home she had left. She detailed the smells and sounds, the structure of the houses, the people, and the atmosphere in the street where she grew up (Figure 7). As she was making the art, she described in detail her home in the city where she grew up:

It smells old and it sounds...it has these sounds that nowhere in America can [I] get them. Even when the bells...there are some churches that have bells that you can hear; it sounds very different....It is also just like the clapping...or the rain when it comes from the buildings....In America you don't get [these] sounds.



Figure 7. Participant 4’s first art piece

The researcher noted to Participant 4 that her art piece about separation “brought” the researcher to the place where the participant had grown up. Participant 4 replied, “It was more about the connection, I think....I am actually giving you all these details about it like I am bringing you into there, so I am really telling you about all the connection.” The participant shared that it was not the first time she had painted the streets of her country of origin; drawing the city where she was born in so much detail helps her whenever she feels “homesick.” She stated, “The whole process for me was really being homesick but it [is] kind of grounded. It kind of brought [her birth city] to me. I was definitely thinking like, yeah, there is so much in making art.”

The participant's second art piece concerned her experience of reconstruction of home (Figure 8). In that piece, she created a representation of her home in the United States. She chose an abstract drawing. She was surprised by what came up in regard to the art piece she referred to as the United States but shared, "I am okay with that it does not make sense because that is what America is; for America to make no sense—really makes sense." After the art-making, the participant explored questions she had on the process of separation from home and why much of what came up for her was an experience of connection.



Figure 8. Participant 4's second art piece

Participant 5

Throughout the interview, Participant 5 shared how art-making had been always a dominant part of her life. She uses the arts when she has to “struggle a lot to find the words.” She added that she believed this struggle was “not only because English is my second language but also because there is something that the arts [express] which is hard to explain in words.” She spoke about the elements that arts can bring: “the colors, the different materials, the lines” that convey a “sensation” absent for her in spoken language.

In the art-making during the research, the participant chose to create two visual art pieces around the subject of separation from and reconstruction of home (Figures 9 and 10). The art-making experience “was very emotional for me....It evoked that...it gave space to process some of this.” Throughout the art-making the participant noticed various familiar as well as surprising and new elements. The main part of her art-making was the subject of roots. She shared that her powerful image of an “uprooted plant” was an image she had in the past and she decided to use the painting to extend the roots “beyond the flat canvas” (Figure 9). When she reflected on the art-making, she realized that “home can be a place in my imagination.” It gave her a sense of an inner connectedness and acknowledgment that her roots were not only “floating in the air.” She found that she has “a lot of things I carry inside” and that “home is a place in my heart” (Figure 10).



Figure 9. Participant 5's first art piece

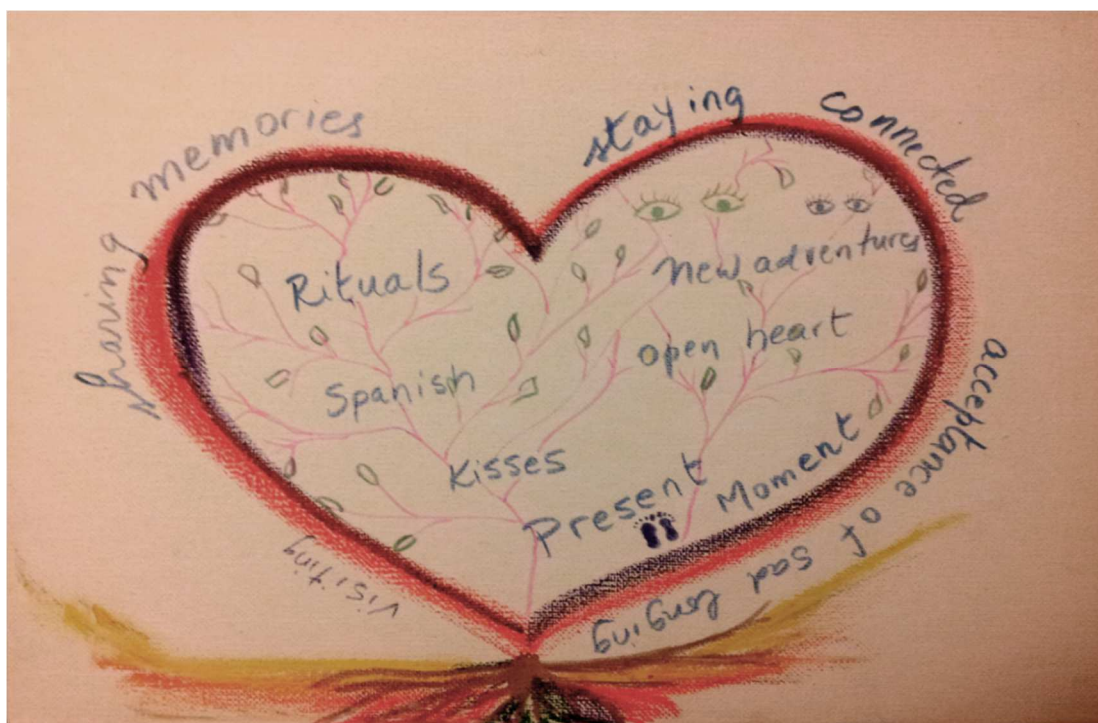


Figure 10. Participant 5's second art piece

One element that came up in the interview was the participant's struggle to belong fully to a place. She shared feeling that she is a "citizen of the airport and does not belong to any place." For her, the art-making and the reflection on it gave her a "new" feeling of "resolution." She could feel "more at peace with the dichotomy...more at peace with the conflict it generates."

Participant 5 discussed how through the art-making and reflecting on her interview she realized that both creativity and nature feel like "home" to her and how this realization extended beyond the interview. She described that she took part in an art exhibition and kept examining the things that she carries and that make her feel at home, such as art and nature. She read a poem that she wrote as part of the exhibition where she started the poem saying, "Nature is my home, whether I'm here or there, nature holds me and welcomes me in," and she ends the poem with, "My art invites you to the origin of life, to wonder." By connecting to two of those things—nature and art—the participant realized that the subject of being uprooted came up again, similar to her art in the interview. However, this time she stated, "The seeds that come from the ground are now in the air, but they have a home there."

Participant 6

Participant 6 used visual art-making to explore his experiences around separation from and reconstruction of home. He shared that the first thing that caught his eye was an image of a Toyota (a car he has in the United States) that for him symbolizes the connection between his country of origin and the United States. He described other images he chose to represent the "landscape" of his hometown, the mountains, and the

sea. He said that a small part of his art represented the United States, adding, “I did not do too much here; I just drew my home.”

Throughout the first interview, the participant expressed his difficulty in fully belonging in the United States and expressed the same feeling in his art. He shared that the only thing he feels he belongs to in the United States is his wife and his physical home. He shared that the image of a kite in his art represented his initial strong wish to relocate, gain new possibilities, and “fly away”—and now he questions whether he made a good decision (Figure 11).

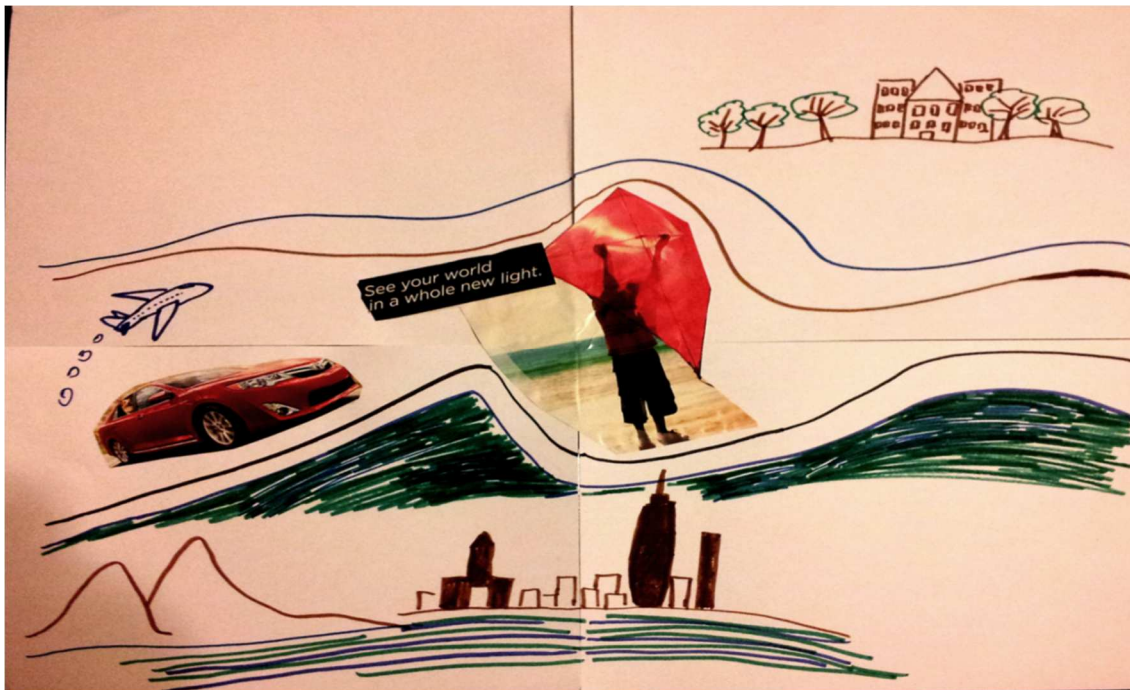


Figure 11. Participant 6's art piece

In the second interview, Participant 6 shared his surprise that he expressed the “empty side” both verbally and in the art-making of the first interview. He felt that what came out of him was “too extreme” and did not represent his whole experience. He discussed the timing of the interview—when he was away from his home in the United States. Moreover, he spoke about his choice of an art modality (visual art) outside his “comfort zone.” He shared that the visual art was “limiting.” Even though it is a modality he sometimes uses in his work as a therapist, he did not feel “he could really express” himself. The participant shared that he used what he saw in front of him (the art supplies) without thinking that if he could, he would choose to use his main modality—music.

When concluding, the participant shared that reflecting back on his art and his verbal reflection provided him an opportunity to see himself more clearly. It emphasized the connections and all the things he has in his life in the United States. Moreover, he shared that in transition situations (such as a transition to a new position), he was able after the interview to connect the experience to his immigration process and the difficulties that remain.

Participant 7

Participant 7 chose movement to express her experiences around separation from and reconstruction of home. For her, “The arts always helped connect with people on a level that it did not matter where they [were] from and what language[s] they speak because it is a universal language.” She shared that in her work with immigrants she found the arts to be above language and cultural barriers and to provide people an opportunity to connect fully, internally, and with others.

In her movement piece, Participant 7 shared the three phases of her movement represented (1) the “old home,” (2) the “transition,” and (3) an acceptance and adjustment phase she noted as a current experience. Each part of the movement represented different aspects of her relocation experience. In the first part, she expressed the “loving, folding experience” of her old home. The second movement piece felt to her as a “sharp-angled battle,” and the third part expressed her wish to apply the things she experienced in her old home to the “new situation.” The participant’s ability to witness herself moving and to reflect on her movement was a new experience for her. She described it as “interesting” and “surprising.” She shared that the movement gave her an opportunity to revisit the three phases she had experienced in relation to her relocation and this provided a sense of “integration” between the “old” and the “new.”

In the second interview, Participant 7 expressed her disappointment in not “letting in something I was not aware of” in her movement. She explained that because the research theme was a topic she had greatly explored in the past she had come to the interview wanting to share her knowledge and express what she knew. This prevented her from fully opening up and “finding something new.” Despite that realization she observed “circular motions” she had been unaware of when she was moving. In the second interview, she related that these movements stirred in her a strong, familiar desire to “gather,” “collect,” and “bring into my presence to create a home.”

Participant 8

Participant 8, who had relocated from Canada to the United States felt that her experience was different from those of people who relocated from far-away countries.³

3. With the participant’s permission and due to the important distinction of this participant’s immigration within North America, the researcher disclosed here the participant’s country of origin.

She shared her concerns that due to this difference she would not be able to contribute to the research. However, she found that the art-making brought up many feelings in her. She reflected that she found “how moving from Canada was actually more meaningful than I thought.” She described that in her art she chose images she was drawn to and realized that “even though they are different parts of my life” they all are connected. For her the images represented pieces of her life she saw as “building blocks”; each block was a part of her life related to and dependent on the previous one. The participant shared that putting together a collage symbolically connected together her life experiences and she saw it as a dynamic, constantly changing experience. She used an image of a butterfly in the collage to represent her transition between countries and in different stages of her life (Figure 12).



Figure 12. Participant 8’s art piece

Participant 8 concluded that a repeating theme in the interview art exploration as well as in photography she did in the past concerned the subject of groups. She said this theme also appeared in her clinical work that involves group therapy around life transitions. She shared that she has a need to be connected to and to connect people to groups.

Participant 9

Participant 9 used visual art (not her main modality) to explore the research subject. She shared that creating a frame of an “empty space” represented home (Figure 13). Home for her is where she feels she belongs or longs to be. She also created human-like clay shapes surrounding the frame to represent her nuclear family that lives with her in the United States. For the participant, making art was a different type of experience. First, it was different from the modality she normally uses—music. Second, she shared that her perception changed each time she looked at it and that when she created the art she felt a sense of longing. In the second interview the experience of longing changed to a sense of disconnection from her country of origin and a greater focus on her life in the United States. The participant discussed the ability to look at the art in a perspective of time and understand other new things about it as well as the subject of home as changing and dynamic. She noted that with music there is something more immediate. In the visual art, another layer gave her new meanings because of the ability to reflect on the picture again. Similarly to her own internal changes in perception, she observes things in her art differently as well.



Figure 13. Participant 9’s art piece

Participant 10

Participant 10 responded to the research theme by using both visual art and music as means of exploration. In the interview, he shared that he started with visual art, which for him was “the most alien of the modalities.” He realized that perhaps he chose the art modality in which he felt alien because it best reflected his experience when he had “left home.” He said that for the artistic exploration he chose random images that—throughout the process—started to make sense and greatly reflect the relocation experience (Figure 14). The images included a koala bear to represent himself and his experience of feeling “well taken care of” but “somehow trapped,” which were feelings he had in his country of origin. Another image was of an astronaut to symbolize “new

possibilities” he hoped to find in the United States. A third image was of hands, which represent the struggle he experienced after relocating. In another image of hands “you see the skeleton” that represents his experience of finding out who he truly is. All these images as well as the colors that the participant chose were not something that he planned or that initially had a definite meaning. Throughout the art-making, Participant 10 absorbed meaning that he could later identify with and question. The participant emphasized that usually in visual art-making exploration he tends to use abstract painting but in this art-making he used representational images. He said his reason for doing so was the research subject and its importance for him; the art-making experience was surprising, “symbolic,” and “representative.”



Figure 14. Participant 10's first art piece

Even though music is Participant 10's main modality, making music around the research theme was not his "first instinct." He explained that in music he feels he has "more control"—and the visual art provided him an opportunity to experience more of the unknown. "My ideas and feelings were clearer; I felt I just wanted to move there to the music because I have more control on what I want to say." Therefore, after the art-making the participant had an "idea, an artistic way" of what he wanted to say. He shared that he did not initially have any musical notes but he had a clear concept—a melody that had become clearer because of the visual art-making. Therefore, he chose instruments that were meaningful for him: congas, which are "really African but we associate them with Latin [music]" and drums, which symbolize who he is and the medium that was his reason for coming to the United States and represented for him "being at home." The melody was a "combination of Jewish and Latin" rhythm representative of his two identities of origin.

Together with the sounds, the participant shared sensing a bluish color he had in his visual art-making (Figure 15) that represented being in his country of origin. It was "sad yet comfortable." The other instrument (the participant did not recall its name) he used was a "representation of my new home." The participant, who was about to get married in the United States and "build here a home," shared that his brother-in-law gave him this very unique instrument, which represented the new life ahead with his future wife. Moreover, the participant explained that he chose this instrument because it needs a lot of exploration until it "makes sense," an experience similar to one he had in his experience of reconstructing a home in the United States. For him, the reconstruction of a home is never ending and is about continuously remaining in the unknown and

constantly exploring. Moreover, he found that the exploration, the open “possibilities,” and the remaining in the unknown were main factors that also lead him professionally as a music therapist.



Figure 15. Participant 10's second art piece

Belonging-Not Belonging

All research participants discussed the theme of Belonging-Not Belonging as a response to the research topic. They spoke about four aspects of this theme. The first aspect concerns the participants' need to belong and to connect. The second is the participants' struggle to belong in the United States. The third aspect is the loss of a sense of belonging to their country of origin after the transition. Six participants explored a fourth aspect, the idea of "growing roots" and feeling rootless that will be examined in this section as well.

Need to Belong and to Connect

When exploring the subject of separation from and reconstruction of home, the participants discussed the basic need to belong and expressed it in their art. They often used metaphors and images to represent their need to belong and to connect and the role that need plays in their lives. The need to belong and the lack of feeling they fully belong follows some participants in their lives and influenced their decisions to relocate. A few participants described how the relocation process raised questions of belonging as well as the need to belong and connect.

Participant 8 discussed how her use of group images in her art piece had started earlier in her personal life and professional work, saying, "I am always drawn to a group. I do a lot of photography and I am always taking pictures of groups and things like candies or just piles of crayons...capturing people and relationships." She shared that what helped her most in the process of separating from home was establishing a connection and "creating a family away from home."

Participant 8 also realized that since she had transitioned to the United States she had lived on the same street. She had witnessed constant changes in this neighborhood. She shared:

It is interesting because...since I lived here, I have lived on the same street...I have seen a lot of different changes...I have seen so many people move in and out and I am still here. So it is funny. In some ways I feel like stagnant...all the memories are on the same street.

Finding connection is also something Participant 6 yearns for in whatever he does. He stated, “Find a connection—where I go, whatever I do—I want to find the connection so that I can feel confident, feel settled down.”

Participant 5 shared that in a course she took a few years ago she was asked to create her “social atom” (a structure that shows personal social surroundings and interactions). She felt that due to her relocation she needed to construct her social atom in a way that would be “fluid”—changeable—and that represented her social surroundings from both her country of origin and the United States. She explained:

I was asked to do a social atom. I chose to do it in a way that you can change [it]. It was all little circles that represented people in my life and I made it in a way that I can change it, that it could be fluid. Sometimes I feel closer to these people and sometimes further away, and these people come closer. And it had to do with being far away from people.

Participant 9 discussed her constant wish to connect her family to the values with which she was raised along with adopting the new values from her life in the United States. On one hand, the participant wants to connect her family to the traditions and

worldview of her native country. On the other hand, she wants her children to grow up with her new country's values such as women's right to have a career. For her, the process of separating from and reconstructing home causes the constant need to integrate "old and new values." She shared that she had to "create new values and at the same time try to have our roots. And those roots are stretching and longing for the old values and the new values."

Similarly, Participant 7 shared her continuing need to connect her family to values, traditions, and worldviews she had in her country of origin. She described the "struggle" and the process as "trying to apply kind of what I bring with me—that strength of home and community—and trying to apply it in the new situation and it wasn't always fitting."

In her second interview, Participant 7 watched the video recording of her movement art piece. She noted that she often used "circular motions" and shared:

It was something I was not aware of when I was moving....It is like collecting, gathering in [a] circular motion....I guess it fits in with what I just described, of what I bring into the present to create a home.

For Participant 2, the need to connect and belong comes up especially in times she feels lonely. She shared, "I long to reach out to the family because I lost connection and the support I need. When I feel lonely I feel that [it is] something that I need; nobody can support me here like a family."

A few participants described the need to belong as a constant search they remember. This sense of not belonging encouraged some of them to search for new opportunities and possibilities outside their countries of origin.

Participant 10 shared that his life in his country of origin was one in which he did not completely belong:

I grew up in a very supportive family but in a city where I did not feel completely engaged or that I could not find what I wanted culturally, artistically, socially...I felt that I could have more choices in every way and find more who I was and what I wanted.

In his art expression, Participant 10 created a collage that included an image of a koala inside a cage. To him the koala represents how he felt in his country of origin: “trapped” and never quite belonging. He further explained:

I found this guy, koala, I mean he is cute but there is something about the way he is staring outside—that is what attracted me more than the actual koala—and the way he feels trapped. You know, he seems like well taken care of—he does not seem abandoned or anything—but he is looking outside like there is something else out there. I connected with that because I guess that is kind of how I felt.

Participant 3 also shared that she felt she never quite belonged in her country of origin. She did not grow up in her country of origin; her family left when she was one year old. When she returned with her family several years later she felt she needed to hide who she truly was in order to be accepted. “It always felt like I had to hide a piece of me in order to be accepted because they noticed the differences...I did not feel like I had a voice there.”

Struggle to Belong in the United States

Participant 2 described her struggle to fit into American society. She shared a constant need to balance characteristics embedded in her from her country of origin—such as being “humble” and thinking of others before self—with American society, which she feels values other characteristics—such as “put your foot down” and “speak out for yourself.” Participant 2 described an inner struggle to find the right balance between both societies’ expectations in order to feel as though she belongs:

Relationships with others—I think that is hard for me to really fit. My personality fits here but somehow not really....How do I go out, adapt to American culture...express myself and not be all stressed out. Yeah, the stress feels sometimes too much.

Participant 4 described the need to “work” in order to connect with people and feel as though she belongs in her life in the United States. “Over here you have to definitely...work at connecting [with] people. I think if you do not...you can probably survive but it would be much harder to be without people.” Participant 4 also shared feeling that in her country of origin she knew the system and how things worked; however, in her transition she feels as though she is on another person’s “land” and needs others to help her connect and belong:

In Europe, you just kind of know. There is something about it where you feel it is my country, this is what I know, I grew up here, I know how the system works versus like here it is kind of being more open....I get it—I am on your piece of land. I may think I know but I need to hear from you to really, really know.

Even though she has lived in the United States eight years and has many things that connect her to her life in the United States, Participant 1 still feels things are new for her. “I have so many things here: friends, church, my husband, home, work..., but it is so new to me even though it has been eight years. It is so new, still new.”

Participant 5 shared feeling as though she were a “tourist,” saying, “I think that we in comparison to other people who are from here—we always feel that we are tourists and we go to places and visit. We [are] tourists where we live.” Participant 5 felt she needs to “make an effort to embrace things that have nothing to do with our [her] culture.” She used the example of the Fourth of July holiday. Her children—who were born in the United States—do not question the holiday; they fully accept it as part of their culture. However, Participant 5 and her husband struggle to belong to such holidays as naturally as do their children. She described how she tries to create home by observing those things that she does not fit in with or connect to through her children’s eyes:

Putting the eyes of my kids [referring to her art] I tried to think that creating the home—this is their home. They do not have this thing that both my husband and I have....Seeing that through their eyes, that [is] what they know....Like [when] it is the Fourth of July we celebrate this.

No questions for them. They do not have anything else. We need to make an effort to embrace things that have nothing to do with our cultures.

They were born here.

Participant 5 also discussed the idea of “background,” which came up in her art as representing her life in the United States. She shared that even though she has lived in the United States for 10 years she feels her life is “flat, the present, with no background.”

She compares herself to her children who were born in the United States and who have layers of memories experiences. For Participant 5, her “background” exists in the present moment and in her “imagination” and is constantly “filling.”

Participant 6 discussed the subject of belonging-not belonging; he described how he does not feel as though he belongs to many things in his life in the United States. He spoke about lack of connection, feeling he “cannot get it [the humor, the people]” and feelings of emptiness:

When I am here, the only thing is my home. That is the only thing....Anything else is like not mine...I mean, culturally I do not find a lot of connection. That is what I mean; I do not find a lot of connection. It is like empty right here....I try my best to fit in but you know there is some limit right here.

Sometimes people talk about something like they are trying to be humorous and then I cannot get it. And you know? After a while I do not want to make any effort that is all, okay, whatever, I just stay home and go to work....So just home, just home, every year back and forth. In [my country of origin], I feel it is everything. I belong there. It is everything there. I belong to a whole city. I belong to a mountain over there. I belong to a root over there, you know, my home. I belong there. And here it is just home [referring to his house].

In the second conversation, Participant 6 shared his surprise about the “extreme response” that he expressed in the first interview and “the empty side” that came up. He then emphasized everything that helps him feel that he belongs in the United States:

For some reason that part, the empty side of me, came up. And I have kind of expressed that it is like black and white. Of course, it is not. I have been here for the last 14 years. Of course I know a lot of people and I have friends and connections; I have students; I have my colleagues; I have orchestra; I go to the orchestra, I play music here, I used to sing in a choir. Sometimes I go to church. Yes, I have something here. I also enjoy my life here actually. Part of me enjoys that. Even though a part of me resists that, you know like I cannot fit here, I cannot be part of it.

Loss of a Sense of Belonging to the Country of Origin

In addition to their struggles to fit in with the United States, a few participants also shared their difficulties fully belonging to their countries of origin. Their feelings included loss of social cues and dislocation as well as not feeling they fully belong at any particular place.

Participant 2 raised questions about where home is for her; she shared a sense of a strong duality and referred to the experience as feeling “lost in the ocean.” In the United States, she feels like herself but not “at home,” whereas in her country of origin she feels at home but does not “fit in very well.” She further stated:

When I am back in [my country of origin], yes, it is very easy for me to adapt to it but I do not fit very well, I do not feel really myself. And here I feel myself but at the same time, it does not feel like home. So sometime I have the time that I feel like I am lost in the ocean, I do not know where. And a lot of pieces falling down.

Similarly, Participant 5 described the struggle to belong in the United States as well as in her country of origin. She shared feeling “uprooted” and not belonging completely to any place. The only place she truly belongs is the space “in between,” which makes her a “citizen of the airport.” She stated:

Sometimes you do not feel that you are here or there. My kids are here and I feel a sense that my home is here but....And I am getting emotional talking about it. As if when I go back, I do not feel that I am from there either any more. The place that I belong is the airport, the air. But “the space between” is a reality—maybe the only one. This is how imagination is described as an intermediate realm...we can discuss.

Participant 5 gave the example of coming from a very physically affectionate society; however, since she has lived in the United States she sometimes struggles to know the right way to behave. She lacks the cultural understanding and social “codes” she used to have that helped her connect with others and know what to do to feel that she belongs. She explained:

When I was living there, I knew who I need to kiss. Now I do not. Now I am questioning, do I kiss this person or not?...The person that comes to clean my home I used to kiss but now I am questioning. You lose things that you do not think you will lose. Like codes. Here I know: You do not!

Participant 3 spoke about the different lifestyle she currently has in the United States compared to the one in her country of origin. Differences that come into play include the way people are expected to dress. When she visits her country of origin, she needs to accommodate her appearance in order to belong. “In [my country of origin] I

have to think about even the clothes I bring there when I visit. It has to be proper and very new looking.”

Feeling Rootless-Finding Roots

In both their discussions and their art expressions, participants raised the theme of feeling rootless or rooted. Six participants brought up the subject of roots as a dominant part of their experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home. The experience the participants shared was complex and moved between feeling rootless after the relocation to better finding their roots than when they lived in their countries of origin.

Participant 1 shared that she still feels rootless even though she has many things that connect her to life in the United States. She used a powerful image of a flower in a vase compared with a flower growing in the ground. She said that in her life in the United States she feels like a flower in a vase that needs constant maintenance in order to survive. The flower in the ground has “roots” and receives “water and nutrition.” That is, the flower in the ground receives what it needs naturally:

I have so many things here: friends, church, my husband, home, work... but it is so new to me even though it has been eight years. It is so new, still new. I am looking at the flowers, so home is like flowers [in] the ground but this home in the United States is like this...in the vase....Ground always gives you water and nutrition, you know it never ends. Roots. But this one, after a few vases...just gone. You need to refill [the] water all the time.

Participant 5's initial response while making her art was to say she feels "unrooted" and that "the roots are in the air." She added, "You become some kind of a creature that has roots but they are not rooted in a place."

Similarly to Participant 1, Participant 5 shared an image of an "uprooted plant." She read aloud a piece of writing she created in response to the art-making:

It is familiar, the image of the uprooted plant. I have thought about it before. The heart with roots [is] still in the air and connecting to a land and scene that only exist in my imagination....It is the land of my childhood, which lives inside of me. A land that extends beyond the flat canvas....The heart in the first drawing has the roots that are in the air and feeling of the blue empty sky depicting the sadness, void, separation.

Participant 7 shared how in her relocation process she has been trying to embrace the new while connecting to her roots. She discussed her own experience of connection to roots along with creating roots for her children. She stated, "Staying connected to my roots while witnessing them, creating, creating their [referring to her children's] own roots here."

Participant 9 shared an experience of "growing roots" in her struggle to create something new along with keeping the old. She referred to her search for roots by saying, "We are trying to create new values and at the same time trying to have our roots, and those roots are stretching and longing for the old values and new values." Later, she continued to describe this as a process of growing roots by sharing, "On the one hand, a kind of longing but we are more inward trying to create new values here, these little things, yet the roots are still growing."

Two participants shared that they actually felt they found their roots after they relocated. Participant 3 discussed how her father always told her that she would lose her roots if she lived outside her country of origin. “My father used to say that if I ended up living elsewhere...I would feel rootless.” The participant shared that having roots in her country of origin actually makes her feel she “can go from there [to] anywhere.”

Home Here-Home There; Home Nowhere-Home Everywhere

Most participants shared that the experience of separating from and reconstructing a new home was a familiar experience and one that they had thought about before. They noted that in the relocation process certain profound questions kept arising: *What is home? Where can I feel at home? How do I feel regarding the home I left? How can I create a home for my family in the United States?* As explored in this research study, the answers to those questions are multilayered and vary among participants. However, all participants shared the idea that being at home relates to feelings of connectedness, belonging, and a place where one can truly be oneself.

For many participants, relocation raised a sense of duality between two homes (home in their countries of origin and home in the United States). Moreover, the participants described dual emotional states: a sense of homelessness and a realization that home can be everywhere because it is carried within. The interviews show that life transitions could also affect the sense of homelessness on one hand and the ability to feel connected and at home on the other hand.

Relocation Raising Fundamental Questions about Home

The experience of relocation raised for many participants constant and fundamental questions about where and what home is. For example, thinking about

where and what is home was not new to Participant 7. She had been concerned about how she can create a sense of home—as she defines it—for her family. She said:

These years that I have been here, I have been thinking a lot about home and which home. Do I want to live here? Do I not? How do I create a home for my children that is connected to what is home for me? And this [the research's topic] is very familiar; it was not new.

Participant 2 also shared that she constantly tries to define what is home for her and questions whether she could feel “at home” in the United States. Her relocation experience raised an internal process of understanding what home is—as she sees it—and how she can create it far from her country of origin. She described a long-term process that even after seven years is still current in her life. “Sometimes, I wake up and feel like am I here? Is this my home?” She added, “I am still in the process [of] restructuring what is the home I want to live for.”

Participant 3 was surprised to realize from the study that she still experienced “feeling vulnerable” regarding the experience of separating from her country of origin. She said that she thought she “worked through this topic in some ways” and had “come to terms with leaving and I am happy here and I set a home and everything.” However, Participant 3 had an emotional response to the subject and to the art creation around the idea of separation. She described a long process of defining what she needs in order to feel at home in a place and asked herself if a sense of home can be achieved only by the people she is with or also by the place she is at. Participant 3 shared a situation when she was studying with a very “supportive” group of students; however, she said that “was not enough for me to feel at home and comfortable to keep living there.” She explained that

she did not feel at home because the students she studied with had not gone through the immigration experience as she had and they could not understand her fully. That lack of understanding affected her ability to feel at home with them. She said she was missing “a bond, a shared bond about the struggles of being immigrants.”

Duality of Homes

Five participants shared the idea of duality of homes as a theme. Some participants described the duality as associated with feelings of split, longing, loss, and guilt. Participant 2 described a constant struggle to know where home is for her—the United States or her country of origin. This struggle was often attached with a strong sense of being lost at sea. She said:

Sometimes I still have a lot of difficult time[s]—this is like [an] ocean. I could lose myself in here. I am not really sure. Should I stay or go home? And where is my home? Is it here or back in [my country of origin]?

Participant 2’s feelings of duality often connected with longing, guilt, and feeling split. For her, “separation is a huge theme in my life” that is constantly present and brings up feelings that she is in an unsolvable situation she calls “Catch-22.” She described that she “always want[s] to go back home, that is my home place,” but on the other hand, “I know it is quite not what I want.” In both the interview and her movement Participant 2 expressed the struggle she experiences with the separation and conflicted feelings of guilt and not taking care of her family while also wanting to “open the door” and feel “more freedom.”

Participant 2 noted that she works with elderly immigrant clients who experience a sense of duality. For her clients, being able to feel at home comes up as an important

struggle that surfaces strong feelings of wanting to return to their countries of origin, which they refer to as “home.” Participant 2 shared that especially in the end-of-life stage people tend to long for the homes they left in their countries of origin. She shared:

They always want to go home. That is the only wish they want but they cannot....For someone [who] feels like here I have home they feel the same struggle, like going home but not really feel home, and being here and not really [being] at home.

Participant 5 discussed a sense of duality she experiences between her country of origin and the United States as a response to relocating. She differentiates between home as a physical place and home as an emotional state. For her, being physically at home and experiencing a sense of home do not always align—and sometimes even conflict. She shared, “I feel that my house is here but my sense of home?...How I can explain it? There is a house and sense of soil and groundedness but there is something of your own culture which is lost.” Participant 5 addressed feeling disconnection, loss, and “longing for the familiar, the smells and sounds.”

Participant 5 drew a heart in her art exploration. Inside the heart, she put words that represented her “family life in the moment” and outside she wrote words that reflect her connection with her country of origin. For the participant, distancing what connected her with her country of origin—outside the heart—was purposeful and meant to distance the intense feelings the duality and distance raised in her. “If I stay in touch with it every day I would feel very sad.” (See the art piece and additional discussion in the Art as a Bridge and Reflection section.)

Participant 1 discussed her constant need for “connection.” For her, the relocation experience raised aspects of duality between her country of origin and the United States; between her “old self” and her “new self”; and between a “discovered” and “undiscovered area” in her. In her art piece, Participant 1 used representations (such as flowers for each country and colors that represent the flag of her country of origin and parts of her new and old self) that reflected the external and internal duality she experienced. As part of her art, she stretched a line that reflected the “connection” she yearned for and her wish to “integrate” between the duality.

Participant 7 shared that she believed she had found the “integration” she needed in the duality she used to experience. Nevertheless, this came to be only after a long, arduous struggle. The process she went through was “trampy and hard and difficult” and “took forever to get there.” However, this process brought her to a place where she could accept her life in the United States and see it as “good enough.”

Home Nowhere-Home Everywhere

All participants shared the association between home as a physical place and home as an emotional place. Some participants associated the experience of separation from home with feelings of loss and the fundamental feeling of *homelessness* (a sort of emotional transience that metaphorically expressed that they do not feel at home anywhere). Nevertheless, the participants also shared that separation from home provided opportunities for change, new possibilities, and new definitions of home. For some participants, feelings of homelessness emphasized the idea that feeling at home is experienced internally as a “place in the heart.” Moreover, the interviews show that life

transitions (such as marriage, family visiting from country of origin, and travel) could also affect feelings of being at home as well as feelings of homelessness.

Participant 5 shared that separating from her country of origin raised for her the experience that she is not “here or there.” She stated, “My kids are here and I feel that my home is here but...and I am getting emotional talking about it, as if when I go back I do not feel that I am from there either anymore.” Both her art and her interview reflected the idea of feeling uprooted and without a place she can refer to as home. As a response to feeling “uprooted” and not “here or there,” the participant shared that home is “a place in my heart” and “no matter where I go I can access it.”

Participant 6 stated that even though his physical home is in the United States, it does not necessarily represent his emotional home. At times, the gap between these homes creates a deep sense of loss and emptiness as if he has “nothing here.” In his first interview, the participant shared the feeling of homelessness and emptiness he experiences in the United States. He acknowledged that referring to his physical home as the only place he feels connected to might be “too extreme.” However, he noted that sometimes it feels that the only thing that makes him feel connected and at home is his physical home and “everything else is not mine.”

In his second interview, Participant 6 spoke about the “empty side” that came up strongly for him in the first interview. When reflecting on the first interview the participant shared that maybe the fact that the interview took place when he was “away from home...in the United States” connected with how he felt when he arrived in the United States just after relocation. He shared that when he arrived in the United States he had no friends and it felt “empty.” He connected with this same feeling when coming to

a new city away from his New York home brought up the feeling of missing his country of origin. He shared that when his family who still live in his country of origin came to visit he traveled with them and showed them his life in the United States. In this experience, he found that if he could “enjoy life here” then he could also “slowly become adjusted.”

Participant 2 described feeling at times “lost” and as though “a lot of pieces [were] falling down.” She shared that sometimes she feels “not really myself.” At other times, she finds meaning and feels “joy and hope.” When she feels “lonely,” she can also experience feelings of “disconnection” and “disassociation.” She spoke of the need to find balance between feeling at home and experiencing homelessness and expressed the need in her movement piece.

Participant 10 noted in the interview, “Even in my new home I am a foreigner everywhere.” On one hand, he feels at home in the USA; on the other hand, he feels like an outsider “everywhere.” The participant, who was about to get married at the time of the interview, said that particularly “now, getting married it is becoming more real that I am finding my home here for awhile; the wedding makes it more clear.”

Participant 7 said that to feel at home after relocation she needed to connect to her “core” and practice her “tradition and spirituality.” This inner connection to things that associate with feeling at home made her able to carry her sense of home to any place she wanted. She shared, “The tradition, the roots, the rituals, like we do Shabbat dinner, Shabbat candles, songs, all of these things that I feel no matter where we go will be part of home we created.”

Participant 4 explained that she often feels more connected to Europe. However, when she is in Europe people tell her she is “way too Americanized.” In the United States, people see her as a “foreigner” when people hear her accent. Therefore, she said, “It is a bizarre place to be in; you kind of belong everywhere and nowhere.” Later in the interview, she noted that she carries within the feeling of being at home. Sense of home is something always in her; it has “never changed” or “been created,” it is only being “built on.” In addition, she associates home in a universal way that emphasizes the connection of all human beings:

It is almost like here and now being in a space; the sky looks the same as in Europe, kind of the thoughts or the friendships are the same. Yeah, they are different people and they speak different languages but I still have the same type of friendships in Europe just as much as here. I still meet good people and not so good people just like you meet here good people and not so good people.

Old Me-New Me (Evolution of Identity)

Participants described an internal process they experienced as a response to their relocation between countries. Their internal journeys included questions about their identity—who they were and who they had become. When asked during the research about their experiences regarding separation from and reconstruction of home, participants noted a parallel internal experience of separation from and reconstruction of their selves—and described the process as fluid, evolving, and ever changing.

Participant 7 shared how her relocation experience affected who she is as a person. She said that in her relocation experience she was “connecting to my core” and

“staying connected to my roots.” She described a long process of reconstruction of home that made her come to a place that is “good enough.” The changes she went through in response to her definition of what makes her feel at home were not only external but also affected who she is internally and the fact that she is now a “different person”:

I think I am a different person...It feels good now but it took forever to get there....There is definitely something strong in me that has integrated, accepted, and built something here that is good enough. I do not think that it will ever feel like the way it felt growing up but I do not really need that either. I am different.

Participant 2 described an internal process of “peeling” off and “putting back” the layers of who she was and who she had become. For her, the experience of separation from home raised a deep internal process that included searching deep inside who she was and then “layering back and construct[ing] back its foundations.” This experience of layering and reconstruction raised existential questions of who the participant truly was and her purpose in life. She stated, “I have to reconstruct myself, OK; now I have to get rid of what I have learned. So if I get rid of that, who am I? What do I live for? What is my essence of life?”

Participant 2 also described how after relocating to the United States she felt as though her inner self was divided—as though she were constantly trying to connect jigsaw puzzle pieces inside of her “together to become me.” This feeling of impotence made her feel lost at times and “very lonely and sad; frustrations, a lot of frustrations and loss. Disconnection or disassociation with the whole society.” Feelings of guilt and self-judgment of whether she was “being a good kid” also followed the experience. She felt a

constant struggle between gaining “individuality versus [being] selfish.” She also shared that the separation and reconstruction experience brought new meaning and a sense of freedom to become who she wanted to be and to find what she was searching for—“joy and hope, freedom and certainty, more solid....what you are looking for in life, more meaningful.”

Similarly to Participant 2, Participant 5 described a powerful internal process in response to her relocation to the United States. She shared that she used to feel a strong sense of emptiness as well as feel “divided.” She expressed this idea of emptiness and feeling split in photographs she had previously made of cut fruits half empty and half with “the heart.” She explained:

I wanted to explore through photography what I was feeling at the time....I cut a fruit like a peach, and there was one part that was empty and the second part had the heart and that [is] how I felt. That was the moment I felt that I cut myself open. I felt so divided. The heart, the seed of the peach, was in one side and the second side was empty, and that [is] how I felt like I was—empty. Where is my heart? What was happening to me?

For Participant 10, the experience of transitioning to the United States provided him an opportunity to “see the skeleton” and for “finding who I was.” The experience initially raised a sense of a “struggle,” an “anxiety,” and a wish to “prove” himself in connection with others. He shared that the experience of relocating “turned [out] to be more challenging than I expected.” The participant described an inner struggle to be accepted and acknowledged by others. He shared:

I felt I had to in a way prove myself to myself and to other people....I do not mean necessarily proving yourself like you are amazing or anything. No, but by trying to connect with other people you try to gain creditability or connections.

Participant 10 also said he is “reminded every single day” that he is from “somewhere else.” The feeling of being “from outside” became a part of his identity when other have continually ask about his accent or his name. He stated, “Even in a city like New York, there are so many different cultures and people from outside, still it is part of my identity that I am not from here.”

Participant 7 stated that even though she had become an American citizen she never feels completely “Americanized” but in constant desire not to lose the identity she had “from home.” She shared that she feels she became a mixture of different parts—a “conglomerate”:

I am American at this point. I am a citizen but I am not Americanized, not to the point of losing my culture or my identity from the past or from home. So I am some kind of conglomerate. I do not know how you say that, but a combination of things.

Participant 8, similarly to Participant 7, shared a stronger identification with her country of origin than with the United States. She stated, “I still talk about being Canadian. I do not talk about being American even though I have my citizenship; I just do not feel as connected to it.”

Participant 1 described the experience of relocation as one that provided her with free time to be away from everything familiar and to search for who she truly was and

where she was heading in life. She shared, “I just had a lot of time that I thought about myself, like who am I and why did I come here and where am I going, [those] kind of questions.” The experience created a constant “tension” between two sides of her. “I think there is kind of a fight. A tension like which one is affecting, which one is stronger, or weak. Maybe I am struggling with two sides.”

In response to the art-making, Participant 1 described a parallel connection with two places—her country of origin and the United States. The connection and association with two places, which she refers to as “the old” and “the new” respectively, also raised two sides she carries within—her “old” self and her “new self.” These two sides of herself are “different” and often lack the connection for which she yearns. She shared her use of colors to represent these different sides and her need for a new color that provides strength and power—“new myself.” She stated:

When I compared with this color—the darker color and the golden one—the protection, so OK, I think I need a new myself which is the red—very powerful, very distinguishable. And all of the sudden I see the difference between this side to this side, so different. I just want to have a connection.

Participant 9 discussed the idea of having two sides of identity rather than developing one solid identity. She spoke about the experience of leaving “the home” and creating “a home” as one that generations of her family had experienced. She compared her process of relocation to the one her parents and grandparents had when they relocated to her country of origin before she was born. Her mother’s family, who came to her country of as result of war and bad economic conditions, were “trying to really become

[ethnic]; they [were] trying to really assimilate themselves.” The participant’s mother wanted to assimilate in the new country so she tried to be as ethnic as she could and hid from others her origin identity. Only by the “smell of food and taste...the atmosphere” inside her family’s house could the participant experience the “old” home they had left. Now as an adult in a new country Participant 9 is trying to integrate and negotiate between “creating new values and at the same time trying to have roots.” She shared that even though she is working on integrating both identities she still feels separated from her children as they are “developing their own new identities.”

Participant 3 left her country of origin as a baby, moved back with her family as a young girl, and then relocated to the United States as an adult. She explained how these transitions affected her identity. She described how she felt as though she were an outsider at various stages of her life and remembered times she needed to “hide a piece of [herself] in order to be accepted.” She shared how these deep experiences influenced her career decision. Even today, teaching classes about multicultural issues she has a need to give her students an opportunity “to see someone who is not from the same culture so I try to share about differences.”

Participant 3’s decision to move from her country of origin was not easy for her. She explained that in her country of origin, “there is a strong association between home and land” and “the house is your identity.” Therefore, when leaving the house she also left what she considered the “home” and her “identity.” She also left the language itself, which influenced the way she thought and saw the world. Her original language has a different “mindset...because the words we use...[are] more collectively based.” The fact that she now is used to expressing herself in English—and the different mindset it

creates—makes it hard to “feel at home in [my country of origin].” It makes her feel more American when she is in her country of origin. Moreover, people’s different cultural norms and characteristics also influence how they perceive her and her identity. In America, her original identity is more emphasized; in her country of origin, she feels more American. She said that as a woman in her country of origin she is considered more “aggressive in terms of [country of origin] standards because I talk in a deeper voice for one thing. [Country of origin] women generally tend to talk in a higher pitch.”

Participant 4 relocated from a culture where she noted people are more introverted and emotionally closed. She found that people in the United States are more accepting of differences and are more “individuals.” She said that people consider her different anywhere she is—whether in the United States or her country of origin. In the United States, she is a “foreigner” and in her country of origin, she is “too Americanized.” Therefore, she shared, “I pretend that I belong to both places.” In order to be accepted in American society she often feels she needs to “fake it until you make it or fake it until you become it.”

Art: Common Experiences

This section examines and identifies common experiences the participants reflected about in relation to the use of art before this research in their immigration process, the actual art-making around the subject of separation from and reconstruction of home, reflection upon the art process and artistic products of the research, and the effect it had or did not have on the participants’ professional roles as expressive therapists.

Art as a Bridge and Reflection

In this research, the art-making provided participants an opportunity to reflect, mirror, and bridge the experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home. The participants' experiences of creating and reflecting upon the artwork helped them understand and accept their movement among the parts of the three main themes (belonging-not belonging; home here-home there; and old me-new me). For many of the participants, the experience of understanding and accepting their own movement among the parts of the main themes opened their ability to support their clients who experience similar experiences and helped them to understand their clients' experiences in depth and in ways they did not have before.

For most participants the art-making in this research was like a bridge connecting their "old home" and "new home" and their old self with their new self. Moreover, it functioned as a mirror—a reflection—that as Participant 8 described allowed her to witness unseen parts. One participant spoke about art as a "transitional object" that helped her "confusing parts." A few participants shared that as a result of the artistic process they discovered they could consider two places as home and do not need to struggle with choosing one place over the other. Moreover, a few participants shared that the arts affected their ability to reduce their feelings of homelessness.

The idea that home does not necessarily relate only to a physical place was transformed to a realization that home is more of an internal state of being carried within the person. Participants found the ability to reflect on the experience by observing both the art-making and the transcript of their initial responses after the art-making to be extremely powerful. They found art as a mirror to reflect on their experience as well as

connection in the area of “between”—between belonging and not belonging; between experiencing “homelessness” and “home within”; and between the old self and the new self.

Feeling Home in the Art

The participants found art-making in this research to be a meaningful method to explore their experiences of separation and reconstruction of home. They described different art modalities as a main part of all their personal and professional lives and their main means of expression that prior to this research had helped them through struggles they had when relocating to the United States. As Participant 2 shared, art provided another language when “words disguise” what she wanted to say. All participants felt they could feel at home in various art modalities. Participant 8 shared that she did not expect to be able to contribute to the research but found that the art actually brought up strong emotions she did not expect to have. Participant 10 spoke about a deep connection he experienced when he made music (his main modality). When the participant observed his video recording of his music, he shared that he felt he “look[ed] out of it...almost like I was on drugs or something,” and explained that as being fully into the experience of the art that disconnected him from the outside surrounding. Participant 4 said that throughout the art-making she realized that through art, she senses connection. She also realized that in previous situations when she felt a sense of longing—“homesick,” as she stated—drawing the streets and city she left brought home to her.

Most participants chose to explore the research theme by using the art modality with which they are most familiar and comfortable and the modality they also use in their careers as expressive therapists. Participant 1, for example, shared that when she uses

music (her main modality) she does not feel that she is in a different country. The music feels home to her no matter where she is.

However, not every art modality stirred that feeling of home. A few participants chose an art modality different from their main modality, which they described challenged them to express themselves fully and naturally. Participants 6 and 10 discussed how the experience of using an art modality that felt unfamiliar was challenging and similar to experiences they had after relocation, and thus contributed to a better understanding of where they had been and where they are currently.

Participants 2 and 3 shared that actually using “familiar” art modalities brought them to known places in themselves that prevented them from discovering something new, and actually the unfamiliar art modality stirred emotions and experiences that provided a wider awareness and realizations they did not have before. Participant 7 shared that when she reflected back on her process and watched the movement she did for the study, she noticed that she chose to go to places that were familiar to her—places she knew about her experiences of separation and reconstruction of home and that prevented her from “finding something new.”

The use of expressive arts therapy, integration of different art modalities, and the transition from a familiar art form to an unfamiliar one brought to the participants a great sense of completion. Participants 2, 3, and 10 shared that the ability to transition between art modalities and experience the research subject through different modalities provided different experiences that together created a whole experience that felt meaningful and complete. Participant 2 shared how her movement (her main modality) connected her to the body memory, which stirred images she had a need to reflect in the visual art form

and in writing. The overall experience felt complete to the participant. Participant 10 also shared similar feelings to Participant 2—a very powerful experience that he related to the art-making and transition between art modalities.

Artistic Representation of the Study as a Whole: Film-Making

The researcher collected metaphors, images, words, and somatic experiences shared by the participants in all ten interviews that related to their expressed experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home and reflections on art-making around that subject. These words, phrases, and sentences were then organized into a poetic text. The researcher responded to the interview information and the poetic text by creating a film that reflects the experiences the participants shared throughout the interviews. The poetic statement and film, both focused on a metaphoric and imagistic response to the interviews, provided a deeper understanding of the research subject in that they extend meaning and understanding beyond the words and the artistic expressions participants shared. The film was not intended to reflect each participant's specific or exact story; rather, it explores the deep, common meanings shared in the research. When starting the film-making, the researcher had not planned how the film would evolve other than a wish to examine the research information in the language of art.

The first thing that affected the basic structure of the film was the idea of duality shared by the participants. They shared a sense of duality between countries, between old and new homes, between feeling a sense of “homelessness” and that home is everywhere, between emotional experiences such as belonging and not belonging, and between old and new identities (the home within). Each theme discussed in the beginning of this results section reflected dual experiences that were not static and often changed. The

theme of duality in this film was reflected by a split screen that demonstrated the participants' outer experiences and very inner experiences as well.

The second idea that led to the structure of the film was a metaphor shared by Participant 1 describing a flower taken from the ground, its natural environment, and transitioned to a new environment—a vase. The vase, as described by the participant, reflects the new home for the flower, a home that provides everything the flower needs but requires constant maintenance. Although one participant stated this specific metaphor, the nature of this experience was present in other interviews as well. The film was an attempt to explore how the transition of this flower—relocated, uprooted, and moved to a new home (the vase)—affected its concept and sense of home.

By analyzing each interview, the researcher collected main quotes, ideas, and reflections from the participants that informed the artistic response. From these quotes and reflections, the researcher created a “story” that described a journey—a journey between two homes that started as a physical journey and developed to an emotional and internal journey for the flower (the immigrant). In the film story, the flower was curious to find new opportunities and relocate from its ground. With relocation to new surroundings, the flower faced various intense feelings of longing, sense of loss, and the wish to reconstruct a new home that, through the journey, transformed also to fundamental questions about what is home and where is home. The flower did not feel at home in the vase and discovered that the ground no longer felt like home. At times, the flower faced a feeling of in between or, as Participant 5 described, of being “a citizen of the airport” and at times everywhere felt as home (such as the flower's realization that the sky is the same sky and home can be everywhere). The flower went through changes

also in the internal sense of home, as shown by its color change (gradually changing to orange throughout the film). At the end, after a mixture of questions (reflected by a swirl), the flower realizes that feeling at home relates to an internal feeling of being complete and whole and is not based on physical surroundings.

Film Poem

Home is like flowers in the ground
My home here (in the United States) is like being a flower in a vase
In the ground, I got water, nutrition.
It never ended.
My roots.
But here, in the vase I need to refill the water all the time
Otherwise,
Just gone.
This is my home.
This is what I know.
Here are my roots.
What is out there?
Everything is new here,
Unfamiliar,
Scary
I belong there, in the ground
I miss my home
I am the uprooted plant
Can I feel at home here?
What do I need?
I can be warm.
I can make it.

I can belong.

Can I?

Sometime I feel lost in the ocean

A lot of pieces are falling down

I feel divided

Like I am cut into two

Where is my heart?

What is home?

Is my home here or there?

Maybe home is a place in my imagination.

Is home physical or actually within me?

I need connections.

I will create my home

I have to reconstruct myself.

I need to get rid of what I have learned

But if I get rid of that

Who am I?

I have changed

When I go back I do not feel at home anymore.

Here, I do not feel at home either

I am some kind of conglomerate, a combination of things.

My home is in-between

The sky is the same sky

Maybe my home is everywhere

What is home?

Who am I?

Where do I belong?

What is home?

This is me

This is my home.

I carry it inside
I carry it wherever I go.

Figure 16. Film poem

Another meaningful part in the film-making—in addition to the story creation and images—was speaking the story and dramatically enacting it in the film. The researcher found this component powerful because it provided another layer of understanding that is sometimes hard to convey in research—that is, in the “telling” and embodying the story with intonations and emotional reflections the research participants shared.

The participants shared a significant response in relation to their own art-making in the research. By exploring artistically and afterward reflecting upon the art piece (visual art, movement, music, etc.), they could feel a sense of integration and connection between their homes and between various parts in themselves. The flower in the film also experienced a sense of internal connectedness at the end of the film. In addition, the film provided the researcher an opportunity to feel connectedness among the various parts of the research and the various dimensions it revealed.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

This dissertation examines the perspectives and experiences of home for immigrant expressive therapists both personally and professionally. It explores the concept of home and its role in the human experience, psychological aspects of the immigration experience, and the use of expressive arts therapy as a method for working with immigrants. It supports the literature that provided a correlation between these three areas, but moreover fills the gap in the literature by addressing a combination of the three. In so doing, this research contributes to the mental health field in general and the expressive arts therapy field in particular.

The pilot study discussed two main processes the participants explored: separation from home and recreation of home. The literature also concluded that leaving one's home and recreating another home are major parts of the immigration experience. Moreover, previous studies found that these major experiences can raise fundamental questions about where and what home is for the immigrant (e.g., Despres, 1991; Mallet, 2004; Malone & Dooley, 2006; Philip & Ho, 2010; Wiles, 2008). This research aligns with the literature in concluding that separating from and recreating home is significant in the immigration experience. All participants were familiar with the research subject. Some participants shared that the subject of home was a subject they had much thought about and explored since they relocated; and although for a few it was less present in their everyday lives, it was still familiar, emotion provoking, and relevant.

Ten expressive therapists were asked to explore through art-making their experiences and perceptions of separation from and reconstruction of home. Three main themes emerged in the participants' experiences:

1. Belonging-Not Belonging;
2. Home Here-Home There; Home Nowhere-Home Everywhere; and
3. Old Me-New Me (Evolution of Identity).

The results of this study support the literature in emphasizing that being at home concerns not only a physical place but also an emotional state (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Lydon, 2002; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009). Study participants discussed that the physical experience of relocating from one country to another had emotional implications as well. Moreover, the literature stressed the idea that the perception of one's physical home (as present or as lacking) could affect the emotional home (e.g., Hayes, 2007; Hoersting & Jenkins, 2011; Kabachnick, Regulska, & Mitchneck, 2010), and this study confirms this claim. Specifically, participants discussed the influence of immigration (i.e., separation from physical home) on their sense of belonging, sense of self, and internal sense of home.

Belonging-Not Belonging

All the participants of this study associated home with a sense of belonging. As suggested in the literature, feeling at home relates to such a sense of belonging (Ahmed, 1999; Hayes, 2007; Magat, 1999; Silva, 2009; Swift, 1997; Wright, 2009). However, the literature often conflicted. For example, some studies claimed that when home is a negative place it is not necessarily associated with a sense of belonging (Wardhaugh, 1999; Wright, 2009). Ahmed (1999), Hayes (2007), Madison (2006), and Silva (2009)

discussed the complexity of the term *belonging*. They found that in the case of immigration the wish to belong associates not necessarily with a specific home but with a deep longing to connect and reach a space of belonging. Participants in this dissertation research shared their complex experiences around belonging and not belonging. Many participants shared a feeling of not fully belonging in the United States on one hand and not quite belonging in their countries of origin on the other hand. For some participants the feeling of not belonging was familiar even before they relocated from one country to the other.

Ahmed (1999) claimed that home for the immigrant not only relates to “fantasies of belonging” in a place (country of origin or country of immigration), but also that it actually raises a much deeper sense of examination of the “space of belonging.” This dissertation’s results also support Ahmed’s ideas in that it emphasizes how the immigration experience provided participants the opportunity to examine the “space of belonging” and question what it means to them and what they need in order to feel they belong.

Another concept related to all participants’ experiences of separation from home and reconstruction of home concerns roots. Participants expressed—through art-making and verbally—their complex experiences of feeling rootless and rooted. For example, Participant 5 shared how she feels like an “uprooted plant” and questions how she could feel belonging if her roots are in another place. Participant 3 spoke about her experience of actually connecting to her roots when she left the place of her roots. Several participants also examined the idea of “growing roots” and the constant negotiation they

feel they needed between having roots and feeling rootless. Previous studies described this phenomenon with less attention than did this study.

Home Here-Home There; Home Nowhere-Home Everywhere

Five study participants explored the idea of duality between homes—home in the United States and home in the origin countries—and the participants shared the contradictory experience of feeling at home and not at home. This study also finds the experience of the “journey between” as referred to by Ahmed (1999, p. 330) and discussed by Madison (2006) wherein the immigrants did not feel they have a home in either place (United States or country of origin). The participants in this study reflected an experience of being between two places—which some referred to as the “old,” the “new,” and the space between them. Participant 5 described it as feeling like “being a citizen of the airport.”

The duality and having two places to refer to as home—and sometimes feeling that neither place is home—was found to lead to fundamental questions about *home* and what it means to feel *at home*. The literature suggested that immigration could affect the immigrant’s emotional state; raise longing, nostalgia, and a sense of loss and grief; and connect with issues of separation-individuation (e.g., Arredondo-Dowd, 1981; Casado et al., 2010; Mirsky, 1991; Philipp & Ho, 2010). This study supports these ideas in that many participants shared an internal sense of loss and feelings of nostalgia and longing as a result of their immigration.

One term described by Hoersting and Jenkins (2011) was *cultural homelessness*, which involves feeling disconnected from any culture group. Similarly, Ahmed (1999) described this feeling as “the homelessness of migration and exile” (p. 339). In this

study, a few participants explored the idea of homelessness as a metaphoric space of feeling empty and not feeling at home anywhere; other participants shared that the experience of duality between homes made them realize that home can be everywhere. As Participant 4 stated, “You kind of belong everywhere and nowhere.”

Old Me-New Me (Evolution of Identity)

This study finds separation from home and reconstruction of home to be associated with internal changes in the inner home—the identity. The participants shared that those external changes such as language, ways of interaction, costumes, and ways of living evolved to internal changes as well. Earlier studies (e.g. Akhtar, 1995; Lemzoudi, 2007; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Seiden, 2009) discussed changes in identity that result from the immigration experience. The participants in this study explored and reflected upon the changes they went through in reconstructing who they are and used a few metaphors to reflect this experience. One participant described the experience as breaking and connecting “puzzle pieces.” Another participant referred to the process as “peeling off” and “layering back.” For another participant, it was an opportunity to “see the skeleton.” However, all participants shared that separation from and reconstruction of home led to reconstruction of the self. Therefore, similarly to Nhat Hanh (2011) and Metari (2005), this study concluded that being at home for the participants is not only being in a physical place they consider home or having a sense of belonging and emotionally feeling at home. There is also the much deeper sense that sees home as a metaphor for their ability to feel internal connectedness and to be present and whole with who they were and who they have become.

One finding shown in all three themes is that these themes are not static. That is, various experiences (such as travelling away from home in the United States or a family member coming to visit) could affect and change the participants' experiences. Many participants were found to carry dual experiences and in certain situations, one experience was stronger than the other was—but the experiences and their strengths were fluid and could change. For example, a participant in the first interview described having a sense of “emptiness” and “sense of homelessness” and in the second interview shared that he had been away from his house in the time of the interview and was surprised at his “extreme” response.

Art as a Bridge and Reflection

All participants in this research were asked to use art-making as a way to explore their experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home. Expressive therapies were found in the literature to be effective treatment methods when working with immigrants and this study supported that as accurate in three main ways:

Art as Another Language

“Words disguise what I want to say,” said Participant 2, expressing a sentiment shared by other participants. They felt that exploring their experiences in the art helped them to express things they could not express as well verbally. The literature had also found that art provided another language for its users (Chebaro, 1998; Einstein cited in McNiff, 2013; Linesch et al., 2012).

The current research participants—all of whom used various art modalities in their practices—could choose any form of art-making. Some chose an art modality they felt most *at home* with, which strengthened their understanding of what it means for them

to feel at home. Others chose an art modality with which they were not as familiar or comfortable. Two participants discussed how choosing a less familiar modality provided them an opportunity to relive the struggles and unfamiliarity they had experienced in their immigration and to experience it more fully than had they chosen an art with which they were familiar and comfortable. For some participants, choosing art modalities they were familiar with prevented them from developing new ways of understanding. This study involved participants from varied cultural backgrounds. McNiff (1992) discussed how art not only provides a place to express each person's unique and cultural components but also connects with the "universal qualities of feeling" (p. 104). This study supports that idea, shared also by Gilboa et al. (2009) and Hurtig (2005), by showing that even though the study participants came from different cultural backgrounds and experiences, they all expressed in the art deep fundamental experiences that were repetitive and reflected a common experience.

Art Connects External and Internal Experiences

Art provides expression of inner experiences into external forms (McNiff, 2009; Rogers, 1993). The literature concluded that art helps the immigrant connect to familiar places within and contributes to the connection between outer and inner experiences (Linesch et al., 2012; Pylvänäinen, 2008; Schaverien, 1998; Seelye & Howell Wasilewski, 1996; Subramanyam, 1998). Through art-making the participants explored their *outer* experiences of separation from and reconstruction of home: separating from their families and everything that was known and familiar and adjusting in a new place with a new way of living, a new language, and so forth. In addition, the art was found also to connect the participants with *inner* experiences including a deep connection with

who they are and with their inner homes. Participants emphasized that their own connection with their inner homes provided them with a better understanding not only of themselves but also of their clients who experience similar feelings.

Art Bridges Areas of “Between”

Many participants discussed the idea of old and new: old home and new home, old self and new self. The art as shared by the participants was an opportunity to represent each place (external and internal) and create a metaphoric/artistic connection that for many participants contributed to their internal integration. This finding supports the literature that discussed how the arts could bridge immigrants’ new and old homes (Chebaro, 1998; Subramanyam, 1998; Wong-Valle, 1981) and new and old identities (Heller, 2007; Rousseau et al., 2005; Rousseau et al., 2007). Moreover, the study participants—especially when doing visual art pieces—discussed the continued reflection the art provided them. They could look at the visualize art product and continually reflect on its meanings. The art helped integrate the “between” areas—between the old and the new, between belonging and not belonging, and between the separation and reconstruction processes—that, as a few participants shared, helped reduce their sense of “homelessness” and establish a stronger sense of internal integration: a sense of home within.

Limitations

A researcher who herself experienced immigration to the United States conducted this study. Therefore, although the researcher used every precaution to maintain objectivity and not impose her own experiences with the subject, it is possible her experiences influenced the wording or content of interview questions or the tone of voice

used when interviewing. In addition, the researcher's experiences as an immigrant could have affected her analysis of the participants' responses.

This research eliminates various circumstances that might affect the ways participants experienced the research subject. For example, the effect of culture on the research subject is not examined in this research, and future researches might examine the affect of each culture on immigrants' experiences. Further, all participants in this study are expressive therapists who had willingly immigrated for the purpose of study. That factor might influence the participants' social and socioeconomic backgrounds and capabilities to immigrate. Future research might include more extended examination of participants' circumstances and other factors on immigration. Examining a different group of immigrants could potentially influence the results of the study. Moreover, all participants in the study are comfortable with the creative process as a form of expression, which is another factor that has potential to influence the results of the study. Ten participants took part in this study. Future research could include more participants, different professional backgrounds, varying time spent in the United States, and a wider range of counties of origin. It would also be informative for a nonimmigrant researcher to conduct this inquiry. All limitations mentioned in this section could also be a great strength of this research.

Conclusions

The aim of this research is to provide a greater understanding of the immigrant's experience of separation from and reconstruction of home. Moreover, this research examines the use of the arts as an expressive arts therapy method to explore and provide greater understanding of these experiences and the concept of home for immigrants.

This study found that the use of the arts provides a connection—a bridge between two homes, two identities, and two dimensions of experience: separation and reconstruction of home. The arts expressed inner experiences into external forms. Moreover, the use of expressive arts in this study, especially the transition from one art modality to another, emphasized that certain art modalities can function as home for some users, whereas for others it can create a feeling of unfamiliarity and estrangement. Use of expressive arts therapy (transition between various art modalities) can provide a deep experience that can reflect both the immigration process and the feeling of being “at home.” Therefore, the use of the arts could provide its users a powerful tool to explore the experiences of immigration. Immigrant expressive therapists could gain valuable knowledge about themselves and about their ability to feel at home in the arts, and from that awareness and their own experiences could understand better the experiences of their immigrant clients.

The art-based method used in this study provides greater understanding of the shared elements this study offers. Moreover, similar to the role of the arts for the participants who found it provided a sense of connectedness and reflection of inner parts, the art methods used in various stages of the research pulled out the elements that the subject of home had concealed.

This study raises awareness that the subject of home can be an essential concept in the immigration experience and that therapists can gain valuable knowledge by providing a place for it in counseling. Moreover, this study provides an understanding that home comprises physical, emotional, and metaphorical states that are often connected. Understanding all three dimensions of the meaning of home (i.e., physical,

emotional, and metaphorical) could contribute to clinicians who work with immigrants specifically and to understanding other human experiences as well.

The use of the arts to explore physical characteristics of home can positively affect the emotional home (feeling belonging and connected in a place), which can influence the metaphoric sense of home (feeling whole and present in ways beyond physical qualities). The effect is reciprocal, meaning the use of the arts provides a way to work on one's metaphoric home, which can in turn contribute to the reconstruction process of the new physical home.

Therapy aims to provide a sense of home, sense of belonging, and opportunity for clients to develop a stronger sense of home within. By understanding what makes immigrant therapists feel at home and what prevents that feeling, as found in this research, contributes to their work with clients—especially immigrant clients. This could provide understanding also for clinicians and clients who did not experience immigration. Therefore, future research could gain valuable knowledge by examining art making in its different modalities on the physical, emotional, and metaphoric homes of not only immigrants but also humans in general.

APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form



29 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138

Doctoral Research Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in the research project titled: Losing and Reconstructing Home- Expressive Arts Therapy in the Case of Immigration. The intent of this research study is to examine the immigration experience, in specific examining immigrants' sense of home as a response to the immigration experience. The study will explore the experiences of expressive arts therapists who immigrated from different countries, and who used different artistic modalities. This research explores how expressive arts therapy can affect the experiences of home, sense of belonging, and sense of safety of immigrants. The main focus of this study is to understand how expressive arts therapy methods could be used in order to raise immigrants' sense of home, and sense of belonging.

Your participation will entail a participation in two phases of the research. Phase 1 will be an hour long interview, and an artistic response in continuation of the interview. Phase 2 will be a two hour expressive arts therapy experiential group and a discussion group.

In addition

- You are free to choose not to participate in the research and to discontinue your participation in the research at any time.
- Identifying details will be kept confidential by the researcher. Data collected will be coded with a pseudonym, the participant's identity will never be revealed by the researcher, and only the researcher will have access to the data collected.
- Any and all of your questions will be answered at any time and you are free to consult with anyone (i.e., friend, family) about your decision to participate in the research and/or to discontinue your participation.
- Participation in this research poses minimal risk to the participants. The probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are no greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.
- If any problem in connection to the research arises, you can contact the researcher Dana Albert-Proos at 617-669-7394 and by email at dalbertp@lesley.edu or Lesley University sponsoring faculty Dr. Robyn Flaum Cruz at (412) 401-1274.
- The researcher may present the outcomes of this study for academic purposes (i.e., articles, teaching, conference presentations, supervision etc.)

My agreement to participate has been given of my own free will and that I understand all of the stated above. In addition, I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Participant's signature	Date	Researcher's signature	Date
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APPENDIX B: Consent to Use and/or Display Art



29 Everett St., Cambridge, MA 02138

CONSENT BETWEEN: Dana Albert-Proos and

_____.

Expressive Arts Therapy Doctoral Student

Artist/Participant's Name

I, _____, agree to allow Dana Albert-Proos.

Student

Artist/participant's name

Expressive Arts Therapy Doctoral

to use and/or display and/or photograph my artwork, for the following purpose(s):

- Reproduction and/or inclusion within the research currently being completed by the expressive arts therapy doctoral student.
- Reproduction and/or presentation at a professional conference.
- Reproduction, presentation, and/or inclusion within academic assignments including but not limited to a doctoral work, currently being completed by the expressive arts therapy doctoral student.

It is my understanding that neither my name, nor any identifying information will be revealed in any presentation or display of my artwork, unless waived below.

I DO I DO NOT wish to remain anonymous.

This consent to use or display my artwork may be revoked by me at any time. I also understand I'll receive a copy of this consent form for my personal records.

Signed _____ Date _____

I, _____, agree to the following conditions in connection with the use of artwork:

Expressive Arts Therapy Doctoral Student

I agree to keep your artwork safe, whether an original or reproduction, to the best of my ability and to notify you immediately of any loss or damage while your art is in my possession. I agree to return your artwork immediately if you decide to withdraw your consent at any time. I agree to safeguard your confidentiality.

Signed ____ Dana Albert-Proos _____ Date _____

Expressive Arts Therapy Doctoral Student

Contact info:

Dana Albert-Proos

Email: dalbertp@lesley.edu

Address: 21 Salisbury Rd. Newton, MA 02458

Phone number: 6176697394

APPENDIX C: List of Researcher-Provided Materials Given to Participants

- Square canvas
- Round base
- Collage materials
- Glue
- Brushes
- Scissors
- Oil pastels
- Chalks
- Paints
- Buttons, strings, marbles, paper cuts, feathers
- Clay

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