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BEYOND STRESS REDUCTION: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF INTRAPERSONAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH MINDFULNESS INTERVENTIONS

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Mindfulness-based programs are becoming increasingly common in workplace settings as a means to manage worker stress and enhance resilience.

The healthcare sector has been an early-adopter of mindfulness as a means to mitigate workers' exposure to trauma and high levels of stress, which can result in fatigue, burnout and sub-optimal patient care. In spite of the avalanche of new empirical and theoretical studies of mindfulness programs published over the past ten years, there remains a relative dearth of high-quality qualitative research describing the process and outcomes of programs from the perspective of participants, including their longitudinal impacts. This paper describes qualitative findings of an evaluation of two workplace mindfulness programs involving over 190 healthcare workers, using pre- and post-intervention qualitative surveys as well as focus groups. The study explores participant experiences, described in their own words, and the impact of these programs one year after completion. We draw on the stories gathered from participants to craft an inductive model of mindfulness and its impacts on the lives of novice practitioners. Using metaphor as a method to elucidate

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this model, we describe the transformative impacts of mindfulness for workers, including impacts on stress, resilience, insight and well-being.

We also discuss how qualitative research methods can inform efforts to enhance the quality and evaluate the impact of mindfulness programs in the workplace.■