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The Relationship Between Mindfulness and Leadership: How Mindfulness Practices Affect Leadership Practices

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the PhD in Leadership and Change Program of Antioch University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

June 2019

This dissertation is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD in Leadership and Change, Graduate School of Leadership and Change, Antioch University.

Dissertation Committee

- Lize (A.E.) Booysen, DBL, Chair
- Jon Wergin, PhD, Committee Member
- Ron Cacioppe, PhD, Committee Member

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This journey has been life transforming. I am very grateful and look forward to the future. Thank you.

Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore and understand the relationship between mindfulness practices and actual leadership practices. This qualitative study utilized narrative inquiry with phenomenological interviewing techniques to explore selective leaders who use mindfulness practices, and see how they used mindfulness in their leadership practice. Sixteen in-depth interviews were conducted and thematic analysis was utilized. Eleven themes were identified with multiple sub- and sub-sub-themes, including: "Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice," "Being Mindful Toward Self," "Being Present with Others," "Being Present with a Group," "Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention," "Emotional Intelligence," "Buffering of Reactivity," "Resilience and Recovery," "Alignment," "Improved Job Performance," and "Mindful Leadership." The participants described the ability to move into the present moment, gain discernment, choose a needed action, even if the best choice of action was not acting at all, and then remerge back to the present moment. Mindful leadership was found to be the ability to see oneself, others, the situation(s), the complexities and emotions at all levels (intra- and inter-personally), and then to step back, integrate it all, and with a humanistic approach—lead. A significant implication for leadership that this study may offer is that the simple practices of mindfulness can potentially ripple out through one's life in ways that take shape as some of the best practices across multiple leadership theories and models. Practical applications were found on both an individual leader-level, such as with developing a humanistic approach; and an organizational leader-level, such as the value of mindful leadership training and coaching.

Keywords: mindfulness, mindful leadership, leadership, contemporary leadership demands, narrative inquiry, thematic analysis.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Introduction

"Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (Burns, 1978, p. 1). Although it has been 40 years since Burns' statement, leadership remains a highly observed and critical area of interest. Numerous leadership theories have evolved since the 1970s; however, the gap of understanding leaders and leadership evolves just the same—as society and industry change, so does the leadership demand (Wren, 1998; Northouse, 2013; Sinclair, 2007). Today's leaders face ever increasing technological changes and advancements, generational shifts, and social norms, all of which are increasingly intolerant of outdated protocols. The contemporary leaders, therefore, must be able to navigate through near constant change, numerous competing commitments, and complex inter- and intra-personal exchanges. The demands upon leaders have never been higher and require new methods and techniques that appropriately enable leaders to meet these challenges.

Much has been said on the evolution of leadership (i.e. Northouse, 2013) and the many leadership theories available today help to make sense of leadership styles and tendencies; however, a relatively new and important focus in leadership studies is on how leaders themselves can achieve a state of leadership that meets the current leadership demand without burning themselves out (Sinclair, 2007). Of particular interest in this area and in this dissertation study is in how mindfulness may be a very key component in leadership that provides a means to handle the contemporary leadership challenge.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is generally understood as a state of mind wherein one purposefully and nonjudgmentally focuses their attention and awareness in the present moment (Kabat-Zinn,

1990; Goldstein, 2013). Mindfulness is generated through practicing simple meditation techniques that consist of focusing on something constant and stable, such as the in-breath and out-breath, or the pulse, of the actual feeling of the body sitting. When a person attempts to focus on one item (such as breathing in and breathing out), they invariably lose focus and the mind begins to wander. Then at some point, the person notices that the mind has wandered, and they gently usher their attention back to the focus of attention. Attention is key in mindfulness, and some even refer to mindfulness practices as being a form of attention training (i.e. Hunter, 2015). The practice provides people with an understanding of the challenge of focusing on one particular item, and insight on the tendency that the mind has when left to itself. The increased ability to nonjudgmentally refocus attention provides a layer of self-understanding, self-management, and self-care. The repeated, simple meditation practice can then be transferred into every-day life, allowing people to become more aware of when they may have stopped listening and started forming a response in a conversation, or perhaps when they've lost their patience with someone because they were thinking of "bigger" problems and minimizing the problems being presented. The transfer of this "attention training" to everyday life is where mindfulness in leadership has great potential as a general awareness of the present moment is created and sustained.

Mindfulness itself has been researched since the late 1970's, with Kabat-Zinn's (1982) breakthrough research on stress reduction, but mindfulness has recently begun to be researched within the context of leadership. Mindfulness in organizations has been researched more substantially. Research on mindfulness in organizations typically uses quantitative analyses with employee self-reports of outcome variables, pre- and post a mindfulness intervention. Research often follows the discovery of Kabat-Zinn's (1982, 1985, 1990) work and are focused on

analyzing stress reduction (Galantino, Baime, Maguire, Szapary, & Farrar, 2005; Wolever et al., 2012; Weinstein, Brown, & Ryan, 2009; Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, and Cordova (2005); but also to look for other variables and outcomes, including well-being, burnout, and coping (Grégoire, Lachance, & Taylor, 2015; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013; Krasner et al., 2013); or employee performance (Dane & Brummel, 2014). These other outcomes, that appeared when researching mindfulness in the workplace, often fall within the areas of performance, relationships, or well-being (Good et al., 2016). What is clear is that mindfulness practice does indeed aid in reducing stress and stress-related ill-being (Walach et al, 2007).

Before moving on to mindfulness in leadership, it is important to take into consideration the research on mindfulness through neuroscience. Davidson et al. (2003) undertook a major study to investigate alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. Davidson's et al. (2003) findings "suggest that meditation may change brain and immune function in positive ways [including immune response, stress reactivity, and general sense of well-being] and underscore the need for additional research" (p. 564). The concepts of neuroplasticity, (the term used when connections change [in the brain] in response to experience), and neurogenesis (which occurs when new neurons grow, even in adults) led to another layer of significant research in the field of neuroscience (Siegel, 2007). Findings (Davidson, 2004) showed how neuroplastic alterations produce functional changes, revealing that mindfulness practice enables individuals to regulate their emotions in a more positive manner with approach rather than withdrawal and therefore not only helps people feel good and recover from negative feelings more quickly, but it can actually improve medical health (as cited in Siegel, 2007). In other words, repeated mindfulness practices of simply noticing when thoughts arise and dissipate with nonjudgmental awareness begins to change the way the brain

functions when presented with emotional responses. The ability to approach the emotional state with nonjudgmental awareness provides the opportunity to proactively select the response instead of acting with habitual norms. The findings provide more understanding of how basic mindfulness meditation practices can overflow into everyday life, providing the ability to make positive changes by choice in behavior, emotional regulation, and general emotional intelligence. Davidson's (2004) findings are not only significant for better understanding mental health and well-being, but also for understanding how mindfulness may be a tremendously valuable practice for leaders.

Research on mindfulness in leadership, while still in its nascent stage, has shown that mindful leaders can improve employee job performance and decrease employee emotional exhaustion (Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014); that mindfulness practices enhance leadership effectiveness (Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, & Cook, 2015); and that mindfulness increases transformational leadership ability, which leads to subordinate reports of increased well-being (Pinck & Sonnentag, 2017). Connections have also been made between mindfulness and self-leadership (Furtner, Tutzer, & Sache, 2018) and mindfulness and servant leadership (Verdorfer, 2016).

While the research on mindfulness and leadership is still in its nascent stage, there is no shortage of theoretical discussion. Many books (Carroll 2006, 2008; Gonzalez 2012; Marturano 2014; Bunting 2016; Sinclair 2016; Hougaard & Carter 2018) are available on the subject. While most authors imply that findings were empirical, the data remains proprietary. What can be identified are the numerous crossover themes that emerge from the popular literature, specifically: attention, awareness, unbiased and nonjudgmental observation, self-regulation, accessibility (of the practice), adaptability, authenticity, and resilience. All of these traits are

viewed as assets for the modern day leader who navigates the complexity of contemporary leadership. Additionally, many of these identified traits sit well with existing literature on leadership theories.

A few leadership theorists (i.e. Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002) have offered direct (theoretical) connections between mindfulness and effective leadership performance. Boyatzis and McKee (2005) asserted that "great leaders are emotionally intelligent and they are mindful: they seek to live in full consciousness of self, others, nature, and society" (p. 3). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) refer to an essential leadership skill, that of "getting off the dance floor and going to the balcony," which they reference as "…what the Buddhists call… 'mindfulness'" (p. 51). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) asserted that "attention [is] the currency of leadership," and build their theory of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) upon this basis of regulation of attention, awareness, and observation "moving outside in and moving inside out" (p. 8).

Other connections between mindfulness and leadership theories can be drawn theoretically as well. For example, elements of servant leadership, authentic leadership, transformational leadership, and situational leadership are described as requiring particular orientations to others (inter-personally), to themselves (intra-personally), and to situations. Mindfulness practices, containing elements of nonjudgmental awareness (intra- and inter-personally) and attention to the present moment, may offer leaders great aid in enhancing their particular leadership theory-in-use. More will be discussed on theoretical connections in chapter 2.

What is still missing from the current research on mindfulness and leadership is a deeper exploration of how mindfulness practices affect leaders' leadership practices. More qualitative

studies are needed in order to better understand the experiences and stories of leaders who are practicing mindfulness. Conceptual and anecdotal models are helpful; however, much more can be learned from further focused study and the field of leadership is ripe for more thorough analysis of mindful leader's stories and their common themes.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this research study was to explore and understand the relationship between mindfulness practices and actual leadership practice and create a narrative on the subject. The study was designed to explore selective leaders, who use mindfulness practices, and see how they used mindfulness in their leadership practice.

The research question is: how do mindfulness practices affect leadership practice?

For clarity, mindfulness practices are the traits generated from practicing mindfulness meditation and generally include attention, awareness, present moment focus, and nonjudgment. Leadership practice includes the process, actions, and behavior of the leader.

Methodology

As an exploratory study that sought to create a narrative, the research design was qualitative and used a narrative inquiry methodology. Phenomenological interviewing techniques (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) were utilized in order to take deep dives into the experiences of mindful leaders to discover more meaning as well as uncover the stories of mindful leaders. Phenomenological interviewing includes semi-structured, open-ended qualitative questions that focus on the interviewee's "life world, meaning, and positive experience," with the interviewer guided by sensitivity, focus, specificity, change, and ambiguity with deliberate naivety (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 31-35).

Interviews were transcribed and member checking practices were conducted.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) state that in common interview studies the answer is "15 +/- 10," as there is no standard number and more is not necessarily better or more scientific. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) and Creswell (2014) suggest that the quantity be based upon reaching saturation (i.e. when new interviews no long yield new information), but even that is difficult to determine. Additionally, it is sometimes beneficial to interview certain participants more than once for a number of reasons, such as having new information that may have been gathered in later interviews that would inform earlier interviews, sometimes there is a sense that more would have been said or the interviewee would have gone deeper if they had more time. Thematic analysis was then utilized across interviews in order to generate a set of commonalities and differences among interviewees following Braun and Clarke (2006), Boyatzis (1998), and Maguire and Delahunt (2017) for code development and conducting thematic analysis. All coding was conducted via hand coding.

Significance of the Study and Contributions to the Field

There is no shortage of theoretical considerations regarding mindfulness and leadership. As mentioned previously, many books (Carroll 2006, 2008; Gonzalez 2012; Marturano 2014; Bunting 2016; Sinclair 2016; Hougaard & Carter 2018) are available on the subject. What is missing is more empirical research, particularly through qualitative research methods on the subject. The core significance of this study, beyond that of the significance of knowing more about mindful leadership in practice, is the potential the study has for answering the call of modern day methods for effective leadership. If simple mindfulness practices provide a means for effective leadership, then perhaps mindfulness should become an essential element of contemporary leadership development. At the very least, the stories of mindful leaders need to be shared and analyzed for common themes, something which this study directly addresses.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Scope

By design, this study will focus solely on leaders who practice mindfulness, that is, they have a regular (weekly) mindfulness meditation practice and have practiced for more than one year. The phenomenological interview design will narrow the scope of participants and allow for multiple interviews with key participants. The estimate of quantity of participants was 8-10 with 5-6 conducting more than one interview; in actuality, there were 12 participants, 4 conducted more than one interview, and two exchanged follow-up emails for further clarification.

Positionality

As a white, heterosexual male who grew up in a middle-class city in the USA, I recognize that my perspective comes from a state of privilege. Constructivism and developmentalism shape my phenomenological and ontological perspectives, and this inherently influences my research and writing. Additionally, my research interest in mindfulness and leadership stem directly from experience, and therefore I put forth extra effort to avoid confirmation bias through the use of bracketing and phenomenological reduction (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 31).

I have been practicing mindfulness since 2010 and teaching mindfulness since 2011. I found mindfulness to be a key, missing component of my own psyche, of my own ability to lead and manage myself. I discovered mindfulness when reading a book by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh. I then attended a five-day mindfulness retreat led by Thich Nhat Hanh. I then discovered Jon Kabat-Zinn's work on Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and attended numerous trainings and retreats. It is my personal experience that becoming a more mindful person greatly aided in my ability to grow up to the increasing responsibilities that I was encountering as an adult—job promotion, marriage, and becoming a father.

Definition of Key Terms

Mindfulness

- "The most common understanding of mindfulness is that of present-moment awareness, presence of mind, wakefulness. This is the opposite of absentmindedness." (Goldstein, 2013, p. 13).
- "a two-component model…. The first component involves the self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment. The second component involves adopting a particular orientation toward one's experiences in the present moment, an orientation that is characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance" (Bishop et al., 2004, p. 232).

Phenomenological Interview:

- "a semistructured life world interview [that] attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 31).

Layout of Chapters

This chapter (Chapter I) considered the foundational elements of mindfulness and leadership. Significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, scope, and positionality were all considered.

In Chapter II, mindfulness will be explored in detail. A literature review on mindfulness in general, mindfulness in organizations, and mindful leadership is presented. Additional considerations are also given to theoretical connections between mindfulness and leadership and leadership theories.

Chapter III details how the research study was conducted. The chapter discusses narrative inquiry, phenomenological interviewing techniques, the participant selection process, data analysis, and thematic analysis.

Chapter IV of the dissertation presents the findings of the study. The chapter will present and discuss all themes and sub-themes that were found after conducting the data analysis.

Chapter V will look into conclusions from the study and implications for leadership and further research. Consideration will also be given as to how the research process, data analysis, and conclusions changed me as a person, leader, researcher, and professional.

Chapter II: Review of the Literature

Mindfulness

Mindfulness has become an increasingly popular term across industries (Reb & Atkins, 2015). What used to be known only to Buddhist practitioners is now being taught in corporate America, university hospitals, schools, and wellness centers. The term, "be more mindful" has often been used in western society to refer to paying attention or perhaps thinking a bit more before taking action, often retrospectively for correction to errors, but mindfulness is a well-defined and specific way of being and approaching life that is drawing the attention of the masses.

Since the 1970s, psychologists (e.g., Goleman & Schwartz, 1976; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998), neuroscientists (e.g., Schwartz, Davidson, & Goleman, 1978; Davidson et al, 2003; Davidson, 2004; Fletcher & Hayes, 2006; Siegel, 2007), and scholars in other disciplines have conducted research on the effects of meditation, including mindfulness meditation, seeking to understand different states of mind as well as eastern world influences on the western world. However, Kabat-Zinn's (1982, 1985, & 1990) research, on what he termed "Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction" paved the way for the contemporary boom in interest and validation of mindfulness as a beneficial and useful method of dealing with the stressful demands of life.

Mindfulness, as is known and defined today, can be traced back to Buddhism, where it was well defined and taught by Siddhartha Guatama, the Buddha (Nhat Hanh, 1998; Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985). It was also prevalent in Indian culture and Hinduism, where Siddhartha Guatama learned of this beneficial practice. In Sanskrit, mindfulness is written as smriti, which literally translates into English as "to remember" (Nhat Hanh, 1998; Conze, 1954).

The most famous Buddhist sutra on mindfulness is the *Discourse on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness (Satipatthana Sutta)*, wherein the Buddha taught his followers to cultivate awareness and attention to the body, the mind, thoughts, feelings and emotions, and mental states in a particular way that brings clarity of what is occurring to the practitioner in a given moment (Nhat Hanh, 1998; Conze, 1954). This central teaching in Buddhism, wherein one is instructed and guided to develop the ability to concentrate on present moment conditions without judgment is presented and expressed in a way that is approachable to people from all backgrounds. Instructions include simply noticing areas of tension in the body, and giving full attention to physical actions, such as walking, breathing, and eating, while noticing when attention may have shifted to a thought or feeling (Nhan Hanh, 1990; Kabat-Zinn 1990). This "practice" as given by the Buddha over 2,000 years ago is nearly the same as the instructions that are being provided by mindfulness teachers in Fortune 500 companies (Tan, 2014).

Contemporary Buddhist teachers (Goldstein, 2013; Kornfield, 1993, Nhat Hanh, 1998) have helped people to approach their lives in ways that open their eyes to subtleties of everyday life and shown people how to become more aware of the motivating elements in one's cognition and actions. In a sense, these teachers give people approachable instructions with permission and empowerment to consider what their thoughts are in a given moment, to notice what emotions are currently present, and to unravel the current drivers of action or non-action (or motivation and demotivation). By teaching and training people to become more aware of thoughts, emotions, and drivers of action, practitioners begin to approach life in a way that gives them more freedom of choice and detachment from unconscious or unrecognized reactions to everyday encounters. This empowering state of mind has led to the drive of researchers wanting

to examine this phenomenon and make sense of it, many of whom have had first hand encounters with practicing mindfulness.

The early focus of mindfulness research has been to investigate whether the change from mindless to mindful can be measured, and to examine the impact of mindfulness upon people's lives, especially with regard to benefit and detriment. Mindfulness Scales were developed and mindfulness interventions became the predominant research focus, all of which will be explored in detail below. Mindfulness in leaders and leadership, the focus of this dissertation, has only recently begun to be researched; however, the findings are significant and suggest a strong need for more research in this area. Additionally, the theoretical considerations of mindfulness in leadership have been explored in more detail and many connections are being drawn between mindfulness and effective leadership (explored in detail below).

Origins of Mindfulness Research

In order to appropriately address the topic of research on effects of mindfulness, one must begin with the seminal research of Kabat-Zinn (1982) and Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, and Burney (1985) whose research and contribution to the field of mindfulness is cited in nearly all research on mindfulness.

Although most references to Kabat-Zinn are to his published books, especially *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness* (1990), he first published the findings of his research in peer-reviewed journals (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985). On a Buddhist mindfulness silent retreat, Kabat-Zinn (1990) had an idea to bring the wisdom of mindfulness to those who needed it most, those dealing with the debilitating stress of chronic pain. Kabat-Zinn founded a Stress Reduction and Relaxation Program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, where he was able to get

physician referred clients who would undergo 10-weeks of mindful meditation instruction with pre- and post testing (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985)).

Kabat-Zinn (1982) began his research with the targeted inquiry of how formal, regular, and consistent mindfulness practice (i.e. daily meditation on awareness, body scan meditation, or mindful movements) affects people who have chronic pain. People with chronic pain have to deal with constant strain, and their reaction to dealing with the pain. In the research study, Kabat-Zinn (1990) discovered that the positive benefits of mindfulness for those with chronic pain were to help the participants deal with their reactions to the pain, which were often more bothersome than the pain itself. The enabling of the participants is what was striking—the participants reported that after the mindfulness training the chronic pain did not affect their daily lives as much as it had before.

The discoveries from the first research intervention led Kabat-Zinn to conduct an even more thorough research project to learn more through a comprehensive evaluation of pre- and post test responses (Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985). The primary question turned from a general inquiry ("How would a mindfulness meditation intervention affect people with chronic pain?,"1982) to seven very specific questions with measurements (Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985) in order to investigate the breadth and depth of mindfulness training in a clinical context. The results of the research were significant (for every pain index, the mean value was reduced significantly ($p < 0.003$) between pre- and posting), and gained the attention of researchers in the medical and psychology fields.

Neuroscientists (Davidson et al., 2003) undertook a major study to investigate alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. Davidson et al. (2003) found: "significant increases in left-sided anterior activation, a pattern previously associated with

positive affect, in the meditators compared with the nonmeditators… significant increases in antibody titers to influenza vaccine among subjects in the meditation compared with those in the wait-list control group [and f]inally, the magnitude of increase in left-sided activation predicted the magnitude of antibody titer rise to the vaccine….findings suggest that meditation may change brain and immune function in positive ways [including immune response, stress reactivity, and general sense of well-being] and underscore the need for additional research (p. 564).

The concepts of neuroplasticity, (the term used when connections change [in the brain] in response to experience), and neurogenesis (which occurs when new neurons grow, even in adults) led to another layer of significant research in the field of neuroscience (Siegel, 2007). Findings (Davidson, 2004) showed how neuroplastic alterations produce functional changes, revealing that mindfulness practice enables individuals to regulate their emotions in a more positive manner with approach rather than withdrawal and therefore not only helps people feel good and recover from negative feelings more quickly, but it can actually improve medical health (as cited in Siegel, 2007). In other words, repeated mindfulness practices of simply noticing when thoughts arise and dissipate with nonjudgmental awareness begins to change the way the brain functions when presented with emotional responses. The ability to approach the emotional state with nonjudgmental awareness provides the opportunity to proactively select the response instead of acting with habitual norms. The findings provide more understanding of how basic mindfulness meditation practices can overflow into everyday life, providing the ability to make positive changes by choice in behavior, emotional regulation, and general emotional intelligence. Davidson's (2004) findings are not only significant for better understanding mental health and well-being, but also for understanding how mindfulness may be a tremendously valuable practice for leaders.

As mentioned previously, leaders face numerous challenges and near constant pulls on their attention throughout any given day. A recent meta-analysis of neuroscientific studies on meditation portrayed how mindfulness practices in particular more greatly affect the brain's natural defense mechanism, the amygdala's fight, flight, freeze response, (Gotink, Meijboom, Vernooij, Smits, & Hunink, 2016). Gotink et al. (2016) state that "when the situation allows for cortical processing, the [prefrontal cortex] PFC can regulate the amygdala, either increasing or decreasing its activity (Ohman, 2005); [and] MBSR seems to be associated with more efficient PFC inhibition of amygdala responses, improving emotion regulation" (p. 39). What this means is, leaders who practice mindfulness should have a greater ability to regulate the brain's natural threat perceiving response, proving the leader with the ability to have more space between stimuli and response. This suggests that leaders who practice mindfulness may be less prone to fight, flight, freeze responses and more prone to noticing their natural response and then choosing the outcome of their words and actions. This would be a highly valued quality in the workplace, where the leader can appropriately work with the themselves, the situation at hand, and their colleagues by maintaining the executive functioning of their brain (i.e. the prefrontal cortex) through perceived threats.

Mindfulness Scales

Contemporary research on mindfulness nearly always includes one of the established, validated mindfulness scales. The most commonly used mindfulness scale in the research has been Brown and Ryan's (2003) Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). While it is clear that the major intention of Brown and Ryan's (2003) research study was to establish a validated and usable scale to measure mindfulness, their research on examining, measuring, defining, and evaluating mindfulness was substantial and beneficial to the collective inquirers

who wanted to know more about the fascinating benefits and usefulness of mindfulness. Brown and Ryan (2003) are social psychologists who undertook an exhaustive process to determine how levels of mindfulness related to established psychological constructs and to general "well-being." The results were valuable and have been referenced in numerous published academic studies.

Prior to Brown and Ryan's (2003) MAAS, the only formal scale was Buchheld, Grossman, and Walach's (2001) Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory. Buchheld et al. (2001) built their assessment scale at a silent Vipassana (literally "insight" meditation, which is considered the same as mindfulness meditation) meditation retreat. While considered useful and informative, the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory has been criticized (Brown & Ryan, 2003) for only being useful for longtime practicing meditators and not for its usefulness in general research studies with mindfulness interventions.

While Brown and Ryan (2003) were developing and publishing the MAAS, another group of researchers were busy attempting to establish a useful mindfulness scale as well. Baer, Smith, and Allen (2004) were in their fourth round of research assessments when Brown and Ryan's (2003) article was published, causing them to pause their work to evaluate what was done in Brown and Ryan's (2003) study. Baer et al. (2004) ended up making their fifth round of evaluation a comparison of their scale with MAAS to determine similarities and differences, since they too were interested in the assessment of mindfulness skills and the psychometric characteristics and relationships with other constructs. While the MAAS tracks when and how people are either aware of their actions, thoughts, emotions, etc. or acting on "auto-pilot," Baer et al.'s (2004) Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS) attempted to better categorize different components of mindfulness in order to assess different components of mindfulness skills rather than overall mindfulness. In their comparison of MAAS and KIMS, Baer et al.

(2004) found that their construct of "Act with Awareness" most closely related to the MAAS assessment.

Two years later, Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer, and Toney (2006) conducted a more robust study whereby they established a new scale that could measure individual components, which they term "facets" of mindfulness, allowing researchers to evaluate different areas of mindfulness, rather than the previously established (and highly used) MAAS scale, which, in their opinion, only assesses one component of mindfulness. Baer et al.'s (2006) study included a comparison of the proposed five facets of mindfulness with all of the previously established mindfulness scales to compare them and reduce redundancies and non-correlated elements. The results formed what Baer et al. (2006) termed the "Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire," or FFMQ, allowing researchers to more easily compare facets of mindfulness with other constructs.

The value of the FFMQ is the clear differentiation between elements of mindfulness in a measurable and validated way. The facets are 1) act with awareness, 2) non-judgment, 3) non-reactivity, 4) observe, and 5) describe. As mentioned above, the widely used MAAS scale only assesses one of these facets (act with awareness).

It was around this time (2004) when clinical psychologists recognized the need to clearly define mindfulness (which may explain the depth and breath of Baer et al.'s (2004, 2006) studies that highlighted the singular component of Brown and Ryan's (2003) scale and the need to consider the multiple faces of mindfulness). Bishop et al. (2004) presented a definition of mindfulness as:

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

The multi-component definition from Bishop et al. (2004) further validates the need to have a multi-component assessment scale for mindfulness. Still, Brown and Ryan (2003) are continually cited for their validated work on MAAS and researchers continue to use MAAS to measure when a person is or is not acting mindfully or being mindful. An added bonus to researchers and research participants is that the MAAS is only 15 questions in length, whereas the FFMQ is 39 questions.

Before moving beyond mindfulness scales, it is worth noting the work of Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, and Laurenceau (2007) whose research examined whether a mindfulness assessment could predict mental conditions and established the Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale, revised version (CAMS-R). Feldman et al. (2007) provided a comprehensive examination of existing mindfulness scales and constructed a validated mindfulness scale two times (hence the revised version) in order to positively contribute to the industry of mindfulness research and overall understanding of assessing well-being.

Mindfulness in Organizations

Mindfulness in organizations has been researched substantially. Research on mindfulness in organizations typically uses quantitative analyses with employee self-reports of outcome variables, pre- and post a mindfulness intervention. Research often follows the discovery of Kabat-Zinn's (1982, 1985, 1990) work and are focused on measuring stress (Galantino, Baime, Maguire, Szapary, & Farrar, 2005; Wolever et al., 2012; Weinstein, Brown, & Ryan, 2009); employee well-being, burnout, and coping (Grégoire, Lachance, & Taylor, 2015; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013; Krasner et al., 2013); or employee performance (Dane & Brummel, 2014).

Consistent positive results of mindfulness interventions on employees continue to be shown as new studies are conducted. The overwhelming form of research on mindfulness is quantitative analysis and with each new quantitative research study confirming similar previous studies, it is curious to see a lack of qualitative research looking for deeper meaning.

Most studies that investigated mindfulness in organizations focused on the stress-reduction element, but also to look for other variables and outcomes. These other outcomes, that appeared when researching mindfulness in the workplace, often fall within the areas of performance, relationships, or well-being (Good et al., 2016). From 2005-2013 in particular, numerous studies investigated if and how mindfulness could reduce stress in the workplace. Psychologists Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, and Cordova (2005) researched how an MBSR program would affect health care practitioners engaged in clinical practice. While their numbers were too small for statistical significance, their findings did suggest that an 8-week MBSR intervention may be effective for reducing stress and increasing quality of life and self-compassion in health care professionals.

In one of the few qualitative studies, Walach, Nord, Zier, Dietz-Waschkowski, Kersig, and Schupbach (2007) sought to determine how an MBSR program would affect employees reports of stress-related problems. Through conducting interviews post an MBSR intervention, Walach et al (2007) found that positive strategies of coping with stress increased and negative strategies of coping decreased (significant difference at post treatment: $p = .039$ compared to control). Eighty-two percent of the participants reported having reached their personal goal (of reducing stress).

Klatt, Buckworth, and Malarkey (2009) investigated how a shortened MBSR intervention would affect reports of stress in healthy working adults and then compared the results to

traditional MBSR programs. The results showed significant reductions in perceived stress ($p = .0025$) and increases in mindfulness ($p = .0149$) were obtained. Results were equal to MBSR meta-analysis. As an additional measure, Klatt, Buckworth, and Malarkey (2009) also took weekly salivary cortisol measurements, but found the cortisol changes (pre- and post intervention) were insignificant. Malarkey, Jarjoura, and Klatt (2013) conducted a follow-up study testing cortisol measurements again, but could not confirm that a shortened mindfulness intervention was more effective on reducing cortisol than traditional education programs on reducing cortisol levels.

Geary and Rosenthal (2011) sought to see if mindfulness would reduce stress in healthcare employees and if so, would the results be stable one year out from an MBSR intervention. The surveys showed that MBSR effectively reduces self-report measures of stress and increases daily spiritual experiences in employees and they are stable at 1 year out; however, their additional measure of testing pulse rate variability did not correlate with report stress reduction.

Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, and Kreitzer (2013) tested the use of a telephonic (as opposed to in-person) mindfulness intervention (using MBSR) on nurses and found positive affects ($p < .001$) in reductions of perceived stress and reported burnout, and increases in serenity and empathy.

Mindfulness Interventions on Working Professionals

Grégoire, Lachance, and Taylor (2015) presented a comprehensive discussion on how mindfulness affects employees. They also presented results of a follow-up research study on previous research by Grégoire and Lachance (2015), who found that mindfulness helps reduce psychological distress among call center employees. Grégoire et al.'s (2015) follow-up study

looked to further investigate the effects of mindfulness on the call center employees. What they found was that "the intervention helped increase mindfulness and psychological wellbeing, but also reduced psychological distress, stress and burnout among employees… helped employees refrain from impulsive or reactive behavior when experiencing negative emotions but had no significant effect on their emotional awareness [and] there was a trend toward emotion regulation mediating the effects of the intervention on psychological distress" (Grégoire et al., 2015, p. 96). Looking at the big picture, Grégoire et al. (2015) suggested that across the body of research on mindfulness interventions in organizations, the research showed that mindfulness interventions are a "valuable way to reduce negative mental health outcomes such as psychological distress [however,] their impact on positive outcomes remains unclear" due to measurements of mental health and "clinical problems" (p. 98).

Mackenzie, Poulin, and Seidman-Carlson (2006) investigated how a brief (4-week as opposed to the traditional 8-week MBSR program) mindfulness intervention would affect nurses and nurse aids. Using an experimental design, they found significant improvements in burnout symptoms ($p < .05$), relaxation, and life satisfaction ($p < .01$).

Many studies moved beyond simply reconfirming stress reduction (although many kept or rediscovered elements of stress reduction in the variables). For example, Dane and Brummel (2014) reported that mindfulness is positively correlated with job performance with regard to "the mind's tendency to wander, [hence they] view mindfulness (in the workplace and elsewhere) as a remarkable feat: situating the mind in present moment time, despite psychological pressures to the contrary, [and] in performing this mental feat in a dynamic work environment, individuals attend to a number of stimuli and events and, as a result, perform effectively" (p. 119). This coincides with what Brown and Ryan (2003) found when creating

and validating the MAAS. Brown and Ryan (2003) found significant correlations with MAAS (which indicates when people are being mindful or not) "at a moderate level with emotional intelligence [and] most strongly [$p < .0001$] related to clarity of emotional states but also with mood repair and, to a lesser degree, attention to emotions" (p. 828)… and also mindful engagement ($p < .0001$) (p. 829). Drawing on these connections, one could predict that if employees were more mindful, they would be better able to have "clarity" on their emotional state, "repair" their moods when encountering a negative experience, and "engage" in their work, and potentially linking to employee resilience. Additionally, this suggests that employees who are more mindful are better able to notice where their attention is at a given time and adjust and focus accordingly.

Of note are two qualitative studies. One qualitative study was conducted by Atkins and Styles (2015) after a mindfulness intervention in an organization was implemented. Atkins and Styles (2015) that looked at identity and sense of self in employees. What they found is that participants in the mindfulness training were better able to see themselves as the observers of situations and actions. Perhaps it is this element of learning to observe situations more objectively than subjectively that is the key to understanding.

In a more recent and much needed qualitative study, Hugh-Jones, Rose, Koutsopoulou, and Simms-Ellis (2018) conducted "a version of grounded theory" (i.e. they did not reach saturation in the interviewing process), in order to "elicit and analyze accounts from past participants of a workplace mindfulness intervention in order to generate a preliminary model of how positive benefits appear to be secured" (p. 474). The preliminary model suggests that: "discrete, temporal experiences build on each other to generate multiple, positive benefits [and] as anticipated in mindfulness-based interventions, enhanced attentional capacity was important,

but our provisional model also suggests that resonance, self-care, detection of stress markers, perceiving choice, recovering self-agency and upward spiralling [sic] may be central mechanisms that lead to positive outcomes" (p. 474). The results of this study aid in the understanding of how people change when learning and practicing mindfulness.

Mindfulness Research in Leadership

Reb, Narayanan, and Chaturvedi (2014) conducted what appears to be the first two research studies on the fields of mindfulness and leadership. Reb et al. (2014) used a quantitative quasi-experimental design to assess mindful leaders with the dependent variables of work-life balance, emotional exhaustion, deviance, and job performance. They used paired assessments (with leaders and their supervisors) to determine the response on employee “deviance” (i.e. unethical behavior) and job performance. All relationships showed significant results ($p < .05$) with job performance being positively correlated with mindful leaders ($p < .001$) and employee emotional exhaustion being negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with mindful leaders.

In a similar study, Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, and Cook (2015) conducted a full experiment (with a control group) wherein they led mid-level leaders in a hospital environment through an eight-week training in mindfulness (weekend immersion with eight weeks of webinar training) in a mixed method study. Their findings showed that participants in the mindfulness training increased reports of mindfulness, decreased stress, and increased leadership effectiveness (confirmed through qualitative analysis with participant direct reports); however, they also discovered that sustaining mindfulness past the eight-week program was a challenge.

Pinck and Sonnentag (2017) looked at how leader mindfulness would translate into subordinates’ well-being. They first researched how mindfulness related to transformational leadership and then used transformational leadership as a mediator to investigate subordinates’

well-being. Pinck and Sonnentag (2017) found a significant ($p < .001$) relationship between leader mindfulness and transformational leadership; however, they could not determine the direction of the relationship (i.e. does transformational leadership create more mindfulness or does mindfulness create more transformational leadership attributes?). They then found that subordinate self-reports of well-being were significantly related to leader's scores on the Transformational Leadership Scale.

Further, Tutzer, and Sache (2018) examined the relationship between self-leadership and mindfulness. Self-leadership was measured with the German version of the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (Andressen & Konradt, 2007; Houghton & Neck, 2002) and mindfulness was measured with the German version of the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS; Baer et al., 2004; Stroehle et al., 2010).

Correlation analysis results showed significantly positive relationships between self-leadership (alpha = .86); mindfulness (alpha = .86; $p < .01$); [mindfulness facet] observe (alpha = .81; $p < .001$); and [mindfulness facet] describe (alpha = .89, $p < .05$). Findings suggest that the elements of mindful observing (of internal and external experiences and stimuli) relate with the ability to lead oneself (as defined in self-leadership theory). The information is useful for future studies.

Verdorfer (2016) examined mindfulness and its relation to servant leadership. Verdorfer (2016) first used a non-leader sample to explore the relationship between mindfulness (using the Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory) and "other-reported" humility and "noncalculative motivation to lead," which was found to be significant ($p < .001$). Verdorfer (2016) then used a leader sample and investigated the relationship between leaders' dispositional mindfulness and actual servant leadership behaviors as perceived by their followers. The findings revealed that leaders' dispositional mindfulness was positively related ($p < .001$) to direct reports' ratings of

the servant leadership dimensions humility, standing back, and authenticity. In summary, data support the utility of including mindfulness as a predictor in servant leadership research and practice (p. 950).

Table 2.1, below includes a summary of the research conducted on mindfulness, including early research, neuroscience, workplace interventions, and leaders/leadership.

Table 2.1
Mindfulness Research

Research Results	Reference
Reduction in reactions to chronic pain.	Kabat-Zinn (1990)
Reduction in pain and pain reactivity.	Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, (1985)
Meditation my change brain and immune functions in positive ways	Davidson et al., (2003)
Emotion regulation, negative mood recovery, and improve health	Davidson, (2004)
Emotion regulation, with regard to regulating the amygdala	Gotink, Meijboom, Vernooij, Smits, & Hunink, (2016)
Stress reduction in the workplace	Galantino, Baime, Maguire, Szapary, & Farrar, (2005); Wolever et al., (2012); Weinstein, Brown, & Ryan, (2009); Klatt, Buckworth, and Malarkey (2009) ; Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, and Kreitzer (2013)
Improving employee well-being, decreasing burnout, and increasing coping.	Grégoire, Lachance, & Taylor, (201)5; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, (2013); Krasner et al., (2013); Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, and Kreitzer (2013)
Reducing stress and increasing quality of life and self-compassion in health care professionals	Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, and Cordova (2005)
Increase in positive strategies of coping with stress and decrease in negative strategies of coping.	Walach, Nord, Zier, Dietz-Waschkowski, Kersig, and Schupbach (2007)
Stress reduction sustained one year post intervention.	Geary and Rosenthal (2011)
Mindfulness is positively correlated with job performance with regard to “the mind’s tendency to wander” (i.e. increasing attention, concentration, and focus)	Dane and Brummel (2014)

Mindfulness is positively correlated with emotional intelligence, clarity of emotional states, mood repair, and attention to emotions.	Brown and Ryan (2003)
Enhanced ability to objectively rather than subjectively view oneself.	Atkins and Styles (2015)
Resonance, self-care, detection of stress markers, perceiving choice, recovering self-agency and upward spiralling [sic] may be central mechanisms that lead to positive outcomes (that research on mindfulness has shown).	Koutsopoulou, and Simms-Ellis (2017)
Job performance is positively correlated with mindful leaders ($p < .001$) and employee emotional exhaustion is negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with mindful leaders.	Reb, Narayanan, and Chaturvedi (2014)
Increase in leader effectiveness, decrease in stress, but not confirmable as a sustained trait.	Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, and Cook (2015)
Significant positive relationship between leader mindfulness and transformational leadership	Pinck and Sonnentag (2017)
Mindful observing (of internal and external experiences and stimuli) relate with the ability to lead oneself (as defined in self-leadership theory).	Further, Tutzer, and Sache (2018)
Leaders' dispositional mindfulness was positively related ($p < .001$) to direct reports' ratings of the servant leadership dimensions humility, standing back, and authenticity	Verdorfer (2016)

Theoretical Considerations of Mindfulness and Leadership

While the research on mindfulness and leadership is still in its nascent stage, but growing, there is no shortage of theoretical discussion. Many books (Carroll 2006, 2008; Gonzalez 2012; Marturano 2014; Bunting 2016; Sinclair 2016; Hougaard & Carter 2018) are available on the subject. While most authors imply that findings were empirical, the data remains proprietary. What can be identified are the numerous crossover themes that emerge from the popular literature, specifically: attention, awareness, unbiased observation, self-regulation, accessibility (of the practice), adaptability, authenticity, and resilience. All of these traits are viewed as assets

for the modern day leader who navigates the complexity of contemporary leadership. The increasing demands of attention and performance combined with limited resources make optimal leadership ability a rare achievement. Many of the authors argue that mindfulness provides a means to navigate the leadership demands and therefore operate from a more desired state of being. For example, Brendel and Bennett (2016) presented a conceptual practical model of embodied leadership, an integration of mindfulness and somatic practices "that transform a leader's relationship with behavior from the automatic to the consciously chosen realm."

A few leadership theorists (i.e. Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002) have offered direct (theoretical) connections between mindfulness and effective leadership performance. Boyatzis and McKee (2005) asserted that "great leaders are emotionally intelligent and they are mindful: they seek to live in full consciousness of self, others, nature, and society" (p. 3). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) refer to an essential leadership skill, that of "getting off the dance floor and going to the balcony," which they reference as "…what the Buddhists call… 'mindfulness'" (p. 51). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) asserted that "attention [is] the currency of leadership," and build their theory of adaptive leadership (Heifez, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) upon this basis of regulation of attention, awareness, and observation "moving outside in and moving inside out" (p. 8).

Similar to the adaptive nature of leadership (as presented by Heifetz, Grashow, & Linksy, 2009), situational leadership theory suggests that leaders must be aware of the multiple dimensions of their role as a leader (supportive behavior and directive behavior), and be further aware of the need to appropriately apply each role situationally (Northouse, p. 99). "Effective leaders are those who can recognize what employees need and then adapt their own style to meet those needs," (Northouse, 2013, p. 100). Blanchard, Zigarmi, and Zigarmi (1985) provided a

framework of understanding the situational leadership styles, that of delegating, supporting, coaching, and directing. In order to work with the situational leadership framework, the leader must know and understand both the situation and the ability and current need of their follower(s). Not only does this leadership style require a level of understanding of the framework itself, but it requires that the leader understand and recognize individual needs and then adapt to those needs, constantly. Today a direct report may need directive guidance and tomorrow they may need coaching; in six weeks, the process may need to be repeated based-upon a different situation. This requires a great deal of awareness on behalf of the leader in order to meet the individualized needs of the follower. It would make sense that leaders who are more mindful, more aware of themselves and situational influences, more able to navigate demands and perceived threats, and more able to recognize the needs of others, would be better able to adapt situationally. While there are no direct ties through research of mindfulness and situation leadership that I could find in my literature search, the connection seems rather clear.

Another leadership model that may theoretically relate to mindful leadership practice is that of transformational leadership. Burns (1978) identified a two-tiered model of leadership, one of a transactional nature (i.e. a bonus given for a sales increase) and the other of a transformational nature (i.e. raising the level of motivation and morality). Further expanding upon Burns' (1978) foundation, Bass and Avolio (1994) expanded the framework stating that transformational leadership elements include inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence; and transactional elements include contingent reward and management-by-exception. Good et al. (2016) suggested that mindfulness may be related to transformational leadership, especially the component of individualized consideration. Individualized consideration is "representative of leaders who

provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of followers…leaders act as coaches and advisers while trying to assist followers in becoming fully actualized" (Northouse, 2016, p. 193). While it is clear that a connection may be made between transformational leadership and mindful leadership practice, it is only theoretical at this stage. Good et al. (2016) suggested that '"the improvement in attention qualities conferred through mindfulness may give leaders richer perception of followers' needs….one way that leaders high on dispositional mindfulness may build high-quality relationships is by attending to the needs of followers, thus providing them with relational support that leads to employee flourishing" (p. 129).

Reb, Sim, Chintakananda, and Bhave (2015) presented considerations of how mindfulness relates to authentic leadership, charismatic leadership, and servant leadership. Authentic leaders are defined as "those who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others' values/moral perspectives, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and of high moral character" (Avolio, Luthans, & Walumba, 2004, p. 4; as cited in Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 312). Advancing their discussion and investigation on authentic leadership definitions, researchers Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May and Walumba (2005) "zero in on the self-awareness and self-regulatory processes whereby leaders and followers achieve authenticity and authentic relations, which [they] deem as being an essential starting point for discussing ALD [authentic leadership development]" (As cited in Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 321). Given the definitions of authentic leadership, the relationship between authentic leadership and mindfulness is straightforward.

Similarly, servant leadership theory, presented by Greenleaf (1977), focuses on a specific way of being. In the case of servant leadership, the way of being is that of a servant—to colleagues, direct reports, and the organization. As Greenleaf (1977) describes the way of being, he asserted that "framing all of this [discussion on being a servant leader] is awareness, opening wide the doors of perception so as to enable one to get more of what is available of sensory experience and other signals from the environment than people usually take in" (p. 27). Again the connection between components of the leadership theory and mindfulness can be drawn, in this case intentional broader awareness of the environment, other people, and oneself.

Spiritual leadership is another leadership theory worthy of discussion in relation to mindfulness. Fry, Hannah, Noel, and Walumbwa (2011) defined spiritual leadership as "an emerging construct within the broader context of workplace spirituality that taps into organization members' needs for transcendence and connection, to intrinsically motivate oneself and others and satisfy fundamental needs for spiritual well-being through calling and membership" (p. 261). Fry et al. (2011) described the multiple dimensions of spiritual leadership including "vision, altruistic love, hope/faith, spiritual well-being, calling, and membership" (pgs. 262-263). Of importance in the discussion is the differentiation between religion and spirituality, and critics (i.e. Tourish & Tourish, 2010) have highlighted the need to ensure that spiritual leadership is not simply Christian perspective implemented in a workplace environment. The definition provided by Fry et al. (2011) makes the distinction, and even argue that spiritual leadership is not necessarily created by the hierarchical leader, but created in a group setting. While mindfulness may play a role in spiritual leadership, it is not clear that particular aspects of mindfulness are directly related to spiritual leadership. Rather, it may be that mindfulness practices better enhance a leader's ability, or a group's ability, to notice the needs of the

organizational members and take appropriate action to make positive changes. Mindfulness may indeed aid in implementation of spiritual leadership, especially with regard to generating intrinsic motivation and voicing a collective vision to create membership.

An important area of theoretical connection between mindfulness and an additional construct in management, and worthy of discussion in leadership, includes the components of what has been called reflection-in-action (Schon, 1983), double-loop learning (Argyris, 1991), and critically reflexive practice (Cunliffe, 2004). Schon (1983) discussed how knowledge cannot always be readily described, rather it is tacitly understood through action, that is, the knowledge of how to do something is experienced in the moment of performing it. Schon (1983) continued on to explain how some people can develop the ability to begin understanding the tacit knowledge-in-action to the point where they can reflect, in the moment, on the action and make adjustments, calling this reflection-in-action, a very beneficial and fundamental element of learning, growing, and changing toward being more professionally effective.

Similarly, Argyris (1991) discussed a framework for understanding how typical, every-day functioning in the work place (or elsewhere) is maintained, calling it single-loop learning. The single-loop learning is akin to the experienced, high functioning manager who has the knowledge and know-how to keep the business running day-in and day-out. Argyris (1991) then explained a second-tier, that of double-loop learning, wherein a person begins to examine the single-loop functioning with questions of a higher-order (i.e. is this the right thing to be doing? Do we need to make adjustments or changes? Is business as usual taking into consideration changes in employees needs or industry fluctuations?). Argyris (1991) argued that double-loop learning is challenging, even for highly educated people, and requires a great degree of non-judgmental consideration of the whole scope of a workplace situation and climate, and that for

people to get beyond single-loop learning, they have to let go of ego-defense reasoning, such as projecting problems on others.

Continuing this differentiation between tacit knowledge/single-loop learning and reflection-in-action/double-loop learning, Cunliffe (2004) discussed critically reflexive practices and their value to the discussion of effective management. Cunliffe (2004) described how much of people's standard reactions to stimuli are reflex responses, that is, they are habitual and utilize memory and tacit knowledge. People may reflect upon their reflexive responses, but reflection on habit only goes as far as single-loop learning. By adding a critical evaluation of reflexive responses with reflection, managers can then become more aware of why they are operating out of habit, how that habit action effects their perception of events, and then be able to learn, grow, or change as needed. Schon (1983), Argyris (1991), and Cunliffe (2004) all described the difficulty in learning how to move out of everyday standard thinking and acting. Elements of mindfulness, especially nonjudgmental awareness, may very well aid in the practices of reflection-in-action, double-loop learning, and being critically reflexive.

Although not a leadership theory, resilience has been studied in relation to authentic leadership theory (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007) and as a form of positive psychological capital at work (Good et al. 2016). Resilience has been described as the capacity to rebound from adversity, conflict, and failure and to develop as a result of these challenges (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007). Good et al (2016) argued that mindfulness may be related to resilience through what Bishop et al. (2004) described as a "decentered perspective." Similar to the discussion on neuroscientific understanding of mindfulness and Cunliffe's (2004) description of critically reflexive practices, mindfulness practice may allow for potentially toxic workplace experiences to not as quickly trigger habitual reflex responses, and may generate more

ability to objectively observe situations rather than be directly subject to emotional reactivity. Good et al. (2016) asserted that "by decoupling the external experience (i.e., toxic boss) from automatic physiological and psychological harm, mindfulness fosters [an] aspect of resilience—recovery from toxic events" (p. 131). Additionally, it is argued that repeated exposure to toxic experiences and overcoming such experiences can lead to greater well-being (Neff & Broady, 2011). This would suggest that mindfulness practice may enable growth in the face of adversity (Good et al., 2016).

An interesting possibility, worthy of consideration and future research is the potential of such mindfully created resilience and its relation with Duckworth's (2016) findings on grit. Grit, which was defined as "determination with direction" and "passion plus perseverance," was found to be significantly predictive of success across numerous industries, including Army special forces retention, sales employee retention, and graduate education completion (Duckworth, 2016, p. 8). If mindfulness does enable growth in the face of adversity, as was suggested by Neff and Broady (2011), then perhaps mindfulness may play a role in increasing perseverance and grit.

Sinclair (2007) articulated a poignant summation of theoretical connections between mindfulness and leadership, but also the importance of such a practice: "what we need in leadership may be simply stated but is hard to give: the capacity to not react impulsively from our own immediate needs; to be really present for others; [and] to relinquish our need for control or mastery to the requirements of the challenge in front of us" (p. 123). "And this is why mindfulness has such potential for leadership: because it can be practiced in the thick of whatever we are doing or whoever we happen to be" (Sinclair, 2015, p. 6).

Clearly, there are many valuable connections between mindfulness and leadership. What still remains is a need for more empirical research on the subject.

Summary and Conclusion

As discussed above, the research on mindfulness is beneficial, especially with regard to reducing stress, which in turn reduces negative states induced by excess stress. The stress reduction of mindfulness interventions has shown consistent statistical validation across the literature. The dominant form of research is quantitative analysis using scale assessments of dependent variables in experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Rarely was a qualitative method added to a study and only two studies were purely qualitative. The continued use of quantitative measures does, however, confirm the replicability of the mindfulness interventions and validates the results. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (or a modification of it, typically a reduction in time) is the dominant mindfulness intervention throughout the literature.

The lack of substantial qualitative research on mindfulness in general and with leaders in particular presents an opportunity for further research in order to investigate more deeply into what is occurring in the practitioners of mindfulness. Additionally, I could not find in my review of the literature and study that focuses on the lived experiences and stories of leaders who practice mindfulness. Much could be learned from this study. This dissertation aims to address this shortage of qualitative research on leaders who practice mindfulness and give voice to their lived experiences through sharing their stories. Chapter III will outline in detail how this deficiency and opportunity can be addressed through this dissertation study.

Chapter III: Methodology

Introduction

Chapter III of this dissertation examines the methodology, research questions, data collection and analysis, as well as the rationale for using narrative inquiry. It provides detailed explanation regarding the research questions, participants, processes for data collection and the analysis. The chapter starts with a section on what narrative inquiry is, why it is a good fit for this research, my role as a researcher and the importance of understanding my particular research stance. The second section, titled Research Design, addresses the design of the research, a discussion of the participants, the interview questions and the interview plan. The third section lays out how the interviews were analyzed through narrative thematic analysis. And the final section discusses the limitations of the research.

Methodology (Science of Research)

As discussed in Chapter II, the dominant form of research in mindfulness and leadership (and mindfulness in organizations) has been quantitative analysis, which presents a general need for more qualitative research due to the shortage of inquiry. However, a perhaps more important need has arisen with regard to researching mindfulness and leadership—the need to explore and understand the meaning in which leaders who practice mindfulness ascribe to leading with mindfulness. Thus, the nature of the need describes the inquiry, which is a qualitative methodology (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, Pringle and Booysen (2018) describe how the researcher's own research paradigm should be disclosed as it informs the selection of methodology.

My particular research paradigm is influenced by constructivism. As described by Pringle and Booysen (2018), constructivism: "is based on relativism, [and views] reality as

constructed, subjective, multiple and relative. Constructions are not more or less "true", only more or less informed. Researchers come to understanding by entering the worldview of a unique person or persons, and there is a reciprocal relationship between researchers and participants" (p. 33). The constructivist research paradigm lends itself to qualitative methodologies that allow researchers and participants to co-construct the reality and meaning-making of the area being researched.

The combination of a shortage of qualitative measures, the need to better understand, explore, and make sense of how mindfulness is practiced in leadership, and the constructivist research paradigm all suggest that a qualitative study would be ideal for this dissertation.

Research Question(s) and Choice of Method

"Qualitative researchers are interested not in prediction and control but in understanding" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p.4). After having reviewed the existing literature on mindfulness in leadership, even greater has the intrigue of understanding grown in seeing how leaders who practice mindfulness bring meaning to their practice. Additionally, qualitative researchers "study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln,1994, p. 2, as cited in Clandinin (ed.), 2007, p. 4). Qualitative research provides a means to dig deeper into the phenomena of mindful leadership and see the meanings that mindful leaders ascribe from their direct experiences.

The research question is: how do mindfulness practices affect leadership practices? Given that the research question was explored qualitatively, an appropriate research design was selected in order to best meet the inquiry.

Overview of the Original Research Design and Process

"When trying to understand how people make sense of life and the problems scholars study, researchers often identify *narrative* as important for the particular, idiosyncratic, deeply held experiences of being in this world, as compared to the more general indications noted on surveys or responses in controlled experiments" (Daiute, 2014, p. 3; italics added for emphasis). Narrative research focuses on "the study of stories or narratives or descriptions of a series of events…embrac[ing] the assumption that the story is one if not the fundamental unit that accounts for human experience" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 4). "The appeal of narrative, most agree, is that it expresses personal experience…[by] focus[ing] on experience and the meaning of experience from the perspective of people living it in reality" (Daiute, 2014, p. 8). Thus narrative inquiry seeks to elicit the stories of lived experiences and perspectives on those experiences in order to gain understanding of a phenomenon. Narrative inquiry fits well with the dissertation research question, providing a focused method of seeking to gain understanding of mindful leadership.

In addition to explaining its usefulness in qualitative research, narrative researchers (i.e. Wells, 2011; Daiute, 2014; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) also discuss the means of establishing studies that are trustworthy and have relevance to the field of inquiry, especially when discussing elements of validity and transferability (i.e. they defer to trustworthiness and relevance versus validity and transferability). Trustworthiness, it is argued, is shown through the researcher's steps taken to ensure that the narratives captured from participants are accurately portrayed and that interpretations and analysis are grounded in the research method itself (Wells, 2011).

The research process began with a snowball sampling method to find ideal participants to be interviewed for this study. Ideal participants were viewed as leaders (i.e. work with a

group(s) of people in a position of hierarchical significance who have decision making authority for the organization) who practice mindfulness, self-select as mindful leaders, and were willing to be interviewed. Participants and the selection criteria are discussed in more detail below. Once participants were found, I began following Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) suggestions for conducting an interview study and Braun and Clarke's (2006) guidelines for analyzing the data.

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) suggested using seven stages for an interview investigation: 1) thematizing, 2) designing, 3) interviewing, 4) transcribing, 5) analyzing, 6) verifying, and 7) reporting. Thematizing, which describes the "what" and "why" of the research investigation have already been addressed. Designing the study involves much of what has been conducted thus far in this dissertation— ensuring that the phenomena of study in significantly explored and explained (chapter I), especially with reviewing the literature (chapter II), and that ample thought and consideration have been given to the method of research design (chapter III). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) state that research design can be more flexible and iterative rather than holding to a definite plan. This has to do with the evolving knowledge that the researcher will gain once the interview process begins and/or when the analysis stage begins, that may guide the researcher to conduct more interviews, revisit audio recordings, and/or re-transcribe sections of interviews. They call this a method of pushing forward (i.e. improving interview techniques) and spiraling backward (i.e. revisiting the raw data or reanalyzing).

This section also addresses the question of how many interview participants are needed. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) stated that in common interview studies the answer is "15 +/- 10," as there is no standard number and more is not necessarily better or more scientific. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) and Creswell (2014) suggested that the quantity be based upon reaching saturation (i.e. when new interviews no long yield new information), but even that is difficult to

determine. Additionally, it is sometimes beneficial to interview certain participants more than once for a number of reasons, such as having new information that may have been gathered in later interviews that would inform earlier interviews, or if there is a sense that more would have been said or the interviewee would have gone deeper if they had more time. As it worked out for this study, and discussed in more detail below, 12 participants were interviewed, four of them conducted second level interviews, and two of them provided email exchanges after the interviews.

The next five stages (interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting) of the Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) stages of interview investigation will be discussed in more detail below.

Research Participants

Creswell (2014) stated that in qualitative research, one must purposefully select the research participants who will best help the researcher to understand the problem/phenomenon and the research question. For this qualitative, narrative inquiry, research participants had to meet a set of selection criteria (described below). The research process began with a search for leaders who practice mindfulness who were willing to be interviewed using a snowball sampling method. A promotional email was distributed through a variety of outlets with reminder follow-up emails. It was expected that the majority of participants would be acquaintances of acquaintances (i.e. a number of acquaintances of mine had shared with me very early on that they had ideal people in mind for this study), but that was not the case. The promotional email was distributed to my social network and beyond it. The promotional email/post was sent through the Mindfulness in Education Network, the University of Massachusetts's Mindfulness-Based Stress

Reduction network, the American Mindfulness Research Association, the Association for Mindfulness in Education network, and the Mindful Leadership Summit Facebook page.

Potential participants were prescreened by me. As mentioned previously, this was a purposeful selection of mindful leaders, thus the first measure of prescreening was to ensure that they had a regular mindfulness practice. Ideal participants were viewed as having undergone a formal mindfulness training through a notable lineage. By notable lineage, I mean through commonly known teachers and methods in mindfulness, including: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR); a "second generation" Mindfulness-Based program, meaning that the teachers were trained in MBSR and then created a modified version to a specific audience or training; Vipassana or Insight meditation training; Thich Nhat Hanh's mindfulness training; Koru Mindfulness training; or if none specific, that the teachers who taught the leader mindfulness practices were trained in one of the lineages. While it was the intention to establish this lineage connection, not all of the participants who were ultimately selected had specifically disclosed where they had learned mindfulness until during the interview. Prescreening in this area was actually done through a survey response that included whether or not the participant practiced mindfulness and for how many years they had practiced.

The second prescreening criterion was to ensure that the participants were in a position of leadership (i.e. they were in mid- to high-level positions in organizations, supervise employees, and were responsible for strategic decision making). This criteria was rather straight forward as the study is focused on leaders.

The prescreening process was conducted through using a brief survey on Survey Monkey. Questions will include:

1. Do you practice mindfulness meditation? (Y/N)

2. If yes, on average how many hours per week do you spend in meditation?
3. How many years have you been practicing mindfulness meditation?
4. Are you in a leadership position? (Y/N)
5. In which industry do you work?
6. Does your mindful meditation practice influence your leadership practice(s)? (Y/N)
7. Do you make effort to notice your thoughts, emotions, and experiences throughout the day? (Y/N)
8. Would you be willing to be interviewed to discuss how your mindfulness practice affects your leadership practice? (Y/N)
9. If yes, please provide your general availability for a one hour interview.

Demographical questions were asked in the survey, including age, gender, and race.

Fifty-six people responded to the survey. The respondents were sorted into industries (Corporate, K-12, University/College, Non-Profit, Health Care/Private Practice/Mental Health, and Military). The selection criteria was intended to maximize diversity while ensuring that all participants met the primary requirements of being mindfulness practitioners in leadership positions who were willing to be interviewed. After prospective, qualified participants were sorted by industry, they were then sorted by gender, age, and race. Preference was given to participants whose job title and years of mindfulness practice would guarantee that they were ideal candidates for the study, without sacrificing the maximization of diversity. Selected participants were individually emailed by me, thanking them for completing the survey, and inviting them to schedule an interview. Not all selected participants responded to interview invitations. One selected participant did not show up to be interviewed. Nonetheless, the interviewees who ultimately participated were of tremendous value to the study. Twelve

participants were interviewed, four of them conducted second interviews, and two of them included follow-up email exchanges with me for clarity. Chapter IV will provide survey response information about the participants, including age, race, gender, years of mindfulness practice, and job title, as well as descriptions of the participants and what they contributed to the research study.

Prior to the interview, all participants were required to complete and sign an Informed Consent Form. Interviews were conducted via FreeConferenceCall.com and were audio recorded. Audio recordings were saved on an external hard drive. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim by me. After the interview, participants were asked to review a summary of their interview, written by me, to ensure accuracy and clarity. All participants responded to the review of their summary and one correction of clarification was made. This method of "member validation" provided an added layer of validity to the study itself, ensuring accuracy on behalf of the researcher, which in turn improved the overall usefulness of the study to the public. Four participants who had a great deal to say and offer on the subject of their mindful leadership practice were interviewed more than once. As mentioned previously, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) suggested that reflexivity and flexibility in the research design should be given to ensure that the topic being studied (i.e. mindful leadership) is being thoroughly researched.

Open-Ended Semi-Structured Interview

The interviews were open-ended and semi-structured, designed to give participants the space to share their experiences and stories of mindful leadership. Brinkmann and Kvale (2011) suggested that when preparing interviews, "if a narrative analysis is to be employed, then give the subjects ample freedom and time to unfold their own stories, and follow up with questions to shed light on the main episodes and characters in their narratives" (p. 157). By creating a semi-

structured (as opposed to unstructured or scripted) interview with open-ended questions, specific topics were able to be explored with flexibility in relation to the interviewee and the stories shared, but this also ensured that the research topic is explored through specific questions or prompts.

A few specific questions were asked of all interviewees. The first standard question was: "If I were to ask you to give an example of a particular instance, or instances, that you can think of that your leadership practice has been influenced by your mindfulness practice, what would that be…what stories come to mind?" There were a number of topics of interest, described below, that were introduced to the interviewees. Some topics were emergent through conversation, and when needed I simply prompted the interviewee to tell me more about the topic. Topics were introduced to the interviewees in a way to invite their story, their lived experience, rather than just their values and beliefs. For example, on the topic of dealing with workplace challenges, I said to the interviewees, "Some researchers have suggested that mindfulness may aid in dealing with workplace burnout, but mindfulness may have nothing to do with dealing with workplace burnout; I'm interested to see if this is true for you in your experience." Topics of interest were informed from the literature review in chapter II and include, self-management, interpersonal relationships (especially in hierarchical relationships), burnout, resilience, dealing with change or challenges, job performance, organizational learning, leading oneself, leading others, leadership style, and leadership practices. Participants were asked to describe their job and leadership role. Additionally, I was interested in hearing how the aspects of mindfulness, attention, awareness, and nonjudgment, influence the interviewee's thoughts and actions. Participants were asked to describe how they found mindfulness, how they

define mindfulness, and what being mindful looks like on a daily basis, especially with regard to their jobs and leadership roles.

For the structure of the interview, I followed Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) suggestions, as the interviewer I had introductory questions, and prepared techniques for follow-up questions, general probing questions prepared (i.e. "could you say something more about that?"), specifying questions, direction questions, indirection questions, structuring questions, and offered interpreting questions (i.e. "is it correct that you feel that…?") (p. 161-162). Additionally, I used silence when appropriate to see if the participants had more so say on the topic.

Additional questions were constructed for the two final interviews, informed by the previous interviews. The additional questions were:

- "Is mindful leadership possible without working on yourself first?"
- "It seems as though mindful leadership is really about getting to the present moment, seeing what is there, and then acting (or not acting) from that point of clarity or insight—is it that simple or is there more to it?"
- "Regarding truth—it seems as though mindful leaders may ask themselves this question—is that thought true, is what that person saying true, do I need to speak my truth in this situation—does that resonate with you?"
- "What role does ethics play? Some critics of mindfulness in the workplace view mindfulness as exploiting workers to simply put out more, to stay in their desk longer—what would you say to those critics?"
- "As a mindful leader, do you think that being a mindful leader is more advanced or more difficult that other leadership styles; is it worth it; is it more effective?"
- "Have you had any thoughts or reflections about this subject since our last interview?"

After conducting all 16 interviews and member checking (i.e. received a response from the participants that the summary of the interview was accurate), the interviews were coded and analyzed for themes. In order to analyze the data (see next section) I followed the guidance of Braun and Clarke (2006), Boyatzis (1998), Maguire and Delahunt (2017), and Saldana (2013) for code development and conducting thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis has been defined as a "method for identifying, analysing [sic] and reporting patterns (themes) within data…[and] it minimally organizes and describes [the] data set in (rich) detail" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). To analyze the data from the interviews, I initially followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase guide: 1) become familiar with the data (i.e. read through the transcripts multiple times taking notes); 2) generate initial codes; 3) search for themes; 4) review themes; 5) define and name themes; and 6) write-up the analysis. As the process of analyzing the data became challenging, Saldana's (2013) guidance became highly valuable and was consulted numerous times when I felt "stuck" in the coding process and was trying to figure out how the codes fit into proper themes.

A crucial point of consideration when conducting thematic analysis is whether the thematic analysis will be theoretical (i.e. driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytical interest) or inductive (i.e. driven by the data only) (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given that this dissertation was guided by an interest in mindful leaders, the thematic analysis was theoretical instead of inductive in nature, meaning that coding was conducted by looking for segments within the transcripts that appeared relevant to or captured something of interest to the research question (how do mindfulness practices affect leadership practice?). In

theoretical thematic analysis, not every line of transcript text was needed to be coded, as the coding was designed to focus on the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, all coding was hand coded by me.

Riessman (2007) suggested that "a good narrative analysis prompts the researcher to look beyond the surface of the text" (as cited in Daiute, 2014, p. 11). Duite (2014) stated that one way narrative researchers go beyond the surface is by identifying themes, which is the third phase of the analysis process outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). "This phase, which re-focuses the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, involves sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes… essentially, you are starting to analyse [sic] your codes and consider how different codes may combine to form an overarching theme" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89).

Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that at this general point in the data analysis codes may be in clusters (i.e. situated with other codes that share some commonality) or stand alone. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggested that the codes and potential themes then be reviewed. Boyatzis (1998) suggested that at this stage, the researcher should be very open to considering the many possibilities of how the codes and potential themes relate, and suggested that one work with systems thinking and pattern recognition in order to generate the ability to have the cognitive complexity to really see the data, which he and others (i.e. Winter & McClelland, 1978) view as learnable (pp. 8-9). It was clear in the preparation of codes and themes that at this general point in the process, the key was to work with the codes, search for possible themes, and then revisit and review the themes again. Interviews were initially coded and recoded five times until it became apparent what themes were really emerging from the interviews. Suggestions for working with the themes include making mind maps, diagrams, cut-outs of the codes and

potential themes, and finding other creative ways to explore the relationships (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Boyatzis, 1998). What worked for me was to utilize Saldana's (2013) suggestions to reflect and write about the research question, reflect on and write about the code choices and their definitions, and reflect on and write about how I personally relate to the participants and/or the phenomena. Saldana (2013) suggested that one consider the question, "what strikes you?"

The first four rounds of coding of the interviews included a designation of the context or focus of the mindfulness practice: self, other, group, work, organization, leadership. Following Saldana (2013), after coding within the context/focus (i.e. self, group, etc. as just described) I included a combination of in vivo coding (direct quotes), process coding (using -ing), and values coding (attitudes, beliefs, values). I followed Saldana's (2013) suggestion of creating "coding memo's" after coding each interview, which became highly beneficial in making sense of the data and seeing how the codes were fitting or not fitting with what was presented in the interviews. An example of a coding memo is as follows:

> Memo after coding participant #2; 11/16/18
> Participant shared a number of beliefs and showed enthusiasm about alignment of beliefs with techniques and trainings in the Military. Current coding did not have room for "beliefs" or expressions of "alignment." Reflecting on the interviews, I can recall three people sharing that they are Christian, two that they were Buddhist, and this participant talking about his Rosicrucian upbringing and current beliefs. More than 50% of the participants shared their religious or spiritual beliefs in the process of the interviews—something that I did not ask about. I think it significant to add a code on "beliefs" and add a code on "alignment."

Through the memo process, it soon became apparent that another layer of organization needed to be included in the coding process: the addition of a qualifier of a "technique" and an "outcome," in order to more clearly see what the participants were doing (technique) and what was the benefit (outcome) of doing so. Interviews were all recoded, organizing all the data by context (self, group, work, organization, leadership) and description (technique, outcome), along

with values coding and some stand alone codes (such as alignment, authenticity, vulnerability, transformational leadership, and “perspective”). This yielded 440 coded interview segments across the 16 interviews, most of which included multiple codes.

At this point in the data analysis, actual themes had yet to be generated. General categories had been created, as described above, and potential themes had begun to emerge. Generating themes, phase three as guided by Braun and Clarke, 2006, involved the process of revisiting the codes and the supporting data (i.e. excerpts that formed the codes) and seeing if they all fit underneath “candidate” themes. The transition from the coding and recoding of data and placing them into themes was challenging. I did follow Braun and Clarke’s (2006) suggestions (described in previous sections) as I transitioned into “phase five.” Phase five involves naming and defining the themes. This is where the moments that are coded under each theme are reviewed and pieced together in order to form the “story” of each theme. The stories are then reviewed in order to ensure that the narrative being created is coherent, internally consistent, and is presented in a way that explains why it is valuable in the study. Also, each narrative under each theme is then reviewed and revised to allow for the researcher to consider how the narratives relate to the broader overall story being told across all of the themes. At this point, Braun and Clarke (2006) guide the researcher to ensure that the themes are clearly defined and that the researcher can easily (i.e. with a sentence long description) define what each theme is and what it is not. After this, the researcher then revisits the names of the themes themselves to ensure that those are the names that will be used in the final analysis and write-up. They suggest that the "names need to be concise, punchy, and immediately give the reader a sense of what the theme is about” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93).

As this worked out in this study, it became apparent after numerous recodings and coding memos, that the categorization of "techniques" and "outcomes" was prohibitive in generating higher level themes. While the categorization was effective for seeing what was in the data, it took away from the ability to generate the higher level themes that were emerging. Setting aside "techniques" and "outcomes," and really focusing in on what the participants were describing across all of the data, the themes finally became apparent. What finally emerged was the framework of a context in which mindfulness practices affected the participant's leadership practices—the participants all began their responses within a context that was either self-focused, other focused, group focused, or leadership focused. These contexts then became the themes and allowed the emergent story of the data to be told. This generated numerous sub-themes that were purposefully nested into the themes (context) in order to fully capture what was being presented across all interviews/data. The themes and sub-themes were then established and defined and all coded transcript excerpts were then recoded and categorized under the new themes and sub-themes. This stage did involve the reduction of themes and sub-themes based upon frequencies in the data (i.e. if a generated sub-theme had zero coded excerpts it was deleted). The final themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes are described if full detail in Chapter IV.

As previously mentioned, in order to maximize credibility and potential transferability, two quality control methods were put in place. The first is member checking. After each interview transcript was completed, interviewees were sent a summary of the interview to ensure that what they said had accurately and completely been represented. All participants responded to the interview summary. Ideally, this process is designed to also provide some resonance for the interviewee through seeing what they said and seeing an interpretation of their experience, which may provide an opportunity for the participants to further learn from their own experience

of sharing their stories and being heard. Whether or not that resonance was generated through member checking was not able to be determined; however, the participants did express resonance at the end of the interviews themselves, often with gratitude for the experience and with enthusiasm of seeing the completed research study.

The second measure was to have a qualified peer review my process of transcription, coding, and thematic analysis. This ensures that the analysis makes sense, is logical, and systematic, and doing so adds sufficient rigor to the study in general. F fellow doctoral candidate who was trained interview coding and thematic analysis reviewed two coded transcripts. The review provided great insight and discussion that led to positive changes in this study in moving beyond limited categorizations that improved the quality and accuracy of the final themes.

The results of the analysis is presented in Chapter IV, and a discussion of the results is presented in Chapter V.

Ethical Considerations

Research participants shared stories of their experience with mindfulness and leadership. The content did include some sensitive information; however, the participants were instructed that they could stop the interview at anytime or choose to not answer any questions that were uncomfortable, deemed too sensitive in nature, or were too private or proprietary to be shared. Transcripts and identities have been kept confidential and stored on an external hard drive that is not connected to the internet. Further, when interviewees expressed sensitive information in their interview, such as their place of work or names of colleagues, these were not transcribed into the written interview transcription and were not produced within the dissertation itself.

The IRB process included a request of an expedited review of the research proposal, because the research involved no more than “minimal risk” to participants. The participants were

all adults in the general population (i.e. not prisoners), and the data collection methods consisted of survey and interview recordings that did not involve interventions or disclosure of potentially incriminating information. The IRB application was submitted in late June 2018 after the dissertation proposal hearing was completed and approval was received promptly afterward.

Methodological Limitations

Regarding methodological limitations, the main challenge was with regard to the notion of the positivist mind and the perception of quantitative research as the standard method of scientific investigation—something that I have already encountered in simply sharing my research plans with acquaintances (i.e. "don't you have to have a control group, or something like that"; "so, you'll prove that your study is significant and then people will pay you to train them?"). Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) discuss this thoroughly in their introduction to narrative inquiry, particularly with regard to the general misunderstanding in the public eye of quantitative versus qualitative research, wherein one seeks to work with larger groups, numbers, and statistics in order to generalize, and the other seeks to understand phenomena and how people make sense of such phenomena in its natural setting. Thus, the limitation of any qualitative method is in the need to explain the value of the method itself, as opposed to the belief that quantitative research is "research," and other methods are not quite at the same level. Creswell (2014) suggests that qualitative research is no longer thought of as second class within academia, for the most part, but rather guides readers to understand that the researchers must choose their methodology based upon their research interests, research question, and feasibility, since one method is not better than or worse than another method, rather they are all equally valuable when used appropriately to meet the needs and goals of the study. While the non-academic community may need a more thorough introduction to the methodology and the means to ensure that the study is legitimate (i.e

meets criteria of rigor, vigor, and relevance to name a few), this “limitation” is not substantial, which is why quality control measures were added to the analysis stage.

With consideration to this particular study, using narrative inquiry limits the study in terms of quantity and scope of interviewees. As described above, this was purposeful in order to target ideal participants and spend ample time gathering their stories, perceptions, and meaning making of the phenomena being studied (i.e. mindful leadership). Therefore instead of using terminology designed for quantitative studies (i.e. statistical significance or generalizability), the focus on quality was instead determined through trustworthiness and relevance (as discussed above).

Chapter IV: The Findings

Introduction

Chapter IV of this dissertation will examine the analysis and findings of the research. The chapter will begin with an abbreviated presentation of the individual participants, providing glimpses of their stories of being mindful leaders. Then, the sequential analysis of the interview data will be presented, highlighting each theme and sub-theme discovered through the methodology.

For clarification, the aim of this research study was to explore and understand the relationship between mindfulness practices and actual leadership practice and create a narrative on the subject. The study was designed to explore selective leaders, who use mindfulness practices, and see how they used mindfulness in their leadership practice. The research question is: how do mindfulness practices affect leadership practice?

Glimpses of the Participants

The process of interviewing the following participants was humbling, insightful, intriguing, exciting, moving, and life-changing. The specific demographical information of the participants is presented below in Table 4.1. Additionally presented are simple "glimpses" into the participants' stories shared during the interviews. As noted in chapter three, the interviews were highly in-depth and lasted from 45 to 75 minutes in length. The glimpses presented should not be considered as a summation of the interviews, but as a brief sharing of a few highlights and a setting of some context.

Table 4.1
Overview of Participants

Participant Number	Job Title	Industry	Age	Gender	Race	Years of Mindfulness Practice	Number of Interviews
1	Clinical Director, Social Worker	Non-profit, At-Risk Youth	42	F	Asian	17	1
2	Army Captain; Owner	Military; Business	46	M	Hispanic	20	1
3	Manager of Conflict Resolution Certificate Program	Higher Education	33	M	White	8	2
4	Executive Director	Non-profit, Museum	54	M	White	12	2, plus email
5	Registrar	Higher Education	54	F	African American	25	1
6	Dean of School of Social Work	Higher Education	62	M	White	10	1, plus email
7	Program Director, Integrative Medicine; Nurse Practitioner	Medical	50	F	Asian	5	1
8	Director of Community Learning; Co-coordinator of Sustainable Communities	Higher Education	51	F	White	15	1
9	Psychologist, Private Practice; Owner	Small Business	43	F	White	10	1
10	Executive Director	Non-profit, activism	41	F	White	22	1

11	Executive Director	Non-profit, Mindfulness in Schools	49	F	White	15	2
12	Founder, President	Business/ Corporate	43	M	White	20	2

Participant 1 was an experienced clinical social worker and long-time mindfulness practitioner (17 years of practice). As Clinical Director of a non-profit organization with 65 employees, she managed the "clinical integrity" of the institution and supervised eight supervisors. The institution has been working to integrate mindfulness practices into its culture, of which she has had a major role. She presented herself, in the interview, as a kind-hearted, knowledgeable, authentic, and vulnerable human being who found her "calling" in being of service to others, specifically through being able to be fully present with whomever is with her. This created a strong alignment with her personal values and the institutional mission. She is especially adept at using mindfulness in crises and guiding her supervisees to do the same. Her stories were inspiring and impactful.

Participant 2 was a Captain in the US Army who also owned his own Holistic Wellness company, wherein he would work with disabled veterans on things such as building self-confidence, healing, and relaxation. He shared how mindfulness and meditation taught him to value and pay attention to emotions, instead of shoving them aside, enabling him to develop empathy for others. His stories varied from intense war-zone experiences to more administrative process improvements in things such as payroll. He considers himself a "change maker" and emphasized the value of connecting with people and understanding their experiences and their "plight," in order to make positive change. He was passionate about sharing elements of

alignment with his personal beliefs and policies or procedures in the Army that he resonated with, such as intuition and visualization.

Participant 3 was a Manager of a Conflict Resolution certification program at a large, multi-campus community college who also started his own consulting corporation to bring conflict resolution into local organizations. He is passionate about helping people to understand how conflict occurs and how to constructively engage with conflict. He was a good story-teller and shared many stories, which led to a second interview in order to accommodate the extra time needed to fully address the scope of the interview. He was vulnerable in sharing how much mindfulness has helped him work through his own difficult and sometimes debilitating emotions and situations. He shared how attentive he was to himself and to others, especially in determining where biases and personal narratives begin to create conflict. Conflict transformation is extremely important to him and mindfulness, he shared, is a means of getting to the presence of mind in order to see and navigate the conflicts.

Participant 4 was an Executive Director of a small, non-profit museum, who discovered mindfulness while recovering from a car accident that left him having to learn how to walk again. He shared about that life-changing experience of learning to walk again to now being a marathon runner. His insights from practicing mindfulness to recover from trauma are utilized in the workplace as he and his team continue to take on bigger and more numerous events and tasks that previously would have been considered impossible to them. His stories and perspectives were incredibly insightful, which led to a second in-depth interview and an email exchange discussing the benefits of mindfulness practice in a leadership context. He came across as grounded and happy, eager and excited to share the value of mindfulness practices.

Participant 5 was the Registrar of private university. She had recently changed jobs from being the Registrar at a large public university and the job transition into the new university was the context for many of her stories. She called herself a prayerful, reflective person, and she shared stories that highlighted her consideration of other people and how she might affect them through her actions, non-actions, words, tones, and the ways in which she presented information, especially as a newer employee. She presented herself as very respectful of others and purposeful in her intentions to manage the moment and positively affect those around her.

Participant 6 was a Dean at a large university and had held many previous job positions that he recalled in order to share stories about using mindfulness in leadership. He discovered mindfulness while attending a training on how to host meaningful conversations, which led him to attend numerous mindfulness trainings and retreats and start his own personal, daily mindfulness practice. He shared rich stories and insights on how he, as a mindfulness practitioner, leads individuals and groups. He had clearly given much thought to "mindful leadership" prior to the interview as many of his conceptualizations were well developed, while some were organic and framed in the interview itself. His perspectives, frameworks, and insights were highly relevant and valuable to this study. While we intended to conduct a second interview, we were unable to make the schedule work; however, he did send a follow-up email with further insights.

Participant 7 was a long-time Nurse, then Nurse Practitioner, and now the Program Director of an Integrative Medicine program at a large hospital system. She discovered mindfulness and self-compassion work five years ago (prior to the interview) and the discovery was life-changing. She shared stories of then versus now and the positive changes that have taken place since she began practicing mindfulness. Her personal values highly align with the

Integrative Medicine program that seeks to bring mindfulness and related practices into medical practice and also into the workplace. She was vulnerable, authentic, excited, and inspired to do great things and provided many insights into what mindfulness in the workplace really looks like.

Participant 8 was the Director of Community Learning and a Co-coordinator for the Center for Sustainable Communities at a liberal arts university. She discovered mindfulness in graduate school when researching best teaching practices, finding that a reduction in stress for students promotes better learning, and mindfulness was a means to reduce the stress levels of students. This started her journey in researching and practicing mindfulness. She shared many impactful stories about how mindfulness builds empathy, compassion, and encouragement, which is incredibly helpful during times of crisis and stressful situations. She also shared how mindfulness practices enabled her to move into a leadership role, which she was initially uncomfortable with, but is now well developed, which she described as a "beautiful" leadership practice. Her insights and articulation were highly valuable to the study.

Participant 9 was a Psychologist and owner of her own private practice, who held previous roles such as a State Consultant for School Psychology and Learning Specialist at a Quaker School. She discussed and emphasized the deep, lasting value for clients who get to experience the full presence, focus, and awareness from a therapist. Being present with clients through modeling can create deeper and more sustainable change. She also discussed the value of a self-aware leader acknowledging the authority that their hierarchical job position creates and working to suspend that authority to generate more creative and deeper discussions.

Participant 10 was an Executive Director of a non-profit organization that works to advocate for human rights and equality, and promote religious liberty (among other things). She

was a long-time mindfulness practitioner (22 years of practice). She thoroughly discussed how mindfulness practices work for her, keeping her grounded and able to work through the demands of life. She shared how mindfulness practice aids her as a leader, especially in group settings, providing her with the ability to be present and more able to pick up on cues, patterns, group dynamics, and the complexities of how people, emotions, situations, events, perspectives, etc. intertwine; and shared how she is able to see those complexities and help groups to navigate through what is present in order to accomplish shared goals. Her insights, stories, and reflective responses were highly beneficial to this study.

Participant 11 was a former teacher who founded a non-profit organization that works to bring mindfulness into school systems. She had been practicing mindfulness for 15 years at the time of the interview. She was an avid storyteller, enthusiastically sharing her journey of discovering the benefits of mindfulness, finding her life's work in bringing mindfulness into school systems, and navigating the new role of Executive Director of a non-profit organization. Two interviews were conducted in order to cover the full scope of the interview.

Participant 12 was the President and Founder of a leadership coaching and consulting company. He was formerly a university President and a non-profit executive. He had practiced mindfulness for 20 years at the time of the interview. His depth in his sharing showed a tremendous amount of previous self-reflection and conceptualization of how mindfulness affects himself, his leadership practices, and his perspectives and viewpoint. He was thoughtful, articulate, and very present. Two interviews were conducted, the second in order to gain clarity through his perspective on a number of emerging themes and questions that previous interviews had revealed. He shared how mindfulness helped him through the trauma of losing a job, how he then gained perspective, the ability to forgive, gain understanding, and move on in a

developmental way, growing and learning through difficult experiences. His major focus is in executive-level coaching, where he views being present and fully listening as the highest value that he can offer others. His contributions to this study were invaluable.

Thematic Analysis

Through thematic analysis eleven themes were identified with multiple sub-themes. Table 4.2 will show all of the themes with frequency counts by participants and total frequency per theme. Following Table 4.2, each theme and sub-theme will be presented with explanation and examples and accompanying tables.

Table 4.2
Themes

	Themes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
1.	Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice	7	5	11	8	1	9	7	6	3	8	5	9	79
2.	Being Mindful/Present Toward Self	13	2	8	20	4	15	10	4	5	11	7	20	119
3.	Being Present with/for Others	20	6	7	7	7	9	14	10	6	4	8	16	114
4.	Being Present with Group	1	4	2	10	2	4	8	8		7		2	48
5.	Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention	3	1	1	3	1	2	5	4	1	4		7	32
6.	Emotional Intelligence	8	2	6	5	4	9	2	2	1	2	1	4	46
7.	Buffering of Reactivity		2	1	3	1	3		2	1	1	1	3	18
8.	Resilience & Recovery	3	1	1	3	1	5	3	3		1	1	3	25
9.	Alignment	4	1	3	1			1	1	4		7	2	24
10.	Improved Job Performance		1		4	1	1	1	2		2	1	2	15
11.	Mindful Leadership	5	9	5	16	3	18	12	6	6	8	11	10	109

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

Theme 1: Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice.

While having a "mindfulness practice" was a part of the pre-screening requirements, all participants referred to and described their "practice" repeatedly throughout the interviews. Twelve sub-themes were generated in order to fully describe what the participants shared. The sub-themes are: "Awareness of Breathing," "Awareness of Body," "Awareness of Thoughts," "Present Moment Focus," "Meditation," "Focused/Mindful Movement/Exercise," "Daily Ritual," "Regrounding," "Recentering," "Dealing with Emotions," and "Knowing the Value of the Practice." The sub-themes are described in detail below and the frequencies are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3
Theme 1 Subthemes

Theme 1 Subthemes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 1: Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice	7	5	11	8	1	9	7	6	3	8	5	9	79
1.1. Awareness of breathing	1	1		2			1	1		1		2	9
1.2. Awareness of body	1			3			2			1	1	3	11
1.3. Awareness of thoughts	1		1			3	1					1	7
1.4. Awareness of emotions	1		2	1		1	1	1			1		8
1.5. Present Moment Focus	3		1	3			1	2					12
1.6. Meditation	1	4	1		1	4		1	2	2	2	1	19
1.7. Focused/mindful movement/exercise	1		5	1			1			2	1	1	12
1.8. Daily Ritual	1						2			2		1	4
1.9. Regrounding			3	2						2			7
1.10. Recentering			1					1	1	2		1	6
1.11. Dealing with Emotions	3	4	3	4	1	1	1			1	1	2	21
1.12. Knowing the value of the practice	2	4	6	4	1	3	6	4	2	3	4	6	45

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

An example of Theme 1, with the multi sub-themes “Awareness of Body,” “Awareness of Emotions,” “Awareness of Breathing,” “Dealing with Difficult Emotions,” and “Present Moment Focus,” is provided here:

> Part of my practice is noticing what’s happening in my body, noticing if my heart starts racing or if I’m starting to have any of those symptoms of stress or anxiety, and being conscious of my breathing. Bringing my breathing back online and refocusing on that so I can be more present and bring my relaxation response back online versus my fight or

> flight. I think especially in stressful moments, just calming everything down so I can be present again. I think that happens quite a bit. (Participant 1, p. 17).

Most participants described more than one of the sub-themes under theme 1 when describing their personal, internal mindfulness practice. Another example, this one from Participant 10, includes sub-themes, "Meditation," "Recentering," and "Knowing the Value of Practice:"

> So, I needed to learn how to find space to get through that [difficult experience] and I found that practicing…what mindfulness or meditation for me was the first practice that I started playing with…in the mornings before I would go into my day and then in the evening to recenter myself at the end of the day was a little bit of how I survived in some ways during that time. (Participant 10, p. 2)

The Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice theme was found across all participants, mentioned in high frequency. A total of 79 instances were coded into theme 1. There were a variety of ways that participants described their personal mindfulness practice, which were captured in the sub-themes.

Sub-theme 1.1. Awareness of Breathing

Awareness of Breathing was mentioned by 6 participants a total of 8 times. In the first example, from Participant 4, the participant is also showing "Awareness of Emotions," and "Dealing with Emotions," but the emphasis is on using the Awareness of Breathing for insight.

> One of the ways I get in touch with where I am in the moment is, I'm always trying to be more aware or more conscious of my own breath, and I find that my breath will usually be revealing to me [laughs a little] of where my head is at. So, am I, am I experiencing stress or anxiety because of a huge workload on my desk; am I experiencing passivity, am I experiencing apathy, like, where is my head at? I can usually find that through my own breath—am I breathing slowly, am I breathing normally? (Participant 4, pp. 3-4)

> When I was building my personal practice, I would use my breath. (Participant 8, p. 11)

While the second example is rather straight forward, the first example is also an illustration of how some of the sub-themes cross over into other sub-themes.

Sub-theme 1.2. Awareness of Body

Awareness of the Body was mentioned by 6 participants a total of 11 times.

> I began incorporating body mindfulness. So, awareness of…things going on in my body in terms of body temperature, temperature at the extremities, like cold hands or cold feet, or…fidgeting or, or being jittery, or constricted breathing, or clenched jaw; just all these different cues in the body that, that let, that give you…an indication of what your inner state is like at that moment. (Participant 12, p. 2)

> And so, just 8, 9 years ago I was gonna attend this course called, 'Integrative Nurse Coaching,' and I thought I was gonna become a better Nurse, better provider, by learning how to take care of my patients. And as part of that Integrative Nurse Coaching experience, it was actually two pillars: one pillar was patient [focused] and the other was really taking care of yourself and getting to know you, getting to know me. That was my first time every really pausing to understand, start coming back into my body and feeling, instead of, you know, doing cognitive thinking all the time. I used to take a lot of pride…in…not pausing and not thinking about the body and just, you know, just cranking up the hours and doing things that I needed to do. I really thought I was doing a super job, but taking this course had me…I was, I was…advised to pause and learn mindfulness. And so, it was so delicious that I actually wanted more… (Participant 7, p. 2)

Sub-theme 1.3. Awareness of Thoughts

Awareness of Thoughts was mentioned by 5 participants a total of 7 times.

First thing you do is just notice what you're thinking about it. (Participant 6, p. 16)

> …however, I'm able to notice like in that moment and I'm like, 'oh wow, this thought just came, the mother's guilt just came, okay, you know, it's the 'Guest House,'' you know, poem that Rumi describes really inviting the guests [thoughts, emotions, situations] over for tea and experiencing like, 'oh,' so like not allowing ruminations to take over my life. (Participant 7, pp. 3-4)

Sub-theme 1.4. Awareness of Emotions

Awareness of Emotions was mentioned by 7 participants a total of 8 times. This sub-theme was utilized when participants described the awareness of emotions as a part of their personal, internal mindfulness practice. Another sub-theme discussed below, "Dealing with Emotions," was used when participants described how the mindfulness practice helped them to work with their emotions. The first example presented, shows the purposeful awareness of emotions in the body. The participant is also utilizing other sub-themes of Awareness of Breathing, and this example also stems into the second theme—Being Mindful/Present toward Self, discussed later. The second example here from Participant 3 described both an Awareness of the Emotions and Dealing with the Emotions. Additionally, this portrayed a level of Emotional Intelligence (a stand alone theme discussed later).

> …and so I think that I can just settle into my body and notice…what's happening around or notice rising anxiety or tension and just be aware of it, not that I need to, like, fight it, but even just that awareness of it…helps me notice what's happening…and can…help relieve some of the anxiety. So I think more than anything it's a noticing and a breathing. (Participant 10; p. 4)

> I also struggle with some pretty intense depression and anxiety from time to time and it's hard to be mindful when I go through spells of that, but I've also found, I think there's a direct connection, and you probably, you might know if there's any research in this, but between my anxiety and depression being significantly decreased when I am intentionally practicing mindfulness. I've found that true for myself. (Participant 3, pp. 6-7)

Sub-theme 1.5. Present Moment Focus

Present Moment Focus, in the context of a Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice was described by 5 participants a total of 12 times.

> …but for me it is coming back to the present moment and just being fully aware of what is happening, now, and when my mind goes to the future or to the past, trying to just return always to the present and to what is happening. (Participant 1; p. 1)

Sub-theme 1.6. Meditation

Meditation was described by 10 participants a total of 19 times. As shown below in the two transcript excerpts, some participants (see first example from Participant 6) were very descriptive of what transpired in their meditation, while others emphasized the importance and context of doing so (second example, Participant 2).

> So that led me to…start with a daily meditation practice. I did that for about…that was in March, April of…'08…and…I was, so I started doing that and I found it helpful…. in my meditation practice we often talk about this concept of just creating space [tone shifted]; so not everything is stimulus response and…. I guess that's the other thing that I think that I do a lot is…just try to slow things down a little bit… You know, a little bit of stillness, a little bit of space, that's when good work is happening. (Participant 6; p. 3)

> So that's where mindfulness comes in. Like I said, I held onto my meditation, I would actually meditate even more on a daily basis as much as I could. (Participant 2; pp. 7-8)

Sub-theme 1.7. Focused/Mindful Movement/Exercise

Seven participants discussed a Focused/Mindful Movement/Exercise as part of their personal mindfulness practice a total of 12 times. These included yoga, running, and walking, but with an emphasis of being mindful and present of the movement, the body, the breath. Note that the second example provided below also shows an outcome of the focused/mindful movement/exercise, which is also coded in sub-themes 1.9., "Regrounding" and 1.10., "Recentering."

> I also started practicing yoga a lot during that time and I've always been in touch with kinda mind, body, spirit connection…so, yeah, I, I, it became habit during that time. (Participant 10; p. 3)

> Like last year, I was, at one point, I was going to yoga in the mornings before work at 6am, four out of the five workdays a week, and that very much helped to ground me and center me. (Participant 3; p. 7)

Sub-theme 1.8. Daily Ritual

Four participants discussed a Daily Ritual that they used as part of their Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice. As can be seen in the transcript excerpts, the Daily Ritual is a method of keeping the participant connected to their mindfulness practice.

> I used to be a better meditator [laughter] and meditate more often, but meditation is a process of coming back and returning, so one thing that I do ensure that I do every day [is], I have a fountain in my office that is connected to a switch and a light, so I have a bell that I have; so I come into my office, shut the door. I flip the switch on the fountain and the light, I grab my bell, and I ring and listen to the bell three times, as sort of an opening to my day in my office. And then I make sure before I leave that I do the same ritual as I shut it down, just to sort of close the day. So if I've done no mindfulness at all for the day [laughter], at least I'm incorporating those. (Participant 1; p. 4)

> I start my mornings right. I spend some time in the morning, first with gratitude. I always look at the sky when I roll out of the bed [laughs], you know, whether it's cloudy or pretty or what [wet?], and then I spend some time either I sit to meditate or some days I just know that my energy is maybe different and I need to just read a poem…and then I start my way that way. (Participant 7; p. 4)

Sub-theme 1.9. Regrounding

Regrounding was described by three participants a total of seven times. One example was already shown above in Sub-theme 1.7. Another example is shown below.

> And…have found that it's a way to kinda ground me when there feels like there's a lot of chaos in life. (Participant 10; p. 3)

Sub-theme 1.10. Recentering

Recentering was described by five participants a total of six times.

> …mindfulness was, on some days, was like the only thread that I was holding on to. You know, being able to recenter myself…. (Participant 12; pp. 10-11)

> …on a practical side, often getting our kids to school on time [laughs] is a bit challenging at times and so, so I do know that after I drop them off, I'll do, that's usually when I go meditate actually, is after I drop the kids off, I'll go home and, and, and

> meditate. So that, that helps sort of reset things for the rest of the day. (Participant 9; p. 8)

Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with Emotions

This sub-theme was described by 10 participants a total of 21 times. The two examples presented above for sub-theme 1.4., Awareness of Emotions also portray Dealing with Emotions. Examples of this particular sub-theme also portray other themes or sub-themes. The first excerpt presented below shows an example of the next sub-theme, "Knowing the Value of the Practice," but it includes Dealing with Emotions. The second example shows the theme "Resilience and Recovery," and "Emotional Intelligence."

> So, mindfulness has helped me overcome that anger and understand other people a lot better. Because when I first started in the military, "whoa," I had zero tolerance, zero patience. It was gonna be the right way or no way or the highway. (Participant 2; p. 4)

> And I think that for me, this was the first major loss that I've had in terms of a friend, of a peer dying and there were all these things that would come in, thoughts and emotions, but ultimately, I felt like I was sitting in the middle of the hurricane. I could feel that come and go and I wasn't swept away by it, but I could feel the emotions and be with them. Where, you know, before that and in my earlier 20's, it would have been a crisis for me. I've experienced depression and anxiety in my younger years and they could be debilitating, and this was a pretty major impacting event and I was able to sort of still be with it in a way that didn't sink me. (Participant 1; p. 11)

Sub-theme 1.12. Knowing the Value of the Practice

All 12 participants described the value of practicing mindfulness a total of 45 times. Two examples provided below illustrate how participants presented the value of their mindfulness practice.

> Oh it helps me so much. I…I am able to not, not mindlessly chatter when I go to my…my weekly meetings, I am able to be thoughtful and listen carefully and, I'm able to be self-reflective, which is…actually self-reflection is a, is a valued trait here at our…college and not everybody comes by that naturally, so I, I'm able to…really use my practice to, I feel much more effectively report and then also take, take instruction. I'm a better learner, I'm a better employee…and a better colleague. (Participant 8; p. 8)

> …if I hadn't been…engaged in any mindfulness practice during that time, if I hadn't been…you know, working with somebody who was sorta helping me see things beyond just the routine and sort of the daily grind so to speak, I don't think that I would have…been present enough to trust that I could leave that position and then go do something that spoke to me much more strongly, so I feel that mindfulness provided sort of this base level of awareness that allowed me to be present with what was really occurring in terms of how I was physically, I mean it was causing a lot of physical stress and then how I was emotionally in terms of I wasn't really able to be really present with my kids and with my family… (Participant 9; pp. 6-7)

Theme 1 was labelled as "Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice" in order to differentiate from Theme 2: Being Mindful/Present Toward Self, discussed below. Having a "Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice," was described in ways uniquely different from "Being Mindful Toward Self."

Theme 2: Being Mindful/Present Toward Self

Theme 2, Being Mindful/Present Toward Self is a step away from Theme 1, Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice. Being Mindful/Present Toward Self is a shift away from the more meditative, focused, intentional practices described above. It is a shift toward being mindful and present throughout the day in a self-awareness, self-monitoring, self-inquiry type of way—it is being mindful and present toward oneself. All 12 participants described this a total of 119 times. Again, multiple sub-themes are present in order to fully capture what the participants were describing. The eleven sub-themes were "Noticing Attention," "Sensing into Broad Awareness," "Stepping Back/Pausing/Slowing Down," "Practicing Mindfulness," "Gaining Perspective," "Insight," "Self-Inquiry," "Enhanced Discernment," "Informed Decision-Making," "Self-Regulation," and "Humanistic Approach." Table 4.4. includes the frequencies of the sub-themes and sub-sub-themes.

Table 4.4
Theme 2 Sub-themes

Theme 2 Subthemes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 2: Being Mindful toward Self	13	2	8	20	4	15	10	4	5	11	7	20	119
2.1. Noticing Attention	3			2		2	3	1	1		1	2	15
2.2. Sensing into Broad Awareness	2			4		1	1		2	3	2	3	18
2.3. "Stepping Back"/Pausing/Slowing Down	4		1	3	2	1	4	2		4	2	3	26
2.3.1. Leaving the room/situation/space	3				1			1		1			6
2.4. Practicing Mindfulness (theme 1)	4	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	3	1	2	23
2.5. Gaining Perspective	5	1	3	14	1	7	3				3	14	51
2.6. Insight	3	1	5	11		8	6	1	3	3	4	13	58
2.6.1. Somatic						1	1		1	1	1	3	8
2.6.2. Cognitive				3		6	5	1			2	7	24
2.6.3. Emotional		1	4	3		2	5		1	1	2	4	23
2.6.4. Behavioral	1		3	7			3	1	1	1	2	7	26
2.7. Self-inquiry	3				1	4	1		1		2	3	15
2.8. Enhanced Discernment	2		2	9		6	3		1	5	4	7	39
2.9. Informed Decision-Making	1		1	6		5	2	2	1	2	3	2	25
2.10. Self-Regulation	3	1	1	8	2	3	3		1	1	3	5	31
2.10.1. Emotions		1		6	1	2	2			1		1	14
2.10.2. Attention				3			2				1	1	7
2.10.3. Reactivity	1	1		4							1	3	10
2.11. Humanistic Approach	3	1	4	4	1	2	4		2	3	3	3	30

2.11.1. Kindness	1					2					1	4
2.11.2. Compassion			1			3		1			2	7
2.11.3. Non-judgement	1		1			1					1	4
2.11.4. Self-Care		1	1		1	2		1	3	1		10

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

The following example described both Theme 1 ("an intentional daily practice") and Theme 2 ("as well as a being able to just be aware in a moment…").

> And I find that it's both an intentional daily practice as well as a being able to just be aware in a moment when it's really difficult or stressful or intense or chaotic that I can return to a center in mindfulness. (Participant 10; p. 3)

The next example is more in the context of a workday and describes how the participant is paying attention to himself and his actions.

> And I think, for me the intellectual side of it, I'm kinda going through it right now, I really like to use the technique because being in the moment allows me to, as a leader, like when I come in on a Monday morning—what can I observe about my patterns, what can I observe of these habitual patterns that I might not be aware of, but I should be aware of? And I think using mindfulness to be on the physical side of it, of, just on the workload side of it—what kind of patterns do I have myself set into? …being more mindful of what's working and what's not working, it just helps me change things on the fly. (Participant 4; p. 4)

Sub-theme 2.1. Noticing Attention

Eight participants described noticing where their attention was in a given moment, a total of 15 times.

> We meditate so that we notice when we are distracted, when we notice when we're not paying attention, when we notice when we're caught in a narrative; cause it happens, you know. (Participant 6; pp. 10-11)

> …meditation and mindfulness has definitely allowed me to be more present in the moment and notice what's going on, and I'm able to then by being in the moment, which

> is not always but most times, I'm able to see what thoughts are arising and what might be going on, maybe it's my body's tired, maybe it's the mind, and not being washed away by those thoughts, so I can just be at the, you know, my metaphor is: I stand at the bank of the river, you know, instead of previously being in the river and being drowning [laughs], you know? (Participant 7; pp. 3-4)

Sub-theme 2.2. Sensing into Broader Awareness

Eight participants described Sensing into a Broader Awareness from whatever it was that they were focused on at the moment. This stemmed from sub-theme 2.1., Noticing Attention. The first example was expressed in the context of another theme of Mindful Leadership, sub-theme Listening, but it is an example of how the participant shifted attention and awareness into a broader focus. The second example has to do with an interview prompt on objectivity that led the participant to discuss how he (and others) can sense into a broader awareness of multiple narratives that take place around situations.

> Mindfulness is focused attentiveness. I'm going to become attentive to the situation and everything in it, so that's me, that's you, that's mind, body, spirit, it's communication. (Participant 12; p. 14)

> …becoming present to the fact that there are, there are multiple views inside our, our own mind, there are multiple voices, multiple perspectives, and so to be able to…to reflect on each one separately, I don't know that we ever get out of ourselves and become an object to our own analysis. I think we try…but I think what's actually happening is that we're just becoming more aware of, of the multiple narratives that we construct in our heads…and being able to examine those. (Participant 12, 2nd interview; p. 2)

Sub-theme 2.3. "Stepping back"/Pausing/Slowing Down, and Sub-sub-theme 2.3.1. Leaving the Room/Situation/Space

Ten participants described a process of "Stepping Back," Pausing, and/or Slowing Down as a significant method of aiding their ability to be mindful and present toward themselves, and four participants described the sub-sub-theme of Leaving the Room/Situation/Space.

> So just as a constant reminder to me of like the more present I am, the more I can slow it down, the more I can respond to what's happening effectively. (Participant 1; p. 3)

The next example also includes the sub-sub-theme 2.3.1. "Leaving the Room/Space/Situation:"

> Sometimes I'll even, if I need to step away or be in my car or I can actually like create a space where I, if I need to go somewhere else and just recenter. (Participant 10; p. 4)

Sub-theme 2.4. Practicing Mindfulness (Theme 1)

This sub-theme was created after it became apparent that participants were describing how they would shift to practicing their Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice in the context of being mindful toward themselves. All participants described this.

> So, when I'm feeling rattled or angry or uncertain, that is my default. I check in with my body and then I check in with my breathing. (Participant 6; p. 10)

The next example also includes elements of sub-theme 2.2., Sensing into Broader Awareness, sub-theme 2.10., Self-Regulation; and sub-theme 2.11., Humanistic Approach (explained later); however, this example shows how a participant became aware of the need for mindfulness practice and then created space to do so.

> I know that I'm not when I become more irritated or irritable or, or when I've had a rough night's sleep…if I haven't been sleeping well I know that's harder for me to be really present. So…yeah, or, or if something's going on at home or, or a particular client is really struggling, you know, and maybe that client is in three hours yet I am, I'm having to see two clients ahead of them, so I guess I, I know that I'm aware, I'm aware of, of when I might not be totally present when there's more stress and when there's…just more, more things that are kind of…more thoughts that are stressful, I guess. And what do I do, well, I, I may do a minute or two of, of mindfulness practice prior to seeing that particular client…. (Participant 9; p. 8)

Sub-theme 2.5. Gaining Perspective

Nine participants described how when being mindful toward themselves, they "Gained Perspective" on an issue, topic, or situation, a total of 51 times. This sub-theme could certainly be viewed as an outcome of the practice. The first example also contains sub-themes of Self-Inquiry and Enhanced Discernment (discussed later), as well as Theme 8 Resilience and Recovery. Clearly, though, the participant is Gaining Perspective on the thoughts that he has been having.

> So, what mindfulness helps me do is catch myself in that narrative. If I start to feel… "nobody appreciates me; nobody cares about me; they don't really value the work I'm doing; you know, whatever;" that space, that stillness I spoke to you earlier, that mindfulness provides—it's an opportunity for me, if I wish, to interrupt that and say, "is that really true…or am I just feeling sorry for myself?" (Participant 6; pp. 14-15)

The next example also shows elements of sub-theme Insight, sub-sub-theme Emotional, sub-theme Self-Regulation, and Theme 7 Buffering of Reactivity. The participant is Gaining Perspective on what is occurring as she's being mindful toward herself.

> So…I think it…brings in more self-reflection…so when things feel frustrating or things feel…overwhelming, I can pause and just kinda notice what's happening, reflect on it, and…try to explore it instead of being very reactive in the moment. (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 2)

Sub-theme 2.6. Insight, with Sub-sub themes 2.6.1. Somatic, 2.6.2. Cognitive, 2.6.3. Emotional, and 2.6.4. Behavioral

Eleven participants described elements of Insight regarding themselves or a situation they were dealing with. Sub-sub-themes were included to capture where the insight was coming from: Somatic, for when participants described gaining insight from noticing how their body was in a given moment; Cognitive, to understand their thinking or narrative; Emotional, to

understand their emotions, where they were coming from and why they were present; and Behavioral, to see and understand their actions and behavior. This sub-theme captures described value of Being Mindful Toward Oneself.

The first example includes the sub-sub-theme 2.6.4., Behavioral. The participant was sharing an experience that he had been reflecting upon to which he had Gained Perspective (sub-theme 2.5.) and Insight.

> And as I reflected on that, I thought, "well, the reason that I wasn't aware of that before is, I was out of my normal practice; I wasn't waking up in the morning and taking the first hour of the day for the meditation, reflection, and journaling.?" So instead of being proactive, I was very reactive and I allowed old…expectations or assumptions about my family to drive my behavior while I was unaware. So, a little regretful of thinking, "I wish I had been following my regular practice, I would have been more aware and I could have chosen a path," and maybe with some people I would want to keep my guard up around, but others, you know, I would want to engage. (Participant 12; p. 5)

The next example includes the sub-sub-themes Somatic, Emotional, and Behavioral. The participant also shows elements of sub-theme 2.10., Self-Regulation of Reactivity (2.10.3) and Theme 8, Resilience and Recovery. She shares how she gains Insight after recovering.

> …knowing my body and knowing…my emotional state, like I know myself and so I am really easily able to spot where I feel off kilter and when I need help. And so I'm doing that constantly and it's only those moments when something completely unexpected happens that sometimes you lose it for a little bit, right? And then you have to kind of like recover, and then when you recover, you're like, "oh, I see now," you know. And I guess what I'm saying with the, with the business stuff, is like, I'm constantly monitoring and adjusting what I'm doing and how I'm responding and noticing how that feels for me and where…and most of the time I think it's, I mean there's nothing major, really in what I do. Little bumps…you just kinda plug along and you're constantly noticing that and you're constantly like measuring the emotional temperature that you have and measuring like…even just like that amount of tension in your body… (Participant 11; p. 16)

Sub-theme 2.7. Self-Inquiry

Seven participants described a Self-Inquiry, a total of 15 times. This sub-theme is an example of a technique (versus an outcome). Examples of this theme have been shown already above. This example is part of a longer excerpt that also includes Theme 9, Alignment, and Theme 11, Mindful Leadership, sub-theme 11.1, Authenticity. Her focus includes regular Self-Inquiry in order remain authentic.

> …so for me, I've had to really, over the past four or five years of having this business, to really listen and maintain awareness of what it is that speaks to me and why, why I continue to do this…and that…it still is authentic. I think that's a big priority for me in terms of what I want this business to look like and, and feel like, and, and accomplish and how I want it to succeed, is that I don't want it to lose it's sort of essence, which…you know, is reflective of me, just being the business owner… (Participant 9; pp. 13-14)

Sub-theme 2.8. Enhanced Discernment

Enhanced Discernment described particular outcomes from participants wherein they portrayed examples of being able to grasp or understand things which were obscure. Nine participants described this sub-theme a total of 39 times. The first example includes a number of other sub-themes, particularly Self-Regulation and Emotional Intelligence, but it is a prime example of Enhanced Discernment, specifically around seeing into the truth or falsehood of thoughts that stem from strong emotions. The participant was describing a recent experience where one of his top employees had informed him that she was going to be looking for a new job.

> And so I indulged myself for at least 15-20 minutes last night of around, "crap, that could start this cascade and this and this and that" or it could not, and that's just, that's just, you know, kind of unhealthy fantasy. And so that's the other way, but generally I think mindfulness allows you to sort of reflect on what you're thinking, to recognize, I mean one of the things I heard at a meditation retreat one time was… "mindfulness meditation allows you to understand that your thoughts are not true." And so it's an invitation to just be curious about that, you know, to catch yourself when you start a sentence with "what if," and ask yourself, "is that true?" So, long answer, but yes I think it has a really important role in that. (Participant 6; pp. 15)

The next example includes previous sub-themes of 2.6., Insight, Cognitive and 2.5., Gaining Perspective. She's describing how with mindfulness practice, one can gain the discernment to see the thoughts and emotions that are generated in reaction to situations, which paves the way to work with the thoughts and emotions.

> It's working with your state of mind, you know, and recognizing your state of mind, and recognizing…you know that that things are…those manifestations of mind are actually we create a lot of it, right? So we create the extra suffering that goes along with the actual pain of the situation, you know? And so, and then how do you get yourself out of that? (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 9)

Sub-theme 2.9. Informed Decision-Making

This is another sub-theme that presented itself as an outcome of theme. Ten participants described how their mindfulness practice and being mindful toward themselves helped them in their decision-making process. The first examples also include Theme 9, Alignment, but it is a clear example of how the mindfulness practice aided the participant to an informed decision (that led her to open her own business).

> …there was a big disconnect with what I wanted and who I was and what was happening on the outside. So if I hadn't, I don't know what would have happened if I hadn't been engaged in mindfulness, but I suspect that I could have just continued to push, push, push and make things fit where they fit and…or left that job to just go into another sort of rush, rush job…but because I was, you know that whole notion of when you get quiet [laughs], you, you really…can hear more and you can hear more of who you are and…and I think that that really…allowed me to recognize that, "no, I don't want to just go into another rush, rush job, that, that I, I want to be able to…feel fulfilled and satisfied and sort of respond to, to…sort of the needs that I felt more deeply." (Participant 9; p. 7)

The next example includes elements of Theme 11, Mindful Leadership, sub-theme Adaptability, and also shows the previous sub-themes of Gaining Perspective and Enhanced

Discernment, but it clearly offers a description into the need to make informed decisions as one is going through their work day juggling demands and competing commitment.

> But it does go back to… the failure cycle. I mean, you do have to be mindful of what's not working and if you're…mindful of what's not working and can change it, that, that can help you stay on task, too, cause I mean sometimes you're focused on the list and not focused on the real world and the two of them might not jive that day and that can get you upside down as well. (Participant 4, 2nd interview; p. 6)

Sub-theme 2.10. Self-Regulation, with sub-sub-themes 2.10.1. Emotions, 2.10.2. Attention, and 2.10.3 Reactivity

Self-Regulation was described by 11 participants a total of 31 times in the context of Being Mindful Toward Self. Four sub-sub-themes were included in order to show the object of the regulation that the participants were activating, when disclosed. The sub-sub-themes were the Self-Regulation of Emotions, Attention, and Reactivity. The following example was centered around an interview prompt on stress reduction, but the participant described the ability to Self-Regulate Emotions, Attention, and Reactivity in dealing with everyday workloads.

> If I get it right and I'm having a good day and I'm managing it mindfully, I'm managing it as it comes towards me, and as I have it in my hand I'm noticing it, I'm feeling it, I'm dealing with it, but I'm not making it bigger. I think a lot of the times when we see it and it hits us emotionally we make it a lot bigger and that's why I'm going to the bookstore and they're telling me how to get rid of it [stress]. I think instead of seeing it like it's one-hundred percent big, I need to look at it and realize it's only 8 or 9 or 10% big, and I can deal with that 10%. Right now, right here at this moment, I can deal with that stressor. It's not as bad as I think it is and because I'm aware of that, I can actually reduce it. And the odd part of it is, now I can, I can take on a little bit more because what I thought was impossible is actually quite manageable. And after three or four hours I have a lot more done, I've accomplished a lot more than I used to think I could do, and I've actually, I mean if I looked you in the eye I'd be telling you I'm bringing more stress into my life, but it's not making me feel more stress. I'm actually, I can bring more stress into my life and actually come out of it at the end of the day feeling better than when I had those two or three things in my life that I made, I turned into something overwhelming emotionally. (Participant 4; p. 5)

Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach, with sub-sub-themes 2.11.1. Kindness, 2.11.2. Compassion, 2.11.3. Non-judgment, and 2.11.4. Self-Care

Eleven participants expressed a Humanistic Approach toward themselves that exhibited elements of the four sub-sub-themes, Kindness, Compassion, Non-judgment, and Self-Care. The two examples below show this Humanistic Approach toward self.

> So, I think that, you know, when you're becoming mindful, you do want to understand yourself and understand others, and I think that leads very naturally to accepting yourself, becoming less judgmental, less critical of yourself, even as you look closer, when you understand why you do what you do, and what all is involved in there, being able to accept yourself and love yourself. (Participant 12, 2nd interview; p. 12)

> I'm able to use a lot of self-compassion and I've grown to see myself as my best friend and I'm really kind to myself, even though I expect myself to do my hundredth thing [smiling]…I'm okay with, you know, getting 75 done and not all 25 [laughs] that are left. So a lot of self-compassion along with mindfulness and not getting swayed by those negative thoughts that may come, so, you know, are they completely undone? No, they're there, you know, but it's not, they don't get, you know, I "invite them to tea," but they don't usually linger too long. (Participant 7; pp. 7-8)

Theme 3: Being Present with/for Others

Being Present with or for Others was a theme that all 12 participants described a total of 114 times. "Others" included co-workers and clients as well as hierarchical work relationships (direct reports above and below the participant). Eight sub-themes are included in order to fully present and describe what the participants shared with regard to how they are Present with or for Others. The eight sub-themes were "Active Listening," "Self-Regulation," "Discernment (self and other)," "Taking Perspective," "Coaching," "Modeling," "Humanistic Approach," and "Relationship Building." The sub-themes and sub-sub-themes are discussed below and frequencies are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5
Theme 3 Sub-Themes

Theme 3 Sub-themes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 3: Being Present with/for Others	20	6	7	7	7	9	14	10	6	4	8	16	114
3.1. Active Listening	2	3	4	3	4		5	5	2		2	5	35
3.2. Self-Regulation	2	1	4	6	6	3	7	3	1	1	3	9	46
3.2.1. Attention			2	3			4	2	1			6	18
3.2.2. Emotions			2	1	3	2	3		1		1	2	15
3.2.3. Reactivity		1	4		5	2	4		1	1	2	5	25
3.3. Discernment (Self & Other)	9	3	5	5	5	4	4	2	2	1	2	11	53
3.4. Taking perspective	5	2	5	2	4	1	2	2	1		4	5	33
3.5. Coaching	9	4	1	2	2	4	2		2	2		8	36
3.5.1. Self	4	1		1	1	1	2		2	1		6	19
3.5.2. Other	7	3	1		1	2				2		6	25
3.6. Modeling	7	1		2	2	1	5	1	4	2	3		28
3.7. Humanistic Approach	6	3	2	2		2	4	6	2	1	4	5	37
3.7.1. Kindness		1				2	3	2	1				9
3.7.2. Compassion	2	3				1	2	2	1				11
3.7.3. Empathy		1	1					2			3		7
3.8. Relationship Building		1	3	2	2		2	1		2			13

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

The following is an example of the intention of Being Present for Others and includes the sub-theme 3.6., Modeling.

> So mindfulness influences me…throughout the day, obviously as a, as a therapist I incorporate a lot of the strategies when it feels appropriate…but mindfulness is obviously a evidence-based strategy, so…I, I try to, I work a lot with adolescents and, and I incorporate the conversation about mindfulness, but I don't, I'm not heavy handed with it because I guess my philosophy is that really by me being mindful and by me being present in the session with them, that is communicating more about mindfulness than me giving them a handout about how to take a deep breath…I put a higher priority on me having a practice and me being…mindful, not only in the session, but in my life and, and trusting that that is going to be a greater teacher about mindfulness than me handing a handout to them. (Participant 9; pp. 5-6)

The next example also shows the intention of Being Present for Other people, but with the distinct sub-theme (3.2.) of Self-Regulation of sub-sub-theme Reactivity (3.2.3.).

> I'm a prayerful person and I'm a reflective person and so I'm also…considerate of what people might be thinking, either in personal situations or at work, in the office….you have to be mindful of how you know one person might react to something versus another person. And so, I try to pause as quickly as I can within my mind before I react or as I'm listening so that I am mindful of how I respond or what I expect, so that it kinda remains as positive as it can be, cause sometimes we can be quick to react to something we learned that might not be…what we expect to hear and, and, and you might be snappy answers or answers that make people feel like they did something wrong. And I try not to do that, I try not to come across in that manner and so I guess being mindful helps you with that, it helps you to be consistent with a positive approach. (Participant 5; pp. 2-3)

Sub-theme 3.1. Active Listening

Ten participants described Active Listening as a means of Being Present with or for Others. The first example was a response to an interview prompt asking the participant to describe more about how they are present with others. The example also shows sub-theme 3.2., Self-Regulation of Attention (3.2.1) and sub-theme 3.8., Relationship Building.

> Like you do active listening skills, of course, just, you know…being quiet, being present, looking at them, looking directly at them…and giving non-verbal cues that they are being heard…but then also asking, asking pointed questions…about things that they've shared and things they are speaking about….remember conversations then reflecting back on them at later times so that people realize that they have not only they've been heard, but they've been remembered. Yeah, basically it's a lot of active listening skills

> that I think mindfulness fosters. You have to be very, very present to do that. (Participant 8; p. 7)

The next example shows how the participant began to incorporate Being Present for Others through Active Listening, describing the value and impact as well.

> What I notice now is, looking back I always wore…an expert hat… I noticed I was talking all the time [laughs]. I was not doing active listening at all, and so, so active listening and…using motivational interviewing were two big skills that…I use that in my professional and personal life now…just really pausing and paying attention to notice what the other person is saying has been really meaningful and what I notice is people are, you know, are, they're happy to meet with me, they, you know, and I schedule something and people don't not show up or, you know, they stay, they're engaged, they're, you know, really participating and collaborative and I think we feed off each other, you know, when I'm actively listening and I'm able to repeat back what I'm hearing to them, is a great validation and acknowledgment. And a lot of times, you know, we as colleagues…we're not getting that from other colleagues sometimes. So nothing like I'm this only unique person, but I'm noticing that having cultivated meditation and mindfulness and self-compassion, has allowed me to…be a better listener. (Participant 7; p. 3)

Sub-theme 3.2. Self-Regulation, with sub-sub-themes 3.2.1. Attention, 3.2.2. Emotions, and 3.2.3. Reactivity

Self-Regulation of Attention, Emotions, and Reactivity was not only described by participants in the previous theme, Being Mindful Toward Self, but also in the context of Being Present with Others. All participants described examples of Self-Regulation when Being Present with or for Others. The following example shows a participant utilizing Self-Regulation of all three sub-sub-themes, as well as sub-theme 3.3., Discernment (self & other) and sub-theme 3.4., Taking Perspective.

> I seek to really make a concerted effort to both recognize my emotions, my biases, my thoughts when I am finding myself in conversation with other individuals and trying to recognize how those are influencing the way I communicate and the way I'm being perceived; but then I think equally, I try to be mindful of where they're coming from and what biases they have, what type of language and frameworks they use to make sense of the world, what's some of their strengths and areas of improvement are, what they are

> knowledgeable about, what are their gap areas; and I try to consciously take that in and filter that into how I interact with people. And because of so much of the work I do relates to inter-personal conflict, I think that mindfulness component helps me to be, practice in mindfulness helps me to be more empathetic and in tuned to the people that I'm working with, even if they're coming from very different perspectives and identities. I do try to make a conscious effort to be present for them and take in as many variables as I can and treat every person and situation as an individual situation as opposed to just a…the same thing over and over that I can recite the same language for and respond in the same way. (Participant 3; pp. 2-3)

Sub-theme 3.3. Discernment (self and other)

All participants described a means of Discerning between themselves and others when Being Present with Others. As shown in the previous example above for sub-theme 3.2., Self-Regulation, the participants describe the ability to separate and identify what is their own and what is the other person's, whether it is emotions, thoughts, or points of view. The first example is a brief glimpse, that also includes sub-theme 3.4., Taking Perspective.

> so really giving myself that other, the ability to see that other perspective to understand the other person's point of view or the other's, you know, have some curious about…what's actually happening on the other side of this thing or person that's frustrating me. (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 2)

The next example, from Participant 1 who is a clinical social worker and a supervisor of social workers, teaches her supervisees how to gain discernment between what is their own and what is their clients', particularly around traumatic experiences, such as a client overdosing.

> I think having people sit with it, see it, see the person for their whole experience and the journey they've come on. And, you know, helping them to be with themselves—"what's your reaction; what's yours and what's somebody else's?" That's part of what we try to help people with…But the more people can be with themselves, learn more about themselves, how they feel about what's happening. You know, mindfulness is a process of getting to know yourself and sort of being able to separate yourself from things that aren't yours. You know, like not attached to everything that comes by. So, I think it is something that we try to help people with, even if people aren't claiming it as mindfulness, at the base of what we do, and some people can do this work, some people can't. I think everybody leaves with some better sense of being able to sit and observe what's happening, now. (Participant 1; pp. 11-12)

Sub-theme 3.4. Taking Perspective

Eleven participants described a means of Taking Perspective when Being Present with Others. The following example shows how the participant was able to Take Perspective on her own patterns and assumptions when meeting with the person whom she reported to. The example also includes sub-theme 3.5., Coaching—Self (3.5.1.) as well as 3.3., Discernment (self and other).

> I did have somebody who I reported to and so when I had meetings with that person…there, there was a, I was often aware of…my, sort of default way of letting the person who's [says quote] "in charge of me" or the person who is…above me in rank…to…sort of sub, not…what's the right word here? To sort of prioritize what they are saying as opposed to what I am saying. So…I feel though, that my mindfulness practice, especially in those meetings, I was able to…recognize when that was at play and when, sort of the…assumption that I often had of, of needing to…yield to the person above me, maybe wasn't a correct assumption…and so I was able to…be more assertive in terms of what the needs were in my position and…and…really, sort of get, communicate more to the person who was higher up, of what was, what I was dissatisfied with and then what was needed in that particular position. (Participant 9; p. 11)

Sub-theme 3.5. Coaching, with Sub-sub-themes 3.5.1. Self, and 3.5.2. Other

Ten participants described how they Coach themselves or others in the context of Being Present with Others. The following example illustrates the concept with both sub-sub-themes, also including 3.8., Self-Regulation, Reactivity and 3.7., Modeling.

> And, so, I recognized both in that moment, my own, like desire to help save him in some ways and also a noticing that it was okay that he was feeling tension and stress and that it was hard for him. So my mindfulness allowed me to see that he was stressed and he was in a difficult spot, but also it was okay and he is going to grow from it and I trust…the process, the human process that we're each going through in this work…and encourage him to be mindful of, "yes, this is difficult and you're going to be okay…stay in it, don't run away from it." So think that there's a little bit of me seeking to be mindful and then seeking to help that be a little contagious in some ways. (Participant 10; p. 5)

The following is an example of Coaching—Other, that also includes 3.7., Humanistic Approach.

> And for me, being comfortable with people and loving them enough to say, "I don't think you're being objective, I think your stuff is in the way; how can I help you; this is painful because of your past or because of your current situation—I don't know if you know that." You know, like being honest, and I'm told I do that pretty well. People are like, "wow, you're really good at telling people what you see without them getting upset." And I'm like, "well that's my goal; I want them to see the truth." Some people do get upset, but I try to be sensitive to those things. (Participant 1; p. 14)

Sub-theme 3.6. Modeling

Modeling was described by 10 participants. The concept here is that the participants were intentionally and purposefully Being Present and mindful for the Other person in order for the person to see what that looks like. Previous examples have already demonstrated this sub-theme, but the following example shows how the participant received positive feedback from a respected colleague who had noticed the way that she was consistently present with and for other people.

> So…the physician I work with, she's just a few years younger than I am, very, very smart, amazing, very pleasant, very collaborative and [pause] she's so full of ideas and has so much to share, and what I…so, what I notice is, I, I, and it's not…maybe it is, so she said, "[participant's first name], I think I'm going to be noticing more of what you do and I'm gonna [be] noticing what I do." I said, "what do you mean?" She said, "you know, I notice when you're talking people are listening [laughing] very intently…and I, I need to pay attention to what's going on, like how am I showing up, what am I saying." So…she was surprised that conversations that we sit together that there are things that I might have picked up…and, you know, others may have not have heard that…or…they may have not noticed the nonverbal, yeah, language. (Participant 7; p. 14)

Sub-theme 3.7. Humanistic Approach, with sub-sub-themes 3.7.1. Kindness, 3.7.2. Compassion, and 3.7.3. Empathy

Eleven participants described taking a Humanistic Approach toward others through (three sub-sub-themes) Kindness, Compassion, and Empathy. The following two examples show the impact of the purposeful intention of seeing the humanness of another.

> … I think the clearest example of how I use mindfulness is to just really focus on being present and slowing down my mind, so I'm not getting caught up in the crisis of the moment; and also bringing a sense of compassion into this, compassion for me, compassion for the other person, so that they can feel that.…if I can come from a place of compassion and caring and be mindful of how I'm reacting or of what I need to set aside for the moment, hopefully I can help that person. Mindfulness to me is about being present when people really, really need it, and presence itself is healing if you can do nothing else, I can be with them… (Participant 1; p. 3)

> There's a faculty member here who's not particularly good in the classroom for a number of reasons…she's been here a long time and… I just took a different approach to her, I reflected a bit before the meeting about you know, "how painful…I've had a bad class, I've had a bad lecture where, you know, it just didn't work, you know. That's awful. She had a career of them." And so I felt some compassion around her on that. And…over time the focus shifted…and her…teaching rankings went way up, she even won a teaching award. (Participant 6; pp. 12-13).

Sub-theme 3.8. Relationship Building

Seven participants described Relationship Building as a part of being present with or for others. The first example comes from an interview prompt asking the participant about the value of practicing mindfulness.

> …just being mindful I think improves relationships because you are deemed considerate and rational person in your decision making and your approach to certain situations and, and that helps relationships, and relationships help impact outcomes. And so, being mindful helps you, it, it, it says that "I'm consistent with a positive approach, I'm aware of the situation, I'm aware of people's feelings and thoughts and I'm listening." And so, I don't have to fear outcomes because being mindful helps, you know, build positive outcomes, which is what I believe. It may not happen all the time, but a great percent of the time, I think it does. So the reduction of fear and the improvement of relationships is, I think, a part of the most powerful element of mindfulness. (Participant 5; p. 14)

The second example comes from an interview prompt that asked if mindfulness affected the participant's relationship with his boss. Elements of other sub-themes are certainly present (Discernment—Self & Other; Self-Regulation—Reactivity, Emotions).

> I had to make a really conscious effort to get a sense of where she's coming from and how best to communicate with her… So, that mindfulness, I guess, at the front end, really helped for us to connect, I think. And we have a great working relationship. I've never had a better working relationship with a supervisor. And I think part of that is largely because of the conscious effort I made early on in the relationship, to really seek to understand her perspective, what her interests were and needs were and her values and get a sense of the lenses that she understands the world…through, and get a sense of the lenses that she understands our work and the organization that we work within through… not only do I consider her to be the best supervisor I've ever had, but I also would say it's a colleague friend relationship, too. I feel like I can be pretty vulnerable with her and because I'm vulnerable with her, she can be really supportive of me and vice versa. And I truly believe that has a lot to do with being mindful and open at the beginning of the relationship… And, an important thing to note, too, is I applied for her job…and she knows that… I had to be really intentional from the get go not to hold any resentment towards her… I think there was a possibility for much more conflict and I think because both her and I navigated it well with a sense of mindfulness, it's been one of the best working relationships I've ever had, if not the best. (Participant 3; pp. 5-6)

Theme 4: Being Present with a Group

Being Present with a Group was described by 10 participants a total of 48 times. Not all participants' job roles required group, but the vast majority (10 of 12) did and they had much to say about it. Eight sub-themes have been included in order to more clearly see what the participants described regarding being present with a group. The seven sub-themes were, "Self-Awareness," "Group Awareness," "Helping the Group See What is Present," "Helping Group Find Alternative Perspectives," "Managing the Group's Emotions," "Discernment," and "Modeling." The sub-themes and sub-sub-themes are discussed below and Table 4.6. provides the frequencies.

Table 4.6
Theme 4 Sub-Themes

Theme 4 Sub-themes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 4: Being Present with Group	1	4	2	10	2	4	8	8		7		2	48
4.1. Self-Awareness		1	1	4	1		4	2		3		2	18
4.2. Group Awareness		1	2	4	1	1	5	3		1		2	20
4.2.1. "Reading the Room"			1				3			1			5
4.3. Helping group see what is present			2	8		3	3	3		4		1	24
4.3.1. Presenting alternative solutions								2					2
4.3.2. Guiding group toward resolution/solution				5		1	2			2			10
4.4. Helping group find alternative perspectives				1	1	3		2				1	8
4.5. Managing the Group's Emotions		2	1	4		1	4	2		1			15
4.6. Discernment		1	2	7	2		2	2		1		2	19
4.7. Modeling	1	4		4			6	3		1		1	20

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

The following is an example of Being Present with a Group with sub-themes 4.5., Managing the Group's Emotions, 4.6., Discernment, and 4.7., Modeling.

> …we have a rather large upheaval going on right now [organizationally]… I'm the only [one in the group] who has a specific mindfulness practice, but I do know that…as we have been working to address a very serious, systemic problem, here at the college, that we are able to continuously stop and check ourselves from becoming reactionary and I

> know that that's because…I'm able to model what I have learned. I, I've watched my two colleagues, again, start to develop the same, same way of…working through the problems and issues. (Participant 8; p. 4)

Another example, from the same participant, thoroughly describes her practice of Being Mindful with a Group including the technique and the outcomes. The transcript excerpt exhibits multiple sub-themes, including 4.1., Self-Awareness, 4.2., Group Awareness, 4.3., Helping the Group See What is Present, with sub-sub-theme 4.3.1., Presenting Alternative Solutions, and 4.4., Helping the Group Find Alternative Perspectives. Elements of theme 11, Mindful Leadership are also present.

> I do know that my practice allows me to slow down enough to make connections and…seeing, seeing patterns and recognizing, recognizing patterns and making connections…in my work is really important. I think that, I think I am able to grow programs because of that. I'm able to…to be less about an agenda and more about…noticing…more organic ways of, of making, making programs, for instance, work. I, I notice with my colleagues, so often they will come, come into a situation with a specific agenda, "this is what we want to…this is what we want to produce, we want A, B, and C, and now we're going to make that happen." And I know that mindfulness makes me more flexible and able to flow, so when, when I come across, up against a road block…up, up, up against something that is really throwing other people for a loop, I'm able to, to navigate around it to see other ways of making things work and other ways to bend and move so that we can still come to the same conclusion, but maybe just not the same way that we expected to get there….. I think a lot it has to do…with that self-reflectiveness and that ability to be still and to notice and to pay attention. (Participant 8; p. 9)

Sub-theme 4.1. Self-Awareness; and Sub-theme 4.2. Group-Awareness

Eight participants described maintaining Self-Awareness when Being Present with a Group and nine described being aware of the group, or having "Group-Awareness." These two sub-themes are presented together because all eight examples of Self-Awareness in the group setting also included Group Awareness. The following example also illustrates sub-theme 4.6., Discernment.

> I think the, the way I communicate with my Board is, you've got to speak their language. A Board of Directors, when you're in that setting and you're in that meeting, you're

> speaking a certain language. The language is often, number one, financial. So you're, you're driving a conversation that's based on very specific numbers. So that's one example of like, "here's how the conversation's gonna go." And another language is also mission. Are we really focused and speaking about the mission? And I think, if I keep my language, if I'm listening to my words and I'm listening to my thoughts, I may be, I may be thinking or wanting to say something, but if it is not, if I can't communicate it in one of those languages, I'm probably not going to get heard at the table…. And if somebody doesn't hear me then of course they're gonna, they're just going to react to what they're hearing, what they're gonna hear, so it means you're not communicating and that means, that means more stress because nothing's getting, you're not accomplishing what you're trying to accomplish and then it can also lead to more emotion because maybe it's going, it ratchets in a, whether it's positive or negative, but it goes in the wrong direction….I think the most mindful thing that I do at that moment at that table is to make certain I am speaking the right language. It's kind of like, I mean if you sat at a table and everyone spoke French except you, you're not gonna get heard and it literally is that basic—if I don't speak their language, I'm not going to get heard. (Participant 4; pp. 10-11)

Sub-theme 4.3. Helping Group See What is Present, with sub-sub-themes 4.3.1. Presenting Alternative Solutions, and 4.3.2. Guiding Group Toward Resolution/Solution

Seven participants described Helping the Group to See what is Present. The first example portrays what this looks like.

> I am frequently, like I said, in meetings where there's a lot of tension [laughs]. We work with city leaders, we work…with radical activists and everybody in-between. I have come to see that one of the things that I bring is a presence in those spaces that I'm able to watch and observe and reflect back to the group in ways that help people move from what can feel like chaotic, overwhelming situations into more clarity and organization, like mental organization, if that makes sense. And so I've noticed that that really helps people feel both safer and more included as well as…able to stay and keep moving in difficult situations. [pause]. Yeah, so it's not uncommon…for me, in a meeting, to be listening, taking it all in and then to say, you know with words [laughs], "this is what I have observed and I wonder if this is what is being experienced," I can say, "on reflecting clearly there is a lot of hurt and also we're very tired, we've been at this for a year, we have close relationships…and this is complicated…" (Participant 10; pp. 7-8)

Continuing from the previous example, Participant 10 goes on in a way that demonstrations the sub-sub-theme 4.3.2., Guiding the Group Toward Resolution/Solution and also sub-theme 4.5, Managing the Group's Emotions.

> I can reflect both the emotions in the room and the complexity of the room, the need for grace in particular spaces for each other and for ourselves, and then some organization of, you know, "these are three things that I see that we could do to move forward. It seems like we need clarity on this. It seems like we need to do a little more research on that. It seems like our next step could be x." And then asking, but always in a "seems curious, wonder," [laughs] ways of inviting deeper self-awareness, mindfulness, reflection, within the group, but also clarity and focus, not just "how do we all feel?" That's great too, but, "how do our feelings move us forward?" And, "how do we keep moving forward in the midst of what our feelings are, moving forward toward our shared goals?" (Participant 10; p. 8)

Sub-theme 4.4. Helping the Group Find Alternative Perspectives

Five participants described how they Helped their Group Find Alternative Perspectives.

> I just encourage people to reflect on their perspective, "how else could we think about this, what assumptions are you making…that are influencing how you're thinking about that." … And this helped bring attention to how people are thinking…and, and how they're constraining their thinking. So…it's, it's often just with questions. … And so that was, not a big deal, but it was just changing, helping people change perspective. I think many people default in this sorta zero sum view, and there are plenty of times when somebody has to win and somebody has to lose, but there are not as many as people think there are, and when people are engaging from that perspective, they're trying to win, they're trying not to lose, whether it's themselves directly or, or whatever they're advocating for, or they're just struggling with the fact that it appears somebody has to lose, and on more than one occasion I have asked… "I need a solution where everybody felt like they won, so…how else could we think about this? What can we say to this person so she feels like she got heard and got something?" And so again, that's just trying to help people…have a, have a different, have an alternative perspective on this. (Participant 6; pp. 5-6)

Sub-theme 4.5. Managing the Group's Emotions

Seven participants described Managing the Group's Emotions. A few examples have already been shown above; however, the following is a prime example of a participant focusing on Managing the Group's Emotions.

> I, typically…so, it depends on the context, it depends on my relationships, it depends on the relationships in a meeting or whatever, but usually I just name it. You know, I might say, "I feel like there's some tension," or "I feel like there's some disconnection," or "there's whatever; let's check in" or "let's…what's going on here?" And I feel like that typically helps. Now, that can't be done in every context. I think also when there is tension and people are vocal about it, I make a conscious effort to make sure that I, at

> least, hear them, and I validate their feelings. I don't always validate their opinions [laughs]. I try not to do that [laughs]. (Participant 3; p. 10)

Another example that shows how a participant was Managing the Group's Emotions was presented after being prompted about an example of mindfulness affecting her leadership, so this example also portrays elements of theme 11, Mindful Leadership with sub-theme 11.8, Using and Understanding Emotions.

> …that particular director meeting, this person got so upset, they like literally, like verbally attacked the other person, the person…was livid, could not control their emotions, I mean I am noticing right now in my heart, like my heartbeat just got faster. She, she got out of her chair, she opened the door and she just banged the door behind her as she walked out. The feeling, you know [laughing], like the crack, the cement, you know that…on the door, it was just very traumatic for all of us to notice, what had happened. This was one of our colleague who no longer works here, but…at which point everybody was like shock stricken and I said…I said, "I'm sorry, this is really hard for me cause there's a lot of pain…I…can, can we just pause and…take a deep breath and…can we just share, like, right this minute when this is so difficult, can we just share this minute what we are grateful for, like what's going on well today," like everything just came to this halt, you know, it was very, like, tense environment, everybody, and these are leaders who are making decisions for the rest of the hospital and they're shocked by…this one person's behavior who was very upset with other person. (Participant 7; pp. 16-17)

Sub-theme 4.6. Discernment

Eight participants demonstrated a level of Discernment within the group setting. The following example shows the Discernment of the participant noticing how another person in the group was affecting her. She clearly exhibited elements of theme 7, Buffering of Reactivity as she was able to slow down and notice her natural reaction to the situation, but the Discernment that she exhibits when noticing and interpreting her reactivity and choosing her response is what is remarkable.

> So I, you know, for example, I have a Board member who I feel like isn't involved in the daily grind, but likes to critique the daily grind, and, so I, I notice in me when she speaks or when she asks questions, even just questions, my internal defensiveness, like, I can

> feel it [laughs]. And so I, my mindfulness in those spaces tries, like, helps me to just be quiet and to realize, like, "oh, interesting, I can feel in me defensiveness about her question." And so it helps me to not act on that defensiveness or to act on it if I feel like I need to, just to be slower and a little more reflective on what I should I respond to and what I shouldn't respond to or how I can respond in ways that are channeling…you know, if I need to stand up and speak truth or say something…I'm able to wait a couple, you know, wait and see if I really do need to say that or if it's just my defensiveness and I need to just chill out. (Participant 10; p. 6)

Sub-theme 4.7. Modeling

Similar to the way that participants discussed Modeling mindfulness to others, they also described Modeling mindfulness in group settings. A few examples have already been presented. The following examples shows the intentional Modeling in a group setting, the first of which also led to Modeling in individual settings.

> So going to people's staff meetings and facilitating some sort of mindfulness exercise is how I would best do that. And be present for them when they come to talk to me. Like, being mindfulness for them, and showing them what that looks like, I think impacts people. Because people say, "I want to be a leader like you" or "I want to make sure I'm there for my staff the way you're here for me." (Participant 1; p. 7)

> …not everybody in the room will…will then begin to do the same thing, but I do strongly believe in modeling, and particularly having been a classroom teacher for so long, and when you do model this way of interacting that…there are going to be people who then see it and then start to do it as well. (Participant 8; p. 4)

Theme 5: Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention

Stemming from themes 1-4, there was a noticeable activity that 11 participants exhibited, that is, a Mindful Shift of Focus or Attention from either themselves to another person (sub-theme 5.1.), vice versa (sub-theme 5.2.), or to practicing their personal, internal mindfulness practice (sub-theme 5.3.) in the moment. The mindful shift was deliberate and intentional. Table 4.7. provides the frequencies of the sub-themes.

Table 4.7. Theme 5 Sub-Themes

Table 4.7
Theme 5 Sub-themes

Theme 5 Sub-themes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 5: Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention	3	1	1	3	1	2	5	4	1	4		7	32
5.1. Self to other			1	1				1		1		2	6
5.2. Other to self	1				1	1		1	1	2		2	9
5.3. To Mindfulness Practice	2	1		2		1	3	2	1	3		4	19

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

The following example demonstrates how the participant was able to shift from her own thinking (self) to the other person (other) and become present again.

> I think it's when I get caught in my thinking "oh what am I going to say" response to and I'm not actively listening, I can miss…things that other people were saying, but when I'm present, I'm actually, you know, paying attention to this exchange, this individual, what's going on in their expressions, their voice, nonverbal, and what is their response to what the other person is saying. It's just such a…in time, real time, this…this…orchestra…sorta, you know, happening, and just noticing how everything is related, like, to the exchange that point going on. And I attribute that to…mindfulness, to be present and notice what's going on. (Participant 7; pp. 15-16)

Sub-theme 5.1. Self to Other

Five participants explicitly described a Mindful Shift of Attention from themselves to another person. The following examples shows how the participant had to recognize his own tendencies, pause, and then mindfully shift to pay attention to the other person's perspective.

> I really sensed that this was something that [first partner] had been struggling with. She's putting a lot of effort into our project and obviously has a lot going on with a kid on the way, buying a house, transitioning jobs, etc, etc, newly married. I really…I think…I'm the type of person that is like, you know, "everyone can participate in everything, let's all collaborate, let's all three show up at this meeting in three weeks

> when we have it with this leader in this organization." But I had to be, I had to step back and recognize where [first partner] was coming from. (Participant 3; p. 4)

The next example also includes the participant's assertion of the value of mindful leadership, but founded on the ability to be present with others, shifting one's attention to others.

> …it is mutually beneficial to approach all aspects of leadership…being fully and completely present, because being present allows you to pay attention to those you work with, to pay good attention to those you work with…and…being fully present gives you more space to make thoughtful, careful decisions. (Participant 8; p. 13)

Sub-theme 5.2. Other to Self

Seven participants described Mindfully Shifting their Focus and Attention from another person back to themselves. The following example shows how the participant described how she does this herself and how she teaches her supervisees to do so as well.

> I think just based on our field, everyone here is very self-reflective, at least for the counselors here, part of their training is to be mindful of their own internal states and thoughts while they're with somebody, so there's a parallel process, and they actually practice writing those down after each session when they're in training. So, I know that the counselors here, some of them who have been trained here under me, they have a beautiful [strong emphasis] practice in that regard. So somebody could be saying something, they're hearing it, and also logging, "how am I reacting; what am I thinking; how am I feeling; and how am I responding?" (Participant 1; pp. 17-18)

Sub-theme 5.3. To Mindfulness Practice

Nine participants described how they would Mindfully Shift their Focus or Attention to their mindfulness practice. The following example shows how the participant is aware of the high demands of her job and that she can step away and practice mindfulness anytime that she needs to.

> And it's like that at work when there are stressors, like I can be with it and know that I can take a moment away to manage the ups and downs of stress and anxiety and not get swept away by the overwhelmingness of things that happen, or the incredible sad things,

> like clients die, clients overdose, and just seeing it as what it is, and knowing that it's part of a longer timeline. (Participant 1; p. 11)

Theme 6: Emotional Intelligence

All participants demonstrated elements of Emotional Intelligence a total of 46 times, whether it was recognizing their emotions, their emotional responses or managing their emotions. The following example demonstrates how the participant recognizes, understands, and manages strong emotions for himself and also for others.

> …all of this is not to tell you that there aren't times that are scary, there are really difficult stuff that's kinda that relationship to fear, it also relates to mindfulness. You know fear is a function of one's narrative. I mean something can happen to make me scared and then I can react to it and recognize it, so "normal people feel frightened, what should I do" and move on. Or I can get this whole narrative around this, which you know, you've done that, I've done that, we've watched people really be, make themselves very unhappy by "what if, what if, what if; yeah, but, yeah, but, yeah, but." So, interrupting narratives around fear and not seeing fear, is a way to cause people to really do transformational work. It's a skill, I think I've come to realize as I've become more mature as a leader. (Participant 6; pp. 7-8)

Another example shows how the participant humanizes and normalizes emotions.

> Then the emotional thing, that's the one where the word regulation can come, right: "how am I feeling about that?" …and I guess I would say this one's important where a lot of people get caught up, a lot of it is feeling fearful or feeling angry as a problem to be solved. But those are normal human emotions, everybody feels those. (Participant 6; p. 17)

A third example came out of a discussion about mindful leadership having to deal with vulnerability and uncertainty.

> …to be able to, to not only be aware of it [vulnerability and uncertainty], but to welcome it and, and almost let it, let it be the natural force that it is. I think sometimes we're always trying to fight that natural force and be something else, but I, I think embracing that has a lot to do with a successful practice. (Participant 4, 2nd interview; p. 17)

Theme 7: Buffering of Reactivity

Ten participants described a Buffering of Reactivity, wherein their mindfulness practice had provided them with an outcome of slowing down their reactivity. The following examples illustrated the concept.

> Personally, I still have many highs and lows when going through a week, but I would never describe them as extreme. Regulating my own emotions has allowed me to accept that I have a much greater capacity for experiencing and interacting with the immediate world around me. The regulation gives me a great buffer that I think is often underrated…. Being more mindful keeps me more grounded, and that offers this giant buffer against those times when the emotions of those around me are very high. (Participant 4, 2nd interview; p. 16)

> …these practices they train our responses, they train our mind and body and spirit to respond in certain ways so that when stress, pressure, you know, life hits you that you have responses that you've practiced and you've chosen and you've learned so you can draw on those kind of like muscle memory. You don't have to figure out how to respond in that very moment because you've already trained yourself, "this is how I respond to stress or conflict or pressure or demands or challenges." I've, I've disciplined myself to respond in certain ways rather than being kinda yanked around. (Participant 12; p. 9)

Part of the next example was shown previously as an example of Theme 5, Mindful Shift of Focus to mindfulness practice. The full excerpt really illustrates the ability of the participant to suspend their reactivity.

> I had a pretty unpleasant meeting on Tuesday… but this person had a couple of her folks in there, in the meeting, and I had two of mine in there and…the other individual was being very aggressive, bordering on bullying and…I was really pissed off. And, and my…I, I really…so what did I do? I did the first thing, I sorta checked in with my body. And I got my feet firm on the floor, and…kinda aware of my posture and just…really in kinda a quick way tried to bring myself kinda into the present moment, be thoughtful about this, don't react from emotion. And at the same time, I need to stick up for my people and try to kinda interrupt the, the bullshit and behavior and bullying. And I'm not, that person [does not have] a direct status over me, but I'm not that person's peer, they're…they're superior to me, not, not directly, but…. And so having done that and chilled out a little bit, and still being mad, I mean I'm mad even talking about it, I was able, I was able to give an adult response, which, which was…I allowed some silence because I like silence, it can be kinda powerful and…then I would say, I said… "I'm not going to talk about this any further with these folks here. You and I will gather and talk

> about this soon." And that was the end of that, and that was the appropriate thing to do, I, I, I'm actually at a loss to understand that person's behavior… (Participant 6; p. 10)

Theme 8: Resilience and Recovery

Eleven participants described elements of Resilience and Recovery at total of 25 times. While there were many examples describing this theme, from recovering from burnout and taking some time off work or recovering from stressful experiences, but the following two examples were the most illustrative, compelling, and inspiring.

> You know [small sigh], coming back from Africa to the US was…was a huge transition. It would be, under any circumstances it would be a big change…it was maybe more traumatic or more difficult…because I was fired and… that decision was made by three of my closest friends who were on the Board of the university…that I was leading at the time. And so there's a lot of trauma, a lot of sense of loss…betrayal…you know, reputational damage, you know, you feel shame, just a lot of those things roll together and I. So it was a very difficult transition that I feel like, you know I feel like the effects of that probably rippled out for at least three years and in some sense, major events like that are with you for the rest of your life to some degree. …mindfulness was, on some days, was like the only thread that I was holding on to. You know, being able to recenter myself…. was really critical to me surviving [chuckles] the experience, recovering from it, being able to launch a successful company, and sort of recover…to rebound after, after, you know, a huge career blow. (Participant 12; pp. 10-11).

> My first step to mindfulness, James, actually came through trauma. I suffered a major trauma in a car accident and a big part of the after effect of that trauma, besides getting over all of the physical aspects of it, was going through a huge, a huge mental transition of essentially going from a fairly normal work life to not being able to work, not being able to take care of yourself, and going through just that sort of life changing experience that too many people have in their lifetime. But one of the ways, thankfully, that I discovered of, that really changed how I was able to heal, and certainly changed the rapidity of my healing is that I discovered mindfulness as a technique to be more aware of where I was in the moment and day to day. And being able to take really small steps to making improvements each day versus the kind of overwhelming, "it's all too big" philosophy that I think a lot of us suffer when they're in that position. And that was really my first steps towards it, so when I really became mindful, number one, of where my body was physically and more mindful of where I was emotionally, and as I took those day-to-day steps and moved back into, a… normal life, that those techniques I've kind of carried with me ever since, cause they were so helpful to me and I've discovered other ways to practice them since then, but those very early steps I took towards healing from trauma, was how I discovered them and discovered its ability for transformation. (Participant 4; pp. 2-3)

Participant 4 is now a marathon runner.

Theme 9: Alignment

Nine participants described a form of Alignment, describing how their values and beliefs aligned with their job or aligned what they're doing through their work (or both).

> I want to make an impact in my community; I want to… empower work places to have better cultures that are able to navigate conflict more effectively and constructively. I think that…if we can do that in the work place, you know, maybe some of those same approaches, concepts, and skills will translate to our families and to our communities…and you know, maybe there will be in some small way, it will be another little component in…in creating…a positive shift for some, for some communities, you know. For handling conflict around diversity issues, for…growing a sense of community empathy towards people that are different than you. Yeah. I, I think that's why I do it.… I can't tell you why I love this stuff so much, James, but I do [laughs]…Fascinated by it, it is very much is a part of who I am. I think about it constantly. (Participant 3, 2nd interview; pp. 9-11)

The next example described how the participant found Alignment, which led to a job change to her current position.

> There was a point in my life where I worked for a health insurance [company], and was living the corporate life and was really wealthy monetarily [laughter], but feeling really sort of dead inside emotionally. And at that point in my life I sort of thought about and meditated on, I was waking up early in the morning to meditate and do yoga and really figure out what was going on with me. And it came to me that what I'm really good at is serving other people. And if I'm not doing that, then I'm sort of out of line with what my purpose is. So, for me, in order to be grounded and centered, I have to be in service and present, and that's my gift to give people. (Participant 1; pp. 8-9)

Theme 10: Improved Job Performance

Nine participants described how mindfulness positively Improved their Job Performance. The first example was also illustrative of how the participant was Being Present with Other people (theme 2) and taking a Humanistic Approach, but the example is centered around how mindfulness affected his Job Performance.

> So, I rearranged [the payroll system]. It took me about four months and after that it started running smoothly. But it was having the patience, again, to be able to communicate with personnel that may have been angry about their job, dissatisfied with

> their life, whatever it is, but that's where mindfulness comes in. It is understanding people, understanding where they are in life, but then also understanding that certain things have to happen in order for the overall teams to do well … So, I changed it all around and we call it, "top block." I actually got the highest rating that an officer could get…and it is because of mindfulness and patience, knowing how to talk to people, being kind, loving-kindness, gosh, even in the military loving-kindness works. (Participant 2; pp. 10-11)

The next example also includes the previous theme of Alignment, but illustrates the participant's response to being asked if mindfulness impacts their job performance in any way.

> …when you're working in a job that is exactly where your heart is at, your motivation to do it and do it well is heightened [chuckles]. So I am like so invested in what I do, you know, and I don't care if I have to work at 9 at night to answer emails that I have to get done before the next morning somedays. Like I don't care if I have to give up weekends and time. You know I try to balance that with taking time off and taking care of myself, but I am so invested in this right now that…my, you know, my job performance is, is probably…higher than it would be if I were working for somebody else…on, on a topic that wasn't…so passionate for me. (Participant 11; pp. 17-18)

Theme 11: Mindful Leadership

Mindful Leadership was described by all 12 participants a total of 119 times. Thirteen sub-themes were generated in order to fully capture and illustrate what the participants were sharing about being a mindful leader or when describing how mindfulness affects their leadership practices. The sub-themes were, "Authenticity," "Adaptability," "Serving," "Listening," "Asking Questions," "Humility," "Using and Understanding Emotions," "Intrinsic Motivation to Help Employees Beyond the Job," "Transformational Leadership," "Diminishment of Hierarchy," "Slowing Down/Slowing things Down," and "Humanistic Approach." The frequencies of the sub-themes and sub-sub-themes are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8
Theme 11 Sub-Themes

Theme 11 Sub-Themes	P1	P2	P3*	P4*	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11*	P12*	Total
Theme 11: Mindful Leadership	5	9	5	16	3	18	12	6	6	8	11	10	109
11.1. Authenticity		1		2		4	7		2	1	1	1	19
11.2. Adaptability	1	1	1	5	2					3	2		15
11.3. Serving	1	1	1	7	1	1	1			1	2	1	17
11.4. Listening	1	1	2	3	1	2	2	3		1		4	20
11.5. Asking Questions	2		2	1	1	5	2			1	2		16
11.6. Humility				4		2	1			1	4		12
11.7. Using and understanding emotions		3	1	1		6	3	1				1	16
11.8. Intrinsic motivation to help employees beyond the job	2	2	1							4	1	3	13
11.9. Transformational leadership	1			2						3	1	2	9
11.10. Diminishment of hierarchy				6			1		2		4		13
11.10.1. Granting leadership to others				4							1		5
11.11. Slowing down/slowing things down			1	2	1	1	1	2	1	3		2	14
11.12. Humanistic approach	4	6	1	5	1	5	6	3			5	1	37
11.12.1. Kindness						1	1	1					3
11.12.2. Compassion	2	1				1		2					6
11.12.3. Empathy		1						2			1		4

* Participant was interviewed more than once.

The following is an interesting example of a participant sharing how they lead mindfully.

> …it's a mistake most of us make…most of us see the leadership as total control, you're trying to control everybody, you tell them what to do, you line them up, you give them tasks, versus empowering them to really make their own choices and their own decisions and guide their own way. And, as a leader, I try to keep people in the moment, I try to keep people focused on what they are doing, and it's a simple thing, but you're sometimes kind of leading people not to worry about what's gonna happen in the next few hours, just concentrate on that very specific task at hand and do it in a positive way. …but I think as a leader it is important for me to keep staff in the moment, to keep them focused on what's really important, and what's really important since we usually have people all around us, we're in a situation where we're interacting with people and sharing the museum and sharing the history, what's really important is that interaction, that being with someone right here and right now, and being able to connect to that moment. I think a lot of times you just miss how special the moment is cause you're not, you're not in it. I mean usually the moment [laughing] is where the really good stuff is going on. That's where the laughter is, that's where people are smiling, that's where someone is looking at, whether it's the museum panel or whether they're doing the program with you, or even if they're just having a beer with us at one of the happy hours—that moment is where the good stuff's at, and I think a lot of us are missing that good stuff. (Participant 4; pp. 8-9)

Sub-theme 11.1. Authenticity

Eight participants described Authenticity or being authentic as a part of being a Mindful Leader. The first example also exhibits a previous sub-theme of Modeling when Being Present with Others, but founded on being Authentic.

> …when I'm vulnerable and being authentic, people respect that, and then they, in turn, can be themselves as well. And that brings work, you know, it can be more efficient this way. So our 30 minute meeting is like, "okay, 5 minutes on this next thing and then the rest really getting to the business," but on the platform of this really mutual respect and understanding and compassion for each other. (Participant 7; p. 5)

The second example, from the same participant highlights how she maintains her Authenticity and authentic sense of sense at work knowing that the way she does things now is different than the way that she used to operate.

> …what I do notice is…so people who, you know, don't know me…I've been here in this place for 3 years now, I used to work in a different…health system for 20 years…and very well respected…I was very serious then, I was very all about business then and now with, you know, mindfulness practice, I'm mild mannered, I'm happy, and I'm more playful. And so sometimes that can be construed as…not a, not a good…you know, not

> a good leader, maybe some people might think, "oh, she's not about business, she's too playful" [laughs], although I'm not using play all the time, but you know, when you're just very…like, when I see the human in everybody else and how important they are in the real world, and, you know, how I'm just one of the billion people in this world, so in just that scheme of things, I notice what, where my place is. But sometimes in business world, it might be considered as like, "oh," I don't know, "maybe she doesn't, you know, maybe she's not very serious about her work." So, that thought comes to me at times, but it doesn't sway me from not being authentic and not being in the moment, noticing. (Participant 7; p. 7)

A final example of Authenticity describes how the participant tries to stay in tune with and re-identify with her authentic self and original authentic intentions for founding her business.

> So one question that I've kinda been pondering…is, "how do I lead myself, how do I involve myself." And I'm learning, certainly in, in this business…that…I think I…you know, it requires a lot of understanding and a lot of…knowledge is …of how you operate, … just a lot of self-awareness, ….and knowing, knowing what speaks to you…so for me, I've had to really… listen and maintain awareness of what it is that speaks to me and why, why I continue to do this…and that…it still is authentic. I think that's a big priority for me in terms of what I want this business to look like and, and feel like, and, and accomplish and how I want it to succeed, is that I don't want it to lose it's sort of essence, which…you know, is reflective of me, just being the business owner. (Participant 9; pp. 13-14)

Sub-theme 11.2. Adaptability

Adaptability was described by seven participants as a part of how mindfulness affects their leadership practice. The following two examples highlight the participants' descriptions of how they are adaptive by being mindful in the context of leadership.

> Mindfulness is, is a state of awareness…things are gonna be different and situations will be different or locations…in terms of my leadership at the university, I work differently with administrative departments versus academic departments. And so it makes you become adaptive…[and] more flexible…. [I]n leadership…you have to have that, sort of adaptability or… situational leadership style to address certain issues. (Participant 5; pp. 7-8)

> I feel like I'm always learning from other people, so always adapting. I feel like I'm pretty agile and I'm pretty open to feedback. I always ask people, "what's helpful to you in working with a supervisor or manager, what's not helpful?" Maybe that's my default way of always being open [laughter], I don't know. I haven't reflected on that very much. I feel like my approach is maybe straight up Zen—if I'm fully present then

> wisdom will arise and I'll do the right thing in the moment based on what I'm truly seeing of the person across from me; and everybody's different. I try to be aware of those differences. (Participant 1; p. 14)

Sub-theme 11.3. Serving

Ten participants described Serving as an aspect of their mindful leadership. As exhibited in the follow two brief examples, Serving in this context is about how the participants as leaders are able to be serve those with whom they work and interact.

> And I think as a leader, it's really important for me not to just be aware of myself and where I'm at in that process, but to be able to help and guide the people around me, too. (Participant 4, 2nd interview; pp. 5-6)

> So one of my goals is people who love their work, they enjoy their work, and leaders who lift their people up, so it's leaders not just achieving objectives, but, but lifting, by their leadership, lifting everyone around them. (Participant 12, 2nd interview; p. 10)

Sub-theme 11.4. Listening

Listening was mentioned by 10 participants as part of their mindful leadership practice. The following two examples show how strongly the participants felt about Listening being a critical, integral part of their leadership practices.

> And then the other thing…the ability to become a good listener. I never, never underrate that. I think that almost every time people naturally go to a person who is a good listener and that when they are being listened to they feel like they matter and they are important. And, and that to me is the only way to effectively lead a group of people, to, to let everybody know that they are important and that they matter. (Participant 8; p. 6)

> …I really do believe that listening is a foundational, core, critical leadership skill. And mindfulness, one way of saying what it is would be, listening to yourself, listening to your body, listening to…being attentive to, you know, listening is being attentive to someone. If I'm going to listen to you, then I'm attentive, I'm attending to your words and your total communications. Mindfulness is focused attentiveness. I'm going to become attentive to the situation and everything in it, so that's me, that's you, that's mind, body, spirit, it's communication. So, if listening is as I think it is, a critical, core leadership skill and mindfulness is a practice that enables me to listen well, to be attentive, to attend to myself, to the other person or the group and the context and all of that, then that puts it just right at the heart of my leadership practice; it would be inseparable from it. (Participant 12; p. 14)

Sub-theme 11.5. Asking Questions

Eight participants described how mindfulness affected their leadership practice by shifting to Asking more Questions of others. The following example highlights what many participants described, which was purposefully Asking more Questions than providing answers or telling people what to do.

> I see the role of leader as different now. I used to see it as the decisive, captain of the ship…that everyone looks to for what we should do, and there are times [such as in crisis situations] when that's absolutely right…. I work with people who…who are very smart and creative and, so the role of the leader here is often to…ask, ask questions to help people focus or to help people see things in a different way. That has a huge impact…. I just encourage people to reflect on their perspective, "how else could we think about this, what assumptions are you making…that are influencing how you're thinking about that." … And this helped bring attention to how people are thinking…and, and how they're constraining their thinking. So…it's, it's often just with questions. (Participant 6; pp. 4-6)

Sub-theme 11.6. Humility

Five participants described elements of Humility or being humble in the context of their leadership role and/or abilities.

> I see this as an honor, where I work, this place, workplace; it's bigger than each one of us separately, and it is definitely an honor and a privilege, so I don't, I don't ever let that get to my head, like, "oh, I have this Directorship," I always remember what a gift and honor this is, to be serving in this way. (Participant 7; p. 9)

> …because I really think that if you're really being mindful, it's so clear that yeah maybe I'm the one who signs the check, maybe I'm the one who pushed submit on the grant application, but like five other people contributed to that and actually gave me feedback and created it… (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 3)

Sub-theme 11.7. Using and Understanding Emotions

Using and Understanding Emotions, in the context of being a Mindful Leader, was described by seven participants. The first example highlights the value that the participant placed upon this theme, and also touched into Theme 9: Alignment.

> …part of my practice as a leader of mindfulness is, being in tune with what people's interests, needs, values, and/or identities are, and making sure that they are not negatively threatened. I don't shy away from conflict… It's okay to call into question people's interests and values and needs and encourage them to think about them on a deeper level, or encourage dialogue in that regard, but when people feel threatened it goes to a different level where they don't feel safe as it pertains to those areas, that I really, intentionally try to mitigate. And that's probably the main, the probably one of the most driving forces behind what I do as a mindful leader….[making people feel] safe or unthreatened…and…heard and human [laughs]….[pause] and connected. I think that's it…. Make people feel connected. (Participant 3; pp. 9-10)

The next example describes how the participant notices and works with fear in the role of a leader.

> I think one of the things that I've observed about myself…as I've matured as a leader is how I relate to fear and how I relate to fear as a…tool in leading people. Early in my career in the last career when we had responsibilities for hitting, you know, certain revenue levels, we had to have so many patients and all of that stuff, I was much more inclined to say to people, "hey, here's the target, if we don't hit this target 'that's' gonna happen." I don't think that's a good idea. I, I think …you can scare people into making more widgets…but you can't scare people into being more creative, and why would you want to scare people anyway? …And all of this is not to tell you that there aren't times that are scary, there are really difficulty stuff that's kinda that relationship to fear, it also relates to mindfulness. You know fear is a function of one's narrative…. So, interrupting narratives around fear and not seeing fear, is a way to cause people to really do transformational work. It's a skill, I think I've come to realize as I've become more mature as a leader. (Participant 6; p. 7)

Sub-theme 11.8. Intrinsic Motivation to Help Employees Beyond the Job

Six participants described an Intrinsic Motivation to Help Employees Beyond the Job, much more than just helping them to be a good employee. The following two examples illustrated that motivation.

> Yeah, I want them [staff] to develop and be their fullest selves and live connected in the world and be whole people…and we're pretty clear about that, too. And we're pretty clear about that none of us will work for this organization forever. You know, the chances are high that most of won't be here in five years, just statistically. And so how are we developing as people while we're together in this space serving this mission; and how is that development furthering this mission of an organization that's seeking to develop, you know, rights and equality for all people, how are we furthering that internally and externally? And so I mean, we verbalize that and, and so my wish for them is that the things that they experience and the ways of being that they cultivate here

> serve them wherever they may go and contribute to what I see as, you know, a call to love and justice…on the meta scale as they grow in their work and move forward. (Participant 10; p. 15)

> I'm always wanting to make sure that people are okay in general, and overall, and that they can self-actualize in the job that they're in or figure out where they're supposed to be. I tend to be there for being beyond just the job. Not getting into their personal lives, but, "is this where you're wanting to be; is this where your heart is; what is your life calling; let's make sure this is in line with that, and if it's not, how do we help you find that or how do we encourage that or support you in incorporating those things into your work, if we can?" So making sure they're fully in their passion. (Participant 1; p. 7)

Sub-theme 11.9. Transformational Leadership

Five participants described an emphasis on helping their employees to experience something beyond just a transactional leadership experience, but, similarly to the previous sub-theme, to help their employees to experience something or find something that is more transformative than the norm.

> …our vision statement…reflects what my, my intentions or my goals are internally and externally, it's… "leadership transformation in the companies that we serve as evidenced by people who love their work and leaders who love their people." I feel like, and I think mindfulness is very much connected to this, that, that the goal of, of people enjoying what they do, finding, finding joy, finding satisfaction in what they do, is very important to me. I think it gives, it's part of what gives leadership meaning is when everyone's lives is impacted in such a way that, that they find satisfaction. I, I don't think…our jobs are the only place we should find fulfillment or satisfaction or, it's not the only place, sometimes it's not even the main place, but it's certainly where we spend the bulk of our waking lives and if, if we're not enjoying that, I think that's a tragedy. So one of my goals is people who love their work, they enjoy their work, and leaders who lift their people up, so it's leaders not just achieving objectives, but, but lifting, by their leadership, lifting everyone around them. (Participant 12, 2nd interview; p. 10)

Sub-theme 11.10. Diminishment of Hierarchy, with Sub-sub-theme 11.10.1. Granting Leadership to Others

Four participants described Diminishment of Hierarchy as important and valuable in the context of being a mindful leader. The first example also illustrates the sub-sub-theme of Granting Leadership to Others. The second example describes how the acknowledgement of

hierarchy diminishes the restrictions that some people may experience in terms of being able to comfortably and opening share and discuss a concept when a hierarchical relationship exists.

> I don't think mindfulness makes me a better leader, mindfulness makes a distributed leader, so like I distribute the leadership to other folks to share with me, instead of putting myself in this whole leadership position….I really try to view my Board of Directors, my clients, the students I work with, the teachers I work with, as, as…leading me, we do formative feedback after every single class we teach…so when I look at all of that, that's their leadership telling us, you know, critical information about how we're serving them, you know, so I try to view all of that as they're, they're leading us, they're guiding us, and we really are here to create conditions for them to, to benefit and heal… (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 3)

> …in a hierarchical relationship…when one or both people are mindful, they are aware that the relationship that they have and the sort of authority that one has over the other is part of the conversation, even if it's not outwardly stated, they are aware that dynamic that plays a role in whatever conversation they're having. So whether it's a boss talking to, you know, 10 different people, even if the boss is…is mindful of his or her position, then even stating, you know, "I recognize that I'm the authority figure in the room, but I want to be, I want that to be stated, I want that to be that's something at play here, but I don't want that to hinder any conversation that's happening." …once we bring awareness to the dynamic that may exist, I think a lot of our thoughts and worries and…ideas about that dynamic just go away and then we're able to get into a deeper conversation. (Participant 9; pp. 11-12)

Sub-theme 11.11. Slowing Down/Slowing Things Down

Nine participants described Slowing Down or Slowing Things Down as important and as a bi-product of being mindful in a leadership role. The following example really illustrates the value and intention of Slowing Things Down in order to be more successful.

> We have a major event that's happening, this week….and we'll probably be going from, you know, having 10 or 15 or maybe 20 in an hour to having 250 to 300 people in an hour… And I think when it started and…we just looked at it and we were like, "wow, there's just no way we can pull this off; there's just no way we can do this." And it wasn't until you really back off of that…[and] we slowed ourselves down and stopped taking it all at once on our shoulders, and broke it into smaller pieces, then we found out we really could manage it. And, we've actually added a little more to the work load this week…. It's counter-intuitive cause…to do more you've actually got to slow down…just slow down, ease up a little bit, and break it into smaller pieces and you can actually do more.… Slow down, take a little off your shoulders, even though everyone's telling you to put more on, take a little off your shoulders and do it one at a time and you

> become more efficient. And that only comes from being aware of it, you know, like you're looking at it, you're very aware of what's going on, you're very aware of what you can or cannot accomplish, even in the next hour, and being able to break that down and make your own list, just control your own list of what you want to manage, and it really does work. (Participant 4; pp. 6-7)

Sub-theme 11.12. Humanistic Approach, with Sub-sub-themes 11.12.1. Kindness, 11.12.2. Compassion, and 11.12.3. Empathy

Ten participants described taking a Humanistic Approach toward others as leaders, through three sub-sub-themes of Kindness, Compassion, or Empathy. This sub-theme was described 37 times. The first example illustrates sub-sub-themes Kindness and Compassion. The first and second examples also show how the participants make the Humanistic Approach a part of the culture. The third example illustrates the purposeful connection with others at a basic human level.

> … mindfulness helps me lead [through] the capacity to be present, hear what's going on with somebody, to be open to that this conversation could be different than all the others, and then compassion and kindness. …I've had to train the people that work directly before me, my CFO, my Associate Deans, around that, and then I remember saying to them, "listen…I'm not doing this cause I'm a soft touch, which I probably am, I'm doing this because this is how people should be treated; and when people are treated this way, you're likely to get that back, so that's how we're gonna do it here." (Participant 6; pp. 13-14)

> If there's anything that's most important to me, it's that I'm creating an atmosphere that someone wants to be in and that doesn't happen by accident. It's not an accident that you create an environment where people can be at their best, and when people can be in their environment and, and it's okay for them to fail and it's okay for them succeed, it's okay for them to be themselves and really explore their talent and their ability, and to really learn. If you give someone that environment, they, they're jazzed to stay in it, and not only are you getting great stuff for the institution, but that person is a heck of a lot better for being here than if they weren't here, and I think if there's anything that drives me about having this position is that I just love that I can help create a space that someone can come in and really enjoy being, that the day flies by and you're sort of, you're sort of sorry to leave and you really wanna come back to work tomorrow cause you, you have a, a, a really good experience. So, that's, that's probably number one for me, James. (Participant 4, 2nd interview; pp. 11-12)

> And then as I sit and meet with other colleagues, just paying attention and bringing humanness out first, like really connecting at a human level and letting people know that

> you are not, you know, "my meeting." [laughs]. You are a person, I meet with you, and we are connected at a human level, and out of which, something bigger comes because that's bigger than what they know, what I know, and that synergy that comes together with that mindfulness, with that respect, and the humanness of each other, we're able to create this…you know, this kindness and love at the table, and then the meetings are more meaningful, we're more open, we're not worried about, like, "oh this person is gonna think something of me"…I, you know, don't let those ruminations, you know, come, and I'm just more authentic. (Participant 7; p. 5)

Summary

Clearly, the 16 interviews produced substantially rich data regarding how mindfulness practices affect leadership practices. Across the interviews, eleven themes emerged: "Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice," "Being Mindful Toward Self," "Being Present with Others," "Being Present with a Group," "Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention," "Emotional Intelligence," "Buffering of Reactivity," "Resilience and Recovery," "Alignment," "Improved Job Performance," and "Mindful Leadership." In order to fully capture the scope of how mindfulness practices affect leadership practices, not only were the eleven themes required, but also numerous sub-themes, as described above. The themes acted as a wide-angle lens in order to see the whole, while the sub-themes provided the means to tighten the focus to a sharper image, really examining the details of what the participants presented and described. While the data have been presented in Chapter IV, much is to be discussed about the findings.

In Chapter V, the findings will be examined and discussed. Consideration will be given to the previous research on mindfulness and mindful leadership as compared to the findings presented in this chapter. A model of mindful leadership will also be presented and discussed. Additionally, consideration will be given to future areas of research and study.

Chapter V: Discussion

Introduction

As was discussed in Chapter I, the need for more methods of handling the demands upon the contemporary leader is higher than possibly ever before. Mindfulness, at the same time, has become a more known, studied, researched, and valued component of health and well-being, especially in the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and health care. Numerous organizations have begun to see the cross-over value of bringing mindfulness into the workplace in order to address the challenges of stress, burnout, and emotional reactivity, as well as to promote general well-being. As explained in Chapters I and II, research on mindfulness and leadership is still in its nascent stage and nearly all research on mindfulness in the workplace is quantitative. This study was designed to address the shortage of research on mindful leadership as well as to provide more information on how mindfulness practices actually affect leadership practices through the use of a qualitative study. The results of this study present a valuable contribution to the fields of leadership, employee well-being, and mindfulness.

Discussion of Techniques and Outcomes

Through researching how mindfulness practices affect leadership practices, many techniques and outcomes were discovered. While the results of those techniques and outcomes were thoroughly presented in Chapter IV as Themes and Sub-themes, (and they will be compared to previous studies later in this chapter), consideration of the specific techniques and outcomes will be presented here. As discussed in Chapters III and IV, participants described how they practiced mindfulness and how those practices affected them within the context of various situations and stories. The contexts were initially categorized as self, other, group, organization, leadership, but evolved into what was presented in Chapter IV. Specific

mindfulness meditation practices were shared by the participants and labelled under Theme 1: Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice. Techniques in this context included: awareness of the breath, awareness of the body, awareness of emotions, present moment focus, daily ritual, meditation, and mindful/focused movement/exercise. Outcomes of the techniques included: regrounding, recentering, dealing with emotions, knowing the value of the practice, and being able to be Mindful Toward Self (Theme 2).

Being Mindful Toward Self (Theme 2), is thus an outcome of the techniques of Theme 1; however, Being Mindful Toward Self includes its own set of techniques and outcomes. Techniques that participants presented for Being Mindful Toward Self include: noticing attention, sensing into broader awareness, stepping back/pausing/slowing down, shifting to practice mindfulness (as in Theme 1 techniques), self-inquiry, and taking a humanistic approach. Outcomes of Being Mindful Toward Self included: gaining perspective, insight, enhanced discernment, informed decision-making, and self-regulation. Further, the participants described how their ability to be Mindful Toward Themselves enabled them to Be Present with or for Others (Theme 3), thus Being Present with Others is another outcome of Being Mindful Toward Self.

Moving on to Theme 3: Being Present with Others, the technique and outcomes differentiation begins to blend as participants began to describe the techniques of Being Present with/for Others as outcomes of having a Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice (Theme 1) and Being Mindful Toward Themselves (Theme 2). For example, active listening is a technique for Being Present with/for Others, but the participants stated that it was only possible (and intentional) because of the participant's own mindfulness practice. Similarly, self-regulation was a technique used in order to Be Present with Others, but it is an outcome of Being Mindful

Toward Self. Discernment of oneself and other people was presented in the same way, an intentional technique, possible through being mindful. Coaching was a technique, presented as either a self-coaching technique, guiding oneself back to the present moment, such as active listening, or in noticing attention or emotions and then moving to self-regulation. Modelling was presented as a technique used for the benefit of others. When discussed by the participants, modelling was clearly an intentional technique, showing others how to be present, and also hoping that others would then exhibit the same behaviors should they choose to do so. The humanistic approach that participants had taken toward themselves (described in Theme 2) arose as a technique in Being Present for Others, and as an outcome of knowing the value of taking a humanistic approach toward themselves. Taking a humanistic approach toward others included empathy. Participants also described relationship building as an outcome of Being Present with Others.

Techniques for Being Present with a Group, Theme 4, included: self-awareness (through techniques and outcomes of Themes 1 and 2), group awareness (an outcome of Being Present with Others), and modelling. The following sub-themes of Theme 4 were both techniques for Being Present with a Group and outcomes of Being Present with a Group: discernment, helping the group see what is present, helping the group to see alternative perspectives, and managing the group's emotions.

The ability to make a Mindful Shift of Focus/Attention was presented by participants as an outcome of their mindfulness practice and their experience of being mindful and present. The participants described the ability to step back and notice (taking perspective), seeing what was taking place and understand what was needed (gaining discernment), and then being able to shift

focus, typically from a situation toward practicing mindfulness, but often shifting focus from themselves to other people or from the other people back to themselves.

Additional outcomes were categorized as stand-alone Themes (6-10): Emotional Intelligence, Buffering of Reactivity, Resilience and Recovery, Alignment, and Improved Job Performance.

Being a Mindful Leader (Theme 11) was described by participants as an outcome of their mindfulness practice and experience being mindful and present. When comparing the participant interviews across the board under the category of Mindful Leadership, the participants presented the following techniques: being authentic, being adaptive, serving, listening, asking questions, being humble, using and understanding emotions, having an intrinsic motivation to help employees beyond the job, transformational leadership, diminishment of hierarchy, slowing down/slowing things down, and taking a humanistic approach in their leadership practice. Anecdotal outcomes were included in quotes presented in Chapter IV, such as getting back what you give to others in the sense of kindness, authenticity, adaptability, and creating a positive work environment. Let us now turn toward examining how the results of this study relate to previous research.

Research Results and Comparison with Previous Studies

Chapter II provided a thorough literature review of the research on mindfulness, including a table summary of the research results. Table 5.1, presented below, includes the summaries of research results from the literature review and compares those results with the results of this study. The results of this research study, using qualitative, narrative inquiry with phenomenological interviewing and thematic analysis will be presented in Table 5.1. by Theme

and Sub-there when and where this study can confirm, not confirm, or expand upon the previous research studies.

Table 5.1
Literature Review Research Compared to Research Findings in this Dissertation Study

	Mindfulness Research	Reference	This Research Study	Themes/Sub-themes from this Study
1	Reduction in reactions to chronic pain.	Kabat-Zinn (1990)	Not Confirmable	N/A
2	Reduction in pain and pain reactivity.	Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, and Burney, (1985)	Not Confirmable	N/A
3	Meditation may change brain and immune functions in positive ways	Davidson et al., (2003)	Possibly Expands Upon	Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-Regulation Theme 3, Sub-theme 3.2. Self-Regulation Theme 7: Buffering of Reactivity
4	Emotion regulation, negative mood recovery, and improve health	Davidson, (2004)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-Regulation, 2.11. Humanistic Approach
5	Emotion regulation, with regard to regulating the amygdala	Gotink, Meijboom, Vernooij, Smits, and Hunink, (2016)	Confirmable and Expands Upon (except regarding the amygdala)	Theme 3, Sub-theme 3.2. Self-Regulation Theme 6: Emotional Intelligence Theme 8: Resilience & Recovery
6	Stress reduction in the workplace	Galantino, Baime, Maguire, Szapary, and Farrar, (2005); Wolever et al., (2012); Weinstein, Brown, and Ryan,	Expands Upon	Theme 1: Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach

Table 5.1
Literature Review Research Compared to Research Findings in this Dissertation Study

	Mindfulness Research	Reference	This Research Study	Themes/Sub-themes from this Study
		(2009); Klatt, Buckworth, and Malarkey (2009) ; Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, and Kreitzer (2013)		
7	Improving employee well-being, decreasing burnout, and increasing coping.	Grégoire, Lachance, and Taylor, (201)5; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, and Lang, (2013); Krasner et al., (2013); Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, and Kreitzer (2013)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach Theme 8: Resilience & Recovery
8	Reducing stress and increasing quality of life and self-compassion in health care professionals	Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, and Cordova (2005)	Expands Upon	Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach Theme 9, Alignment
9	Increase in positive strategies of coping with stress and decrease in negative strategies of coping.	Walach et al., (2007)	Expands Upon	Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.6. Insight Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-regulation Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach

Table 5.1
Literature Review Research Compared to Research Findings in this Dissertation Study

	Mindfulness Research	Reference	This Research Study	Themes/Sub-themes from this Study
10	Stress reduction sustained one year post intervention.	Geary and Rosenthal (2011)	Expands Upon	Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.6. Insight Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-regulation Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach
11	Mindfulness is positively correlated with job performance with regard to "the mind's tendency to wander" (i.e. increasing attention, concentration, and focus)	Dane and Brummel (2014)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-Regulation Theme 10, Improved Job Performance
12	Mindfulness is positively correlated with emotional intelligence, clarity of emotional states, mood repair, and attention to emotions.	Brown and Ryan (2003)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 6, Emotional Intelligence Theme 8, Resilience & Recovery Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.4. Awareness of emotions Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with difficult emotions
13	Enhanced ability to objectively rather than subjectively view oneself.	Atkins and Styles (2015)	Possible Expansion	Theme 3, Sub-theme 3.3. Discernment (of) Self and Other, 3.4. Taking Perspective

Table 5.1
Literature Review Research Compared to Research Findings in this Dissertation Study

	Mindfulness Research	Reference	This Research Study	Themes/Sub-themes from this Study
14	Resonance, self-care, detection of stress markers, perceiving choice, recovering self-agency and upward spiralling [sic] may be central mechanisms that lead to positive outcomes (that research on mindfulness has shown).	Koutsopoulou and Simms-Ellis (2017)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 2, Being Mindful Toward Self (and all sub-themes) Theme 1, Personal Internal Mindfulness Practice Theme 9, Alignment
15	Job performance is positively correlated with mindful leaders ($p < .001$) and employee emotional exhaustion is negatively correlated ($p < .001$) with mindful leaders.	Reb, Narayanan, and Chaturvedi (2014)	Confirmable and Expands Upon mindful leader job performance.	Theme 10, Improved Job Performance
16	Increase in leader effectiveness, decrease in stress, but not confirmable as a sustained trait.	Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, and Cook (2015)	Expands Upon	Theme 11, Mindful Leadership
17	Significant positive relationship between leader mindfulness and transformational leadership	Pinck and Sonnentag (2017)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 11, Sub-theme 11.9. Transformational Leadership; Sub-theme 11.8. Intrinsic motivation to help employees beyond the job

Table 5.1
Literature Review Research Compared to Research Findings in this Dissertation Study

	Mindfulness Research	Reference	This Research Study	Themes/Sub-themes from this Study
18	Mindful observing (of internal and external experiences and stimuli) relate with the ability to lead oneself (as defined in self-leadership theory).	Further, Tutzer, and Sache (2018)	Confirmable and Expands Upon	Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.1. Noticing Attention, 2.2. Sensing into broader awareness, 2.6. Insight Theme 4, Sub-theme 4.1. Self-awareness; 4.2. Group-awareness
19	Leaders' dispositional mindfulness was positively related ($p < .001$) to direct reports' ratings of the servant leadership dimensions humility, standing back, and authenticity	Verdorfer (2016)	Confirmable and Expands Upon (from the leader's point of view)	Theme 11, Sub-theme 11.3. Serving, 11.6. Humility, 11.11. Slowing down, 11.1. Authenticity

With regard to Table 5.1, this research study was able to confirm and expand upon many of the previous research studies on mindfulness. The participants in this study were long-time mindfulness practitioners and they shared openly and thoroughly about how mindfulness affects them and they presented viewpoints into what mindfulness looks like in practice in the general context of work and leadership, as well as in everyday life. As some participants put it, mindfulness "weaves through everything," (Participant 1; p. 10); "mindfulness is a way of life…I incorporate into everything that I do" (Participant 2; p. 5). As the participants in this study described more and more information that was similar to what previous studies had revealed and valuable themes became uncovered, it became clear that this study was confirming and expanding upon previous studies. The Themes of Resilience and Recovery, Emotional

Intelligence, Improved Job Performance, Buffering of Reactivity, taking a Humanistic Approach toward self and others emerged from numerous coded instances of stories that the participants shared. In this regard, this qualitative study did just what it was intended to do: find the stories of mindful leaders and see how mindfulness affect leadership practices.

Discussion

Table 5.1 illustrated how the results of this research study compared to previous research findings. While it may be beneficial to review each Theme separately and compare it to previous research, in many cases more than one Theme was being described or presented by participants, so for ease of following the comparison, the discussion will follow the sequential research outcomes presented in Table 5.1., labelled as "Mindfulness Research, 1; Mindfulness Research 2, etc." for clarity of organization.

Mindfulness Research, 1, Reduction in reactions to chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), *2, Reduction in pain and pain reactivity* (Kabat-Zinn, Lipworth, & Burney, 1985). This study did not take into consideration whether mindfulness played a role in pain reduction or pain reactivity, as did the early studies on mindfulness, so this was not confirmable and not applicable.

Mindfulness Research 3: Meditation may change brain and immune functions in positive ways (Davidson et al., 2003). This study *may* be able to expand upon the results of the previous study with regard to self-regulation. Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10., Self-Regulation; Theme 3, Sub-theme 3.2., Self-Regulation; and Theme 7 Buffering of Reactivity are all described as learned through experience and purposefully implemented in order to not get caught up in reactivity or to lose focus/attention on the present moment. While no neurological measurements were in place for this research study, one could make the assumption that such a change in reactivity and

regulation would be measurable neurologically, thus this study possibly expands upon the previous study in the sense of providing more information on how the participants self-regulation and generate the ability to create a buffer to reactivity.

Mindfulness Research 4: Emotion regulation, negative mood recovery, and improve health (Davidson, 2004*)*. The self-work and self-care elements presented in Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11., Dealing with Difficult Emotions; Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.10. Self-Regulation, 2.11. Humanistic Approach, support, confirm, and can expand upon the previous research results. The participants in this study were very aware of their emotions, emotional reactivity, and how those emotions affect them. They were Emotionally Intelligent (Theme 6) and expressed putting for great effort to work with their emotions, understand them, regulate them, and return to an equilibrium.

Mindfulness Research 5: Emotion regulation, with regard to regulating the amygdala (Gotink, Meijboom, Vernooij, Smits, & Hunink, 2016). With regard to the amygdala, this study cannot offer any measurements; however, with regard to emotion regulation and working with the reactivity of "fight, flight, freeze," this study can confirm and expand upon the previous research. Themes 3, Sub-theme 3.2., Self-Regulation; Theme 6, Emotional Intelligence; and Theme 8, Resilience & Recovery all add insight and explanation into how this emotional regulation occurs. The participants described the ability to use their mindfulness practice to notice cues from their body to alert them to a heightened emotional state. The participants then described the methods they used to regulate the emotions, recover, and return.

Mindfulness Research 6: Stress reduction in the workplace (Galantino, Baime, Maguire, Szapary, & Farrar, 2005; Wolever et al., 2012; Weinstein, Brown, & Ryan, 2009; Klatt, Buckworth, & Malarkey 2009; Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013). While this study did

not implement any stress reduction assessments, participants did describe how their Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice (Theme 1) helped them to Recenter, Reground, and Dealing with Emotions, as well as how they took a Humanistic Approach (Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11.) toward themselves with kindness, self-compassion, non-judgment, and self-care. These elements were presented by participants as ways in which they deal with workplace demands and stress.

Mindfulness Research 7: Improving employee well-being, decreasing burnout, and increasing coping (Grégoire, Lachance, & Taylor, 2015; Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013; Krasner et al., 2013; Bazarko, Cate, Azocar, & Kreitzer, 2013). Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11., Dealing with Emotions; Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach; and Theme 8, Resilience & Recovery confirm and expand upon the previous research results. Participants discussed how their Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice (Theme 1), and Being Mindful Toward Themselves (Theme 2) helped them to deal with workplace challenges, to notice when they needed to address an issue, such as sensing burnout or experiencing negative emotions. They also shared ways of dealing with burnout and difficult emotions that led to Resilience and Recovery (Theme 8), situationally. For example, when Being Present with Others (Theme 3), they might "step back" or "leave the room/situation," Mindfully Shift their Focus (Theme 4) to a mindfulness practice, Recenter, Reground, Deal with the Emotions, and return to the situation.

Mindfulness Research 8: Reducing stress and increasing quality of life and self-compassion in health care professionals (Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005). This study can expand upon the research results through Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.11., Dealing with Emotions; Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.11. Humanistic Approach; and Theme 9, Alignment. While the frequency of the themes that expand upon the previous research across the participants, it may be worthwhile here to note that two participants in this study were in the industry of health care and

spoke about increasing self-compassion. This notion of being kind to oneself, allowing oneself to be how they are without judgment, not expected more of oneself in a day than is reasonable, having self-understanding and self-coaching and self-talk as readily available and usable tools for health and well-being were discussed by the participants. Additionally, as noted with Theme 9, Alignment, the participants also described how valuable it is to be a job that aligns with one's own values and abilities, and that doing so increases the quality of life.

Mindfulness Research 9: Increase in positive strategies of coping with stress and decrease in negative strategies of coping (Walach et al., 2007). When participants in this study were asked about how they deal with stress, they referred to their Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice (Theme 1), specially Dealing with Emotions (sub-theme 1.11.), and Being Mindful Toward Themselves (Theme 2), with regard to 2.6., Insight, 2.10., Self-Regulation, and 2.11. taking a Humanistic Approach, including self-care, kindness, and self-compassion.

Mindfulness Research 10: Stress reduction sustained one year post intervention (Geary & Rosenthal, 2011). The same themes and sub-themes just mentioned for mindfulness research result 9. In addition, participants repeatedly spoke about mindfulness being a practice, which generates the ability to have self-compassion, be kind to oneself, remove harsh self-judgment, and continue to do their best. Participants in this study had all been practicing mindfulness for more than 5 years and had integrated in into who they were and how they handled everyday life. Again, it was with a non-judgmental attitude that allowed the participants to be able to continually deal with new challenges or stressors as they arose, or deal with old stressors when they crept up on them.

Mindfulness Research 11: Mindfulness is positively correlated with job performance regard to "the mind's tendency to wander" (Dane & Brummel, 2014). Theme 2, Sub-theme

2.10., Self-Regulation and Theme 10, Improved Job Performance can confirm and expand upon this previous study. As discussed in Chapter IV, Improved Job Performance was expressed by 9 of 12 participants. Participants attributed mindfulness in aiding them to be present when it mattered most, really listen to others to see what is fully being said (or not said), helping them to manage and prioritize the day, dealing with emotions and reactivity, and being able to have a humanistic approach toward themselves and others. These, they said, improved their job performance.

Mindfulness Research 12: Mindfulness is positively correlated with emotional intelligence, clarity of emotional states, mood repair, and attention to emotions (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Analysis of the participant interviews in this study was able to confirm and expand upon this previous research. Theme 6, Emotional Intelligence was present in all interviews (a total of 46 times). Theme 8, Resilience and Recovery was present in 11 of 12 interviews. Theme 1, Sub-theme 1.4. Awareness of Emotions was present in 7 of 12 interviews, and Sub-theme 1.11. Dealing with Emotions was present in 10 of 12. Emotions, dealing with emotions, and working with and recovering from emotions and reactivity were themes across the data. Participants had much to say in this area and provided insight into how understand and work with emotions and how their mindfulness practice aids them in doing so.

Mindfulness Research 13: Enhanced ability to objectively rather than subjectively view oneself (Atkins & Styles, 2015). This study may be able to expand upon the research results of increased objectivity. Theme 3, Sub-themes 3.3. Discernment of Self and Other, and 3.4. Taking Perspective offer possible expansion in the subject. When Being Present with/for Others (Theme 3), participants described the intentional practice of trying to notice what was the other person's (i.e. the other person's emotional reaction) and what was their own reaction (i.e. to what they

were hearing). Some participants elaborated on the subject sharing how they put for great effort to not only discern what was their own and what was the other person's, but also to regulate it, such as when noticing how an experience in the past was influencing their own thinking about what they were hearing in the present. With regard to Taking Perspective, participants shared how they would put forth effort to understand the perspective of the other person and see where they were coming from, even if they disagreed with what they were hearing. Some participants described how Taking Perspective not only helped them to better understand the other person, but also to see themselves more clearly, potentially gaining insight on themselves. While this is not exactly objectively viewing oneself, it is quite close to it and suggests that the participants are likely more able to objectively view themselves than subjectively, but more research in this area would be needed.

Mindfulness Research 14: Resonance, self-care, detection of stress markers, perceiving choice, recovering self-agency and upward spiralling [sic] may be central mechansisms that lead to positive outcomes (Koutsopoulou & Simms-Ellis, 2017). Themes 1 (Personal, Internal Mindfulness Practice), 2 (Being Mindful Toward Self), and 3 (Alignment) all provide data that can confirm and expand upon the previous study. The connection between these two studies seems only a matter of synonyms (i.e. "resonance" and "alignment"). The participants shared about how having their mindfulness practice (Theme 1) and Being Mindful Toward Themselves (Theme 2) were the foundation upon which they were able to Be Present for Others, Groups, and in Leadership situations. Also, another clear connection is simply that the positive outcomes only come from the techniques/practices (described above), confirming what the previous study states.

Mindfulness Research 15: Job performance is positively correlated with mindful leaders and employee emotional exhaustion is negatively correlated with mindful leaders (Reb, Narayanan, & Chaturvedi, 2014). Theme 10, Improved Job Performance explores and explains how improved job performance is related to mindfulness practice and mindful leaders. Employees of mindful leaders were not interviewed in this study, so nothing can be said in this particular area.

Mindfulness Research 16: Increase in leader effectiveness, decrease in stress, but not confirmable as a sustained trait (Wasylkiw, Holton, Azar, & Cook, 2015). While this study did not objectively measure leader effectiveness, participants in the study were all asked how mindfulness practices affected their leadership practices. Theme 11, Mindful Leadership captures what the participants shared as what they deemed were "effective" or beneficial leadership traits that were improved through mindfulness practice. Decrease in stress was discussed above.

Mindfulness Research 17: Significant positive relationship between leader mindfulness and transformational leadership (Pinck & Sonnentag, 2017). Theme 11, Sub-theme 11.9., Transformational Leadership and Sub-theme 11.8., Intrinsic Motivation to Help Employees Beyond the Job confirm and expand upon the previous study. As described by Avolio (1999) and Bass and Avolio (1990) transformational leadership goes beyond a transactional working relationship toward caring about colleagues in ways to see them achieve their highest human potential. As described in Chapter IV, six participants described an Intrinsic Motivation to Help Employees Beyond the Job and five participants described elements of Transformational Leadership as related to how mindfulness affects their leadership. This study can confirm the

previous study's assertions while also expanding upon it through narratives and accompanying thematic analysis.

Mindfulness Research 18: Mindful observing (of internal and external experiences and stimuli) relate with the ability to lead oneself (as defined in self-leadership theory) (Further, Tutzer, & Sache, 2018). This study can confirm and expand upon the previous study through Theme 2, Sub-theme 2.1., Noticing Attention, 2.2., Sensing into Broader Awareness, 2.6., Insight, 2.8., Enhanced Discernment; and Theme 4, Sub-theme 4.1., Self-awareness, 4.2., Group-Awareness, and 4.7. Discernment. Participants described the ability to notice what was going on in the present moment internally and externally and then determine the best course of action or in-action based upon what was present. The discernment of what was present and what was needed was the key point in this area that related to the ability to lead oneself, to know what to do and take appropriate action.

Mindfulness Research 19: Leaders' dispositional mindfulness was positively related to direct reports' ratings of the servant leadership dimensions humility, standing back, and authenticity (Verdorfer, 2016). This study can confirm and expand upon the previous study from the leader's point of view. Theme 11, Sub-theme 11.3., Serving, 11.6., Humility, 11.11., Slowing Down, and 11.1. Authenticity provide insight on how the leaders in this study intentionally practiced these sub-themes in order to be an effective leader. Participants attributed mindfulness practices and experience being mindful and present in aiding them in their ability to be mindful leaders with regard to these sub-themes.

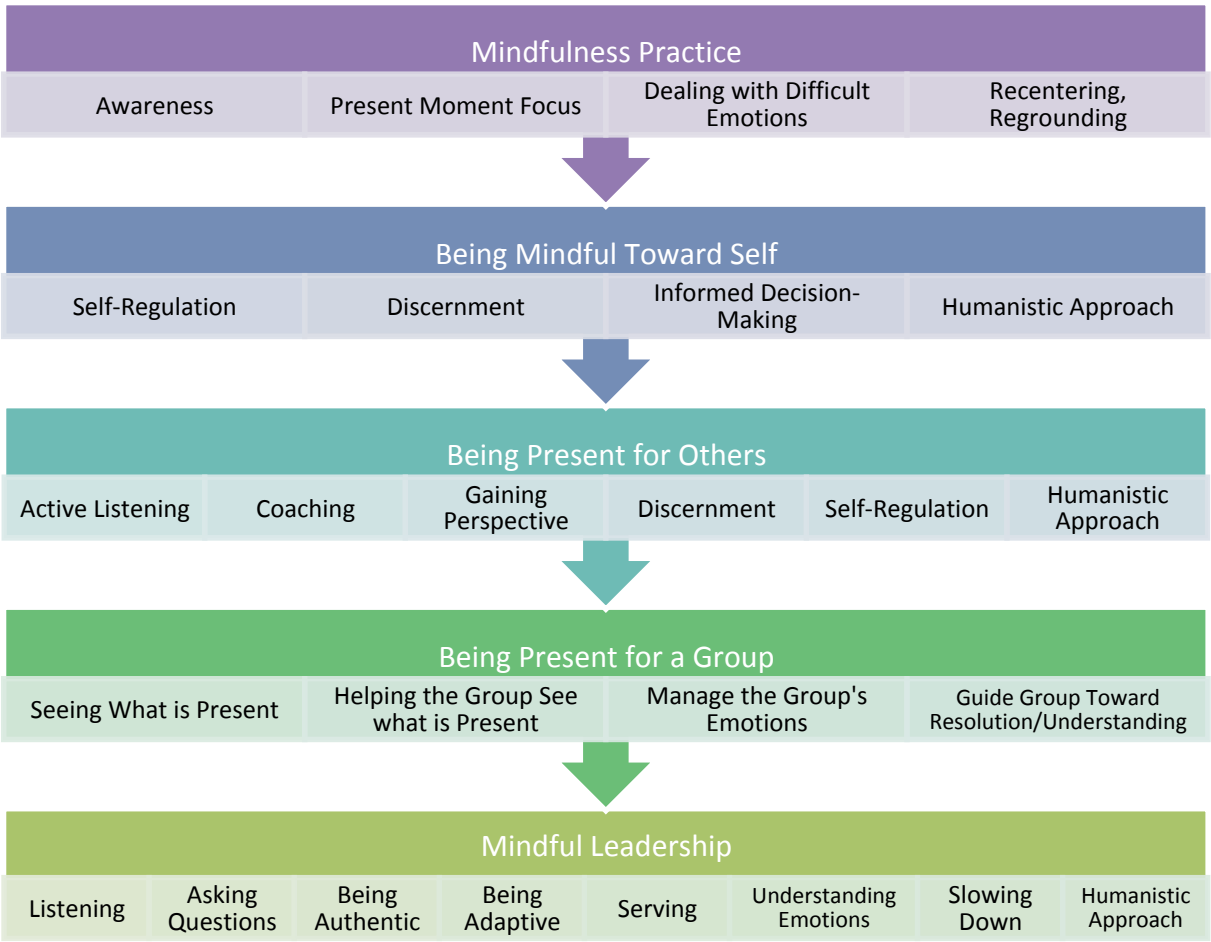
Toward a Model of Mindful Leadership

The findings from Chapter IV presented a deep look into how mindfulness practices affect leadership practices. From the very first of the 16 interviews it became clear that

mindfulness affects leaders in a holistic way, that is, it affects their approach to most everything they do, reaching beyond their leadership roles. Participants described how mindfulness helps them to work on themselves, work with other people and groups, and act and serve in their leadership roles. Participants discussed how mindfulness helped them when working with their own supervisor and also when they worked with people they supervised. They spoke about how they dealt with their own emotions, the emotions of others, of groups, and of the emotional responses that their leadership decisions and actions would generate in others. The participants discussed what it meant to lead and what it meant to be mindful and what that looks like as a "mindful leader." The contributions of the participants were generous and valuable.

Building upon this observation, a model began to emerge from the data, as depicted in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. A Model of Mindful Leadership



From Figure 5.1 it is clear that the first four themes and the final (11th) theme suggested a progressive model that answers the research question of how mindfulness practices affect leadership practices and illustrates mindful leadership.

First, the participants all had a mindfulness practice (Theme 1) in which they were able to deeply work on themselves, notice how they were in the moment, deal with what they were experiencing, and reemerge. The mindfulness practice was of the utmost importance. It was presented as the core and foundation upon which the participants were able to build.

Second, the participants were able to continue to be mindful toward themselves (Theme 2) throughout the day, maintaining a sense of awareness and attention that helped them to self-regulate emotions and reactivity, gain discernment, and make more informed decisions, all while being kind, compassionate, and/or nonjudmental toward themselves.

Third, they were then able to extend this approach of being mindful toward themselves to being present for others (Theme 3). Being present for others was described as a purposeful and effective method of serving others through the giving of their full attention—active listening, offering coaching, gaining perspective from the other, and doing so with the same kindness, compassion, and nonjudgment that they offer themselves—all while continuing the self-regulation their own emotions, reactivity, and attention, coaching themselves to stay in the moment, and gaining discernment from listening and discussing.

Fourth, the participants were able to modify being present for others to being present with a group (Theme 4). In addition to the attributes shared of being present with others, being present with a group included the ability to notice and pick up on things happening in the group setting often much earlier than other people, which offered the opportunity for the participants to purposefully and with a humanistic approach help the group to see what was present, help the group to manage emotions, and also to guide the group, when appropriate, to see alternative perspectives and/or potential resolutions to what they were dealing with.

Fifth, the participants discussed how all of this informed and guided their leadership practices, describing how they were and what they did as mindful leaders (Theme 11). As leaders, participants described listening, asking questions, serving, being authentic, being adaptive, using and understanding emotions (themselves and others), slowing down, and taking a humanistic approach toward others as the way in which they led mindfully.

The participants also described how they were able to mindfully shift their focus and attention (Theme 5), most often toward their mindfulness practice, in order to recenter, reground, and/or deal with emotions as they arose. This particular action accompanied by the ability to be able to sharply focus in on the present moment and use an enhanced level of discernment in order to know whether the participants needed to focus on the group, on particular people, on themselves, or on leading. The mindful shift of focus with enhanced discernment of what was needed in the moment was one of the most striking and valuable findings in the study. When leaders are able to not only pay attention to what is in front of them, but are also able to notice the subtleties of their own motivations and concerns as well as those of others involved, they are seeing a picture that is more comprehensive. Then, as they are taking in all that they are seeing, their mindfulness practice allows them to take a step back to see what is really going on and using discernment, shift to what is needed in the moment. Participants described just needing to pause and ask questions, listen, or interrupt negative dialogue in order to get the group back on track, instead of impulsively reacting. While the action of listening or interrupting narratives is intriguing as was described by participants as effect, it is the ability to notice that that is what was needed that was most striking—that the participants could more clearly see what was taking place and shift to meet the need.

Participants expressed a sensitivity toward the present moment accompanied by a set of "tools" to use based upon what they discerned was needed in the moment. One participant described it like this: "…the biggest thing for me with mindfulness is that I have lots of tools now to deal with difficulty that I never had before, so different ways of…just holding difficult emotions, or situations, or individuals that…feel difficult in my life and, and especially in my work" (Participant 11, 2nd interview; p. 2). Essentially, the participants described the ability to

move into the present, really see what is present, discern what is needed, then choose the action that is needed, even if the best choice of action was determined to be not acting at all, and then remerge back to the present moment. Mindful leadership, then is the ability to see oneself, others, the situation(s), the complexities and emotions at all levels (intra- and inter-personally), and then to step back, integrate it all, and with a humanistic approach—lead. Leading mindfully is a continual extension of one's own mindfulness practice. Leading mindfulness is an intention to be centered, grounded, aware of the present moment, and able to deal with whatever comes up through maintaining a nonjudgmental awareness and sensitivity to changes coming and going from moment to moment. Additionally, participants described a level of self-efficacy, knowing the value of their mindfulness practice and their ability to lead in a way that they found as ideal and valuable not only to themselves, but also for others and their organizations.

Implications for Leadership

What may be the most significant implication for leadership that this study may offer is that the simple practices of mindfulness have the potential to ripple out through one's life in ways that take shape as some of the best practices across multiple leadership theories and models. As was discussed in Chapter II, many theoretical connections have been drawn between mindfulness and leadership practices and while the authors (Carroll 2006, 2008; Gonzalez 2012; Marturano 2014; Bunting 2016; Sinclair 2016; Hougaard & Carter 2018) claimed that the studies were empirical, the data remains proprietary. What can be identified from the literature are the numerous crossover themes that emerge, specifically: attention, awareness, unbiased observation, self-regulation, accessibility (of the practice), adaptability, authenticity, and resilience. This study can confirm these finds and expand upon them with narratives.

A few leadership theorists (i.e. Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Heifetz & Linsky, 2002) have offered direct (theoretical) connections between mindfulness and effective leadership performance. Boyatzis and McKee (2005) asserted that "great leaders are emotionally intelligent and they are mindful: they seek to live in full consciousness of self, others, nature, and society" (p. 3). This study found that the mindful leaders in this study were emotionally intelligent and had an intention to be mindful toward themselves and fully present with others.

Heifetz and Linsky (2002) referred to an essential leadership skill, that of "getting off the dance floor and going to the balcony," which they reference as "…what the Buddhists call… 'mindfulness'" (p. 51). Heifetz and Linsky (2002) asserted that "attention [is] the currency of leadership," and built their theory of adaptive leadership (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) upon this basis of regulation of attention, awareness, and observation "moving outside in and moving inside out" (p. 8). Participants in this study explicitly described the self-regulation of attention and emotions, while maintaining awareness of themselves, others, and the situation. Further, the participants' ability to slow down, step back, take perspective, gain discernment, and make informed decisions fits quite well with the simple metaphor of the dance floor and balcony provided by Heifetz and Linksy (2002), and Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009). As was intended, this study provides some insight on how the leaders are able to not only get off the dance floor, but also to know when to do so, as they gained discernment through practice.

Two other aspects of Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's (2009) adaptive leadership model related to the results of this study. The first is that of "creating a holding environment," described as a place that "consists of all those ties that bind people together and enable them to maintain their collective focus on what they are trying to do…[through] shared language, shared orienting values and purposes…lateral bonds of affection, trust, and camaraderie, and vertical

bonds of trust in authority figures and the authority structure" (pp. 155-156). This relates well with Theme 4: Being Present with a Group, and Theme 3: Being Present with Others. Much of what was shared in Theme 4: Being Present with a Group, had to do with giving full attention to the group (sub-theme Group Awareness), helping the group see what is present, and helping the group see alternative perspectives. As stated previously, the ability to Being Present with the Group was an outcome of Theme 3: Being Present with Others. Being Present with Others included a sub-theme of Relationship Building as participants described their efforts to listen to and understand those with whom they worked (horizontally and vertically) with a humanistic approach.

The other aspect of Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's (2009) adaptive leadership model related to the results of this study was their description of "creating a *personal* holding environment" (pp. 292-293). Creating a personal holding environment is described by Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's (2009) essentially as self-care, recognizing the stress that comes from leading adaptive change, listening to one's body, and getting good rest and exercise. This directly related with participant's in this study reporting taking a humanistic approach toward themselves (in Theme 2), which included self-care; and using their mindfulness practice to help them manage themselves (Theme 1), which included somatic awareness, mindful/focused movement/exercise.

In servant leadership, "lifting others" is presented as a measurement of leadership effectiveness—knowing that a key indicator to the servant leader is seeing others are lifted up by the leadership. Participants in this study described this in multiple ways, from the humanistic approach toward others, both within and without a formal hierarchical relationship, as well as with their intentions for serving employees beyond the job, helping them to become better

people, coaching them, and guiding them. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter II, servant leadership theory, presented by Greenleaf (1977), focused on a specific way of being. In the case of servant leadership, the way of being is that of a servant—to colleagues, direct reports, and the organization. As Greenleaf (1977) describes the way of being, he asserted that "framing all of this [discussion on being a servant leader] is awareness, opening wide the doors of perception so as to enable one to get more of what is available of sensory experience and other signals from the environment than people usually take in" (p. 27). The connection between components of servant leadership theory and mindfulness are now clearer and confirmable through this research study, especially with regard to the participants' ability to intentionally become aware of the themselves, others, and the situation. Furthermore, the data also showed that 10 of 12 participants described serving as an essential part of being a mindful leader.

Transformational leadership was discussed in Chapter II as potentially relating with mindful leadership practice. Burns (1978) identified a two-tiered model of leadership, one of a transactional nature (i.e. a bonus given for a sales increase) and the other of a transformational nature (i.e. raising the level of motivation and morality). Further expanding upon Burns' (1978) foundation, Bass and Avolio (1994) expanded the framework stating that transformational leadership elements include inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence; and transactional elements include contingent reward and management-by-exception. Good et al. (2016) suggested that mindfulness may be related to transformational leadership, especially the component of individualized consideration. Individualized consideration is "representative of leaders who provide a supportive climate in which they listen carefully to the individual needs of followers…leaders act as coaches and advisers while trying to assist followers in becoming fully actualized" (Northouse, 2016, p. 193).

Clearly a connection may be made between transformational leadership and mindful leadership practice, as mindful leaders in this study reported coaching and modeling as an intention to help others beyond the job. Good et al. (2016) suggested that '"the improvement in attention qualities conferred through mindfulness may give leaders richer perception of followers' needs….one way that leaders high on dispositional mindfulness may build high-quality relationships is by attending to the needs of followers, thus providing them with relational support that leads to employee flourishing" (p. 129).

Good et al.'s (2016) assertions regarding the possibility that mindfulness may build high-quality relationships is important to consider, as relationship building was a reported outcome of mindfulness practice in this study. Carmeli, Brueller, and Dutton (2009) asserted that quality relationships among organizational members are highly beneficial and lead to an increase in psychological safety (i.e. people feel more comfortable being themselves without fear of negative consequences); however, they also state that the achievement of quality relationships is challenging. While it was not explicitly explored in this study, the participants did describe stories and scenarios that suggested intentions of building high-quality relationships and generating psychological safety both for themselves and for those with whom they regularly worked with. The participants in this study frame this more along the lines of their intentions to be fully present for others, to listen to them, make sure that they were heard, and serve them as best as they could, and that relationship building was an outcome of this practice. More could be explored in this area in future studies as the two concepts of Being Present for Others and building high-quality relationships and generating psychological safety may be more closely connected than can be reported from this study.

Participants in this study also described attaining resonance with work, alignment with their purpose and values, and helping make the corner of the world that they live in a better place, through their own actions, in-action, discernment, and presence. The potential impact of mindfulness upon leaders and leadership outcomes is extraordinary, not only because mindfulness may provide a means for people to begin to understand the complexities that surround themselves and others, but also to make the workplace a much more positive environment. When organizations include an emphasis on the people within the organization, not just the profit margin or the measurement tools of achieving the mission or task completion, but also on employee well-being and alignment, there is a shift beyond the transactional nature of the employee-employer relationship to something bigger—transformation, learning, development, and perhaps altruism and self-actualization. While this may be wishful thinking, it is worth exploring in future studies.

At the same time, the participants cautioned potential mindful leaders of a number of things that need to be considered. First of all, they said that not everyone sees and perceives the value of being a mindful leader. "…Others may perceive it as being too soft," (Participant 5; p. 13). Expanding upon this, another participant shared that,

> "…initially mindfulness can…maybe foster some traits that are not valued particularly in American society and it can be easy to be…misjudged, our, our powers for good can be easily misjudged. So initially I think that could be a downside to it, but, you know, in the long term, I have to say that it always wins. It always wins to be, to be a compassionate…caring and thoughtful leader." (Participant 8; p. 13)

Other participants remarked about how mindfulness takes time to learn and cultivate: "…after 22 years it's, it's still very deliberate; and it takes focus, time, and energy" (Participant 12; p. 16). Still, other participants talked about how being mindful can slow you down; however, this was not presented as a poor quality trait, rather as something that should be understood, that slower is better and ultimately—and counter-intuitively—faster.

Digging a bit deeper, participants shared a need for understanding the balance of taking a step back for internal reflection and moving forward with informed decisions:

> "I think there's a little bit of a sweet spot…I'm also pretty practical…and…I think mindfulness at its best is both rooted and in the world and I think sometimes people can mistake it for being…like too belly-button gazing and not outward facing enough, does that make sense? You know, it can go too far if you're not staying present, if you're becoming just, you can get stuck, I think, in your mind, pretty easily…and so there has to be enough awareness to know when to…stop and reflect and when to step forward….. but I feel like when I stop and I'm mindful, I make better decisions" (Participant 10; pg. 13-14)

The insight from participant 10 is another reminder that being a mindful leader is built upon having a solid mindfulness practice, generating the ability to be present and aware.

Another point that was made was the need to recognize, understand, and be prepared for what it means to be open and authentic in a leadership position. Participant 6 put it this way:

> "I think if one chooses to practice in an authentic way that mindful leadership would entail, you have to be willing to be vulnerable, open, and have a pretty clear sense of appropriate boundaries. If you don't feel safe enough to do that, or are unwilling to have that come back on you occasionally, then this represents another reason not to practice from this perspective. So, while I don't actually believe in thick skin, or at least I don't have it, I think you're level of maturity and coping need to allow for appropriate responses when being genuine and authentic may get you stepped on" (Participant 6; p. 22)

Other participants shared similar cautions, such as needing to have the ability to pick oneself up when things fail by being able to practice mindfulness and be mindful of how things are affecting them. A key point and constant reminder that the participants offered is that mindful leadership is founded upon working on oneself—the inner work, participants stated, is required in order to lead in this way. In second interviews, participants spoke strongly about this—inner work as required.

Despite all the glorious potential of mindful leadership and the cautious stories that participants provided, mindful leadership is clearly an area that needs more attention and research, especially in the fields of leaderships, management, and human resources. Many of the

participants learned mindfulness on their own and then slowly began to incorporate it into their work lives, gaining wisdom through experiencing their own successes and failures. With studies like this one and others to come, mindful leadership could be taught and coached in a progressive way, just as this study suggested.

Further Research

As just mentioned, further research is certainly needed on mindful leadership. While this study has been able to present the stories and experiences of 12 mindful leaders, it was exploratory by nature. With the outcomes from this study, further studies could be generated in terms of measurements of mindful leadership, measurements of the factors of mindful leadership, and searching for correlations.

A few of the participants had suggestions for further studies. "I'd be curious to know if there's a correlation between mindfulness and ethical decision making" (Participant 10; p. 14). This participant and others discussed ethics in leadership and they felt that the mindfulness practice generated an ethical consideration in themselves that then affected things outwardly, toward staff and the organization. Another participant had a suggestion for exploring what he, as a leadership consultant and coach, has seen as a limitation in leadership that mindfulness or emotional intelligence may help overcome:

> "I think that's probably worth exploring either in, in this research project or in a follow on, of is that perception really out there, anecdotally it seems like it's out there, but…is that perception out there and is there evidence to support it, that, you know, there's, there's a ceiling to your leadership effectiveness that you can't break through without doing some of this work, and it might be connected to EQ, you know, developing you emotional intelligence, your mindfulness, your consciousness, doing the inner work." (Participant 12, 2nd interview; p. 14).

Additionally, while not tested in this study, there does appear to be a potential connection with years of applied mindfulness practice and levels of adult development. Many participants

described “then and now” scenarios, of how they were “then,” and how they are now, suggesting that after practicing mindfulness for so long, they have changed and matured in positive ways. Further research could potentially uncover how mindfulness may be related to stages of adult development.

As mentioned above, there is also room for further research with regard to how mindfulness practice may relate to improvements in high-quality relationships and the increase of psychological safety, something suggested in this study, but not explicitly explored.

Another research study that would be quite interesting would be with regard to leadership theory instruments and mindful leaders. Many studies have been conducted as a pre- and post-intervention to measure if leaders were more mindful after a mindfulness course/intervention, but I would like to see a study that has mindful leaders completing a survey that also includes validated instruments across adaptive leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership, transformational leadership, situational leadership, and relational leadership theories. A mixed method study in this area would be even more helpful, as survey participants who scored highly across the leadership theories could be interviewed in order to gain additional insights and narratives. Much is still left to be explored along the lines of mindfulness and leadership practice.

Practical Application

Individual leader-level. Perhaps the most practical application that this study can offer is generating the habit of stepping back, pausing, and/or slowing down when one feels emotionally reactive. Best practices from participants suggest that in order to step back and pause, one has to be able to notice when their body has reacted. The application then, is in developing the ability of noticing if the breath has changed, if muscles have tightened (especially

fists and jaw), as they can then become an alert system instead of part of a reactionary system that takes over. Participants described the ability to shift focus when the "alert system" has been noticed, to then stop and try to reground through taking a few deep breaths, sensing into the feet on the floor, and then shifting to cognitively recognize the reactivity, bring in nonjudgment, see the whole picture through gaining a little space and more perspective, and then choosing a response—even if the response is to leave the situation or just to name or label the emotional reactivity. The mindfulness practice in this area is greatly benefitted by a regular practice; however, it can be achieved in the moment by turning toward the experience instead of turning toward the "perceived threat." For example, learning to see the emotional response and label it in one's own mind, "Wow, that comment made me incredibly angry." This interruption of reactivity can be a game changer.

Another practical application is around the humanistic approach that came up so often in this study. Participants had generated the ability to be kind to themselves, to have self-compassion, and to practice self-care. The participants took the time to see how they were doing and if they were not doing okay, they did not beat themselves up; rather they gave themselves permission to be that way and then looked ways to work with it. Participants described the need to just go on a walk, take a yoga class, or get away from work as a means to being kind to themselves and take care of themselves. This then leads to being able to offer others the same kindness, compassion, and now empathy, promoting self-care to others and perhaps even changing the culture around what it means to be an employee where they work, creating a workplace environment where kindness, compassion, empathy, and self-care are seen, understood, valued, and adopted.

Another practical application for those who do practice mindfulness or who are planning on starting, is to begin to recognize when the mindfulness practice has enhanced the ability to see what is present in others and in groups, and then to recognize that a level of discernment needs to be gained in order to inform oneself of when and how to use this information. Not all people are ready to hear that others can see their emotions, notice their patterns, or be informed of how they affect their environment as much as they do. Some participants suggested asking permission from others before sharing observations, while others described trial and error, but being okay when they were wrong by removing self-judgment. Nonetheless, the ability to speak up or "speak the truth" were presented by some of the participants as their leadership contribution, their ability to positively affect an environment by giving voice to that which is not being voiced. Perhaps, then, sharing tactfully and with a humanistic approach are recommended.

Organizational leader-level. While the above recommendations all stem from specifics found in this research study, what would be truly valuable as a practical application is a solid, sequential training program designed by mindful leaders to develop mindfulness practices for the context of leadership application. Such a training program could be highly beneficial to both new and established leaders. Coaching from a mindful leadership perspective would also be highly beneficial and help participants to sustain what they learned from a training program, as mindfulness is an ongoing practice of learning, evolving, and returning to the present moment, cultivating the abilities shown in this study through experience and practice over time.

Additionally, while there are a few mindful leadership groups and conferences, it would be beneficial for a network of mindful leaders to be formed in order to create the space for conversations such as those shared in this study to occur. This would provide the opportunity for

mindful leaders to not only share their stories, but also share best practices, and offer coaching and support for others and receive it themselves.

Researcher's Experiences with the Process

I felt extremely lucky to have the chance to speak with the participants in this study. Each one of them shared so much and after having interviewed them, transcribed their interviews, and reviewed those transcriptions dozens of times, the participants' insights and stories have truly affected me regarding what it means not only to practice mindful leadership, but also in how to articulate it. I find myself sharing tidbits of wisdom extracted from the participants' stories quite often. More so, I find myself following their advice and suggestions. Each participant came to the interview with such rich life experiences and shared so openly and reflectively that I was truly touched. My experience of interviewing and analyzing the interviews has certainly changed me for the better.

At the same time, I certainly experienced a sense of comparing myself to the idealized stories and experiences that the participants shared. I experienced some envy and awe, as well as general excitement about having had such deep and meaningful conversations with leaders in their fields of work. There were times when I examined my own leadership with a critical and comparative eye and I did not fully like what I saw. But, I had to bring mindfulness practice into the experience of these internal responses. Being a mindfulness practitioner, I turned toward the thoughts and experiences, recognized how they were affecting me, and worked to incorporate what I saw in the participants as best practices into my own leadership practice. It is not easy to bring a humanistic approach to difficult emotions or with difficult people. Mindful leadership truly is a continuous, daily practice, that is humbling, and yet insightful, revealing, enabling, and informative when used.

I learned a great many things while conducting this research. Beyond the knowledge of conducting a dissertation research study, which was challenging and rewarding in its own right, I found that it was highly valuable for the participants to have the opportunity to share their stories, both for them and for this research study. It was also highly valuable for me to hear their stories, process with them, reflect afterward, and come back to second-level interviews with deeper questions, searching for meaning. Some of the conversations that ensued were deeply insightful for both interviewer and interviewee. The coming together of mindful leaders to talk about the practice, the experiences, the stories, and the general intention of just trying to make the world that we live in a better place for all of us was highly beneficial and validating. The discussions held in this study were about understanding the human experiences and recognizing how we as people of influence through our leadership roles can intentionally, positively affect the human experiences of those around us. There was camaraderie around creating positive change, of generating self-development, of making improvements upon ourselves and helping those around us to achieve the same. The impact here is resonant on a high-minded and heart-centered level. When we are able to see how the external world affects us internally, and see how our external actions affect other people's internal conditions, we begin to see a connection between inner and outer that enables practitioners with a means to interrupt negative conditions, situations, or automatic reactivity and stay on the idealized path. Mindfulness offers a means of addressing situations and surprises organically, seeing what is transpiring in the moment and being able to make informed choices, distanced from reactivity. I don't believe that I would have been able to complete this dissertation without my mindfulness practice and it has made all the difference. I am grateful and humbled by the experience. May readers be as well.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

PHDLC - IRB consent form

This informed consent form is for leaders who we are inviting to participate in a dissertation research project titled "The Relationship Between Mindfulness and Leadership: How Mindfulness Practices Affect Leadership Practice".

Name of Principle Investigator: James Van Auken
Name of Organization: Antioch University, PhD in Leadership and Change Program
Name of Project: The Relationship Between Mindfulness and Leadership: How Mindfulness Practices Affect Leadership Practice

Introduction
I am James Van Auken, a PhD candidate for Leadership and Change at Antioch University. As part of this degree, I am completing a project to explore the experiences and stories of leaders who have a regular mindfulness practice. I am going to give you information about the study and invite you to be part of this research. You may talk to anyone you feel comfortable talking with about the research, and take time to reflect on whether you want to participate or not. You may ask questions at any time.

Purpose of the research
The purpose of this project is to explore the experiences and stories of leaders who regularly practice mindfulness. This information may allow us to better understand how mindfulness may or may not aid leaders and leadership.

Type of Research Intervention
This research will involve your participation in an hour-long interview, where your unique perspective, experiences, and stories will be considered, explored, and compared with others. Each of these interviews will be recorded solely for research purposes, but all of the participants' contributions will be de-identified prior to publication or the sharing of the research results. These recordings, and any other information that may connect you to the study, will be kept in a locked, secure location.

Participant Selection
You are being invited to take part in this research because you have identified yourself as a leader who practices mindfulness and are willing to be interviewed. You should not consider participation in this research if you are not in a leadership position, you are a minor, or are not willing to be interviewed and surveyed.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate. You will not be penalized for your decision not to participate or for anything of your contributions during the study. You may withdraw from this study at any time. If an interview has already taken place, the information you provided will not be used in the research study.

Risks
No study is completely risk free. However, I do not anticipate that you will be harmed or distressed during this study. You may stop being in the study at any time if you become uncomfortable. If you experience any discomfort as a result of your participation, employee assistance counselors will be available to you as a resource.

Benefits
There will be no direct benefit to you other than sharing your stories, but your participation may help others in the future.

Reimbursements
You will not be provided any monetary incentive to take part in this research project.

Confidentiality
All information will be de-identified, so that it cannot be connected back to you. Your real name will be replaced with a pseudonym in the write-up of this project, and only the primary researcher will have access to the list connecting your name to the pseudonym. This list, along with recordings of the discussion sessions, will be kept in a secure, locked location.

Limits of Privacy Confidentiality
Generally speaking, I can assure you that I will keep everything you tell me or do for the study private. Yet there are times where I cannot keep things private (confidential). The researcher cannot keep things private (confidential) when:

- The researcher finds out that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused
- The researcher finds out that that a person plans to hurt him or herself, such as commit suicide,
- The researcher finds out that a person plans to hurt someone else,

There are laws that require many professionals to take action if they think a person is at risk for self-harm or are self-harming, harming another or if a child or adult is being abused. In addition, there are guidelines that researchers must follow to make sure all people are treated with respect and kept safe. In most states, there is a government agency that must be told if someone is being abused or plans to self-harm or harm another person. Please ask any questions you may have about this issue before agreeing to be in the study. It is important that you do not feel betrayed if it turns out that the researcher cannot keep some things private.

Future Publication
The primary researcher, James Van Auken reserves the right to include any results of this study in future scholarly presentations and/or publications. All information will be de-identified prior to publication.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw
You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so, and you may withdraw from the study at any time without your job being affected.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you may ask them now or later. If you have questions later, you may contact James Van Auken, [email address removed].

If you have any ethical concerns about this study, contact Lisa Kreeger, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Antioch University Ph.D. in Leadership and Change, Email: [email address removed].

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Antioch Institutional Review Board (IRB), which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected. If you wish to find out more about the IRB, contact Dr. Lisa Kreeger.

DO YOU WISH TO BE IN THIS STUDY?
I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____
Day/month/year

DO YOU WISH TO BE RECORDED IN THIS STUDY?
I voluntarily agree to let the researcher record me for this study. I agree to allow the use of my recordings as described in this form.

Print Name of Participant_____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____
Day/month/year

To be filled out by the researcher or the person taking consent:

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to

the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent_____

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent_____

Date _____
Day/month/year

Appendix B: Sample Excerpt, Coding, and Theme

Transcript Excerpt	Initial Coding	Theme/Sub
I: So you mentioned on this survey that you've been practicing that for 22 years? P: Yeah…so, I guess I first started practicing meditation and yoga…around 18, 19 years old…and really out of spiritual exploration and curiosity was how I first started to explore. [P-10:40, p2]	Established Meditation Practice [P-10:40, p2]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Meditation Focused/mindful movement/exercise [P-10:40, p2]
So, I needed to learn how to find space to get through that and I found that practicing…what mindfulness or meditation for me was the first practice that I started playing with…in the mornings before I would go into my day and then in the evening to recenter myself at the end of the day was a little bit of how I survived in some ways during that time. [P-10:40, p2]	Mindfulness Meditation Practice Mindfulness > Self [Technique] • Twice Per Day [Outcome] • "Recenter" • "How I survived" difficult people at a job [P-10:40, p2]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Meditation Recentering Knowing the value of practice [P-10:40, p2]
I also started practicing yoga a lot during that time and I've always been in touch with kinda mind, body, spirit connection…so, yeah, I, I, it became habit during that time [P-10:40, p3]	Mindfulness > Self [Technique] • Mind, Body, Spirit Meditation and • Yoga Practice [P-10:40, p3]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Focused/Mindful Movement/Exercise [P-10:40, p3]
And…have found that it's a way to kinda ground me when there feels like there's a lot of chaos in life. [P-10:40, p3]	Mindfulness > Self [Outcome] • "Ground me" when there is "chaos" [P-10:40, p3]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Regrounding [P-10:40, p3]

And I find that it's both an intentional daily practice as well as a being able to just be aware in a moment when it's really difficult or stressful or intense or chaotic that I can return to a center in mindfulness. [P-10:40, p3]	Mindfulness > Self [Technique] • "Daily practice and • being aware in the moment…" [Outcome] • returns her to a "center" [P-10:40, p3]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Daily Practice Recentering Knowing the value of the practice **Being Mindful toward Self** Sensing into broad awareness Practicing Mindfulness **Mindful Shift in Focus/Attention** to mindfulness practice [P-10:40, p3]
Yeah, yeah… I mean I think that a part of it's developing the habits where it can happen to be aware enough that it's needed in that moment. [P-10:40, p3]	Mindfulness > Self [Technique & Outcome] • Develop the habit to be aware that mindfulness is needed [P-10:40, p3]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Daily Practice Knowing the value of the practice **Being Mindful toward Self** Enhanced Discernment [P-10:40, p3]

The other is just breath, I mean I think that breath is always the fastest, easiest way to kinda reground…you know just stopping and taking a breath. [P-10:40, p3-4]	Mindfulness > Self [Technique] • Stopping and taking a breath [Outcome] • Reground "Breath is the fastest way to reground" [P-10:40, p3-4]	**Internal, Personal Mindfulness Practice** Awareness of breathing Regrounding **Being Mindful toward Self** Stepping Back/Pausing **Mindful Shift in Focus** to practicing mindfulness [P-10:40, p3-4]
Sometimes I'll even, if I need to step away or be in my car or I can actually like create a space where I, if I need to go somewhere else and just recenter, [P-10:40, p4]	Mindfulness > Self (Work) [Technique] • Remove herself (if needed), • create a space to recenter [P-10:40, p4]	**Being Mindful towards Self** Stepping back—Leaving the room/situation/space Practicing Mindfulness [P-10:40, p4]

and so I think that I can just settle into my body and notice…what's happening around or notice rising anxiety or tension and just be aware of it, not that I need to, like, fight it, but even just that awareness of it…helps me notice what's happening…and can…help relieve some of the anxiety. So I think more than anything it's a noticing and a breathing. [P-10:40, p4]	Mindfulness > Self [Technique] • Settle into her body and notice • Just awareness helps • "Noticing and breathing" [Outcome] • Relieves anxiety of intense situations [P-10:40, p4]	**Being Mindful toward Self** Sensing into broad awareness Insight—emotional Self-Regulation—Emotions **Practicing Mindfulness** Awareness of body Dealing with difficult emotions **Emotional Intelligence** [P-10:40, p4]