FEELING UNSURE:
A LIVED EXPERIENCE OF HUMANBECOMING

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

The candidate certifies that

a) Except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the candidate alone;

b) The work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award;

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Françoise V. Maillard Strûby

August, 2009

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* as viewed from the humanbecoming school of thought. From the humanbecoming perspective *feeling unsure* is a universal lived experience of health and quality of life. The purposes of this study were to understand the lived experience of *feeling unsure* from the humanbecoming perspective, to enhance understanding of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* as an essence of health and quality of life, to discover the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*, to add to the body of knowledge on the phenomenon of *feeling unsure*, and to contribute to expand the theory of humanbecoming. The Parse research methodology was used to guide this study and answer the question: *What is the structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure?* Ten persons living in community accepted to participate in this study. The processes of dialogical engagement, extraction-synthesis, and heuristic interpretation were used for data gathering and analysis. The central finding of this study is: *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidations, while revering alliances*. The findings of this study emerged as new knowledge that extend the theory of humanbecoming and enhance the understanding of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher posits a conceptualization of the universal phenomenon of *feeling unsure* through the lens of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1997a, 1998b, 2006a). The researcher explicated how this study came into being in view of engaging in dialogue with others, and experiencing literature, movies, music, paintings, and sculptures. In addition, the researcher outlines the purpose of the study and its significance to nursing. The chapter concludes with the research question that launched this study.

1.2 THE PHENOMENON OF CONCERN: FEELING UNSURE

Feeling unsure is a universal experience of health and quality of life. It surfaces in everyday life as humans share with others, family, and community, at work, school, and play. It is an inherent paradoxical rhythm that appears as humans incarnate feeling sure and *feeling unsure* all-at-once. *Feeling unsure* arises at once with feeling assured while living on the edge in pursuing anticipated projects. Humans describe experiences with words, postures, and gestures as opportunities and challenges surface in coming to know something of value. In day-to-day living, people in all walks of life experience moments of *feeling unsure*. *Feeling unsure* shapes envisioned undertakings as humans move with determination and hesitation all-at-once. For example, in dialogue with others about the possibility of building a community centre, the researcher moved with courage when initiating a new way of rendering services guided by a distinct unconventional nursing approach. There was honouring of divergent perspectives with the difficulties inherent in creating an unusual path. There were struggles with moments of

hesitation in risking venturing forth to bring the envisioned possible to fruition. Another example of *feeling unsure* was shown when a man who was confined on board a plane crossing the Atlantic described feeling anxious, not knowing if he sustained a heart attack. He was definite about the acute chest pain he experienced, but unsure of the possible consequences. Surrendering to what was happening, he affirmed possibilities of changing his lifestyle while considering different health options. Another example arose in practice as a woman described feeling tense and on edge when awaiting nursing care in hospice. She described how uneasy she felt for being a burden to the nurses who did not know the peculiarities of her care.

 Feeling unsure is also prominently described in the arts. Among familiar tales, *Alice's adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, 1865/2006) reported the strange worlds and perplexities of relationships, as Alice moved onward with the unexpected consequences of her choices. Puzzled and astonished about rules based on a predetermined worldview, Alice kept silent and remained still. When requested to participate in unfolding proceedings, she moved on even with the unsureness and lack of clarity she experienced with fright and wonder. Other literary works such as Shakespeares's metaphor, "So foul a sky clears not without a storm" (Gregg, 1955) pertains to feeling unsure as humans live calm-turbulence with harbouring unpredictability while knowing the intrinsic potential of clarity.

 Musical artforms offer representations of *feeling unsure* also. In the popular song from the film *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Jewison, 1973), Mary Magdalene was torn with hesitation as she pondered on love. *Feeling unsure* emerged with fright and fear as she reflected on past relationships and recognized with serene beholding the man she was revering. *Feeling unsure* is also represented in Verdi's (1853) opera *La Traviata* where a woman questioned her troubled soul regarding a decision about *loving, to be loved*. Elsewhere, *feeling unsure* is represented

when *La Traviata* asked for guidance about the sacrifice she had made for the sake of love, since she did not know what to do.

Another example is one in which Paul Wittgenstein, the pianist, plunged into turmoil searching for a way of moving his talent after losing his right arm during the First World War (Manuel, 1938). After a falling out with Ravel, and other embarrassing difficulties, he later acknowledged that the composer's *Concerto for the left hand* was wonderful and proceeded to play it under Ravel's original version. Also Giacometti's (c. 1947) sculpture, *The walking man*, portrays *feeling unsure* as the figure appears to risk moving on, his feet partly anchored to the ground, as he approached a woman standing alone. While the thin elongated human forms are held back with upright torsos, hesitation is represented by massive feet pointing to *feeling unsure* about which direction to take. As well, the painting, *Tower of Babel* (Bruegel, c. 1563), portrays the paradoxical rhythm of certainty-uncertainty in *feeling unsure*. It represents a leaning tower where people at its foundation are busy with different activities. The painting pertains to the relationship of the gods to protect ongoing evolving human diversity, as humans strive to maintain continuity of sameness with the gods by eliminating uncertainty and chaos of life's challenges. While the leaning *Tower of Babel* (Bruegel, c. 1563) symbolically represents wavering worldviews, the various activities portray humans' fascination for sameness, as humans all-at-once build new projects with the assurance of uniqueness and diversity arising in community relationships.

The preceding examples show how *feeling unsure* emerged from the researcher's experiences and interpretation of selected artforms. *Feeling unsure* is an ever present human way of being that shapes hopes and dreams as individuals move on. *Feeling unsure* is a

universal phenomenon giving birth to something of value in carving out health and quality of life.

1.3 THE PHENOMENON OF FEELING UNSURE: CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

Concept inventing (Parse, 1997a, 2006a) guided the researcher's ponderings to explore a unitary conceptualization of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*. Concept inventing is "a multidimensional all-at-once process of analysing-synthesising, bringing to life novel unitary concept" (Parse, 2006a, p. 289). It "entails rational-intuitive origination of a unique synthetic definition of an idea surfacing from the beliefs and values of the scholar who is creating the concept" (Parse, 1997a, p. 63). Three essences of the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* surfaced in the researcher's ponderings: uneasy-easy puzzlement, opportunities-constraints, and anticipating possibilities. Linking these three essences, a unitary conceptual definition emerged as*, Feeling unsure is an uneasy-easy puzzlement arising with opportunities-constraints amid anticipating possibilities.*

1.3.1 Uneasy-Easy Puzzlement

The first essence of *feeling unsure* is uneasy-easy puzzlement. The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Webster, 2004) defined the descriptive adjective uneasy as *discomfort; awkward; embarrassed; apprehensive; worried; restless* (p.1366). The descriptive adjective easy is defined as *involving little difficulty or discomfort; requiring little effort, thought, or reflection; not difficult to endure or undergo; marked by peace and comfort; free from annoyance or anxiety; not burdensome or strained; allowing freedom of movement; felt or attained too readily, naturally, and spontaneously* (Webster, 2004, p. 392). These definitions indicate that the adjectives uneasy and easy are not contraries but offer a view of how the

hyphenated descriptive adjectives uneasy-easy arise as paradoxical ways humans experience *feeling unsure*. Uneasy-easy arose in concept inventing as the researcher pondered on ways that humans live daily situations. It is cocreated with family, at work, and in school settings as people describe activities and situations, and tell stories. Uneasy-easy arises as humans live discomforting-soothing ways of being while moving with possibilities in pursuing projects. It is a rhythmical shifting movement that surfaces as humans describe the enlightening-obscuring meaning moments of *feeling unsure*.

Puzzlement is defined *as the state of being puzzled; perplexity; a surprise; a worry* (Webster, 2004, p. 1013). Puzzlement arises with unsureness-sureness in the quest for ways to move on with others, ideas, and situations. According to Audi (1999), Socrates investigated ways that humans incarnate truth and virtue beyond conventional behaviours in order to attain wisdom. Gadamer (1993/1996) reported that Socrates maintained that knowing that one does not know is real wisdom. For this researcher, puzzlement surfaces in coming to know (Parse, 1998b), while leaping beyond with anguish and doubt (Kierkegaard, 1843/1985; 1844/1974). Puzzlement about words and language arise and meanings are often obscured as understanding eludes clarity, cocreating indecisiveness (Derrida, 1967/1973; Wittgenstein, 1969). The notion of puzzlement finds expression in the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b) as a cadent rhythmical movement in coming to know. It unfolds with the indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging humanuniverse (Parse, 2007b), as humans live the paradoxical tension of enlightening-obscuring in coming to know with bewilderment.

This view of uneasy-easy puzzlement is consistent with the third principle of humanbecoming, "cotranscending with the possibles is the powering and originating of transforming" (Parse, 2007b, p. 309). It connotes an availability arising with bewilderment in

forging new paths with the uncomfortable-comfortable unfolding of seeing anew, as humans shape uniqueness. It relates to "conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of living" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). The essence uneasy-easy puzzlement refers to the concept originating in cotranscending with the possibles (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2007b).

For this researcher, uneasy-easy puzzlement surfaces moment-to-moment in humanuniverse unfolding. It is an unsettling-quiet daze while being curious and vigilant in clarifying the opaque, the *sfumato* (Gelb, 1998). Uneasy-easy puzzlement is risking security, in daringly moving one foot ahead of the other (Giacometti, c. 1947) with the sureness and unsureness of the possibles in cocreating anew. It is living with ambiguity and courage moment-to-moment, while coming to know unique ways of living paradoxical transforming experiences. Uneasy-easy puzzlement is an essence of *feeling unsure* humanuniverse becoming. In chapter 2, the essence uneasy-easy puzzlement is further discussed in connection with the humanbecoming school of thought.

1.3.2 Opportunities-Constraints

The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Webster, 2004) defined opportunity *as a favourable juncture of circumstances*; *a good chance for advancement and progress* (p. 870). For this researcher, opportunity is being available to seeing advantages in allowing projects to flow with emerging occurrences. It is grasping an unanticipated moment that appears with the unpredictable and evocative (Parse, 2002a). The occurrences cocreate possibles with humanuniverse unfoldings as individuals uncover the benefits and boundaries of opportunities with wonderment. A fortuitous opportunity is moving beyond with the creative flow, while discovering the yet-to-be with surprise (Parse, 2002a). With fortuitous opportunity humans

choose from infinite possibilities, while figuring out ways to bring projects forward in aloneness and with others all-at-once.

Constraint is defined as *a state of being checked, restricted, or compelled to avoid, or perform some action; a repression of one's own feeling, behaviour, or action* (Webster, 2004, p. 267). Constraint is the exercise of forces that determine and confine (Schaaf, 1964). It is related to the power of actions that restrict freedom of movement in human relationships (Meltzer, 1992; Rabinow, 1997; Sartre, 1943/1966). It is a human lived experience (Dilthey, 1961) that discloses ways of expressing value priorities (Parse, 2006b).

Opportunities-constraints is a paradoxical rhythm that surfaces with uneasy-easy puzzlement in *feeling unsure*. In everyday living, humans weave rhythms of relating with advantages and obstacles all-at-once. Circumstances appear in the rhythmical flow of the boundless as ways of being human surface with the hurdles in various choices. Hooper (1985) captured the essence of this paradoxical rhythm in her poem *Duty*,

> I slept and dreamed that life was Beauty
> I woke and find that life was Duty.
> Was the dream a shadow lie?
> Toil on, sad heart, courageously,
> And thou shall find thy dream to be
> A noonday light and truth to thee. (p. 70)

Opportunities-constraints arose from the second principle of the humanbecoming theory, "configuring rhythmical patterns of relating is the revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting of connecting-separating" (Parse, 2007b, p. 309). Opportunities-constraints is related to the concept enabling-limiting. Enabling-limiting is "living the opportunities-restrictions present in all choosings all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 44). As humans choose ways of being with circumstances and situations, opportunities-constraints in *feeling unsure* is fashioned with freeing and at once stifling options in moving with possibilities. For this researcher,

opportunities-constraints is a mysterious liberating paradox of becoming, unfolding indefinitely

with *feeling unsure*. In chapter 2, the essence opportunities-constraints is further discussed in

light of the humanbecoming school of thought.

1.3.3 Anticipating Possibilities

Anticipating is defined as *giving advance thought; meeting an obligation before a due*

date; foreseeing and deal with in advance; to expect or speak in knowledge of later matter; and

to look forward to as certain (Webster, 2004, p. 54). In *feeling unsure*, anticipating arises as

humans live envisioning what will be. Anticipating refers to considering the intricacies of an

idea or situation looking onward with the expected (Adorno, 2006; Parse, 2002a; Rilke,

1924/1935). As humans conceive ways of being with projects, anticipating arises in coming to

know. As roving artisans (Pascal, (1670/1947) free to choose (Sartre, 1943/1966) with situations

(Marcel, 1951), humans coshape projects while *feeling unsure* when considering possibilities.

Anticipating refers to humans working with projects that appear all-at-once beyond the horizon.

It is dwelling with possibilities in building the projects.

The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Webster, 2004) defined possibility as *the*

conditions or facts of being possible; a potential or prospective value (p. 968). Possibility

purports the potency that arises with movement while envisaging the "unknown not-yet" (Parse,

1998b, p. 47). The movement inherent in all possibilities surfaces as humans incarnate what is

ventured with what appears in setting forth projects. Possibility is being with the yet-to-be

(Parse, 1998b, p. 29).

For this researcher, anticipating possibilities is "abiding with, comparing, and

appropriating the subsidiary awareness of particulars with the focal awareness of the whole"

(Parse, 1998b, p. 36). The essence, anticipating possibilities is captured in Rilke's (1898/2008)

poetic statement, "The root never sees the fruits nevertheless it nurtures them" (p. 57). Anticipating possibilities is consistent with the first principle of humanbecoming, "structuring meaning is the imaging and valuing of languaging" (Parse, 2008a, p. 370). It is related to imaging, "reflective-prereflective coming to know the explicit-tacit all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 36). The essence anticipating possibilities is further explained in chapter 2 in view of the humanbecoming school of thought.

1.3.4 Summary

Guided by the process of concept inventing (Parse, 1997a, 2006a), the researcher created an original definition of *feeling unsure*, *Feeling unsure is an uneasy-easy puzzlement arising with opportunities-constraints amid anticipating possibilities*. The abstract concept is composed of three distinct interwoven essences; namely, uneasy-easy puzzlement, opportunities-constraints, and anticipating possibilities. The essence uneasy-easy puzzlement is related to the theoretical concept originating (Parse, 1998b). It is "inventing new ways of conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of living" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). Opportunities-constraints is an essence of *feeling unsure* and is connected to the theoretical concept enabling-limiting (Parse, 1998b). Enabling-limiting is "living the opportunities-restrictions present in all choosings all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 44). The essence anticipating possibilities pertains to imaging in feeling unsure, which is "reflective-prereflective coming to know the explicit-tacit all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 36). At a conceptual level of the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1998b), *feeling unsure* is originating in the enabling-limiting of imaging.

1.4 PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this study were to:

a) understand the lived experience of *feeling unsure* from the humanbecoming perspective (Parse, 1998b);

b) enhance understanding of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* as an essence of health and quality of life;

c) discover the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*;

d) contribute to the advancement of nursing knowledge.

1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that guided this study was: *What is the structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure?*

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF EXPLORING THE PHENOMENON OF FEELING UNSURE FOR NURSING

The phenomenon of *feeling unsure* is a universal lived experience surfacing with humanuniverse. This study has significance in the following ways:

a) an original unitary definition of *feeling unsure* added depth and understanding about the concept of feeling unsure to the theoretical literature.

b) exploring the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* has uncovered new insights about a universal experience of health and quality of life.

c) exploring the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* with people from the general population was unique to this study.

d) findings of this study contributed to the expansion of nursing science and expanded the knowledge base of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1987, 1990a, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998b, 2003, 2005, 2007b).

e) findings of this study added to the knowledge of *feeling unsure* from previous research (Bunkers, 2007; Morrow, 2006) guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1990b, 1998b, 2005).

1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis consists of eight chapters. In chapter two the researcher explores the philosophical underpinnings of the humanbecoming school of thought and discusses the essences of *feeling unsure* in light of the concepts and paradoxes of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1987, 1992, 1998b, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007b). Chapter three presents a critical examination of theoretical and research literature related to the phenomenon of *feeling unsure*. In chapter four the researcher describes the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1990b, 2001, 2005) and addresses the criteria of rigor and credibility of the study. The structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* is explicated in chapter five and in chapter six a discussion of the study's findings in relation to relevant research is presented. In chapter seven, the researcher presents a personal reflection of her research journey. Chapter eight concludes the thesis by discussing the uniqueness of the findings of the study. The implications for further research, practice, and leading-following with community and the findings' contribution to the humanbecoming school of thought and the discipline of nursing are also presented.

In the next chapter the philosophical underpinnings of the humanbecoming school of thought are discussed and the humanbecoming theory is explored with the researcher's conceptualization of *feeling unsure* in light of the theoretical concepts. A redefinition of the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* through the lens of the humanbecoming theory is presented by this researcher.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher addresses the philosophical underpinnings of the

humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2007b, 2008a). The ontology of the

humanbecoming school of thought is grounded in the human sciences and is consistent with

the principles and postulates of the science of unitary human beings (Rogers, 1970, 1992) and

the tenets of existential-phenomenological thought (Heidegger, 1962; Merleau-Ponty,

1942/1963, 1944/1989; Sartre, 1943/1966). The humanbecoming perspective is consistent

with the beliefs and values of this researcher. The chapter concludes by revisiting this

researcher's conceptual definition of *feeling unsure* as presented in Chapter One. The

phenomenon of the study is defined in light of the postulates, principles, and paradoxes of the

humanbecoming theory.

2.2 THE HUMANBECOMING SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

The humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b, 2007b, 2008a)

consists of a specific ontology, epistemology, and congruent methodologies. A school of

thought is "a theoretical point of view held by a community of scholars" (Parse, 1997b, p. 74).

Humanbecoming (Parse, 2007b, 2008a) is a nursing perspective that encompasses "non-

traditional beliefs about the human-universe-health process" (Parse, 1999, p. 2).

2.2.1 Contributions from the Human Sciences

The humanbecoming school of thought, rooted in the human sciences, is inconsistent

with the natural sciences. According to Dilthey (1961, 1976, 1894/1977, 1883/1988), the

ontology of the human sciences is acausal and this differs from the causal tradition of the

natural sciences. Human sciences emphasize understanding human experiences by illuminating meaning, values, and relationships (Parse, 2001) through diverse epistemologies and methodologies that evolved from Dilthey's perspective (Gadamer, 1976, 1978; Giorgi, 1970; Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur, 1981; Schutz, 1967). The focus of humanbecoming is human experiences (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2001), viewed differently from alternate approaches. Humanbecoming views humans as indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging (Parse, 2004, 2007b) beings participating with the universe in cocreating lived experiences. This view of nursing is situated within the *simultaneity paradigmatic perspective* (Parse, 1987).

2.2.2 Contributions from the Science of Unitary Human Beings

According to Rogers (1970) humans are irreducible wholes of energy field patterning. Rogers created a new worldview for nursing that consists of three major principles and four postulates. The three principles are: resonnancy, helicy, and integrality (Rogers, 1970, 1992). The four postulates are energy field, openness, pattern, and pandimensionality. Resonnancy is defined as, "continuous change from lower to higher frequency wave patterns in human and environmental fields" (Rogers, 1992, p. 31). Rogers (1992) defined helicy as, "continuous, innovative, unpredictable, increasing diversity of human and environmental field patterns" and integrality as, "continuous mutual human field and environment field process" (p. 31). The postulate energy field is defined as, "the fundamental unit of the living and the non-living. Field is a unifying concept. Energy signifies the dynamic nature of the field. A field is in continuous motion and is infinite" (Rogers, 1992, p. 29). Openness is "characterized by constant interchange of materials and energy with environment" (Rogers, 1970, p. 49). It "explains the infinite nature of energy fields, how the human and environmental fields are integral with one another, and that causality is invalid" (Rogers, 1992, p. 30). Another postulate fundamental to the science of unitary human beings is pattern. Rogers (1992) stated that pattern is "the distinguishing characteristic of an energy field perceived as a single wave"

(p. 29). Pandimensionality is defined as "a non-linear domain without spatial or temporal attributes" (Rogers, 1992, p. 29). Rogers' views clarified "the nature of human wholeness, the nature of the human-universe relationship, and the nature of health" (Parse, 1992, p. 35) that highlighted a perspective of the nursing discipline related to beliefs about human health in the mutual environmental process. The ideas in Rogers' three principles and four postulates contributed to Parse's synthesis of the humanbecomig school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b) in that humanbecoming and humanuniverse is "indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging" (Parse, 2007b, p. 310).

2.2.3 Contributions from Existential Phenomenological Thought

The existential phenomenological perspective considers humans as a unity constituted as intentional free subjects who continually manifest themselves. Through the creation of projects, humans seek to define and shape self in the world and what appears in the present (Heidegger, 1962; Husserl, 1936/1970a, 1900/1970b; Kierkegaard, 1844/1974, 1846/1968; Merleau-Ponty, 1942/1963, 1964a, 1964b, 1944/1989; Sartre, 1943/1966). The existential phenomenological perspective emphasizes understanding existence by describing humanly lived experiences in light of subjectivity, intentionality, constitution, and freedom. The humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b) posits humans as unitary (Parse, 2004); that is, indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging beings (Parse, 2007b). In light of freely choosing meaning, humans move with possibles as patterns of relating are cocreated in connectedness with the universe. Humanuniverse is unbounded humanbecoming's *evolutionary emerging* (Parse, IHB, 2009a). The humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b) emphasizes understanding humanly lived experiences for the purpose of describing and explicating health and quality of life.

The humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b) arose as a different conceptual system consistent with the tenets and concepts arising from existential-

phenomenological thought. Assumptions embedded in the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1981, 1998b) draw on the existential-phenomenological tenets of intentionality and human subjectivity and the concepts of coexistence, situated freedom, and coconstitution of humanbecoming to extend the understanding of humanly lived experiences of health and quality of life.

2.2.3.1 Intentionality

While it is reported (Husserl, 1936/1970a) that Descartes' cogitato alludes to intentionality as "having something consciously [...] in experiencing, thinking, feeling, willing" (p. 82) and that Brentano viewed the tenet as an objective characteristic of psychic and mental processes, Husserl disagreed with the idea that intentionality pertained to what one has in mind. Husserl (1936/1970a) explicated that "human beings [are...] consciously affected by things, actively attending to them or in general perceiving them, actively remembering them, thinking about them, planning and acting in respect to them" (p. 235). Husserl (1936/1970a) questioned intentionality in light of "the inseparable unity" (p. 143) between humans and how things or objects constitute or manifest meaning. Husserl (1936/1970a) addressed intentionality in terms of the phenomenological reduction, where an object appears in consciousness in light of the human's horizon and the flowing persistence of time, such that "the objective universe comes to be—the world which is and *as* it is concretely and vividly given" (p. 168). Hence, for Husserl, transcendental phenomenology is possible as humans suspend judgement in view of what appears, while being able to describe the phenomenon. This conceptualization is consistent with Merleau-Ponty's (1944/1989) views. He stated, "my existence is...one with the existence of the world, and because [of who] I am, when taken concretely, is inseparable from this body and this world" (p. 408). Merleau-Ponty (1964a, 1964b) further explicated that humans' gaze through focused concentration awakens in abiding with things that show the luminous invisible manifested through visible objects.

Heidegger (1962) concurred with the idea of coexistence while distinguishing that perception is "consummated" (p. 89), since humans are "involved [in] the world through a fundamental nature of knowing, being present, and open (Parse, 1998b, p. 14). Heidegger (1962) further explicated that intentionality is related to the performance of acts that are felt deeply and lived in situation.

Intentionality as conceived from the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b) draws particularly from Heidegger (1962), Husserl (1936/1970a), Merleau-Ponty (1944/1989), and Sartre (1943/1966). Expansion of the tenet could be surmised in terms of indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging humanuniverse cocreation (Parse, 2007b), where humanbecoming emergings guided by the ontology (Parse, 1998b, 2005, 2007b, 2008a) explicate a way of coming to know and understand humanly lived experiences of health and quality of life.

2.2.3.2 Human Subjectivity

Subjectivity is the first principle of existentialism (Sartre, 1946/2007). It is a statement about being (Heidegger, 1949/1993) that expresses a worldview (Heidegger, 1954/1975) and shapes life experiences (Jaspers, 1938/1971). While Sartre (1946/2007) stated that humans are projects that emerge in view of choices made in situations and Merleau-Ponty (1942/1963) posited that human subjective projects arise from a lived perspective that provides communication with the world, Kierkegaard (1846/1968) discussed subjectivity in view of living a paradoxical tension arising in inwardness, and Heidegger (1962) posited subjectivity as "*Being-towards-possibilities*" (p. 188), "a potential yet-to-be" (Parse, 1998b, p. 15). Humans' potential yet-to-be is underpinned by temporality (Heidegger, 1962; Kierkegaard, 1846/1968; Lévinas 1978/1981; Sartre, 1946/2007). This is where subjectivity is addressed as *Otherwise than being* (Lévinas, 1978/1981), choosing within the consciousness of being and nonbeing (Sartre, 1943/1966), and standing face-to-face before

nothingness, while being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1962). The nothingness of being does not

arise from a causal context but surfaces as a subjective project in becoming (Heidegger, 1962;

Kierkegaard, 1846/1968; Sartre, 1943/1966, 1946/2007). From a humanbecoming

perspective, Parse (1998b) addressed human subjectivity as a paradoxical tension of being and

nonbeing lived all-at-once as, "humans coparticipate with the world in the emergence of

projects [while] choosing to live certain values [....] in cocreation of personal becoming" (p.

15).

2.3 THE THEORY OF HUMANBECOMING

Parse's (1981, 1987, 1992, 1995, 1998b, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2007b, 2008a)

theory of humanbecoming is a distinct conceptual system built on the principles and

postulates of the science of unitary being (Rogers, 1970) and the tenets and concepts from the

body of existential-phenomenological thought (Heidegger, 1962; Merleau-Ponty, 1944/1989;

Sartre, 1946/1956). Parse (1981) presented *Man-Living-Health: A theory of nursing* to the

scholarly discipline of nursing. The theoretical perspective is grounded in the simultaneity

paradigm (Parse, 1987). While the theory was renamed *Human becoming* (Parse 1992) and

the language of the assumptions and principles revised, the theory remains in keeping with the

simultaneity perspective that Parse (2004, 2007b) clarified as unitary; that is, indivisible,

unpredictable, everchanging. Consistent with the idea of humanbecoming as an "evolutionary

emergent" (Parse, IHB, 2009) and founded on its indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging

perspective (Parse, 2007b), Parse's (2007b) theoretical work was renamed "by specifying

humanbecoming in one word" (p. 308).

The ontology of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1995,

1998b, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2007b, 2008a) is grounded in assumptions, postulates,

principles, and concepts and paradoxes (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Humanbecoming Assumptions, Postulates, Principles, Concepts, and Paradoxes

Assumptions	Synthesized Assumptions	Postulates	Principles	Concepts and paradoxes
The human with universe is coexisting while coconstituting rhythmical patterns. The human is open, freely choosing meaning with situation, bearing responsibility for decisions. The human is continuously coconstituting patterns of relating, The human is transcending illimitably with possibles. Becoming is human-living-health. Becoming is rhythmically coconstituting with humanuniverse. Becoming is the human's patterns of relating value priorities. Becoming is transcending with possibles. Becoming is the human emerging.	Humanbecoming is freely choosing personal meaning with situation, living value priorities. Humanbecoming is configuring rhythmical patterns of relating with humanuniverse. Humanbecoming is cotranscending illimitably with emerging possibles.	Illimitability is the indivisible unbounded knowing extended to infinity, the all-at-once remembering and prospecting with the moment. Paradox is an intricate rhythm expressed as a pattern preference. Freedom is contextually construed liberation. Mystery is the unexplainable, that which cannot be completely known unequivocally.	Structuring meaning is the imaging and valuing of languaging. Configuring rhythmical patterns of relating is the revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting of connecting-separating. Cotranscending with possibles is the powering and originating of transforming.	**Imaging**: explicit-tacit; reflective-prereflective **Valuing**: confirming-not confirming **Languaging**: speaking-being silent; moving-being still **Revealing-concealing**: disclosing-not disclosing **Enabling-limiting**: potentiating-restricting **Connecting-separating**: attending-distancing **Powering**: pushing-resisting; affirming-not affirming; being-nonbeing **Originating**: certainty-uncertainty; conforming-not conforming **Transforming**: familiar-unfamiliar

Parse (1981, 1995, 1998b, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2008a) articulated the following assumptions about

human and becoming:

1. The human with universe is coexisting while coconstituting rhythmical patterns.
2. The human is open, freely choosing meaning with situation, bearing responsibility for decisions.
3. The human is continuously coconstituting patterns of relating.
4. The human is transcending illimitably with possibles.
5. Becoming is human-living-health.
6. Becoming is rhythmically coconstituting with humanuniverse.
7. Becoming is human's patterns of relating value priorities.
8. Becoming is transcending with possibles.
9. Becoming is human's emerging. (Parse, 2008a, p. 370).

These nine assumptions were synthesized in the following three assumptions:

1. Humanbecoming is freely choosing personal meaning with situation, living value priorities.
2. Humanbecoming is configuring rhythmical patterns of relating with humanuniverse.
3. Humanbecoming is cotranscending illimitably with emerging possibles. (Parse, 2008a, p. 370)

The humanbecoming assumptions mean that humans incarnate unique preferred cherished beliefs

in cocreating ways of being that unfold with a seamless reality in the cadent flow of timeless

moments, while moving on with boundless possibilities as humans envision projects. Three

major themes emerged from all the philosophical assumptions: meaning, rhythmicity, and

transcendence (Parse, 1981, 1995, 1998b, 2008a; Parse, Coyne, & Smith, 1985)

2.3.1 Meaning

Consistent with some descriptions of meaning as articulated by Dilthey (1961), Gadamer

(1976), Heidegger (1962), and Husserl (1900/1970b), Parse (1998b) stated that meanings are

"the valued images of the is, was, and will-be languaged in the now with and without words,

with and without movement....It arises with the human-universe process and refers to ultimate

meaning or purpose in life and the meaning moments of everyday living" (p. 29). As humans

with universe shape personal knowledge with valued ways of being in everyday unfolding with an irreducible "inevitable presence" (Parse, 2008, p. 281), meaning surfaces with uttered-unuttered expressions and movement-stillness. Expressions of humanly lived experiences emerge with situations as humans incarnate meaning, all-at-once shedding light beyond the moment (Parse, 1998b).

2.3.2 Rhythmicity

Rhythmicity is the paradoxical patterning of humanuniverse unfoldings that arises with a cadent flow, revealing unique unrepeatable experiences. The everchanging humanuniverse connectedness shifts as diverse ways of being with others, ideas, objects, and situations are shown in patterns of rhythmical relating with innumerable opportunities and restrictions lived all-at-once. Diversity emerges in shifting ways of being that surface with recognizable configurations in the continuity of rhythmical patterns of humanuniverse (Parse, 1998b).

2.3.3 Transcendence

Transcendence is reaching beyond with the not-yet known explicitly, as humans cocreate and invent new ways of being with possibles in light of different vantage points. Humans struggle and leap beyond the moment, while daringly propelling with the envisioned possibles in choosing to incarnate preferred options with situations grounded in the context of lived experiences (Parse, 1998b). It is living on the edge as cherished alternative ways of being surface, while moving on in creating anew with everyday circumstances.

Parse, Coyne, and Smith (1985) summarized the indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging unfoldings of humanbecoming that weave meaning, rhythmicity, and transcendence in stating,

"What is and will be as it appears now, is the meaning moment that is stretched in the shifting of rhythms to the not-yet" (p. 12).

2.3.4 Postulates

Drawing from the humanbecoming assumptions, Parse (2007b) posited four postulates. The postulates are illimitability, paradox, freedom, and mystery. Parse (2007b) defined *illimitability* as, "the indivisible unbounded knowing extended to infinity, the all-at-once remembering and prospecting with the moment (p. 308). Illimitability addresses uncircumscribed ways that humanbecoming emerges with inexhaustible understandings that appear all-at-once in humanly lived experiences. Illimitability permeates humanly lived experiences in view of unending expanding horizons. It pertains to countless ways that humans engage options with universe. Parse (2007b) defined *paradox* as, "an intricate rhythm expressed as a pattern preference. Paradoxes are not opposites to be reconciled or dilemmas to be overcome but, rather, are lived rhythms" (p. 309). Paradoxical tensions inherent in all humanly lived experiences do not surface as an either-or option to be resolved through analytic logic or arise from a multidimensional additive both-and perspective. Paradoxes arise in all lived experiences as humans choose favoured ways of being with situations that incarnate the tensions of apparent opposites all-at-once. Paradox weaves seemingly intermingled contraries as humans choose to express a privileged option, while incarnating all-at-once a distinct counter-related way of being.

Parse (2007b) defined *freedom* as, "contextually construed liberation" (p. 309). Freedom is an emergent continuously unfolding as humans live everyday in connectedness with universe. It arises with "the inevitable presence" (Parse, 2008b, p. 281) of humanuniverse that permeates the "all-at-onceness" (Parse, IHB, 2009a) of evolving cocreated situatedness (Parse, 1998b).

Parse (2007b) defined *mystery* as, "the unexplainable, that which cannot be completely known unequivocally. It is a puzzlement, an impenetrable" (p. 309). Humanuniverse emergence surfaces with mystery. It is a bewildering indescribable that arises with awe as humanuniverse unfoldings appear with ineffable glimpses of knowing, while at-once veiled with the imponderable. The four postulates permeate all principles of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b). That is, all principles are intricately woven with the philosophical assumptions and underpinned with the pervasiveness of the postulates inherent to the theory.

2.3.5 Principles of Humanbecoming

Parse (1981, 1992, 1995, 1997b, 1998b, 1999, 2003, 2008a) stated three principles that are congruent with the philosophical assumptions and the themes of humanbecoming. The humanbecoming principles constitute "a specific belief system about nursing's metaparadigm construct, the human-universe-health process" (Parse, 1997b, p. 75). The principles are:

1. Structuring meaning is the imaging and valuing of languaging.

2. Configuring rhythmical patterns of relating is the revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting of connecting-separating.

3. Cotranscending with possibles is the powering and originating of transforming (Parse, 2008a, p. 370).

2.3.5.1 Principle one

The principle, *Structuring meaning is the imaging and valuing of languaging* (Parse, 2008a, p. 370), means that humanly lived experiences are cocreated as humans construe personal reality with the universe. Meaning appears as humans ponder unreservedly with universe on illimitable ways of being, while freely choosing prized options regarding what is important in the

mystery of humanuniverse unfoldings (Parse, 2007b). Parse (1981, 1998b, 2008a) identified

three concepts in positing the first principle. The concepts are imaging, valuing, and languaging.

Structuring meaning arises as humans with universe live the paradoxical tension inherent in each

concept; that is, "the explicit-tacit and reflective-prereflective of imaging, the confirming–not

confirming of valuing, and the speaking–being silent and moving–being still of languaging"

(Parse, 2007b, p. 309). *Imaging* is a "reflective-prereflective coming to know the explicit-tacit

all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 36). Imaging is constructed while "abiding with, comparing, and

appropriating the subsidiary awareness of particulars with the focal awareness of wholes" (Parse,

1998b, p. 36), as humans glimpse the yet-to-be known explicitly with critical reasoning and

illusive apprehension all-at-once. Reflective knowing shapes imaging of the now moment with

explicit thought, as prereflective knowings surface all-at-once with the elusiveness of the

indistinct. Imaging surfaces with humanuniverse unfoldings with the paradoxical tension of

unequivocal knowledge amid the vagueness of dim perception in light of chosen significant

options. That is, meaning is constructed in light of valuing. Parse (1998b) described *valuing* as,

"confirming-not confirming cherished beliefs in light of a personal worldview" (pp. 37-38). The

paradoxical rhythm confirming-not confirming refers to prizing imaged options as humans

choose what to believe, what to do, and ways of being with universe. Choosing, prizing, and

acting arise in valuing (Parse, 1998b) as humans uphold preferred ways of being that have

meaning, while relinquishing that which is not significant. Valuing surfaces in the continuous

everchanging paradoxical rhythm of embracing-not embracing beliefs, as humans choose

preferred ways of being with activities of everyday living. Prizing imaged options arises with

languaging meaning. Parse (1998b) defined *languaging* as, "signifying valued images [while]

speaking-being silent and moving-being still" (p. 39). Languaging refers to expressing

symbolically the treasured in "words and no words [with] tonality, tempo, and volume, as well as gesture, gaze, touch, and posture" (Parse, 1998b, p. 40). As humans live all-at-once the paradoxical rhythms of speaking-being silent and moving-being still, languaging conveys meaning with "understandings [that] arise as ideas are integrated with personal knowledge and beliefs" (Parse, 2002b, p. 183). Reality is cocreated and symbolized as "a seamless symphony of becoming" (Parse, 1996) that emerges with rhythmical patterns of relating.

2.3.5.2 Principle two

Principle two is, "*Configuring rhythmical patterns of relating is the revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting of connecting-separating*" (Parse, 2008a, p. 370). It refers to the theme of rhythmicity in "cocreating reality illimitably with paradoxical rhythms: the disclosing–not disclosing of revealing-concealing, the potentiating-restricting of enabling-limiting, and the attending-distancing of connecting-separating" (Parse, 2007b, p. 309). Configuring rhythmical patterns of relating pertains to illimitable ways humans freely engage with others, ideas, objects, and situations, while divulging preferred modes of being with opportunities and all-at-once restrictions that emerge in the mystery of humanuniverse unfoldings. *Revealing-concealing* is "disclosing-not-disclosing all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 43). It refers to ways humans unveil meaning while signifying something of wonder that is inscrutable and not readily apparent or uncovered. Parse (1998b) stated, "fundamental to this rhythm is the notion of the human as mystery—an appreciation of the unexplainable in [humanbecoming]" (p. 43). This statement specifies that, as humans choose to make known ways of being with situations there is also all-at-once a non-disclosing. *Enabling-limiting* is defined as, "living the opportunities-restrictions present in all choosings all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 44). It refers to incarnating with vigour the infinite number of fortuitous circumstances that arise all-at-once with confining impediments.

This pertains to the potentiating-restricting of enabling-limiting. In choosing one way of being over another, humans cocreate both opportunities and restrictions all-at-once in unique ways of being with possibles, while weaving the fabric of life (Parse, 1992). *Connecting-separating* is another concept related to configuring rhythmical patterns of relating. Parse (1998b) defined connecting-separating as, "being with and apart from others, ideas, objects, and situations all-at-once" (p. 45). Inherent in the concept is the paradoxical rhythm attending-distancing (Parse, 2008a, p. 370). The cadent flow attending-distancing of connecting-separating pertains to ways humans are involved with relationships and activities, while rhythmically engaging with distinct others appearing all-at-once with the moment. The attending-distancing of connecting-separating is living communion-solitude. Humans move together with opportunities and limitations that arise with closeness of relationships, as contemplating prospects surface in rhythmic patterns of involvement. When connecting with particular human beings, ideas, objects, and situations, others are set at a distance, kept at bay; that is, there are separations in the connections and connections in the separations.

2.3.5.3 Principle three

Parse (2008a) stated principle three as, "*Cotranscending with possibles is the powering and originating of transforming*" (p. 370). It arises with "the pushing-resisting, affirming-not affirming, and being-nonbeing of powering; the certainty-uncertainty and conformity-nonconformity of originating; and the familiar-unfamiliar of transforming (Parse, 2007b, p. 309). Cotranscending with possibles is moving beyond with freedom that surfaces with the certainty of asserting preferred ways of being with illimitable possibilities arising with situations, as humans coconstitute the yet-to-be in a different light. It is moving with the impenetrable in "cocreating anew in the changing of change" (Parse, 1998b, p. 47). Parse (1998b) described *powering* as,

"the pushing-resisting […] of affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing" (p. 47). It is

the unrelenting continuous tension of daring to propel on with the struggles of what was and is in

light of the possibles about-to-be. Powering is living on the edge with the possible perils that

challenge humans with a sense of the not-yet, which may shadow personal ways of asserting

being. The paradoxical rhythms pushing-resisting, affirming-not affirming, and being-nonbeing

of powering are associated with the certainty-uncertainty and conformity-nonconformity of

originating while cotranscending with possibles. Parse (1998b) defined *originating* as,

"inventing new ways of conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of living" (p.

49). It is launching the new amid the conventionally expected, as humans incarnate assuredness

in treading unbeaten paths with hesitation all-at-once. Originating arises with choices humans

make while living the struggle of changing situations that emerge in anticipating possibles. It is

incarnating the emergent not-yet as humans carve out what is uniquely distinct, while living with

"the ambiguity of the unknown [sic]" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). *Transforming* is another concept

related to cotranscending with possibles. Parse (1998b) defined transforming as, "shifting the

view of the familiar-unfamiliar, the changing of change in coconstituting anew" (p. 51).

Transforming emerges in the flux of change with the presence of unexpected promptings

appearing with the not-yet envisaged, as humans struggle with the familiar-unfamiliar. It is

venturing with inspiring uncharted ways of being, as humanuniverse connectedness appears with

possibilities emerging in unfolding new light.

In summary, Parse (2007b) stated

The ontology [of humanbecoming] consists of assumptions, postulates,
principles, concepts, and paradoxes. The assumptions permeate the postulates
and the postulates are embedded in the principles. Central to the school of
thought is the idea that human reality is a seamless symphony of becoming.
This idea of reality is foregrounded with the postulates (p. 371).

2.4 RESEARCHER'S CONCEPTUALIZATION OF FEELING UNSURE

In view of concept inventing (Parse, 1997a, 2006a), the researcher's meaning of *feeling unsure* surfaced as, *Feeling unsure is an uneasy-easy puzzlement with opportunities-constraints amid anticipating possibilities*. The three essences are: uneasy-easy puzzlement, opportunities-constraints, and anticipating possibilities. Weaving together the three essences forms a unitary conceptual definition that is congruent with the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b, 2007b, 2008a). Each essence is further discussed in light of the humanbecoming school of thought.

2.4.1 Uneasy-Easy Puzzlement

Uneasy-easy puzzlement is related to transcendence. It is associated with the third principle, "Cotranscending with possibles is the powering and originating of transforming" (Parse, 2008a, p. 370). The essence uneasy-easy puzzlement highlights the concept originating; that is, "inventing new ways of conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of living" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). This paradoxical rhythm of originating is inherent in feeling "sure-unsure all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). Parse (1998b) said that it is "the kind of certainty-uncertainty and conformity-nonconformity [that...] is significant in patterns of originating" (p. 50). For this researcher, uneasy-easy puzzlement is an unsettling-quiet daze. It is living with the ambiguity of discomforting-soothing ways of being. Uneasy-easy puzzlement arises as humans forge new paths in living the expected while daring to be different with doubts and confidence that surface all-at-once. It refers to "creating new ways of distinguishing personal uniqueness" (Nietzsche, 1901/1967, as cited in Parse, 1998b, p. 49). Uneasy-easy puzzlement pertains to "fortifying the ingenuous" (Parse, 2008a, p. 372) in choosing innovative ways of being with situations. It is incarnating the expected with bafflement, as awkwardness and reservation arise

with feeling unsure as humans fashion prospects in moving beyond with the assuredness of a personal mode of living creative expressions. People feel uneasy-easy puzzlement as situations arise in originating change. The paradoxical rhythm arises in forging new paths with the uncomfortable-comfortable unfoldings of conforming-not conforming, as bewilderment surfaces all-at-once with certainty-uncertainty.

2.4.2 Opportunities-Constraints

The second essence, opportunities-constraints, is related to rhythmicity. It is associated with the second principle, "Configuring rhythmical patterns of relating is the revealing-concealing and enabling-limiting of connecting-separating" (Parse, 2007b, p. 370). Opportunities-constraints highlights the concept enabling-limiting that Parse (1998b) defined as, "living the opportunities-restrictions present in all choosings all-at-once" (p. 44). For this researcher, opportunities-constraints surfaces in feeling unsure with choosing ways of being, as humans incarnate advantages and restrictive drawbacks that arise all-at-once with situations. With situations, unfolding options surface in a cadent flow that shapes all human choosings. Choosing to move in one direction offers opportunities and limitations that at-once encumber the prospect of moving with the advantages and restrictions that arise all-at-once in another direction. Parse (1998b) said, "The human cannot be all possibilities at once, so, in choosing, one is both enabled and limited. A recognizable flow and cadence emerge with the enabling-limiting of [humanbecoming]" (p. 44). Opportunities-constraints shape value priorities that arise with the paradoxical rhythm "potentiating-restricting" (Parse, 2007b, p. 370), as humans move with possibilities that surface with favourable-stifling options.

2.4.3 Anticipating Possibilities

The third essence of *feeling unsure* is anticipating possibilities. It is related to meaning. Anticipating possibilities is associated with the first principle, "Structuring meaning is the imaging and valuing of languaging" (Parse, 2008a, p. 370). The essence anticipating possibilities highlights the concept imaging that Parse (1998b) defined as a, "reflective-prereflective coming to know the explicit-tacit all-at-once" (Parse, 1998, p. 36). For this researcher, anticipating possibilities is considering the intricacies of an idea or situation as humans conceive ways of being, while envisioning projects with the sense of *feeling unsure* when pondering the might be. It arises with appropriating unfolding meanings that surface with unambiguousness and vagueness all-at-once. Anticipating possibilities is envisaging beyond the horizon of the expected, while dwelling with denotations and connotations that arise in coming to know prospects yet-to-be. Anticipating possibilities is the "imaging reality [...] of the explicit-implicit knowing and is an essential feature of [humanbecoming]" (Parse, 1998b, p. 37).

2.5 THE PHENOMENON OF FEELING UNSURE THROUGH THE HUMANBECOMING LENS

Through the humanbecoming lens, the phenomenon of this study was conceptualized as, *Feeling unsure is uneasy-easy puzzlement with opportunities-constraints amid anticipating possibilities*. At the theoretical level of discourse the phenomenon is, *Feeling unsure is originating in the enabling-limiting of imaging*.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter provided a description of the philosophical underpinnings of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b, 2007b, 2008a) followed by an

explication of the assumptions, themes, postulates, principles, and concepts and paradoxes. This chapter concluded by explicating the researcher's conceptual definition of *feeling unsure* in view of humanbecoming. The next chapter provides a review of literature in relation to the phenomenon under study, that of *feeling unsure*.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a review of literature on the phenomenon *feeling unsure*. Significant literature is presented in two sections: general theoretical literature and research literature. The chapter concludes with a summary of the extant literature on the phenomenon.

3.1.1 Literature Search of Databases

An extensive literature search on the phenomenon feeling unsure was conducted. The computerized search included the following databases: Academic Source Elite, Anthropology Index, ALLSEARCH (Arts and Humanities), AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine), ATLA Religion Index, Business Source Premier, Cochrane Index, Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI), Education Complete, EHRAF (Collection of Ethnography), Film Literature Index, Healthstar, Medline, Modern Language Association (MLA), International Biographies, Philosopher's Index, Psychological Abstracts (PSYCHINFO), and Sociological Abstracts. Reference lists and reference materials were consulted. The key words searched included being unsure, *feeling unsure*, uncertainty, unsure, and unsureness in French and English literature. Citations were not limited by dates and or by discipline. A plethora of writings related to being unsure, feeling unsure, uncertainty, unsure, and unsureness were identified. Various disciplines contributed important nuances related to each of the key words identified. Only the writings and research pertinent to the researcher's study are presented here.

The review is divided into two content sections: a) uncertainty and b) unsureness, being unsure, and *feeling unsure*. Each section is further subdivided into theoretical literature by discipline and research literature. The chapter concludes with a summary of the current state of literature on the phenomenon *feeling unsure*.

3.2 THEORETICAL LITERATURE ON UNCERTAINTY

Many disciplines have addressed the concept uncertainty. From the humanbecoming perspective (Parse, 1998b), uncertainty was discussed at the conceptual level as a lived paradoxical rhythm of certainty-uncertainty and related to *feeling unsure* (Bunkers, 2004, 2006, 2007; Morrow, 2006). Discussions of uncertainty enhance understanding of the phenomenon and the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

3.2.1 General

Uncertainty is defined as, "the quality or state of being uncertain" (Webster, 2004, p. 1361). It ranges from falling short of certainty to a complete lack of conviction or knowledge and being unable to be accurately known or predicted. Uncertainty is synonymous with doubt, dubiety, dubiosity, scepticism, and suspicion (Webster, 2004). These words have similar yet different meanings. While doubt suggests an inability to make a decision, dubiety pertains to a "wavering between conclusions" (Webster, 2004, p. 1361), whereas dubiosity refers to vagueness and confusion. Scepticism implies an "unwillingness to believe without conclusions" (Webster, 2004, p. 1361), whereas suspicion stresses "a lack of faith" (Webster, 2004, p. 1361). Uncertainty is opposite of certainty. Certainty is characterized by the ability to discern with assuredness (Webster, 2004).

Penrod (2001) reported that uncertainty was described with more or less discreetness than other peripheral concepts. She refined the concept by clarifying uncertainty as a state of being more than a trait or a quality (Penrod, 2001, 2007). Discussion about uncertainty follows from perspectives taken from different disciplines to explicate this researcher's definition of *feeling unsure*.

3.2.2 Sacred Literature and Theology

In the parable of the good seed and the darnel (Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43), Brother Anthony (1975) explicated that darnel refers to doubt. The biblical scholar (1975) explained that "the Truth that has been entrusted to [humans]" (2Tm 1:14) was circumvented with lawless plausible arguments that cause confusion and deceitful trickery. Brother Anthony (1975) stated, "It is the children of unbelief (…) who produce the empty words full of error concerning the Lord" (p. 119). Uncertainty is thus concerned with belief. On his way to Damascus (Acts 9:1-6), Paul of Tarsus' uncertainty, doubt, and puzzlement was described as a furious struggling with lingering thoughts and discomfort when the Lord Jesus appeared to him (Holzner, 1944). Mysteriously, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus" (2Cor 4:6), melted Paul's binding shackles of uncertainty (Marguerat, 1999). Though convinced about the truth of his experience, Paul expressed uncertainty in dialogue with the Philippians when he stated, "I am still running, trying to capture the prize for which Christ captured me….and I strain ahead for what is still to come" (Phil 3, 12-13). The all-absorbing questionings about one's existence surface with uncertainty in light of the unexplainable revelations in sacred literature and theological beliefs that are not fully within human understanding. While Barth (1975) insisted on the need to resist doubt by beholding the revealed Word of God and Habgood (1983) noted that clarity of beliefs was founded in the fog of uncertainty and in the light of faith, Tillich

(1952) addressed doubt as a loss of existential meaning lived in the tension of humans' finitude in view of a spiritual life. From the sacred literature and theology uncertainty is concerned with faith, belief, and doubt.

3.2.3 Philosophy

Descartes also addressed uncertainty in terms of doubt (Cress, 1641/1980). He stated that what was known through a) bodily senses, b) errors of customs, c) the discernment of the true and the false, and d) perception was unreliable and worth questioning. He said "I pay attention to what spontaneously and at nature's lead came into my thought (…) whenever I pondered what I was" (Cress, 1641/1980, p. 62). Descartes contended that valid arguments disputed with clear and distinct ideas can attain knowledge to resolve doubt with reason. Hence, for Descartes, resolution of doubt is possible through cognition. He said "I am (….) a thing that thinks" (Cress, 1641/1980, p. 63). Like Descartes, Kierkegaard (1844/1974) stated that doubt surfaces in questioning one's own existence. About doubt he said, "What is this unknown something which the Reason collides when inspired by its paradoxical passion, with the result of unsettling even man's knowledge of himself?" (Kierkegaard, 1844/1974, p. 49). For Kierkegaard (1844/1974), passion is faith. He posited, "Faith has precisely the required character; for in the certainty of belief […] there is always present a negated uncertainty, in every way corresponding to the uncertainty of coming into existence….a transition from possibility to actuality" (Kierkegaard, 1844/1974, pp. 101, 91). Questioning surfaces with doubt and is described as "a path from ignorance to clarity [that….] creates the initial fissure in the veil of the unknown [revealing….] our limitations and our urge to go beyond (Batchelor, 1990, p. 37). Hannay (2001) commented that for Kierkegaard doubt surfaces as "an attitude humans' actively adopt in the face of uncertainty against a background of [….] strained reality/ideality relations" (pp. 231-232).

Whereas James (1912) addressed uncertainty as the indeterminateness of human relations to the world and Pascal (1670/1947) described doubt as a wager of faith between seeing too much to deny what is and too little to be sure, Merleau-Ponty (1964a) articulated uncertainty as openness to the opacity of the world. Uncertainty arises in the perceived world of the individual and in inventing the imaginary, constructed as roaming attempts (Merleau-Ponty, 1964b). This view of uncertainty is similar to the notion of freedom as described by Bergson (1907/1911) and Sartre (1946/1956, 1986). Bergson (1907/1911) articulated that uncertainty surfaces in view of a groping, unpredictable, and undeterminable form of intelligence as humans' continuously choose through free will and invent self in creative evolution that is "coextensive with the fringe of possible action" (p. 287). Sartre (1986) addressed the ambiguity of metaphysics in view of the incompleteness of human beings who freely choose in constituting reality. Wittgenstein (1969) believed that language arises with uncertainty in signifying reality. He argued that definitions are a myth whereas the uncertainty of naming and describing reality surfaces in context and with intention (Wittgenstein, 1969). McGinn (2004) further articulated Wittgenstein's idea of uncertainty in human relationships as,

> The general uncertainty of the game which arises from an essential elasticity in our concepts does not mean that there is no such thing as unambiguous evidence […] in a concrete case. The grammatical uncertainty which characterizes our ordinary language-game is also connected with the fact that its conceptual possibilities include that of another's thoughts and feelings being hidden from me in a variety of different ways (p. 256).

From the discipline of philosophy, uncertainty was a) described as doubt in cognition, b) related to faith, freedom, and language, and c) explicated as a paradoxical tension of relations between reason and faith and between humans and the world.

3.2.4 Physics

Heisenberg (1949) discussed the uncertainty of knowing simultaneously with the momentum and position of subatomic particles in quantum physics. The Heisenberg uncertainty principle explicates that accurate knowledge of the behaviour of certain variables exists generally in a proportionate inverse relationship that does not apply in cases related to the infinity. The scientific and philosophical implications of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle highlight the limits of predictability of the future diverging of natural and empirical conditions. Aligned with the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, Schaaf (1964) discussed the uncertainty of the Gaussian function related to degrees of freedom and constraints of upper limit calculations in normal statistical distribution. Furthermore, Prigogine (1997) expressed uncertainty based on the limits of determinism to explain the irreversibility and instability of dissipative structures in complex nonlinear systems. These ideas were somewhat significant to uncertainty as viewed with feeling unsure.

3.2.5 Psychology and Social Psychology

Frankl (1988) addressed uncertainty as a) meaning in the moment as a fearful apprehension and human limitations, b) meaning of life as a frustration between control of social organizations and individual purposive will, and c) the absence of finite beings' understanding of ultimate meaning in light of the Infinite. Different from Frankl (1988), Ellis (1994) attributed the uncertainty brought about by life's hassles as individuals' wallowing in irrational beliefs and unhelpful negative feelings and clinging to inflexible rigid thinking. While both Ellis (1994) and Frankl (1988) thought that uncertainty acts on emotions and behaviours that detract from human adaptation to fulfil daily demands, Fromm (1947) posited that refusing to engage the limits and uncertainty of human security and knowledge is an escape from freedom and creates a false

sense of security about the human condition. Fromm (1947) thought that humans must be

vigilant with passion and strivings in raising questions to emancipate themselves from beliefs

held by authority. He said, "The quest for certainty blocks the search for meaning. Uncertainty

is the very condition to impel man [sic] to unfold his powers" (Fromm, 1947, p. 45).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) observed that uncertainty creates psychological stress and is

a major adaptive task. The psychological stress of uncertainty is manifested by mental confusion

when individuals are not able to decide on a course of action. The indecisiveness of uncertainty

appears with conflicting thoughts, emotions, and behaviours that have an immobilizing effect on

coping processes. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) posited that the more meaningful the event the

less individuals were able to use quality cognitive coping mechanisms to appraise threats and the

probability and the predictability of future events. Bandura (1997) explained, "problem-solving

skills require processing of multifaceted information that contains many complexities,

ambiguities, and uncertainties. The fact that predictive factors are usually related

probabilistically (...) to future events creates some degree of uncertainty" (p. 177).

Notwithstanding the challenges of uncertainty heightened by telecommunication technology and

the accelerated pace of human transactions (Bandura, 2001), Bourdieu (1982) addressed

uncertainty as he questioned the immediate blind adherence to rules of language and rituals by

which individuals engage social practices. Bourdieu (1977/1980a, 1980b) posited that social

individuals may follow sub-reflective practical logic out of placid ignorance in order to cope

with the fuzziness of unforeseen and ever-changing social situations. He stated that any field

presents itself potentially with transformative possibilities that have a measure of indeterminacy

or uncertainty (Bourdieu, 1977/1980a, 1980b).

From the disciplines of psychology and social psychology, uncertainty was described as stressful apprehensions that surface with irrational beliefs regarding life's hassles. In living uncertainty, humans use coping mechanisms to solve problems in order to perform effective and meaningful actions.

3.2.6 Anthropology

Whereas psychological, social, and cultural anthropology viewed uncertainty primarily in terms of risk (Beck, 1992; Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994; Boholm, 2003; Cancian, 1972; Cashdan, 1990; Douglas, 1978; Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982; Giddens, 1990; Mertz, 1985, 2002), Cashdan (1990) stated that there was no agreement on a definition of uncertainty in anthropology. Boholm (2003) stated, "uncertainty has to do with what is unpredicted in life (…) irregular occurrences" (p. 167), and further explicated that "the concept of risk can be understood as a framing device which conceptually translates uncertainty from being an open-ended field of unpredicted possibilities into a bounded set of possible consequences" (p. 167). Further discussions on uncertainty in the anthropological literature were described in relation to globalization (Appadurai, 1996; Beck, 1992; Giddens, 1990). Uncertainty of globalization related to the potential economical, ecological, demographic, linguistic, political, and technological impact was variously alluded to while framed in terms of sustainability.

In psychological anthropology, van Meijl (2008) posited that uncertainty arises with internal inconsistencies related to the ways people express common values. Such uncertainty surfaces with a sense of ambiguity about self. Van Meijl (2008) suggested that in structuring self individuals might not necessarily be interested in formulating a contradictory sense of self. Distinct from van Meijl (2008), Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) stated that a stable self identity emerges with ambiguous confusion and not feeling at home in interchange with other people.

The authors postulated that uncertainty arises with a) complexity, b) ambiguity, c) deficit knowledge, and d) unpredictability (Hermans & Dimaggio, 2007). Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) suggested that in structuring a stable self -identify individuals establish their own local comfortable "niche" (p. 34) to deal with the increasing insecurity and anxiety of global situations. Zabinski (2008) posited that both van Meijl (2008) and Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) implicitly associated uncertainty of the unity of self as "processual self[ing]" (p. 201). While upholding a static and essentialist perspective of the self, Zabinski (2008) argued for the necessity to acknowledge the dynamic and changing self of a "fluxing person....in transit between positions" (pp. 201-202) as, "I am coming from my particular past, I am moving toward an ambiguous future. I am constantly reshaping, moving, reforming. Therefore, even if different parts of me are in conflict 'now,' they overall could be said to not be in conflict, viewed not as a whole per se, but processually" (p. 202).

In social anthropology, Beck (1992) and Giddens (1990) explicated the idea of insecurity of self in association with society. Giddens (1990) argued uncertainty of self in terms of trust, risk, and reflexivity. He posited that there was a tension related to risk between lay scepticism and the abstract systems of representation proposed by professional expertise. Beck (1992) addressed the uncertainty of a "risk society" created through capitalism and wealth production and argued for the importance of individual autonomy.   Beck (1992) advocated that an unsure risk in society uses technological mastery to create benefits, but a new paradigmatic perspective of scientific rationality is needed to deal with the incalculability of hazards and insecurities introduced by modernization. Uncertainty was further discussed in view of conflicts that arise in the individual self as a problem of social risk (Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994). These authors

posited that fundamental ambivalence grasped by calculations of probability leads to uncertainty and alienation of self (Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994).

In cultural anthropology, Mertz (1985, 2002) suggested that uncertainty appears in in-between moments that are mediated through representations of signs and interpretations through mental cognition. The author contended that uncertainty arises with painful indeterminateness (Mertz, 2002) whereas Douglas and Wildavsky (1982) addressed uncertainty in terms of risk which was defined as "a point product of knowledge about the future and consent about the most desired prospects" (p.5).

Known as a transdisciplinary social philosopher, Morin (1999) viewed human beings as *homo complexus*. *Homo complexus* is a view of the human being rooted in a totality perspective (Parse, 1987). It encompasses the dimensions of individual autonomy, social participation, and belongingness to the species (Morin, 1999). Morin (1999) posited that it is as *homo complexus* that humans confront uncertainty through chance, information, and change of context. He stated that uncertainty is a "detoxicator of complex knowledge" (Morin, 1999, p. 11). Morin (1999) suggested that through thoughtful decision-making, awareness, and elaboration of strategies, humans can combat and surmount uncertainty. Morin (1999) contended that education about anthropo-ethics is the way to move with aspiration and determination within uncertainty of individual consciousness. For Morin (1999) the uncertain adventure of humanity is thus a source of collective creativity, learning, and transformation of potentials beyond the limits of self-knowledge.

3.2.7 Nursing

From the simultaneity perspective (Parse, 1987), Parse (1998b) posited, "the paradox certainty-uncertainty is all-at-once being sure and unsure in choosing among options [….It is a]

pattern of originating in situation" (pp. 35, 50). Certainty-uncertainty is a paradoxical pattern that is expressed as humans choose options with definiteness, while envisioning possibilities without knowing the eventualities. Milton (2001) highlighted the idea that living uncertainty is a permanent movement as humans incarnate the paradoxical rhythms of "comfort-discomfort, certainty-uncertainty, and enabling-limiting" (p. 197). Uncertainty pertains to humans living choices in moving with ambiguity, while continuously making decisions.

From the totality perspective (Parse, 1987), Mishel (1981, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1997a) discussed uncertainty primarily related to illness. Mishel (1981) described uncertainty as, "a judgment about an event or situation….Uncertainty hampers the formation of cognitive structure" (pp. 258-259). Borrowing from the literature on stress (Lazarus, 1966) and in light of her research findings with persons living chronic illnesses, Mishel (1990) reconceptualized uncertainty as, "a catalyst in non-linear reactions moving patients cognitively from a mechanistic perspective (capable of explanation) to a probabilistic perspective (where certainty is impossible)" (p. 260). This definition posits uncertainty as a process of moving towards a desired state in view of the changing and evolving nature of chronic illness. Distinctively, Morse and Penrod (1999) described uncertainty as a pattern of moving back and forth, yet specified that there is a cyclical pattern between states of uncertainty. They reported that as people suffer, endure, and move through experiences, uncertainty is punctuated by reformulating self and reordering priorities, whereas Hilton (1988, 1992, 1994) described uncertainty as an emotive and cognitive state. Hilton (1988) defined uncertainty as, "a cognitive perceptual state that ranges from a feeling of just less than surety to vagueness; it changes over time and is accompanied by threatening and/or positive emotions" (p. 18). Through concept analysis (Wilson, 1963), Penrod (2001, 2007) found uncertainty to be precognitive and cognitive ways of knowing. Penrod

(2007) refined the definition of uncertainty by positing that probabilistic cognition precludes existential and situational modes of uncertainty. She said that uncertainty is related to perceived threats and control over events that predispose persons to doubt; such that confidence to interpret or handle life situations leads to uncertainty (Penrod, 2007). This way of viewing the dynamic personal experiences of uncertainty renders the person unable to assign any probabilities to an outcome (Penrod, 2007). Hence, for Penrod (2001, 2007) uncertainty is rooted in self-confidence and control, and the individual's perception of the meaning and outcome of the situation. In contrast, McCormick (2002) defined uncertainty as, "a multidimensional concept that in its purest form is a neutral cognitive state and should not be mistaken for its emotional outcomes" (p. 127). McCormick (2002) posited probability, perception, and temporality as attributes of uncertainty.

In the nursing theoretical literature, uncertainty is conceptualized from two distinct paradigmatic perspectives. From the simultaneity paradigm, uncertainty is an unfolding paradoxical rhythm of uncertainty-uncertainty lived all-at-once, while viewed from the totality perspective uncertainty is a process or changing states occurring in cyclical patterns.

3.3 RESEARCH LITERATURE ON UNCERTAINTY

Review of research studies on uncertainty was conducted in the discipline of nursing and anthropology only. In anthropology literature, the behavioural response to uncertainty was investigated and described (Cancian, 1972; Cashdan, 1990; LeGrand et al., 2003, & Ortiz, 1980; Penrod, 2001).

Numerous studies on uncertainty in illness have been conducted since the 1980s. A comprehensive review of the research literature on adult illness-related uncertainty from 1980-

1995 was conducted by Mast (1995). Mast (1995) organized the findings in terms of a)

antecedents, b) appraisal, c) coping, and d) adaptation using Mishel's (1981, 1990) categories.

Neville's (2003) review of research literature categorized uncertainty in terms of a) time, b)

medical uncertainty, c) professional uncertainty, and d) uncertainty in illness. Several nursing

research studies used Mishel's (1981, 1988, 1990, 1997a, 1997b) uncertainty illness theory and

measured the concept using either the Mishel Uncertainty Instrument Scale (MUI-S) or the

Mishel Uncertainty Intervention in Community (MUI-C) instrument. Six studies are reviewed

here (Bailey, Wallace, & Mishel, 2007; Clayton, Mishel, & Belyea, 2006; Germino, Mishel,

Belyea, Harris, Ware, Mohler, 1998; Gil, Mishel, Belyea, Germino, Porter, & Clayton, 2006; Gil

et al., 2004; Mishel et al., 2005). These studies are all related to the field of oncology. The

studies of Clayton, Mishel, & Belyea (2006) and Mishel and colleagues (2005) on uncertainty

were chosen a) to confirm Mishel's theory of uncertainty in illness (Mishel, 1988, 1990), b) to

illustrate the development of conceptual knowledge, and c) to reaffirm the validation of

psychometric tools through research.

Clayton, Mishel, and Belyea's (2006) research investigated the influence of symptoms,

uncertainty, and communication with providers on well-being to test the theoretical model of

symptoms, communication, uncertainty, and well-being. A convenience sample of 203

recurrence-free African American and Caucasian breast cancer women survivors older than 50

with 5 to 9 years from the original cancer diagnosis and treatment participated in the study.

Appropriate and reliable tools were used to measure the concepts of the theoretical model. In

this study, the Cronbach's alpha for MUIS-S was $\alpha = .81$, which is an acceptable reliability

coefficient (Nunnally, 1978). The power of the study was reported at .714. Findings reported a

direct relation between uncertainty and symptoms and indicators of well-being (mood state and

troublesome thoughts of recurrence) and a direct inverse relation between uncertainty and communication. The unexpected finding of increased communication directly related to an increase amount of troublesome thoughts of recurrence revealed through item analysis that participant received more information from physicians and nurses than participants gave. Clayton, Mishel, and Belyea (2006) argued that this direct increase might be a management skill used to preserve uncertainty and suggested the need to further investigate the relation of uncertainty to communication. Using structural equation modelling techniques the direct effect of uncertainty was linked to the mood state, troublesome thoughts of recurrence, and symptom bother. The link between uncertainty and communication was not established. The results of this study a) confirmed a link to Mishel's theory of uncertainty in illness (Mishel 1988, 1990), b) demonstrated the development of conceptual knowledge, namely, the theoretical model of symptoms, communication, uncertainty, and well-being (Clayton, Mishel, & Belyea, 2006), and c) strengthened the validity of MUIS-S psychometric tool (Mishel, 1981, 1997b).

Mishel and colleagues (2005) hypothesized that breast cancer survivors receiving management intervention would be less emotionally distressed than a control group; that is, the intervention group would show an improvement in psychological and behavioural outcomes under conditions of uncertainty triggered by recurrence of cancer and treatment induced symptoms. A convenience sample of 509 recurrence-free women (149 African American and 360 Caucasian) older than 58 years of age who were 5 to 9 years post-treatment for breast cancer participated in this study. To establish the efficacy of cognitive-behavioural strategies in managing uncertainty, the authors (Mishel et al, 2005) used a 2x2 randomized block, repeated measures design. Appropriate and reliable psychometric tools related to a) cognitive reframing, b) cancer knowledge, c) patient-health provider communication, and d) coping skills were used

to measure uncertainty management. Data were collected at baseline (T1) and 10 months post

baseline (T2). MANOVA findings related to the uncertainty management variables indicated

significant differences (Wilks' Lambda F [9, 496] = 4.04, p = .01) and the Cronbach's alpha for

psychological distress ranged from α = .80 - .93 for Caucasian participants and α = .73 - .90 for

African American participants. Findings also reported that participants experienced an average

of two triggers per month and used a self-help manual 2.24 times per month to deal with triggers

and symptoms. This study confirmed psychological and behavioural benefits from an

uncertainty management intervention and that uncertainty management differs by ethnic groups.

The authors (Mishel et al, 2005) concluded that knowledge and information bring closure to

uncertainty but that the persistence of unpredictable uncertainty endures over time with threats of

recurrence.

Gil and colleagues (2006) investigated the efficacy of an uncertainty management

intervention using a 2x2 randomized repeated measure design. A convenience sample of 483

recurrence-free women (342 White and 141 African American) who were 5 to 9 years post-

treatment for breast cancer were randomly assigned to the experimental (intervention) or control

groups. Gil and colleagues (2006) used Mishel Uncertainty in Illness Scale-Survivor (MUIS-S)

to measure uncertainty and other appropriate and reliable tools to measure additional uncertainty

management variables at baseline (T1), 10 months post baseline (T2), and 20 months post

baseline (T3). Repeated measure MANOVAs revealed a decrease in illness uncertainty (Wilks'

Lambda F [2, 478] = 2.91, p = .05, η^2 = .012) over time for the intervention group. There was no

change in the level of uncertainty for women in the control group. Overall, the significant

differences related to uncertainty were on managing the cognitive reframing and cancer

knowledge variables for both ethnic groups in the intervention group. Gil and colleagues (2006)

stated but did not comment on the non significant effects of the patient-provider communication, problem-solving and social support variables related to uncertainty. The authors (Gil et al., 2006) reported that there was only a slight increase of personal growth through uncertainty for the African American women in the intervention group. Generally, the findings of this study showed that the cognitive-behavioural strategies used to manage uncertainty have beneficial effects on reducing uncertainty.

Gil and colleagues (2004), investigated the source of symptoms related to cancer, long-term treatment side effects, and triggers of recurrence. The convenience sample consisted of 244 women (73 African American and 171 Caucasian) who survived breast cancer for an average of 6.8 years. Over a ten month period, research assistants initiated a monthly telephone protocol by asking participants to identify the frequency of known symptoms and triggers experienced in the prior month. One might question the internal validity of the study as the participants were asked about specific symptoms and triggers without solicitation of personal experiences. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Overall, 1.4 symptoms and 1.6 triggers were reported per month. Whereas the pattern and frequency of symptoms were similar between participants of both ethnic groups, the frequency of triggers occurrences was significantly different for participants of each ethnic group. The authors (Gil et al., 2004) concluded that findings of this study add to the body of knowledge affecting quality of life of long-term breast cancer survivors.

Germino and colleagues (1998) studied the relationship of uncertainty to family coping, psychological adjustment to illness, and spiritual factors of men living with prostate cancer. The study further investigated these relationships in view of patterns of relationship between the patient and their family members and between African American and Caucasian. A sample of 403 participants (69 African American men, 69 family care providers -FCPs-, 132 Caucasian,

and 132 FCPs) participated in this study. Mishel's Uncertainty Illness Scale (MUIS) (Mishel,

1981) and other appropriate and reliable psychometric tools were used to measure correlates of

uncertainty. Overall, findings in patterns of relationship between uncertainty and family coping,

psychological adjustment to illness, and spiritual factors reported fewer differences between men

affected with prostate cancer and FCPs than between ethnic groups. Markedly, there were no

significant relationships between uncertainty and family coping for all African American

participants, while higher levels of uncertainty were related to lower scores on adult role

behaviour for both patients and FCPs in Caucasian families. Whereas measurement of

uncertainty to spiritual factors did not show a significant relationship for all African American

participants, there was a positive relationship between uncertainty and the importance of God for

both groups of Caucasian participants. An inverse relationship between problem-solving and

total social support and uncertainty was reported for the Caucasian FCPs only, while there were

no significant differences for all other participants in the study. Overall patterns of relationship

between uncertainty and psychological adjustment to illness and perceptions of health and illness

varied more between men affected with prostate cancer and FCPs than between ethnic groups.

Bailey, Wallace, and Mishel (2007) explored the concerns and the strategies used by men

undergoing watchful waiting. The purposeful sample consisted of 10 men between 64 and 88

years of age who were diagnosed with prostate cancer in the previous 4 to 12 months. A

qualitative descriptive design was used for this study. Sampling ended with informational

redundancy. Data collection consisted in audiotaped interviews that lasted between 25 to 75

minutes. Data analysis was guided in view of the three domains of Mishel's (1990) theory of

uncertainty in illness. Participants expressed uncertainty in watchful waiting as a lack of

physical discomfort and misattribution of symptoms. Denial was the most common strategy

used in living with illness. In view of the occurrence of any physical changes and the uncertainty about the decision of watchful waiting, participants considered the danger of the disease progression. They wondered whether or not to investigate current medical therapies, and were worried about getting a second opinion. Participants also related to the uncertainty of watchful waiting by considering opportunities. With the self-confidence of having been healthy in the past, participants redefined and minimized the threat of the disease progression by a) believing that poor outcomes occur through current prostate cancer treatments, b) stating trusting the physicians' expertise, c) keeping options open, and d) saying prayers. The results of this study confirm uncertainty in watchful waiting that are consistent with the three domains of Mishel's (1990) theory of uncertainty in illness. Yet, describing the thick descriptors in the findings would enhance linkages to the three domains of the model (Mishel, 1990). Bailey, Wallace, and Mishel (2007) confirmed that the small sample size is a limitation to the study and suggested the need for quantitative analysis to determine uncertainty in view of the incidence and prevalence of concerns for men living with prostate cancer who choose watchful waiting as a management option.

Distinct from the research literature on uncertainty in illness, Penrod's (2001) research was on uncertainty using a hermeneutic phenomenological method. Penrod (2001) described uncertainty as a) sensing control, b) sensing confidence, c) reading the situation, d) regaining a sense of normalcy, and e) shifting temporality. Penrod (2001) argued that experiencing uncertainty involves more than a cognitive function and cognitive interventions.

3.4 SUMMARY OF UNCERTAINTY LITERATURE

The theoretical and research literature addressed uncertainty as a lived experience of health and quality of life. Uncertainty was related to faith, belief, and doubt in cognition and associated with freedom and use of language. Uncertainty was also described as a paradoxical relation between reason and faith and between human and the world. It was explained as a stressful apprehension of life's hassles arising with irrational beliefs. Use of information based on psycho-behavioural interventions and knowledge of coping skills was described as an effective way to resolve uncertainty. Though individuals might experience alterations in decision-making, uncertainty was further described as involving different layers of the self as humans risk engaging existential possibilities through creativity in considering limits of predictability of future conditions. Research findings confirmed a causal relation between the changing nature of uncertainty in illness in view of antecedents, appraisal, coping, and adaptation.

3.5 UNSURENESS, BEING UNSURE, AND FEELING UNSURE: THEORETICAL LITERATURE

While unsureness has been discussed in the arts, theology, philosophy, psychology, and sociology as opposite to sureness, a review of literature uncovered the novelty of the concept in the nursing literature as a paradoxical rhythm of sureness-unsureness (Parse, 1998b). Unsureness emerges in daily life situations and is often linked with surprise, questioning, or silence. Bunkers (2001) stated that in moments of intense turmoil, "silence speaks the unsureness of what may or may not be" (p. 199). While many articles evoked being unsure and *feeling unsure* in view of specific situations, no literature was found that discussed being unsure and feeling unsure from a purely theoretical perspective.

3.5.1 Arts

Durbach (2006a, 2006b) described unsureness in Beckett's and Ibsen's plays in terms of uncertainty, undecidability, ambivalence, indeterminacy, ambiguity, and equivocity. These qualifiers of unsureness were also addressed in the poetry of Keats (Foogle, 1819/1968), Rilke (1922/1978), and Shakespeare (Hudson, 1623/1881).   For example, in *King John*, Shakespeare (1623/1881) associated unsureness to making a vow

> It is religion that doth make vows kept;
> But thou hast sworn against religion;
> By which thou swear'st against the thing thou swear'st,
> And makes an oath—the surety for the truth—
> Against an oath,—the test thou art unsure. (pp. 51-52)

3.5.2 Theology and Philosophy

In the theology literature, unsureness was discussed in terms of uneasiness (Damsteegt, 1975) and trust (Grenz & Placher, 2003). Damsteegt (1975) addressed the unsureness of pastors visiting pre-surgical patients in terms of the uneasiness in a) giving up control, b) understanding the tragic, and c) feeling isolated from other health professionals. Grenz and Placher (2003) addressed unsureness in terms of doubt and hesitation regarding how people know what to believe. The authors posited that unsureness is at the foundation of one's conviction and trust that God's self-revelation will not lead humans astray (Grenz & Placher, 2003). Grenz and Placher (2003) suggested that this theological proposition is related to negative philosophy; that is, the potentialities of things falling short of logic in knowing the reality of things. In philosophy, Zvara (1973) argued that humans can feel unsure about a knowledge claim, yet be able to justify the claim. Zvara (1973) explicated that the relation between knowledge and

unsureness refers to a persistent doubt that always goes beyond the evidence of the truth claims advocated by positivism.

3.5.3 Psychology and Sociology

In the psychology literature reviewed, unsureness was referred to variously. Chovil (1994) associated unsureness with equivocation lived in interactional events. The author explicated that unsureness surfaces when "messages […] are ambiguous, indirect, contradictory, or evasive" (Chovil, 1994, p. 106) in content and meaning to and from the sender and receiver. Similarly Lewis (1977) reported that affect-laden thoughts in group silences surface with unsureness lived through moments of uncomfortableness, anxiety, fright, and resistance and moments of quiescence. Lewis (1977) contended that the silence of unsureness is "a dynamic way of communicating a way of being…an invitation to respond" (p. 111).

3.6 UNSURENESS, BEING UNSURE, AND FEELING UNSURE: RESEARCH LITERATURE

From the discipline of psychology, a review of research uncovered one study on unsureness. It is worth noting that a plethora of studies in the discipline of psychology emerged with unsureness as a research finding, whereas five studies in the nursing discipline discussed unsureness as a research finding. As well, the discipline of psychology and nursing each yielded only one study with findings related to being unsure. There was no research study in psychology related to feeling unsure, whereas four studies from the discipline of nursing were produced on *feeling unsure*.

3.6.1 Psychology

Ripich, Fritsch, Ziol, and Durand (2000) launched a longitudinal descriptive study to investigate unsureness as a compensating strategy. Participants consisted of 55 people affected with Alzheimer's disease who were asked to describe a picture proven to detect language deficits. The participants' language during interviews was audio and videotaped and then transcribed for analysis. The findings indicated that people affected with early Alzheimer made unsure statements over time. Ripich and colleagues (2000) concluded that unsure statements are a self-protecting coping mechanism used in early Alzheimer to communicate competently.

Roth and Borkenstein (1989) investigated the correlation between diabetes and social interaction. The convenient sample consisted of 65 participants between 9 and 16 years of age diagnosed with juvenile diabetes. The participants answered a questionnaire measuring indicators of socially unsure behaviours such as: a) unsureness and susceptibility, b) shyness and contact fear, c) defending oneself, d) avoiding contact, and e) having no courage. Using multiple regression analysis the findings of this study showed an increase in unsureness surfacing with anxiety (Roth & Borkenstein, 1989).

Vallelonga (1998) conducted an empirical-phenomenological investigation of being ashamed. Four participants were asked to describe in writing about their experience of being ashamed. Interviews lasting 60 minutes were then conducted to expand on the written material. Systematic reflective analysis was used to study the raw data. Being unsure was a finding associated with being shamed. Vallelonga (1998) explicated that being unsure occurred when participants realized that they wanted to overcome being that undesirable shame-filled self and they wondered whether this could happen. The author defined being unsure as, "being anxious in the face of further instances of being ashamed and in the face of being depressed" (Vallelonga,

1998, p. 144). Vallelonga (1998) proposed that through a sense of being unsure one moved with anxiety to depression when believing that one could not stop being the undesirable shame-filled self.

3.6.2 Nursing

In the nursing literature four studies on *feeling unsure* were uncovered (Bunkers, 2004, 2006, 2007 & Morrow, 2006), whereas eight studies were tangentially related to feeling unsure, unsureness, or being unsure (Baumann, 1996; Bournes, 2002; Bournes & Mitchell, 2002; Bunkers, 1998, 2009; Phinney, 1998; Welch, 2003; Yancey, 2004). All of these studies followed the rigour of the method that was used.

Bunkers (2004) studied the lived experience of *feeling unsure* guided by the Parse research methodology. The phenomenon emerged from a recommendation of research from a previous study (Bunkers, 1998). The participants were ten Native American women. Descriptions of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* were obtained in dialogical engagement with each participant. Guided by the extraction-synthesis process (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005), the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* emerged as, *disquieting trepidation arising with pursuing endeavours, while joining with-distancing from affiliations*. Bunkers (2006) also investigated *feeling unsure* with 10 homeless women. The findings of the study reported three core concepts of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* as, *despairing apprehensiveness*, *tormenting isolation*, and *prevailing endeavours amid the arduous*. A third study on feeling unsure (Bunkers, 2007) was conducted with 9 women at end-of-life. The structure of the study emerged as, *disquieting apprehensiveness arising while pressing on with intimate sorrows* (Bunkers, 2007, p. 56). Bunkers (2007) explicated *disquieting apprehensiveness* as, "unsettling foreboding. It is a sense of feeling troubled and not in control when contemplating the now and

yet-to-be" (p. 61). Guided by the Parse research methodology (1998b, 2001, 2005), Morrow's (2006) research on *feeling unsure* was conducted with 10 persons living with chronic heart failure. The structure of *feeling unsure* emerged as, *discomforting trepidation with assuredness-unassuredness, as vigilant anticipating with treasured alliances arises with moments of acquiescence* (Morrow, 2006, p. 92). Morrow (2006) explicated *discomforting trepidation with assuredness-unassuredness* as, "uneasiness and anxiety associated with doubt and uncertainty and […] all-at-once confidence and certainty" (p. 93).

Whereas the lived experience of taking a risk was recommended to further understand *feeling unsure*, core concepts from other Parse research studies (Bournes, 2002; Bournes & Mitchell, 2002) recommended conducting further research on the same phenomenon. Bunkers (2009) studied the phenomenon *taking a risk* with 9 individuals living in the community. The study was guided by the Parse research methodology. The structure of *taking a risk* emerged as, *venturing forth amid potential peril, as apprehension with elation surfaces in novel engagements* (Bunkers, 2009, p. 240). Bunkers (2009) explicated the core concept *apprehension with elation* as, "feeling fearful while at the same time feeling excited. It involves moving out of one's comfort zone with feelings of trepidation mixed with jubilation" (p. 246); this explanation implies a sense of *feeling unsure*. Bournes (2002), another Parse scholar, studied having courage with 10 individuals with a spinal cord injury living in the community. The structure of the universal phenomenon emerged as, *fortifying tenacity arising with triumph amid the burdensome, while guarded confidence emerges with the treasured* (Bournes, 2002, p. 220). The author suggested that the core concept *guarded confidence* could be studied as a lived experience of *feeling unsure*. Bournes and Mitchell (2002) explored the lived experience of *waiting* with 12 family members or friends of persons in an adult critical care unit. Guided by the Parse research

methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005), the central finding of the study was the structure, *waiting is a vigilant attentiveness surfacing amid an ambiguous turbulent lull as contentment emerges with uplifting engagements* (Bournes & Mitchell, 2002, p. 58). The authors explicated *ambiguous turbulent lull* as, "a gruelling experience of unsure stillness" (Bournes & Mitchell, p. 62). The phenomenon taking a risk is thus shown to be linked with the lived experience of *feeling unsure*, whereas having courage and waiting are suggested to be related to the phenomenon.

As a research finding, the concept unsureness was related to core concepts in five studies guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). In a research study on the phenomenon of *considering tomorrow* with 10 homeless women, Bunkers (1998) reported one core concept of the structure as, *resilient endurance surfaces amid disturbing unsureness* (p. 56). Bunkers (1998) explicated *disturbing unsureness* as, "a paradoxical pattern of being sure and unsure" and "a pervasive feeling of not knowing what tomorrow would bring and whether or not one would see tomorrow" (p. 61). Unsureness also emerged in Baumann's (1996) study on feeling uncomfortable. The sample consisted of 10 children. The finding of the study emerged with the structure, *feeling uncomfortable is disturbing uneasiness with the unsureness of aloneness with togetherness amidst longing for personal joyful moments* (p. 153). Baumann (1996) explicated *unsureness of aloneness with togetherness* as, "a tentativeness of nurturing presence often related to unexpected shifts in being apart from close others and familiar situations" (p. 154). The originality of Baumann's (1996) study lies in the fact that children were asked to draw a picture of the phenomenon of feeling uncomfortable and talked about it with the researcher.

Associated to unsureness, the core concepts *sure-unsure* (Welch, 2003) and *assured-unassured* (Yancey, 2004) emerged in studies guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). Welch's (2003) study on *taking life day-by-day* was conducted with 10 men. The structure of the phenomenon emerged as, *enduring with the burdensome, while envisioning the possibles amid the sure-unsure* (Welch, 2003, p. 106). Welch (2003) described *sure-unsure* as, "living with ambiguity of unfolding moments" (p. 119). The author further explicated the finding as, "a sense of quiet acceptance of living simultaneously with the known and the unknown not-yet" (Welch, 2003, p. 119). Yancey (2004) engaged in dialogue with 10 baccalaureate-educated nurses in their first year of professional practice about *living with changing expectations*. The structure of *living with changing expectations* emerged as, *venturing with enlivening anticipation amid burdensome assured-unassured acquiescence, while steadfastness with the cherished arises in unfolding alliances* (Yancey, 2004, p. 125). Yancey (2004) explicated *burdensome assured-unassured acquiescence* as, "being sure, yet unsure, in conforming-not conforming with the challenge of inventing new ways of being" (pp. 135-136).

Phinney's (1998) study on living with mild to moderate dementia was conducted with 5 persons and their spouses living at home. Semi-structured interviews lasted 45 to 60 minutes and consisted of three questions. van Manen's (1990) qualitative descriptive approach was used to analyze the transcribed data of the audiotaped interviews. Two major themes emerged: being unsure and trying to be normal. Phinney (1998) reported that being unsure was related to a) memory loss, b) conversation breakdown, c) disorientation, and d) fluctuating awareness.

3.7 SUMMARY OF UNSURENESS, BEING UNSURE, AND FEELING UNSURE LITERATURE

Theoretical literature on unsureness, being unsure, and *feeling unsure* is sparse. In the psychological research literature reviewed, the concepts were mostly named in view of a variety of situations rather than explained or explicated. Unsureness and *feeling unsure* arose as a paradoxical lived experience from the simultaneity perspective. Unsureness was related to considering tomorrow, feeling uncomfortable, living with changing expectations, and taking life day-by-day, whereas *feeling unsure* was associated with having courage, taking a risk, and waiting. Being unsure was related to trying to be normal.

3.8 SUMMARY OF THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The summary of the review of literature focused primarily on uncertainty. Authors from different disciplines addressed uncertainty mainly in terms of opposing emotions, cognition, or behaviours. Conceptualized within these modes of expression uncertainty was variously explicated by considering individuals as wholistic complex human beings. As an undesirable trait that appears in either a linear or cyclical fashion uncertainty was considered a problem to overcome in order to successfully attain a desired outcome. Distinct psycho-behavioural interventions were suggested particularly in view of managing uncertainty in illness. Within a systematic perspective uncertainty was addressed mostly in terms of risk as individuals consider possible actions for growth and change in view of dangers and opportunities present within specific local and/or global situations. These conceptualizations ground uncertainty within causal relationships. Distinct from a dialectical tension of opposites, uncertainty involved freedom and language lived in a relationship between reason and faith and human and the world. These two distinct views of uncertainty account for its conceptual diversity.

Literature on unsureness, being unsure, and feeling unsure was limited. Unsureness was discussed in view of lived experiences from both the simultaneity perspective, whereas being unsure was explicated as a causal relationship. *Feeling unsure* was discussed exclusively from research literature guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). Findings discussed the universal lived experience as an unfolding paradoxical rhythm of becoming that is health and quality of life.

Several studies in the nursing discipline were conducted to further understand the experience of uncertainty in illness. Other studies with participants chosen from specifically distinct populations on *feeling unsure* illuminates the universal lived phenomenon related to health and quality of life. To enhance the understanding of *feeling unsure*, both Bunkers and Morrow suggested the need for further research. This research is the first to study *feeling unsure* with participants chosen from the general population. The next chapter provides a description of the research methodology used for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of the nursing discipline is to expand knowledge through research. Nursing-theory guided research developed from two distinct worldviews (Fawcett, 1993; Parse, 1997b, Parse, Coyne, & Smith, 1985). These views when used to guide research on a given phenomenon contribute richness while building the scientific base of the nursing discipline (Fawcett, 2005; Fawcett & Alligood, 2005; Parse, 1997b, 1998b).

The Parse research methodology (Parse, 1987, 1992, 1998b, 2001, 2005) is rooted in the ontology of the humanbecoming theory of nursing. The humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1992, 1998b, 2001, 2005) is underpinned by a consistent ontological-epistemological-methodological link. The method is a phenomenological-hermeneutic approach to inquiry appropriate for the study of universal lived experiences related to health and quality of life. It is phenomenological in that the meaning of lived experiences as described by participants provides the primary source of information and hermeneutic in that the research findings are interpreted in light of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005).

The humanbecoming school of thought includes three modes of inquiry (a) the Parse research methodology, (b) the humanbecoming hermeneutic method, and (c) the qualitative-descriptive preproject-process-postproject method (Parse, 2001, 2005). The first two methods are basic research methods, and the third method is an applied research method (Parse, 2001, 2005). A basic research method is chosen "when a researcher seeks to expand knowledge of humanly lived experiences of health and quality of life" (Parse, 2005, p. 297), and the applied research method is chosen "when human becoming is the theoretical guide for practice with

individuals and groups in a variety of settings" (pp. 297-298). The Parse research methodology

was the method of choice for this study on *feeling unsure*. A discussion of the background of the

Parse research methodology, the rationale for its selection for the study of *feeling unsure*, a

description of the research processes, and measures to ensure rigor and credibility follow.

4.2 BACKGROUND OF THE PARSE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Using ideas from Kaplan (1964) and Sondheim (1984), Parse (1987) posited four

principles for constructing a research methodology consistent with the humanbecoming school of

thought.

1. The methodology is constructed to be in harmony with and evolve from the ontological beliefs of the research tradition;

2. The methodology is an overall design of precise processes that adhere to scientific rigor;

3. The methodology specifies the order within the processes appropriate for inquiry within the research tradition;

4. The methodology is an aesthetic composition with balance in form (Parse, 1987, p. 173; 1998b, pp. 61-62; 2001, p. 167).

The Parse research methodology was created to be consistent with these principles (Parse, 1987,

1998b, 1999, 2001). The basic assumptions underlying the Parse research methodology are:

1. Humans are open beings in mutual process with the universe. The construct [human becoming] refers to the human-universe-health-process.

2. [Humanbecoming] is uniquely lived by individuals. People make reflective and prereflective choices in connection with others and the universe which incarnate their health.

3. Descriptions of lived experiences expand knowledge of [humanbecoming]. Individuals and families can describe their own experiences in ways that shed light on the meaning of health.

4. Researcher-participant dialogical engagement uncovers the meaning of phenomena as humanly lived. The researcher in true presence with the participant can elicit authentic information about lived experiences.

5. The researcher, through inventing, abiding with logic, and adhering to semantic consistency during the extraction-synthesis and heuristic interpretation processes, creates structures of lived experiences and weaves the structure with the theory in ways that expand the knowledge base of nursing (Parse, 1992, p. 41; 1998b, p. 63; 2001, p. 167).

The Parse research methodology is a phenomenological-hermeneutic mode of inquiry in the process of sciencing used to explore the meaning of humanly lived experiences (Parse, 2001, 2005). It is distinct from other phenomenological methods in that

1. The entities for study are universal lived experiences of health and quality of life…. Participants are persons who can describe the meaning of the experience under study with words, symbols, metaphors, poetry, photography, drawings, music, or rhythmic movements.

2. The data gathering process is a dialogical engagement, which arises as a true presence, researcher with participant. It is not an interview.

3. The analysis-synthesis is the extraction-synthesis, which moves the original dialogue gradually to higher levels of abstraction.

4. The heuristic interpretation connects the findings to the principles of human becoming (Parse, 2001, p. 167).

4.3 RATIONALE FOR SELECTION OF THE PARSE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Parse research methodology was chosen to study the universal phenomenon of *feeling unsure*. The Parse research methodology is consistent with human sciences, the Heideggerian tradition of phenomenology, and flows from the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1987, 1996, 1998b, 2001, 2005, 2007b, 2008a). Consistent with the assumption that humans are indivisible, unpredictable, ever-changing living all-at-once in mutual process with the universe (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2001, 2004, 2005), the researcher believes that

humans are intentional beings free to choose meaning in situations. The researcher also believes that humans can describe lived experiences which serve as the primary source to posit the structure of universal experiences such as *feeling unsure*. The Parse research methodology, then, was the method of choice to guide this study as it (a) is ontologically consistent with the researcher's worldview, (b) provided clear ontological-epistemological-methodological links, thereby strengthening the research tradition and nursing sciencing, and (c) provided the framework to best address the research question, *"What is the structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure?"*.

4.4 RESEARCH PROCESSES

The Parse research methodology comprises three processes: (a) dialogical engagement, (b) extraction-synthesis, and (c) heuristic interpretation (Parse, 1987, 1990, 1998b, 2001, 2005). Inherent in humanbecoming sciencing are ethical standards that were honoured by the researcher throughout the research project.

4.4.1 Participant Selection and Protection of Participants' Rights

The proposed plan for the research study, *feeling unsure*, was submitted to RMIT University Human Ethics Committee in February, 2007. Approval of this study was obtained prior to the recruitment of research participants.

Advertisement for participant recruitment (Appendix A) was posted in the community such as grocery stores, community dwellings, and libraries. Recruitment opportunities also arose in discussions on public transportation. The announcement invited potential participants to participate in a study on the phenomenon of *feeling unsure*. The recruitment announcement: (a) identified the phenomenon of study, (b) described the purpose of the study, (c) explained the

possible length of the dialogical engagement, and (d) provided information for contacting the researcher. Initial contact by telephone with persons 18 years of age or older willing to speak about *feeling unsure* in English provided detailed verbal description (Appendix A) of the study including exactly what participation in the study entailed. The researcher invited participants to share their experiences through words and art forms as expressions of *feeling unsure*. Ten participants from the community were recruited. This sample size is considered adequate (Parse, 1987, 2005).

The researcher met with interested potential participants individually in a mutually convenient and private setting. Full disclosure of the study's purpose, procedures, and intent were further explicated to ensure that potential participants' welfare and rights were protected. Individuals were offered the opportunity to ask questions and to share any concerns with the researcher. Rights to privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity were honoured at all times.

Individuals agreeing to participate signed a consent form (Appendix B). The consent form indicated voluntary participation, the researcher's and the researcher's two supervisors names and phone numbers, and the research compliance manager's phone number. The consent form fully disclosed a) the purpose of the research study, (b) the data gathering process—dialogical engagement, (c) the possible length of the engagement, (d) the right to an explanation concerning questions and concerns—at any and all times, (e) the handling and disposal of audio tapes and transcripts throughout and at the end of the study, (f) any known benefits and risks, and (g) the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time, without consequences for receiving health services. A copy of the consent form (Appendix B) was given to each participant.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the entire study. To ensure anonymity, a list of participant code names was stored separately from the participants' real

names. Confidentiality was protected by keeping consent forms separate from the audio tapes and transcripts. Furthermore, all materials were secured in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. At the completion of the study, all audio tapes and transcripts of dialogical engagements will be kept for a period of 5 years after completion of the study. No identifying information linked to participants will be divulged in any materials obtained or published.

4.4.2 Dialogical Engagement

Dialogical engagement is unique to the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1987, 1998b, 2001, 2005). It is a process where the researcher is in true presence with the participant (Parse, 2005). True presence is an unstructured dialogue between the researcher and the participant focused on the phenomenon under study. It is not an interview where the researcher guides the participant with predetermined questions about the phenomenon of study; rather, the participants describe their experiences in their own ways (Parse, 1981, 1990b, 1998b, 2001, 2005) "with words, symbols, metaphors, poetry, photography, drawing, music, or rhythmic movements" (Parse, 2001, p. 167). Prior to the engagement, the researcher centers and dwells with the phenomenon (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). While in dialogue, the researcher is "attentive to moment-to-moment changes in meaning as she or he bears witness to the person's or group's own living of value priorities" (Parse, 1998b, p. 71).

For this study, the researcher invited the participants to answer the question, "Please tell me about your lived experience of *feeling unsure*". No participants shared an art form to describe their experiences. The researcher engaged with "the reality of others at all realms of the universe…without judging or labeling" (Parse, 1998b, p. 72) with the intent to uncover the structure of *feeling unsure* by attending to the participants' unfolding meaning (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2001, 2005). The researcher moved the dialogue with focused comments such as "Go

on," "Can you say more about your experience in light of *feeling unsure?*" or "Can you think about anything else that would help me understand your experience?" The audio taped dialogues lasted until the participants had no more to share about *feeling unsure* and the time ranged from 12 to 39 minutes. The audio tapes were transcribed to a typed format for the extraction-synthesis process (Parse, 2001). Synthesizing stories, culling essences, and conceptualizing essences are the processes of extraction-synthesis (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005).

4.4.3 Extraction-Synthesis

Extraction-synthesis is a creative process of sciencing that consists in dwelling with, conceptualizing, and inventing by moving the language of the participants' descriptions across levels of abstraction (Parse, 1987, 1990b, 1992, 1998b, 1999, 2001, 2005). This process arises as the researcher is immersed with the transcribed dialogues and audio tapes, synthesizes stories of core ideas about the phenomenon from each dialogue, and abstracts essences from each dialogue by moving levels of discourse. This happened while the researcher was abiding with and adhering to semantic consistency (Parse, 1987, 1998b, 2001, 2005). A structure of the lived experience of the phenomenon under study emerges as, "the paradoxical living of the remembered, the now moment, and the not-yet all-at-once, is the answer to the research question" (Parse, 2005, p. 298). Parse (2005) delineated six major processes occurring simultaneously during extraction-synthesis:

1. Synthesizing a story that captures the core ideas about the phenomenon of concern from each participant's dialogue.
2. Extracting-synthesizing essences in the participant's language from recorded and transcribed descriptions. These essences are succinct expressions of the core ideas about the phenomenon of concern as described by the participants.

3. Synthesizing-extracting essences in the researcher's language. These essences are expressions of the core ideas conceptualized by the researcher at a higher level of abstraction.

4. Formulating the language-art from each participant's essences. Language-art is an aesthetic statement conceptualized by the researcher synthesizing the core ideas from the essences in the researcher's language. The essences arise directly from the participant's descriptions.

5. Extracting-synthesizing core concepts from the language-art of all participants. Core concepts are ideas, written in phrases, which capture the central meaning of the language-art from all participants.

6. Synthesizing a structure of the lived experience from the core concept. A structure is a statement conceptualized by the researcher synthesizing the core concepts. The structure as evolved answers the research question (p. 298).

While the structure of the lived experience posits a statement distinct from the researcher's theoretical description of the phenomenon under study as stated in the nursing perspective, the heuristic interpretation furthers understanding about the lived experience in the language of the humanbecoming theory of nursing.

4.4.4 Heuristic Interpretation

Heuristic interpretation includes the processes of (a) structural transposition, (b) conceptual integration, and (c) artistic expression (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). Through structural transposition, the researcher states the structure of the phenomenon at a higher level of abstraction (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). The process of conceptual integration consists in moving the structure of the phenomenon to the concepts of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). The artistic expression is the cocreation of an art form that reflects the research process and the researcher's transfiguring moments with the phenomenon of study (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). For this study, the researcher selected Cézanne's painting (1900) *Montagne Sainte Victoire*.

4.5 RIGOR AND CREDIBILITY

Rigor, credibility, and critical appraisal are essential in research to clarify meaning, refine ideas, build knowledge, and determine the value of scholarly works in nursing science (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005; Parse, 2001). Both Burns (1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) and Parse (2001) proposed standards for the purpose of critical appraisal of qualitative research. These standards were used to ensure the rigor and credibility of this study. Moreover, methodological experts (this researcher's supervisors) and Parse nurse scholars provided ongoing critique to ensure adherence to these prescribed standards.

Burns (1989) set forth five standards for critiquing qualitative research, namely, (a) descriptive vividness, (b) methodological congruence, (c) analytical preciseness, (d) theoretical connectedness, and (e) heuristic relevance. Criteria for appraisal of qualitative research developed by Parse (2001) include the following categories (a) conceptual, (b) ethical, (c) methodological, and (d) interpretive. Parse (2001) specified the dimensions of substance and clarity within each category. These standards and criteria provide a comprehensive means to ensure rigor and credibility for qualitative research endeavours.

4.5.1 Conceptual

The conceptual category for critical appraisal relates to the ontological and epistemological links to inquiry, namely, the frame of reference, the phenomenon, and the research question (Parse, 2001). This study met the conceptual criteria in that the phenomenon *feeling unsure* was introduced in chapter one as a universal lived experience of health significant to quality of life from the perspective of the humanbecoming theory of nursing. Furthermore, the researcher created an original definition of *feeling unsure* guided by the principles and concepts of the humanbecoming theory of nursing. The research question was clearly stated

using an interrogatory statement. The perspective from which the phenomenon and the research question arose was ontologically and epistemologically consistent with the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2001, 2005).

4.5.2 Descriptive Vividness

To provide descriptive vividness (Burns, 1898; Burns & Grove, 2005) each participant's description was presented clearly and concisely. Audio taped recordings were made to ensure accuracy of the descriptions. Constructing a story for each participant brought forth "a sense of the data as a whole" (Burns, 1989, p. 48) and provided the reader with "a sense of personally experiencing the event" (Burns, 1989, p. 48). No art forms were brought forth by the participants of this study.

4.5.3 Methodological Congruence

Burns (1989), Burns & Grove (2005), and Parse (2001) posited methodological criteria for scholarly appraisal of qualitative research. This standard refers to the consistency between the metatheory (Burns, 1989) and substance and clarity relative to the data gathering and the extraction-synthesis processes (Parse, 2001). It requires an understanding of the worldview and school of thought for the researcher to articulate ontological-epistemological-methodological congruence. The standard includes four dimensions: (a) rigor in documentation, (b) procedural rigor, (c) ethical rigor, and (d) auditability (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) which are consistent with Parse's (2001) methodological criterion.

4.5.3.1 Rigor in Documentation

To demonstrate rigor in documentation, knowledge of the humanbecoming school of thought and research tradition, as well as a clear and concise presentation of all elements of the

sciencing process are required. For this study, the researcher addressed the ontological-epistemological-methodological links of the humanbecoming school of thought in a) the descriptions of the phenomenon of concern, b) the purpose and the significance of the study, c) the research question, d) the review of nursing and extant theoretical and research literature, e) the ethical implications, f) the dialogical engagement and extraction-synthesis processes; all of which contributed to rigorous sciencing. The findings, a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and suggestions for further research and practice were addressed in the written report.

4.5.3.2 Procedural Rigor

Procedural rigor (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) and methodological substance and integration (Parse, 2001) refer to the processes of the research tradition, which for this study, is the Parse research methodology. According to Burns (1989), procedural rigor refers to "steps taken to ensure that data were accurately recorded" (p. 49). This criterion was met by carefully following the dialogical engagements and the extraction-synthesis processes as delineated by Parse (1987, 1990b, 1992, 1995, 1998b, 1999, 2001, 2005). Parse, a nurse theorist and the creator of the humanbecoming school of thought and the Parse research methodology, guided the researcher to adhere to the chosen basic research methodological procedures.

4.5.3.3 Ethical Rigor

Burns (1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) addressed ethical rigor in terms of the conduct of the study, the rights of the participants, and the consent form. Parse's (1999, 2001) ethical criteria extend Burns' (1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) contribution to include scientific merit, protection of participants' rights, and integrity "without obfuscation of the research question, the design, or

the methodological nuances of the data gathering and analysis-synthesis processes" (Parse, 2001, p. 20).

Throughout the conduct of this study, the researcher honoured participants with respect and justice (Parse, 2001). The study was submitted for approval by RMIT University Human Ethics Committee. The researcher identified the phenomenon *feeling unsure* as relevant to the discipline with the intent to acquire discipline-specific knowledge. State of the science of *feeling unsure* was guided by current nursing and extant literature. All participants received both verbal and written explanations (Appendix A) with specific details of the study. Participants voluntarily signed and received a copy of the consent form (Appendix B). Confidentiality and anonymity were protected. Semantic consistency and logical coherence through exploring, mapping, and conducting the study were maintained in synthesizing the findings (Parse, 2001). Ethical standards of integrity were honoured throughout the study and in the plans for publication.

4.5.3.4 Auditability

Auditability allows other researchers to arrive at similar conclusions by following the decision trail in the transformation of participants' descriptions across incremental levels of abstraction (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) to the language of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 2001). Auditability was further ensured by the researcher's two supervisors.

4.5.4 Analytical Preciseness

Burns (1989) articulated that analytical preciseness pertains to "a theoretical schema which imparts meaning to the phenomena under study … by rechecking the fit between the schema and the original data" (p. 50). Burns (1989), Burns and Grove (2005), and Parse (2001) agree that the researcher must highlight and document all decision-making processes and

transformations in levels of abstraction. The researcher of this study ensured careful documentation of these processes and was guided by the founder of the humanbecoming theory of nursing and the creator of the Parse research methodology.

4.5.5 Theoretical Connectedness

Theoretical connectedness "requires that the theoretical schema developed from the study be clearly expressed, logically consistent, reflective of the data, and compatible with the knowledge base of nursing" (Burns, 1989, p. 50). Parse (2001) emphasized the ontological-epistemological-methodological link. Heuristic interpretation (Parse, 2001) consists in the integration of the findings of the study with the humanbecoming theory of nursing. With meticulous attention to details and the guidance of the creator of the humanbecoming theory of nursing and the Parse research methodology, theoretical connectedness was achieved.

4.5.6 Heuristic Relevance

The final standard for the preservation of rigor and credibility of qualitative research is heuristic relevance. This standard includes a) intuitive recognition, b) relationship to the existing body of knowledge, and c) applicability of knowledge to the discipline (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005). This standard is similar to Parse's (2001) interpretive criterion. Parse (2001) called attention to a) interpreting the findings in light of the conceptualization of the study, b) evaluating in what ways the interpretive statements correspond with the findings, c) appraising how the interpretations reflect heuristic conceptualizations, and d) ensuring that the findings are clearly interpreted in light of nursing theory, research, and practice.

The art of criticizing scholarly work "requires knowledge of the work, knowledge of the standards of excellence, and the skill to creatively express and disseminate the critique" (Parse,

1998a, p. 43). This scholarly work was critiqued by this researcher's two supervisors and a

Parse scholar.

4.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher presented a comprehensive discussion of the background,

assumptions, and rationale for selecting the Parse research method to guide this study. The

processes of the method and a detailed description of how the study on *feeling unsure* was

conducted were discussed. The chapter concluded with an analysis of adherence to five

standards of rigor and credibility (Burns, 1989; Burns & Grove, 2005) and criteria for critical

appraisal (Parse, 2001) in qualitative research. The following chapter provides the findings of the

study in light of the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005).

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher presents the findings from discovering the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* using the processes of dialogical engagement, extraction-synthesis, and heuristic interpretation of the Parse research method (2001, 2005). The participants in this study were five men and five women, 18 years of age or older living in community, who agreed to describe their experiences of *feeling unsure*. The stories, essences, and language-art for each of the participants are first presented.

The participants' stories are extracted-synthesized summaries derived from transcripts of the dialogues that reflect the core ideas about the experiences of *feeling unsure*. Expressions from each participant's experience of *feeling unsure* are stated as essences in the language of the participant and written at a higher level of abstraction in the language of the researcher. The language-art is a synthetic statement that captures the core ideas of *feeling unsure* for each participant, as conceptualized by the researcher.

Core concepts are extracted and synthesized from the language-art of all participants. These are the central meanings construed by the researcher about the experiences of *feeling unsure* as described by all participants. A statement joining the core concepts forms the structure and answers the research question: *What is the structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure?*

Heuristic interpretation comprises structural transposition, conceptual integration, and artistic expression. Structural transposition is a process of moving the structure of the

phenomenon under study to a higher level of abstraction, while conceptual integration links this new structural creation to the theory of humanbecoming (Parse, 1998b, 2007b). The artistic expression describes the researcher's transfiguring moments of the research process. The extraction-synthesis and heuristic processes are summarized in tables 1 through 4.

5.2 THE PARTICIPANTS' STORIES

5.2.1 Alice's story

Alice said that feeling unsure is living in limbo. She said, "I don't make any attempts. I have to wait and see what happens. I just get along day by day." *Feeling unsure* is feeling insecure, and worried. It is feeling devastated in taking on anything new. Alice said, "I feel blocked. I can't budge." Alice said that feeling unsure is not knowing if she is doing things right in precarious situations. She said, "I am not confident if I am making the right decision. I just move forward, focus on being totally behind others, and protect myself by not getting involved. It is not easy."

5.2.1.1 Essences: Alice's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is living in limbo. It is moving forward feeling devastated and blocked in taking on anything new.

2. *Feeling unsure* is feeling hesitant, insecure, and worried in precarious situations. It is being totally behind others and protecting myself by not getting involved.

5.2.1.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Disconcerting paralysis with innovation surfaces with the puzzlement of truncating venturing.

2. Wavering irresolutely arises with guarded alliances.

5.2.1.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with guarded alliances, as disconcerting paralysis with innovation surfaces with the puzzlement of truncating venturing.

5.2.2 Martha's Story

Martha said that *feeling unsure* is a stressful and worrisome feeling of "not being able to give up what is scary or allowing it to be." It is not knowing what the future holds. *Feeling unsure* is a choice. *Feeling unsure* is a nagging conflict to fight challenging situations and to control feelings by reasoning and focusing on feeling "fine, healthy, strong, and calm." It is asking for help and pursuing things together by choosing "to react or to pull back and run away and hide." Martha said, "I can roll on in being scared."

5.2.2.1 Essences: Martha's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a stressful, scary, and worrisome feeling of not knowing what the future holds. It is focusing on being fine, healthy, strong, and calm.

2. *Feeling unsure* is a conflict in choosing to react or to pull back in asking for help and in pursuing things together.

5.2.2.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Frightening unexplored prospects surface with attending to contentedness.

2. Wavering irresolutely arises with risking venturing onward with alliances.

5.2.2.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with risking venturing onward with alliances, as frightening unexplored prospects surface with attending to contentedness.

5.2.3 Florence's story

Florence said that *feeling unsure* is a fleeting moment. It is a bothersome feeling that comes and goes in making decisions. Florence said that she does not dwell on her decisions and cannot think about it too much; like "crossing the road where there are no lines is dangerous. It gives me this feeling." Florence said that *feeling unsure* is a worrisome feeling that happens in having to make big decisions. She said, "When I do not know what to do, I weigh the pros and cons." It is feeling apprehensive with situations. Florence said that feeling unsure is wondering about doing the right thing. It is being afraid of hurting somebody. She said, "I am very unsure how I am going to persuade Marco to stay here where it is dry." Florence said that *feeling unsure* is having to relax, do your best, and enjoy the moment. It is finding your way.

5.2.3.1 Essences: Florence's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a worrisome, bothersome, and apprehensive feeling that comes and goes in making decisions. It is being afraid of hurting somebody and wondering about doing the right thing.

2. *Feeling unsure* is having to relax, do your best, and enjoy finding your way.

5.2.3.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Agitation with determining resolutions surfaces with guardedness in revering affiliations.

2. Wavering irresolutely with repose arises with gentle buoyancy.

5.2.3.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with the repose of gentle buoyancy, as agitation with determining resolutions surfaces with guardedness in revering affiliations.

5.2.4 Maud's story

Maud said that *feeling unsure* is a feeling of anxiety and panic that can ruin situations by not feeling capable of doing certain things. It makes her sick, nervous, and irritable not knowing what to expect when travelling. She said, "You can try and do things to make the experience easier by getting organized and taking control, hoping for relief, and you can pass that horrible feeling on to other people." It is not feeling confident and not being at ease. Maud said that *feeling unsure* is searching for reassurance when not knowing where she stands. It is keeping away from situations and avoiding what happens in life by pretending and taking on different roles. Maud said, "It is very difficult to relate to people and to trust others."

5.2.4.1 Essences: Maud's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is not feeling confident and not knowing where to stand and what to expect. It is a horrible feeling of anxiety and panic.

2. *Feeling unsure* is searching for reassurance when not feeling capable of doing certain things. It is pretending and not being at ease trusting others.

5.2.4.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Wavering irresolutely surfaces with paralyzing trepidation.

2. Questing for heartening discernment emerges with unsettling masking with alliances.

5.2.4.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with paralyzing trepidation, as questing for heartening discernment emerges with unsettling masking with alliances.

5.2.5. Lise's story

Lise said that *feeling unsure* is a worry about being comfortable. It is a scary and desperate feeling wondering about being able to do things and trusting that other people know. Lise said that *feeling unsure* is questioning when in doubt and thinking "what if" to protect oneself and others. It is finding out something to feel secure and not bothered. She said that feeling unsure is being dependant on others receiving help and recommendations with an open mind. It is making adjustments and getting to places by learning to deal with situations.

5.2.5.1 Essences: Lise's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a worrisome, scary and desperate feeling. It is questioning when in doubt, wondering about being able to do things, and finding out while learning.

2. *Feeling unsure* is being dependant on others. It is receiving help and recommendations to protect.

5.2.5.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Wavering irresolutely with terror arises with initiating projects.

2. Solicitude surfaces with benevolent alliances.

5.2.5.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with the terror of initiating projects, as solicitude surfaces with benevolent alliances.

5.2.6 Marc's Story

Marc said that *feeling unsure* is a fuzzy feeling. He said, "I don't feel that I can describe the feelings. I don't have immediate access to them. It is a scary and fearful feeling when questioning challenges of relationships." *Feeling unsure* is going along not stopping to consider things and not being equipped to address and make a decision. At work, Marc said that he calls a colleague when unable to do or to resolve something that he is not sure about. Feeling unsure is not a deep feeling of dismay. Marc said that the challenge of what the future holds is more of the domain of creation than of *feeling unsure.*

5.2.6.1 Essences: Marc's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a fuzzy, scary, and fearful feeling. It is going along not stopping to consider things to make a decision or to resolve something.

2. *Feeling unsure* is not being equipped and being unable to address challenges of relationships in creating the future.

5.2.6.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Vague ponderings with trepidation surfaces with indetermination.

2. Ineptitude with alliances arises with innovatively venturing.

5.2.6.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is vague ponderings with trepidation of indetermination, as ineptitude with alliances arises with innovatively venturing.

5.2.7 Serge's story

Serge said that *feeling unsure* is a very sad feeling that hurts all the time. It is feeling alone and not confident when not having somebody there for me. Serge said that *feeling unsure* is losing important people whom he still loves. It is being apart from and missing people. He said, "*I feel unsure* about my wife being gone so long. I am a loving person who wants to be close and to have somebody to hold and to be held. Sometimes it is very difficult. It is not me to get over that."

5.2.7.1 Essences: Serge's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a very difficult and sad feeling that hurts all the time. It is feeling alone not having somebody close to hold, being apart from and losing important people.

2. *Feeling unsure* is not feeling confident. It is wanting to be a loving person.

5.2.7.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Gripping grief with distancing affiliations surfaces with isolation.

2. Wavering irresolutely arises with the desire for personal affability.

5.2.7.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with the desire for personal affability, as griping grief with distancing affiliations surfaces with isolation.

5.2.8 Sylvio's story

Sylvio said that *feeling unsure* is a frustrating and nervous feeling "a funny feeling in my stomach" associated with the stress of not knowing an outcome. He said that he questions, worries about, glides with other aspects of his life, and is less judicious in his choices. Sylvio said that he is inclined to completely put his work aside, not think about it, and escape from what is happening. He said that *feeling unsure* is withdrawing from friends and social contacts, as he needs a little space to enjoy outdoor activities. He said, "People are thinking about the value of what I am doing and it is difficult to separate from what people think about me." *Feeling unsure* is a certain allurement that he enjoys by putting in effort, with "sweat and blood." It is moving from a point of not understanding to learn something and to suffer the sense of uncertainty within the guidelines and restrictions placed upon him. Sylvio said that *feeling unsure* is not a particularly pleasant feeling when contemplating the possibility of failure. He said that *feeling unsure* is "that very specific incarnation of being sure – being unsure."

5.2.8.1 Essences: Sylvio's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is stressful, worrisome, and frustrating. It is being less judicious when questioning and gliding with aspects of life, not knowing outcomes but contemplating the possibility of failure.

2. *Feeling unsure* is an allurement in moving with effort within guidelines and restrictions. It is withdrawing from friends and social contacts, putting work aside, escaping from what is happening, and needing space to enjoy activities.

5.2.8.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Wavering irresolutely with trepidation surfaces with thoughtful anticipation of consequences.

2. Venturing with distancing alliances arises with circumscribed evasions.

5.2.8.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with the trepidation of the thoughtful anticipation of consequences, as venturing with distancing alliances arises with circumscribed evasions.

5.2.9 Nick's story

Nick said that *feeling unsure* is a creative process that is constantly changing. He said that *feeling unsure* is a challenge with which he feels comfortable, fine, and relaxed, and sometimes fearful and anxious. Nick said, "It is a question of confidence in myself. *Feeling unsure* feels as a constriction in my chest, throat, and neck. It is like my body freezes. It limits my ability to act." Nick said that *feeling unsure* is not knowing and not being able to predict with 100% certainty what will happen in the future. He said that it is better to be unsure and to steer his way out of situations. *Feeling unsure* is confusing in moving forward in a relationship with someone. It comes with questions that need responses. Nick said that *feeling unsure* is pulling back, eliminating possibilities, and refining options with a sense of exploration in determining a particular outcome that leads to a decision. *Feeling unsure* is having to learn to define things and being able to modify experiences.

5.2.9.1 Essences: Nick's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is a comfortable, fine, and relaxed feeling but sometimes it is feeling confused, fearful, and anxious. It is learning to explore a particular outcome by eliminating possibilities and refining options that lead to a decision.

2. *Feeling unsure* is the challenge of being pushed and pressed and pulling back in steering situations and relationships. It is the confidence of moving forward in the creative process of acting with constrictions to modify experiences.

5.2.9.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Calm-turbulent discernment surfaces with determination.

2. Navigating with alliances arises with unwavering in shifting the circumscribed.

5.2.9.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is calm-turbulent discernment with determination, as navigating with alliances arises with unwavering in shifting the circumscribed.

5.2.10 Patrick's Story

Patrick said *feeling unsure* is an upsetting, worrisome, stressful, and anxious feeling. It is thinking about possible outcomes for moving ahead. *Feeling unsure* is not being able to settle on making an informed decision or having a confident opinion. It is doing and not being sure about anything. Patrick said "If I am not happy with a situation I imagine that things could be different. I feel if I choose one way, I will miss the other. I have complete control, yet I try to avoid such situations. *Feeling unsure* is like adrenaline in your blood stream. It happens all the time."

5.2.10.1 Essences: Patrick's language

1. *Feeling unsure* is not having a confident opinion or control for moving ahead in making decisions. It is avoiding doing things.

2. *Feeling unsure* is an upsetting, worrisome, and anxious feeling. It is not feeling happy and being unable to detach from situations.

5.2.10.2 Essences: Researcher's language

1. Wavering irresolutely surfaces in venturing with elusive ponderings.

2. Trepidation arises with disheartening truncating alliances.

5.2.10.3 Language-art

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with venturing on with elusive ponderings, as trepidation arises with disheartening truncating alliances.

5.3 LANGUAGE-ART

Alice   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with guarded alliances, as disconcerting paralysis with innovation surfaces with puzzlements of truncating venturing.

Martha   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with risking venturing onward with alliances, as frightening unexplored prospects surface with attending to contentedness.

Florence *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with the repose of gentle buoyancy, as agitation with determining resolutions surfaces with guardedness in revering affiliations.

Maud   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with paralyzing trepidation, as questing for heartening discernment emerges with unsettling masking with alliances.

Lise   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with the terror of initiating projects, as solicitude surfaces with benevolent alliances.

Marc   *Feeling unsure* is vague ponderings with the trepidation of indetermination, as ineptitude with alliances arises with innovatively venturing.

Serge   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with the desire for personal affability, as gripping grief with distancing affiliations surfaces with isolation.

Sylvio   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with the trepidation of thoughtful anticipation of consequences, as venturing with distancing alliances arises with circumscribed evasions.

Nick   *Feeling unsure* is calm-turbulent discernment with determination, as navigating with alliances arises with unwavering in shifting the circumscribed.

Patrick   *Feeling unsure* is wavering irresolutely with venturing on with elusive ponderings, as trepidation arises with disheartening truncating alliances.

5.4 CORE CONCEPTS

Three core concepts emerged with the dialogical engagements and extraction-synthesis processes: *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* (see 5.4.1 Table 1); *venturing with trepidation* (see 5.4.2 Table 2); *revering alliances* (see 5.4.3 Table 3).

5.4.1 Table 1: First Core Concept as Evident in Language-Art

Core Concept:	**Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings**
Structural Transposition:	**Incertitude in penetrating reverie**
Conceptual Integration:	**Originating Imaging**

Alice	wavering irresolutely…with innovation…guarded puzzlement
Martha	wavering irresolutely…attending
Florence	wavering irresolutely…with repose…guardedness
Maud	wavering irresolutely…with discernment…unsettling masking
Lise	wavering irresolutely…solicitude
Marc	indetermination…vague ponderings
Serge	wavering irresolutely…personal affability
Sylvio	wavering irresolutely…thoughtful anticipation
Nick	calm-turbulent…discernment
Patrick	wavering irresolutely…eluding ponderings

5.4.2 Table 2: Second Core Concept as Evident in Language-Art

Core Concept:	Venturing with trepidation
Structural Transposition:	Propelling with the arduous
Conceptual Integration:	Powering

Alice	disconcerting paralysis with truncating venturing
Martha	risking venturing onward…frightening unexplored prospects
Florence	agitation with determining resolution
Maud	paralyzing…trepidation
Lise	terror
Marc	venturing on with trepidation
Serge	griping grief
Sylvio	venturing with trepidation
Nick	calm-turbulent…navigating with determination
Patrick	venturing on…trepidation

5.4.3. Table 3: Third Core Concept as Evident in Language-Art

Core Concept:	**Revering alliances**
Structural Transposition:	**Prizing involvements**
Conceptual Integration:	**Valuing Connecting-Separating**

Alice   alliances

Martha   alliances

Florence   revering affiliations

Maud   alliances

Lise   benevolent alliances

Marc   ineptitude with alliances

Serge   distancing affiliations…with isolation

Sylvio   distancing alliances

Nick   alliances

Patrick   truncating alliances

5.5 PROGRESSIVE ABSTRACTION

5.5.1 Language-Art of the Structure of the Lived Experience

The structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure is: *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances* (see 5.5.3 Table 4).

5.5.2 Heuristic Interpretation

The structure of *feeling unsure* is *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. Through structural transposition, the structure of feeling unsure was raised to: *feeling unsure is incertitude in penetrating reverie arising in propelling with the arduous, while prizing involvements*. At the level of the theory of humanbecoming *feeling unsure* was conceptually integrated as, *originating imaging the powering of valuing connecting-separating* (see Table 4).

Findings arising from research guided by the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1998b, 2007b) bear theoretical messages that are "embedded there wanting to be engaged and interpreted by the reader" (Mitchell & Cody, 2002, p. 77). An artistic expression sheds light on the research findings, while deepening the understanding of the participants' lived experience (Mitchell & Cody, 2002; Parse, 2005). The researcher's choice of Cézanne's painting (1900), *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (see figure 2), is the selected expression to elaborate an artistic expression that "incarnates the transfiguring moments for the researcher as the structure of the lived experience [of *feeling unsure*] surfaced through the research process" (Parse, 2005, p. 298). Further insights about the lived experience of feeling unsure arose by interpreting the findings of

the study through this art form that reflects the transfiguring moments of the researcher in cocreating anew (Parse, 2003).

Figure 2 : Cézanne, P. (1900). *Montagne Sainte Victoire*.

Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings is the first core concept in the structure of *feeling unsure*. It is vacillating with hesitation in considering insights. *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* refers to an unsettling indecisive movement, in wondering about the envisioned. *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (Cézanne, 1900) captures the convex form of a mountain with fluid pleat-like waves in an interplay of ochres and greens creating a vibration of light pierced with the colour blue dappled vaporously. While gazing at the painting from distinct

angles that suggest a to and fro movement concentrated toward converging points, there is a feeling of the presence of air and blowing wind flowing imperceptibly shapeshifting the trees. This pertains to the comings and goings that surface with doubting while conceiving the possibilities. Cézanne contemplated nature's depth while struggling with an implicit knowing of an abstract style of painting to give visibility to the everchanging fluidity of "the Instant of the world" (Merleau-Ponty, 1964a). *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* shapes the meaning of moment-to-moment *feeling unsure*. Participants in this study spoke of *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* in describing the tension of swaying unsteadfastedly arising with keen thoughtfulness. While abiding with *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* in light of *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (Cézanne, 1900), the significance of *feeling unsure* arose for the researcher in being with sureness-unsureness with the calm-turbulence of humanuniverse lived moment-to-moment as a source of inspiration in coming to know situations.

  Venturing with trepidation is the second core concept in the structure of *feeling unsure*. It is risking moving onward with fright and disquietude in accomplishing projects. *Venturing with trepidation* is hazarding with apprehension, while carving chosen options. *Montagne Sainte Victoire* offers the choice of unfrayed paths as a deliberate preferred option in heading toward the mountain, which suggests moving with boldness amid the angst of the unknown. *Venturing with trepidation* is portrayed as a journey strewn along tumultuous rocky paths with unpredictable twists and turns that symbolize the disquietude of wandering, as humans propel onward. Boldly daring to push forth with a distinct way of painting, Cézanne (1900) is known to have said, "Life is fearful." Participants in this study explicated *venturing with trepidation* as they described experiences of taking a chance in living on the edge with dread, while forging ahead in pursuing aspirations with determination. In contemplating *Montagne Sainte Victoire*, a

deeper understanding of *venturing with trepidation* illuminated *feeling unsure* as a pushing with undulating firmness in birthing projects.

Revering alliances is the third concept in the structure of *feeling unsure*. It is profound honouring in being with and apart from cherished others, ideas, objects, and situations. *Revering alliances* is vigilant devotion with something of value, while being available with the treasured. *Montagne Sainte Victoire* nests a singular house standing with ochre walls and closed casements in the interplay of vivid colours from below hooked before a majestic bland calm blue and grey mountain. The smooth velvet voluminous blanket protects yet threatens the homestead from the unpredictable turbulence and shadows of gathering clouds in a sky sparkled with the oneness of blues and ochres. Participants in this study described *revering alliances* as living distancing affiliations with solicitude in light of *feeling unsure*, while experiencing ineptitude with guarded partnerships in deliberately attending to contentedness with others. While abiding with *revering alliances* in light of *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (Cézanne, 1900), the meaning of *feeling unsure* arose with joy, love, and awe while weaving and savouring with boundless hopes and possibilities.

Guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1987, 1998b, 2001, 2005, 2007b), the researcher interpreted *feeling unsure* while contemplating *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (Cézanne, 1900) which illuminated further understanding and expanded knowledge about a humanly lived universal experience. As a path to inquiry, the chosen artform elucidated *feeling unsure* as significant to health and quality of life. The originating imaging of *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings*, the powering of *venturing with trepidation*, and the valuing connecting-separating of *revering alliances* shed new meaning on the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

Sciencing art in light of humanbecoming reveals a depth of understanding, opens to connectedness with community, and offers transfiguring moments in becoming anew.

5.5.3 Table: 4 Progressive Extraction of the Core Concepts of Feeling Unsure

Core Concept	Structural Transposition	Conceptual Integration
Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings	Incertitude in penetrating reverie	Originating Imaging
Venturing with trepidation	Propelling with the arduous	Powering
Revering alliances	Prizing involvements	Valuing Connecting-Separating

Structure

Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances.

Structural Transposition

Feeling unsure is incertitude in penetrating reverie arising in propelling with the arduous, while prizing involvements.

Conceptual Integration

Feeling unsure is originating imaging in the powering of valuing connecting-separating.

Artistic Expression

Cézanne, P. (1900). *Montagne Sainte Victoire*.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The findings of this study on the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* were presented in this chapter in light of the humanbecoming theory. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study in relation to relevant theoretical and research literature.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a discussion of the findings of a study on *feeling unsure*, using the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). Three core concepts, namely, *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings, venturing with trepidation, and revering alliances*, emerged from the language-art of ten participants living in community. Joining the three core concepts answered the research question and formed the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*: *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. Transposing this structure to a higher level of abstraction surfaced as: *Feeling unsure is incertitude in penetrating reverie arising in propelling with the arduous, while prizing involvements*. At the conceptual level of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1998b, 2007b), the lived experience of *feeling unsure* is: *Feeling unsure is originating imaging the powering of valuing connecting-separating*.

To enhance understanding about the phenomenon of *feeling unsure*, supportive statements from the participants' dialogues are explicated in light of the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1998b, 2007b) and each core concept is linked with pertinent literature to further expand understanding and meaning of *feeling unsure*. The structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* is discussed in light of health and quality of life, and new nursing knowledge is presented that contributes to the theoretical base of nursing.

6.2 WAVERING IRRESOLUTELY WITH DISCERNING PONDERINGS

Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arose as a core concept of the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* from the language-art of all ten participants in this study. Participants addressed *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* as vacillating unresolve, while considering envisioned possibilities. All participants' descriptions contained a statement related to feeling ambivalent, yet confident about possible options, while simultaneously living situations with indefiniteness and clarity all-at-once. For example, one participant said, "It is having more than one opinion about a situation and thinking about all the possibilities. It is not being able to bring yourself to choose and to settle on a viewpoint." Another participant said, "When I am teaching, I never know about my own approach and how information will be interpreted. I want to have more information to reflect [on] and have a clear picture about what I am doing." Another participant stated, "When I am at a restaurant, I want to have this and I want to have that as well; I can't decide. I feel if I choose one, I will miss the other. So normally, I wait until they come and ask what I want and I say, 'I'll have the same thing as the next person.' I need to think about the possible outcomes." These descriptions express the core concept, *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* of *feeling unsure* as a vacillating uncertainty while pondering options. It pertains to ways humans struggle in generating unique alternatives in apprehending situations, reflect on personal preferences, and picture chosen ways of being when *feeling unsure*. Particularly, one participant stated, "Before I do something, there is a hesitation. I start asking questions: 'Is it the right thing? Is it the wrong thing?' I feel very precarious. And this is just about with everything. I do not know. I do not have the guarantee. I do not want to make any kind of decisions. I just wait and see what happens." This participant's description of *feeling unsure* points to a holding pattern of indeterminacy in not choosing without

knowing with assurance, while envisioning possibilities all-at-once. These descriptions address *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* as a constituent of *feeling unsure*. The core concept *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* was transposed as incertitude with penetrating reverie, which addresses *feeling unsure* as living with indecisiveness while attentively incarnating yearnings. Incertitude with penetrating reverie was conceptually integrated with the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1998b, 2007b) as originating imaging. Discussion of *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* in light of the construct originating imaging enhances understanding of the meaning of the concepts originating and imaging and adds further depth and clarity about the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

Originating, from the third principle of humanbecoming, cotranscending with possibles (Parse, 1998b, 2007b), is "inventing new ways of conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of living" (Parse, 1998b, p. 49). It is creating new ways of being with assuredness-unassuredness in abiding with what is required, while struggling all-at-once in moving on with an unprecedented way of living value priorities. Imaging, from the first principle of humanbecoming, structuring meaning (Parse, 1998b, 2007b), is the "reflective-prereflective coming to know the explicit-tacit all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p.36). It is a way humans apprehend experiences thoughtfully and unpremeditatedly with distinctness and vagueness all-at-once. The theoretical construct originating imaging best captures the meaning of the core concept *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* of *feeling unsure.*

Originating imaging is generating the envisioned. It is inventing new ways of conforming-not conforming in moving on with ambivalence and confidence, while apprehending situations all-at-once with indefiniteness yet with clarity. *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* is congruent with and adds to the understanding of Parse's (1981, 1998b) assertion

that originating imaging is living the paradoxical tension of conforming-not conforming in moving beyond with the struggle of living certainty-uncertainty, while structuring meaning in light of personal explicit-tacit knowing. As a core concept of *feeling unsure*, *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* was described as ways humans live all-at-once with ambivalence and confidence in making choices with indefiniteness and clarity, while not knowing consequences. For example, a participant offered a description that illustrates originating imaging, "It is not a particularly pleasant feeling when I contemplate the possibility of failing at my work within the guidelines placed on me. I might not finish and need to prepare for that possibility. I get to a point where I am so unsure that I have to completely leave it aside. I worry about other aspects of my life and question what I think." This description refers to originating imaging in that the participant spoke of the uneasiness of conforming to the expected, while questioning with explicit-tacit knowing the consequences of his project. Another participant said, "My *feeling unsure* is about what the future holds. It is more of the domain of creation. There is a degree of uncertainty and fuzziness. It is not knowing what decision to make." Yet, another participant said, "I don't feel confident and am not at ease when I don't know where I stand. I search for ways to achieve things and make it work." These descriptions illuminate the originating imaging of *feeling unsure* with the struggle of conforming-not conforming with certainty-uncertainty in living situations, while structuring meaning in coming to know the explicit-tacit all-at-once. It reflects the participants' descriptions of *feeling unsure* as *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings*.

The core concept *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* was not explicitly described in the extant literature on uncertainty, unsureness, and *feeling unsure*, but was consistent with some ideas discussed by various authors (Bailey, et al., 2007; Bournes &

Mitchell, 2002; Bunkers, 1998, 2007; Clayton, et al. 2006; Gil, et al., 2004, 2006; Germino, et

al., 1998; Hilton, 1988, 1994; Hughes, 1993; Milton, 1998; Mishel, 1988, 1990, 2005; Morrow,

2006; Morse & Penrod, 1999; Penrod, 2001, 2007).

Considering an ontology based on the totality paradigm (Parse, 1987) and using research

methodologies from disciplines other than nursing, concepts such as uncertainty, hesitancy,

ambivalence, and indeterminacy shed a distinct light on the meanings of *wavering irresolutely*

with discerning ponderings. For example, Gil and colleagues (2006) described being uncertain

with recurrent thoughts of breast cancer survivors in a distinct ethnic group; Clayton, Mishel, and

Belyea (2006) correlated feeling uncomfortable about asking for clarification to uncertainty in

older breast cancer survivors; whereas Bailey, Wallace, and Mishel (2007) viewed uncertainty

for men living with prostate cancer by categorizing the experience of watching and waiting the

progression of disease in relation to the appraisal of danger and opportunities. These examples

point to *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings*, but are explained from a particulate

perspective.

Consistent with the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005,

2007b, 2008a), core concepts similar to *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings*

emerged from research guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 2001, 2005). Related

to the phenomenon of *feeling unsure*, Bunkers (2007) discussed the core concept *disquieting*

apprehensiveness in her study of *feeling unsure*, while Morrow (2006) in her study of *feeling*

unsure explicated the core concept *discomforting trepidation with unassuredness-assuredness*,

whereas Bournes and Mitchell (2002) posited *vigilant attentiveness surfacing amid an*

ambiguous turbulent lull in their study on the phenomenon of waiting. While the core concepts

in Bournes and Mitchell's (2002) study were explicated as two distinct theoretical concepts,

namely, imaging and originating, both studies on the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* (Bunkers, 2007; Morrow, 2006) emerged as a theoretical construct. Bunkers (2007) explicated the construct originating imaging as a paradoxical tension that humans generate while shaping a personal way of being, whereas Morrow (2006) discussed imaging originating as a way that humans picture possibles as a pattern preference in *feeling unsure*. Like in Bunkers' (2007) study, the findings of this study emerged with the construct originating imaging. Yet, *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* is distinct from Bunkers' (2007) *disquieting apprehensiveness*. In this study, the idea of wavering is similar to a disquieting feeling of "pervasive hesitancy concerning what is possible" (Bunkers, 2007, p. 60), but the idea of pondering is more clearly shown here. The irresoluteness that emerged as a qualitative descriptor of wavering points to the precariousness of an "ambiguous...lull" (Bournes & Mitchell, 2002, p. 61). Wavering irresolutely addresses the indecisiveness of generating new ways of being, while incarnating the uncertainty of conventional ways in the originating of moving beyond (Parse, 1998b, 2007b). In this study, as in Bunkers' study (2007), imaging referred to explicit-tacit knowing in coming to know which was described respectively as discerning ponderings and apprehensiveness (Bunkers, 2007). As uncovered in this study the irresoluteness that arises with wavering feelings expands the concept of originating and adds new knowledge to the lived experience of *feeling unsure*. From the humanbecoming perspective (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2007b), *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* illuminated originating imaging as a paradoxical rhythm of conforming-not conforming in the certainty-uncertainty of *feeling unsure*, while explicitly-tacitly knowing all-at-once.

6.3 VENTURING WITH TREPIDATION

Venturing with trepidation is the second core concept that arose from descriptions of the phenomenon of *feeling unsure* for all participants in this study. It addresses *feeling unsure* as moving on with turmoil. *Venturing with trepidation* in moments of *feeling unsure* was described by all participants as a disconcerting agitation that surfaces while daring to take a leap. One participant said, "I feel nervous and panicky in having to take the plane. I take control of things by being at a certain place at a certain time before the moment I go to the plane." The participant expressed the idea of *venturing with trepidation* when saying, "You can try and do things by getting organized so that the panic goes away." This description explicated *venturing with trepidation* as living on the edge while accomplishing projects. It addressed the risk of moving on with fear, while shifting with possibilities. Another participant said, "The financial situation is a challenging situation that may be difficult and scary. I am more likely to go down the road of not having enough money to pay the bills." This description pertains to the participant's choice of living the tension of moving on with tumultuous hardship. Another participant said,

> It took me nine years for my patient's rights to get to court because
> it was a battle. I will not go away. It is putting me in a situation where
> I can not budge. It is my decision. I will stick with it.

This description captures the paralysing strength of *feeling unsure*, as the participant audaciously pursued with determination. In these descriptions *venturing with trepidation* addressed *feeling unsure* as daring to take a leap with disconcerting agitation.

The core concept, *venturing with trepidation*, was transposed to propelling with the arduous. Propelling with the arduous was conceptually integrated with the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2007b) as powering. A discussion of *venturing with trepidation*

adds depth and clarity to further understand the meaning of powering and contributes new knowledge about the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

Powering, from the third principle of humanbecoming, cotranscending with possibles (Parse, 1998b, 2007b), is the "pushing-resisting process of affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing" (Parse, 1998b, p. 46). Powering is the force that arises in asserting a perspective in pressing on, while all-at-once pulling back in risking potential disregard. All participants in this study alluded to the pushing-resisting tension of powering, while moving on the edge with fear. Powering, in *venturing with trepidation*, is cocreating a different way of being while reaching beyond with fright. One participant said, "*Feeling unsure* is living in limbo. I feel devastated in taking on anything new. It takes so much energy. Yet, when I want to pursue something, I just conquer it." This description illustrated *venturing with trepidation* as the participant pushed and pulled all-at-once with new adventures in choosing to live with a lack of vitality yet consumed with ravaging feelings, while all-at once thrusting on with projects in asserting being with determination. It pertains to daringly risking undertakings with the disconcerting agitation of *feeling unsure*. *Venturing with trepidation* as related to the theoretical concept of powering in *feeling unsure* is living the paradoxical tension of pressing on—pulling back, while at once affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing.

The core concept *venturing with trepidation* was not explicitly described in the extant literature on uncertainty, unsureness, and *feeling unsure*, but was consistent with the ideas discussed by various authors (Bailey, et al. 2007; Baumann, 2003; Bournes, 2002; Bournes & Milton, 2009; Bunkers, 2007; Cody, 1991; Cody, 1995; Germino, 2004; Gil et al. 2005; Hilton, 1988, Huch & Bournes, 2003; Huffman, 2002; Hughes, 1993; Jonas-Simpson, 2003; Kruse, 1999; Larkin, 2006; Mishel et al. (2005); Mitchell & Heidt, 1994; Parse, 2006b; Pierce & Hicks,

2001; Selder, 1989; Smith 2006; Welch, 2003; Yancey, 2004) While Penrod's (2007)

understanding of uncertainty described as a threat to confidence related to a sense of control is

similar to *venturing with trepidation*, it is distinct in that it lacks the idea of adventure. Likewise,

from a cognitivo-behaviourist perspective, Selder (1989) conceptualized life transition as a

shattered-disruption, which could be considered similar to *venturing with trepidation*.

Furthermore, Bailey, Wallace, Mishel (2007), Hilton (1988), and Germino and colleagues (1998)

discussed uncertainty as the affirmation of danger that must be resolved, whereas the concept

venturing with trepidation evokes the paradoxical tension of affirming being in light of nonbeing

of *feeling unsure*.

    Consistent with the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005, 2007b,

2008a), similar concepts to *venturing with trepidation* emerged from research guided by the

Parse research methodology (Parse, 2001, 2005). For example, Bunkers' (2007) study on *feeling*

unsure emerged with the concept pressing on which was described as "being immersed in earnest

endeavours, while fearing not having enough time to do" (p. 60). While Bunkers' (2007)

description of pressing on is similar to *venturing on with trepidation*, the concept does not

explicitly state the paradoxical tension of being-nonbeing which arose in *venturing with*

trepidation. *Venturing with trepidation* expresses the idea of forging ahead while drawing back

all-at-once, which is similar to the concepts *struggling in pursuit of fortifications* (Daly, 1999),

fortitude amid adversity (Doucet, 2008), *persevering amid adversity* (Pilkington & Millar, 1999),

and *enduring with the burdensome* (Welch, 2003). *Struggling in pursuit of fortifications* (Daly,

1999) described suffering as a way humans affirm-do not affirm all-at-once, while "moving with

anguish in asserting with deliberate determination" (p. 261), *fortitude amid adversity* (Doucet,

2008) explicated the struggle of being-nonbeing in having faith as "pressing on dauntlessly amid

the vicissitudes of life" (p. 350), *persevering amid adversity* (Pilkington & Millar, 1999) highlighted the pushing-resisting tension that arose in having hope as "an effort to resist the challenges present in disconcerting circumstances" (p.183), whereas *enduring with the burdensome* (Welch, 2003) in taking life day-by-day described the tension of "assiduous struggles with the vicissitudes of day-to-day living" (p. 107). While these core concepts illustrate powering, in this study, *venturing with trepidation* further expands the theoretical concept in a different light. Participants' descriptions about *feeling unsure* highlighted powering as a pushing-pulling tension in moving on with turmoil, while all-at-once affirming being with disconcerting agitation in light of nonbeing.

As related to *venturing with trepidation*, the findings of this study uncovered new knowledge about the lived experience of *feeling unsure*, further illuminating powering as the paradoxical pattern of pushing-resisting in affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing. (Parse, 1998b, 2007b, 2008a)

6.4 REVERING ALLIANCES

Revering alliances was identified from the language-art of all participants as the third core concept that emerged in this study on *feeling unsure*. Participants' described *revering alliances* as treasuring relationships. It refers to venerating affinities in upholding special bonds with others, family members, and colleagues. The core concept *revering alliances* surfaced in fulfilling activities with esteemed others, while cherishing the preciousness of affiliations surfacing in everyday situations. For example, one participant said,

> I want to be close to my wife, and when she goes away, I feel that I am apart from her. In my heart, it hurts not having somebody there. I would like to have somebody to hold, to be close. I would rather that she tells me that she wants to be with me.

This statement described *revering alliances* as a constituent of *feeling unsure* in that humans prize others in incarnating devotion, intimacy, and disheartenment, while all-at-once feeling alone. Another participant explicated,

> *Feeling unsure* in relationship is a big thing. Often I feel unsure about how people think of me, how they see me. When that happens it is very difficult to relate and talk to them if I am not sure of who they are and what they are. It is a very strong and important feeling. It could ruin things.

This participant's description honoured the worthiness of others as humans engage with respect, while being apart with ideas that surface moment-to-moment. This description points to the vital worthiness of honouring togetherness in beholding others with fervour, while all-at-once, being apart with unfolding ideas that surface moment-to-moment. Another participant described *revering alliances* when stating, "In my job, there will be a colleague to call or there will be a boss to call when I am not sure about something I am doing." *Revering alliances* is here described as giving importance in communicating with others while feeling inefficient about activities unfolding in aloneness. Another participant said, "I find that I often withdraw from social contact when I am particularly unsure about something which causes stress. I need a little space from my friends." This description pertains to *revering alliances* as the participant chooses to be apart from others in living the tension of feeling unsure while at-once preferring to be at a distance. Another participant said, "I get very frustrated with what I am working on. I get to a point where I have to leave it aside and need a little space to remove that sense of uncertainty. I enjoy the outdoors, so I go running or on a short hike." This description exemplifies how the participant honoured the moment in the cocreation of the situation at hand

by enlivening the meaning of feeling aggravated with an endeavour, while moving away with another activity that surfaced all-at-once with delight. These examples address *revering alliances* in *feeling unsure* as ways humans honour being with and apart from others, ideas, and activities in cocreating situations.

The core concept *revering alliances* was transposed to *prizing involvements*. Prizing involvements was conceptually integrated with the humanbecoming theory (Parse, 1981, 1998b, 2007b) as valuing connecting-separating. Discussion of *revering alliances* in light of the construct valuing connecting-separating expands understanding of the meaning of valuing and connecting-separating and adds further depth and clarity to knowledge about the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

Valuing is from the first principle of humanbecoming, structuring meaning and is "confirming-not-confirming cherished beliefs in light of a personal worldview" (Parse, 1998b, pp. 37-38). The core activities of valuing are, "choosing, prizing, and acting" (Parse, 1998b, p. 38). Valuing is a way humans incarnate choosings in the unfolding moments of becoming, while opting to proceed all-at-once with the treasured. It is relishing the treasured in bearing witness-not bearing witness to the valuable. From the second principle of humanbecoming, "configuring rhythmical patterns of relating" (Parse, 2007b, p. 309), connecting-separating addresses a way humans cocreate "being with and apart from others, ideas, objects, and situations all-at-once" (Parse, 1998b, p. 45) in living the paradoxical tension of attending-distancing (Parse, 2007b). Connecting-separating surfaces in all relationships, such that "in the separation there is connection…and in the connection there is separation" (Parse, 1998b, p. 45). It is a chosen way of being that surfaces as humans engage with others, participate in activities, immerse with ideas and objects, and cocreate situations, while all-at-once being apart from what appears in the

moment. Connecting-separating arises as a preferred pattern of relating with the moment-about-to-be as humans comingle, while all-at-once move away from others, ideas, objects, and situations.

The construct valuing connecting-separating illuminates the core concept *revering alliances* of *feeling unsure* as ways humans attest to and do not attest to being with and apart simultaneously with the moment at hand. It is prizing unfolding togetherness that surfaces with solitude, as humans incarnate communion-aloneness as a preferred way of being while shaping meaning. Valuing connecting-separating is a way of upholding prized options in configuring vital bonds in relationships, while all-at-once holding dearly to unique ways of being in *feeling unsure*. The construct valuing connecting-separating illuminates *revering alliances* as central to the lived experience of *feeling unsure* as described by the participants in this study.

The core concept *revering alliances* was not found explicitly in the extant literature on uncertainty, unsureness, and *feeling unsure*, but was consistent with the ideas discussed by various authors (Bailey et al., 2007; Clayton et al., 2006; Gil et al., 2006; Germino et al., 1998; Pierce & Hicks, 2001; Sorlie, et al., 2006; Wenzel & Shaha, 2008). All studies confirmed the expertise of health providers as important partners in appreciating others, ideas, and situations. While these findings convey ideas similar to *revering alliances*, Clayton and colleagues (2006) and Gil and colleagues (2006) reported that participants' uncertainty was correlated to not always feeling respected in interaction with health providers. The ideas reported in these studies are different from *revering alliances* which connects to honouring others, ideas, and situations of "attending-distancing" (Parse, 2008, p. 309).

Consistent with the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005, 2007b, 2008), numerous research studies guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b,

2001, 2005) emerged with the construct valuing connecting-separating. Similar concepts to

revering alliances such as *spirited cherished engagements* (Huch & Bournes, 2003), *honouring*

affiliations (Kostas-Polston, 2007), *honourableness with significant affiliations* (Smith, 2006),

and *steadfastness with the cherished in unfolding alliances* (Yancey, 2004) emerged from

research with the Parse research methodology (Parse, 2001, 2005). While all core concepts

described valuing in terms such as cherishing, treasuring, or honouring and connecting-

separating as being with and apart from others, ideas, and activities, *revering alliances* sheds

light on honouring others with profound admiration. In this study, honouring others with

profound admiration of *revering alliances* is distinct from honesty with diverse engagements as

explicated in Smith's (2006) concept of *honourableness with significant affiliations*. Honouring

others with profound admiration with *revering alliances* is similar, yet distinct from

steadfastness with the cherished in unfolding alliances that Yancey (2004) explicated as,

"holding on to the cherished, yet having to relinquish…in moving with ever evolving personal

relationships" (p.142), and *spirited cherished engagements* that Huch and Bournes (2003)

expressed as, "uplifting and treasured activities with others" (p. 338). Furthermore, *revering*

alliances was transposed to prizing involvements which is similar, yet different from the core

concept *prized alliances* (Parse, 2006b), which was described as, "trusting, relying on, and

listening to others" (p. 55).

6.5 FEELING UNSURE, HEALTH, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

From the humanbecoming perspective (Parse, 1998b), health and quality of life are

continuously changing as humans cocreate with the universe. Health is living value priorities as

a personal commitment (Parse, 1981, 1990a, 1998b). Personal commitment is choosing to live

moment-to-moment that which has personal meaning. Humans may choose to change the meaning of the situation, thus transforming personal commitment. Change is continuous, innovative, and unpredictable. Quality of life (Parse, 2007a) is incarnating experiences, the "indivisible human's view on living moment to moment as the changing patterns of shifting perspectives weave the fabric of life through the human-universe interconnectedness" (Parse, 1994, p.17). Humans explore the explicit-tacit anticipated and shape quality of life while risking moving with the unfamiliar all-at-once.

The findings of this study show *feeling unsure* as a universal experience of health and quality of life. *Feeling unsure* was described by all participants as a personal commitment that arose in living certainty-uncertainty with explicit-tacit knowing, while pushing-resisting in affirming being in light of nonbeing. Participants described feeling precarious, hesitant, and unable to settle on a view point as they audaciously pursued projects. Participants risked propelling on with tumultuous hardships, as they honored others without judgment, respecting ideas that arose in unfolding situations. *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances* emerged as an indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging way of incarnating becoming. Participants created anew while originating imaging the powering of valuing connecting-separating in living unique rhythmical patterns as ways of becoming. Thus *feeling unsure* is an incarnation of chosen value priorities and a way of living health and quality of life.

6.6 NEW KNOWLEDGE

Five findings emerged from this study as unique, which did not appear in the extant literature on *feeling unsure*:

1. The structure *feeling unsure* is *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances* emerged as new knowledge not previously reported in the literature. From the humanbecoming perspective, Bunkers' (2007) and Morrow's (2006) definitions of *feeling unsure* are somewhat different from the one found in this study.

2. *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* as conforming-non conforming with certainty-uncertainty in light of explicit-tacit knowing emerged as central to *feeling unsure*. Wavering irresolutely adds a critical description to the construct. This unique conceptualization is new to the extant and humanbecoming literature. The core concept expands the construct originating imaging while adding to the understanding of the lived experience of *feeling unsure*.

3. *Venturing with trepidation* as living the paradoxical pattern of pushing-resisting in affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing is essential to *feeling unsure*. This unique conceptualization of powering is new to humanbecoming sciencing and the extant literature and may expand understanding about *feeling unsure* as moving on with disconcerting agitation.

4. *Revering alliances* as confirming-not confirming being with and apart all-at-once arose as a continuous incarnating of relations that is vital to *feeling unsure*. This unique conceptualization which is new to the extant and humanbecoming literature, expands knowledge about *feeling unsure*, and may further understanding about ways humans incarnate patterns of relating.

5. A deeper appreciation and understanding of *feeling unsure* as an experience of health and quality of life emerged from this study.

6.7 SUMMARY

The findings of this study, as evolved and interpreted in light of humanbecoming and other theoretical and research literature, contribute new knowledge and understanding about the lived experience of *feeling unsure*. The findings expand the unique body of nursing knowledge in light of the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b). The next chapter provides a description of the researcher's personal journey of the research process and insights gleaned through the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE RESEARCHER'S REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the author presents a reflection on her research journey for this dissertation. It includes moving the research project from its conception to its completion by describing the researcher's experience with the Parse research methodology, and with the humanbecoming school of thought. The Parse research methodology was the research method of choice to answer the research question, *What is the structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure?*

7.2 FINDING A FOCUS FOR STUDY

With many years in practice as a nurse specialist particularly in the field of oncology this researcher had the opportunity to bear witness to people's health experiences. With bewilderment individuals living in community or hospital settings addressed not having enough information about the prognosis, the diagnosis, and the suggested biomedical treatments, while being fully aware that something unknown and foreboding was happening. Having an opportunity to be asked by the nurse specialist about their health experiences, individuals and family members talked about their concerns, while describing shattering intrusions in daily routines. Individuals described feeling apprehensive and cooped up, while considering options in forging a path and moving on day-by-day. Family members reflected anguish while grappling with the unfolding situations, yet were determined to stay with their loved one. Though convinced of the teaching-learning needed regarding health information and interventions,

bearing witness to such lived experiences provided the impetus to understand the individuals'

and family members' lived experiences of health and quality of life. Familiar with the fix-it

model guiding the nurse expert in a wholistic approach and acquainted with the principles of

man-living-health (Parse, 1981), this researcher pondered the indivisible, unpredictable,

everchanging (Parse, 2007b) ways individuals and family members described living health. By

letting go of ideas about nurses' therapeutic relationships, the researcher engaged with

elusiveness and ambiguity shapeshifting a distinct way of being with others. Curious to know

yet intensely puzzled about personal lived experiences of health, the researcher engaged in

discussions with individuals and family members with attentive presence. People described their

lived experiences as swimming in calm-turbulent flow while keeping afloat with uncertainties,

yet anticipating a better quality of life. While dwelling with the ebb and flow of determinateness

and hesitancy expressed all-at-once, the paradoxical rhythm *feeling sure-unsure* became obvious

to this researcher. The lived experience of *feeling unsure* appeared to the researcher as a

refreshing comfort amid disconcerting doubt. As the researcher pondered on personal and

practice experiences, a desire to further explore the paradoxical rhythm of *feeling unsure* grew to

the extent of envisioning launching a research study. Studying the lived experience of *feeling

unsure* became the focus of interest for this researcher.

7.3 EXPLICATING THE PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Several years before engaging with this doctoral project, this researcher had chosen the

humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b) as her nursing disciplinary frame of reference.

Living the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought is a commitment to honour human

beings who choose in situations and take responsibility for what they do. It is a commitment to

revere the wisdom of others who, with discerning insights, know the way, while incarnating

shifting patterns of preferred options surfacing as health and quality of life. Living the ontology

of the humanbecoming school of thought resonates with this researcher's beliefs. In being with

individuals and family members living with cancer, this researcher learned that unfolding

moments are freely chosen humanuniverse cocreations, as only the person living the life knows.

The clarity of the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought provides a frame of

reference with themes that ground and encompass all humanly lived experiences.

Actual currents in healthcare either minimize or do not value evidence-based nursing

specific research findings that expand theoretical works while suggesting ways of being in

practice. While numerous studies conducted by nurses borrowing research methodologies from

other disciplines might be helpful for the advancement of a general understanding of health

sciences, it is this researcher's conviction that discipline-specific research better advances

nursing knowledge.

Prompted by this conviction, this researcher previously initiated two descriptive

qualitative studies guided by the applied humanbecoming research methodology, namely the

preproject-process-postproject method (Parse, 2001, 2005). The research question for those

studies was, *What happens when the human becoming practice methodology is lived with*

individuals or groups? (Parse, 2001, p. 9). While these endeavours allowed the researcher to

deepen understanding of the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought as related to

practice, achievement of the present basic research project shifted to the question, *What is the*

structure of the lived experience of feeling unsure? (Parse, 2001, p. 9). To further understand the

Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005), this researcher undertook a course

directed by Dr. Parse on various qualitative methods. A critical appraisal of conceptual, ethical,

methodological, and interpretive dimensions of the distinct qualitative methods allowed for further clarity. This researcher's knowledge of the Parse research methodology became fluent when addressing the congruence of ontological-epistemological-methodological links inherent in the humanbecoming school of thought.

Furthermore, over a number of years exchanges with other Parse scholars at the Institute of Humanbecoming provided this researcher with opportunities to clarify the congruence of the theoretical and methodological underpinnings embedded in the humanbecoming school of thought. It was also while attending the Institute of Humanbecoming that this researcher received the refinements of evolutionary emergents and sciencing of the humanbecoming school of thought.

Discussions with Dr. Welch at the Institute of Humanbecoming offered the possibility of pursuing doctoral studies at RMIT University. A proposal to pursue doctoral studies at RMIT University with the intent of conducting a Parse research study was submitted in accordance with university required protocols and accepted.

7.4 CHOOSING A PATH: THE PARSE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.4.1 Concept Inventing

Concept inventing (Parse, 1997a, 2006a) is not a process of the Parse research methodology. It arises as a way to advance knowledge in view of the simultaneity perspective by creating a synthetic indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging definition with unique essences about the phenomenon under study. This researcher's definition of *feeling unsure* was inspired by dwelling with personal and practice experiences, discussions with others about everyday situations, readings from the general and nursing theoretical and research literature, and an

appreciation of different artforms. The richness present and emerging from these situations

emerged in cocreating a unique definition of *feeling unsure*. For this researcher, concept

inventing was an invigorating journey of discovery where a personal statement of essences

defining *feeling unsure* still lingers with breadth and depth when considering how humans freely

choose cocreating health and quality of life.

7.4.2 Selection of Participants

      After receiving the approval of RMIT University HREC, a statement of the study for the

participants (see Appendix A) was posted in different public areas and community dwellings as

the researcher was interested to know how individuals living in community would describe their

experiences of *feeling unsure*. People interested in participating in the study contacted the

researcher who made sure that the expected criteria of eligibility were respected and satisfied.

By word of mouth from one person to another, other interested individuals were also selected. A

third way of selecting participants occurred when overhearing individuals describing situated life

circumstances as this researcher was travelling on public transportation. Remembering Bunkers'

(2003) article on engaging the stranger, with decency and enthusiasm, this researcher risked

approaching distinct individuals. After explaining the researcher's status as a doctoral student

and interest in pursuing a study, this researcher asked individuals if they would be interested in

participating in the study on feeling unsure. Those who agreed were given a statement of the

study for the participants (see Appendix A). Arrangements were then made to meet at a time and

place convenient to the individual and conducive to the process of dialogical engagement.

7.4.3 Dialogical Engagement

Prior to beginning the dialogical engagement with individuals who had signed the consent form (see Appendix B), this researcher conducted four 'practice' dialogical engagements for the purpose of receiving feedback from Dr. Parse about living true presence and staying true to the method. The researcher learnt to stay with the request, *Please tell me about your experiences of feeling unsure* without probing or validating the person. Also, the practice of dialogical engagements afforded this researcher the opportunity to keep the focus on the research question when individuals would elaborate on the context of situations rather than their lived experience of feeling unsure by stating, *Please tell me how this is related to your experience of feeling unsure*. Receiving feedback from Dr. Parse attuned the researcher to subtleties in ways of being in true presence congruent with the ontology of humanbecoming. Furthermore, a deepened understanding and appreciation of true presence as "an intentional reflective love grounded in a strong knowledge base" (Parse, 1998b, p. 71) appeared to this researcher with new clarity.

7.4.4 Extraction-Synthesis

Extraction-synthesis is a process of raising the language of the participants to the language of science (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005). For this researcher, the extraction-synthesis is the most demanding process to maintain rigor and credibility of the research findings. With vigilance, this researcher read and re-read each participant's transcription while listening to the audiotaped dialogues. Intonations and gestures capturing specific ideas described by each participant arose as the researcher laboriously grappled with rational-intuitive knowings in raising the essences of each participant's language to the essences of the researcher's language. Searching dictionaries savouring words that would approximate and depict the essences of each participant was not sufficient. The researcher meditated further glimpsing beyond each

participant's essences while informed with a richer vocabulary. Patiently dwelling with potential words, the essences of the researcher's language emerged all-at-once grasping enigmatically and justifiably the essences of each participant's language. Being immersed with participants' descriptions to state the essences in the researcher's language requires such persistence. Stating the language-art for each participant surfaced readily for this researcher. Positing the structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* required astuteness. The core concepts emanating from all participants' language-art were ordered in a way that rendered the underlying relations of the structure indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging, while illuminating the lived experience of *feeling unsure*. The structure of feeling unsure for this study is, *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. It became apparent to this researcher that the process of extraction-synthesis is congruent with the ontology of humanbecoming where the researcher must honour the participants' descriptions of lived experiences while maintaining rigor and credibility to show integrity of the research process.

7.4.5 Heuristic Interpretation

For this study, heuristic interpretation consists in a) stating the structure of *feeling unsure* at a higher level of abstraction, b) moving the structure at the conceptual language of the humanbecoming theory of nursing (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005), and c) describing an artistic expression that reflects the core concepts of the findings of the study as well as the researcher's transfiguring moments with the study of *feeling unsure*.

The structural transposition of *feeling unsure* is, *Feeling unsure is incertitude in penetrating reverie arising in propelling with the arduous, while prizing involvements*. *Incertitude in penetrating reverie* is a higher level of abstraction than the core concept *wavering*

irresolutely with discerning ponderings. Central to *feeling unsure* is the idea of *incertitude* that connotes fluctuating movement with unrest at a higher level of abstraction than *wavering irresolutely*. The meaning of *incertitude* in *feeling unsure* is lived in *penetrating reverie*. *Penetrating reverie* is at a higher level of discourse and suggests a degree of abstractness in regard to *discerning ponderings*. The second core concept *venturing with trepidation* was transposed to *propelling with the arduous*. *Propelling* reflects the intangible intensity of *venturing*. At the level of the structural transposition *the arduous* of *trepidation* reflects the idea of disquietude and uneasiness in *feeling unsure*. The third core concept *revering alliances* was transposed to *prizing involvements*. This reflects the high regard for others. Explicating the structure of *feeling unsure* at the higher level of abstraction stated as a structural transposition facilitates the comprehension of the conceptual integration of the structure with humanbecoming.

The conceptual integration of *feeling unsure* is, *Feeling unsure is originating imaging in the powering of valuing connecting-separating*. The conceptual integration of the structure of *feeling unsure* emerged with two constructs and one concept. For this researcher, the realization of a construct in conceptual integration was a discovery that showed suppleness in weaving concepts of humanbecoming, while nevertheless adhering to the rigor of the Parse research methodology. For this researcher this discovery confirmed the inherent movement linking the ontology with the methodology embedded in the humanbecoming school of thought (Parse, 1998b). Bunkers' (2007) study on *feeling unsure* is the only other research guided by the Parse research methodology that emerged with the construct originating imaging. Both the concept powering and the construct valuing connecting-separating have been reported in several studies guided by the Parse research methodology

Cézanne's (1900) painting *Montagne Sainte Victoire* is the artistic expression that depicts the core concepts of this study and the researcher's journey. Art creates a unique unfathomable luminosity when pointing beyond the tangible as humans consider the symbolic whole not immediately revealed, while at-once prizing the puzzling movement emanating with the *oeuvre*. Similar to moving beyond chronological time, steering haphazardly through space, or glimpsing the barely perceptible of empirical descriptors of this study, the researcher experienced transfiguring moments while immersed with the research project. A hidden mist behind the mountain in the right background of the painting is shown with an evanescent movement of some of nature's elements abounding in the foreground. For this researcher, *Montagne Sainte Victoire* represents artistically the structure, *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. Sciencing guided by Parse's research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001, 2005) kept this researcher vigilant, uplifted, and wondering with difficulties, hesitation, twists and turns, and carefully testing the ground, plunging in imaginative conjectures, sounding out ideas, feeling the wind of fresh understandings surfacing with new insights, and enjoying the dawn. The sure-unsure appeared differently; like looking at the familiar from a different vantage point. Lingering with the transcripts of the dialogue while remembering Merleau-Ponty's (1964a) evocation of *Montagne Sainte Victoire* (Cézanne, 1900) as Cézanne's quest to paint the *Instant of the world* did not only suggest fluidity and strength of contours and detours of the mountain but more so the participants' daring with determination and hesitancy amid trials, while cautious of living day-to-day on the edge of slippery slopes. *Feeling unsure* arises as a mysterious desire to *cross* the mist while pushing on, birthing new understandings, standing up, walking.

7.5 APPRECIATING THE HUMANBECOMING SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

Contrasting distinct a) paradigmatic perspectives, b) nursing research methodologies and c) the ontology, epistemology, and methodology of qualitative methods from different disciplines highlighted differences, similarities, and overlappings in philosophical underpinnings, while revealing unexpected nuances. This learning entailed a reflection on personal and professional practice situations where this researcher examined not only which value priorities and beliefs were significant in day-to-day living but how living these convictions cocreated personal health and quality of life.

For this researcher, the humanbecoming school of thought establishes a coherent and sure ontological, epistemological, and methodological foundation as an *evolutionary emergent* (Parse, IHB, 2009a) which has been refined over the past twenty plus years without changing its central interest, namely, the human-universe-health process. Grounded in human sciences, the humanbecoming school of thought offers to the nursing discipline and profession and to other healthcare professions an indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging view of "a human service that is guided by those we serve" (Parse, 2003, p. 56). In research as well as in nursing practice guided by humanbecoming, true presence is the way of being with others. True presence is a way of *living* being with others based on the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought. Each and every person electing to engage others with true presence must find his/her own way. The ontology of the concept is not a fit-in model. Indivisible, unpredictable, everchanging unfoldings of human dignity and freedom require deep reverence that arise with boundless ways of being.

Convinced and treasuring that only those living the life can describe lived experiences of health and quality of life, the humanbecoming school of thought was the only venue that offered

this researcher the possibility of launching a research study consistent with personal beliefs.
Guided by Parse's phenomenological-hermeneutic method of inquiry, essences in the
participant's language stated the uniqueness of each individual's descriptions of *feeling unsure*.
While honouring uniqueness, rigor in sciencing using the Parse research methodology offered a
structure of the lived experience of *feeling unsure* that shed light beyond individuality. For this
researcher, the humanbecoming school of thought is a way of cocreating and coconstructing
community becoming.

7.6 ELABORATING THE INSIGHTS OF THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

Three insights gleaned from the researcher's journey, are a) learning to be with the
emerging, b) uncovering subtle connectedness, and c) recognizing oneness of community.

7.6.1 Learning to be with the Emerging

Undertaking a study guided by the Parse research methodology (Parse, 1998b, 2001,
2005) was like receiving a gift with enthusiasm, trembling, and gratitude. For this researcher,
uncovering the coherence linking the ontology of the humanbecoming school of thought with the
Parse research methodology was a revealing moment of recognition of the architectural
scholarliness that arose with wonderment, surprise, astonishment, and awe. A surge in
envisaging numerous possibilities echoed with a familiar perspective, as moments of learning to
be with the emerging unfamiliar surfaced surreptitiously. Patience in being with the ambiguity
of nuanced yet blurred by conceptual approximations from different disciplines, this researcher
heeded with calm-turbulent attentiveness, as unravelling intricacies surfaced inexplicably with
soundness and clarity. From the humanbecoming school of thought a deeper comprehension of

"open being" (Parse, 1998b, p. 11) shapeshifted a distinct sense of what is to be without expectations, particularly during the process of extraction-synthesis, while acknowledging boundless humanuniverse connectedness.

7.6.2 Uncovering Subtleties of Connectedness

For this researcher, connectedness is an overarching humanuniverse unfolding. It grounds individual existence, while moving beyond individuality with boundless presence. Connectedness is a "seamless symphony" (Parse, 1996, p. 181) where humans freely choose to move with the givenness that appears in the moment as relationships with others, ideas, objects, and situations (Parse, 1998b) shape strivings and endeavorings. No one person is ever alone. One is always coconstituting in relationships with the givenness of the visible-invisible that appears moment-to-moment as opportunities and limitations are revealed-concealed all-at-once. It is a vibrant pulsating rhythm of relating beyond connecting. Connectedness is givenness. It pertains to the phenomenal reality of situated beings. The humanbecoming school of thought offers consistent philosophical underpinnings to explore human patterns of health and to investigate universal lived experiences that allow a grasp of connectedness uncovering the phenomenal reality of situated beings with universe.

7.6.3 Recognizing Oneness of Community

As study participants described lived experiences of *feeling unsure*, the insight of oneness of community arose in view that humans shape values in cocreating change. Diverse points of view express ways of steering intended projects with anticipated opportunities and perils surfacing all-at-once while daring to forge on. For this researcher, discussions with Parse scholars deepened a sense of oneness of community. While honouring scholars from other

disciplines allowed the researcher to intently listen with reverence to different points of view. Clarifying a distinct comprehension of community arose in moving barriers of misunderstanding, as a lingering presence of the ontology of humanbecoming was guarded with discreetness.

7.7 SUMMARY

Studying the phenomenon *feeling unsure* using the Parse research methodology, this researcher's journey arose with a greater comprehension and appreciation of the ontological, epistemological, and methodological congruence of the humanbecoming school of thought. A further grasp of the ontological underpinnings opened possibilities of understanding without swaying the researcher while sharpening personal beliefs. Adhering to the rigor of the methodology was a fastidious and laborious journey held with determination and focused on the direction yet not knowing the consequences. Learning to be with the emerging, as well as uncovering subtleties of connectedness and recognizing oneness of community were revealed as significant insights during this researcher's journey. The following chapter presents a) a summary of the findings, b) the uniqueness of the findings and c) implications for research, practice and the leading-following with community.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY, INSIGHTS, AND IMPLICATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a concluding discussion of the findings of this study. A brief

summary addresses how the findings expand nursing knowledge. The uniqueness of the findings

is also presented. Finally a discussion of the implications for further research, practice, and

leading-following with community is presented.

8.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The purposes of the study were to a) understand the lived experience of *feeling unsure*

from the humanbecoming perspective, b) enhance understanding of the lived experience of

feeling unsure as an essence of health and quality of life, c) discover the structure of the lived

experience of *feeling unsure*, and d) contribute to the advancement of nursing knowledge. These

purposes have been achieved.

With the Parse research methodology, three core concepts emerged in studying the lived

experience of *feeling unsure*. The core concepts are: *a) wavering irresolutely with discerning

ponderings*, b) *venturing with trepidation*, and c) *revering alliances*. Woven together these three

core concepts form the structure, *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning

ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. Transposing the

structure to a higher level of abstraction surfaced as, *Feeling unsure is incertitude in penetrating

reverie arising in propelling with the arduous, while prizing involvements*. At the conceptual

level of the theory the structure is, *Feeling unsure is originating imaging the powering of valuing

connecting-separating*. This conceptualization illuminates *feeling unsure* as a universal lived

experience and a phenomenon of health and quality of life. "Living health…is an incarnation of a person's choosings…and value priorities…cocreated in mutual process with the universe. It is a personal commitment lived through abiding with the struggles and joys of everydayness" (Parse, 1998b, pp. 23-33).

This emergent structure of *feeling unsure* enhances the humanbecoming theory in regard to other studies that also investigated the same phenomenon using the Parse research methodology. Only Bunkers' (2007) study on *feeling unsure* is discussed here as the findings at the conceptual integration of the structure are the same as this study. Bunkers' (2007) structural definition of *feeling unsure* emerged as, *Feeling unsure is disquieting apprehensiveness arising while pressing on with intimate sorrows*. The structural definition was transposed to, *Feeling unsure is certainty-uncertainty with possibles arising in resolute abiding with anguishing involvements*. At the conceptual level of the theory the structure is, *Feeling unsure is originating imaging the powering of valuing connecting-separating*.

Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings is similar to Bunkers' (2007) core concept *disquieting apprehensiveness*. In this study, *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* was transposed to *incertitude in penetrating reverie*, whereas *disquieting apprehensiveness* in Bunkers' (2007) study was transposed to *certainty-uncertainty with possibles*. The meanings are similar and led to the conceptual integration as originating imaging. At the structural transposition, *resolute abiding* from Bunkers' study (2007) is like *propelling with the arduous* from this study and both statements led to powering. *Anguishing involvements* is also close to *prizing involvements* that led to valuing connecting-separating. At the conceptual integration of the heuristic interpretation the structure for both Bunkers' (2007) and this study is the same, that is, *Feeling unsure is originating imaging the powering of valuing connecting-*

separating. For this researcher, this confirms *feeling unsure* as a universal lived experience at a higher level of abstraction.

8.3 UNIQUENESS OF THE FINDINGS

This study is the first to investigate the lived experience of *feeling unsure* with a general population. Its unique findings include the following:

1. The structural definition of *feeling unsure* is, *Feeling unsure is wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings arising in venturing with trepidation, while revering alliances*. Though similar to Bunkers' (2007) structural definition of *feeling unsure*, it is a unique conceptualization that emerged as new knowledge not previously reported in the extant literature.

2. The core concept *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* emerged as central to *feeling unsure*. Qualifying wavering with irresoluteness adds new knowledge not previously uncovered in other studies on *feeling unsure*.

3. The core concept *venturing with trepidation* emerged as essential to *feeling unsure* is similar to core concepts found in other studies on *feeling unsure* (Bunkers, 2004; Morrow, 2006). The core concept in all studies addresses *feeling unsure* as a pushing-resisting rhythm in affirming-not affirming being in light of nonbeing.

4. The core concept *revering alliances* emerged as integral to *feeling unsure*. *Revering alliances* is similar to other core concepts present in the literature (Bunkers 2004, 2007; Morrow, 2006). Connecting-separating while confirming-not confirming prized ways of being with others bears on *feeling unsure*.

5. A deeper understanding emerged from this study on *feeling unsure* as an experience of health and quality of life.

The findings of this study contribute new knowledge and understanding on the lived experience of *feeling unsure*. It provides insights for future research, practice, and leading-following with community.

8.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of this study have implications for research, practice, and leading-following with community. Each domain is discussed in the following sections.

8.4.1 Research

Qualitative research is a rigorous, formal, and systematic process of inquiry using descriptions that express human experiences (Parse, 1998b, 2001). New knowledge generated from studies points to research interests to further expand understanding of human experiences. From the core concepts that emerged in this study, other possibilities for research are suggested. *Wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* means swaying with thoughtfulness. Understanding the first core concept could be enhanced by exploring such phenomena as living on the edge, feeling uneasy, feeling worried, or feeling afraid. The second core concept *venturing with trepidation* means endeavouring tribulation. Phenomena arising from *venturing with trepidation* could be augmented by exploring the lived experience of taking a risk, trusting-suspecting, or feeling brave. The third core concept *revering alliances* means treasuring associations. *Revering alliances* could lead a researcher to investigate the lived experience of

feeling loved, being listened to, or anticipating a loss. Research on any of these phenomena would potentially enhance and contribute to what is known about the experience of *feeling unsure*.

8.4.2 Practice

In practice, nurses living true presence bear witness to persons, families, and communities' lived experiences. Individuals describe experiences of feeling doubt that surfaces with swaying thoughtfulness and worries, while all-at-once daring to move on with confidence and determination in addressing others and situations. Knowledge gained from understanding detailed nuances described in this study can guide nurses living true presence. As individuals illuminate the meaning of experiences, chosen preferred options arise in cocreating rhythmical patterns of relating with others, ideas, objects, and situations. Bearing witness to persons, families, and communities' chosen possibilities in moving on with and apart cherished others is a way of honouring others who know the way while *feeling unsure.*

8.4.3 Leading-Following with Community.

Recognizing oneness of community was an insight that emerged from the researcher's journey. Findings of this study have implications that bear on ways of being in leading-following with community. Pondering ways of coconstructing novel projects with community are all-at-once evoked with feelings of unsureness. Assuredness in birthing the envisaged possibilities are addressed by clarifying intentions with inspiring creativity, as individuals speak while relishing the yet-to-be. Yet there is *wavering irresolutely with discerning ponderings* with community listening intently and affably to concerns of others who dare to raise alternate options in cocreating a plan for action. Expanding upon the projects' anticipated apparent opposites

moves community on while shaping and shifting points of view beyond with emerging diverse possibilities.

8.5 MOVING ON

While incarnating appreciations and relishing insightful possibilities enriched with deeper learnings, ways of being in moving on propelled the researcher to embrace familiar daily activities in a different way. Bearing witness to persons, families, and community living health and quality of life uncovers opportunities and limitations that surface in the ebb and flow of new beginnings. Engaging challenges present in the actual healthcare system guided by the humanbecoming school of thought offers clarity in driving on while honouring those we serve. This research journey has inspired the researcher in envisioning her next research projects.

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF THE STUDY FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

RMIT
UNIVERSITY

STATEMENT OF THE STUDY FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Title of the study: The Phenomenon of Feeling Unsure

Dear participant

My name is Françoise Maillard Strüby, a doctoral candidate in the Division of Nursing and Midwifery, School of Life Sciences, RMIT University.

I wish to invite you to be participant in this study about your experiences of feeling unsure. Your participation will involve a discussion between you and me, which will be audio-taped. It is anticipated that the discussion will last between 20-60 minutes depending on what you wish to share. The choice of venue is yours, where you feel most comfortable.

Your identity will remain anonymous and the information shared by you during the discussion will remain confidential. The only persons to have access to your discussion tape and transcript will be yourself, my two supervisors and myself. On completion of the study your taped discussion will be erased. Your name will not appear either on the discussion transcript or in the final report of the study.

There may be potential for you to experience uncomfortable feelings and thoughts as you share your experiences of feeling unsure. If at any point during the discussion you experience such discomfort you are free to stop the discussion. If at any time you wish to withdraw from the study, your decision will be respected and therefore, all information shared by you will not be included in the findings unless your written permission is given.

If you wish to share any metaphors which describes your experiences you may do so during the discussion. If you wish to clarify any issues or seek further information about the study you can contact me by phone, +41 22 320 44 49 (work) or by mobile +41 76 577 6995.

Thank you for your interest

Yours sincerely

Françoise. V. Maillard Strüby

Any queries or complaints about your participation in this study can be directed to the Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee, RMIT University,124 La Trobe Street Melbourne,3000. The telephone number is (03) 99252554.

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Prescribed Consent Form For Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires or Disclosure of Personal Information

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Portfolio	**Life Sciences**
School of	**Nursing & Midwifery**
Name of participant:	
Project Title:	**The phenomenon of Feeling Unsure**

Name(s) of investigator: (1)   **Françoise. V. Maillard Strüby**
Phone:
     +41- 22 320 4449 (work)
     +41-76 577 69 95(mobile)
R-M.Parse,RN, PhD
Phone:
     +1 412-3918471(work)
A.Welch, RN,PhD
Phone:
     + 61-3-99257465 (work)

1.   I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.

2.   I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.

3.   I authorise the investigator   to interview me or administer a questionnaire.

4.   I acknowledge that:

(a)   Having read Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
(b)   I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
(c)   The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
(d)   The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law.
(e)   The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published in refereed journals and presented at conferences, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to the RMIT University. Any information which will identify me will not be used.

Participant's Consent

Participant: _____   **Date:** _____
                    (Signature)

Witness: _____   **Date:** _____
                    (Signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

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