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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVITY TRAINING AND THE  
PRACTICE OF PAUSE FOR LEADERS IN A WORLD OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirement for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Steven M. Ralph, Jr.

May, 2017

Kent Rhodes, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughter and son. You both bring so much love and joy to my life. May you never lose your curiosity, playfulness or creativity.

and

In loving memory of my grandfather, Neil, who inspired me to pursue my dreams and achieve my educational goals. Starting at a young age, he encouraged me to see the value of higher education and provided the guidance that led towards this path.

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## ABSTRACT

The exponential growth of technology is driving a pace of change that is consistently disrupting industries around the world. At the same time, creativity has been identified as a top quality future leaders need to possess to navigate these turbulent times (IBM, 2010; Walinga, Cunningham, & MacGregor, 2011). This qualitative phenomenological study explores the role of pause in enhancing personal creativity and creativity training experiences for leaders. While research studies in the fields of creativity, leadership development and information overload are plentiful, there is a lack of research in how the practice of pause might impact creativity training experiences or influence a leader in how they function throughout this tech saturated world.

In this study, 11 creativity training experts were interviewed regarding the pause practices they have adopted and what role the practice of pause plays during the creativity training experiences they conduct for leaders. Six themes emerged: Creativity experts in this study reported that their practices of pause produce positive benefits, involve nature and/or outdoor activities, typically limit or avoid technology, time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity training experience, the practice of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement and pause practices in training are likely influenced by the creativity training environment.

Recommendations include exploring generational perspectives of technology and pause practices, examining the impact of retreats in creativity training, and investigating cultural dynamics related to pause practices. This study presents key findings for both researchers and leadership development professionals about the role of pause as a

personal practice to enhance creativity, as well as a practice within creativity training that has the ability to enhance the learning experience.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background

In a world comprised of constant economic shifts and uncertainty, leaders must overcome a mass array of challenges and acquire new skills to keep organizations competitive. IBM conducted a survey in 2010 that asked 1500 CEOs and general managers to identify the most important quality for a leader in today's world. The results indicated that creativity is that most important quality that a leader should possess (IBM, 2010). This also aligns with the American Management Association's survey to 500 CEOs that revealed 'practicing creativity and innovation' as the top way to survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Walinga et al., 2011).

Due to the increasing challenges of the global marketplace, organizational leaders will need to embrace and consistently nurture their creativity. "Rapid advancement of technology, globalization, and increased competition have all served as forces that require organizations to adapt and change" (Reiter-Palmon, 2011, p. 1). These increasing challenges will require leaders to actively develop their creative problem-solving skills in order to face problems with fresh insights and to facilitate organizational change and empower employees. Additionally, leaders who cannot empower creative expression and foster innovative approaches to business miss a key ingredient to developing a successful brand.

Strategy, creativity and leadership are to a brand what fuel, heat and oxygen are to a fire: reduce one and it flickers, remove one entirely and it is extinguished. It is in the combination of these three disciplines that the energy of a brand rests. (Van Gelder, 2005, p. 396)

Having only external and environmental factors drive a leader to find opportunities to develop their creative leadership abilities is not enough. Internal motivation to pause from everyday challenges to grow and become a creative leader is essential. This "...intrinsic motivation, defined as the drive to do something for sheer enjoyment, interest or personal challenge of the task itself (rather than for some external goal), is conducive to creativity, whereas extrinsic motivation is generally detrimental" (Hennessey & Amabile, 2010, p. 581).

In the arena of leadership development, creativity has the potential for being overlooked. Creativity is commonly associated to the artistic field, but it also is critical to the study of leadership as well.

Leaders who wish to foster creative thinking and change must recognize the importance of all the facets of creativity. They must understand their own and other's creative abilities. They must master the creative process and be able to facilitate this process in others. (Puccio, Mance, & Murdock, 2011, p. 28)

While there is significant research in both the field of creativity and leadership, examining the role of pause as a practice to enhance and fuel a leader's creativity is in need of deeper exploration. Research into various practices of pause is not new. Over the years, examination into such pause practices as meditation, retreats and exercise have revealed a multitude of health benefits, physically, mentally and emotionally. More recently, books such as *The Power of Pause* (Guilmartin, 2010), *A Deliberate Pause* (Robertson, 2009) and *The Pause Principle* (Cashman, 2012) began to stress the importance of adopting the deliberate practice of pause in today's busy world to become more effective and impactful, both personally and professionally. However, further

exploration into the ability for leaders to pause for self-reflection and awareness to stimulate creative thinking can be worthwhile amidst this ever changing world.

Pause is the fundamental growth process by which we can move from management effectiveness to leadership innovation. Pause liberates us from the imprisonment of the reactive 'stimulus/response' pattern of non-agile management and frees us to proactively cultivate the possibilities that derive from the 'stimulus/pause/multiple responses' of curious, learning-agile leadership. (Cashman, 2012, p.126)

### **Statement of the Problem**

Our world is experiencing exponential technological growth that is significantly disrupting industries. Hagel, Brown, Smoylova, and Lui (2013) assert that when exponential technologies merge and combine in a new and innovative fashion, we can see the magnitude of disruption. They also report that "the current pace of technological advance is unprecedented in history and shows no signs of stabilizing as other historical technological innovations, such as electricity, eventually did" (p. 2). Regardless of profession, many people are being impacted by these rapid changes in ways they could not expect. Hagel et al. (2013) go on to acknowledge that companies are forced to keep up with the evolving technological changes. This, in turn, puts the pressure on the leadership of these organizations. Leaders in this culture have the opportunity to become the disruptive, change agents or be disrupted and forced to change.

Essentially, the leaders of tomorrow will need to be sharp, nimble and highly creative to navigate these turbulent times. VUCA, a military term created following the events of 9/11, stands for Volatile, Unpredictable, Complex and Ambiguous to describe



the uncertain and fast changing times we live in (Cashman, 2012; Levey & Levey, 2011, Levey & Levey, 2013; Slocum, 2013). How can leaders stay creative to solve the variety of complex and disruptive problems of the VUCA world we live in? Cashman (2012) asserts that pausing is the answer that can flip how we know VUCA into what Bob Johansen, ten-year forecaster and author, sees as Vision; Understanding; Clarity; Agility. Never before have we had this massive influx of information coming at leaders. Leaders who embrace moments to pause and create the space to reflect, can prepare themselves to make more calculated decisions that lead to greater innovation. Levey and Levey (2013) state,

When overwhelmed by stressful circumstances, the higher order 'executive functions' of our brains literally shut down, shunting control of our critical decision making to more primitive and emotionally reactive brain centers that increase our tendency for panic and mental paralysis—responses that only exacerbate already desperate circumstances. (p. 34)

It is becoming apparent that our VUCA world and information overload create situations where leaders need to step back and pause to find the creative solutions to life's most pressing problems. However, with the demands of leaders growing each day, there is very little guidance on how to pause to stay creative enough to lead their organizations into further innovation.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to examine the characteristics of pause practices that creative experts have personally embraced to maximize their creative potential, as they facilitate creative growth in other leaders through their training

experiences. Exploration of the role of pause within training experiences these creative experts facilitate will also be considered. This qualitative research study uses a phenomenological approach through interviewing 10 creativity experts who either consult, coach or facilitate creativity workshops for various leaders.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions for this dissertation are:

1. What are the characteristics of the pause practices adopted by creativity experts who facilitate creativity training experiences for leaders within organizations?
2. What role does pause play in creativity training experiences for leaders who attend events facilitated by creativity experts?

### **Significance of Topic**

This topic of study is significant to the field of organizational leadership, both for leaders and for the organizations they lead. First, with the exponential growth of technology only increasing and disrupting countless domains, how leaders embrace pause practices to stay creative amidst the unfolding chaos will be quite valuable and timely. The responsiveness of a leader in today's tech saturated and shifting climate can be a deciding factor in the success and wellbeing of that leader and the organization they are leading.

Living in our information society, we are constantly barraged with information whether we ask for it or not (Edmunds & Mooris, 2000). This reality is highlighted when Marr (2015) states,

...digital technology has evolved at a far quicker rate than the physical evolution of the brains we use to decipher and put it to use. Our brains aren't built to cope with the ever increasing volumes of data we are trying to cram into them – and this is leading to brain malfunction in the form of stress. (p. 1)

With the unprecedented growth of information and technology overload, there is little research to identify how leaders are supposed to cope to stay creative and therefore, innovative in their roles. In fact, Batalo (2012) urged further research studies to explore what methods and techniques might boost creative attitudes and consciousness, while also investigating the dynamics behind these approaches. This study is important because it examines the various elements of pause practices adopted by creativity experts that may serve as a catalyst in fostering creativity within other leaders.

This research topic will also identify any elements of a pause practices that are utilized during creativity training which can contribute to enhancing a participant's learning experience. Researching this topic provides insight as to how the incorporation of pause can be strategically placed with a creativity training experience to foster greater creativity in participants. This research will contribute to the field of creativity training to better serve leadership development.

### **Research Design Overview**

This research study is a qualitative study. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) point out that in a qualitative study the researcher collects "...numerous forms of data and examines them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation" (p. 147). Various themes and patterns develop through the qualitative analysis process (Patton, 2015).

With the various approaches within qualitative research, this study is designed as a phenomenological study. In conducting a phenomenological study, Creswell (2009) states "...the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants" (p.13). The researcher plans to conduct interviews with 10 participants who are considered creativity experts in that they have and currently conduct creativity training for other leaders.

This research study aims to identify themes from the interviews that give greater understanding on the impact of pause practices adopted by creativity experts that help them stay creative and how these practices can be modeled for others wanting to enhance their creative potential. The researcher will also explore if and how these interviewed creativity experts incorporate pause within their creativity training experiences.

### **Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions**

This study will include creativity experts who have been facilitating creativity training experiences to leaders for at least 3 years. The participants in this study were limited to North America. Given that this is a qualitative study, the main tool used is interviews.

There are limitations to this study. The major limitation to this study is that other creativity experts outside North America will not be studied. Additionally, the size of the sample population is small and cannot be attributed to the general population. Although, location and size are limitations, this study will provide insight into the field that can be applicable to other locations. There is also a limitation due to the potential for researcher bias as a result of being a creativity facilitator to leaders as well. However,

the researcher's background in interviewing skills should eliminate researcher bias. One assumption to this study is that all participants will be honest and open about their pause practices. It is also assumed that the creativity experts work with leaders in their training experiences.

### **Key Definitions**

Below are some of the frequently identified terms in this study and their definitions. The inclusion in this chapter is to alleviate any misunderstanding and to provide a clear foundation of common terms mentioned throughout this research.

- *Creative pause*: “the time interval which begins when the thinker interrupts conscious preoccupation with an unsolved problem, and ends when the solution to the problem unexpectedly appears in consciousness” (Szekely, 1967, as cited in Karjaluoto, para. 4).
- *Creative leadership*:  

the ability to deliberately engage one's imagination to define and guide a group toward a novel goal- a direction that is new for the group. As a consequence of bringing about his creative change, creative leaders have a profoundly positive influence on their context (i.e., workplace, community, school, family) and the individuals in that.

(Puccio et al., 2011, p. 28)
- *Creativity*: “the process of developing original ideas that have value” (Robinson, 2011, pp. 2-3).
- *Exponential Technology*: Technologies that double in power or processing speed every year, while their cost halves. (Haupt, 2016).

- *Information overload*: “occurs when the transmission of new information exceeds the receiver’s ability to process” (Maltz & Kohli, 1996).
- *Innovation*: “the process of putting new ideas into practice” (Robinson, 2011, p. 3).
- *Leadership*: “the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or set of goals” (Robins & Judge, 2011, p. 376).
- *Mindful Awareness*: “paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to be with what is” (UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center, n.d.)
- *Pause*: “any space between an action and your reaction” (Guilmartin, 2010, p. 21).
- *Pause Principle*: “the conscious, intentional process of stepping back, within ourselves and outside of ourselves, to lead forward with greater authenticity, purpose, and contribution” (Cashman, 2012, pp. 7-8).
- *Phenomenological Study*: “a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon.” (Creswell, 2013, p.76).
- *Qualitative Research*:  
a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars

to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the data.

(Creswell, 2009, p. 4)

- *Retreat*: a place of refuge, seclusion, or privacy (“Retreat”, 2016).
- *Technostress*: “Technostress is described as individuals’ inability to effectively deal with information and communication technologies” (Ayyagari, 2012, p. 18).
- *VUCA*: Acronym that stands for Volatile, Uncertain, Complexity and Ambiguity used to describe our interaction with change and challenging situations (Slocum, 2013).

### **Organization of Study**

This research study is divided up into five chapters. In Chapter 1, the background of the topic of study is introduced and what the purpose of the study. Additionally, the research question, significance of the topic, research design, key definitions and limitations are also reviewed. Chapter 2 is the literature review section of this study and provides the foundation for why this research topic is critical to explore. In Chapter 2, the focus is on an in-depth examination of creativity, creative leadership, information and technology overload, the role of pause and considerations for creativity training. Chapter 3 provides the methodology for this research study. Chapter 3 also discusses the research design, sample procedures, instrumentation, data collection procedures and analysis, limitations and the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Chapter 4 discusses the research findings and analysis. Finally, chapter 5 contains recommendations for further research and concluding remarks.

## Summary

This introductory chapter provided research into challenges emerging from information and technology overload and the need for leaders to grow in their creative abilities to meet these challenges. Leaders have a responsibility to cultivate an organizational environment for success. With change as the common theme in today's society, "...organizations may create an atmosphere in which creativity and innovation are either fostered or stifled" (Mathisen & Einarsen, 2004, p. 119). The responsibility of whether organizations have a culture of innovation is up to the leaders that run the organizations.

The researcher utilized his professional network of North American creativity experts who have at least 3 years' experience facilitating creative growth in leaders to participate in this study. This chapter examined the qualitative research approach, the key terms mentioned throughout this study, as well as the limitations, delimitations and assumptions incorporated with this study.

While some studies have examined the impact of information and technology overload on individuals in and out of organizations, as well as the impact of certain pause practices on wellbeing, this study is significant because it actually explores the elements of pause practices from those who are the creativity experts teaching leaders how to be creative. This, in combination of whether and how these creativity experts implement pause in their training experiences, will inform the field on increasingly important role pause will play as we advance into an even more tech saturated world. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on creativity, creative leadership, information and technology overload, the role of pause and considerations of creativity training.



## Chapter 2: Review of Selected Literature

### Introduction

When considering the dynamics organizational leaders face in today's marketplace, change is a consistent variable experienced among organizations in industries around the world. Staying competitive depends on employees actively involving themselves in their work, generating novel products, processes and approaches (Shalley & Gilson, 2004). The pressure for ongoing organizational innovation, in addition to satisfying old and new customers involving high quality service (Mathisen, Einarsen, & Mykletun, 2012), present organizational leaders with situations that require creative leadership. Additionally, recent studies have concluded that creativity is an essential quality leaders should exercise to keep organizations competitive and advancing in their industries (IBM, 2010; Walinga et al., 2011).

The pressure for leaders to stay innovative is intensified with the increase of information overload, primarily fueled by the rapid evolution of technology. With the multitude of information channels a person has access to today, the ability to pause, or step back, is important to consider in relation to understanding how a leader can manage the mass amount of information and pressure to stay creative and lead organizations into greater innovation.

This literature review explores the following five areas of research: (a) creativity, (b) creative leadership, (c) information and technology overload, (d) the role of pause and (e) considerations for creativity training. The first section is focused on providing a foundation for the concept of creativity and an overview of the history of creative research. The second section explores the role and impact of creative leadership. The

third section of this literature review examines information and technology overload. The fourth section considers the role of pause in fostering creativity. The fifth and final section of this review is centered on the considerations for creativity training. This review of literature will demonstrate the breadth of research surrounding creativity, creative leadership, information overload, pause and the need for further exploration of considering effective training aspects and specific environments for developing creative leadership.

### **Resource Methods and Sources Used for Literature Review**

In the process of developing this literature review, research databases ProQuest and EBSCO were utilized. Select trade publications, dissertations and books were also included in composing the review of literature.

### **Creativity**

Creativity is defined as “the process of developing original ideas that have value” (Robinson, 2011, pp. 2-3). Creativity has also been defined as a “process that brings new knowledge, that is, previously unrelated elements of knowledge that are synthesized bring new insight through a mental process” (Kristensen, 2004, p. 91). While creativity involves the key feature of originality, it is argued that there are even more features to be considered. Runco, Illies, and Eisenman (2005) discuss that “creative people and things are more than original; they also solve a problem or (if the act does not involve problem solving) are in one way or another fitting or appropriate” (p. 138). Having an original idea does not always result in an appropriate response or practical use of that idea.

In research conducted by Kampylis and Valtanen (2010) exploring 42 explicit definitions and 120 collocations, as well as the positive and negative consequences of the creativity, they discovered the lack of consideration for ethical and constructive effects of creativity for society in creativity definitions. Due to this dilemma, Kampylis and Valtanen (2010) go on to design the following definition of creativity:

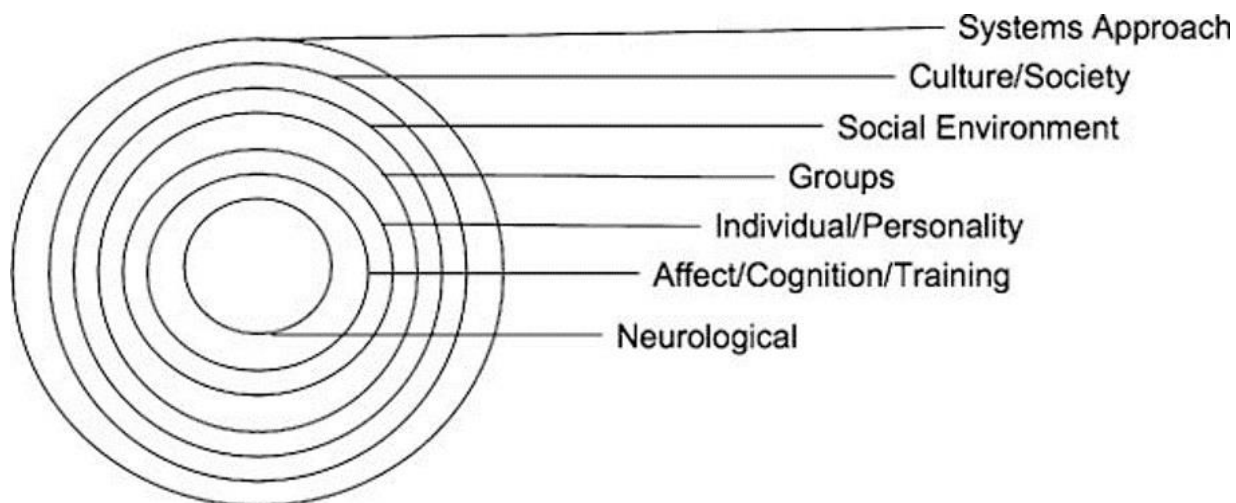
Creativity is the general term we use to describe an individual's attitude to, ability for, and style(s) of creative thinking that leads to a structured and intentional activity, mental and/or physical. This activity may be personal and/or collective, occurs in a specific space-time, political, economic, social, and cultural context, and interacts with it. The creative activity aims to realize the creative potential of the creator(s) and leads to tangible or intangible product(s) that is (are) useful, and desirable at least for the creator(s). The creative product(s) should be used for ethical and constructive purposes. (pp. 204-205)

"The study of creativity is an applied science" (Puccio, Firestein, Coyle, & Masucci, 2006, p. 19). The systematic study of creativity was launched with J. Paul Guilford in his 1950 presidential address at the American Psychological Association (Fillis & Rentschleer, 2010; Kaufam & Sternberg, 2007; Mumford, 2003). Guilford developed the divergent thinking test, a new method for studying creativity. In a summary of the history of creativity research, Hennessey and Amabile (2010) identify that beginning in the 1950s through the 1980s, the focus of creativity research centered on creative personality, creative thinking techniques and social psychology of creativity. However, since the 1990s, they report that the body of creativity research has been filled with a significantly vast array of topics related to creativity. Sundgren and Styhre

(2003) report that the trend of most creative studies tends to be focused on the individual or on four distinct aspects of creativity: the creative person, the creative process, the creative product or the creative place. The field of creativity has not been without criticism. Due to the increase of interest in this field in the recent years with a surge of books and workshops aiming to help people become more creative, some creativity scholars have questioned the validity and scientific rigor of certain methods to enhance creativity (Puccio et al., 2006).

Csikszentmihaiyi's (1996) system model of creativity provides a strong theoretical framework to understanding this subject. His approach to studying creativity includes looking at where creativity occurs. Csikszentmihaiyi states that creativity occurs with a domain or set of symbolic rules, a field or gatekeepers to the domain that make decisions on what constitutes creative value, and the individual person. In his view, the point should not be whether someone is a creative person that matters most, but whether the creativity that an individual produces will be accepted within the domain the person resides.

Hennessey and Amabile (2010), supporting a systems view approach to studying creativity, designed a model (see Figure 1) where they identify that "...creativity arises through a system of interrelated forces operating on multiple levels, often requiring interdisciplinary investigation" (p. 571). They believe the "...'whole' of the creative process must be viewed as much more than a simple sum of its parts" (p. 571).



*Figure 1. Systems view approach. From “Creativity,” by B. A. Hennessey and T. M. Amabile, 2010, *Annual Review of Psychology*, 61, p. 571. Copyright 2010 by the Annual Reviews. Reprinted with permission.*

In further evaluation of the subject and definition of creativity, it is important to distinguish creativity and innovation. As a distinct concept, innovation is described as “the process of putting new ideas into practice” (Robinson, 2011, p. 3). Without the presence of creativity, innovation cannot be achieved. It is through understanding creativity, that an individual or organization can be better equipped for innovation. “If we do not know how people generate new ideas, it is difficult to place observations about motives, dispositions, situations, and developmental change in context” (Mumford, 2003). The focus of this literature review will primarily center on creativity as a primary concept in exploration since all innovation is dependent upon a novel idea as produced through the process of creativity.

### **Creative Leadership**

Researchers often attribute different leadership model names to creative leadership that may include transformational, emotionally intelligent, visionary and

charismatic leadership (Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2004). Puccio et al. (2011) define creative leadership as:

The ability to deliberately engage one's imagination to define and guide a group toward a novel goal - a direction that is new for the group. As a consequence of bringing about this creative change, creative leaders have a profoundly positive influence on their context (i.e., workplace, community, school and family) and the individuals in that situation. (p.13)

Given the unpredictable environment we live in, creative leadership is often considered more effective to handle today's challenges than traditional managerial methods of the past (Fillis & Rentschler, 2010). It has been suggested that creative leadership can be categorized in three ways: leadership that accepts and provides extension of existing organizational paradigm, rejects and replaces an existing organizational paradigm or synthesizes different existing ways of doing something to create a new organizational paradigm (Sternberg et al, 2004; Williams & Foti, 2011). It is important in examining the topic of creative leadership to explore the relationship with transformational leadership and the impact of creative leadership on employee creativity, problem solving, and organizational innovation.

**Creative leaders and transformational leadership.** Puccio et al. (2011) point out that much research has been centered around transformational leadership in recent and current studies. In further examination of transformational leadership, they indicate that because of the focus of this leadership style on change and facilitating change, there is a link to creativity. With the presence of transformational leadership, a leader must recognize the role employees have in the relationship to foster creativity.

Employees' intrinsic motivation and perceptions of their work environment have a significant impact on the role of transformational leadership on creativity (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009).

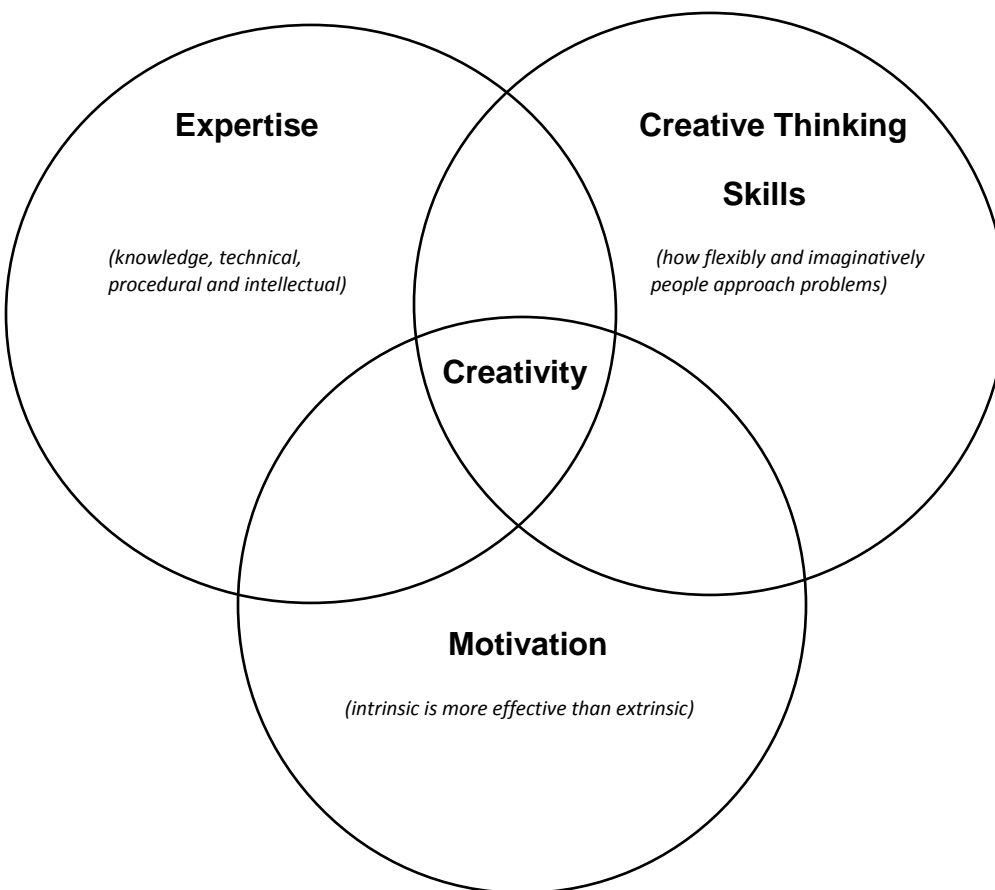
In a study of 32 Taiwanese electronics/telecommunication companies, Jung, Chow, and Wul (2003) discovered that transformational leadership can encourage organizational innovation directly and indirectly through an organizational culture where employees are free to explore innovative ideas and approaches.

Similar to the Jung et al. (2003) study, Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) conducted a study involving 163 R&D personnel and managers at 43 micro and small-sized Turkish software development companies to examine the effect of transformational leadership on the employee level of creativity, as well as organizational innovation. Results indicated that through empowerment, transformational leadership impacts employee creativity.

Oke, Munshi, and Walumbwa (2009) argue that transformational leadership is not the best leadership style during the implementation stage of the innovative process, but rather the transactional leadership style. They also conclude that transactional, rather than transformational leadership is more effective for exploratory efforts involving collaboration among firms striving to develop new outcomes. Continual similar research with other cultures would enhance understanding of transformational leadership on employee creativity and organizational innovation on a global level.

**Creative leadership and employee creativity.** In order for leaders of organizations to encourage creativity among employees, the first step should be establishing a firm comprehension of employee attitudes towards creativity and the

practice of creative thinking within the organizational culture (Fillis & Rentschler, 2010). Shalley, Zhou, and Oldham (2004) argue that employee creativity is "...a function of the employee's personal characteristics, the characteristics of the context in which he or she works, and the interactions among these characteristics" (p. 935). One model of creativity and innovation that helps leaders understand how creativity can be fostered within employees and organizations is the three-component model of creativity (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2. Three components of creativity. From "How to Kill Creativity," by T. Amabile, Harvard Business Review, p. 78. Copyright 1998 by the Harvard Business Publishing Corporation. Adapted with permission. All rights reserved.*



Robbins and Judge (2011) explain that what inspires creativity is when employees blend knowledge within a specific domain, motivation and creative thinking skills. Motivation is a factor that cannot be taught and intrinsically motivated employees will exhibit greater creativity when combining this with knowledge and creative thinking skills (Gilson & Madjar, 2011). What is important from this research is how creative leaders might use this information to facilitate motivation among employees.

Employee creativity is also dependent upon a leader's feedback and monitoring. In Zhou's (2003) study of looking at the role of a creative co-worker and role of supervisor's close monitoring on employee creativity, results demonstrated that increased supervisor developmental feedback in combination with the presence of a creative coworker enhanced greater creativity within employees. This research is further supported by Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, and Kramer's (2004) study in which results indicated that a combination of daily interaction of leaders exhibiting certain behaviors with subordinates, monitoring progress fairly, consulting on important decisions, providing emotional support and recognition can potentially influence employee perceptions, feelings, performance and creativity in their job role. Tierney and Farmer's (2011) research suggests that organizations train leaders in affirming employee creativity through feedback and conveying expectation strategies to help foster creativity identities of employees.

The willingness to take risks is another key dynamic that impacts employee creativity. Dewett (2006) surveyed 287 white collar (non-scientist) employees with each of their supervisors to examine the willingness to take risks and employee creativity. Findings show a relationship that "...employees view creative behavior as inherently

risky to some degree and that their willingness to engage this risk is related to their creativity as judged by their immediate supervisor” (p. 37).

In research conducted by Carmeli, Cohen-Meitar, and Elizur (2007), data concluded a relationship between organizational identification and job challenge with employee creativity. In a study of 175 Israeli employees and their immediate supervisors within government and education industries, results suggest that “...employees who perceive their job environment as challenging, tend to develop strong identification with their organization, which in turn translates into creative behavior” (p. 86). Further research on this topic supports that employees demonstrate more creative behavior when there is a complex and challenging job, supervisor encouragement and support, autonomy on the job and non-controlling behavior from supervisor (Shalley et al., 2004; Shalley, Gilson & Blum, 2009). These findings are important for creative leaders to consider in considering organizational structure and role design.

Continual research on employee creativity has also identified emotional intelligence of a creative leader as an important characteristic when working with employees to enhance their creative capacity. Goleman (1998) discusses that emotional competencies such as self-regulation, self-confidence, initiative, persistence and the ability to persuade are important related to the act of innovation. Zhou and George (2003) explored how leaders' emotional intelligence through the following five routes can fosters employee creativity: identification, information gathering, idea generation, idea evaluation and modification, and idea implementation.

Employee creativity also can be fostered through group and team interactions. In

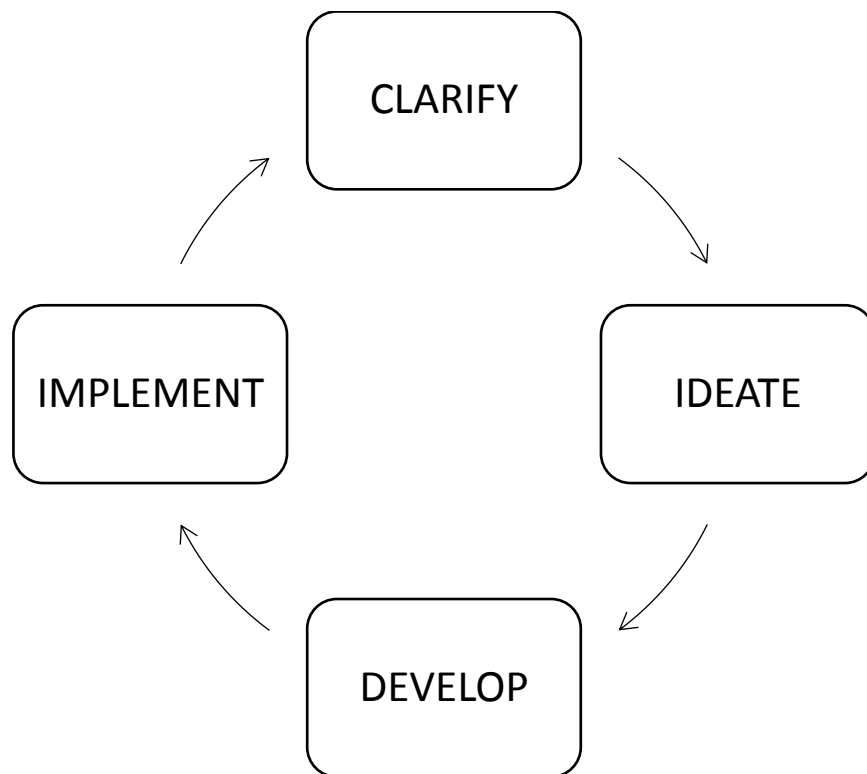
looking at developing teams within an organization to foster creativity, leaders must be aware of group cohesion. Jaussi and Dionne's (2003) research findings reveal that group creative performance is positively connected to group cohesion when the group intrinsic motivation is present. They further suggest that leaders of groups should place strong emphasis on developing group cohesion if enhancing creativity is the goal or else the creative potential of the group is compromised. Team creativity also involves a leader's role in facilitation. Danganan's (2012) research found that using brainstorming in groups requires skillful leaders to carefully facilitate the new ideas that emerge from activities.

**Creative leadership and problem solving.** Research involving creative leadership has incorporated studying creative problem solving. Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, and Strange (2002) argues that, "technical expertise and creative problem-solving skills are essential if one is to lead creative people both because they provide a basis for structuring an inherently ill-defined task and because they provide the credibility need to exercise influence" (p. 712). Over the years of creativity research, many creative problem solving models and approaches have been presented for a variety of contexts (Treffinger, Selby, & Isaksen, 2008).

Puccio et al. (2006) examine training in Creative Problem Solving (CPS), one of the most widely known creativity models. In their examination of CPS training, they suggest that research over the years demonstrates the impact of CPS in organizations is most evident in individuals' behavior, attitudes and on groups. Basadur's (2004) research has highlighted that many times people are prematurely critical and judgmental of new and promising ideas to maintain the perception of being practical. He

claims that leaders have an instrumental role in modeling open-minded thinking and providing the necessary creative problem solving training to their employees.

Although there are various approaches to the creative problem solving process, one of the most widely known began with advertising executive, Alex Osborn in the 1940s and was later developed with college professor, Sidney Parnes' in the 1950s (Creative Education Foundation, 2016). The CPS Model includes four major stages and six steps (see Figure 3 and Table 1).



*Figure 3. CPS model. Adapted with permission from The CPS Process, Creative Education Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.creativeeducationfoundation.org/creative-problem-solving/the-cps-process>. Copyright 2017 by Creative Education Foundation. All rights reserved.*

Table 1

*CPS Process and Description*

Stage	Step	Purpose
Clarify	Explore the Vision	Identify the goal, wish or challenge.
	Gather Data	Describe and generate data to enable a clear understanding of the challenge.
	Formulate Challenges	Sharpen awareness of the challenge and create challenge questions that invite solutions.
Ideate	Explore Ideas	Generate ideas that answer the challenge questions.
Develop	Formulate Solutions	To move from ideas to solutions. Evaluate, strengthen and select solutions for best 'fit.'
Implement	Formulate a plan	Explore acceptance and identify resources and actions that will support implementation of the selected solution(s).

*Note.* Adapted with permission from “The CPS Process,” by Creative Education Foundation, 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.creativeeducationfoundation.org/creative-problem-solving/the-cps-process>. Copyright 2017 by Creative Education Foundation. All rights reserved.

Reali (2013) makes a distinction that with the CPS Model, the process is more fluid and a person can enter at any of the four stages, while Basadur’s (2004) Simplex creative problem solving process identifies eight steps that need to be taken in order.

These steps include:

1. Problem finding
2. Fact finding
3. Problem identification
4. Idea finding
5. Evaluating and selecting
6. Action planning
7. Gaining acceptance
8. Taking action

Regardless of which creative problem solving strategy a leader wishes to employ, a leader should be sensitive to an employees' typical thinking process. From this, a non-typical approach to problem solving can enhance creativity within an organization (Dane, Pratt, Baer, & Oldham, 2011). In addition, leaders should initiate discussion with employees about the criteria used in idea evaluation, the consequences of implementing the various creative solutions and involve other external sources outside of the domain considered for different perspectives on the possible solutions and implementation consequences (Reiter-Palmon & Illies, 2004).

**Creative leadership and organizational innovation.** Creative leaders foster creative organizations (Mathisen et al., 2012). According to Williams & Foti (2011), Evidence from a number of studies suggests leadership has a definite influence on creativity and by extension organizational innovation. To develop the skills necessary for creativity, having the right leadership to foster such an environment is integral to the process. (p. 280)

Organizational innovation occurs when new or improved products or services are developed and there is success in transferring these products to the marketplace (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). A creative leader will lead an organization in greater innovation by improving existing practices or forging a new pathway to achieving goals (Williams & Foti, 2011). By assisting employees to depart from natural tendencies and into new cognitive pathways, leaders will help enhance creativity (Dane et al., 2011). Creative leaders are seen as those who facilitate an environment that allows for others to have the opportunities to be creative (Stoll & Temperley, 2009).

Leaders play a role in the innovation process (Byrne, Mumford, Barrett, & Vessey, 2009; Mumford, Hunter, Eubanks, Bedell, & Murphy, 2007). Oke et al. (2009) state that innovative activities can be exploratory, something completely novel or exploitative, or refining something. They assert that these innovative activities are influenced by leadership style. Furthermore, Oke et al. (2009) state that

...generally innovations tend to be the result of a strategic response or initiatives in organizations to compete effectively in the marketplace. For innovations to succeed in an organization, they require the commitment of key and strategic resources that are controlled by the top management or leadership of organizations. (p. 67)

Stenmark, Shipman, and Mumford (2011) suggest that leaders must manage organizational innovation in a series of planning stages: scanning, template planning, plan development, forecasting and plan execution. In their evaluation, organizations should develop leaders based on the ability to adapt to work environment changes

because at various stages of innovation will require a leaders' role and thinking to change.

In a recent research conducted by Mathisen et al. (2012), they studied the Norwegian restaurant sector to explore the role of leaders' creativity as a predictor of organizational creativity. Data was collected using questionnaires sent to employees, leaders and external raters measuring restaurant creativity level. In this study, results indicated positive connections between leader's creative behavior, organizational creative climates and organizational creative behavior. This study also highlights that creative leaders function as role models and have impact on encouraging creative behavior within followers. This research is in alignment with Stoll and Temperly (2009) previous research emphasizing how modeling is a powerful way leaders lead in their learning and development. Oke et al. (2009) in their research on leaders and their role in organizational innovation add further support on this issue by stating, "...leaders not only serve as behavioral role models for innovative ideas, they also serve as important means for enhancing innovative behaviors and modifying attitudes that are beneficial to innovative activities" (p. 68).

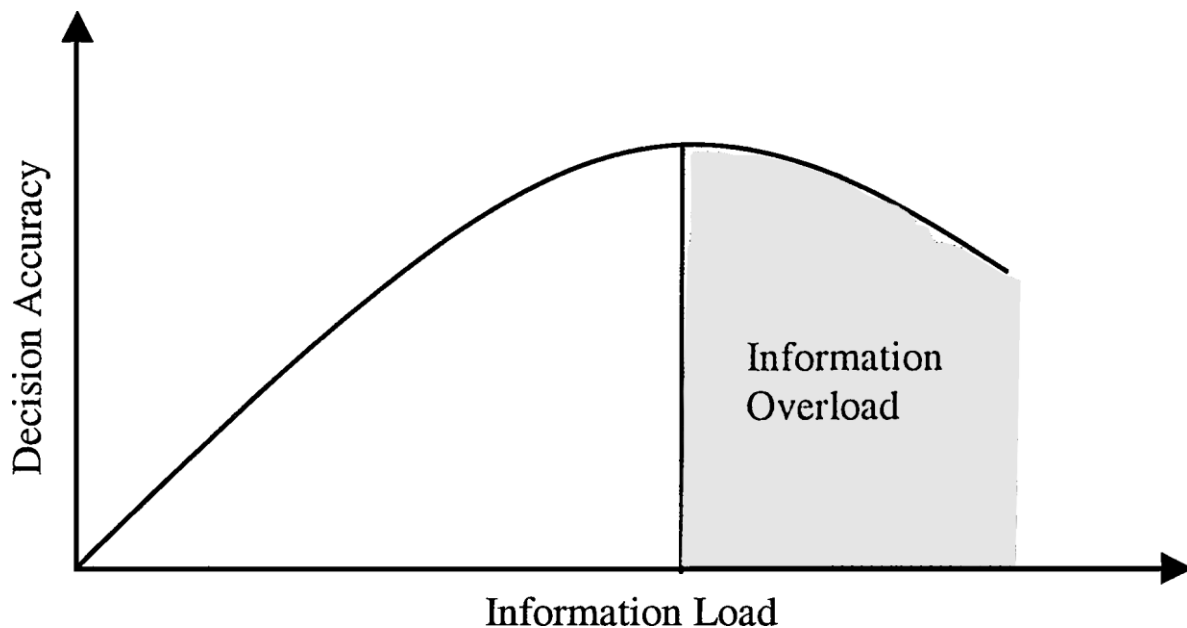
In a study examining how leaders can foster organizational innovation through providing opportunities for creative and unexpected behaviors, Jaussi and Dionne (2003) suggest that leaders desiring more organizational creativity must first realize how they are perceived as creativity role models before implementing certain unexpected behaviors and expectations. From this point, "... a leader must first ensure that he or she is being perceived as a role model for creativity and then continue to orchestrate opportunities for novel and unexpected behaviors" (Jaussi & Dionne, 2003, p. 494). A



creative leader, who understands what appropriate stimuli enhance employee creativity and ultimately the organizational innovation process, can have a positive influence on those around them and the organizational innovative capability (Oke et al., 2009).

### Information and Technology Overload

A creative leader needs to navigate through a variety of challenges. One significant challenge is how to process all the information coming in and still maintain and nourish creativity capacity. As the world has become more complex, more technologically dependent, and fast paced, the vast amount of information being produced has birthed the term, information overload. Eppler and Mengis (2004) describe that information overload occurs at a point when the flow of information a person receives becomes so great that the positive performance of decision making is negatively impacted, as reflected by the information overload U-curve (see Figure 4).



*Figure 4.* Information overload as the inverted U-curve. From “The Concept of Information Overload: A Review of Literature from Organization Science, Accounting, Marketing, MIS and Related Disciplines,” by M.J. Eppler and J. Mengis, 2004, *The Information Society*, 20, p. 326. Copyright 2004 by Taylor & Francis, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Information overload has become such a concern that the Information Overload Research Group was formed by academics who wanted to make public aware of the consequences of this crisis (Marr, 2015). The driving force behind information overload is the rapid evolution of technology. Exponential technology is “technology that doubles in power or processing speed every year, while their cost halves” (Haupt, 2016). The world has seen exponential growth of technology unlike ever before over the last 40 years and the pace of advancement it is only increasing. Marsden (2013) lists some of the more recent data on the impact of information and technology overload,

- 90% of all the data in the world has been generated over the last two years
- Information consumption in the US is in the order of 3.6 zettabytes (3.6 million million gigabytes)
- The average American consumes 34 gigabytes / 12 hours of information per day outside of work
- ‘Between the dawn of civilization through 2003 about 5 exabytes of information was created. Now, that much information is created every 2 days’ (Eric Schmidt – former Google CEO)
- In the US, people who text send or receive an average of 35 texts per day
- 28% of office workers time is spent dealing with emails
- The typical Internet user is exposed to 1,707 banner ads per month
- The human brain has a theoretical memory storage capacity of 2.5 petabytes (or a million gigabytes)
- The maximum number of pieces of information a human brain can handle concurrently is 7 (Miller’s Law)

- Overuse of social media can lead to short-term memory loss. (para. 2)

**The consequences of overload.** Information and technology overload is significantly impacting individuals, organizations and our economy. The Information Overload Research Group reported that "...knowledge workers in the United States waste 25% of their time dealing with their huge and growing data streams, costing the economy \$997 billion annually" (Rosen & Samuel, 2015, p. 110).

One of the pressures that information overload creates is the need for multitasking to manage all the information. This multitasking leads to a decrease in attention, memorization and task management compared to those that focus on one task at a given time (Rosen & Samuel, 2015). Being able to focus and nourish creative thinking on the job amidst information and technology overload is also a struggle. Amabile, Hadley, and Kramer (2002) in a study of 9000 participants working on projects requiring creativity, found that creativity thinking was greater when participants were working on one activity with one other individual, and decreased when working with a variety of people during fragmented days mixed with meetings and other events.

In a study examining information overload within organizations, Oldroyd and Morris (2012) claim its presence has been shown to negatively impact the work of the top performing employees, or stars, in organizations. Oldroyd and Mooris (2012) argue, stars are likely to possess exponentially high levels of social capital, resulting in large volumes of information flow" and therefore, "their decision quality declines and their ability to share information grinds to a halt, crippling both the performance of the star and the organization in which they are embedded. (pp. 410-411)

It becomes the role of the leadership to understand and monitor information overload among employees. In order to do this, leaders must first understand how they manage information overload themselves.

Information and technology overload has developed health concerns. Confusion, loss of memory and restlessness occur from the increase level of the stress hormone cortisol, resulting from an overworked brain processing information that is driven by the constant drive to seek out novelty, now available in almost unlimited supply (Marr, 2015). This dilemma of technology overload has also created a condition known as technostress. "Technostress is described as individuals' inability to effectively deal with information and communication technologies" (Ayyagari, 2012, p. 18).

Psychologists have spoken out that there is an addictive component resulting from technology overload. Behavioral Psychologist, Susan Weinschenk (2012), reports that dopamine, responsible for the pleasure system of the brain, can make you curious and creates seeking behavior. She concludes that dopamine is fueled by information coming in small doses, such as tweets and texts, because it doesn't end up satisfying a person and only leads to the desire for more and more. Technology, especially social media, has the potential to become highly addictive.

This issue is further fueled by the use of technology to fill emotional needs. Belski (n.d.) claims that the use of technology in the form of social media has turned into what he describes as insecurity work so we can make ourselves feel better. He states,

We thrive on friendship, family, and the constant affirmation of our existence and relevance. Our self-esteem is largely a product of our interactions with others. It is now possible to always feel loved and cared for, thanks to the efficiency of our

'comment walls' on Facebook and seamless connection with everyone we've ever known. Your confidence and self-esteem can quickly be reassured by checking your number of 'followers' on Twitter or the number of 'likes' garnered by your photographs and blog posts. (para. 4)

The consequence of information and technology overload has even resulted to deadly outcomes. Shanker and Richtel (2011) reported that information overload was claimed to be the cause of casualties in a past military operation in Afghanistan and would have been avoided if the pace was slowed for more deliberate thinking.

Information overload has a direct impact on organizational creativity. "Under the strain of information overload, it becomes difficult or impossible to fashion a learning organization that is maximizing its member's creativity and decision-making ability" (Ruff, 2002, p. 1). Pearson, Pearson, and Griffin (2009) claim that people who perceive a shortage of time due to all the information overload are not as likely to want to spend time being innovative. They further assert that the motivation to innovate is decreased when people are tired from information overload.

**Overload and the backlash.** The effects of information and technology overload has reached a point where movements have emerged to offset the barrage of information and technology. The Sabbath Manifesto (Reboot, 2010), a creative project hosted by Jewish non-profit organization Reboot, created movement adopting the National Day of Unplugging to encourage people to disconnect from technology for one day to reflect, relax, get outdoors and connect with themselves, their loved ones and their community.

Hotels have started to create digital detox vacation packages (Sekula, 2014) which allow for guest to relax and unplug for a period of time to get genuine technology free vacation. Various coffee shops have become screen free to encourage unplugging from technology and noticed an increase in sales as a result (Russell, 2014).

Retreats for adults, such as Camp Grounded, have emerged for those who would like to escape and check in their technology to pause and enjoy a period of time in nature, similar to what may be experienced in a childhood summer camp. Activities include talent shows, face-painting, archery, yoga, hiking and impromptu sing-alongs (CNET, 2014; Haber, 2013).

### **The Role of Pause**

Driven by the growth of information and technology overload, the role of pause has become an important dynamic for a leader to embrace to ensure continual growth in creativity and healthy self-care. Pause can be described as "...not immediately responding to something someone says, does or writes" (Guilmartin, 2010, p. 21).

Cashman (2012) claims

Pause, the natural capability to step back in order to move forward with greater clarity, momentum, and impact, holds the creative power to reframe and refresh how we see ourselves and our relationships, our challenges, our capacities, our organizations and missions within a larger context. (p. 3)

Pause can look very different depending on the person. Dutra (2012) explains:

Pause also creates high quality energy, increasing our resilience as leaders and our ability to deal with more complex issues. There are a number of ways to pause, physically, mentally and emotionally. A pause can be created by a walk

around the block, 20 minutes of meditation, exercising, immersing into a hobby, or simply a high-quality coffee break. The important point is to create time and space to empty your mind and then reflect and filter issues. (para. 7)

Cashman (2008) adds appreciation for nature, music, present-moment awareness, children at play, love, traumatic events and inspirational reading as moments that give the opportunity for deep reflection. While the way a pause may look for each person might be different, a deliberate pause combined with another activity can be effective.

Csikszentmihaiyi (1996) suggests that

it may be best to combine these periods of reflection with some other task that requires a certain amount of attention, but not all of it. Preferably this should involve some physical or kinesthetic component. Typical activities that facilitate subconscious creative processes are walking, showering, swimming, driving, gardening weaving, and carpentry. (p. 354)

Karjaluoto (2008) explains that the dynamics of showering that many people claim help cultivate creative ideas, can provide a model for other pause activities if the activities include the following:

- Distractions are minimized, including noise
- The body is engaged in a monotonous, mundane, or repetitive activity, freeing the mind to think about other things
- The environment is changed. (para. 12)

Pause allows a person to have the space for self-reflection and inspiration for direction in their career and personal lives. Dobrygowski (2016) highlights that successful leaders share the common trait of self-reflection, which allows a person to

question assumptions, habits and how productive these are in their lives. Some of the world's most accomplished leaders from various industries and domains have incorporated pause practices into their lives. Bill Gates, former chairman of Microsoft, would spend seven consecutive days in a secluded cottage, twice a year, reading 100 papers and reflected on future of technology. English novelist, Charles Dickens would stroll streets of London to find inspiration in observing his surroundings. American novelist, Toni Morrison, pauses to watch the sunrise to prepare her mind for creativity. Maya Angelou, late poet and civil rights activist, would rent a hotel room to pause and provide a place of solitude for her writing (Hall, 2014). Buzan and Buzan (1996) identify that great creative thinkers throughout time have paused, also described as incubation, as a way to have mental breakthroughs. They state that "Einstein instructed his students to include incubation as a necessary part of all their cogitations; and Kekule, the discoverer of the benzene ring, scheduled incubation/daydreaming periods into his daily work programme" (p. 160).

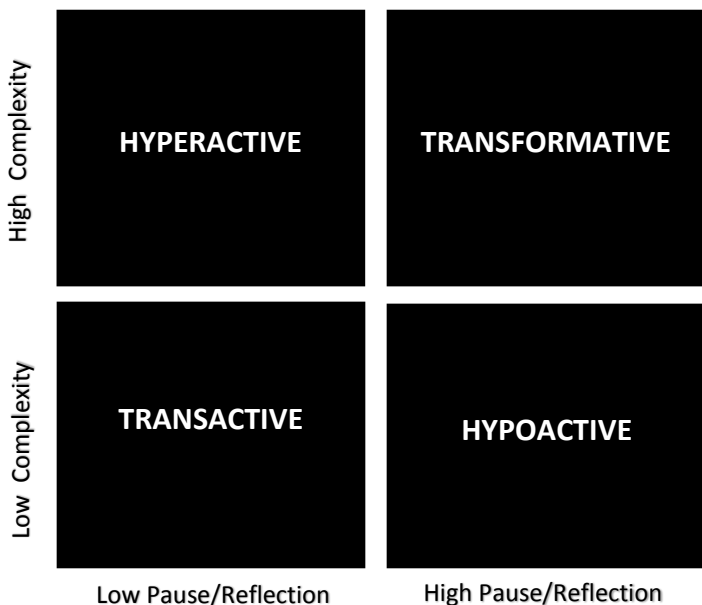
Additionally, pausing can result in generating more energy and focus in life and with projects. Former CEO of Haagen-Dazs and president of Pillsbury, Mike Paxton, pauses with regular runs and time with his family to recharge. Karen Kimsey-House, cofounder and CEO of Coaches Training Institute takes retreats to expand on vision and ideas for direction. David Rothenberger, M.D., a surgeon at University of Minnesota has incorporated a pause practice for all surgical procedures where before each surgery, all attending the procedure will pause and briefly reflect on the importance of their role and the impact of the team (Cashman, 2012).



Pausing is becoming more of a challenge as we move deeper and deeper into a tech saturated world. Belski (n.d.), states “we are losing hold of the few sacred spaces that remain untouched by email, the internet, people, and other forms of distraction” (para. 1).

With all the questions and decisions facing today’s leader, the ability to pause amidst the chaos is vital to ensuring the space needed to make innovative decisions necessary to be an effective and transformational leader. In Cashman’s (2012) *Pause Principle* model (see Figure 5), he illustrates and explains,

One of the key development shifts for moving from management effectiveness to leadership excellence is moving from the transactive and the hyperactive to the transformative by increasing the amount of high-quality pause and reflection, inside and out. (p. 270)



*Figure 5.* The pause principle model. From *The Pause Principle* (p. 27), by K. Cashman, 2012, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Copyright 2012 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. Adapted with permission. All rights reserved. [www.bkconnection.com](http://www.bkconnection.com)

**Pause, outdoors and health benefits.** While pause practices can look different for each person, research has shown pausing with interaction in nature can result in significant cognitive benefits (Atchley, Strayer, & Atchley, 2012; Berman, Jonides, & Kaplan, 2008; Bratman, Daily, Levy, & Gross, 2015; Bratman, Hamilton, Hahn, Daily, & Gross, 2015). In a study conducted by Atchley et al. (2012), participants saw a 50% increase in creative problem solving when spending four consecutive days surrounded by nature and disconnecting from technology. This is further supported by a study to examine the impact of walking on creative thinking, Oppezzo & Schwartz, (2014) found that there was a 60% increase in creative output of novel and appropriate ideas from those that were walking versus sitting. Their research also demonstrated that “100% of those who walked outside generated at least one novel high-quality analogy compared with 50% of those sitting inside” (p.1148). Additionally, another study found that pausing to walk in a forest environment resulted in the health benefit of cardiovascular relaxation, decreased negative moods and anxiety levels (Lee et al., 2014).

Other studies, such as one conducted by Kuo and Faber (2004), show the positive effects pausing to absorb the environment can have on mental health. Their results showed that green outdoor environment can reduced ADHD symptoms in children, while research conducted by Bratman, Daily et al. (2015) suggests that the natural areas in urban areas are an important resource for mental health of those within the community. In a study of patients with a hospital room that included a view of nature as opposed to an urban window view, those with a view of nature experienced shorter postoperative stays, better interaction with hospital staff, less anxiety and more positive feelings (Ulrich, 1984). Dowdell, Gray, and Malone (2011) report that nature is

known to “improve awareness, reasoning, observation skills, creativity, concentration, and imagination” (p. 24).

Research in the field of neuroscience has shown that there are many benefits to the pause practices. Having a pause practice incorporating silence can also have powerful results. Gross (2016) explains how noise has a ripple effect on the physical and emotional wellbeing of an individual.

Sound waves vibrate the bones of the ear, which transmit movement to the snail-shaped cochlea. The cochlea converts physical vibrations into electrical signals that the brain receives. The body reacts immediately and powerfully to these signals, even in the middle of deep sleep. Neurophysiological research suggests that noises first activate the amygdalae, clusters of neurons located in the temporal lobes of the brain, associated with memory formation and emotion. The activation prompts an immediate release of stress hormones like cortisol. People who live in consistently loud environments often experience chronically elevated levels of stress hormones. (para. 11)

It has been discovered that a period of silence can be responsible for the growth of new brain cell development in the hippocampus region of the brain, involving the senses and memory (Gross, 2016). Additionally, Pause practices that involve silence, such as mindfulness, can be very beneficial. This mindful awareness is defined as “paying attention to present moment experiences with openness, curiosity and willingness to be with what is” (UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center, n.d., para. 3). The pause practice of mindfulness with slow and deep breathing activate the vagus nerve, responsible for notifying the brain about the conditions of a person’s organs, resulting in

keeping a person calm and improving the cardiovascular condition (Bergland, 2013; Tan, 2015). Additionally, mindfulness has shown to strengthen the brain to rewire our habitual responses to outside stressors (Graham, 2012). Batalo (2012) suggests mindfulness can contribute to greater creativity by helping people pause to consider perceptions and thinking patterns and whether they need to make any necessary changes.

### **Considerations for Creativity Training**

As catalysts for organizational innovation, leaders are consistently presented with opportunities to grow skills through leadership development programs. Williams and Foti (2011) suggest that "...the use of training can be helpful in increasing the incidence of creative thought processes and providing educational opportunities that might enhance creativity relevant skills" (p. 291). As the world becomes more uncertain and volatile, creativity training for leaders will be important. In consideration for creativity training in leadership development, an examination of creativity training, learning transference, experiential learning and the role of environment will be explored.

**Creativity training.** In the quantitative meta-analytic research of 70 prior studies conducted on creativity training, Scott, Leritz, and Mumford (2004) discovered successful creativity training programs used domain appropriate, realistic exercises focusing on cognitive skill development and a hands on process in skill application. In addition, their study concluded that creativity training significantly impacts divergent thinking, problem solving, performance and attitudes and behavior.

There is a need for leaders to develop the necessary skills to lead innovative endeavors. Mumford et al. (2007) state that, "Although we know much about potential

influences on innovation, little is known about the actions that should be taken to develop the people who must lead these efforts” (p. 402). Williams and Foti’s (2011) research exploring this arena highlights that “...the use of training can be helpful in increasing the incidence of creative thought processes and providing educational opportunities that might enhance creativity relevant skills” (p. 291). They stress that when organizations are looking to grow in innovation, training leaders to become skillful creative problem solvers and developing an environment for fostering creative leaders will be important to consider.

One of the most important considerations in developing creativity training is recognizing the role that a domain plays in training. Baer’s (2012) research into domain-specific creativity training indicates that the purpose of any creativity training should clearly concentrate on the domain centric training to enhance creativity development in that realm or general creativity skill enhancement among various domains using a range of creative activities. Have a clear objective with creativity training will keep the training focused and the outcomes more measurable. Baer (2012) further states,

If one’s goal is to improve students’ creativity in general, however, then the exercises, activities, prompts, problems, puzzles, and questions one employs should be drawn from as many different domains as possible. To do otherwise is to waste potentially valuable creativity training efforts. (p. 22)

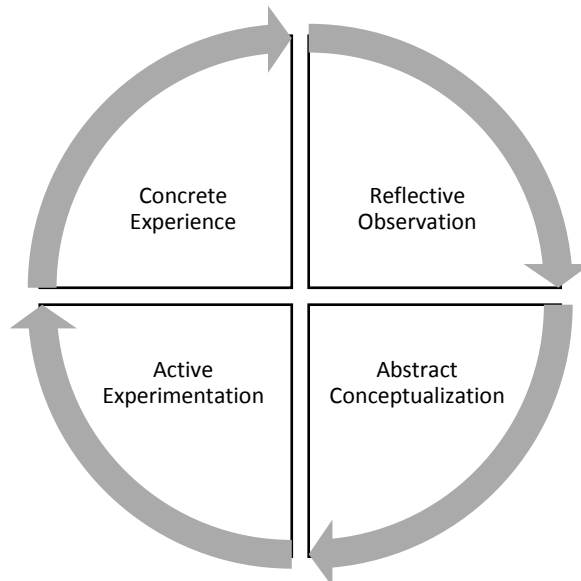
Dow and Mayer’s (2004) research in domain specificity creative training also supports Baer’s research on keeping the creativity training focused on a specific domain or enhancing general creativity skills to learn adaptability. They highlight that training people to recognize various problem types and selecting what creative problem solving

strategies are most appropriate given the specific situation or domain could be very beneficial in training.

**Training, experiential learning, and reflection.** Since the creative process can be developed, an experiential learning perspective can be adopted (Fleming, 2012). Creativity is foundational when considering promoting new kinds of learning (Stoll & Temperly, 2009). Mathisen et al. (2012) suggest that knowledge of creativity should be included within leadership development programs at organizations and an emphasis should be placed on how leaders can apply their creativity to promote a creative organizational culture. An important consideration for creative training is an understanding of experiential learning and its role in enhancing creativity training. Kolb and Kolb (2005) define experiential learning as

...a process of constructing knowledge that involves a creative tension among the four learning modes that is responsive to contextual demands. This process is portrayed as an idealized learning cycle or spiral where the learner “touches all the bases”—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting—in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned. (p. 194)

Building upon the work of John Dewey, an expert in the role of reflection, Kolb’s theory of experiential learning (see Figure 6) includes four distinct phases: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualizing and active experimentation (White, 2012). Kolb’s model of experiential learning is visualized in Figure 6.



*Figure 6.* Kolbs's cycle of experiential learning.

In considering features of experiential learning that could benefit creativity training, the role of pausing for reflection should be taken seriously. White (2012) conducted a qualitative study with undergraduate college students to see how students perceived the role of reflection in a leadership certificate program course. Results of this study indicated that participants were able to establish a significant link between leadership learning and reflection, in addition to demonstrating a preference of contemplation over written and forced reflection. White reaffirming reflections role in experiential learning, states that "...leadership education programs which frame leadership as an experience could benefit from a richer understanding of the role of reflection in students' learning" (p. 140).

**Training, learning transference, and environment.** In learning how creative leadership training can result in organizational innovation, learning transference and the environment of the training are factors to explore. In exploring the barriers to learning transference, Rusaw's (2000) analysis of training resistance indicates that the inability

to transfer the skills learned during a training experience is a common weakness among training programs. She argues factors such as trained employees lacking the power to change work conditions because of manager interference, manager insecurity of a trained employee and a manager fear of change resulting in potential failure as blockage the transference of a learning experience. Rusaw (2000) further suggests that “resistance may stem from a struggle between organizational domination and attempts to emancipate employees” (p. 249).

Contributing additional factors to Rusaw’s (2000) research focusing on factors that block learning transference of training participants, Jurow and Pierce’s (2011) study of how retreat participants either transferred or ignored insights when leaving a retreat experience and returning to work provides further insight into additional factors effecting learning transference. Through this qualitative study, two case studies were presented that indicated personal motivations and institutional roles as influencing factors on the transfer of core principles gained from the retreat to the workplace. In providing a framework for this study on learning transference, Jurow and Pierce (2011) state,

for learning to take place across contexts and for ideas to take hold in an individual’s life, people’s views of who they are and want to be, their actions, as well as their motivations for engaging in activity must shift accordingly across settings. (p. 27)

Watson and Vasilieva (2007) in their qualitative research with 50 senior leaders in two large UK corporations explored learning transference from an outdoor retreat leadership development program called Wilderness Thinking. They found that “...the process of retreat acts as a catalyst for both emotional and intellectual learning.



Through the training the participants were able to access intuitive knowledge about themselves, their lives and the impact of their leadership on the organization” (p. 242). Results of the study revealed such leadership development skill growth in areas of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and confidence through the program, There was also evidence of learning sustainability for up to three years after their retreat experience that impacted their work environments.

Stoll and Temperly (2009) argue that physical environment can encourage creative process. They conducted research that suggests that creative leadership can be enhanced. Their results found that when you take participants out of their comfort zones, creative leadership can be developed. In addition, they report that providing the right space for participants to reflect and think about the situations they face is an important condition for creative leadership.

In a year-long professional development program for public school leaders, entitled *Courage to Lead*, Jurow and Pierce (2011) analyzed how the retreat setting provided an environment for participants to open up through retreat activities related to artifacts and social practices. Their study provided insight in the impact of a retreat setting and how it generated a figured world, completely different than their work environment, with proposed types of characters, motivations, valued activities and specific desired outcomes.

An openness to experience is an aspect of research that intersects the environment of creative training. Research conducted by McCrae's (1987) stated that creativity is related to the personality domain of openness to experience. More recent research by George and Zhou's (2001) study of 149 office employees of a petroleum

drilling equipment company found that creative behavior emerged when there was openness to experience, positive feedback and a heuristic task was present.

The role the environment places in a training experience can be seen in outdoor training experiences. In research focused on a 100-day canoe experience connected with outdoor skills and leadership development, Mullins (2011) found participants'

...leadership roles required expanded repertoires and deeper perception of surroundings. Education of attention came to the fore as participants learned to lead, which required expanding and honing multiple interpersonal and technical skills. While leading, participants confronted and accepted responsibility for elements of uncertainty. That is, their leadership actions had real consequences that encouraged more focused attention to multiple moments in time. Learning to lead involved the environment not simply as a context for travel or group development, but as a multiplicity of active objects of learning. (p. 381)

In business literature with emphasis on creativity, "there is limited knowledge on how the physical space actually enhances creativity" (Kristensen, 2004, p. 89).

## **Conclusion**

Based upon the exploration of the literature, creativity is a growing topic of research. Creative leadership has grown in importance due to the critical need for leaders to adapt and lead organizations adapting to the shifting global marketplace. Leaders are faced with new challenges that require encouraging employee creativity and facilitating innovative cultures at their organizations to survive.

This exploration of literature also explored the driving force of change as seen by information and technology overload. The exponential technological growth is disrupting

industries at a rate that creates even more uncertainty as to what challenges leaders will face tomorrow. The examination of literature related to the importance of the role of pause gives a firm understanding of the various dimensions and results of pause that contribute to healthy well-being and creative thinking.

With the desire for more creative leaders in organizations, comes the challenge of how to train in this arena. The previous exploration in the literature regarding key features of a training experience that are worth developing further into creativity training. Gaining a deeper understanding of creativity, the dynamics of creative leadership, the impact of information and technology overload, the role of pause and the training aspects help prepare in the process of the next step of this research.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

With the speed of change only increasing, the need for leaders to find moments to pause and find creative solutions to the new problems is vital. Chapter 1 discussed the purpose of this research study with examining the pause practices adopted by creativity experts who conduct creative training experiences for leaders within organizations, in addition to examining the role of pause within creativity training experiences for leaders, facilitated by creativity experts. Chapter 2 of this study explored the literature related to creativity, creative leadership, information and technology overload, the role of pause and implications for creativity training. This chapter will focus on explaining the overall research methodology that is foundational to this research study. Structurally, this chapter will examine the (a) research methodology, rationale and design, (b) sample selection and procedures, (c) instrumentation, (d) data collection procedures, (e) data analysis, and (f) limitations and (g) the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process.

### **Research Methodology, Rationale, and Design**

When considering between quantitative or qualitative research methods, the researcher selected the qualitative approach as the appropriate research method for this study.

Qualitative research is based upon the philosophy of empiricism, follows an unstructured, flexible and open approach to enquiry, aims to describe than measure, believes in in-depth understanding and small samples, and explores perceptions and feelings than facts and figures. (Kumar, 2011, p. 394)

This study explores the dynamics of the role of pause for creativity experts and how that may translate into a training experience for the leaders they work with. Exploring a pause practice involves an in-depth look at the various elements and dynamics that a person may incorporate during this activity. A qualitative research approach allows for a flexible approach to gain deeper understanding of the relationship between creativity training, leadership and pause. This is in alignment with the following reasons that Corbin and Strauss (2015) claim a researcher will choose a qualitative over quantitative method

- To explore the inner experiences of participants
- To explore how meanings are formed and transformed
- To explore areas not yet thoroughly researched
- To discover relevant variables that later can be tested through quantitative forms of research
- To take a holistic and comprehensive approach to the study of phenomena. (p. 5)

Additionally, the researcher of this study connected with the common characteristics of curiosity, creativity, imagination and a sense of logic, which are found with many qualitative researchers (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). A qualitative approach will help identify common themes and experiences that would not be deeply discovered through a quantitative study. “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 6).

There are various qualitative approaches to research that have their own

purpose and format (Creswell, 2013). For the purposes of this study, the researcher selected the phenomenological approach. Creswell (2013) states that “a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon” (p. 76). In essence, taking a phenomenological approach is looking at a person’s perspective of a particular experience (Roberts, 2010).

Selecting a phenomenological approach serves the purpose of this research study. In this study, the phenomenon in examination is the pause practices adopted by creativity experts. The utilization of a phenomenological approach provided the opportunity to delve deeper into understanding the unique features of a pause practice of creativity experts and how that may be a contributing factor to enhancing greater creativity for leaders. Additionally, a deeper understanding of these pause dynamics will reveal possible opportunities to incorporate intentional pause opportunities in creativity training sessions for leaders. With this use of a qualitative method there is a great possibility to discover possible new insights about a phenomenon (Mason, 1995).

Qualitative research produces data from three possible data collection methods: in-depth and open ended interviews, observation or written documents (Patton, 2015). The qualitative phenomenological design of this research incorporated use of in-depth interviews. “Interviews yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge” (Patton, 2015, p. 14). The interviews in this study consisted of semi-structured and open-ended questions. The total length of time allowed for each interview was 60 minutes. The interviews were recorded, as approved

by participant through signature on the consent form. Upon completion of collecting data through interviews, the entire interview was transcribed. The data collected from these interviews was coded and analyzed to identify certain themes.

### **Sample Selection and Procedures**

The next phase of this research study is selecting which individuals to interview. Rather than selecting a random sample such as found in a quantitative study, a qualitative study is directed by the researcher's judgement on who will provide the most complete information (Kumar, 2011). "The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (Creswell, 2009, p. 78).

For this study, the researcher used an approach of nonprobability sampling called purposive sampling. The purposeful sampling strategy involves selection of participants, the type of sampling and sample size (Creswell, 2013). Kumar (2011) states a qualitative researcher collects data until a "saturation point in terms of discovering new information" (p. 210). Dukes (1984) recommends studying 3 to 10 subjects, and one phenomenology (as cited by Creswell, 2013). For the sample, the researcher phone interviewed 10 creativity experts who conduct creativity training for other leaders.

To be selected in this study, participants needed to meet the following criteria:

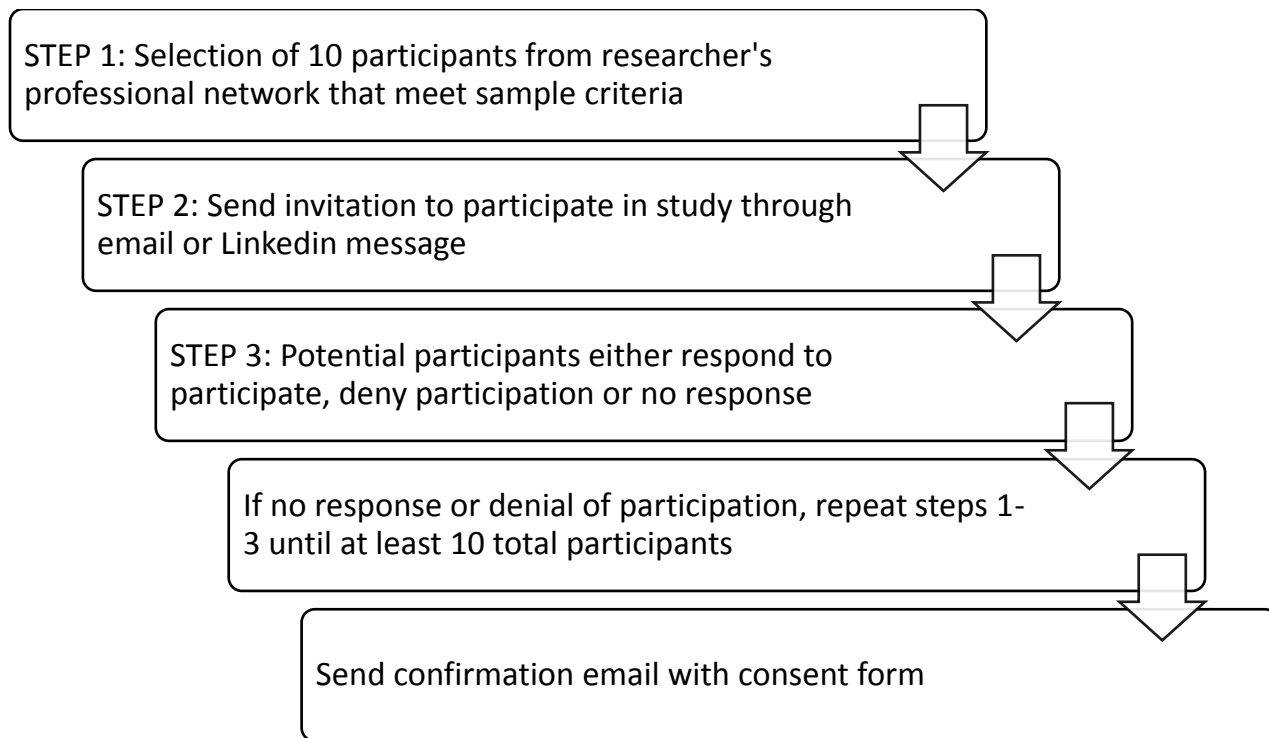
- Creativity experts who have been conducting creativity training experiences for other leaders for at least three years through workshops, seminars, coaching, retreats or presentations.

- Creativity experts who reside in North America.

The rationale for selecting the first criteria is twofold. First, selecting a participant for this research study who is an expert in the creativity field is essential when examining the role of pause with those individuals who are deep within the world of creativity. The target population for this study was experts who have a deep understanding of creativity and how to train leaders in this domain. Second, having the experience of training other leaders in creativity further confirms their ability and gives insight into the second research question exploring pause practices within a training experience. The second criterion is important in selecting the sample because too broad of a geographical territory would require a larger sample because of the multiple dynamics of cultural differences surrounding the practice of pause around the globe.

The first step (see Figure 7) in securing the participants in this research study was to examine researcher's own professional network of creativity experts. Since the researcher is a frequent presenter at creativity and innovation conferences, 10 creativity experts were identified who met sample criteria. The researcher then sent out an invitation via e-mail or LinkedIn message to inquire about their interest in participating (see Appendix A). At this point, the participants either responded in agreement to participate, denied participation or did not respond. Where there was no response or denial, the researcher reviewed his professional network to invite another individual to participate in this study. Once the 10 participants were secured, the researcher sent a confirmation email with a consent form that participants signed.





*Figure 7. Sample procedures.*

## **Instrumentation**

In designing a research study, the instrumentation used to collect the data must be appropriate to design of the study. For this particular qualitative study, the instrument selected was in-depth interviews.

Creswell (2013) states “challenges in qualitative interviewing often focus on the mechanics of conducting the interview” (p. 172). The interviews in this research study were conducted via the phone due to geographical distance. Each interview was scheduled for a 60 minute time frame, but each interview’s actual time varied up to that time limit. A common qualitative research method of observation of non-verbal communication was absent due to the phone interviews.

Creswell (2009) suggests the interview protocol when asking questions and

recording answers. This includes the following:

- A heading (date, place, interviewer, interviewee)
- Instructions for the interviewer to follow so that standard procedures are used from one interview to another
- The questions (typically an ice breaker question) at the beginning followed by 4-5 questions that are often the subquestions in a qualitative research plan, followed by some concluding statement or a question, such as, “Who should I visit with to learn more about my questions?”
- Probes for the 4-5 questions, to follow up and ask individuals to explain their ideas in more detail or to elaborate on what they have said
- Space between the questions to record their responses
- A final thank-you statement to acknowledge the time the interviewee spent during the interview. (p. 183)

Creswell (2013) further adds that “in phenomenological interviews, asking appropriate questions and relying on participants to discuss the meaning of their experiences require patience and skill on the part of the researcher” (p. 173). Because of the broad variety of pause practices a person could experience, the use of interviews in this qualitative study best provides the flexibility for participants to elaborate on this topic under investigation. The interview questions in this research study aligned with both the first research question exploring the dynamics of pause practices adopted by creativity experts and the second research question examining the application of pause practices within the training experience conducted for leaders (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Research and Interview Questions*

RESEARCH QUESTION	INTERVIEW QUESTION
<p>1. What are the characteristics of the pause practices adopted by creativity experts who facilitate creativity training experiences for leaders within organizations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your common pause practices? How often do you practice these pause practices?</li> <li>• What is the typical length of your pause practice?</li> <li>• What is the location for your pause practice?</li> <li>• What are the most important features of the pause practice for you?</li> <li>• What value does the pause practice provide for you? Please provide some examples.</li> <li>• Please describe how you avoid or incorporate technology related to your pause practice?</li> </ul>
<p>2. What role does pause play in creativity training experiences for leaders who attend the events facilitate by creativity experts?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you incorporate pause in your creativity training experiences? Can you please provide some examples?</li> <li>• At what point do you incorporate pause in your training experiences?</li> <li>• What value does pause practices bring to your creativity training experiences? Can you provide some examples of success stories?</li> <li>• Where do you usually conduct your creativity training experiences?</li> <li>• Can you describe the format of your creativity training experiences? (workshop, seminar, retreat, other)</li> </ul>

When conducting qualitative research, validity of the instrument must be taken into consideration. Kumar (2011) defines validity in terms of measurement procedures

as “the ability of an instrument to measure what it is designed to measure” (p. 178).

According to Leung (2015), validity in qualitative studies equates to “‘appropriateness’ of tools, processes and data” (p. 325). Creswell (2009) further asserts that validity involves adopting certain procedures to evaluate accuracy. Even with many researchers agreeing with the significance of validity, Golafshani (2003) states that some qualitative researchers believe the term validity does not have a place within qualitative research and instead, created other terms, such as trustworthiness, to measure their research. To ensure validity in his study, the researcher of this study made certain to make an audio recording of each interview and to make sure the transcriptions of the interviews were accurate.

In addition to validity, the factor of reliability in qualitative research must be considered as well. “Qualitative reliability indicates that a particular approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects” (Creswell, 2009, p. 232). Due to the flexibility of various methods and procedures found within a qualitative study, it becomes challenging for a researcher to have a standardized tool that ensures the same process and results upon replication, as in a quantitative study (Kumar, 2011; Leung, 2015). “A margin of variability for results is tolerated in qualitative research provided the methodology and epistemological logistics consistently yield data that are ontologically similar but may differ in richness and ambience within similar dimensions” (Leung, 2015, p. 326). To ensure dependability and establish reliability, the researcher detailed the process of each stage of this research study and the administration of the interview process, in the event another researcher would like to duplicate the study (Kumar, 2011).

## Data Collection Procedures

The data collection for this research study began in October of 2016 and concluded by November, 2016. In October, the researcher contacted the 10 creativity experts selected to interview for the study. Once the creativity expert agreed to participate in the study, the researcher sent the participant a consent form and set up a phone interview via email. Once an agreed upon day and time was set, the researcher sent a confirmation e-mail to the participant with the scheduled appointment. Participants were notified in this e-mail once again that their names were to remain confidential and would not be disclosed in this research.

During the scheduled phone interviews, with the agreement of the participants, the researcher recorded the interviews via a recording device. Next, the researcher began the data analysis process, which included coding and identifying themes in the interviews. By conclusion of data collection in November, all 10 participants were sent a letter thanking them for the time and participation in the research study (see Figure 8).

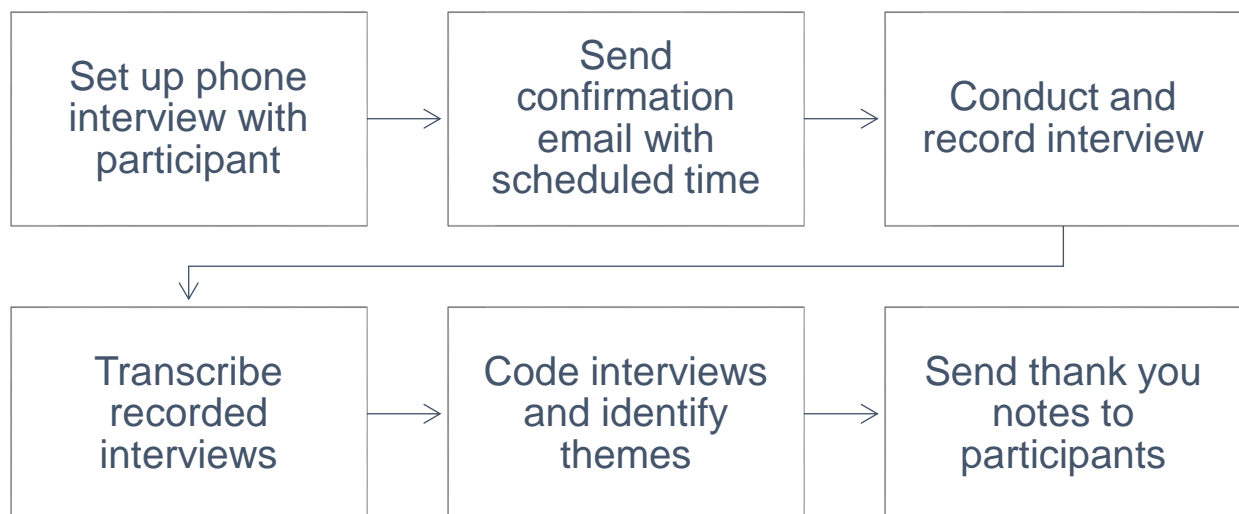


Figure 8. Data collection process.

## Data Analysis

The data in this research study was the transcripts of the interviews. Roberts (2010) states that in a qualitative study that “data are words that describe people’s knowledge, opinions, perceptions, and feelings as well as detailed descriptions of people’s actions, behaviors, activities, and interpersonal interactions” (p. 143) For this research study, the researcher chose to conduct the data analysis following a six step process suggested by Creswell (2009):

- Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis
- Step 2: Read through all the data
- Step 3: Code the data
- Step 4: Use coding process to develop themes for analysis
- Step 5: Discussion with interconnected themes
- Step 6: Interpretation of the data

In step 1, the goal was to organize a large amount of data obtained through participant phone interviews. This step involved transcribing the phone interviews. Step 2 involved carefully reading through all the transcribed interviews. In this second step, the researcher aimed to get “a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning” (Creswell, 2009, p. 185). In continuing to step 3, the coding process began. “A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldana, 2011, p. 3). During this third step, the researcher analyzed the textual data, divided the data into categories, then concluded this step with a labeling the category with a term (Creswell, 2009). Step 4 expanded the

coding process to create descriptions and major themes. Step 5 involved developing discussion. This part of the process involved detailed discussion elaborating on multiple perspectives of participants and including quotations, in addition to identifying any interconnecting themes (Creswell, 2009). The last step in the data analysis, step 6, consisted of interpreting the meaning of the data. This final step brought discussion into what lessons were learned, meaning from connecting findings and literature and new questions that need to be asked (Creswell, 2009).

### **Limitations**

A major limitation to this research study is the size of the sample. There were 10 creativity experts selected to participate in this study. Given the scope of this research study, it is difficult to generalize findings to an entire population with a smaller sample size. Another limitation to this study is the geographical scope of the participants involved in the study. If the sample size was expanded to a broader geographical scope with a larger sample size, greater in-depth analysis of pause practices contributing to greater creativity would be available.

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

In order to protect human subjects regarding ethical issues such matters as informed consent, confidentiality and protection from harm, colleges and universities established Institutional Review Board (IRB) committees that review proposals and approve institutional research (Roberts, 2010). The researcher submitted a proposal to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board for approval before proceeding with any contact with study participants. Upon IRB approval (see Appendix B), the participants in this study were given a consent form (see Appendix C) to review and

sign, indicating they understood that their participation was confidential and voluntary. The consent form describes privacy matters and their scope of involvement in this research study. Participants are informed they had the option to withdraw from participating in this study.

### **Summary**

This chapter discussed the qualitative methodology that the researcher utilized in this study. Using a phenomenological approach, the researcher explained in this chapter how the research design, sample selection and procedures were decided upon. Additionally, the instrumentation for data gathering, as well as the data collection procedures and data analysis were evaluated. Finally, the chapter concluded with the discussion of the limitations of the study and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process. Chapter 4 and 5 will examine the findings, implications and recommendations from this study.



## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the relationship of creativity training and the practice of pause by examining the pause practices adopted by creativity experts, both on personal level and in training environments. The participants in this study included 11 creativity experts who have been conducting creativity training experiences for at least three years and who reside in North America. The researcher sent each willing participant a consent form and letter of participation. The researcher conducted all the interviews by phone.

This chapter will begin by examining the data analysis process used to arrive at the current findings and identify the common themes extracted from the data, as framed by the following two research questions in this study:

- 1.) What are the characteristics of the pause practices adopted by creativity experts who facilitate creativity training experiences for leaders within organizations?
- 2.) What role does pause play in creativity training experiences for leaders who attend events facilitated by creativity experts?

### Data Analysis Process

The beginning stage in reviewing the collected data involved transcribing the recorded interviews. The researcher hired a transcription company to transcribe the recordings. Once the transcriptions were complete, the researcher also listened to the recorded interviews and verified that the transcriptions were accurate. The researcher read through the transcripts multiple times to get a general sense of the interviews and made notes regarding initial impressions.

Next, the researcher conducted the first cycle of coding the transcripts using descriptive and In Vivo coding. In this cycle, the researcher identified preliminary codes consisting of notes, highlighting key words, phrases and quotes from participants within the interviews. The researcher then developed a master list of codes and conducted a second and final cycle of coding. Once all transcripts had been coded, the next phase was assigning names of categories by grouping similar codes together. With the categories now identified, the researcher was able to examine the data to identify themes related to the two research questions. These themes are identified in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3

*Summary of Themes Related to Research Question #1*

Research Question #1 What are the characteristics of the pause practices adopted by creativity experts who facilitate creativity training experiences for leaders within organizations?	
Interview Questions	Themes From Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are your common pause practices? How often do you practice these pause practices?</li> <li>• What is the typical length of your pause practice?</li> <li>• What is the location for your pause practice?</li> <li>• What are the most important features of the pause practice for you?</li> <li>• What value does the pause practice provide for you? Please provide some examples.</li> <li>• Please describe how you avoid or incorporate technology related to your pause practice?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Creativity experts in this study reported that their practices of pause produce positive benefits.</li> <li>2.) Creativity experts in this study reported that they incorporate nature and/or outdoor activities in their practices of pause.</li> <li>3.) The pause practices of creativity experts in this study reported that they typically limited or avoided the use of technology.</li> </ol>

Table 4

*Summary of Themes Related to Research Question #2*

Research Question #2 What role does pause play in creativity training experiences for leaders who attend the events facilitate by creativity experts?	
Interview Questions	Themes From Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you incorporate pause in your creativity training experiences? Can you please provide some examples?</li> <li>• At what point do you incorporate pause in your training experiences?</li> <li>• What value does pause practices bring to your creativity training experiences? Can you provide some examples of success stories?</li> <li>• Where do you usually conduct your creativity training experiences?</li> <li>• Can you describe the format of your creativity training experiences? (workshop, seminar, retreat, other)</li> </ul>	<p>4.) Creativity experts in this study reported that time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity training experience.</p> <p>5.) Creativity experts in this study reported that the practice of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement.</p> <p>6.) Creativity experts in this study reported that pause practices in training are likely to be influenced by the creativity training environment.</p>

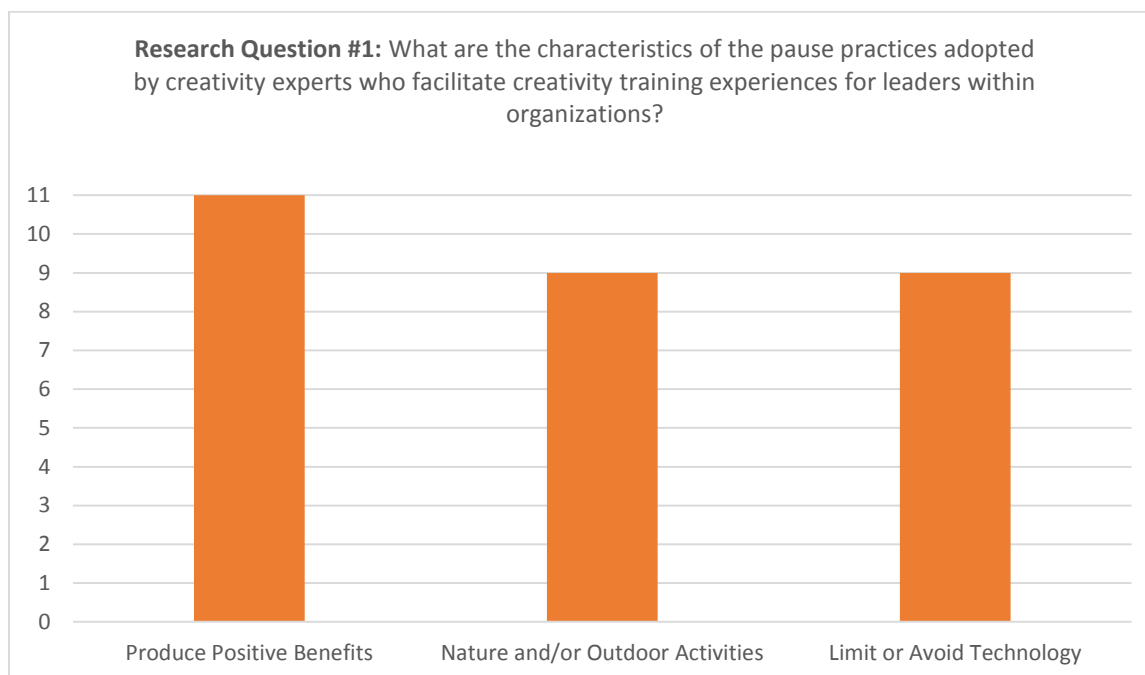
**Investigating Pause Practices of Creativity Experts**

In alignment with the first research question, the researcher aimed to investigate the various characteristics of the pause practices that creativity experts have adopted. The interview questions guided this process and the result is demonstrated within the following three themes:

- Creativity experts in this study reported that their practices of pause produce positive benefits.
- Creativity experts in this study reported that they incorporate nature and/or outdoor activities in their practices of pause.

- The pause practices of creativity experts in this study reported that they typically limited or avoided the use of technology.

Out of these three themes related to the first research question, the most frequently mentioned theme was how the pause practices adopted by creativity experts produce positive benefits, following by an equal mention of the incorporation of nature and/or outdoor activities and the limitation or avoidance of technology (see Figure 9).



*Figure 9.* Frequency graph for research question 1.

**Theme 1: Creativity experts in this study reported that their pause practices produced positive results.** Throughout this study, the creativity experts identified that the pause practices they adopted contributed to positive outcomes. Many participants identified similar pause practices such as meditation, dog walking, exercise, walking in nature, while others had unique pause practices such as a circus arts class, improv theater and adult coloring books. Regardless of the pause practices mentioned, there was a strong theme that the pause practices are not only an enjoyable experience, but

also result in a number of positive benefits. A majority of these positive outcomes identified included helping their mental and physical health, as well as increased productivity that enhanced their work performance.

One participant explained how there was a strong connection between enjoying the process of his/her pause practices and the mental and physical benefits attained.

The outcomes and the activity, like the process and the outcomes are both great. The process of working out clears my mind but the outcome is when my body is strong. The process of cooking clears my mind but the outcome is I'm eating really healthy food. The process of going through and thinking through my problem is very cathartic and the outcome is I have a better solution. So for me, my pause practices that work the best is the meditation. The process is lovely and incredibly relaxing and the outcome is clarity. (Participant #9, October 28, 2016)

Another participant described this mind and body connection related to his/her pause practice by stating, "Helping with my mental state helps me to prevent a decline in my physical state" (Participant #4, November 3, 2016). When describing this mind and body connection, another participant shared a story related to his/her pause practice of riding his/her bike:

...the mental value is huge because it takes my brain off the work that I'm doing even though as I am riding along, all of the sudden an idea or thought will pop into my head that relates to the work that I was doing. So basically, the synapses are firing, and then physically, it's giving me exercise and burning calories, and getting my body in movement, which helps my brain as well. And doing the

exercise and getting the fresh air. Really helps me emotionally destress.

(Participant #8, October 30, 2016)

The results of this study found the practice of pause greatly prepared participants to become more productive in life, as well. One participant described how a moment of pause when starting the day with a cup of coffee provides a great step towards productivity throughout the day:

The smell, the touch, the taste. And for me, those things are always kind of a signal – or symbolize to get down to business, or it's a new day, or it's a new beginning....But it's clearing a space, and so in doing those mindless activities, I become more mindful because, I'm totally starting to kind of meditate on what to get done for the day." (Participant #6, November 1, 2016)

Another participant explains how his/her pause practice of taking a walk has greatly benefited his/her business. He/She states, "...there's been many times when I've gone for a walk or I've gotten away and I've come back with some really great ideas and some big, big kind of new ideas for products we've invented." (Participant #5, November 1, 2016)

One participant shared his/her pause practice of exploring new hobbies and how that helps produce new connections to ideas he/she is working on. This participant described this practice as follows:

I'll learn a new hobby or explore a new area that I'm completely unfamiliar with....So that would be like pause from your one track, one way of seeing things, pause that, look in other divergent, weird areas that seem unrelated and

then connect that back. Find a pattern, and see how you could apply those patters in the domain you're working on. (Participant #1, November 4, 2016)

Similarly, another participant shared that when facing a problem, he/she will pause to read different articles from different fields. He/She states, "Every time I have a problem, I'll try to find solutions in different resources or sources of the information." (Participant #7, October 31, 2016)

One noticeable aspect of participants describing the health benefits and productivity of their pause practices is how many have adapted their practices to be very accessible throughout their busy days. One participant described how pause practices woven throughout busy daily life have provided the benefit of generating moments of gratitude:

And so my pause moments, especially as a mom, my pause moments have to be really in these tiny little slices of places. Because I can't just leave for a month and, you know, hope everyone's good. It has to work in the context of my life. It's when you wake up and you have this little moment of just how precious the whole thing in and how happy, how lucky I feel to have these great kids, and be married and this wonderful neighborhood. (Participant #9, October 28, 2016)

Another participant described how he/she has built in pause practices to be easily accessible at any moment throughout the day, "It's also been in daily life where you are in a moment. You try to step back and go well, where's my mind in this moment? Sometimes it's quick meditation in the elevator as you're going up, just a few seconds" (Participant #1, November 4, 2016). Similarly, another participant explained how a

benefit of his/her pause practice of deep breathing is that he/she can access this practice anywhere and at any time and help prepare for certain experiences in their job:

And breathing is wherever I'm at. That could be in the car, that could be at an office. I do a lot of training, like corporate training and so sometimes literally 20 minutes before the session starts either in the bathroom or whatever room off of the conference room where I can be alone. (Participant #2, November 4, 2016)

**Theme 2: Creativity experts in this study reported that they incorporate nature and/or outdoor activities in their practices of pause.** Many of the participants in this study have one or more of their pause practices in the outdoors and expressed the importance of being in nature and the benefits that experience provides for them. One participant explained, "I walk my dog every day that I'm home, either for two miles along the lakefront or in other areas that are surrounded by nature. I find that very helpful, reflective, rejuvenating" (Participant #3, November 4, 2016). Another participant described how having a pause practice in nature gives a space to process what they are working on in order to get clarity:

The value is it's the movement. It's the ability to process things. It's the ability to step away from technology and buildings and mostly people sometimes. I like walking by myself. Just to get out and get some fresh air and clear cobwebs and purposely – it is a literal stepping away in that. So I think it's proven that it provides some fresh air, it provides some – it gets your body moving and it's just an opportunity to let things incubate and process. (Participant #11, November 4, 2016)



When explaining the most important feature of a pause practice, one participant elaborated on a feature that makes his/her pause practice, primarily in nature, so crucial, stating, “Lack of noise, so not having any noise other than the sounds of nature, but no music, no television, no crowds, no – you know, just all that chatter kind of turned off” (Participant #5, November 1, 2016). Another participant shared similar thoughts related to the pause practice of mediating,

For me, it’s that there is a space for reflection – that there’s a quietness.....having quiet for listening to ambient sounds present in the environment. That can even be if I’m mediating on the train. At least it’s just the ambient noises from whatever that particular environment is. (Participant #3, November 4, 2016)

Another participant also spoke about the benefit of quiet in nature and states, “Nature is so remarkably quieting of the mind...” (Participant #9, October 28, 2016). Another participant described the importance of being outside in nature related to his/her pause practice of walking the dog.

...I think to myself frequently, and it’s different from working out, it’s kind of a different practice, when I take that walk. I’m not listening to anything. I’m letting nature do its trick. I’m letting nature do the work. Something else would be because I need the quiet. I need to walk away from my computer and walk away from my laptop...I will walk away from technology. (Participant #4, November 3, 2016)

Another participant in describing his/her pause practices of either riding his/her bike or interacting with dogs outside shared, “...the environment is enriching or the interaction is enriching to my brain.” (Participant #8, October 30, 2016)

Even if going outside is not convenient because of the weather or other factors, having a view outside a window to look outdoors provides some benefit to some participants. One participant mentions that “thinking out a window” (Participant #2, November 4, 2016) is a pause practice he/she has adopted. Another participant elaborated on his/her pause practice of going to an outdoor spa:

It caters to all of the five elements. So you go to this place and you have this beautiful, harmonious experience with nature that brings in water, air, metal, wood and fire. It’s great. So it’s very – it’s lovely because to me it brings me to a very basic essence....So it’s a really nice way to spend time with myself and decompress. (Participant #11, November 4, 2016)

**Theme 3: The practices of pause of creativity experts in this study reported that they typically limited or avoided the use of technology.** With the exponential growth of technology impacting many aspects of everyday life, the researcher sought to explore how this infusion of technology has effected pause practices of creativity experts. For most of the participants in this study, there was a very strong reaction against incorporating technology as part of their pause practice. One participant stated, “I avoid technology like the plague in my pause practice. No technology allowed” (Participant #8, October 30, 2016). Another participant stated that technology is “noisy”, “interruptive” and “overwhelming” and added, “I’m pretty tuned in. and I don’t want the technology to come between me and my being tuned in” (Participant #9, October 28, 2016).

Still for some participants, the use of technology is considered a balancing act that has both advantages and disadvantages. One participant shared:

Here's the key difference: it's that when technology is a part of my pause, I'm in control of it. It's not controlling me through emails, or phone calls, or anything like that. So, I kind of take control with what I'm using it for, rather than the other way around. I think that technology can suck the life out of you by demanding things of you the way we use it today. (Participant #4, November 3, 2016)

Some participants claimed minimal use of technology connected to their pause practice, primarily in the form of using either a meditation app, note taking, background music or a device to track progress of physical exercise. One participant shared, "So with the exception of meditation and exercise relying on my Fitbit, I try to sort of shut the screens off and avoid it at all costs" (Participant #2, November 4, 2016). Another participants shared that having a cell phone available during a pause practice provides an opportunity to capture notes:

An ideal pause practice avoids technology. However, I will typically have my phone with me and often in the midst of a pause practice I have something to write. I'll have an "aha" or I'll have something come to me. And so I think the benefit of a pocket technology device to capture in the moment "ahas" is important. (Participant #11, November 4, 2016)

One participant described the advantages and disadvantages in claiming that the use of technology, especially surfing the internet, can encourage curiosity. "I think about it as curiosity. It just sparks all this kind of interest for me. So I think technology can be an enabler but it can also be a huge distraction" (Participant #10, October 27, 2016). This comment aligned with a few other participants, who described primary involvement of technology related to their pause practice centered on some type of research online. As

one participant shared, "...technology is fantastic for searching for what I want on the internet" (Participant #9, October 28, 2016). Another participant stated that during his/her pause practice of cooking, "...I sometimes will pull up a recipe on my iPad" (Participant #4, November 3, 2016).

One participant expressed an open mind to the opportunities found in technology:

So there can be some challenges, but at the same time I think there's actually some real benefits that aren't often talked about of the digital domain of sharing of ideas that- a new salon of idea collision there in the digital space is super valuable and is often just discounted by old-school mindset that everything new is bad. (Participant #1, November 4, 2016)

Among many participants' disdain or hesitation of incorporating technology within their pause practices, there was one participant with a technology background, who enthusiastically expressed how technology helps him/her stay organized with capturing notes, reflections and reminders during pause practices. He/She states, "I am a technology person. I love technology" (Participant #7, October 31, 2016).

### **Exploring the Role of Pause within Creativity Training Experiences**

With regards to the second research question in this research study, the researcher aimed to explore how creativity experts have incorporated the role of pause within their creativity training experiences. The following three themes emerged from the interviews:

- Creativity experts in this study reported that time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity

training experience.

- Creativity experts in this study reported that the practice of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement.
- Creativity experts in this study reported that pause practices in training are likely to be influenced by the creativity training environment.

Out of these three themes related to the second research question, the most frequently mentioned theme was how the role of pause in creativity training experiences increase engagement of attendees, following by an equal mention of how the role of pause is influenced by time constraints and the training environment (see Figure 10).

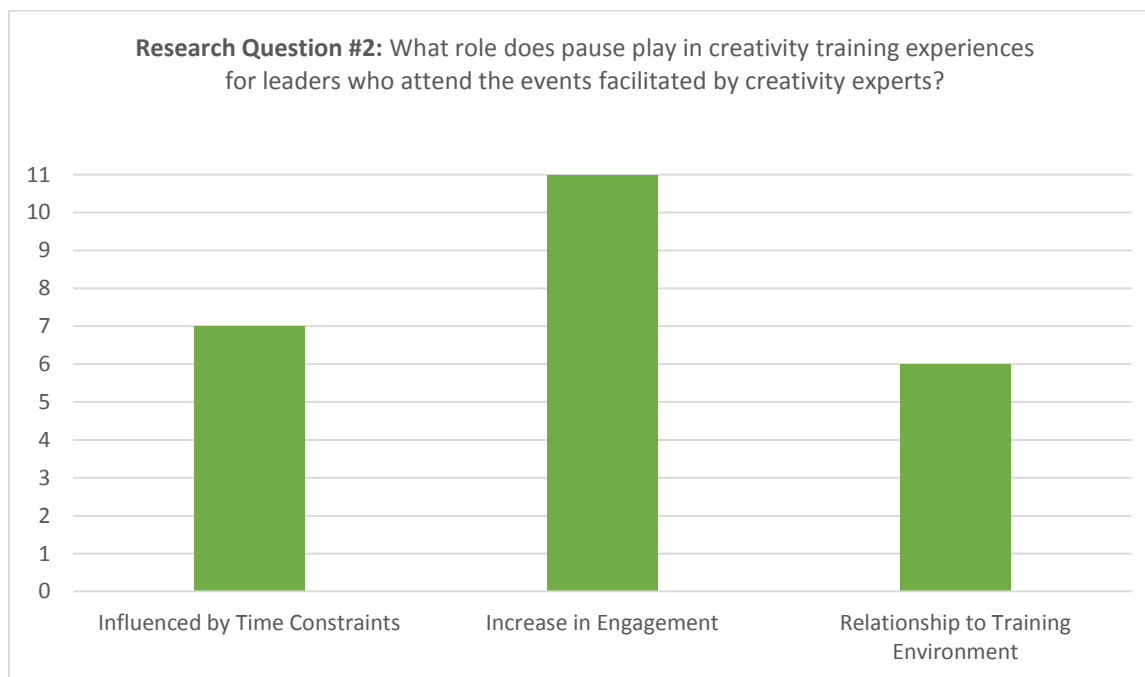


Figure 10. Frequency graph for research question 2.

**Theme 4: Creativity experts in this study reported that time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity training experience.** Many participants in this study identified that time

constraints played a role into their planning of what type of pause practices would be implemented. Some participants shared that if there were short training sessions, they would utilize the breaks to encourage attendees to reflect on activities and topics discussed in the training during that time. Other participants identified that their decision to implement pause practices was heavily influenced by a client organization's agenda, time pressure or reluctance towards the concept of pause.

The issue of a client organization's pressure to have a content heavy agenda delivered within a short time frame, proved to be an added barrier to implementing pause practices within training sessions. Within this dynamic, some participants in this study believed that organizations do not fully grasp the purpose or need for the practice of pause within creativity training experiences. One participant shared, "I feel like it gets pushed as a 'nice to have' versus an integral, important, vital part of what needs to be done" (Participant #6, November 1, 2016). This participant continued to share his/her frustration around a company's resistance to the practice of pause within the context of a training environment and how that actually limits the impact of the entire experience for the attendees in training:

I say there is a need for a pause, but many times, the business does not see the need for pause. So the business dictates – 'as we are investing time for you to do this, and for people to step away from their job, and to do that, you need to do as much as you can, share as much as you can, be on- so they can be back at their job'....What happens is, even when the trainee, and the participants are going through that, they're feeling the time pressure, and they're also feeling the time pressure of how they need to be creative with other people, and then, share back

something that's illuminating and life-changing. And actually what happens is the share backs are very superficial. (Participant #6, November 1, 2016)

Another participant also shared his/her concern about the notion that creativity can immediately happen on demand:

...when you're engaging in innovation or using creativity as a means to support innovation in an organization, people need to understand that they can't just snap their fingers and have all of the creativity immediately available to them. They can only work as quickly as their brains start to make the connections.

(Participant #11, November 4, 2016)

This participant continued to express how he/she makes it a point to educate the organizations he/she works with about the role pause plays in the creative problem solving process:

So in many organizations I've observe there's a real deep requirement to just keep going and keep trying hard to meet the goal and there is not much encouragement to step back and take a pause. Well, the reality is we cannot be engaged in creative process without pause. And so what I want to instill in them is the value and benefits associated with providing deep focus in thinking and also stepping away from it to give them some time to let neural pathways connect and thinking bubble up and take advantage of unconscious processes and all of those. (Participant #11, November 4, 2016)

As one participant shared, "Because pause practices are so foreign in many work environments, the success is getting the client to do it" (Participant #8, October 30, 2016). Still, company pressure can put the creativity trainer in a challenging position of

satisfying the client organization's wishes and fighting to keep elements of pause practices embedded within the creative training, as seen in one participant's feedback:

Both in training and in facilitation, I actually think one of the biggest challenges, especially working with organizations, is lack of time....That time pressure can really, it can be very easy to skip allowing for pause, allowing for incubation.

(Participant #10, October 27, 2017)

In the case where there is the time constraint due to facilitating a very short creativity training experience, one participant shares, "...we might not do much of anything. Other than between activities, initiatives...I will provide a chance for people to end the activity and reflect on their learning or reflect on the activity quietly and then to share that with another or small group" (Participant #3, November 4, 2016).

**Theme 5: Creativity experts in this study reported that the practices of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement.** All of the participants in this study claimed that pause practices fostered greater engagement with attendees in creativity sessions. One participant, in describing a typical pause practice in a creativity session, shared, "...it's just a break from what they think they're going to get" (Participant #9, October 28, 2016). When discussing the value of incorporating these pause practices, this participant added, "People turn on. People show up at present. People get into the conversation" (Participant #9, October 28, 2016). For many of the participants in this study, pause practices provided a way to generate attendee engagement because the practices boosted energy, provided time of reflection for personal application and generated feedback opportunities.



In explaining how a pause practice provided an opportunity to boost energy in training sessions, a participant stated, “It refreshes people so that they can go on” (Participant #4, November 3, 2016). Pause is also seen as a good tool to get attendees present to connect with the training. This is illustrated by one participant comments:

...where I can incorporate an upshift in activity, what happens then – or what I see following that five- to ten-minute activity is the next section, whatever the content is specifically around the tools or techniques, people seem to be much more present and engaged and able to engage with the work. (Participant #2, November 4, 2016)

The reflective component of pause practices was mentioned quite frequently among the participants as well. One participant claimed, “...you need to pause, you need to incubate, and you need to step back, and say, ‘So much has happened, there’s been this flurry – what is really important, and what are the things that are still resonating for me?’” (Participant #6, November 1, 2016). Participants also described how pause practices allowed for time to reflect on how experiences have personal application. One participants expanded on this, “So I think that people find the pause practice as an opportunity for them to integrate knowledge and for it to go into more of their long-term memory instead of just short-term working memory” (Participant #5, November 1, 2016). Another participant added, “People remember what they teach themselves. So the pause moment is really an effort to let people generate their own learning from what you’ve given them” (Participant #9, October 28, 2016). This is also supported by another participant who shared:

...after a learning activity or other physical activity we’ll pause for reflective

learning and that, again, is by practice that seems to help solidify learning so that it can go forward. In facilitation, I think we talked about that, the use of deliberate incubation techniques to get new connections or to set people onto a new line of thinking and that's quite useful. (Participant #3, November 4, 2016)

Pause practices provoke questions from attendees in creativity training sessions. Not only is it seen valuable for the attendees to have these moments of inquiry and deepen their learning, but one participant in this study claimed that pause practices provoking questions also help the trainer with providing valuable feedback about the training session:

So I think that when you have pause, your participants can come up with a lot of questions. And I think it's valuable. I mean it has a lot of value because you can see how they are, how they are getting my information or how they are experiencing, they experience in the positive, as I'm guiding. (Participant #7, October 31, 2016)

Many creativity experts in this study expressed how they try their best to ingrain pause moments to engage their attendees throughout their training, even if the pauses are brief points of reflection. Time allowing, one participant stated that he/she plans some type of pause activity approximately every 30 minutes that could take shape as moments of reflection, energizers, deep breathing or stretching. While many participants shared how they try to deliberately plan in pause practices within training, there was one who shared if he/she noticed mental fatigue with attendees, he/she would say, 'You know what? This is a good time for us to just go outside.' "Sometimes I factor it deliberately and sometimes I see it on the spot" (Participant #4, November 3, 2016).

In explaining how the relationship of pause practices and engagement, one participant (Participant #10, October 27, 2016) shared how he/she uses the Torrance Incubation Model as a framework to engage attendees in his/her training. This model consists of the three phases of heightening the anticipation through providing activities and exercises beforehand, deepening the learning through an experiential approach during the training, and finally, extending the learning after the training. In this participant's perspective, this framework relates to the practice of pause because of the issue of allowing for time within the entire learning experience.

With all the various types of pause practices that are implemented by creativity experts, one participant warned of trying to identify one specific way of engaging attendees through a pause practice:

The other thing is you need freshness, so if you just create a formula of pause and you only ever do that, then that just becomes another box you create for your mind...So there's a danger in taking a tool or taking an approach and trying to make it formulaic and then just apply in all cases. (Participant #1, November 4, 2016)

**Theme 6: Creativity experts in this study reported that pause practices in training are likely to be influenced by the creativity training environment.** Based on responses from participants, the creativity training environment plays an important role in how and what type of pause practices will be implemented. Most all the participants in this study conduct creativity training sessions in wide variety of locations. The locations mentioned included a client organization's office, hotel venues, retreats centers, classrooms, cafeterias, auditoriums, university spaces, conference centers and

other off-site venues. Within this theme, participants expressed that access to the outdoors and flexibility were important.

A major factor in conducting pause practices within a creativity training experience was revealed in many participants' responses of desiring a venue with access to the outdoors. One participant stated:

When I'm working with a client, I beg that the physical space that we're in be large enough for physical movement and have a feeling of psychological safety. Ideally, there is a view to the outside and green....And when I work with my clients, I'll try and get my – the participants standing up and moving as much as possible. I do interactive warm-ups and exercises that relate to helping them, you know- get their mind thinking about something completely different around the challenge or opportunity that's facing them. And I always encourage them that when we get to a break or lunch that they go outside and connect with nature.

(Participant #8, October 30, 2016)

Another participant shares how he/she created and continues to host a retreat experience in his/her training environment and how that has direct impact on the pause practices:

It's really the location itself leads to reflection and an opportunity for people to have some downtime and to really, you know, really appreciate being in nature and to integrate what they're learning into an environment that's outside of the normal environment that most people live in. So it's got all the elements of visual, you know, the smell, just the smell of the trees and wood fires burning and feel that the air has just got a completely different quality to it. The water is, you

know, amazing for swimming and for drinking. So it's just an entire environment that really leads to people having an opportunity to get back in touch with their intuition and reflect. (Participant #5, November 1, 2016)

Another participant shared a similar vision and explained, "My ideal is in a retreat center with easy access to the outdoors. I like being situated in nature" (Participant #3, November 4, 2016).

Even if the creativity training is not conducted in a retreat format, a majority of the participants indicated that having windows and a view to the outside nature has a noticeable impact in relation to incorporating pause practices. One participant expressed:

I've done training experiences in office rooms and in cafeterias, and in auditoriums, and in classrooms. But I just got to pick the venue for my next one and it's going to be a lake view center where there are beautiful glass windows and it overlooks Lake Michigan. When I get to pick, that's where I'd go.

(Participant #9, October 28, 2016)

Sharing a similar perspective on the importance of windows, another participant shared, "Ideally I would like to lead them at a place with natural light, windows. A lot of place to move around. Pretty comfortable." This participant also made it very clear that his/her least preferred situation is "sitting around a boardroom table." (Participant #10, October 27, 2016)

Another participant added their preference of having both windows and also access to outdoors:

I could say the ideal is a room that has windows and in the ideal world it has a

way for participants to get outside and go for a walk. That doesn't happen all the time. I'd say that's more like 50/50. The other 50 percent is sometimes whatever the organization books, and sometimes those are conference rooms that are windowless and not ideal. (Participant #2, November 4, 2016)

Even with the participants discussing the importance of the creativity training environment and their ideal venues to conduct their pause practices within their training experiences, there were some participants reflected a great deal of flexibility in their approach. One participant shared that even though he/she has an established and customized location for creativity training, having a flexible and creative approach to conducting the training experience is key:

So we have a physical lab space that we use for this stuff. And also we create pop-up lab experiences, because sometimes people can't always come to the lab, so you've got to create those experiences in a mobile way wherever the context is. (Participant #1, November 4, 2016)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter started with examining the data analysis process that led the researcher to the current findings. The six major themes that emerged from the data analysis include: practices of pause produce positive benefits, involve nature and/or outdoor activities, typically limit or avoid technology, time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity training experience, the practice of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement, and pause practices in training are likely influenced by the creativity training environment. These six main themes will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Introduction**

This chapter begins with a summary of the overall design of this study and the findings of this research. The discussion will continue and include how these findings connect to the review of literature found in Chapter 2, the implications resulting from this study and recommendations for future research.

### **Summary of Study**

Given the growth of exponential technology, the world is experiencing change like never before. These changes produce new challenges organizational leaders will need to face and exercise their creative problem solving skills. With this influx of these new challenges and the barrage of an overload of information, leaders will increasingly need to adopt practices that will enable them to take a step back and pause, to ensure they make the most creative and strategic decisions.

The purpose and design of this qualitative research study was to explore the practices of pause which creativity experts have personally embraced that enable them to stay creative. Additionally, the researcher wanted to examine if and how these creativity experts implement pause practices within their creativity training experiences for leaders of organizations. Through examining the pause practices of creativity experts who model and train creativity for others, the researcher aimed to uncover aspects of these practices that will provide valuable insights for leaders, on both a personal and organizational level.

Specifically, the research questions for this dissertation were:

1. What are the characteristics of the pause practices adopted by creativity

experts who facilitate creativity training experiences for leaders within organizations?

2. What role does pause play in creativity training experiences for leaders who attend events facilitated by creativity experts?

This study was designed as a phenomenological qualitative research study. Creswell states, "...a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon" (2013, p. 76). The researcher selected a phenomenological approach because this method would allow for a deeper exploration of the relationship between creativity training, pause and leadership.

In this study, the researcher decided to conduct purposive sampling, in which he chose the sample size and selected the participants for the study (Creswell, 2013). The researcher conducted phone interviews of 11 creativity experts based on the criteria of having at least three years of experience conducting creativity training experiences for organizational leaders and who also reside in North America. The participants were selected from the researcher's professional network of creativity experts. While the original intent in this study was to interview 10 creativity experts, the researcher was able to add one additional interview participant through a recommendation of one of the original interviewees. All 11 participants were given consent forms prior to interviews that addressed privacy issues related to this study. The research instrument in this study was a list of 11 interview questions as identified in Table 1 in Chapter 3. Once all the interviews were conducted and recorded, the researcher analyzed the transcribed



data and began the coding process outlined in Chapter 3 to identify themes. After extensive analysis of the data, the following key six themes emerged:

1. Creativity experts in this study reported that their practices of pause produce positive benefits.
2. Creativity experts in this study reported that they incorporate nature and/or outdoor activities in their practices of pause.
3. The pause practices of creativity experts in this study reported that they typically limited or avoided the use of technology.
4. Creativity experts in this study reported that time constraints have the potential to influence the role and implementation of pause within a creativity training experience.
5. Creativity experts in this study reported that the practice of pause in training increases the likelihood of attendee engagement.
6. Creativity experts in this study reported that pause practices in training are likely to be influenced by the creativity training environment.

### **Connection to Literature Review**

This qualitative research study of examining the relationship between creativity training and the practice of pause for leaders in an age of information overload, contributed findings that will now be analyzed in relation to the review of literature discussed in Chapter 2. This section will begin with examining the outcomes of this study in connection with the literature review by first looking at the role of pause and the individual, and conclude with a discussion related to the role of pause and creativity training.

**The role of pause and the individual.** The creativity experts who participated in this study reported a wide variety of pause practices they have personally adopted in their lives. The findings in this study are relatable to Dutra's (2012) description of pause, identifying that these practices can vary per person, but ultimately they generate energy, resilience, ability to handle complexity. Findings also supported Cashman's (2008) assertion that pause provides opportunities for deep reflection and Dobrykowski's (2016) claim that reflection allows moments to pause and evaluate assumptions or habits that could impact productivity.

Based on the results in this study, pause practices provide numerous positive benefits who practice regularly. Many of the health benefits associated with the practice of pause identified in this study align with what has been discussed in the literature. Meditation, mindfulness and breathing exercises were all identified as adopted pause practices that provided positive health benefits to many participants in this study. These findings correspond with data from other reports that mindfulness and deep breathing actually have a positive impact on cardiovascular condition and help individuals keep calm (Bergland, 2013; Tan, 2015). This is also relatable to the findings that Graham (2012) discussed that indicate mindfulness helps our brains rewire to common stressors. In addition to helping cope with stress, this study found participants practiced mindfulness to help prepare for the day or specific moments. This discovery is in alignment with what the UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center (n.d.) explanation on how mindful awareness gives people an openness, curiosity and acceptance of the present moment.

The research findings in this study also correspond to the research discussed in the literature review on the importance of nature related to the practice of pause. Many creativity experts who participated in this study discussed the importance of incorporating nature within their pause practices and the health benefits this experience provided. The results of this study correlate with other research studies indicating that walking in nature produced cardiovascular, mental and emotional benefits (Lee et al, 2014). Additionally, one of the features that was significantly important to many participants in this study, was the aspect of quiet found in a natural environment. As reported by many participants in this study, quietness in nature allowed them to refocus and clear their mind. These findings were relevant to Gross' (2016) findings that discussed how having moments of silence can actually enhance the growth of brain cells in the region that involves the senses and memory, while noise impacts a person physically and emotionally through the release of the stress hormone, cortisol.

This study's findings also correlate with research on other cognitive benefits associated with spending time in nature (Atchley et al., 2012; Berman et al., 2008; Bratman, Daily et al., 2015; Bratman, Hamilton et al., 2015). Additionally, Dowdell et al. (2011) specified that time in the outdoors produced the benefits of sharpened awareness and concentration, reasoning and observation skills, as well as greater creativity and imagination. The creativity experts in this study claimed being in nature helped provide the mental space for new ideas to emerge and to be generally more productive in their thinking process. This is similar to the findings in recent research conducted by Oppezzo and Schwartz (2014) who found that walking outside increased the likelihood of generating new and creative ideas by 60% over sitting down inside.

This is also relatable to findings from Atchley et al. (2012), who in their study discovered a 50% increase in creative problem solving when a person spends four consecutive days in nature. As emphasized by Belski (n.d.), sacred space or places that are removed from technology and other distractions, are becoming increasingly rare. It is worth noting that while this loss of sacred space seems to be becoming a reality, many creativity experts in this study demonstrated determination in identifying, establishing and maintaining these types of spaces within nature to practice pause.

With a majority of participants in this study claiming they either avoid or limit technology in relation to pause practices, it is worthwhile to examine the connection to the literature review on this topic. Research has found that technology overload is becoming an ever increasing health concern. Among the multiple risks associated with the overuse of technology is the potential for addiction. Weinschenk (2012) reported that the release of dopamine triggered by certain technology can stimulate more curiosity and seeking behavior, which could potentially lead to addiction. Additionally, Ayyagari (2012) describes research revealing the emergence of technostress, which is a condition where a person cannot effectively process the level of information and communication technologies. Furthermore, as noted by Marr (2015), the readily available and unlimited supply of information in the world can cause a brain to become overworked in its drive to seek new information, while producing the stress hormone cortisol that causes greater confusion, memory loss and increased restlessness. It is interesting to note that the creativity experts in this study exhibited to have the level of self-awareness and discipline to know when to step back and unplug from technology.

**The role of pause and creativity training.** According to Mumford et al. (2007), there is a limited amount of research identifying the steps to develop the leaders who are responsible to lead innovation. With surveys results from CEOs and general managers all indicating creativity as the top quality future leaders need to possess (IBM, 2010; Walinga et al., 2011), creativity training is becoming more important. Williams and Foti (2011) assert that if organizations want to develop a culture of innovation, cultivating an environment that will support and train leaders with stronger creative problem solving skills will be critical. As emphasized by the findings of Scott et al. (2004), creativity training can impact divergent thinking, problem solving, performance, attitudes and behaviors. This study aimed to provide insights into the role of pause practices within creativity training for organizational leaders. Findings indicated that pause practices have a strong impact on the overall learning experience of creativity training attendees. Many creativity experts who participated in this study identified the use of pause practices heighten attendee engagement within a creativity training experience. Some of the benefits from incorporating pause identified in this study included boosting the energy, providing moments of reflection for personal application and generating feedback opportunities.

While the results of this study provided positive outcomes in relation to the use of pause practices and attendee engagement within a creativity training experience, there were considerable insights into the impact of time constraints related to the role and implementation of pause within a training experience. Some of time constraints mentioned came from a client organization and their time pressure and the desire for a packed agenda. For instance, many participants in this study shared that client

organizations, which hire them to conduct creativity training experiences, do not typically find the value in pause and would rather see the creativity experts fill an already limited training time with content. What some participants in this study identified is how content heavy experiences, without allowing for pause practices, can cause attendees to feel overloaded. This is in alignment to how Oldroyd and Morris (2012) claim information overload is able to have a negative effect on high performing employees in organizations. This seems counterproductive for an organization to put this pressure on the creativity training, but as one creativity expert in this study indicated, that attendee can “feel the time pressure” and participation can end up becoming “superficial” (Participant #6, November 1, 2016). Furthermore, Ruff (2002) explains that information overload can actually sabotage the goal of creating a learning organization that maximizes the creativity and decision making ability of their employees.

Creativity experts who participated in this study emphasized how pause practices allow for important moments for reflection, to allow for attendees to step back and evaluate how what they are learning might apply in their lives. This aligns with White’s (2012) analysis of Kolb’s theory of experiential learning, in which reflective observation is identified as one of the four phases in this model. White (2012) further asserts that deeper understanding of the role of reflection would benefit leadership education programs. The creativity experts who participated in this study also indicated that pause practices which have a reflective component in combination with movement are effective. This is in alignment with Csikszentmihaiyi (1996), who states that reflection combined with some physical component facilitates the subconscious creative process.

Additionally, Karjaluoto (2008) further asserts that having activities where there is minimal distractions, with the body engaged in some type of repetitive activity, all within a changed environment can enhance creative ideas. Further evaluation into the importance to pause for reflection is seen in research focused on great creative thinkers in history. Buzan and Buzan (1996) identified that some of the most creative thinkers used pausing, or incubation as they describe, to have breakthroughs in their thinking.

Many creativity experts in this study shared that the dynamics of the training venue had an impact on if and how pause practices would be implemented. Interestingly, Kristensen (2004) identified that there is very little research on the relationship between physical space and creativity in business literature. From the findings in this study, many creativity experts shared that access to the outdoors and a venue with a view of nature is important related to pause practices in a training environment.

Most of the creativity experts in this study expressed a desire to have a venue with access to the outdoors. They indicate that having a creativity training venue with access to the outdoors gave them the opportunities to exercise pause practices where attendees can interact with nature and have the space for reflection. There is research surrounding training and interaction with the outdoor environment that reveal enriched leadership development (Mullins, 2011). Stoll and Temperly (2009) state the creative process and creative leadership can be enhanced by the physical environment due to providing space for people to reflect and to removing them from their comfort zones. This finding links to one of the creativity expert's in this study who described how the use of a retreat setting allowed for participants to reflect and "...to integrate what they're

learning into an environment that's outside of the normal environment that most people live in" (Participant #5, November 1, 2016). This is also similar to Watson and Vasilieva's (2007) qualitative research study with senior leaders that found retreats have the ability to stimulate emotional and intellectual learning and learning sustainability.

Even if creativity training cannot be conducted at a retreat location, there were many participants in this study who shared how they prefer windows in their creativity training venue. This correlates to Ulrich's (1984) description of a study of hospital patients that found those with a view of nature had more positive feelings, less anxiety, had better interaction with staff and shorter stays than those patients that did not. Overall, the desire of creativity experts to have some connection to the outdoors was prevalent in the findings of this study.

### **Implications**

The implications from this research study carry significance on a personal level, especially for leaders, and also on an organizational level, related to leadership development. By exploring the characteristics of pause practices adopted by creativity experts, this research has revealed insights into pause practices that have direct application for anybody who would like to enhance their practice of pause and creativity. As this research study has discussed in previous chapters, this is especially valuable for leaders living in today's VUCA world.

The results of this study indicated many positive benefits associated with their pause practices, including mental, physical and emotional health benefits. The mind and body connection related to a pause practice was expressed throughout the interviews with creativity experts. Pause practices identified by participants, such as regular bike



rides, dog walking, and other physical practices of pause not only benefit a person physically, but helps prepare and clear the mind, as well as emotionally distress. Once emotionally distressed, the body benefits as well. As these findings suggest, leaders who wish to remain healthy amidst the demands place on their role, will likely find adopting a physical pause practice will greatly benefit their mental and emotion health.

The findings in this study also revealed how the use of pause practices seem to bring the positive benefit of increase productivity. Many participants in this study shared how the practice of pause prepared them mentally for the day, helped them with focus and clarity, while providing them the stamina to accomplish what needed to get done. Many participants shared pause practices that had them shift focus on other activities unrelated to the task at hand, helped give them the space and incubation time that generated new ideas for projects. Leaders who wish to keep with the pace of their increasing responsibilities will likely find adopting pause practices will increase their productivity and have a positive influence on their career.

The research findings also unveiled that pause practices can be simplified and embedded in everyday moments. Findings indicated such pause practices like meditative practices that involve deep breathing, have the flexibility to be exercised in moments throughout the day and in very short time frames. Examples from this study include meditative deep breathing while riding an elevator or in moments before a presentation. This is highly applicable for leaders because of the demanding schedules that many keep. Based on results from this study, leaders who incorporate short moments of pause practices throughout the day, will likely see an increase in focus and peace.

The importance of nature and outdoor activities was a strong theme in relation to pause practices according to the findings of this study. This is significant because the results indicated that one of the primary beneficial features of pausing in nature is providing the space for reflection in quiet. This appears to be an aspect of pause practices that leaders would benefit from. Having a quiet and scenic place to pause would likely facilitate reflecting on strategic decisions and increased creative problem solving abilities.

The findings in this research study related to the use of technology with pause practices are highly meaningful. Most all participants in this study shared they try to either avoid or limit the use of technology in their pause practice. As discussed in previous chapters, the exponential growth of technology is making more difficult to unplug. Many participants in this study expressed strong views that they felt technology was interruptive, noisy and distracting. Those that did involve technology with their pause practice did so in a minimal fashion, usually in the form of a meditation app, capturing moments of insight or background music. If a leader wishes to enhance their creative capacity, it might be worthwhile to consider that creativity experts, who spend a majority of their time in the creative domain, either avoid or limit technology when practicing pause. If the creativity experts are finding value in unplugging in pause practices, it is highly probable that others might find value and enhance their creativity as well.

On an organizational level, the findings in this study provide insight into factors that can directly impact leadership development programs involving creativity training. First, the results of this study appear to demonstrate how important it is to allow for time

for pause within training environments. Embedded within the creative process is allowing time for incubation, a pause, so there is room for thinking to stir and ideas to take shape. Some responses from participants in this study identified frustration with organizational pressure to fit in a lot of training content in a short time frame, thus creating a barrier for effective pause practices to be implemented. If an organization decides to conduct creativity training, this study's findings demonstrated that a packed agenda with a very tight time pressure can very likely result in sabotaging the goals of the creativity training. Time for pause practices, such as designated times for reflection, appear to be a strategic part of creativity training.

The second area this research study impacts organizations is how it seems the role of pause leads to greater engagement of attendees in creativity training. The results of this study showed pause practices in creativity training engaged attendees through activities boosting energy, generated points of reflection for personal application and provided opportunities for feedback. Although this study is in the context of creativity training, it is likely that organizations who encourage employees to adopt pause practices in other training experiences, and even throughout their work day, could see greater employee engagement in their jobs.

Lastly, this study showed how the training venue has an impact on the entire training experience. This is not just a matter of preference, but what type of environment is best going to enhance the learning experience. From this study, the creativity experts interviewed shared that a training location with access to the outdoors and having windows with a view to nature provided a multisensory experience in pause practices incorporating reflection. Participants in this study shared how they encourage attendees

to take breaks to go outside to connect with nature and reflect on what they are learning. Some shared how they just encourage attendees to go outside and shift their minds on something entirely different. In either case, the pause from training to interact with the outdoors and connect to nature provides a stimulus in the learning experience. Organizations are likely to maximize their training experiences, especially related to creativity training, if they select venues that are in nature or have windows to connect with some natural environment.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

As evidenced within this qualitative phenomenological study, the need for further examination into the role of the practice of pause and its relationship to creativity is becoming increasingly significant. Technological advances driving the constant change our world is experiencing is only making it more difficult to predict what the future will hold. Leaders in organizations will need to know how to navigate these turbulent times by accessing and strengthening their creative problem solving abilities. Furthermore, with the growing need for leaders to enhance their creative abilities, it is also worth considering the role of pause within creativity training experiences. The researcher recommends three areas for future research that build upon the results discovered through this study: exploring generational perspectives of technology and pause practices, the impact of retreats in creativity training, and investigating cultural dynamics related to pause practices.

#### **Generational perspectives of technology and pause practices.**

Recommendations for future research on generational perspectives related to the use of technology and pause practices will provide important insights into the relationship

between technology, pause and creativity. While this was not a factor under consideration in this research study, future research exploring the integration of technology within pause practices between digital native generations of the Millennial Generation and Generation Z, and the digital immigrant generations of Generation X and the Baby Boomer Generation, would provide valuable information. The results could have important implications related to the implementation of pause practices within creativity training experiences, especially if facilitated by a member of Generation X or the Baby Boomer Generation.

**Retreats and creativity training.** The researcher also recommends future studies exploring the role of a retreat in creativity training experiences. As revealed in this study, being in nature and having outdoor activities play a powerful role in pause practices for the entire creativity training experience. Having venues with access to the outdoors and windows to nature was consistently identified as an important feature by the creativity experts for conducting creativity training. There was very limited research available examining the impact of a retreat experience on creativity training, and further insight into this relationship might provide insight on more impactful ways creativity training can be delivered and what role location plays into the experience.

**Cultural dynamics related to pause practices.** Finally, the researcher recommends future research into the dynamics that cultural differences play related to pause practices. This study was limited to a sample of participants from North America. It would be valuable to see if there are any differences in results with research gathered from other regions of the world. An examination to the similarities and differences between regions would provide richer detail into impact of various pause practices and

the range of how they are implemented within creativity training experiences for attendees. This would also provide insights to if and how certain pause practices may connect with various cultures more than others.

### **Limitations**

As discussed in Chapter 1, there were some limitations within this study. First, the geographical location of the participants was restricted to North America, thereby limiting perspectives and insights from potential participants in other regions of the world. Second the sample size, although suitable for the nature of this study, was relatively small and could not provide the broader generalization that a larger sample would provide. The third limitation was the potential bias of the researcher, given the researcher's background as a creativity facilitator. One limitation that was not identified in Chapter 1, which emerged through the study, is related to one interview of a participant. The audio recording for this one interview resulted in very poor quality and therefore, the researcher only used data from the answered questions for which the entire answer was audible.

### **Conclusion**

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the characteristics of personal pause practices adopted by creativity experts and the role of pause within their creativity training experiences they conduct for leaders of organizations. This study found the major themes related to the pause practices of creativity experts to be that pause practices produced many positive benefits, nature and outdoor activities play a key role, and the use of technology is typically avoided or limited. The major themes related to the role of pause within creativity training experiences were the influence of time

constraints, increased attendee engagement and the creativity training environment as a key factor.

Given the rapid exponential growth of technology shifting dynamics within world, a leader's creative ability to navigate these changes is becoming more imperative. Understanding the dynamics of the practice of pause and its relationship to creativity will help provide insights on how people can prepare themselves to be better creative problems solvers amidst a rapidly changing world that presents many new problems to be solved. Additionally, understanding the dynamics of effective creativity training will be a critical aspect of leadership development, not only for the trainer but also the client organization.

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## APPENDIX A

## Initial E-mail and LinkedIn Invitation to Potential Participants

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I hope you are doing well. I am conducting my doctoral research at Pepperdine University's Graduate School of Education and Psychology and would like to extend a formal invitation to participate in my research study. My dissertation is a qualitative study exploring the relationship between the practice of pause and creativity training for leaders and I have identified you as one of a selection of creativity experts I am interested in interviewing. This study aims to provide insights on the characteristics of pause practices that may enhance creativity for leaders in a world of information overload.

The interview will be conducted on the phone and will last up to 60 minutes. The interview will be audio recorded to ensure accuracy for transcription. Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You can choose to skip any question and withdraw from the study at any point. If you withdraw, I will destroy the audio recordings. Additionally, I will be using a data coding process to ensure confidentiality of participants.

I appreciate your consideration in participating in this research study. If you choose to participate, I will provide an informed consent form and we can schedule our phone interview. I look forward to hearing from you and please do not hesitate to ask me any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Steve Ralph  
Doctoral Candidate  
Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology  
626-xxx-xxxx  
xxxxxxx@pepperdine.edu



## APPENDIX B

### IRB Approval Letter



Pepperdine University  
24255 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, CA 90263  
TEL: 310-506-4000

#### NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: October 21, 2016

Protocol Investigator Name: Steve Ralph

Protocol #: 16-10-405

Project Title: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVITY TRAINING AND THE PRACTICE OF PAUSE FOR LEADERS IN A WORLD OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Steve Ralph:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at [community.pepperdine.edu/irb](http://community.pepperdine.edu/irb).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

## APPENDIX C

## Informed Consent

**PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY**  
**Graduate School of Education and Psychology**

**INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

**EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVITY TRAINING AND THE  
PRACTICE OF PAUSE FOR LEADERS IN A WORLD OF INFORMATION  
OVERLOAD**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by principal investigator and doctoral candidate, Steve Ralph, and faculty chair, Dr. Kent Rhodes, at Pepperdine University, because you have been identified as a creativity expert who conducts creativity training to leaders and resides in North America. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for your records.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is examine the characteristics of pause practices that creative experts have adopted to maximize their creativity and to explore the role and significance of pause within their training experiences for leaders.

**STUDY PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a telephone interview that is comprised of 11 open-ended questions. The length of the interview will take no more than 60 minutes. The interview will be audio taped.

**POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The research involves no more than minimal risk. There is a possibility that some of the interview questions may make you feel uncomfortable or anxious. You have the right to refuse to

answer any question or end the interview at any time. Your confidentiality in this study is taken very seriously. As with any study, the risk of confidentiality being compromised is a possibility. There are precautions in place to minimize this risk. Personally identifiable information will not be used and the principal investigator will be using a coding process to minimize this risk.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, potential anticipated benefits to society could include greater understanding on how the practice of pause can help encourage creativity in others, as well as a deeper understanding on the role of pause in training environments.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The records collected for this study will be confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if required to do so by law, it may be necessary to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if disclosed any instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

Your name, address or other identifiable information will not be collected during the interview. The audio recording of your responses will be identified only with a code and given to a transcriber to transcribe the interview. The transcript data will be maintained separately and stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. The audio-tapes will be destroyed once they have been transcribed.

### **SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

Under California law, the researcher(s) who may also be a mandated reporter will not maintain as confidential, information about known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child, dependent adult or elder, including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse or neglect. If any researcher has or is given such information, he or she is required to report this abuse to the proper authorities.

### **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

**ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION**

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or only completing the items for which you feel comfortable.

**EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY**

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury.

**INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

You understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries you may have concerning the research herein described. You understand that you may contact the faculty chair of this study, Dr. Kent Rhodes, at [kent.rhodes@pepperdine.edu](mailto:kent.rhodes@pepperdine.edu) if you have any other questions or concerns about this research.

**RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).