

EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE WORKERS IN
RESIDENTIAL CARE THROUGH A CONSTRUCTIVE-DEVELOPMENTAL LENS

by

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BA (Hons.) Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1986

MSc. Nova Southeastern University, 1999

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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Abstract

Child and youth care workers in residential care provide support and intervention to young people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. Caring for these young people can be complex and demanding and many child and youth care practitioners struggle to meet the challenges associated with their roles. Practice problems include volatile and punitive environments, inability of practitioners to safely manage young people's threatening and aggressive behaviours, and staff turnover and burnout. These problems are often attributed to job stress, personal characteristics of practitioners, and lack of education, training, and professional development.

To reconceptualise the aforementioned practice problems, Robert Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory was used as a theoretical framework to explore the experiences of child and youth care workers in residential care. The research was guided by 2 main questions:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job?
2. What role does the organizational environment play, if any, in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems?

An exploratory study was conducted using a mixed methods design. The study was conducted in two stages. First, 99 participants completed the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL), Work Environment Scale (WES), and Leadership Development Profile (LDP). Linear regression was conducted to explore the relationships between the ProQOL, LDP, and WES and most results were not significant.

From the initial pool, 18 participants were selected for in-depth, qualitative interviews to assess their constructive-developmental orders – the ways in which they make meaning - and explore their experiences in residential care in the areas of job satisfaction and success, challenge, and coping with the demands of the job. The ways in which participants at different constructive-developmental orders experience and cope with the challenges of their jobs are described and themes are identified. There was internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order and across organizations.

This dissertation examines implications of the findings for child and youth care practice, education, training, supervision, research, and organizational management in residential care.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to the research problem, the context in which the study is situated, the theoretical framework, and the research questions.

Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care

The primary role of child and youth care practitioners in a residential setting, regardless of the specific program orientation or theoretical underpinning, is to provide direct care and support to the young people in residence. Tasks and responsibilities usually include establishing and monitoring the daily structure and routine; facilitating and participating in social, recreational, and educational activities; and providing behavioural supports and crisis intervention. Ideally, these tasks occur within the context of positive relationships between the staff and young people. Due to the nature of the work and the setting, residential child and youth care is more intimate than most types of professional helping (Phelan, 2009; Raychaba, 1993). This “intensely personal and demanding endeavour... can be overwhelming” (Mann-Feder, 1999, p. 93) for many practitioners.

There are many descriptions of the ideals of the work. Child and youth care workers are often characterized as engaging in relational practice in which the focus of intervention is directed towards the space “in-between” the worker and the child (Bellefeuille & Jamieson, 2008; Garfat, 2008; Garfat & Fulcher, 2011). In a residential setting, practitioners participate in the development and maintenance of a therapeutic environment in which they engage with young people in the life space (Gharabaghi & Stuart, 2013; Maier, 1987; Ward, 2003) and utilize activities (VanderVen, 2003, 2005), interactions (Krueger, 1995; Maier, 1994), and daily life events (Garfat, 2002, 2008; Phelan, 2001; Ward, 2003) as opportunities to promote growth and change. This includes the purposeful use of space, time, and the physical environment (Maier, 1991; Redl, 1966; Smith, 2009). Intervention is strengths-based (Stuart & Carty, 2006), needs-

led (Garfat & Fulcher, 2011), trauma-informed (Ford & Blaustein, 2013; Holden et al., 2010), and rooted in attachment (Fahlberg, 1991; Maier, 1994) and development (Ainsworth & Fulcher, 1981; Maier, 1987; Stuart, 2009). Intervention is also immediate and focused on meeting young people “where they are at” (Garfat & Fulcher, 2011; Krueger, 2000).

Some describe the use of “self” as core to effective practice (Fewster, 1990; Phelan, 2005; Smith, 2009; Stuart & Carty, 2006). It has also been suggested that child and youth care workers are required to separate themselves and their own needs from the needs of the young people and to demonstrate self-awareness and a willingness and ability to engage in ongoing reflection and self-exploration (Fewster, 1990; Garfat, 2008). As stated by Phelan (2005), when discussing required content in child and youth care education programs, “CYC education includes attachment theory, developmental and systemic awareness, and relational strategies, but self-understanding underlies all of this...” (p. 353). The capacity for self-understanding and how this self-understanding influences the work relates to the practice problems presented in the next section and underlies the focus of the research presented in this dissertation.

Children and youth are usually placed in residential care because the challenging nature of their behaviours makes it difficult for them to live in a family home. These behaviours can be aggressive, destructive, or disturbing (Frensch, Cameron, & Adams, 2003; Whittaker & Pfeiffer, 1994) and may include self-harm, running away, suicide attempts, verbal escalation, and physical assaults (Seti, 2007). This can make the job of caring for these young people complex and demanding (Braxton, 1995). The residential environment can become volatile and threatening - for both the staff and the young people. In contrast to the ideals of practice, the realities are often less satisfying.

Underlying the behaviours of young people in residential care are almost always histories of severe trauma, often in the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse, and/or neglect (Brendtro, 2004; Raychaba, 1993; van Beinum, 2008). These young people have experienced years of humiliation, degradation, chaos, threat, and fear; they have been “incubated in terror” (Perry & Szalavitz, 2006). The lifetime of hurt and pain that they carry with them is reflected in their behaviour (Anglin, 2002). As so eloquently stated by Crenshaw and Garbarino (2007, p. 160), “This deep reservoir of unrequited sorrow is the smoldering emotional underbelly to the violence.” Unfortunately, front-line child and youth care practitioners are not always equipped to adequately respond to the behavioural manifestations of this underlying pain or to the emotional underbelly itself.

The problems that exist in residential care – such as volatile and punitive environments, behaviours from the young people that the staff are unable to contain, and staff turnover and burnout - have been documented by numerous authors over many years (see, for example, Barford & Whelton, 2010; Colton & Roberts, 2007; Gharabaghi, 2010; LeBel, Huckshorn, & Caldwell, 2010; Raychaba, 1993; Whittaker & Pfeiffer, 1994). Issues of power and control between the young people and the staff in residential care consistently arise, and there is plenty of literature outlining the difference between controlling, coercive practice and approaches based on connecting and relating (Brendtro, 2004; Fewster, 2011; Freeman, 2011; Fox, 1994; Leaf, 1995). And yet it is disconcerting that the same conversation is necessary over and over, because things do not appear to change.

Working in the midst of young people’s distress and turmoil can take its toll on practitioners (Kahn, 2005) even in well-functioning teams (Anglin, 2002; Smith, 2009). Being exposed to the pain of individuals who have been victimized can leave practitioners at risk of developing

secondary or vicarious trauma (Collins & Long, 2003; Figley, 1995) and compassion fatigue (Seti, 2007), the symptoms of which can include extreme helplessness, victim blaming, emotionally distancing oneself from clients, over-identification with clients (Collins & Long, 2003), anxiety, depersonalization, and pessimism (Osofsky, Putman, & Leiderman, 2008).

In residential care, practitioners are not just exposed to the traumatic stories of the young people, they are exposed to the behavioural manifestations of their trauma as well. This adds an extra layer of complexity to the work that is often overlooked. As stated by Mattingly (1981), "...no matter how skilled and sophisticated the worker, a kick in the shins, broken glasses, an insult, and a child's lack of progress are all assaults on self-esteem which threaten workers' perceptions of their helping ability" (p. 154). The expectation that child and youth care workers should always know what to do or how to respond in the most challenging of situations is referred to by Anderson-Nathe (2010) as "the myth of supercompetence." Subsequently, when practitioners experience moments of "stuckness," of not knowing what to do, they can become mired in self-doubt, shame, and feelings of inadequacy (Anderson-Nathe, 2010).

Child and youth care practitioners are required to develop caring relationships with the young people with no expectation that these relationships be reciprocated (Garfat, 1998; Mann-Feder, 1999). Although this is considered to be fundamental to effective child and youth care practice, it is also purported to be one of the greatest challenges (Fewster, 1990; Smith, 2009). The pervasive frustration and anxiety that can be experienced by the staff, coupled with the entrenched emotional distress of the young people, often results in power struggles and "counter-aggression" (Brendtro & Ness, 1983) between the staff and the young people. This dysfunctional interactional cycle can lead to more punitive responses by the staff, including the misuse of physical restraint and seclusion (Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, 2013; Raychaba,

1993), the laying of criminal charges by the police (Finlay, 2003; Gharabaghi, 2010), and/or scapegoating and victim blaming (Colton & Roberts, 2007). The latter can occur when professionals perceive their clients as “threatening, manipulative or exploitive” (Herman, 1992, p. 419). Typical negative reactions of the staff to the behaviours of the young people can include labelling, advocating for the use of medication, dismissing, punishing, unnecessarily restricting privileges, shaming, and humiliating (Braxton, 1995).

Young people in residential care require responsive caregiving by practitioners attuned to their needs. When this does not occur the residential environment, rather than being therapeutic, can become unhealthy, dysfunctional, and negatively impact the young peoples’ development and future trajectory. According to Anglin (2004),

Perhaps more than any other dimension of the carework task, the ongoing challenge of dealing with such primary pain without unnecessarily inflicting secondary pain experiences on the residents through punitive or controlling reactions can be seen to be the central problematic for the carework staff. (p. 178)

In a study examining the high percentage of young people in the child welfare system that end up in youth corrections, Finlay (2003) described group homes as “gateways to custody” (p. 16).

Young people she interviewed described regularly being charged by residential staff for offences ranging from theft and property damage to throwing ketchup at a houseparent.

These types of reactions can be connected to the apparent tendency of some staff to depersonalize the young people. Ward (1998a, p. 272) has described this as the “demonization and devaluing of young people who are not seen as fully human but rather as undeserving, bad or sad.” This is disturbingly portrayed in filmmaker Andrée Cazabon’s (2005) documentary “Wards of the Crown,” about the experiences of several young people in Canada who had transitioned

out of care. All of the young people in the video had lived in group homes at some point in their lives, and not one of them could relay anything positive about these programs. A quote from one of the young people, which has been used extensively in promotional materials for the video, says “love is inappropriate in a group home.”

Another common problem that exists in residential care is the tendency of some staff to over-identify with the young people, become over-involved, and experience a loss of perspective (Eisikovits, 1997). This often goes hand-in-hand with difficulties setting limits and maintaining boundaries. Konopka, more than fifty years ago, described the ongoing tension in group care between all-out permissiveness and total control – both of which can be equally damaging – and the difficulties associated with helping front-line staff to maintain an appropriate balance between the two (Konopka, 1954). These problems still exist today (Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, 2013).

Child and youth care is complex and challenging work. Yet, sometimes, the complexity is unrealized and the job is pared down to the most basic elements – managing behaviours and attending to immediate needs. In many programs, conversation and intervention can be superficial and focused almost exclusively on the concrete events of daily living (Anglin, 2002) and the cooperation, or lack thereof, of the young people (Fox, 1987). Rigid behavioural programming and point-and-level systems abound (Tompkins & VanderVen, 2005; VanderVen, 1995). The focus often appears to be on controlling behaviours and this sometimes seems to be about meeting the needs of the staff - not the needs of the young people (Raychaba, 1993).

In sum, there is a “profound separation” between the ideal of child and youth care as described in the literature and what commonly occurs in practice (Gaughan & Gharabaghi, 1999). Even though there has been an abundance of theoretical knowledge generated within the

field in the last few decades, this knowledge does not always make its way to the front-line. As poetically expressed by Eisikovits, Beker and Guttman in 1991, “residential child and youth care work has access to this Shakespearean wing, the means to fly, yet the occupation is, too frequently, still not flying” (p. 3).

Conceptualizing the Problems Through a New Lens

There have been many attempts to explain the practice problems commonly experienced in residential care, and yet the same problems continue to persist despite the presence of so much writing about the ideals. The goal of my research was to look at some of these problems through a different lens, with the hope that it may help us better understand the persistence of these difficulties.

Although developmental practice is a central theme of child and youth care, we seldom pay attention to child and youth care workers’ personal development. Yet the same processes that underlie children’s development continue throughout the lifespan; adults’ minds continue to grow and become more complex. To be congruent, I assume, an organization must be responsive to the developmental needs of the staff parallel to the way that the staff are expected to be responsive to the developmental needs of the young people. Developmental theories have not been used to explore the ways in which child and youth care workers, particularly in residential settings, could be more effective. One way to examine the experiences of child and youth care workers is through a constructive-developmental lens. Constructive-developmental theory describes the qualitatively different ways that individuals construct and interpret their experiences and, subsequently, understand and relate to themselves and the world (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

There are many constructive-developmental theorists (see, for example, Baxter Magolda, 2010; Cook-Greuter, 2004; Torbert, 2013, 2014; Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009), although Robert Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory was the inspiration for this study. Kegan's theory is a complex model of human development that addresses the way individuals organize experiences related to themselves and others, with a focus on an individual's perspective-taking and capacity for dealing with ambiguity, complexity, and paradox (Berger, 2010). Because it describes individuals' *ways* of knowing rather than *what* they know, constructive-developmental theory can be a powerful tool with which to examine how people make sense of their experiences.

Kegan's (1982, 1994) framework integrates and expands upon several theoretical models, drawing heavily from Piaget's (1972) theory of cognitive development, Kohlberg's (1981) model of moral development, Erikson's (1963) psychosocial stages, and Winnicott's (1965) conception of holding environments (Duys & Hobson, 2004). I considered Kegan's (1982, 1994) model a good fit for this study because it is a theory of meaning-making. Constructive-developmental theory integrates the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal domains of an individual, and child and youth care is a complex occupation that involves not only what the practitioner knows, but *who* the practitioner is. Traditional child and youth care education and training focuses on *what* practitioners should be thinking. This is important in ensuring that the content of their thinking is grounded in child and youth care theory and methodology. Assessing where practitioners are in their development of mental complexity would focus on *how* they are thinking.

In developmental practice with the young people, various developmental theories are commonly referenced, such as those of Piaget, Erikson, Gilligan, Bronfenbrenner, and so on. With

regard to the practitioners, there is no common guiding theory of adult development. Most staff development activities focus on professional development, not psychological development. Knowledge of adult development, particularly Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory, may provide a useful framework in which to discuss some of the difficulties and challenges associated with child and youth care practice that is normative and non-blaming. Increased understanding of the different ways in which child and youth care workers make meaning, and how their meaning-making may impact their experiences, could lead to more realistic expectations and targeted support for child and youth care practitioners.

In addition to addressing some of the practice problems previously identified, Kegan's (1982) theory could partially explain why there are often anomalies in organizations, for example, one or two gifted practitioners working in the midst of an exceptionally dysfunctional organization. Other examples include a healthy organization that has a couple of employees who are perpetually unhappy, dissatisfied, and unable to perform their duties to the same level as their co-workers, or a practitioner who thrives in one organization, but struggles to perform in another organization.

Reflexive Postscript

Just as in child and youth care, where the practitioner is the intervention "tool," the researcher in qualitative research is the primary "measuring instrument" (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007, p. 458). My own history and experiences are therefore relevant to this study, in that who I am as a child and youth care practitioner and leader inevitably impacts and influences who I am, and the choices I make, as a researcher. For the purpose of transparency, it is important that I provide information about the values and beliefs that lie behind my interpretations so that the reader can

consider the likely impacts on my research results. The link between reflexivity and ethical research rests on transparency (Etherington, 2007).

This research was inspired by my 30 years of experience in residential care. My first job as a child and youth care worker was at a group home for “severely emotionally and behaviourally disturbed” young people. On my orientation shift, as the only employee in the house trained in crisis intervention, I had to physically restrain a young person who was attempting to jump out of a third-story window. Subsequent shifts followed a similar theme. After I had been there for nine months, the program was shut down by government because it was so volatile and dysfunctional.

Although I didn’t realize it at the time, working in such an unhealthy environment taught me many valuable lessons. I learned first-hand how damaging it can be to pair ill-prepared staff with vulnerable young people. I learned how bad things can get, how quickly they can get so bad, and how easy it is to lose perspective when one is in the middle of the chaos. I also saw the profound negative and enduring impact all of this had on the young people. That early experience has been the driving force behind everything I have done in my career since then.

For the last 28 years, I have been a child and youth care manager, trainer, and educator. In my consecutive roles as executive director and provincial director of organizations providing residential care to children and youth, I have supervised hundreds of child and youth care practitioners. Consistently, I have focused on providing the highest quality of care possible to the young people in our programs. Given that quality of care is completely dependent on the capacity of the front-line practitioners, I have been fixated on promoting competency of child and youth care workers. Within my own organizations, I have invested heavily in staff training and education. On a broader scale, I have been a strong and vocal advocate for the development of education, standards, and professionalism for child and youth care workers.

Over the years, I have seen the value in ensuring that child and youth care workers in residential care receive ongoing professional development and training opportunities. At the same time, I have grappled with the realization that education and training do not appear to be enough for many child and youth care workers. I have watched with interest multiple practitioners attend the same training session and all leave with very different interpretations of what the training was about and how they might be able to apply the learning. And I have recognized that some individuals are able to “catch on” to the work fairly quickly while others struggle for years. While I had chalked these up to personal aptitude and practitioner development issues, I had no cohesive framework through which to understand these differences or, more importantly, know what to do about them.

In early conversations about my research interests with my academic supervisor, Dr. Doug Magnuson, I expressed that I wanted to explore the development of child and youth care workers. Specifically, I was interested in trying to figure out how to better support practitioner development and, ultimately, help more people to become fully competent in their roles. Doug suggested that I read the work of Robert Kegan.

The first article I read on constructive-developmental theory was about a study of ESL learners and the ways in which individuals at different developmental orders responded to the learning environment (Kegan et al., 2001). Immediately, I saw the potential applicability of this theory to the field of child and youth care. The idea that adults could continue to develop in mental complexity, and that the way in which they made meaning impacted their experiencing of themselves and the world, paralleled the beliefs that underpinned our work with children and youth.

That was almost ten years ago. Since then, I have been immersed in constructive-developmental theory. Because I continued to work full-time while completing my dissertation research, I was able to introduce constructive-developmental theory to my work environment and explore the potential of using this as a framework for understanding practitioners' experiences. While my use of constructive-developmental theory in the workplace is separate from my research, I share this information because these years of practical application have influenced the direction and scope of my study.

The research has also been influenced by my insider status. Although I have held multiple roles in the field, I strongly identify as a child and youth care practitioner in residential care. I have surrounded myself with a large group of like-minded individuals from around the world, with whom I regularly share ideas, and have been mentored by many of the field's recognized leaders in residential care. As Berger (2015) states, "reflexivity in qualitative research is affected by whether the researcher is part of the researched and shares the participants' experience" (p. 219). Given that I am entrenched within the community of practice in which the research took place, it is inevitable that my own positioning influences my ideology (Costly & Gibbs, 2006).

It was not possible, through the course of envisioning and conducting this research, to completely erase the subjectivity associated with my own history, or my belief in and practice using constructive-developmental theory as a tool through which to view child and youth care practitioners' experiences in residential care. To mitigate the impact of my own biases, I purposefully and knowingly attempted to remain open to opposing viewpoints, and to having my assumptions challenged. Specific actions I engaged in to ensure the trustworthiness of the data analyses are outlined in Chapter 3. The advantages and disadvantages of my situatedness as an

insider are also described in Chapter 3, along with an exploration of reflexivity as a research method.

Research Questions and Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to gain a better understanding of the different ways in which child and youth care practitioners experience the job and cope with the demands. My research questions were:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job?
 - a) What do child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, identify as the primary challenges and the most satisfying experiences, and how do they experience and cope with these challenges?
 - b) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems vary in their experiencing of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, or the symptoms of burnout?
 - c) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with and experience the demands of the job in ordered ways so that there is internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order?
2. What role does the organizational environment play, if any, in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems?
 - a) How do practitioners with different meaning-making systems experience the organizational environment?
 - b) Is there coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations?

The ways in which these research questions were operationalized are reviewed in the next section.

Overview of Research Design

In this section, I provide a brief overview of the research that was conducted for this dissertation, and the ways in which the research questions were addressed.

I conducted an exploratory study using a mixed-methods design. To answer the research question on how practitioners experienced and coped with the demands of the job, I gathered information through a standardized survey instrument, the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) (Stamm, 2010), and qualitative interviews. To explore the ways in which practitioners' meaning-making systems impacted their experiences, I used two developmental measures: the Leadership Development Profile (LDP) (Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009), a sentence completion test; and the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) (Lahey, Souvaine, Kegan, Goodman, & Felix, 1988). The organizational environment was assessed through the Work Environment Scale (WES) (Moos, 2008) and targeted questions embedded into the interviews.

My original intent, and the way I started the research, was to recruit participants through their organizations so that I would end up with 8-12 participants from each of 6-8 organizations. This would have enabled me to answer the research question related to the role of the organization in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems. Although many organizations agreed to participate, the response rate from their child and youth care workers, with the exception of one organization, was very low. To increase the number of participants I modified the study design and recruited practitioners directly. This increased the number of participants, but the frequencies in most organizations were too low to

implement my original design. I therefore addressed the role of the organizational environment indirectly rather than directly.

The study was conducted in two stages. In the first stage, participants completed the ProQOL, LDP, and WES through an online survey platform. From the results of the ProQOL, I selected individuals for subject-object interviews. The purpose of these interviews was twofold: to assess participants' constructive-developmental order; and to elicit information from them about their experiences on the job, particularly with regard to job satisfaction and success, challenges, coping, and support.

A detailed description of the research methods is provided in Chapter 3.

Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the research problem and context underpinning the study, the theoretical framework, and the research questions.

In Chapter 2 the literature is reviewed in three areas: 1) research related to the practice problems introduced in Chapter 1; 2) Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory; and 3) the holding environment, which is the psycho-social surround in the organizational environment and an integral component of Kegan's theory. Gaps in the literature are explored and the rationale for the research is presented.

The research methods are presented in Chapter 3, and Chapter 4 through Chapter 7 contain the results. In Chapter 8, I discuss the implications of the results for practice and research.

Summary

The idea that child and youth care workers undergo transformative change - that they change the way they see and interpret things - is not new to the field. This has been explicitly stated by

many writers, including Garfat (2001), Anglin (1992), Krueger (2007), Fewster (1990), and Magnuson and Burger (2002). What has not been offered, to date, is an underlying theory of adult development that can unify and coordinate many of the ideas that have already been put forth. Kegan's model could provide a theoretical underpinning to the development models proposed by practitioners within the field (Phelan, n.d.) and promote opportunities to empirically explore and validate the developmental evolution of child and youth care practitioners. A richer understanding of child and youth care workers' developmental diversity could inform practices that would more strategically support practitioners where they are and also facilitate transformational growth. Exploring the experiences of child and youth care practitioners in residential care, and the differential responses of practitioners to their work environments, could help to decrease the magnitude of problems currently experienced in the field, and lead to a reduction in the number of practitioners burning out and/or leaving the field. This could have significant implications for the education, training, and development of child and youth care workers and, ultimately, lead to more effective, higher quality care provided to young people and their families.

This study relied on literature pertaining to child and youth care, residential care, constructive-developmental theory, and holding environments. A review of this literature is provided in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I present a review of the literature in three key areas: 1) prior research related to the practice problems in residential care that were introduced in Chapter 1; 2) Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory; and 3) the holding environment, which is the psycho-social surround in the organizational environment. The notion of "holding" is integral to Kegan's theory. Finally, I explore gaps in the literature and present the rationale for my research and the research questions.

Common Practice Problems in Residential Care: The Research

In the literature the practice problems, as identified in Chapter 1, are often attributed to and aligned with job stress, burnout and turnover, personal characteristics of practitioners, education and training, and practitioner development.

Burnout and Turnover

Many of the practice problems in residential care are attributed to staff turnover (Braxton, 1995; Colton & Roberts, 2007; Connor et al., 2003). The annual turnover rate can be very high, between 50% - 70% in the United States (Connor et al., 2003; Seti, 2007) and 30% - 50% in the United Kingdom (UK) (Colton & Roberts, 2007). Turnover is such a problem that in 2004 the shortage of residential child care workers in Wales was declared an emergency by the Children's Commissioner for Wales and perceived to have reached crisis proportions in parts of England (Colton & Roberts, 2007). Barford and Whelton (2010) found that child and youth care workers generally last between two to five years in the field before changing professions. They attributed this turnover rate to a loss of idealism (turned to disappointment), unsupportive supervisors, poor coping skills, and challenging clients. Job satisfaction and morale issues are also prevalent in the field (Braxton, 1995; Burford, 1988; Krueger, 1986).

Factors attributed to both burnout and turnover include long shifts, isolation, lack of adequate compensation (Eisikovits, 1997; Ferguson & Anglin, 1985), boredom, and the volume and intensity of direct client contact (Seti, 2007). Unclear and conflicting role expectations (Berridge & Brodie, 1998; Burford, 1988; Hicks, Gibbs, Weatherly, & Byford, 2009; Seti, 2007) and lack of involvement in decision-making (Mattingly, 1981; Whitaker, Archer, & Hicks, 1998) have also been identified as significant contributors to job stress, turnover, and burnout. In Lakin, Leon, and Miller's (2008) study of burnout, in which they surveyed 375 staff from 21 residential treatment centres, burnout was predicted primarily by personality variables and managerial support and there was significant variability across organizations.

Burnout is defined as "a psychological syndrome that involves a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors on the job" (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 498) and consists of three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal efficacy. Residential child and youth care workers who are experiencing the early signs of burnout can demonstrate rigid thinking and behaviour, less empathy, resistance to change, increasing lack of confidence in their abilities, loss of trust in their co-workers, cynicism, apathy, diminished creativity (Mattingly, 1981), and rigid adherence to rules (Seti, 2007). Emotional exhaustion is the most commonly reported symptom of burnout among residential child and youth care workers (Lakin et al., 2008) and has been attributed to the challenges of dealing with the young people's behaviour, related safety concerns (Colton & Roberts, 2007), and role stress, which consists of role conflict and ambiguity (Seti, 2007). Depersonalization has been associated with age (it shows up more often in younger workers), lower levels of empathic concern, and less perceived managerial support (Lakin et al., 2008).

It has been suggested that child and youth care workers are at risk of burnout due to the demanding working conditions coupled with a general lack of respect, appreciation, and support (Cameron & Boddy, 2008; Decker, Bailey, & Westergaard, 2002; del Valle, Lopez, & Bravo, 2007; Krueger, 2007). Practitioners can develop negative reactions to their clients' difficulties when their competency and control are threatened (Colton & Roberts, 2007; Stamm, 1995). In one of the few studies that solicits the perspective of residential child and youth care staff, Heron and Chakrabarti (2002) interviewed 30 practitioners from seven children's homes about their experiences on the job. The researchers used burnout as the concept underlying the questions for their semi-structured interviews. Themes that emerged from the interviews, with regard to the challenges experienced by practitioners, were consistent with findings from other studies on burnout: violent behaviours of the young people, lack of independence, exclusion from decision-making, feeling devalued, difficulty identifying meaningful goals, and perceived inability to meet children's needs.

Age, Experience, and Personal Characteristics of Practitioners

Raychaba (1993) interviewed several young adults about their experiences in residential care. These former youth in care identified that the group care staff were too young and this contributed to their inability to effectively handle the demands of the job. This is consistent with the findings of several other studies (Barford & Whelton, 2010; Decker et al., 2002; Seti, 2007) suggesting that burnout, particularly emotional exhaustion (Lakin et al., 2008), is high in younger child and youth care workers. Younger workers also perceive the environment as more conflictual, feel more insecure (del Valle et al., 2007) and less supported (Berridge & Brodie, 1998). According to Braxton (1995),

The typical, inexperienced young adult entering residential care work with disturbed children [...] is between 20 and 30 years old and is often in the phase of adult development that involves searching for a personal identity. Young adult staff with little or no experience working with troubled children are likely to become casualties themselves. (p. 14)

Employees younger than 23 years of age are more likely to leave their jobs in residential care than employees 45 and older (Connor et al., 2003).

Although young workers may experience more difficulties with the job, being new is challenging regardless of age. This fits with Sutton's findings (1977, as cited in Garfat, 2001) that new workers were eager, open to learning, and able to provide a significant amount of support to the young people – although they frequently over-identified with the young people. After one to three years, they showed significantly less motivation and reported lower job satisfaction. Moscrip and Brown (1989) stated that it is common for new practitioners to be overwhelmed by the job and suggested that experience brings a clearer perspective and understanding of the intervention process. Braxton (1995) has recommended that it is the responsibility of the supervisor to develop “emotional maturity” in new practitioners.

Several authors have proposed that personal characteristics of the staff are more important than education or experience (Barford & Whelton, 2010; Hicks et al., 2009; Krueger, 1986; Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, 2013; Stuart & Carty, 2006; Whitaker et al., 1998). According to Garfat (1998), professional child and youth care practice requires that practitioners have a high level of self-confidence and responsibility, a general and immediate sense of self, and an awareness of contextual factors. Whitaker et al. (1998) state that the staff who can best cope with the job are self-confident, sensitive to the moods and needs of others, in touch with their own feelings, able to courageously handle difficult situations, and able to engage in

reflective practice. Similarly, other studies have found that individuals with an internal sense of coherence (Steinlin et al., 2017) and internal locus of control (Seti, 2007) experienced greater job satisfaction and less burnout.

Education and Training

Many individuals hired to work in residential care are not educated or trained as child and youth care workers. Even in Canada, where there are numerous diploma and degree programs in Child and Youth Care, the majority of practitioners enter the field with unrelated or no formal education (Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations [CCCYCA], 2004; Gharabaghi, 2008). Many authors (Ainsworth, 1981; Barford & Whelton, 2010; Colton & Roberts, 2007; Krueger, 2005; Mattingly, 1981; Whittaker & Pfeiffer, 1994) claim that the lack of education and training contributes to the problems that exist in residential care. While intuitively and experientially this claim rings true, a robust literature search did not identify any research that has looked directly at the impact of education and training in relation to the practice problems or to practitioners' performance. In one of the few studies that has addressed practitioner education in any capacity, Stuart and Carty (2006) examined how child and youth care education programs trained graduates to implement evidence-based practice in child and youth mental health settings. Respondents acknowledged the value of child and youth care education, but also identified a gap between university training programs and the knowledge and skills necessary to do the job. Program managers stated that individual attributes and characteristics were of paramount importance to effective practice and emphasized the need for education and professional training to focus on the centrality of self-awareness, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.

Lakin et al. (2008) determined that experience and education did not predict any of the burnout subscales in their sample of child and youth care workers and a lower level of in-service training was predictive of emotional exhaustion, but not depersonalization or personal accomplishment. In their study of children's homes, Sinclair and Gibbs (1998) found no evidence that improved levels of staff qualification led to better outcomes for children. Likewise, Eisikovits (1997) identified the limited impact of formal training on job performance. These results should not be interpreted to mean that education and training are not important. In order for training to be effective, however, staff must be able to transfer the training into practice (Clough, Bullock, & Ward, 2005). Ward (1998b) has proposed that training on its own is not the answer to problems that exist within the residential sector because of the complexity of the problems and the need to attend to relationship and structural change. Hicks et al. (1998) assert that if the program culture "does not promote, or worse, precludes, a reflective stance, training of any kind, formal or informal, with individuals or with groups, is unlikely to be effective for residential workers and for the quality of care which they provide" (p. 371).

Practitioner Development

Some researchers and writers have characterized the problems in residential care as practitioner development issues and have suggested that child and youth care workers move through predictable stages towards increased competence as they become more experienced. In all of the proposed frameworks, which are very consistent with each other, during the first stage practitioners are concerned with rules and expectations and organizational procedures (Hills, 1989; Phelan, n.d.; Sarata, 1979; Sheahan et al., 1987). During this time the worker is easily confused, reactive, fearful, over-involved, and personalizing the young people's behaviour (Sheahan et al., 1987). Practitioners may look for safe young people to connect with, avoid those

perceived to be more threatening, experience frequent fight or flight reactions to challenging situations, and require more experienced practitioners to guide their interventions (Phelan, n.d.).

In the second stage, child and youth care workers begin to compare their work attitudes, philosophy, and performance to those of supervisors and co-workers (Sarata, 1979). They become less likely to engage in power struggles although they are still personalizing the behaviours (Sheahan et al., 1987). Practitioners are now beginning to learn about the role of self in practice (Sheahan et al., 1987), to recognize contextual elements, and connect past and present experiences (Hills, 1989). Additionally, workers at this stage are able to trust their own judgment, become comfortable working in uncertainty and ambiguity, and work more creatively (Phelan, n.d.). Phelan (n.d.) asserts that some practitioners never reach this level of practice and others, once they get here, never move on.

In the third stage practitioners have developed boundaries, are aware of their own emotions, are flexible, and engaged in reflective practice (Sheahan et al., 1987). Hills (1989) believes that at this stage practitioners are context conscious, able to engage in deliberate planning and work with increased confidence, although not yet fully trusting intuition. Phelan (n.d.) asserts that practitioners who reach the third stage can initiate experiential learning, strategic use of the life-space, and design treatment plans for both individuals and the group. Additionally, they have the ability to discuss their own issues as often as the youth's when creating ways to support change.

Garfat (2001) pointed out that each of these models appear to suggest that practitioner development occurs independent of context. He proposed a model in which development occurs as a contextualized interactional process between the practitioner and the young people, which is not tied to the length of time in the field. "Movement between stages represents a transformation in how the worker perceives, and acts within, interactions with the youth, in the context in which

those interactions occur. The worker, in essence, experiences a transformation of perspective” (Garfat, 2001, p. 5).

While most of these models are focused primarily on professional development, in child and youth care the personal and professional are intertwined. Residential care is unique in the human services field in that the personal qualities of practitioners are placed at the forefront (Smith, 2009). This is acknowledged by Anglin (1992), who proposed an integrated process of staff development that attends to acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and exploring self. Ward (1998b) discussed the importance of developing psychological presence, which includes the capacity for authenticity and connectedness, and stated that this is integral to the stated norms of effective child and youth care practice. According to Ward, the personal factors that contribute to an individual’s ability to be psychologically present include stages of adult development. Similarly, Kahn (1992) identified adult development as a factor that impacts an individual’s ability to engage.

Magnuson and Burger (2002) also recognized the importance of practitioners’ developmental capacity, and proposed

that the inherent difficulties and discontents in the life of a youth worker parallel the inherent difficulties and discontents of a youth under their care, and that some of this discontent (although not all) is a consequence of frustrated or thwarted development – not just of the youth but also of the workers. (p. 9)

According to Magnuson and Burger, many supervision problems in residential care are rooted in developmental issues. They proposed a model for supervision, borrowed from developmental psychology, focused on promoting developmental growth in practitioners that includes role-taking, a balance between action and reflection, and support and challenge.

Summary of Problems and Challenges of Working in Residential Care

The provision of residential care for young people is, by its very nature, demanding work. The most common problems are volatile, punitive, and controlling environments and the challenge of setting limits, establishing boundaries, and avoiding power struggles and counter-aggression. The problems have been attributed primarily to staff turnover and burnout, the causes of which have been identified as the challenging behaviours of the young people, difficult working conditions, lack of respect and support, and personal attributes of practitioners. Practitioners can become overwhelmed by the emotional demands of the job, and the constant exposure to the pain and pain-based behaviours of the young people can result in compassion fatigue. Lack of education and training have been identified as contributing to the practice problems, although there is no empirical evidence to support this claim.

The common thread running through all of the literature is the challenging nature of the job and the inability of some practitioners to cope with the challenges. While the practice problems have been clearly established, no studies have directly examined the causes of these problems or the ways in which child and youth care workers differentially experience the work environment. Although some individual and organizational factors are predictive of turnover and burnout, these relationships are not causal. Claims that any of these factors cause turnover, burnout, or any of the practice problems cannot legitimately be made based on the information available.

The various theories of child and youth care worker professional development, introduced in the previous sections, fit with many of the research findings related to age and personal attributes of practitioners and their ability to engage in reflective practice. They also offer partial explanations for the difficulties many practitioners experience and, to varying degrees, account for the relationship between managerial support, the work environment, and practitioner turnover

and burnout. However, all of these theories have been derived from practice experience. There has not, to date, been any systematic study of the psychological development of child and youth care workers.

Robert Kegan's Constructive-Developmental Theory

Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory offers a way to conceptualize the practice problems in child and youth care. According to Kegan, being human is an activity of meaning-making. We are constantly organizing our experiences and making sense of them. "There is thus no feeling, no experience, no thought, no perception, independent of a meaning-making context in which it becomes a feeling, an experience, a thought, a perception, because we are the meaning-making context" (Kegan, 1982, p. 11). Constructive-developmental theory posits that the way in which meaning is constructed changes and becomes more complex over time (Kegan, 1982, 1994). As stated by Smith (2011),

Constructive-developmental theory synthesizes the dialectical ideas of social construction of meaning and individual inner psychological changes in ways of knowing – meaning is socially constructed, internal meaning-making systems are developed, and the process of development can be hindered or supported by the environment. (p.16)

Development occurs in a continuing cycle of movement depending on the psychosocial support available in the individual's environment. Each stage is stable for a durable period of time until the old way of making meaning does not work anymore, which precipitates a crisis. The disequilibrium can then prompt movement into the next developmental stage (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

In Kegan's constructive-developmental theory, the individual is considered to be an active participant in his own growth through the processes of assimilation, accommodation, and

equilibrium (Popp & Portnow, 2001). When faced with new experiences, individuals first attempt to interpret the situation through their existing way of knowing. This process of assimilation represents an attempt by the individual to make familiar that which is unfamiliar in an effort to maintain a sense of order or equilibrium. New information can be assimilated into an individual's existing way of knowing as long as it approximates their current interpretive framework. When information is not readily incorporated into the existing meaning-making structure, the structure itself must change or become substantially modified in order to accommodate the new information (Popp & Portnow, 2001). Developmental growth and change, therefore, occurs when there is a "moderate challenge to the individuals' current way of knowing that requires the creation of a wholly new interpretive logic" (Popp & Portnow, 2001, p. 53). This moderate challenge is also known as cognitive dissonance or cognitive conflict. It is important to note, however, that "it is out of necessity that individuals' interpretive lenses radically and qualitatively change or are accommodated. In other words, we assimilate if we can and accommodate if we must" (Popp & Portnow, 2001, p. 53).

How these processes of assimilation or accommodation are played out is largely dependent on the nature of the precipitating event and the psychosocial environment. In order to facilitate developmental growth, in addition to creating disequilibrium, the growth mechanism must be interpersonal in nature, emotionally engaging, and personally relevant (Valcea, Hamdani, Buckley, & Novicevic, 2011). Even in an environment that promotes developmental growth, transformative change can be a slow process; the evolution from one way of knowing to another can take years (Kegan et al., 2001).

There are three key principles underlying constructive-developmental theory. One of these is that development is a lifelong process that occurs through ongoing interaction between an

individual and the psychosocial environment (Kegan, 1982). Kegan refers to the psychosocial environment as a holding environment, which was originally conceptualized by Winnicott (1965) to describe the importance of the caregiver's physical and psychological holding in supporting an infant's development. According to Kegan (1982), holding does not only occur during infancy and it can include broader psychosocial contexts such as those comprised by co-workers, classmates, and friends. Effective holding environments provide support, challenge, and relational continuity. Kegan (1982, 1994) asserts that we experience successive holding environments and opportunities for continued development throughout our lifetime and the nature of the holding environment directly impacts our development.

Another key principle is that development is not the same as the concept of life phases nor is it simply the acquisition of knowledge or information (Kegan et al., 2001). Developmental growth reflects increased complexity in the *way* we make sense of ourselves and the world (Kegan, 1994). The third principle is that all individuals move from one stage to the next in the same order without skipping stages, although not all individuals reach the highest stages. Adult development is not tied to age, and the rate and capacity of development varies among individuals. Once an individual has progressed to a new stage, regression to a lower stage is not possible because the individual has a new, more complex perspective on what was formerly subject. The world is seen through new eyes. As articulated by Strang and Kuhnert (2009), "In general, as individuals develop through the constructive-developmental stages, their self-definition changes from externally-defined to internally-defined, their interpersonal focus changes from self to others, and their understanding of the world changes from simple to complex" (p. 422).

Meaning-Making Systems

The concept of meaning-making, as articulated by Kegan (1982, 1994), is about simultaneous epistemological and ontological activity; it is about knowing and being. Central to Kegan's constructive-developmental model is the concept of the subject-object balance, which has its roots in object relations theory (Kegan, 1982). The subject is essentially the process through which individuals organize and understand their experience; the lens through which they view the world. It is "the self." The object is "other," that which the individual can reflect on, regulate, and take responsibility for (Kegan, 1994).

As individuals move through the life cycle, the balance between what one is subject to (embedded in) or can perceive as object (separate from self) continually undergoes a process of transformation into increasing complexity. Moving from subject to object is analogous to "getting outside of oneself." Movement from one system to the next is a gradual, transformative process that results in a more complex way of seeing, experiencing, and understanding oneself and the world (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

According to Kegan (1982), our meaning-making evolves progressively over the course of the life span through six qualitatively different constructive-developmental orders, or systems, with each system having its own distinct conception of the world. The transition from one system to the next is "a process of emerging from one way of constructing the relationship between self and other and ending up with a new way of constructing that relationship that contains the old way" (Drath, 1990, p. 486). The meaning-making systems are often referred to as "orders of consciousness" (Kegan, 1982).

Kegan's (1982) meaning-making systems start at birth and continue through the life span. The first meaning system, the incorporative order, occurs in infancy. In this system there is no

distinction between what is subject and what is object, as the infant does not yet distinguish between the inner and outer worlds. At the second order, impulsive, the child has gained control of her reflexes (which are now object) and is embedded in her perceptions and impulses (to which she is now subject). Characteristics of individuals operating at this order include lack of impulse control and inability to hold two perceptions together, to have two competing feelings at the same time, or to coordinate feelings over time. The child is able to recognize objects outside of herself, but those objects are subject to the child's perceptions (Kegan, 1982).

The meaning systems pertaining to adulthood are instrumental, socialized, self-authoring, and self-transforming. These are illustrated in Table 1. Two of these – socialized and self-authoring – are the systems most commonly found in adulthood, and I therefore give these the most attention.

Instrumental. In the instrumental meaning-making system the individual has gained control of his perceptions and impulses and is now embedded in, or subject to, his needs, wishes, and interests (Kegan, 1982, 1994). His sense of self is enduring, external, subject to rules and authority (Kegan, 1982), and organized and understood by concrete attributes and events and observable actions and behaviours (Popp & Portnow, 2001). Within this meaning system, individuals can display self-sufficiency, competence, and role differentiation (Kegan, 1982). However, they think in categories and are not yet capable of abstract thinking (Lahey et al., 1988). At this order, the individual has his own plans and purposes, and can recognize that others have the same. Although the instrumental stage usually begins in middle childhood, some individuals do not progress beyond this stage.

The main challenges with the instrumental way of knowing stem from conflicting perspectives between the individual and others with regard to fulfilling needs and meeting goals;

what becomes important to the individual is determining whether the other person will be an asset or a hindrance to the meeting of his own goals (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

In the instrumental meaning system, daily life is guided by a dualistic sense of right and wrong and arbitrary either/or distinctions. Interactions with others reflect a tit-for-tat kind of mentality (Popp & Portnow, 2001). In a study of adult learners in an ESL program, students within the instrumental meaning-making system described their cohort as a learning environment where they could compare their ideas to those of other people. They identified that the support from their cohort members was important, and support was described in concrete terms, using examples such as helping pronounce words correctly, offering friendly encouragement, and helping with homework (Kegan et al., 2001).

Table 1

Subject-Object Balance and Characteristics of Constructive-Developmental Orders

Developmental order	Subject (embedded in)	Object (can reflect on or take control of)	Characteristics
Instrumental	Needs, wishes & interests	Impulses & perceptions	<p>Sense of self is organized and understood by concrete attributes and events.</p> <p>Subject to rules and authority; engages in “tit-for-tat” thinking.</p>
Socialized	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Needs, wishes & interests	<p>Able to engage in abstract thinking.</p> <p>Internalize and identify with the values and beliefs of significant others. Need a clear sense of what is expected from them by others and feel a strong obligation to meet those expectations.</p> <p>Have little tolerance for ambiguity.</p>
Self-Authoring	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	<p>Able to determine their own sense of self through their own internal authority. Able to accept feedback and engage in self-reflection.</p> <p>Able to separate self from other, do not view behaviour of others as a reflection of themselves or their abilities. Able to release others from being the co-constructor of reality and have developed the capacity to not assume responsibility for others’ responsibilities.</p>
Self-Transforming	Inter-individuality and interpenetration of systems	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	<p>Able to reflect on the limits of their own ideology. Can see across differences to identify similarities. Able to make space for the modification or expansion of their own agenda or guiding principles.</p>

Note. Table constructed with information from Kegan (1982, 1994).

Socialized. At the socialized order of consciousness, the self is embedded in the relational realm. Individuals at this stage have developed the capacity to internalize and identify with the values and beliefs of their social surround. They are able to subordinate their own interests on behalf of this greater loyalty. Within this system the individual has developed the capacity for abstract thinking, to “think about thinking,” to reflect upon his needs, wishes and interests, and to have an internal dialogue about himself (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Individuals can simultaneously consider their own perspective and that of someone else and can put the needs of others ahead of themselves in order to remain connected (Strang & Kuhnert, 2009). They can now bring into the self the views, opinions, and feelings of others and experience empathy for others.

The cost of this newly emerged developmental capacity, however, is that individuals with this meaning system are now subject to the expectations of others. Individuals at this stage do not just *have* relationships, they *are* their relationships. They are unable to separate their own sense of self from the values, beliefs and judgments of significant others, view the world through their relationships (Kegan, 1982, 1994) and are subject to the ideology of influential others (Drath, 1990) who are perceived as co-constructors of the self and as sources of authority (Popp & Portnow, 2001).

Other can be relational—important people in one’s life, whether friends, colleagues, teachers, supervisors, anyone in a position of authority. Or “other” can be ideational—religious, political, philosophical. Whatever the nature of the other, a person with a socializing way of knowing gets from it a sense of self, a sense of identity, belonging, validation, acceptance; a sense of sameness, of commonality, of shared experience with others. (Popp & Portnow, 2001, p. 56)

Individuals with a socialized way of knowing experience others as responsible for their feelings

and assume responsibility for the feelings of others (Lahey et al., 1988). They need a clear sense of what is expected of them by others and feel a strong obligation to meet those expectations.

They have little tolerance for ambiguity (Popp & Portnow, 2001).

In the socialized meaning system, because the orientation is toward a sense of connection and belonging, individuals experience criticism as destructive to the self; if others do not like what they said or did, it means they are not a good person. Individuals are focused on identifying commonalities and feeling a sense of shared identity and purpose (Kegan, 1994).

In the study of adult learners in the ESL program, referenced in the previous section, those with a socialized way of knowing were more oriented towards discussing the internal thoughts and ideas of their peers than the external, concrete aspects of the cohort support. For example, they talked about the importance of their relationships, and about accepting and valuing each other as key outcomes of the learning process. An essential feature of them feeling comfortable in the learning environment was a lack of conflict, as they perceived any form of conflict to represent a breach of the mutuality and loyalty they searched for in relationships (Kegan et al., 2001).

Self-authoring. Within the self-authoring meaning-making system, individuals move beyond being subject to the expectations of others (they no longer *are* their relationships, they *have* them) and develop an autonomous self. They are able to determine their own sense of self through their own internal authority and have developed the capacity to differentiate the self from others, and others from their points of view. This new self therefore has the ability to regulate and evaluate its own values, goals, and interpersonal connections, and individuals in this meaning system can transcend their own needs and those of others in accordance with their own personal value system (Kegan, 1994). The individual is able to release the other from the

responsibility of being their co-constructor of reality (Lahey et al., 1988) and has developed the capacity to not assume responsibility for others' responsibilities (Drath, 1990).

The self-authoring system can also hold contradictory feelings simultaneously and is characterized by “its capacity to take responsibility for and ownership of its own internal authority; its capacity to internally hold, manage, and prioritize the internal and external demands, contradictions, conflicts, and expectations of oneself and one's life” (Popp & Portnow, 2001, p. 57). Individuals at this stage of meaning-making have the capacity to create and preserve roles and regulate relationships. Self-authoring individuals are concerned with consequences related to personal integrity and meeting their own standards. Others are perceived as autonomous entities, and the perspectives of others are integrated into individuals' own internal systems (Kegan, 1994). In the self-authoring meaning-making system, differences of opinion are considered a given and are used as opportunities for growth. Criticism and feedback are evaluated and used according to the individual's own internally generated standards and values (Lahey et al., 1988).

The limitation at this stage is that individuals are subject to the internal guiding principles their system has created and are subsequently invested in maintaining psychological control over its autonomy (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Individuals in this stage are not able to reflect on their underlying “guiding principles” (A. Howell, personal correspondence, March, 2011).

In the aforementioned study of adult learners, self-authoring individuals experienced conflict with their peers as an inevitable and necessary part of the learning process, not something to be avoided. Their relationships with each other, while considered important and valuable, were viewed more as a means of enriching their own understanding and experience – the process of

working together was important because it provided a broader context for articulating, discussing, and challenging their own thoughts and ideas (Kegan et al., 2001).

Self-transforming. The self-transforming system has been described as the “postmodernist mind” (Berger, 2005). It is postulated that very few individuals actually reach this stage of development and those who do are almost always over the age of 40 (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Individuals with a self-transforming way of knowing are able to reflect on and question their own internal guiding principle, and to hold within them other, sometimes contradictory, principles (Lahey et al., 1988).

Instead of viewing others as people with separate and different inner systems, those who have self-transformational minds see across inner systems to look at the similarities that are hidden inside what used to look like differences. Those who are now self-transformational are less likely to see the world in terms of dichotomies or polarities. (Berger, 2005, p. 22)

It is important to note that, while the various meaning-making systems are presented as stable and distinct developmental orders, individuals do not simply jump from one to the next; the process of development is much more fluid and complicated (Kegan, 1982). Within the five meaning-making systems Kegan has identified 21 epistemological distinctions and he suggests there may be more.

Reinterpreting Experience Using Constructive-Developmental Theory

Kegan’s constructive-developmental theory (1982, 1994) holds great potential for reinterpreting the practice problems in residential care and increasing understanding of child and youth care worker development. Although it is not a theory that has previously been introduced to the child and youth care field, in a research capacity, it has provided the epistemological basis for numerous studies focused on adult learning (Drago-Severson et al., 2001a; Helsing et al.,

2001; Drago-Severson et al., 2001b; Helsing, Drago-Severson, & Kegan, 2004; Ignelzi, 2000), life changes and transitions (Khan, 2009; O'Donovan-Polten, 2001; Rosen, 1999; Smith, 2011), development (Berger, 2005), parenting (Marienau & Segal, 2006), family therapy (Eriksen, 2006), philanthropy (Jones, 2015), leadership (Brennan, 2016; Helsing & Howell, 2013; Yeyinmen, 2016), teaching (Berger, 2002; Fantozzi, 2010; Hasegawa, 2003), and organizational change (Bowe, Lahey, Kegan, & Armstrong, 2003; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). All of the studies have reported epistemological differences in participants' experiences. Constructive-developmental order has also been positively correlated with effective leadership (Bartone, Snook, Forsythe, Lewis, & Bullis, 2007; Eigel & Kuhnert, 2005; Lewis et al., 2005; Lucius & Kuhnert, 1999; Merron, Fisher, & Torbert, 1987).

The Importance and Role of the Holding Environment

The work environment has been identified as contributing to many of the practice problems in residential care. The issues most commonly cited are a lack of clear policies and guidelines (Raychaba, 1993; Savicki, 1993), lack of social support from co-workers and supervisors (del Valle et al., 2007; Lakin et al., 2008; Savicki, 1993), excessive bureaucracy and lack of autonomy and decision-making authority (Seti, 2007; Smith, 2009), lack of recognition and advancement opportunities (Ferguson & Anglin, 1985; Krueger, 1986), and inadequate orientation and supervision for front-line practitioners (Magnuson & Burger, 2002; Raychaba, 1993). Hicks et al. (2009) found that variation in performance in children's homes can be explained by a combination of factors, including leadership, relationships between staff and management, size of the home, and a clearly articulated philosophy. Eisikovits (1997) stated that there are often discrepancies between the espoused values and theories of the organization and the theories in use by the staff and suggested that dysfunction in residential programs often stems

from a lack of attention to the cultural dynamics that exist within the program. Garfat (1998) recommended that the organizational culture must be one in which the staff are supported to engage in reflexive practice and to embrace the ambiguity and complexity inherent in child and youth care practice.

While the research clearly indicates that the organizational context somehow contributes to the experiences of child and youth care workers in residential care and their ability to cope with the demands of the job, it is not clear *how* this occurs. According to Kegan (1982, 1994), the psychosocial contexts in which a person is embedded are more than just support – depending on the point of view of the individual, they *are* him or her. Kegan consistently emphasizes the importance of the environment in influencing development, and constructive-developmental theory offers a way to think about the structural quality of supports provided to child and youth care practitioners. Psychological support is not just affective, it is also a matter of “knowing”; can we recognize who the person is and who he or she is becoming?

The Research on Holding Environments

Some studies using Kegan’s (1982, 1994) theory included the holding environment as an area of inquiry. Silver (2001), Gillieux (2010), and O’Donovan-Polten (2001), for example, examined participants’ experiencing of a training or work setting as a holding environment. O’Donovan-Polten determined that the legal profession provided an environment that essentially required, rewarded, and “held” its members at the self-authoring stage of development. Silver, who studied the experiences of participants at a Tavistock conference, reported that participants at the socialized order did not find the environment of the conference supportive, resulting in three of them walking out, while participants who were self-authoring described the same conference as supportive and growth enhancing.

In contrast, Gillieux (2010) attended to elements of a leadership education training program, such as curriculum, methods of instruction, and peer relationships, to strategically create an environment that would provide adequate holding to participants at all developmental levels. His goal for the training was to support growth in meaning-making, and his goal for the research was to assess if he created such a learning environment. He determined that the course functioned as a holding environment which helped to promote students' learning across constructive-developmental orders.

The Impact of the Holding Environment in Residential Care

The concept of the workplace as a holding environment has been proposed by several researchers and practitioners (Kahn, 2005; Kegan, 1982, 1994; Steckley, 2010; Ward, 2008), including Winnicott himself (Ward, 2008). Steckley (2010) asserted that adequate holding environments

contain safe spaces for staff to freely and genuinely express feelings provoked by the work, including those which may appear critical, destructive or otherwise unprofessional [...] staff also need to be supported to make sense of those feelings in a way that gives insight to the young people, their “selves” and their practice. (p. 121)

Kahn (2005) defined holding environments as “interpersonal or group-based relationships that enable self-reliant workers to manage situations that trigger potentially debilitating anxiety” (p. 260). Employees seek out and are receptive to holding when they are faced with situations that are anxiety-provoking and emotionally draining.

In order for an organization to function effectively and provide adequate holding, according to these theories, there is a need for clarity about the organizational tasks, roles and authority, appropriate organizational boundaries, flexibility and tolerance in relationships, and the

opportunity to participate and contribute (Kahn, 2005; Ward, 2008). Organizations focus on providing emotional and psychological support to employees (Kahn, 2005), listening and responding with respect, building rapport and relationships, challenging thinking and action (Anglin, 2002), and providing opportunities for self-reflection, unpacking of emotions and experiences, learning and insight (Kahn, 2005).

As mentioned previously, individuals experience a succession of holding environments in their lifetime, and, for adults, the workplace is one of these holding environments (Kegan, 1994). From a constructive-developmental standpoint, the holding environment provides a balance of support and challenge to individuals that acknowledges where they are and facilitates movement to the next developmental order. Without adequate holding, individuals may have difficulty dealing with situations in which there is a mismatch between their meaning-making system and the demands of the environment, and they do not experience developmental growth. Given the importance of the holding environment in mediating the experiences of individuals and in supporting and promoting development, it would be remiss to study child and youth care workers in residential care without also considering the context in which the work occurs.

Purpose and Rationale of the Study

While some researchers within the fields of education, leadership, and management have recognized the benefits of interpreting the experiences of professionals through a constructive-developmental lens, there is no literature linking Kegan's (1992, 1984) constructive-developmental theory with child and youth care practice. Very few studies have looked at the impact of residential care on child and youth care workers and none have examined practitioners' experiencing of the job, or the ways in which they cope with the demands of the job, through a constructive-developmental lens. Yet this is a job in which *who* the practitioner is relates to *how*

she does the job. As child and youth care has become more sophisticated, it has begun to demand a complexity of meaning-making capacity that may be over the heads of many practitioners. As stated by Barnes (1991, p. 154),

The treatment center and each living group must be perceived as places for positive social interaction and experiential learning [...] so as to use all elements of the daily living situation as the medium for treatment, as they occur, for the promotion of confidence and building of competence on the part of each and every young person in the group with whom the worker is involved. Such a normalizing approach creates demand for more sophisticated child care workers than are required when the focus for residential treatment is curing pathology and workers are regarded as providing custodial care between clinical appointments and therapeutic recreation.

Although not explicitly stated, these expectations have within them implicit demands for practitioners to operate from a particular logic or way of knowing, which may exceed the actual capacities of practitioners. For example, it is expected that child and youth care workers can and will understand the perspective of the young people with whom they are working. It is further assumed that practitioners will be able to set limits on the young people's behavior which both adhere to organizational values and incorporate an understanding of how the young people will feel about and react to what they say and require. In group care this is even more complex, as practitioners must be able to set limits and maintain boundaries not just with an individual child but with a group of children, all with distinct and, often, competing interests (Konopka, 1954; Maier, 1991; Maluccio, 1991). Child and youth care workers are expected to be able to separate their own needs from the needs of the young people. They are expected to engage in reflective practice and make use of their "self" in their interactions and interventions with the young

people. In many organizations, child and youth care workers are also expected to be innovative, creative, take initiative, and work independently without ongoing supervision or direct feedback.

From a constructive-developmental perspective, these expectations are not just requirements for individuals to behave in certain ways – they are developmental demands that require individuals to be making meaning in a particular way. We operate in the world as we construct it, and if the way in which we construct it is not a good match for the demands placed upon us, there will be greater potential for problems to arise. The expectations of child and youth care workers, as described in the literature, demand more from practitioners than just acquisition of knowledge or skills, or demonstration of specific behavior.

Kegan (1994) asserts that contemporary parenting in western civilization appears to require meaning-making capacity consistent with the self-authoring order of consciousness. Unfortunately, a high percentage of the population is thought to operate from the socialized order (Berger, 2005). Their way of making meaning may therefore render them “in over their heads because they lack the developmentally-related capacities to make sense of and fully understand the modern (or ‘self-authoring’) world” (Berger, 2005, p. 20). This has significant ramifications for residential child and youth care practice, as it is certainly as complex as (and many would argue more complex than) the contemporary parenting role. If most of the competencies expected of child and youth care practitioners require a self-authoring way of knowing, and most practitioners make meaning at the socialized stage, there is an obvious disconnect. This could contribute to some of the practice issues previously identified.

This is not to suggest, however, that only individuals who have reached the self-authoring stage of development should be employed as child and youth care workers. What it does suggest is that without an understanding of the ways in which practitioners are making meaning, the

potential for frustration, misunderstanding, confusion, and negativity is significant. Meaning-making capacity has nothing to do with intelligence, skill, or knowledge. In child and youth care, it is not so much the practitioner's meaning-making capacity that is the issue, it is the match or mismatch between practitioner capacity, the job demands and the ability of the environment to adequately support employees at varying developmental stages. Whether or not a practitioner can handle the demands of the job likely has more to do with the environment in which she is working than the practitioner herself.

To clarify the concept of the fit between an individual's meaning-making capacity and the demands placed upon him, Kegan (1994) compares the difference between the capacity of the socialized meaning-making system and the capacity of the self-authoring system to the difference between the capacity to drive a car with an automatic transmission and the capacity to drive a car with a standard transmission. He says,

We cannot pretend that these capacities are merely noncomparable differences or nonrelatable expressions of human diversity (such a gender, learning style, or sexual orientation). The fact is, there *is* a normative relation between the two drivers. One is better than the other in one quite circumstantial way: All stick-shift drivers can also drive automatic cars, but not all automatic drivers can necessarily drive stick-shift cars. Stick-shift drivers are not better people, they aren't even necessarily better drivers, but they can definitely drive certain kinds of cars that many automatic drivers cannot drive, and the opposite cannot be said. More precisely, stick-shift drivers are themselves able to take responsibility for an important feature in a car's operation – changing gears – over which drivers of automatics do not exercise responsibility [...]. The fact that the driver of an automatic who is unable to shift the gears himself is dependent on some aspect of the bigger context in which he is operating to perform

this action really doesn't matter at all so long as there are always plenty of automatic cars around and they work well. If there are always plenty of well-functioning automatic cars available, the difference between automatic and stick-shift drivers would not only not matter at all but the very distinction would probably disappear from view. We wouldn't notice it. People who have lived their whole lives in a state of unendingly available supply of automatic cars just naturally feel that this is the way the world is, and they have no reason to be aware of the fact that this is one of the features they assume to be true about the world. On the other hand, should the world *not* consist primarily of automatic cars, should the world be one in which, more and more, the very act of driving is assumed to consist of manually shifting the gears on one's own, *then* the characteristic of only being able to drive automatic cars, which before meant nothing, would be of extraordinary significance [...]. It should be made clear that the difference between the two kinds of drivers is not that their cars perform differently. Both kinds of cars have to go through frequent gear changes. The difference is in who or what does the gear changing. (p. 101)

To continue this analogy, if a residential program has only stick-shift cars, and newly hired employees can only drive automatic cars, then the environment itself must provide some external mechanisms to help automatic drivers shift the gears – at least until they are able to do this themselves. In child and youth care, this would take the form of appropriate supports and challenges necessary to help practitioners successfully fulfill their professional responsibilities.

Conceptualizing the Practice Problems Through a Constructive-Developmental Lens

One of the reasons, perhaps, why individuals are impacted differently by the same amounts of pain, in the same environment, may be related to their developmental capacity to let go of the pain (or to acknowledge it, or to recognize who owns the pain). To cope with the emotional

demands of the job, child and youth care workers are often provided with specific skills training, educated on the importance of self-awareness, and coached on the need to identify their “triggers” - primarily so that they will not get drawn into power struggles with the young people, or engage in counter-aggression. While this may be helpful, it presupposes that practitioners have the ability to identify their emotional response to the young person as separate from the young person – and this requires a particular way of knowing (and type of self-awareness) that they might not yet have developed. This speaks specifically to the possible impact of practitioners’ developmental capacity on their experiencing of and ability to cope with their own and the young peoples’ pain and pain-based behaviour. The capacity to manage pain may be related to the ability to think complexly. According to Kegan (1994), “the demand that we be in control of our issues rather than have our issues control us” (p. 133) is a demand for a self-authoring system of meaning-making.

Having the ability to transcend our own needs and focus on the needs of the young people requires that we first have the ability to separate our own needs from the needs of others. This is only possible, from a constructive-developmental perspective, if one has developed the capacity to do this – which would only occur when one is making meaning at the self-authoring order. Providing skill-based training on dealing with aggressive behaviour, for example, will not do much to address the fundamental problem if the demands of the job exceed one’s developmental capacity to meet them. The concepts taught in training will simply be interpreted through the individual’s existing logic.

If practitioners’ meaning-making systems are not fully self-authoring, their capacity to set limits and maintain boundaries, to engage in reflective practice, to construct ethics in relation to self, and to tolerate the level of ambiguity required to perform at the most complex level of

practice may also be limited. To establish and maintain boundaries, child and youth care workers must have the ability to be fully present in interactions with the young people while also being able to suspend their own needs and focus on meeting the needs of the young people (Mann-Feder, 1999). Setting limits and maintaining boundaries consists of “the continuous creating and recreating of roles rather than just the faithful adherence to the demands within them” (Mann-Feder, 1999, p. 96). According to Kegan (1994), limit setting requires self-authoring mental complexity. It is important to recognize that practitioners who have difficulty setting limits or preserving boundaries are not necessarily in need of new skill development. Rather, the way in which they are making meaning may limit their capacity to recognize situations in which limit setting might be necessary. It may be the inability to have a relationship to their relationships that creates this limitation (Kegan, 1994).

The finding that workers with an internal locus of control (Seti, 2007) or internal sense of coherence (Steinlin et al., 2017) are better able to handle the emotional demands of the job could possibly be interpreted developmentally, in that only self-authoring individuals would actually have the capacity for an internal locus of control or sense of coherence. Similarly, the experiencing of empathic concern and emotional contagion, as discussed by Lakin et al. (2008), could be related to developmental capacity. Self-authoring individuals would have the capacity for empathic concern, whereas those with a socialized mind would experience emotional contagion as a result of their inability to fully separate themselves from others.

Why do some people in an organization appear to struggle with the job while others appear to more easily adapt to the demands placed upon them? Why do some practitioners “burn out” after only a few years on the job while others can work in the same environment for 20 years without experiencing any signs of burnout? Many of the risk factors associated with burnout, particularly

role ambiguity, boredom (Seti, 2007), conflicting role expectations (Berridge & Brodie, 1998), lack of involvement in decision-making (Mattingly, 1981), and potential risk to competency and control (Stamm, 1995) can be viewed through a constructive-developmental lens. When viewed from a constructive-developmental perspective, it is not surprising that young workers experience the highest levels of turnover and burnout. Not only would they have to deal with the challenges associated with being new and inexperienced, they would most likely (but not necessarily) still be making meaning within the instrumental or socialized systems. This would add additional pressure and hinder their ability to cope with, and perform, the demands of the job.

In a review of a new youth centre for young offenders in Ontario (Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, 2013), numerous practice problems, such as those reviewed in the introduction, were identified. The issues were complex, however, in that the problems did not show up consistently across all shifts. One of the most compelling messages coming from the more than 200 young people interviewed was that the quality of their life in the program “depends who’s working.” This speaks clearly to the variances between staff in the same program, and the importance of looking at the individual experiences of practitioners within the organizational context. My interest in conducting this research stemmed from the premise that an exploration of these differences from a constructive-developmental framework may yield interesting information that could help to inform residential program expectations and guide training, support, and supervision provided to child and youth care practitioners.

While some studies have referenced the impact of organizational culture and structure on various areas of organizational functioning, there have been no prior studies that look at ways in which child and youth care workers experience or respond to the demands of the job within

different organizational social contexts. The relationship between the organizational environment and the epistemology of child and youth care workers in residential care is also a previously unexplored area. Given the pivotal role of the holding environment in Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory and the relationship between the holding environment and individuals' experiencing of themselves as competent or "in over their heads" (Kegan, 1994), I considered this to be an important area of potential inquiry.

Research Questions

I conducted an exploratory study to look at whether Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory may be a useful framework through which to view the practice of child and youth care in residential care and, in particular, the experiences of child and youth care workers in the context of their organizational environments. The results offer a new perspective on some of the practice problems that exist in the field. The research was designed to answer the following questions:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job?
 - a) What do child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, identify as the primary challenges and the most satisfying experiences, and how do they experience and cope with these challenges?
 - b) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems vary in their experiencing of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, or the symptoms of burnout?
 - c) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with and experience the demands of the job in ordered ways so that there is internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order?

2. What role does the organizational environment play, if any, in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems?
 - a) How do practitioners with different meaning-making systems experience the organizational environment?
 - b) Is there coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations?

Individuals' meaning-making capacity influences multiple aspects of their lives such as their self-understanding, interactions and relations with others, and interpretations of ideas and events (Popp & Portnow, 2001), all of which are of critical importance for child and youth care practice in residential care. In this study, Kegan's constructive-developmental theory was used as an analytic tool to examine what the child and youth care profession is asking of practitioners and to consider the fit, or misfit, between these demands and the mental capacities of the practitioners. Using the theory as a backdrop to the demands of the job provided new clues about potential sources of stress or difficulty for child and youth care workers that have not been previously identified or clearly articulated.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented a review of the literature pertaining to the practice problems in residential care and Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory. This included a brief overview of the concept of a holding environment. I presented the rationale for my research and described the applicability of constructive-developmental theory to my area of inquiry. In the next chapter the research methods are described.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

The goal of my research was a better understanding of the ways in which child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, experience and cope with the demands of the job. I used Kegan's (1984, 1992) constructive-developmental theory as the interpretive framework to examine how differences in mental complexity may influence practitioners' experiencing of their roles. In particular, I looked for differences in compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout across developmental stages and explored what participants with different meaning-making systems considered the most satisfying and challenging aspects of their jobs. I also looked at the work environments and the interplay between the environment, developmental order, and practitioners' experiences. My theory was that participants with different meaning-making systems would respond in ordered ways so that there would be internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations.

To measure compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout, I used the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) (Stamm, 2010). To measure organizational environment, I used the Work Environment Scale (WES) (Moos, 2008). To assess constructive-developmental level, I used the Leadership Development Profile (LDP) (Rooke and Torbert, 1998) and, for selected participants, the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) (Lahey et al., 1988).

Participants

Participants were 99 front-line child and youth care workers and supervisors from 31 organizations providing residential care to young people in Canada, Scotland, Australia, and the United States. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 66. There were twenty-five participants between the ages of 20 and 29, thirty-three between the ages of 30 and 39, twenty-four between the ages of 40 and 49, thirteen between the ages of 50 and 59, and four 60 or over. The majority

of participants ($n = 77$) were female. All participants had completed some post-secondary education, with 59% ($n = 58$) having a bachelor's degree or higher. The number of years of experience ranged from 0 to 39, with the average being 12 years. Fifty-eight participants were front-line child and youth care practitioners. Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of demographic information.

Table 2

Demographic Data by Position

Demographics	Overall N = 99	Child and youth care	
		worker N = 58	Supervisor/manager N = 41
Age (Years)			
20-29	25	19	6
30-39	33	25	8
40-49	24	9	15
50-59	13	3	10
60+	4	2	2
Gender			
Male	20	14	6
Female	79	44	35
Child and Youth Care Experience (Years)			
0-5	30	26	4
6-10	24	15	9
11-15	19	10	9
16-20	7	2	5
21+	19	5	14
Education			
Some	3	1	2
Diploma	38	30	8
Bachelor's	51	25	26
Master's	6	1	5
Doctorate	1	1	0

From the initial pool of participants, I selected 18 for in-depth interviews. These individuals were chosen from five organizations that each had seven or more employees participate in the study. Of those interviewed, there were four males and 14 females between the ages of 30 and 62.

Measures

I used a mix of quantitative and qualitative measures to assess how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job, perceive the organizational environment, and make meaning.

Assessing Practitioners' Experiences: Professional Quality of Life Scale

One of the ways to assess how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job is to look at their experiencing of compassion satisfaction (the pleasure derived from helping others) and compassion fatigue (consisting of secondary trauma and burnout). Based on Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory, practitioners may be more or less susceptible to experiencing burnout, vicarious trauma, or other related difficulties depending on their constructive-developmental level.

I assessed practitioners' experiencing of compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue with the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) (Stamm, 2010). Stamm defines professional quality of life as "the quality one feels in relation to their work as a helper" (p. 8), which is influenced by the positive and negative aspects of the job responsibilities. The positive is compassion satisfaction. The negative is compassion fatigue, which is comprised of two parts. The first part contains emotions such as exhaustion, frustration, anger, and depression that are considered typical of burnout. The second part is secondary traumatic stress, a feeling driven by fear and work-related trauma. Work-related trauma can be direct (primary) trauma, indirect

(secondary) trauma, or a combination of the two (Stamm, 2010). Professional quality of life, as conceptualized by Stamm (2010), is associated with characteristics of the work environment (organizational and task-wise), personal characteristics of the individual, and the employee's exposure to primary and secondary trauma in the work setting.

The ProQOL is a 30-item self-report measure of the positive and negative aspects of the professional caring role. It is the most commonly used instrument to measure the effects of working with individuals who have experienced extremely stressful events (Stamm, 2010). It consists of three scales that measure the separate constructs of compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress. I tailored the questions to my research by changing the word "helper" to "child and youth care worker."

Compassion satisfaction. Compassion satisfaction is related to the pleasure individuals derive from the work that they do. Items on the ProQOL that measure compassion satisfaction include: I get satisfaction from being able to help people; I like my work as a helper; I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I help and how I can help them; I believe I can make a difference through my work (Stamm, 2010). Higher scores on this scale of the ProQOL represents greater satisfaction with the ability to do the job. The average score is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .88). About 25% of people score higher than 57 and about 25% of people score below 43 (Stamm, 2010).

Burnout. Burnout is associated with feelings of incompetence, hopelessness, and difficulties coping with work demands. Items on the burnout subscale of the ProQOL include: I feel trapped by my job as a helper; I feel worn out because of my work as a helper; I feel "bogged down" by the system; I feel overwhelmed because my workload seems endless (Stamm, 2010). Higher scores on this scale mean that individuals are at higher risk for burnout. The average score on the

burnout scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .75). About 25% of people score above 57 and about 25% of people score below 43 (Stamm, 2010).

Secondary traumatic stress. Secondary traumatic stress is the second component of compassion fatigue. It concerns work-related, secondary exposure to extremely traumatic and stressful events. Questions on this subscale of the ProQOL include: I think I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I help; I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I help; I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims; I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds (Stamm, 2010). The average score on this scale is 50 (SD 10; alpha scale reliability .81). About 25% of people score below 43 and about 25% of people score above 57 (Stamm, 2010).

Psychometric properties of the ProQOL. The ProQOL has sound psychometric properties, including good construct validity. There is shared variance between burnout and secondary traumatic stress of .34, which likely reflects the distress that is common to both conditions (Stamm, 2010). The scales have good to very strong internal reliability, particularly the compassion fatigue scale, which has an alpha reliability between .84 and .90 (ProQOL, 2013). The ProQOL is stable across time and has demonstrated cross-cultural validity. The ProQOL instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Assessing the Work Environment: Work Environment Scale

To assess the organizational environment, I used the Work Environment Scale (WES) (Moos, 2008), a 90-item, true-false questionnaire. The WES consists of 10 subscales divided into three dimensions: Relationship (involvement, co-worker cohesion, supervisor support); Personal Growth/Goal Orientation (autonomy, task orientation, work pressure); and System

Maintenance/Change (clarity, managerial control, innovation, physical comfort). Additional information is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Work Environment Scale (WES) Subscales and Descriptions

Subscale	Description
Relationship Dimensions	
1. Involvement	The extent to which employees are concerned about and committed to their jobs.
2. Co-worker Cohesion	How much employees are friendly and supportive of each other.
3. Supervisor Support	The extent to which management is supportive of employees and encourages employees to be supportive of one another.
Personal Growth Dimensions	
4. Autonomy	How much employees are encouraged to be self-sufficient and to make their own decisions.
5. Task Orientation	The emphasis on good planning, efficiency, and getting the job done.
6. Work Pressure	The degree to which high work demands and time pressure dominate the job milieu.
System Maintenance and Change Dimensions	
7. Clarity	Whether employees know what to expect in their daily routine and how explicitly rules and policies are communicated.
8. Managerial Control	How much management used rules and procedures to keep employees under control.
9. Innovation	The emphasis on variety, change, and new approaches.
10. Physical Comfort	The extent to which the physical surroundings contribute to a pleasant work environment.

Note. Table reprinted from the WES Manual (p. 9), by R. H. Moos, 2008, Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden Inc. www.mindgarden.com. Copyright 1974, 2008 by Rudolph H. Moos. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

I selected this particular instrument because it measures dimensions of the work environment that closely align with Kegan's (1982, 1994) conception of the holding environment. Kegan states that the holding environment is comprised of the psycho-social surround, which consists primarily of the significant relationships in an individual's life, including work relationships, and the amount of support and challenge they receive. The subscales in the WES also correspond with the elements of support and challenge necessary for adequate holding as put forth by Baxter Magolda (2009). The WES is commonly used in research to "describe and compare work settings, examine the determinants of work climates, and focus on the connections between work climates and outcomes for groups and individuals" (Moos, 2008, p. 10). I used the WES to examine the relationships between work environment, constructive-developmental level, and participants' experiencing of compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue.

The WES is available in three forms: the real form (Form R), the ideal form (Form I), and the expectations form (Form E). The most commonly used is Form R, which measures employees' and managers' perceptions of their work environment. Form I measures perceptions of an ideal work environment, and Form E measures prospective employees' expectations of the work environment (Moos, 2008). Form R was used in this study.

The WES is administered to employees and the individual scores can be aggregated to determine workplace environment climate scores. Findings from studies using the WES have indicated that the organizational social climate is an entity independent of any one employee's perception of it, and individual perceptions may mediate the impact of work climate on psychological well-being (Moos, 2008).

The WES was standardized on a sample of more than 3,000 individuals and has demonstrated sound psychometric properties. Test-retest reliability is within the acceptable range for all 10

subscales, with a low of .69 for clarity and a high of .83 for innovation, and internal consistencies for WES subscales (Cronbach's Alpha) range from 0.66 to 0.84. Inter-correlations between the 10 subscale scores on a group of 1,045 employees indicate that the subscales measure distinct yet related aspects of the work environment (Moos, 2008).

Normative data for Form R was gathered from more than 13,000 employees, over 8,000 of whom were employed in health care and social service sectors, including residential treatment centres for children and youth (Moos, 2008).

Copyright restrictions prevent the full WES from being reprinted. With permission from the publisher (Moos, 2008), I included five sample questions from the WES in Appendix B.

Assessing Developmental Level: Leadership Development Profile

To assess the constructive-developmental level of all participants, I used the Leadership Development Profile (LDP) (Torbert et al., 2004). This instrument is much more practical than the subject-object interview (Lahey et al., 1988) for assessing large numbers of participants, and the developmental stages measured by the LDP can be mapped to Kegan's (1984, 1992) constructive-developmental orders.

The LDP was developed by Torbert and colleagues (Torbert et al., 2004) as a variation on the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (SCT) to better capture the developmental differences of leaders in organizational contexts. Before describing the LDP it is therefore necessary to provide an overview of the SCT. This instrument was developed by Loevinger (Loevinger & Wessler, 1970, as cited in Cook-Greuter, 2004) based on her constructive-developmental framework of ego development. The SCT contains 36 initial sentence stems (e.g., "When I am criticized..."). The completed sentences reflect an individual's reasoning and thinking processes and ways of relating to others. Rating is conducted using a scoring manual,

and raters match each of the 36 responses with one of the category titles listed in the scoring manual. An exact match or very close match is sought between the responses provided by participants and those identified in the manual. Where a match does not exist, raters use a rule set and their own judgment to rate each individual sentence completion (Herdman-Barker, Rooke, & Torbert, 2009).

In the SCT, individual sentences are rated across participants' answers rather than scoring each individual's items in order. If there were 20 participants in a study, for example, the first item on the form would be rated for all participants, then the second item, and so on. This scoring procedure has been implemented to avoid a "halo" effect of early item ratings on a given measure predisposing a rater to more of the same. The scores are eventually added together to create an overall statistical score for each individual (Herdman-Barker et al., 2009, p. 2). Kegan himself has said that the SCT is a "sophisticated, reliable, and widely used" (Kegan & Lahey, 2009, p. 27) measure for assessing an individual's mental complexity.

The LDP "goes beyond the original instrument in the range of mature worldviews it covers and in its much broader application" (Cook-Greuter, 2004, p. 4). In order to expand the generalizability of the measure and improve its face validity and usefulness as a work-related instrument, the LDP omits a number of gender-based items included in the SCT such as "The worst thing about being a woman..." (Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009). The current version of LDP includes 24 of the SCT's original items along with 12 new items. These new items include nine work-related stems that include questions related to power, time management, and teams (Herdman-Barker et al., 2009). The LDP has been used to compare various leadership behaviours with constructive-developmental capacity and has been recommended as a worthy alternative to the Subject-Object Interview (SOI) (Bartone et al., 2007). The responses to the new

stems in the LDP correlate better with an individual's overall profile rating than responses to the SCT stems did, thus improving the overall reliability of the measure (Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009). Inter-rater reliability ranges from Chronbach's alpha .85 to .95 (Cook-Greuter, 2003).

See Appendix C for the 18-item LDP.

Assessing Constructive-Developmental Order: Subject-Object Interview

In the second phase of the study, I conducted subject-object interviews (SOI) with 18 participants to assess their constructive-developmental order. The SOI is specifically designed to elicit data on a person's "unselfconscious epistemology" (Lahey et al., 1988) or meaning-making capacity. At the beginning of the SOI, participants are presented with 10 probe words intended to arouse strong thoughts and emotions. The probe words usually used are anger, anxiety, success, change, important to me, overwhelmed, proud, joy, challenged, and strong stand. Other words can be selected depending on the nature of the research. To align the SOI with my research questions, I added the word "pain" and substituted the phrase "strong stand" with "supported." The words are presented on index cards, and participants are given 20 minutes to recall experiences conjured up by each word and write down their responses. These cards remain with the participants as a prompt to help them recall their experiences and are for their use only. Participants can be instructed to recall experiences from any part of their life, or from a specific context or setting. I instructed participants to restrict the experiences to those from their current work environment.

Once participants have finished writing their responses, the interviewer explores a few cards in depth, constructing questions based on the information introduced by the participants. This portion of the interview usually takes about an hour (Lahey et al., 1988). I began each interview

by asking participants to select the card with which they would like to start. Once participants were finished talking about the content generated by this card, they were asked to select the next card. This process continued until the interview ended.

The goal of the subject-object interview is to access the meaning-making structure underlying the participants' descriptions of their experiences. "The interview is a continuous process of questioning, probing, and checking back and forth between interviewer and interviewee for clarification about what has been said so that meaning is understood" (Rosen, 1999, p. 62). The fundamental question a subject-object analysis answers is: "From where in the evolution of subject-object relations does the person seem to be constructing his or her reality?" (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 10). The way to identify the underlying meaning-making structure during a subject-object interview is to look for what people can and cannot take a perspective on. Specific types of questions have been developed to get at an individual's meaning-making structure during the SOI. These primarily include variations of "why" and "how" and questions that probe for extremes such as: What was the worst/best/scariest/most satisfying thing about that? Why was it important to you that...? What was at stake for you when...? How do you know...? (Lahey et al., 1988). The rationale for using these types of questions is that if the right questions are asked, one can find out, for example, "not why they are angry, but how the self must be constructed to experience the particular violation the speaker expresses" (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 290, underlined in original text).

The SOI has demonstrated construct validity as evidenced by "high degrees of consistency among alternative forms of the measure, different domains of experiencing, different test items and different psychological themes" (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 368). Inter-rater reliability in studies using the SOI has ranged from .75 to .90 (Kegan et al., 2001). Additionally, the SOI is capable of

distinguishing 21 distinct epistemological positions and subsequently provides a more refined set of discriminations between any two stages than found in Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview or the Washington University Sentence Completion Test (Lahey et al., 1988). The SOI has also demonstrated the capacity to capture gradual changes in an individual's constructive-developmental level in the expected direction over time (Lahey et al., 1988). Test-retest reliability has been demonstrated with correlations of .82 (Spearman coefficient) and .834 (Pearson's r), both significant at the .0001 level (Lahey, 1986). Inter-item consistency, with a correlation of .96, was documented by Villegas-Reimers (1988).

The SOI can only be used by researchers who are familiar with Kegan's constructive-developmental theory and trained in conducting and assessing subject-object interviews. To address this, I completed a training course through Minds at Work with associates of Robert Kegan on conducting and scoring the SOI and engaged in additional individual sessions with one of the trainers. For this study, all interviews were scored by a second scorer, another PhD student who attended the SOI training with me. I scored 20 of the SOIs she conducted for her dissertation research before conducting my own interviews, which provided me with considerable practice experience.

A benefit of the SOI is that it can also be used to explore other areas during the interview and can be analyzed separately for content as well as structure. The SOI is ideally suited for research that seeks to explore participants' understanding in a particular area. I conducted an expanded version of the SOI to assess the meaning-making systems of participants, and also to gather information about how they cope with and experience the demands of the job and themselves in the job, and the influence of the organizational environment. Specific questions related to my areas of inquiry were embedded into the SOI and added to the end of the interview. During the

interview, I asked general questions about how participants coped with and experienced the job, including what satisfied and challenged them. Questions were designed to get at the developmental differences in participants' experiences and the way in which they made sense of these experiences. The full list of questions is in the Semi-Structured Interview Guide in Appendix D.

How Does the LDP Compare to the SOI?

Florio (2008) conducted a systematic review of constructive-developmental theory in leadership research. She looked for the methods that have been used in each approach and how they compare and contrast. She identified that composite studies of 497 adult managers who were assessed for constructive-developmental level using Torbert's method of assessment showed the same developmental patterns as found in studies using Kegan's subject-object interview (Florio, 2008). Table 4 provides an illustrative comparison of the developmental stages of Kegan and Torbert.

Table 4

Comparison of the Constructive-Developmental Theories of Torbert and Kegan

Theorist	Developmental stage			
Kegan	Instrumental	Socialized	Self-Authoring	Self-Transformational
Torbert	Opportunist	Diplomat/Expert	Achiever/Individualist	Strategist/Alchemist

Note. Table created with information from Bartone et al. (2007) and Cook-Greuter (2004).

The LDP is a more efficient means of assessing developmental level than the SOI. A significant limitation of using the LDP, however, is that it can only be scored by trained raters, and the training process takes two to three years to complete (Herdman-Barker et al., 2009). Individuals must be assessed at the post-conventional level (beyond expert) of the measure in order to be eligible to enter the one-year intensive certification track (Cook-Greuter, 2003). In

the 1990s, Torbert and Cook-Greuter joined forces with Harthill Consulting in the UK to make the LDP commercially available (Torbert, 2014).

To use this measure in my research, I contacted Harthill Consulting (Harthill Consulting Ltd., 2014), requested permission to use the measure and arranged to have the LDPs from my participants scored by one of their expert raters. Participants completed the 18-stem, split half LDP sentence completion form. The two halves of Form 81 (WUSCT), which is approximate to the LDP, were considered equivalent in research by Novy and Francis (1992). Harthill Consulting recently ran a validity check on the 18-stem form and got a split half reliability of .923 (D. Rooke, personal correspondence, June 11, 2015).

Procedure

Prior to recruiting participants, I contracted Mind Garden (Mind Garden Inc., 2014) to administer the ProQOL, WES, and LDP online. This is a web-based service that specializes in the publication and administration of psychological assessments and instruments. Mind Garden has also developed the capacity for automated scoring and they were used to score the ProQOL and WES. As mentioned previously, Harthill Consulting was contracted to score the LDPs.

Once the surveys were loaded on the site, I asked six of my employees – child and youth care workers who responded to a request for volunteers – to pilot the surveys. This allowed me to troubleshoot any potential issues prior to recruiting the research participants. Employees also volunteered to participate in SOIs, which provided me with additional practice conducting and scoring the SOIs.

Recruitment

Recruitment took place over a 16-month period starting in January 2016. I used a variety of recruitment strategies. I was originally looking for participants from six to eight different organizations in order to explore the experiences of child and youth care workers with different

meaning-making systems in a variety of organizational contexts. To that end, I designed the study to have two levels of recruitment. The first was recruitment of residential programs, through the executive director or program manager. The initial recruitment letter for programs is attached in Appendix E. In the second level of recruitment, once programs agreed to participate in the study, individual practitioners within each program were recruited by their managers. The invitation letter is in Appendix F.

To ensure a large enough sample within each organization, only organizations that employed more than six full-time child and youth care workers in each residential program were invited. All programs were required to provide group care to young people with challenging behaviours to ensure that the demands of the job were comparable across organizations.

I started by contacting seven individuals that I knew who were in positions of authority in residential programs in Canada and Scotland and invited them to participate in the study. Two organizations in Canada and two in Scotland agreed to participate.

Next, I sent out invitations through the International Child and Youth Care Network (CYC-Net) online discussion group and the Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations (CCCYCA). The president of the CCCYCA distributed the invitation to the Canadian provincial child and youth care associations and asked that they forward it to their member organizations. From the CYC-Net posting, I received responses from a large organization in Canada and a network of homeless shelters for youth in the United States. Both organizations distributed the invitation to their employees but there was no follow-through from any of the employees.

I distributed invitations to delegates at the National Child and Youth Care Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia in May 2016. While at the conference I also asked colleagues from Canada, the United States, and Scotland to forward the study information to potential participants.

In June 2016 I attended a conference in Ontario and provided information to managers of five programs. Upon returning home from the conference, I contacted the managers of each program by email and formally invited them to participate. At the suggestion of one of the participants at the conference, I visited the website for the Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth (OARTY), looked up the list of residential programs in Ontario, and sent email invitations to all that fit the criteria.

From the first several batches of invitations, I received 29 participants - 26 of them from one organization. At this point, it was becoming clear that to recruit more participants, I was going to have to modify my approach. I made three changes to the study design. First, on the assumption that I may have more success if the invitation to participate did not come from the organizational management, I changed my recruitment strategy so that I could also recruit practitioners directly, through word-of-mouth and Child and Youth Care Association websites and social media. The design modification occurred eight months into the data collection process. This resulted in a slight modification to the Invitation to Participate for Individuals (Appendix G).

Another issue I identified as a possible impediment to participation was the length of the invitation. I initially used a three-page invitation letter that included all of the information about the study including procedures, inconvenience, benefits, risks, anonymity, and confidentiality. I received feedback from a couple of people who participated in the research that the invitation letter was intimidating. To address this I developed a short, one paragraph introduction to the research that I used as the initial invitation, to be followed up by the full invitation once people expressed interest in participating. The shorter invitation can be found in Appendix H.

In August 2016, I attended a child and youth care conference in Vienna, Austria and, while there, colleagues from organizations providing residential care in the United States offered to

forward the invitation to their child and youth care staff. In September 2016, I posted a notice on Facebook requesting participants. This was posted on the Facebook page for the Child and Youth Care Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, and my own personal page. The post was shared by numerous colleagues across North America. In November 2016, I attended a child and youth care retreat in New Mexico and, while there, recruited additional organizations from the United States and Australia. In December, I posted the shorter invitation on CYC-Net. In January 2017, a colleague in a child and youth care university program sent the invitation to students in her class who work in residential care. Additional Facebook invitations were posted in January and April 2017.

The design changes did enhance my recruitment efforts and the response from practitioners volunteering to participate in the study increased. After I received an email from individuals offering to participate, I responded by thanking them for their interest, explained the need for them to provide consent before I could provide them with the link to the surveys, and attached the formal Invitation to Participate along with the consent form. The email response script is in Appendix I .

Upon receipt of the signed consent forms (Appendix J), which were submitted through fax or email, I forwarded instructions to participants on accessing and completing the surveys on Mind Garden. With this method, I imported participant names and email addresses into Mind Garden's Transform system. The email invitation that I sent to participants contained a link which they could click to take them to a login page, where they could login and set a password. From the login screen they could go directly into the surveys. All participants completed a questionnaire on demographics (age, gender, years of experience, education) along with the Professional

Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL), Work Environment Scale (WES), and Leadership Development Profile (LDP). The complete Mind Garden instructions are in Appendix K.

Participants were not offered, nor did they receive, any compensation for their participation.

I was initially interested in ending up with organizations that varied on the dimensions of the WES. Casting a wide net right at the beginning seemed to be the best approach to achieve this. With the change in design, I ended up with many more organizations than originally planned.

Selection of Participants for Subject-Object Interviews

Many of the studies I reviewed (Bugenhagen, 2006; Bugenhagen & Barbuto, 2012; Mumma, 2010) conducted an SOI first, followed at a later date by a standardized questionnaire. It is possible that participation in the SOI could have influenced participants' responses on the second measure. To control for this, I chose to conduct the SOIs last. Since these are a measure of constructive-developmental level and, according to the theory, development occurs over a lengthy period of time, it is unlikely that completion of the standardized measures would have had a significant impact on development.

Although participants were dispersed across a larger number of organizations than initially anticipated, there were five organizations from which at least seven employees participated in the study. Although there were not enough participants from each organization for me to get an aggregated measure of organizational culture, this did enable me to continue with my original plan to interview selected participants from each organization in an attempt to explore the experiences of practitioners with different meaning-making systems within and across organizations. Specifically, I was looking for child and youth care practitioners who were making meaning within the socialized and self-authoring systems, since these are the two most

common systems found in adults (Kegan, 1982, 1994) and I was interested in exploring whether there was coherence within developmental orders irrespective of organizational influences.

All participants were initially advised that they may be selected to be invited for an interview after they completed the surveys and, if they were selected, I would contact them at a later date. From the survey results I purposefully selected a minimum of three individuals from each program to participate in SOIs and in-depth interviews. I used the ProQOL data as selection criteria in that within each organization, I selected the individuals with the lowest and highest scores on the Compassion Fatigue subscale of the ProQOL. I chose to select practitioners at the extreme ends of this measure on the assumption that they may represent different constructive-developmental orders. Within each organization, I also randomly selected one participant from the remaining practitioners. The use of purposeful random sampling, in which cases are selected without any prior knowledge of what the outcomes may be, can increase credibility even in small sample sizes (Patton, 1990). In two organizations in which a senior manager participated in the research, I selected them for interviews as well. In some cases, the supervisor was the participant with the lowest ProQOL score from that organization. When this happened, I also selected the front-line practitioner with the lowest score.

Since this part of the study was exploratory, I wanted enough participants to be able to look for patterns within and across meaning-making systems and organizations, but not so many that it became impossible to adequately explore the experiences of each participant in-depth. I selected 22 participants for interviews. Two did not reply to my email, one forgot about her interview, and one asked to reschedule two times and then failed to show up for the interview on the third attempt. In total, I interviewed 18 participants across five organizations. I conducted all interviews in person and travelled to wherever the participants were located.

To maintain anonymity, participants who were selected for interviews were given the option of where the interviews would take place. All participants said that they would be comfortable with me selecting the location. Many interviews were conducted in hotel meeting rooms. Some were conducted at participants' workplaces, with their permission. Others were held at my house or office (only after hours when other employees would not be around). At the start of each interview, I thanked participants for their willingness to be interviewed, explained the process, and offered refreshments. I stated that I would ask questions throughout the interview, but they did not have to answer or discuss anything they were not comfortable talking about. I reiterated that they could take a break or end the interview at any time. At the end of the interview, participants were given a \$15 gift card to a coffee shop or equivalent as a token of appreciation.

Interviews with participants were recorded using a digital recorder. To transcribe the interviews, I used a professional online transcription service, Transcription Puppy (TranscriptionPuppy.com, 2017). I sent the digital audio files to them electronically and they returned the completed transcription within 48 hours. Participants' names were not attached to the audio files.

Data Analysis

In this section I describe the methods used to analyze the subject-object interviews for constructive-developmental order and themes. I also review processes used to analyze the ProQOL, WES, and LDP and the relationships between them.

Analysis of the Subject-Object Interview

The Subject-Object Interview (SOI) was conducted with select participants from each organization to assess participants' meaning-making systems. Transcripts were analyzed using Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory as the conceptual lens.

Scoring the SOI involves reviewing the transcript of the interview for “scorable bits” (Lahey et al., 1988). These are sections in the interview that reflect the individual’s meaning-making structure. The scorer assigns a rating to each bit, using their knowledge of constructive-developmental theory and understanding of the structure and limits of individuals’ meaning-making. The overall scores represent each full stage of development or the transition points in-between. The SOI can make six distinctions between any two developmental levels. For example, between 3 (Socialized) and 4 (Self-Authoring), the SOI can distinguish between meaning-making in which:

1. Only the socialized system is evident (3);
2. The socialized system begins to be reflected on, but the self-authoring system is not yet constructed (3(4));
3. Both the socialized and self-authoring systems are evident, but the socialized system is predominant (3/4);
4. Both the socialized and self-authoring systems are evident, but the self-authoring system is predominant (4/3);
5. The self-authoring system is the governing principle, but it must work at not letting the socialized system intrude (4(3)); and
6. The self-authoring system is firmly established (4) (Kegan, 1994).

I scored each interview and used a second scorer for all interviews. According to Lahey et al. (1988), the scores between the researcher and second scorer must be within one transition point of each other (e.g., 3/4 to 4/3) for the scores to be reliable. If this level of agreement is not reached, additional review of the transcript is undertaken and comparisons are made to determine the final score. In this study, our rate of agreement was 94%.

Although I scored the SOIs as described in the SOI Guide (Lahey et al., 1988), for qualitative analysis purposes I did not use the detailed range of scores and instead divided participants into three groups: socialized, self-authoring, and a separate category for those who were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring.

Ethical Considerations in Conducting and Analyzing the Subject-Object Interview

The SOIs were conducted within the ethical parameters of academic research. The purpose of the study was clearly outlined in the invitation to participate and the consent form.

One of the ethical issues pertains to awareness of how the results may impact participants, particularly at different developmental orders. Upon reading my dissertation, participants may learn something about themselves (or my framing of their experiences) that they did not previously know. It did not occur to me, until after the research was conducted, that this could be a negative experience or that there could be any potential for harm or discomfort. This is illustrative of the way in which my insider position and epistemology influenced my vision and decision making. In all my years of using constructive-developmental theory in practice, and presenting on it at conferences and in training, I have never encountered a negative response. Many practitioners who have self-identified as socialized, for example, have expressed relief upon the discovery. Knowledge of the meaning-making systems provided them with a helpful way of understanding, in part, why they struggle the way they do, and gave them hope that this will change over time.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that participants in the study would react in the same way. In retrospect, I could have engaged in clearer dialogue with participants at the end of the interviews about constructive-developmental theory, and the specific ways in which the results might be reported. Because this did not occur, to mitigate the risk of harm I carefully

anonymized the findings, used pseudonyms, and did not report on the locations of participants. In the writing of the report, I kept out any detail that might be identifying, such as individuals' years of service or specific positions within organizations. In one case, I changed the gender. I also tried to relay all of the information in a respectful manner. I have considerable admiration and appreciation for all participants in the study and I hope that comes through in the dissertation.

We understand the constructive-developmental orders through the order at which we are making meaning. One of the interesting aspects of conducting and analyzing the subject-object interview, therefore, is that the epistemology of the researcher inevitably influences the interviewing and assessment processes. It is more challenging to recognize a participant's developmental order if this order is unfamiliar territory for the researcher (van Diemen van Thor, 2014). It is possible that an SOI interviewer could be faced with an interviewee who they suspect is at a more developed stage than they are themselves. An interviewer could lack the means to probe beyond their own developmental order, leading to them collecting evidence on a more familiar, preceding stage instead. The validity of SOI findings are dependent upon "the skill, experience, expertise and form of mind of the interviewer conducting the interview. Interviewers can have bad days or project their own blind spots onto the assessments" (van Diemen van Thor, 2014, pp. 17-18).

Although I have not been formally assessed (in part because it would be impossible to excise my familiarity with constructive-developmental theory from my responses in an interview or sentence-completion test), based on my knowledge of constructive-developmental theory and understanding of myself, I am confident in saying that I am making meaning at the self-authoring order. I have a well-developed self-governing system and, moreover, can clearly remember what

it was like to be functioning at the socialized order and identify the differences with where I am now. I am also aware that there are limits to my internal structure and have an emerging capacity to reflect on this and to see across systems. Given that I have been immersed in constructive-developmental theory for so long, this is not a surprise. I do not believe that I have yet developed a full self-transforming structure, however, and I am largely still embedded in my own ideology.

Making meaning at the self-authoring order equips me to be able to recognize and assess individuals at all constructive-developmental orders, as “developmental theory holds that people can intellectually understand one stage beyond where they currently profile” (Yeyinmen, 2016, p. 106). One of the limits of self-authoring thinking is that individuals at this order can “fall into the trap of certainty-by-method, that is, ultimate adherence to their own logic” (McAuliffe, 2011, p. 9). While engaged in all of the research activities, I had to be careful not to become absolute in my understanding or application of constructive-developmental theory, or become too enamored of my own ideology. Continuous consultation with my supervisor and committee members helped me to get outside of myself and remain open to other perspectives and possibilities.

Conducting the subject-object interview requires a delicate balance of active listening and questioning to explore the limits of individuals’ thinking. I was much more comfortable listening, and occasionally had to prod myself to step out of listening mode and probe for the edges of participants’ thinking.

Thematic Analysis of Subject-Object Interviews

To explore how different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job, I analyzed the subject-object interviews thematically. I chose thematic analysis as the qualitative analysis method because it can be used to identify patterns of meaning across a dataset and address research questions about individuals’ experiences (Braun &

Clarke, 2017). Thematic analysis is flexible, applicable across a range of approaches, and theoretically and methodologically sound (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The thematic analysis was driven by the following research question:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job?
 - a) What do child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, identify as the primary challenges and the most satisfying experiences, and how do they experience and cope with the challenges?
 - b) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with and experience the demands of the job in ordered ways so that there is internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order?

Thematic analysis occurred after all of the data had been collected. However, the same interviews were scored for subject-object balance throughout the course of data collection. During the SOI analysis, I made note of any themes or patterns that seemed to be emerging from the interviews and used these as a starting point for the thematic analysis. I began the thematic analysis within a week of conducting the last interview.

I engaged in a six-step analytic process (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and began by reading all of the interviews as a collective to thoroughly familiarize myself with the data set, and continued by reading, and re-reading, individual interviews. To answer question 1(a), I started the analysis by developing three categories - job satisfaction and success, challenges, and coping - that corresponded with the research question. I then used these categories to identify and code excerpts in the interviews that were related to the research question. As stated by Miles and Huberman (1994), “conceptual frameworks and research questions are the best defense against

overload” (p. 55). While coding I systematically worked through the full data set, making sure to give complete and equal attention to each item, and searched for relevant and interesting data. I initially coded for as many potential themes and patterns as possible and included inconsistencies within and across data items (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To assist with this process, I used a web-based qualitative and mixed-methods research application, Dedoose (SocioCultural Research Consultants LLC, 2017).

After all of the relevant interview material had been coded, I began the next step of searching for themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was an iterative process, as I went back and forth between the data set, coded excerpts and memos, refining, dropping and merging codes, and looking for patterns, connections, and exceptional cases. The process was intuitive and inductive as themes emerged from the data (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). I also incorporated writing into this process as an integral part of analysis, as recommended by Braun and Clark (2006). The writing was particularly helpful with the theme development, review, and revision.

To answer question 1(b), I looked for patterns in the data and themes within and across participants with different meaning-making systems. Patterns and themes that were specific to particular developmental orders did emerge and the next step was to engage in a detailed analysis of each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994) as the theoretical lens.

The final stage (Braun & Clarke, 2006) involved weaving together the themes, data excerpts, and analysis and writing the results.

Scoring the ProQOL, LDP, and WES

The ProQOL was scored by Mind Garden. Scoring of the ProQOL consisted of reversing some items, summing the items by subscale, and converting the raw scores to a t-score. This can

be done manually or by computer, and Stamm (2010) provides a computer code written for SPSS that can be converted to other statistical programs as needed. Although the scoring process for the ProQOL produces continuous scores, in the ProQOL manual (Stamm, 2010) cut scores are also provided for each subscale, along with scale definitions and average scores. The ProQOL produced scores on compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout.

The LDP was scored for each participant by expert scorers from Harthill Consulting.

The Work Environment Scale (WES) provided a measure of the work environment. Items on the WES are arranged so that responses in each column on the answer sheet constitute one subscale. An individual's raw score for a subscale is determined by counting the number of responses as identified in the scoring key. Raw scores can be converted to a standard score using tables provided in the WES User's Guide (Moos, 2008). Mind Garden scored the WES for all participants.

Analyzing the Relationships Between Measures

Data from the ProQOL, SOIs, and semi-structured interviews were used to answer the question of whether practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with and experience the demands of the job in ordered ways. I asked analytic questions such as: Are there common challenges and accomplishments among practitioners who share the same meaning-making system? Are there commonalities or notable differences among practitioners' experiences and coping abilities within the same meaning-making system, or across meaning-making systems?

Through linear regression I addressed the question of whether practitioners with different meaning-making systems, as measured by the LDP, vary in their experiencing of the ProQOL constructs of compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress. Linear regression

was also used to explore the relationship between practitioners' WES scores and the LDP, and the three-way relationship between the WES, ProQOL, and LDP to assess coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations.

The thematic analysis of the SOIs and semi-structured interviews also explored the role that the organizational environment plays in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job, and how practitioners with different meaning-making systems experience the organizational environment.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an accepted strategy for establishing rigor in qualitative research and a useful tool for "improving the quality and validity of research, and recognizing the limitations of the knowledge that is produced" (Etherington, 2007, p. 604). Reflexivity in research is related to the "use of Self" and the recognition that the researcher is part of the research process. To be reflexive, it was important that I examine my own self and how I used my own history, experiences, values, beliefs, expectations, and biases to conduct and influence (whether knowingly or not) the course and outcome of this research (Berger, 2015). This included identifying the types of factors that influence my own construction of knowledge and how these influences showed up in the planning, conducting, analyzing, and writing of the research (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

Our research interests and questions reveal something about us. As stated by Guillemin and Gillam (2004), "Our choice of research design, the research, methodology, and the theoretical framework that informs our research are governed by our values and, reciprocally, help to shape these values" (p. 274). Some of my values, beliefs, and biases that informed the study are:

1. I believe that residential care can be a viable option for children and youth who cannot live with their families and have strong views about the need for child and youth care practitioners to be properly equipped to meet the demands of their role.
2. One of my “underlying guiding principles” is that, as practitioners working with children and families, we have an obligation to do whatever it takes to provide quality care.
3. In the provision of quality care, I rely heavily on theories of development and meaning-making, among others.
4. I value theory that can be translated into practice.
5. As a manager of residential care programs, I believe that the work environment contributes directly to the quality of care and am committed to the provision of a positive and healthy organizational culture.

It is important for me to reveal this information about myself, in addition to the data, analytic processes, and results, so that the reader can confirm the adequacy and integrity of the findings (Morrow, 2005). What follows is an account of the ways in which these values, beliefs, and biases may have influenced my research, and how this influence was mitigated.

Transparency

Reflexivity is demonstrated through the provision of a detailed and transparent account of the researcher’s decisions and underlying rationale (Berger, 2015). To be transparent, it is important to include information about any research dilemmas and the means by which they were resolved (Etherington, 2007). To that end, I incorporated throughout this dissertation, where applicable, the use of first-person language and reporting of key decision-making processes. Transparency is considered central to producing a trustworthy empirical research report (Shaw, 2010).

Being an Insider Researcher

As a researcher, it is important that I take responsibility for my own situatedness in the research and the effect that this may have on the participants, questions being asked, data being collected, and interpretation of that data (Berger, 2015). My position as an insider in residential care for children and youth was introduced in Chapter 1 and will be explored more thoroughly in this section.

There are advantages and disadvantages to being an insider. One of the advantages is “access to the field” (Berger, 2015). Because I work within the field of residential care, I had access to a large network of people and organizations to draw upon for recruitment of participants. Some individuals agreed to participate in the study because they either knew me, were familiar with my work, or we had a mutual acquaintance. Another advantage is that I was potentially viewed as someone who would understand the experiences of participants, enabling them to feel more comfortable during the interview and be more willing to share their experiences. A third advantage is that I entered the research process with a solid understanding of residential care; I had a “head start in knowing about the topic, understanding nuanced reactions of participants” (Berger, 2015, p. 223). I was therefore able to approach data collection and analysis with some knowledge and insight about the subject. I was not shocked or surprised by any of the experiences relayed by participants and knew to probe in areas I might have avoided under other circumstances. For example, when participants talked about being physically assaulted by young people, I recognized this as part of the job and did not hesitate to ask follow-up questions. I was not concerned that my questions would be traumatic for the individuals being interviewed. In contrast, the second scorer for the SOIs, who is not familiar with the field of residential care, was disturbed by the content of some of the interviews.

Sharing the experiences with participants afforded a level of understanding that was also helpful in analyzing the data. Although some of the findings were unexpected, my understanding of residential care provided me with a contextual framework through which to interpret the results that I would otherwise not have had. The finding that most practitioners were doing okay, for example, was somewhat incongruent with the literature and the dominant discourse of residential care. As an outsider researcher, these results could have been puzzling. However, as an insider I have worked for many years in well-functioning organizations, with low turnover and satisfied, competent practitioners. I had no difficulty understanding and believing the results.

My position as an insider also came with disadvantages. Because of my unique position within the field, during the interviews I had to continually reflect on how my presence and role shaped the conversation and actively work to mitigate this impact. For example, during one interview the participant seemed particularly reluctant to talk about her organization, even though it had been clearly explained that the focus of the interview was on the workplace. Because I had an informal connection with her organization (but not with her directly), I had to reflect on whether her discomfort could be connected to this dynamic. Out of concern that her apprehension may be related to my insider role, I pulled back and did not ask her as many questions as I did the other participants.

It has been recognized that there is a risk, when the researcher has a shared background with participants, that participants could withhold information they assume would be obvious to the researcher and, conversely, that the researcher could also take for granted the similarities in experiences and overlook aspects of participants' experiences (Smith, 2011). Of the participants who were interviewed, three were former employees and/or students. I had to be careful during the interviews to recognize that some of them may be influenced by what they thought I wanted

to hear. I also tried to prevent making a priori assumptions about the ways in which each of these individuals may be making meaning. To guard against potential bias, before each interview I reviewed the protocols of conducting an SOI. I also brought a comprehensive list of questions that could be used to probe for the structure of participants' thinking, along with the structured interview guide. Periodically throughout each interview, I discreetly referred to these documents in an effort to stay within the pre-determined boundaries of the interview.

Shared experience may also impact the power relationship between researcher and participant (Etherington, 2007). To avoid direct power imbalances, I did not include participants from my own organization other than to pilot the surveys. Those who participated in the pilot were not interviewed and I did not review the surveys they completed – they piloted the process only. To select participants for the pilot, I simply sent out an email to all employees requesting volunteers to pilot the survey instruments for my PhD dissertation. I selected the first six employees to respond.

The negative effects of power in the researcher-participant relationship are mitigated when the researcher is situated as non-exploitive and compassionate towards the participants (Costly & Gibbs, 2006). I attempted, throughout the study, to conduct myself in a caring and supportive manner. I have considerable respect for all practitioners in residential care, and the ability to empathize with their struggles. It was reported by some participants, after their interviews, that they enjoyed having the opportunity to talk about their experiences and found the process “validating.”

As an insider, I needed to be aware of “unconscious editing” (Berger, 2015). Because I was already informally applying constructive-developmental theory to my interpretation of practitioners' experiences in the workplace and had written on the potential value of

constructive-developmental theory in the child and youth care field, I needed to be careful that I did not overlay this onto the research results or let it influence the analysis. It was also important that I separate myself from the research and not be tied to the results. On an ongoing basis, I examined my theories and assumptions and how these may be influencing the data collection and analysis. I consulted regularly (sometimes daily) with my supervisor to discuss my emerging findings and interpretations. While conducting the data analysis, I purposefully searched for negative case examples (Braun & Clark, 2006) and explored alternative explanations and multiple interpretations of emerging patterns or themes. I used memos and journaling to record my thoughts and reactions throughout the research process. I used two measures of development, the SOI and LDP. I also used a second scorer for all SOIs to establish inter-rater reliability.

Providing sufficient information about the research context, processes, participants, researcher-participant relationships, and use of self enables the reader to decide how the findings may transfer (Morrow, 2005). Including participants across five organizations, three jurisdictions, and two countries contributes to the assumption that there may be some level of transferability.

The use of a theoretical framework helped to reduce researcher bias. According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), “The importance of theory-driven thinking and acting should be emphasized in relation to the selection of a topic, development of research questions, focus of the literature review, the design approach, and analysis plan for the dissertation study” (p. 14). In my study, I was interested in capturing a slice of participants’ experiences, within clearly articulated parameters, that I could interpret through a constructive-developmental lens. Ensuring that data collection and analysis remained grounded in the theoretical framework enabled me to offer clear

explanations of the findings without the risk of “limited uselessness of findings and conclusions” (Sarter, 2006, p. 494, as cited in Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 24).

CHAPTER 4: SUBJECT-OBJECT INTERVIEWS, JOB SATISFACTION, AND SUCCESS

Subject-object interviews (SOI) were used to assess participants' constructive-developmental orders and explore their experiences in their workplaces. During each interview, in addition to reviewing the prompt questions, I asked general questions about how participants coped with and experienced the job, including what satisfied and challenged them. Questions were designed to get at the developmental differences in participants' experiences, and the way in which they made sense of these experiences. All interviews were analyzed twice: first for constructive-developmental order, and second for themes within and across developmental orders.

In the first part of this chapter, I present the initial findings from the SOIs – the developmental orders of participants and selection criteria. This information is necessary to understand the results presented in this and the next two chapters, as the results are organized by developmental order. In the second part of this chapter, I present the results of the thematic analysis related to job satisfaction and success.

Constructive-Developmental Order of Participants Interviewed

Subject-object interviews were conducted with 18 participants chosen from five organizations that each had seven or more employees participate in the study. Of those interviewed, there were four males and 14 females between the ages of 30 and 62. Nine were front-line practitioners, and nine were supervisors. Scores for all participants ranged from socialized to self-authoring. There was no evidence of meaning-making at the instrumental or self-transformational levels for any of the participants interviewed.

For analysis purposes, I divided the participants into three groups: socialized (3 or 3(4)), transitional (3/4 or 4/3), and self-authoring (4(3) or 4). The scores of the subject-object interviews revealed that seven participants were self-authoring, seven were socialized, and four were transitioning. The majority of socialized participants were front-line child and youth care

practitioners, with only one supervisor making meaning at the socialized order. Three child and youth care workers and one supervisor were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, and all self-authoring participants were in supervisory or management roles. The breakdown by position is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Developmental Order by Position

Developmental order	Overall N = 18	Child and youth care worker N = 9	Supervisor N = 9
Socialized	7	6	1
Transitioning	4	3	1
Self-Authoring	7	0	7

As outlined in Chapter 3, individuals were selected for subject-object interviews either because they scored highest or lowest in their organization on the secondary trauma and burnout subscales of the ProQOL, they were randomly selected, or they were in management positions.

The ProQOL scores of the 18 participants who participated in subject-object interviews are presented in Table 6. I used this as a measure of how practitioners cope with and experience the demands of the job. Based on Kegan's (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory, I hypothesized that practitioners may be more or less susceptible to experiencing burnout, vicarious trauma, or other related difficulties depending on their constructive-developmental level.

Table 6

ProQOL Scores by Developmental Order

Participant	Developmental order	Compassion satisfaction	Burnout	Secondary trauma	Selection criteria
Tracy	Socialized	40	60	75	Highest
Julie	Socialized	57	42	58	Random
Miranda	Socialized	59	59	64	Random
Gina	Socialized	47	58	65	Highest
Anna	Socialized	55	51	55	Lowest
Sharon	Socialized	56	56	76	Highest
Bonnie	Socialized	64	48	57	Random
Cathy	Transitioning	53	56	62	Lowest
Joel	Transitioning	61	56	77	Highest
Karen	Transitioning	60	52	73	Random
Susan	Transitioning	53	45	49	Lowest
Dennis	Self-Authoring	55	48	49	Lowest
Raymond	Self-Authoring	64	45	61	Manager
Kyra	Self-Authoring	64	46	68	Random
Tara	Self-Authoring	53	52	52	Lowest
Natasha	Self-Authoring	59	55	73	Manager
Lucy	Self-Authoring	53	53	61	Lowest
Ryan	Self-Authoring	59	45	52	Random

Note. Scores presented for Compassion Satisfaction, Burnout, and Secondary Traumatic Stress are t-scores. Participant names are pseudonyms.

Although the compassion satisfaction scale was not part of the SOI selection criteria, I included the scores in Table 6 since they provide a measure of job satisfaction. The mean t-score reported by Stamm (2010) for each scale is 50 and the standard deviation is 10. ProQOL results for all participants, and the mixed-methods data for the 18 who were interviewed, are analyzed in the Discussion Chapter.

Also included in Table 6 are the selection criteria utilized for each participant. Of the four participants who had the highest ProQOL scores for their organization, three were making meaning at the socialized order, and one was transitioning. Of the six who scored lowest for their organization, only one was socialized, one was transitioning, and four were self-authoring.

Relationship Between SOI and LDP Scores

The Leadership Development Profile (LDP) was used as an economic way to measure the developmental level of the 99 participants. I was not aware of participants' LDP scores until after the SOIs were conducted and analyzed. For the 18 participants who were interviewed, 61% of the SOI scores roughly aligned with the LDP scores. Of the scores that did not align, they were one action logic apart. This percentage of agreement is not high enough to consider the LDP a reliable alternate measure to the SOI. This is not surprising considering that the constructs measured by the LDP and SOI, while similar, are not the same. Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory is focused on the *structure* of an individual's thinking, irrespective of content. Torbert's action logics, on the other hand, focus on the *structure* of thinking and *content* to which an individual at a particular action logic might be drawn (Torbert et al., 2004). The implications of this are discussed further in Chapter 8.

Thematic Analysis: Job Satisfaction and Success

In the remainder of this chapter, I present the first results of the thematic analysis of the SOIs. In particular, I address the following parts of the research question:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners experience the demands of the job?
 - a) What do child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, identify as the most satisfying experiences?
 - b) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems experience the demands of the job in ordered ways so that there is internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order?

During the subject-object interviews, participants were asked what aspects of their job gave them the most satisfaction and when they felt the most competent or successful. Other satisfaction themes arose when they responded to the SOI prompt cards for “joy,” “important to me,” and “proud.” In this chapter, I present the themes pertaining to job satisfaction and success that emerged from the interviews. To illustrate the similarities among participants of the same epistemological order and the differences between epistemological orders, I present the themes in three sections: socialized, self-authoring, and transitioning. As mentioned previously, of the 18 participants who were interviewed for the SOI, seven were socialized, seven were self-authoring, and four were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring.

Table 7 provides an overview of the subject-object balance at each constructive-developmental order (Kegan, 1982) and the “satisfaction themes” from participants.

There are no themes provided for the instrumental and self-transformational orders of mind because none of the participants were making meaning at either of those orders. Transitioning refers to the movement from socialized to self-authoring, in which what is subject at the socialized order gradually becomes object at the self-authoring order. There is no distinct subject or object for the transitioning stage.

As described in Chapter 3, the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. I started with the category “job satisfaction and success” and searched the data set to identify and code related excerpts from the interviews. After the coding was completed, I engaged in an iterative process of identifying themes. Patterns and themes of job satisfaction and success were analyzed through a constructive-developmental lens (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

Table 7

Subject-Object Balance of Constructive-Developmental Orders and Participant Themes on Job Satisfaction and Success

Developmental order	Subject (embedded in)	Object (can reflect on or take control of)	Themes from participants (source of satisfaction and success)
Instrumental	Needs, wishes & interests	Impulses & perceptions	N/A
Socialized	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Needs, wishes & interests	Making others happy Being liked Positive feedback from others
Transitioning	N/A	N/A	Making a difference Internal struggle
Self-Authoring	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Meeting own goals and expectations Demonstrating competence Facilitating growth
Self-Transforming	Inter-individuality and interpenetration of systems	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	N/A

Note. Table constructed with information from Kegan (1982).

The Socialized Mind

Individuals at the socialized order are embedded in the interpersonal. They are “uncritically, unawarely identified with external sources of ideas” (Kegan, 1994, p. 110). The various ways in which this showed up in participants’ interviews about their work satisfaction will be presented in this section.

The seven participants making meaning at the socialized order - Julie, Tracy, Miranda, Anna, Sharon, Gina, and Bonnie - represented five organizations. The four participants who were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring – Joel, Karen, Cathy, and Susan – represented

three organizations. Because those who were transitioning were making meaning at both the socialized and self-authoring orders, information from their interviews will be presented in this section, as applicable. The themes of those operating at the socialized level are shown in the right-hand column of Table 7.

Making Others Happy

The practice of child and youth care is often described as “relational,” especially when referring to group care. Connecting with young people, engaging with them “in the moment” is recognized as a crucial tenet of effective child and youth care practice (Garfat & Fulcher, 2011). To that end, all participants in the study discussed the value of positive encounters and connections with the young people. Many of them described the importance of the little moments, those “bright lights” and “little wins” that keep them going through the tough times. The difference between those with a socialized mindset and those who were self-authoring was in the meaning they gave to these experiences. For participants at the socialized order, these moments of meaningful encounters went beyond being a “beacon of hope;” they appeared to be essential to their experiencing of job satisfaction and feelings of competence.

When asked to identify how they assessed their own job performance, individuals at the socialized order consistently gave examples of positive interactions with young people. Because individuals with a socialized mindset are embedded in the relational realm, they interpret their experiences with the young people from *within* the relationship. For socialized individuals, “the self is located in the interpersonal matrix [...] its limit lies in its inability to consult itself about that shared reality [...] because it *is* that shared reality” (Kegan, 1982, p. 96). For the socialized practitioners in this study, how the young people interacted with them in a particular moment and how they felt in response to this interaction seemed to constitute *who they were* as child and

youth care professionals in that moment. Rather than the experience comprising two separate selves who joined together to share a moment, the moment became a reflection of themselves. When things were “going right” they felt good about themselves, but when things were not going right, they struggled. Tracy identified that in order to feel she was “doing something positive throughout the day or throughout the week,” it was necessary to feel like she was connecting to at least one of the young people. For Tracy, although she enjoys being challenged and had successfully managed many challenging situations, the ideal client would be “youth that are positive who want to work with you and want to be with you.”

All participants at the socialized order described the types of positive encounters in which they felt good, or competent: playing games, going for walks, going to the park, dancing in the kitchen, washing dishes, and laughing together. The notion of “making others feel good,” and subsequently feeling good themselves, was inherent in these scenarios and highlighted as important by all participants making meaning at the socialized order. Julie said, “I was happy. The kids were happy. People I was working with were happy. There was no conflict.” Likewise, Bonnie defined success as “having happy colleagues working around you.” Bonnie explained that when employees are happy “they are more successful in their work, and also having, you know, happy and engaging participants and teams in the placements as well.” Gina described engaging in positive activities as “bringing the most happiness,” and Anna relayed a story about a young person attending a special event with her and the best thing about it being that “he was so happy.” When asked what brought her the most satisfaction in her role, Miranda replied,

Basically, if you're in the position to have a pretty good relationship with your co-workers and your kids - like, as long as you can know that you're doing your best and you're making changes, even if it's baby steps - I think that's much more successful as long as you're happy

and the kids are happy and everything's done that should be done and anything that's needed by the kid is taken care of; I think that's what I call successful. I think it's making sure everybody's as happy as they can be, and if they're not happy, helping them be happy.

Wanting to help young people experience happiness, as part of a holistic approach to care, is a valuable endeavor that was mentioned by many participants, not just those in the socialized order. For socialized participants, however, “making young people happy,” or a related sentiment, was presented as the end goal. When participants were asked to reflect on where this or other values came from, they responded by going back to their own childhoods with comments like: “It’s always been important to me,” “It’s how I grew up,” “It’s definitely a family value,” “It's always been instilled in me by my parents,” and “I've just always known it's important to feel that you matter and are cared about and all that [...]. So, I just want to make sure that people got the same kind of start.”

Kegan (1994) stated, “If it is because this is ‘just the way I was brought up’ [...] then one has no way to stand outside of the value without feeling in violation of one’s fidelities” (p. 90). Individuals without an “internal set of convictions” (Kegan, 1994) are left with no way to interpret the experience, from outside of the experience, or to critically reflect on the value. The desire to make others happy, for the socialized participants, appeared to be connected to values in which they are embedded. Without the capacity to subordinate this value to a larger theory or ideology, when young people were not happy it impacted how participants felt about themselves in their roles.

Happiness was only one value of several that socialized participants identified as driving their practice. Sharon, for example, highlighted trust as one of her values and mentioned it several

times in relation to how she determines success with young people and families. When asked why it was important, she replied,

Because I need it. I think every human needs connections. Everyone needs connections. Yeah, I know [...] you know, my family have been so close, so close. You know [...] I've had a great childhood and that's one of the reasons I came into the industry, because I think everyone deserves it. But they're not going to get it but [...] just to see them trust someone.

Sharon identified the value of trust through the familial relationship in which she is embedded and did not demonstrate that she was able to question or weigh the validity of this value (Kegan, 1994).

Cathy relayed that she felt most competent in her role when things were “going right” and described having those “ah ha” moments when the young person catches on to an idea. When asked how she assesses when things are going right, or when “ah ha” moments were happening, Cathy replied,

I don't know if I could put words [...] I honestly don't. It's like when you're just sitting down having a cup of coffee, having a grand chat and it's like it's not work anymore. Or just, you're sitting down having coffee with a friend. You know it doesn't seem like work and, you know, you're not going through your head, "Okay this goal, so this, this and this so I'm going to try to put tidbits of conversation" you know. Like it doesn't seem like work. It just seems like you're hanging out with a friend.

The ability to “orient to the welfare of a human relationship” (Kegan, 1994, p. 77) is one of the distinguishing features of the socialized order. Cathy’s repeated references to feeling like she’s with “a friend” appear to be indicative of the way in which she constitutes and evaluates her relationships. In this example, rather than acknowledging and preserving the roles she and the

young person each occupy in the relationship, Cathy identifies that she feels best when these roles are collapsed. This aligns with the theme of *making others happy* in that it is indicative of Cathy's apparent captivity within the relationship "as the very context from which to feel or behave" (Kegan, 1994, p. 89). Cathy did not demonstrate the capacity to reflect on how the experience of feeling like a friend fit within a deeper, internal set of convictions related to child and youth care practice or why this was important to her.

Being Liked

Individuals at the socialized order, because they are embedded in the relational and derive their sense of selves from their relationships, typically present as needing to be liked (Kegan, 1982). For all but one of the socialized and transitioning participants, being liked was explicitly identified as being important to their sense of self. This is illustrated in the following dialogue with Karen:

And then I'm like okay, am I going to challenge them, am I not, what are they going to think of me if I do and [...]. So that's where I get stuck in that.

Interviewer: Okay. And so, what's at stake if you do challenge them? When you're thinking about, "what are they going to think of me," what's at stake there?

Karen: Whether or not they like me. All right, like that's what comes up is I mean there's all kinds of things but when you boil it down, it's all about how safe do I feel with them and are they going to like me.

Interviewer: And if they didn't like you, what would that mean for you?

Karen: That I was - I would devalue myself as a person.

Similarly, Susan talked about the impact it has on her when she is liked or not liked by the young people:

Oh 'cause you want warm fuzzies [laughs] like they, to me that says that they, they like me, which is obviously a bonus 'cause some they don't like you. So knowing that they like and they trust me and they want me to be around and they're excited to see me, that just makes me feel good and it feels like what I'm doing with them, my conversations with them, my interactions with them are impactful, hopefully. Yup, so. I think not having a connection with a certain young person for me, is really hard 'cause I really make a point of having a relationship, some take longer than others, some are like that.

Interviewer: And then how does that impact on you when that happens?

Susan: I feel bad for myself, I think I take it personally sometimes, I kind of like, what is it that I'm doing? And that's when I'll go ask people like, is there something I'm doing? Should I do something different?

Miranda has been told, through training she has received and discussions with her supervisor, that she “should not” need to be liked by the young people, and that their behaviour was not about her. Miranda had held onto this message but appeared to still be captive to her relationships with the young people. Even while trying to express why being liked was not important to her anymore, she identified that the first thought she had while in the midst of a difficult situation was, “Oh my God, they hate me.” She went on to say,

I think the whole relationship part is what I want. Like, I don't ... if they want to curse at me, that's fine, and I've definitely developed more of a backbone there because it's ... but I think it's more important to have a relationship with the kid than if ... because, in a way, I think they expect a release for caring about them. And even if they ... they're not going to like everybody. They're not going to like every worker that comes in to see them because ... especially if it's a residential thing and there's ... workers coming and going. It's harder for

them to get used to people. So, as long as they kind of respect me or don't mind seeing me when I come in and like the food I cook or anything like that.

Julie feels the most competent when she “feels valued.” Her examples of feeling valued were “When I feel like the other person respects the experience that I've had so far and when the youth come to you for advice or when they share something. As soon as they share something with me, I'm like, “Wow! I'm doing something right. That's awesome!”

Young people confiding in her leaves Julie feeling “very flattered” and “very good” about herself. Likewise, Gina talked about the “good feeling” she gets whenever a young person tells her, “You're the only person I feel comfortable talking to,” or “You're the only one I can talk to about this because no one listens.”

Although individuals at all constructive-developmental orders can enjoy being liked by others, for those at the socialized order being liked was presented as criteria for being successful. According to Kegan (1982), individuals at the socialized order have not yet developed the capacity to subordinate an ideal to a bigger theory or ideology that can regulate the ideal. They are therefore susceptible to becoming trapped in the ideal of wanting to be liked or needed, or make others happy. The ways in which participants making meaning at the socialized order tried to prevent not being liked are discussed in Chapter 5.

Positive Feedback From Significant Others

At the socialized order, individuals do not have an internal framework of their own through which to evaluate their performance. They are, instead, lodged entirely within the “expectations, requirements, satisfactions, and influences of mutual, interpersonal relationships” (Kegan, 1994, p. 99). The triumph of the socialized order, the capacity for socialization, is also the primary limitation; the socialized mind is subject to the expectations of those within the social surround

(Kegan, 1982, 1994). The necessity of feedback from others, particularly supervisors, was strongly emphasized by all participants at the socialized order and those who were transitioning. Without this feedback, these individuals struggled to know how they were doing. For example, when Bonnie was asked how she is able to assess her job performance without acknowledgment from others, she said,

I think it would suck. I think that would be hard to not hear every now and again you're doing the job well [...] I think I would evaluate it of how my relationships are with other people. So if people weren't communicating with me I would feel like maybe I've been a bit off this week, and that's not great. That's not what I want in my job. So that's probably how I would evaluate it.

Bonnie's focus on how other people would respond to her as an alternate means of evaluating her own job performance, in the absence of direct feedback, indicates the weight that others' reactions to her have on her perception of herself. When asked, she was not able to identify any other criteria for assessing how she was doing in her role. As stated by Kegan (1994), she looked to others as "infallible guides" in which she invested authority. Miranda also articulated how difficult it is for her when she does not receive any feedback from her supervisor:

When I didn't have it, it was definitely an anxious and nervous thing because you didn't know if you were doing something right or if the social worker was going to question you [...]. It's like if you'd done what you thought you were supposed to do [...] like, I know you're supposed to kind of follow your own gut instinct in the moment and stuff, but it was really confusing because sometimes it'd be something down on paper and then it would kind of be like, "Why didn't you do this?" or "Why didn't you do that?" So, it was really, like, hard to deal with people kind of telling you you're doing it wrong.

Julie, who identified herself as a “people pleaser” defined success as “moving up into higher positions” accompanied by “acknowledgment from supervisors and feedback.” Julie stated, “So if I feel like I’ve been a part of them in achieving something, then I would feel ridiculously successful and valued.” This illustrates Julie’s reliance on external validation and her loyalty to the larger group, both of which can be reflective of socialized meaning-making. Julie relied primarily on feedback from her supervisors and the co-workers to evaluate her performance, saying, “With the youth [...] not as much because there’s always gonna be kids that like you and don’t like you and whatever.” Julie demonstrated in several areas that she had internalized many of the messages of her organization, one of them being that you can’t expect all young people to like you. This may have enabled her to find another source of external validation in her supervisor. Because she had become embedded in the relationship with the values and philosophy of her organization, she was able to use this as a “handhold” with which to get through the tough times with the young people. She still wanted to be liked, and momentarily felt bad when she was not, but was able to extricate herself from these feelings by asking for feedback from her supervisor:

Like, we have evaluations for our positions and stuff like that. So, I have been pretty proactive in that in asking for feedback and asking for challenges and what I can do to be better, I guess. Like, I’ve been very proactive in that. I’ve had some really good supervisors that I’ve also, like, when I was doubting myself or something, they would say something that would make me think, “Wait, you think that way too? Okay. Cool, I’m not actually crazy.” Which is really nice.

Feedback from supervisors was identified by participants as a primary means of support and is covered extensively in Chapter 5.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the themes related to job satisfaction and success for participants making meaning at the socialized order. Socialized individuals derived satisfaction and success from *within* their interpersonal relationships. The themes were *making others happy, being liked,* and *positive feedback from significant others.*

The strengths of the socialized order are that individuals can demonstrate empathy and put the needs of others ahead of themselves in order to remain connected (Strang & Kuhnert, 2009). They have developed the capacity to internalize and identify with the values and beliefs of their social surround and are able to subordinate their own interests on behalf of this greater loyalty (Kegan, 1994). Those at the socialized order are typically focused on identifying commonalities and feeling a sense of shared identity and purpose (Kegan et al., 2001). The socialized participants in this study demonstrated considerable commitment to the young people with whom they worked, and to their organizations.

The limits of this order of consciousness are that individuals are subject to the expectations and ideology of others and “take them as The Truth” (Kegan, 1994, p. 110). They don’t just *have* relationships, they *are* their relationships (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Success in their role was therefore experienced from *within* their significant relationships. Individuals at the socialized order need a clear sense of what is expected of them by others and feel a strong obligation to meet those expectations.

The satisfaction themes for socialized participants were illustrative of the strengths and limits of their order of consciousness.

The Self-Authoring Mind

Self-authoring individuals have a self that “owns” their connections to the ideologies, relationships, or institutions in which they were previously embedded (Berger, 2002). They may still hold the same values and beliefs – or not – but their relationship to them has changed. They have developed an internal framework, a “self-governing system” through which they can filter their experiences. Unlike those who are socialized, self-authoring individuals have developed the capacity to regulate their activities through an internal set of convictions rather than the confines of a single value (Kegan, 1994).

The seven self-authoring participants in the study – Kyra, Dennis, Raymond, Tara, Natasha, Ryan, and Lucy – represented four organizations. Because individuals who are transitioning make meaning at both the socialized and self-authoring orders, information from their interviews is presented in this section as applicable. The themes of those operating at the self-authoring order are shown in the right-hand column of Table 7.

Meeting Own Goals and Expectations

Self-authoring participants varied greatly in their descriptions of what they found satisfying in their roles and what constituted success for them. None of them mentioned “being liked” as a benchmark of success, but there was little coherence across self-authoring individuals with regard to the content of their interviews. There was coherence, however, in the *source* of the content. All self-authoring participants demonstrated the capacity to evaluate how they, and the young people, were doing outside of the interpersonal interactions. They could articulate and reflect on their own criteria for assessing their performance beyond simply referring back to their childhood or stating that it was “just who I am.” They felt satisfied and successful when they met

their own goals and expectations. This is illustrated in the following definition of success provided by Kyra:

First, I said small steps. That's really big parts of success that I think causes the most issue for people sometimes. It's like, I guess, we just get so much caught up in like all-or-nothing thinking, so, it's small steps, and there's lots of small steps, forwards and backwards, and being able to prepare for that and who's deciding on success. What I think is success, and what another person thinks is success, or what a parent thinks is success, not the same thing [...] I think part of it is setting it up right from the very beginning to realize that it does take a lot of time or you may never ever see this. Setting up, like, those guiding principles that we're not ever fixing anyone or curing anyone, we're not saving anyone. We're providing an opportunity to offer a change in skills, give them other options to use as coping, to learn better ways to deal with the things that they had working previously for them [...] because I do have so much experience with this population it's twofold, like you use your experience when you have it and you also mentor the other people who do not have it.

In this example, Kyra mentions the “guiding principles” she creates and relies on to measure success. She does not equate how she is doing with how the young people are doing. She appears to recognize that these are separate issues. “The immediacy of interpersonalist feeling is replaced by the mediacy of regulating the interpersonal” (Kegan, 1982, p. 102).

Tara talked about the feeling of success associated with accomplishing a goal, and the anticipation with which she begins each new work day, “Yeah, like when I drive into work every day, I look forward to going to work, right? You’re like driving, “Oh my God, tomorrow.” You know what I mean? I’m thinking of those things and then [...] I can’t wait for tomorrow to do this and next week we’re doing this.” The excitement that comes with anticipating the work day

was also brought up by Raymond, who said, “When I wake up every day to go and I have this wonderful purpose I get to go to every day. And I'm not interested in striking gold. I'm not interested in not showing up. I'm not interested in doing half a job.” Raymond has indicated an internal set of guidelines that drive him in his role, and what makes him feel successful is meeting these guidelines:

Well our mandate and our vision deserves excellence [...] it's absolutely imperative that I lead with confidence and certainty. I don't need to be right, but I need to be able to make confident decisions, certain decisions, have a vision, be able to foresee obstacles in advance and be able to plan for them.

The comments from Tara and Raymond illustrate the ways in which they both have ownership of themselves and their work. They are not apprehensive about what each day may bring or hoping for “positive moments” to get them through the day. They have things they want to do, goals they want to meet, and the capacity to know that these things are within their control.

Demonstrating Competence

Self-authoring participants described various types of situations through which they derived satisfaction and felt successful. All participants who were self-authoring provided examples related to *demonstrating competence*. For example, Natasha discussed the satisfaction she derived from being able to support staff through crisis situations and, in particular, extricate them from “power struggles” with the young people:

So, I guess working with kids that are really angry, I've always been really good at giving them an out when you can see that they've backed themselves in, but they don't want to lose face. So, they don't want to be humiliated by backing down. So, I've been good at giving them an out. I guess stepping into that management crisis response role was the same with the

youth workers. Because I never walked in, no matter where you are, “You are doing a really bad job. Go and sit in the office until I sort this out.” Always: “Look, I’m going to have a bit of a chat with someone. Can you go and start that paper work that needs to be dealt with?”

In this example, Natasha demonstrates the capacity to assess the situation through her own framework or coordinating principles and to act in accordance with those. Job satisfaction, for Natasha, appears to come from demonstrating competence in meeting her own standards. In a similar vein, Dennis talked about having pride in his ability to be a “calming force”:

Even if I can’t calm a situation down, sometimes it’s about just stepping back, and making sure that nobody gets hurt, and waiting for the storm to pass. But I think the thing that I’d like the most of that part of myself, and this job is that, sometimes, I don’t need to tell you, sometimes, it can be really hard. Sometimes it can be extremely frustrating, and heartbreaking and I think that over the years I have developed a good sense of being able to walk people out of that. Not all the time; sometimes people are frustrated about stuff or upset about things, and there’s not really a lot you can do other than just be there [...]. But on average, I really think I’ve developed a way with people at work, to be the calming force in situations like that.

Dennis talked about being in a supervisor role and identified that his main source of joy in that role was “seeing youth care workers have fun on shift even if something bad has happened. Some negative thing has happened, and they’re still able to laugh about it afterwards.” When asked what was so good about this, Dennis replied that “it speaks to the resilience of youth care workers, and what a special breed of people they are.”

As was true for all self-authoring participants, Dennis’ examples of where he derived his sense of satisfaction and success were internally generated and not reliant on the actions or

reactions of others. He was able to reflect on where his beliefs came from and take ownership of these rather than blindly adhering to values and beliefs from internalized others.

In the following example, Kyra discussed her view of success, versus that of some of her staff:

Even like my staff, having a great night or had a really good weekend, but the young people had no issues and look back through the information it was because you gave them everything they wanted - that was not successful. So, was it successful in the moment for you, to get through a weekend of days, of 12-hour shifts? Sure. But what did it mean in the larger scheme in trying to sort those things out? Small steps would be my first thing that came to mind when I first think about success because you have to look at it from all angles. Then, the second part would be around, what success looks like and how you measure it? Because that's really important, and what you can't measure [...] because I think we've already alluded to it before, but you can't measure how many times someone didn't do that [...] how often are they thinking about suicide or how often are they thinking of those kind of things [...]. So, what exactly are you measuring?

Kyra's frustration is that the staff consider a "good shift" to be one in which there are no behavioural issues from the young people and everyone gets along. While this might make sense to a socialized practitioner, who is determining her own success based on the young people's responses to her, it does not fit with Kyra's own standards and expectations about how to effectively work with young people.

When Lucy was asked when she felt satisfied and successful in her role, she replied, "doing well at my job, being compliant with my standards, and I guess also my own moral and ethical compass, as well."

Facilitating Growth

All self-authoring and two transitioning participants talked about growth in themselves and those they supervised as hallmarks of success. Dennis described watching the youth care workers on his team starting to become competent as “magical.” He went on to say, “It's hard to not feel good about it selfishly, in a sense. ‘Ah! That is so awesome to see, and it's good to know that stuff's happening when I'm not here to guide you.’ It makes you worry less.” Similarly, when talking about the growth of staff on her team, Kyra said,

I know how good it feels to feel confident and competent, and you approach things in a very different way and I think that then translates into other aspects of your life as well. So, I think that when I see that, then you just get this warm and fuzzy feeling, like this person is doing okay.

Acknowledgment was also important to participants who were self-authoring. Unlike for those making meaning at the socialized order, this was more focused on professional competence, or the meeting of a personal goal, than other people's responses to them. Lucy defined success by the opportunities she had been given in the organization and the recognition associated with that:

Success. That sounds very egocentric [laugh] and not very client-based but probably my biggest moments of success are a couple of promotions I've had here and I also deliver training to inductees. I think you can get lost in the day-to-day grind of doing this sort of work and sometimes it doesn't work out, sometimes it does. So, for other people to go, “You can step up when you're ready to step up or you're ready to train others,” is really big recognition, I think [...] I really enjoy seeing workers that I've helped support to achieve at something. I really enjoy seeing that because I know it's hard work.

Ryan talked about success in terms of adding something to people's lives that they didn't have before:

Because sometimes, you get that sort of ... there is that sort of rigid thinking around certain clients [...] that low-functioning, they've reached their pinnacle or their plateau and there's not going to be any further change [...] I think it's always good to bring something to them that you can see that they really liked to do that they didn't have before.

Interviewer: Yeah. Why is that important to you?

Ryan: I think that that's a measure that you actually [...]. That's what the job is about [...]. That shows you that you're actually doing something worthwhile [...]. It shows the measure that you're not just babysitting, for a lack of term, but you're actually helping promote positive growth and development, not just maintaining where they are. But for me, it makes me feel like I'm actually contributing and actually doing something worthwhile. I think in terms of my job performance now, I suppose I always try to set down a milestone, goals and milestone indicators for performance and things like that.

Self-authoring participants were able to take perspective on interactions with the young people from a distance that did not appear to be as accessible to those who were socialized.

Dennis highlighted the value in “getting that phone call five years down the road with the kid saying, ‘You know what? That thing that you said, I've got that. I get it now.’” When asked what made that kind of experience so valuable, Dennis replied, “It's just reaffirming. It's so much of what happens in any of our homes, it is not stuff that we ever see, not ever.”

Because all of the self-authoring participants were supervisors, they talked a lot about their own growth as an indicator of success, and the growth they encouraged in the employees they supervised. Kyra suggested that the biggest indicator of that growth is when the staff “recognize

themselves.” Kyra explained, “That is, sometimes, where success comes from, from that really rough experience that you had. There's just a difference when you can see staff that you know that they got it, and how good they're feeling.” Dennis also emphasized the importance of helping the staff to grow:

In any helping situation I think with people, “How can I help this person so they can help themselves?” not “How can I help this person so they're dependent on me for the rest of their life?” Right? And so I view that the same way; they're gonna be happier, they're gonna be more confident at their job, and they're gonna feel better about themselves, and I get less phone calls and it's win-win-win for everybody [laughing].

Kyra and Dennis both value learning and development, and these self-authored principles govern their actions.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the themes for job satisfaction and success for participants who are self-authoring. These participants had their own internal frameworks against which to measure success. The themes were *meeting own goals and expectations*, *demonstrating competence*, and *facilitating growth*.

A strength of the self-authoring order is that individuals are able to determine their own sense of self through their internal governing system. They have the capacity to differentiate the self from others and can create and preserve roles and regulate relationships (Kegan, 1994).

Individuals in this meaning system can evaluate their own values, goals, and interpersonal connections and transcend their own needs and those of others in accordance with their own personal value system (Strang & Kuhnert, 2009). All self-authoring participants in this study demonstrated these strengths.

The limitation of the self-authoring order is that individuals are subject to the ideologies and principles of their own internal authority (Kegan, 1982, 1994). While they are no longer embedded in the relational realm, they are now embedded in their own ideology and identity. These limitations did not show up in the interviews as clearly as the strengths. This is possibly, in part, because the demands of the job do not require meaning-making beyond the self-authoring order. The limits of this way of knowing, therefore, are not regularly tested.

The Transitioning Mind

Individuals who are transitioning from socialized to self-authoring are caught between both ways of meaning-making. Their way of knowing is shifting from following others' visions and expectations to following their own (Baxter Magolda, 2009). According to Baxter Magolda (2009), this process includes the following steps:

1. Questioning External Authority
2. Constructing the Internal Voice
3. Listening to the Internal Voice
4. Cultivating the Internal Voice

The four transitioning participants in the study - Karen, Joel, Cathy, and Susan - represented three organizations. Some of the interview material for transitioning participants has already been presented in the socialized and self-authoring sections of this chapter. In this section, I present information that was unique to those who were transitioning. The themes for transitioning participants are shown in the right-hand column of Table 7.

Making a Difference

Like those who are socialized, transitioning participants identified the importance of relationships with the young people as a determinant of success. While they still rely on the

moment-to-moment connections to evaluate how they are doing, they have also, to varying degrees, developed the capacity to step back and reflect on those moments from outside the relationship. All transitioning participants indicated that they are developing their own internal criteria for assessing their job satisfaction and performance. For example, when talking about trust, Susan said,

I think because ... how to describe it? Because it shows to me that they're in a trusting place. They don't feel they're in chaos anymore; they're safe. So then they can work on up here instead of living on drugs and surviving, right? And I think that tells me that they finally feel comfortable, so they feel comfortable enough to open up and talk to me. So I think that it shows progress on their end and I think it's awesome.

Susan demonstrated the ability to talk about trust in terms of what it means for the young person irrespective of her role in the relationship. Similarly, Cathy talked about feeling “moved” upon running into a young person after she had left the program and “hearing the youth tell you that you have helped them.” When describing the meaning of that experience, Cathy said,

I guess it just gives me hope that, you know, despite all the hardships and how hard this job can be sometimes, you do get that shining star that comes through. And it kind of puts everything else in perspective that, you know, like you might have a really horrible day where you don't think anything's going to go right and, you know, you're feeling really a lot of despair for the youth, but then it can all change, it can all go back. Because like, I mean, I had those 12-hour shifts with this girl. Really, I had a lot of those 12-hour shifts - so it just gives me a lot of hope, that things can turn around for the better. Like, if we keep at it we might just get there. Guess it makes me feel validated in the work that I do - that I actually know what I am doing [laughs].

When asked how she was impacted when she didn't get that type of validation, Cathy replied,

It's discouraging. It makes me think, "Okay, am I doing my job right? Are there things that I could be doing better? Should I have done something differently?" It just kind of leaves too many questions. Now I don't know if it is just me wanting to feel validated all the time - maybe that is my own personal self-awareness, maybe.

Although Cathy is still relying on responses from the young people to determine how she feels about her performance, the awareness that she displays in the last line, that her frustration could be related to her and she may have some control over it, is illustrative of the emerging self-authoring meaning-making structure.

Susan talked about the value in hearing success stories about young people. She described the experience of having them call the program after they have left to check in with the staff as "awesome" and explained that

Just seeing them want to be connected and like they're in a good place. I think as it goes back to what we talked about in the beginning, the success piece, like, we impacted their life in some way, in a positive way that they have that trust and that stability in their life, that these people were there for me and they maybe never had that before, very little of and just - so that's cool.

Similarly, Joel talked about having the "need and want and drive to make a difference." He explained,

You can make a difference in so many ways. A lot of us tend to focus on the big things. You got that youth who's no longer punching holes in walls [...] but that's a big thing [...] when people see that, it's, "How did you do that? That's great." But, sometimes, just getting them to

say little things like “please” and “thank you” are so huge but so easy to overlook. So just try to remember those little things.

Instead of internalizing the immediate reactions of the young people as validation – or not – of his own performance, Joel can step back, evaluate them through pre-determined criteria, and take a perspective on the longer view. “Making a difference” appears to be emerging as an internal guiding principle for Joel. This is a wider framework than just wanting young people to be happy.

Internal Struggle

Many participants who were transitioning referenced growth, and the internal struggle associated with it, as both a challenge and a source of satisfaction. Conflict, and a strong push from their supervisor, were identified by transitioning participants as pivotal to their growth. Joel, when talking about the difficulty he was having with his supervisor spending more time away from the home, identified the benefits of having to rely on himself more:

For me, it pushes me. As stressful as it can be, as much as it can create that anxiety within myself to whether or not I'm able to do it, it pushes me. I'm personally someone who's really, really constantly seeking to do better and that really, in that way, it really pushes me.

Joel appears to be demonstrating the reconstruction of his relationship between self and other and developing a relationship to his relationships (Kegan, 1982). Out of necessity, and with considerable support, he is starting to rely on himself for things that were previously the domain of external authority figures.

The internal struggle was cited by transitioning participants as a necessary part of the growth process. Karen referenced the way in which a challenging situation with an employee triggered internal growth:

Even when I think back to [...] when I had that experience with that employee [...] if that were to happen now, one because I've already gone through and I'm expecting it, two just because where I'm at in my own development, it would be so different. So different. So I think that repetition of doing the same thing, and becoming professional at it, gives you the confidence. That's part of it. I also think self-awareness - being aware of the mental impact of your own stuff.

Likewise, Joel described his internal conflict as he struggled to reconcile feedback from his colleagues with his own emerging expectations for himself as a child and youth care practitioner:

Very quickly, I fell in love with it [...] I also started getting recognized by the people on my team, by my manager, and I felt really good to get that. And part of it for me is always wondering, "Have I done enough? Have I learned enough? Am I doing well enough? Can I do better? How can I do better?" That just creates a lot of internal struggle there.

In a similar fashion, Ryan, in reflecting back on his earliest days, talked about the anxiety associated with "starting on the wrong foot" and the feelings of being "wrecked" and "never going to be able to get back from that." This led to a period of growth, as described by Ryan below:

I don't know about whether it's culture shock but it's a really big, it changes the way that you do things and then you also - it's good in a way because at the end you experience a personal growth from it. So like you yourself, you become more adaptive and flexible and things like that, which is good, but at the start, it's really, I think sometimes, this organization is a bit, it can be really sink or swim like. I think we try, you try to support people as much as you can but there's still [...] there's nothing really like it.

Cathy has become aware that she can take responsibility for her own emotional responses and well-being and described the process of trying to release herself from the relational embeddedness with the young people. When talking about no longer taking on the young people's "stuff," Cathy said,

I used to. I doubt, like I said I don't anymore. I don't so much anymore. You know it was a real thing, you know. You can lead a horse to water, right? So, I mean I can offer all the tools and all the help and all the support, but they need to buy into the program too. It can just be - if they don't buy into it, it's not going to work. So, I try not to take this on myself. I can offer the solutions, I can offer to help, but that's all that I could do. But they need to be the one to take the first step.

Interviewer: Right and - again, how did you get to where you are able to not take that on yourself?

Cathy: A lot of positive self-talk. A lot of just in-the-moment reminders. "Okay, Cathy, this isn't about you." I guess through experience, really, experience. And again, my manager telling me, like, "Cathy, you've got to stop." I guess it comes to the realization that I can't, that I can't fix everything all the time, you know? Kinda tough pill as well to swallow, it's true [chuckles].

The passage above illustrates the process of transition that Cathy is experiencing. She indicates that she is aware of and able to identify that there is a new way of being, yet she is still subject to the external guidance to help herself get there.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the themes for job satisfaction and success unique to participants transitioning from socialized to self-authoring. The themes were *making a difference* and *internal struggle*.

The primary strength for individuals who are transitioning is the development of their internal voice and emerging ability to question the authority to which they had previously blindly adhered (Baxter Magolda, 2008). The main limitation, or cost, of transitioning is that individuals can become torn between following the expectations of others versus their own developing expectations (Berger, 2002). These strengths and limitations were demonstrated by all transitioning participants.

Summary

The research question focused on how the structure of meaning-making shapes individuals' experiences. Among the 18 participants interviewed, there were developmental differences in how they experienced job satisfaction and success, and coherence among participants of the same epistemological order and across organizations.

For socialized practitioners, the themes that emerged were *making others happy, being liked, and positive feedback from others*. Job satisfaction was located inside of their relationships with the young people and subject to the opinions of others.

For self-authoring participants, positive connections with the young people were important but did not define who they were or how they were doing. The themes that emerged for self-authoring participants were *meeting own goals and expectations, demonstrating competence, and facilitating growth*.

Developmental growth happens when the old order folds into the new order. It doesn't go away but becomes object - something we can take out, look at, and reflect on (Kegan, 1994). Participants who were transitioning demonstrated both socialized and self-authoring meaning-making during the interviews. The themes that emerged for transitioning participants were *making a difference* and *internal struggle*.

Composition of Participant Group

It is important to note that the composition of the participant group was unique and, in some ways, surprising. Of the 18 participants, seven were socialized, four were transitioning and seven were self-authoring. There was a higher percentage of self-authoring participants in this study, at 38%, than has been reported for the general adult population. Studies have shown that 18% - 34% of adults aged 19-55 make meaning at the self-authoring order, and 43% - 46% make meaning at the socialized order or in transition between socialized and self-authoring (Kegan, 1994).

In addition to the developmental breakdown, half of the participants were supervisors and all but one of the supervisors were self-authoring. The implications of the group composition on the results, and the broader ramifications in terms of child and youth care practice in residential care, are explored in depth in the Discussion Chapter.

Constructive-Developmental Theory Caveat

The results suggest that there are qualitative differences in the way that practitioners, and supervisors, at different orders of consciousness, experience job satisfaction and success. Although the material is presented in a way that highlights the coherence within and differences across developmental orders, this is not intended to represent the full range of experiences of participants or to box anyone into a narrow framework. It is important to emphasize that “more

complex” does not equate with “better.” Practitioners who are self-authoring are not necessarily any better at performing their job responsibilities than those who are socialized. Developmental order is just one part of who individuals are as practitioners and supervisors and has nothing to do with their knowledge, intelligence, skill, or commitment to the role - beyond the way in which they experience each of these constructs. “People can be kind or unkind, just or unjust, moral or immoral at any of these orders” (Berger, 2002, p. 39). The differences lie in how individuals make meaning and the fit or misfit between their order of mental complexity and the demands placed upon them. As illustrated by Kegan (1994) in his analogy of the automatic versus stick shift car, the increased complexity relates to who is shifting the gears. If child and youth care in residential care requires stick shift drivers, an understanding of the ways in which the environment can provide the necessary gear shifting could prevent some practitioners from becoming “in over their heads” (Kegan, 1994).

Constructive-developmental theory has been critiqued for its hierarchical nature and the presumption that more complex ways of knowing may be valued more highly than those that are less complex (McAuliffe, 2011). However, many theorists argue that developmental theory should rather be viewed as a hopeful enterprise. Berger states (2002), “Instead of seeing the ways that discussions of adult capacity are limiting, I see the ways that understanding different capacities can be supportive and liberating. This is not a stagnant typology of complexity; instead, it is dynamic and it suggests that capacity grows and changes in important ways over time” (p. 66). The value in exploring the ways in which child and youth care practitioners make meaning is to increase our understanding of what they need, and how we can best support them and help them to grow.

Exceptions

Constructive-developmental theory is one framework for understanding the way in which people make sense of the world and the differences between people. There is no theory, however, which explains all human being and doing. In that regard, analyzing the thematic content of the interviews was not a “neat and tidy” exercise and there were exceptions to the findings. These exceptions are presented in this section.

Sharon was the only socialized participant who did not specifically talk about the need to be liked. With regard to the young people, her main concern was that she was not allowed to discipline them “the way she was raised.” In her explanation of this, she did demonstrate the limits of her meaning-making structure in that she holds others responsible for her feelings:

Loss of ... maybe, having to back down to the child, or loss of sort of face. As far as, I mean that sounds really bad. But it's like ... you know, if you're going to be rude to me, these are the consequences. But I can't dish out consequences so I, you know, it's like they've won.

In Sharon's case, the traditional values in which she was embedded provided her with clear beliefs about parenting and discipline and these clashed with the values and beliefs of her organization. This was a source of conflict for Sharon.

Some socialized participants did identify criteria for success other than what was encompassed in the themes. Three socialized participants identified the attainment of goals as a measure of success. These were not self-directed goals, however, and were discussed in terms of success for the young person or the team rather than themselves. For example, Bonnie highlighted the importance of meeting shared goals:

To me that means that we are all doing our jobs well [...] all working together for a common goal [...] whether it's going to that program, or getting a job, or getting their license, like

everybody is working together for a common goal, and that makes me feel really good, that makes me feel like we are being successful.

The difference between Bonnie's articulation of meeting goals and that put forward by the self-authoring participants was in the *author* of the goals.

Julie talked about attainment of goals by the youth as a measure of success for them and her: When they talk about the future and the plans that they have, like getting jobs, when they go to school, when they're regularly employed, I'm very, very proud of them, and it makes me proud of myself for being part of that too.

Similarly, Anna identified life skills, work skills, and education as criteria for young people's success.

Tracy expressed that she feels good when she has successfully managed a crisis situation with the young people:

It can be during a very difficult situation, in which you have now managed to, let's say, calm down the youth and that can give you a real sense of competency and success, especially most likely, if it's been a positive, it's occurred in a positive manner, obviously that gives you a real sense of competency.

Final Comments

The data from the qualitative interviews indicates that the way in which participants make meaning impacts their experiencing of job satisfaction and success, and there is coherence within developmental orders and across organizations. In the next chapter, I look at what child and youth care workers and supervisors in residential care identify as the primary challenges in their role. In Chapter 6, I look at the ways in which they cope with these challenges.

CHAPTER 5: CHALLENGES

In Chapter 4, I presented the thematic analysis results for job satisfaction and success. In this chapter, I present the results of the thematic analysis related to challenge. In particular, I address the question: What do child and youth care practitioners, with different meaning-making systems, identify as the primary challenges of their role and how do they experience the challenges?

During the subject-object interviews, participants were asked what aspects of their job were the most challenging. In addition to answering this specific question, they talked about sources of challenge during other parts of the interview, in particular when responding to the prompt cards for “anger,” “anxiety,” and “overwhelmed.” The themes are presented in three sections: socialized, self-authoring, and transitioning. As mentioned previously, of the 18 participants in the study, seven were socialized, seven were self-authoring, and four were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring.

Table 8 provides an overview of the subject-object balance at each constructive-developmental order (Kegan, 1982) and the challenge themes from participants. As described in Chapter 3, the interviews were analyzed thematically. I started with the category “challenges” and searched the data set to identify and code related excerpts from the interviews. After the coding was completed, I engaged in an iterative process of identifying themes. Patterns and themes of challenges were analyzed through a constructive-developmental lens (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

Table 8

Subject-Object Balance of Constructive-Developmental Orders and Participant Themes on Primary Challenges

Developmental order	Subject (embedded in)	Object (can reflect on or take control of)	Themes from participants (challenges)
Instrumental	Needs, wishes & interests	Impulses & perceptions	N/A
Socialized	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Needs, wishes & interests	Dealing with personal attacks Dealing with conflict Dealing with ambiguity
Transitioning	N/A	N/A	Emerging from embeddedness Role separation
Self-Authoring	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Not meeting own values and standards Witnessing others' pain
Self-Transforming	Inter-individuality and interpenetration of systems	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	N/A

Note. Table constructed with information from Kegan (1982).

The Socialized Mind

At the socialized order, individuals are embedded in the relational realm. They cannot know themselves separate from the interpersonal context (Kegan, 1982). In the residential care environment, this leaves practitioners with a socialized meaning-making system particularly vulnerable in some key areas. These vulnerabilities, associated with the challenges of working in residential care from a socialized mind, will be presented in this section.

In Chapter 4, the themes for practitioners making meaning at the socialized order, with regard to job satisfaction, were *making others happy, being liked, and positive feedback from others*. As

shown on the right-hand side of Table 8, the challenges involve *dealing with personal attacks*, *conflict*, and *ambiguity*.

Dealing With Personal Attacks

All individuals who participated in the study worked in residential programs with a mandate to provide a therapeutic environment to young people with “complex needs.” The children and youth were dealing with a multitude of issues, including severe trauma histories and developmental disabilities. Practitioners were regularly subjected to a range of volatile behaviours from the young people including self-harm, running away, suicide attempts, verbal threats, and physical violence. Having to deal with young people who were angry and aggressive, and their associated pain, was identified by all but one of the participants with a socialized mindset as a very challenging aspect of their job. The biggest challenge was not, however, the physical act of dealing with these behaviours; it was the personal toll it took on the practitioners themselves. Six participants who were making meaning at the socialized order and all of those who were transitioning identified that dealing with personal attacks was particularly challenging. This is illustrated in the following dialogue, in which Tracy talked about how depressing it was for her to be continuously threatened and sworn at by the young people:

And let's face it. You're cursed at a lot during the day and you're threatened a lot during the day, and you just don't feel very good. I mean, nobody wants to be cursed at. And after a while, it doesn't matter how many times that everyone says, “Oh, don't take it seriously.” If you've been cursed at for basically off and on for 12 hours or something like that, then it's pretty hard not to take it personally.

Tracy's distress appears to be reflective of the *way* in which she makes meaning of the situation. At the socialized order, individuals experience others as responsible for their own

emotional reactions to them and are therefore captive to the other to change how they feel. An individual making meaning at the socialized order "...cannot actually set things right by herself. Things will be set right when her inner psychological life is happier, but her inner psychological life is not an 'object' under her control" (Kegan, 1994, p. 122). For individuals with a socialized mindset a personal attack is not experienced as an interruption in the relationship, it is experienced as an interruption of the self (Kegan, 1982).

Julie identified that she had not yet experienced a young person outright hating her, and said she often asked herself how she would respond if it did happen. She did relay a situation with a young person in which he told her off "completely" and she described feeling "very unsettled" after that incident. Similarly, Miranda reported feeling "overwhelmed" when dealing with aggression from young people:

Basically, aggression and stuff is always the hardest because you know that it's coming from a place of pain. So, you know that the child isn't trying to hit you in the head, or they're not really trying to curse at you. They're just trying to explain what's going on with them. So, a lot of that's really challenging because you get the emotional, like, "Oh, my God. They're freaking out at me. They hate me," but you just, I think that's most challenging because you kind of go into it knowing like, "Okay. I can help them this way and I'll" [...] I find, like at first it's like you're trying to do your best for them and it's like nothing's working. So, it kind of feels like that's what's hard to move forward from and sometimes it just feels like, "Oh, my God. I don't know what I'm doing here," and you get overwhelmed and stuff. But as long as you're able to kind of go in the next day with a fresh approach, and even if they curse at you again, you keep trying.

Miranda is aware that the young people's behaviour is "not about her" and she tries to remind herself of this when she encounters a difficult situation. However, information she has received in training and from her supervisor about not personalizing the young people's behaviours has been interpreted through Miranda's socialized consciousness. Messages from others that she should not take things personally often leave her feeling worse. "Not personalizing" requires an emotional self that one has control over. At the socialized order, the self is embedded in the relational realm. Although Miranda describes valiant efforts to separate her reactions from the young people, it appears that she cannot yet fully generalize to her practice what she has been taught. That generalization would require that she be able to step back and create some distance from the situation in which she is embedded (Berger, 2002).

Joel found it more difficult to deal with verbal and sexual acting out behaviour than physical. As hard as it was to deal with during the incident, it got even harder afterwards because that was when he "started to internalize things a bit more." Susan also internalized comments from young people, and described the emotional reaction she has to young people trying to "manipulate" her:

I just think like "What are they getting from it? What do they want?" And like, they're trying to get something from me to make me, separate me from staff, something like that [...] I don't know if they're trusting or if it's like them not liking me or whatever of that, not exactly sure what it is [...] but there's something there that, they want something from me and they're doing it purposely to get something out of me and then that pisses me off.

The excerpt above highlights the way in which Susan holds the young people responsible for her reaction to their behaviour. This is characteristic of individuals at the socialized order. In addition to holding others responsible for their feelings, socialized individuals also assume responsibility for the feelings of others (Kegan, 1994). This was illustrated by Bonnie while

discussing the difficulty she experiences exercising supervisory authority with employees.

Bonnie said that it was hard for her to be a supervisor because sometimes her employees only saw her as a friend. When asked what the hardest part of this was for her, Bonnie replied, “Because I want to be Bonnie the friend. I really hate being the manager.” As this was explored further, the following dialogue ensued:

Bonnie: I hate being the bad guy. Because this job is already hard enough, I just hate being the bad guy.

Interviewer: How do you do it?

Bonnie: I am very, I always do the shit sandwich, where it's, I don't have trouble addressing it because I feel that that is, I think it depends on the level where they are at in their job. So if there was someone brand new, and they presented me with something, I would have no problem just going through, walking them through it, and discussing with saying, “Hi, this is some stuff you need to work on.” If I received that same work from a manager that I have been supervising for over twelve months, I would not even edit it. I would read it and put it back in front of them and say, “You need to look at this again before you give it to me.” So I don't have trouble addressing that with them. I think it's just more of, I don't know. It's different [...] like it depends on the issue.

Interviewer: Does it depend in any way on what you think their response might be?

Bonnie: Yes, a lot. And how they will react. Some people are very good at taking on feedback, some people just melt in front of you and shut down, and I think when you know that people are going to shut down...

Interviewer: You don't want to be responsible for that.

Bonnie: No. And I think that when people shut down, they are not hearing what you are saying as well.

Interviewer: What's the worst thing that could happen? If you were addressing something with an employee, what would be the worst outcome?

Bonnie: They would judge me. I wouldn't be Bonnie, the friend. I would be Bonnie, the boss, which is my job, but maybe the relationship would be severed a little bit.

Dealing With Conflict

In addition to her difficulty with “being the boss,” Bonnie acknowledged that she has difficulty dealing with conflict. When asked to identify the worst thing about conflict, Bonnie said,

Gosh! I don't know. I just don't like it. I don't like to be seen in that light. I don't like other people to see me in that light because I don't think it's [...] a part of me that I want people to associate with me.

Conflict was identified as a stressor by all participants at the socialized order and three of those who were transitioning. Cathy, for example, described herself as becoming “anxious and nervous” when dealing with situations in which the outcome “may not be favourable.” She said,

I guess again going back to policies and procedures and protocols like, “I know, I'm going to get told off when they come. I'm going to get screamed at.”

Interviewer: What would be the biggest source of your anxiety in regard to that kind of scenario?

Cathy: I don't like conflict. I don't like anger [chuckles]. I don't know if that sounds so bad being in the line of work that I am, but I always try to find a way to resolve things with less conflict as possible, right? So, you know, knowing that this one youth in particular, she's

going to, if we say this to her she's going to come home and she's going to freak out, she's going to tear the house apart. But, again, this is what we're being told to do so I guess that, so I guess I feel nervous that I know what's going to happen.

For participants who were making meaning at the socialized order, the avoidance of conflict stemmed from a combination of wanting to be liked and not wanting to make others feel bad. For example, Sharon talked about her difficulty in providing constructive feedback to families because she does “not want to hurt their feelings.” As mentioned previously, individuals making meaning at the socialized order gave others responsibility for how they felt and assumed responsibility for the feelings of others.

Transitioning participants also personalized events and talked about needing to be liked. Supervisors who were socialized or transitioning experienced the same issues with personalizing the behaviour of their employees as the front-line practitioners did with the young people. For example, Karen described her response to a negative altercation with an employee:

And actually, this week I'll be chatting with them, but I still have not had a chance to chat with them and say, “What was that about?” And so the initial reaction was anger [...] and I thought, “What are you here for if you're going to allow that to go on?” right. The other piece was a little bit of me feeling a little bit let down, thinking, “What, I thought you were invested here like, what are you doing? What's this?”

Karen's feeling “let down” is indicative of her socialized meaning-making system. She is embedded in the relationship and feeling personally betrayed, rather than being able to take perspective on the situation and perhaps view the employee's behaviour as betrayal of a contract or agreement, or of himself.

Participants who were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring were able to recognize when they were internalizing or personalizing comments from others and reflect on this. They had not yet developed the capability, however, to completely determine their own worth irrespective of significant others' opinions of them and this was a source of internal tension. They still relied on "external authority to support the use of their growing self-authored voices" (Berger, 2002, p. 120). Susan, for example, was aware that she "should not" need others to like her, yet this caused conflict for her in her work with the young people:

There was a young person who we had recently, who I did not connect with. Just, I went and spoke to different supervisors, different staff, all that. I'm really struggling. I think that he was so disrespectful to women and that really, with my thing, it was just like my countertransference piece and I was like, "This really pisses me off." I can't like this young person because that was something that I needed to sort through but through conversations, there's like - he was angry and cursing on staff so it's like, trying to help him, but then I needed it to check myself at the same time. So I found it really overwhelming working with that young person because he made me angry.

Julie talked about the challenge of getting other people's opinions "out of her head" when she felt like she had a connection with a young person and other people had different opinions. When asked how that impacted her, she said,

You question yourself. You question the youth. It makes you wonder why it's different for you and not them, and if you deluded yourself into thinking there's something there that isn't. So, I guess, the first thing is doubting myself.

When asked what was most challenging about that, Julie said that she "tried to be open-minded and objective" but it was "not always easy." She went on to explain:

If there's a youth that people believe are hard to connect with, then if I feel like I've connected with them, it makes me doubt whether I really have or not [...] I'm learning as I go and trying to stay open-minded and try to shut out the other voices when they're [...] I'm very influenced by other people's opinion so [...] I'm tired.

Julie, although still making meaning at the socialized order, has started the transition process.

She is aware that she can have her own voice yet is still subject to the opinions of others. Her declaration that she is “tired” at the end of the passage illustrates the amount of effort Julie must exert to keep the voices out. Julie has not yet developed a full self-authoring structure.

Dealing With Ambiguity

Individuals making meaning at the socialized order struggle with ambiguity and rely on clear direction and external guidelines. They need to know what others expect from them (Kegan, 1994). All participants at the socialized order discussed the difficulty in dealing with situations in which there was ambiguity or a lack of clear direction. For example, Julie talked about the challenge of working in new homes, saying, “I don't know what people expect of me, and then in the houses, like the different rules. I don't know the kids very well. I don't know how they react to things [...]. So that was a challenge.” In a similar example, Tracy expressed that working with new staff can be anxiety-provoking:

It takes a while to form a bond with your teammate and see how they're going to react to any given situation, and how the two of you are going to work together. So any time when someone new comes in [...] you sort of feel on your own a little bit until you feel open to the other person.

Taking on new and unfamiliar experiences can be difficult for anyone, regardless of how they are making meaning. There are similarities in these two situations, however, that go beyond just

dealing with something new. Individuals making meaning at the socialized order have not yet developed an enduring self that exists outside of their relationships to the program, supervisor, or colleagues with whom they are most aligned. They do not have the confidence that they can handle whatever comes up, regardless of where they are or who they are with, because they do not know *who they will be* in those contexts. Who they are, as practitioners, is subject to who they are working with.

“Dealing with change” was also cited as a significant challenge for many socialized and transitioning participants. According to Cathy, “too much change can create too much chaos.” Miranda described her distress when dealing with change:

With change, basically, I don't like change very much. I do whatever I can to get used to it. It makes me really anxious and nervous and upset sometimes for change, but I know, I try to find, like, the good in it too. Like, it just takes me more time to kind of get used to it because I like to know what to expect. I think you just get used to things the way things are and then when something like throws a wrench in it, it kind of makes you overwhelmed or it takes time to, like, adjust to it, and it just makes me - I'm just used to kind of going with the norm and you get so fixated on where you are and then anything that will change, but it's a part of life, so it's just something that I've been working on.

The most troubling part of change for participants was “not knowing what to expect.” This relates back to the difficulty dealing with ambiguity. Individuals at the socialized order rely on external authority for values, standards, direction, and a sense of identity (Popp & Portnow, 2001). Without external guidance, and in the absence of a self-governing system that can take control, socialized individuals can be left floundering (Kegan, 1982).

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the challenge themes for participants making meaning at the socialized order. Socialized individuals experienced the most challenge when *dealing with personal attacks, conflict, and ambiguity*. As stated in Chapter 4, individuals at the socialized order derive satisfaction through *making others happy, being liked, and receiving positive feedback from significant others*. Their primary sources of challenge directly impacted them in these three areas.

As mentioned previously, strengths of the socialized order are that individuals have empathy and can focus on the needs of others. They find support in shared experiences and mutually rewarding relationships and can be loyal (Kegan, 1994). Socialized participants in this study went out of their way to meet the needs of the young people and support their co-workers, often at great cost to themselves. One of the limits of this order is that acceptance by others is of critical importance, and others' opinions are paramount. Socialized individuals are likely to express what they think others want to hear. Any form of conflict is perceived as a breach of the mutuality and loyalty they search for in relationships (Kegan et al., 2001).

The Self-Authoring Mind

All self-authoring participants in the study worked in management or supervisory roles. The content of their interviews, therefore, was more focused on issues pertaining to the supervision of staff than direct care of the young people, although the latter was raised. Since the differences in meaning-making systems are related to the structure or *way* in which people make meaning, these differences can be observed irrespective of context or content.

For self-authoring individuals, who are no longer made up of their relationships but have a relationship to their relationships, the source of their "own continued well-being and integrity is

not limited to its life within the shared reality of the relationship” (Kegan, 1994, p. 127). The challenges faced by self-authoring participants are presented in this section.

Not Living Up to Own Values and Standards

Self-authoring individuals have developed their own internal system, or set of guiding values and principles, and can articulate where these came from (Kegan, 1994). Often, the biggest challenge they face in the role involves potential violation of their internal guidelines. All self-authoring participants reported struggling when they did not meet their own standards. Being and appearing competent was important to them, and this was defined by their internal ideology. Dennis, in the example below, talked about his struggle to recognize that he would not be able to effect change with all employees:

I think part of it was just coming to a realization that no matter how skilled I think I am in certain things, I'm just not going to be able to effect change with everybody. It's just not reality. But I remember those, specifically with a couple of people, specifically with one youth care worker when I first get in the [...] role. I was very frustrated about their viewpoint on things and stuff. And I tried here and there. We're talking about things, “Have you ever thought about looking at it from this angle” and “You thought about this, you thought about that,” and it's getting nowhere. I don't want to suggest that you just give up with people. That's not what I mean. But sometimes...

Interviewer: Recognizing limitations is helpful.

Dennis: Yes absolutely, because you could drive yourself crazy if you don't. I think with that particular person, I just got to a point that I could [...] my time could be spent better elsewhere. I just keep hitting against a brick wall and then I felt it was really not much that I

was going to be able to do there. So yes, I think that was probably the best thing that could have happened to me with that particular person.

In this example, it is clear that the pressure to “effect change with everyone” was internally driven. Unlike individuals at the socialized order, who are focused on meeting others’ demands, Dennis is under pressure to meet his own demands.

Situations in which they felt like they might be required to compromise their values or principles were brought up as very challenging for those who were self-authoring. When asked to identify the most challenging part of his job, Raymond quickly replied, “The compromise and the sacrifice of some values and beliefs that I have surrounding how to be with people.” Lucy similarly identified that one of her biggest challenges was knowing what is in the best interests of a client and having to accept less than that due to funding and other systemic constraints. For Tara, “it’s generally things about not having [...] a say [...] nothing is being done that I think should be done or I want to be done.” Tara elaborated:

The worst thing about that is that I know that it’s not necessarily the right decision and I think they know that, but their hands are tied and they proceed - not that they don’t care, but that’s what it appears, that they don’t care, because they’re doing it anyway and say, “Okay, we’ll figure it out.” Or, “We don’t have any options.” Generally what happens, it seems like everyone is in agreement but we’re not doing it [...]. So how come? How come we can’t push back a little bit more? Or [...] “Let’s have another conversation around this, [...] so well, can we have a meeting, or can we have a discussion, or do we have any input here?” It’s that kind of thing. It seems like it’s more and more of that happening.

Raymond discussed his discomfort with “playing the political game” and his refusal to compromise his integrity:

In working with families there's an authenticity, a genuineness, a very real sense of what people want to accomplish. I'm finding it different in the world of politics [...]. The power and justice there seems to be some less than genuine ways of being with people. You know, I'm learning that sometimes that has to be, so I'm finding that very conflicting. I understand that I don't have a tremendous skill in that yet and I'm not sure that I'm going to develop one. I'm probably going to bring forth who I am and how I do. And I've had some successes with that with some senior people and it, I know it's building trust with them. I'm not expecting to change them at all, but I'm not sure that I'm interested in changing me to fit into this way of communicating. So that's gonna make, I suspect, for some uncomfortable moments in that way.

Raymond demonstrates clearly that he has a *self* over which he has control. His conflict does not lie within his relationship and he is not worried about meeting external expectations that are imposed on him. Raymond's loyalty is to his own self-governing system. At the self-authoring order, one has developed the capacity to "alter our behaviour or not in accordance with our *own* purposes, standards and convictions, for which choice we are now responsible" (Kegan, 1994, p. 125).

Natasha expressed that one of her biggest challenges, and the only time she had been angry working at her organization, was

when changes are not communicated and around [...] things that I feel are unfair because they are in a position of power to the kids, or when changes have happened that haven't been communicated across the board, it has caused harm to the team or to the kids. As a support you could have changed that with just one phone call. That's when I get angry.

As with the previous examples, Natasha's frustration stemmed from a violation of her internal set of values and principles. Similarly, Kyra expressed frustration with "systems issues" that got in the way of doing what was best for the young people in her program. She very clearly demonstrated the capacity to take ownership of her own values and beliefs. The process through which she became able to do this is briefly illustrated in the following excerpt:

Yes, and if they change your values to change with experiences that you have, I know probably one of the biggest ones I always talk about for myself, which is a really big part of what's really important here too, is that I would have struggled initially to say like, "Okay, my expectation would be, specifically for my family, like your family loves you unconditionally [...] your mom is your mom and your mom takes care of you;" that's not the case for a lot of people. So I learned that fairly early in and would have probably felt initially, in early stages of education and experience, would have felt very angry towards the families for the impact that they would have on the young people, but had to step outside and realize that they were doing the best they could [...] but I wouldn't have realized that without a lot of discussions and insight-oriented development, and all those kinds of things as well.

In this example, Kyra demonstrated that she has moved beyond being captive to an ideal, such as "mothers should take care of their children," and has developed a wider ideology against which she can reflect on, and modify as needed, individual values and ideals.

Cathy expressed concerns about policies that she believes are harmful to the young people in her home:

Right now, with one particular youth that I am working with, a lot of the policies and procedures and protocols around that youth I think are actually causing more frustration and harm than good. It's very frustrating. It is really frustrating. I mean, all I can do is voice my

concern and make suggestions, and like, “Hey, you know, but because we’re doing X, Y, and Z, they’re acting this way, when we can do A, B, and C and those behaviours might not be there anymore.” But that’s all I can do. It’s just offer the suggestion and hope that it falls on somebody’s ears that would actually listen and possibly take it into account.

Interviewer: Yeah. What are the things that frustrate you the most about that? Because it doesn’t sound like you’re getting positive responses all the time.

Cathy: No, it’s just like, “Oh, we will take it into consideration,” and like, months down the road, like, “You know, we’re still having these issues and nothing’s changed. Have we tried to change it? Have we, you know, spoke to the other higher ups to see if we can change it?” It just seems to fall on deaf ears all the time. So that makes me angry and frustrated.

There is a slight difference in the way Cathy, who is transitioning, experiences this situation versus those who are self-authoring. Although Cathy has clear ideas about the way in which they should be working with this young person and is frustrated that these ideas have not been implemented, her frustration does not originate from a violation of her internal guiding principles. Rather, she is frustrated at the impact the decisions that have been made are having on the young person and her own ability to effectively deal with situations as they arise.

Many self-authoring participants, some of whom were new to the supervisor role, identified that one of their challenges was not getting to spend as much time with the young people as they would like. Concerns about separating from the young people were part of a larger struggle to meet their own expectations in relation to the multiple demands of the role. Dennis expressed,

There’s parts in my role now that I miss other stuff a lot. I miss working directly with the kids, and at times, I’ve noticed myself kind of drifting to doing that, so I’m like pulling myself back. Because it is not really my role now. I do miss that.

Natasha also talked about missing the young people and, in particular, “not seeing all those little wins” with the young people. Natasha stated,

I really find joy in just hanging out with sassy teenage girls or energetic little kids. I think stepping back from that, it was kind of hard to find that reason to keep coming back, I guess. Like am I making that big of a difference when I'm not there doing those things every day - challenging those behaviours or routines, and patterns? Yeah. It was more of a: “Am I just a pencil pusher now?”

In both of these examples, the source of conflict came from their own beliefs about who they were as professionals. Both Natasha and Dennis struggled to reconcile their views of themselves with the responsibilities of their new roles. Similarly, Raymond described struggling to meet the demands of his new role and, in particular, letting go of some of his former responsibilities:

And there were certainly moments where I felt overwhelmed and I think that was just, it was just some workload things - longer days, longer weeks, but consistently I'm getting overwhelmed, if I can use that word, I will use that word, with letting go of my last portfolio and trusting it to somebody else and not meddling. I get overwhelmed. “Are they going to see this? Are they going to see - like I...” [chuckles].

Interviewer: What are your concerns there? What are your biggest fears?

Raymond: Well if they miss something, it can make more work. It can undermine themselves, and by that I mean if they miss something, then their subordinates perhaps feel less safe because, you know. And then they'll beat themselves up for way too long because that's what they're like, but that's the learning curve. That's what it's about [...] and I'm a terrible enabler when it comes to that. You want people to have success, but that is done through tripping and falling sometimes, right?

Witnessing Others' Pain

One of the prompt words in the subject-object interviews was “pain,” so it was a topic that all participants discussed. Those who were socialized tended to focus on their own pain, although the pain of the young people was referenced in these conversations. Participants who were self-authoring and transitioning identified being witness to the pain of the young people and the staff as a challenging part of their role. Ryan shared the way in which front-line practitioners “take on” the pain of the young people:

I think a lot of that sort of stuff I talked about, like the pain stuff is [...] you did take a lot of this. You see their emotional suffering and you do take a bit of that sort of stuff. I mean to be, I notice with empathy, you wanted to be careful. You don't want to just directly experience all that stuff to yourself.

Ryan is able to reflect on the experience of absorbing the young people's pain with some distance from the relationship. He recognizes that he has control over how emotionally involved he can become, and the ability to extract himself as needed. Also, while talking about the impact of seeing the young people in pain, Natasha relayed the following:

Pain ... I've been assaulted a lot in this job. Especially between the crisis response stuff. But pain, I think the first thing I thought of is the pain that you see on the kids' faces. How hard that is to watch. I think everyone that works in youth care is empathetic. It's almost like when they feel that pain, you feel it too. So, like Dad doesn't turn up to contact. Or they are embarrassed at school because they are not allowed to go on an excursion and everyone else is. Or whatever it is, you, I think more so than your own stress or physical pain from assaults or whatever, it's more watching the kids go through pain that is really hard about this job.

Interviewer: What's the hardest part of that?

Natasha: When you can't change it. Yeah. So, I mean, when kids can't go home. Or when parents don't turn up to contact.

In her description, Natasha reveals that she has the capacity to feel empathy for the young people without taking on their pain as her own. This is evidence of a self-authoring construction. Kyra talked about the challenge of seeing the staff in pain:

When you take it, you take it with you, like you take it, you breathe it day in and day out, and if you don't do anything about it then it has real implications [...] compassion fatigue. It's been very hard so seeing the pain, understanding it, knowing where the young people and families are coming from and also where the staff are coming from, and then like, I think some of the things I've struggled with the most is actually seeing a change in the staff. These amazing, wonderful people who do amazing work and you see their personalities change [...] but in the same way that you can't make a young person, you can't do the treatment, we also can't save the staff. That's often time the really hard part and you see it happening and you do your initial supervisions, you do your group supervisions, you do your informal chats, you do your check-ins, but you can't stop it, and you have no control over it, so you provide the information, you provide the resources, you give them the pamphlets, you set up those kinds of things, but it doesn't mean that they're going to be okay.

Dennis expressed a similar sentiment:

So it was painful for me to watch the youth care workers being in pain [...] but I mean, on some I've seen it, obviously that or some version of that, happen so many times over the years. It wasn't necessarily new, but it was new in terms of my role, and it was new in terms of not being a part of that group of people necessarily that were feeling that pain. Those things were new for me.

Although challenged to deal with the pain of others, for self-authoring participants the challenge was not internal but was related to having empathy, and providing support, for the individuals who were in pain. They are able to do this because they were no longer embedded in the interpersonal. As stated by Kegan (1994),

When the self [...] is bigger than those co-constructions and thus no longer identified with them the source of its own sense of continued well-being and integrity is not limited to its life within the shared reality of the relationship [...]. But if we neither identify with the internal registering of how the other feels nor ignore it, but are able instead to be in relationship to it, then we do not leave off caring for the other, we leave off being made up by our caring. We become able to do something with our caring for the other. (p. 126)

Joel talked about the challenge associated with witnessing a young person's pain, but from a different perspective. His concern was related to not making a difference, which is one of his internal guiding principles:

And to me, as terrifying as the idea of being pushed down the stairs or having him do something else - there was a glass right next to him, I could, he was the type who would smash that and try to use that as a weapon. So, there are all these scenarios running through my head, but for me, the scariest part of it is knowing that this may be happening here and now, but we're in a controlled situation. The idea of not being able to, in the long term, effect change within his life and his behaviours, understanding the type of trauma he could potentially inflict on others down the road, to me that was the hardest part of it.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the challenge themes for participants who are self-authoring. These participants were challenged when they encountered threats to their own internal governance

system. The themes for those at the self-authoring order were: *not meeting own values and standards* and *witnessing others' pain*. These relate to the themes presented in Chapter 4 for satisfaction, *meeting own goals and expectations*, *demonstrating competence*, and *facilitating growth*.

Individuals who are self-authoring, because their loyalty is to their own internal system, are able to hold onto multiple loyalties in their relationships with others:

Even when the experience the other is having is a negative experience about us, we can connect to the regret, anger or disappointment the other is feeling about having it. Our relationship to the other includes, in a powerful way, our recognition of the other's relationship to herself. (Kegan, 1994, p. 128)

Self-authoring individuals experience conflict as an inevitable part of the learning process rather than something to be avoided (Kegan et al., 2001).

The limitation of the self-authoring order is that the individual's identity is now subject. They do not have the capacity to reflect on the limitations of their internal governing system. For example, Raymond, who is self-authoring, talked at length about his difficulty dealing with the "political games." Raymond has a very clear sense of who he is and is governed by a core set of values and ideology. He is very flexible and adaptable, and open to new ideas and approaches *within his internal ideology* about how to be with people. What Raymond is unable to do is reflect on this system. One of his internal guiding principles appears to be connected to being authentic and genuine. Raymond cannot conceive of a situation in which being anything other than "himself" would be beneficial.

The Transitioning Mind

While transitioning between constructive-developmental orders, adults will hold onto the current order and experiment with the next. It is during this experimentation that a person will face challenges and perhaps struggle while taking on board a new way of making meaning (Berger, 2002). As such, many of the themes that showed up for socialized and self-authoring participants also emerged for those who were transitioning. Some of the interview material for transitioning participants has already been presented in the socialized and self-authoring sections of this chapter. In this section, I present information that was unique to those who were transitioning.

Role Separation

One of the difficulties experienced by individuals at the socialized order is that they tend to be defined by a singular role and have difficulty managing multiple roles at the same time (Berger, 2002). All participants who were transitioning discussed the ways in which they were trying to become less enmeshed in their professional roles. Attempting to take control of their work life – rather than being controlled by it – required great effort. In the dialogue with Cathy below, she demonstrates the tension that exists between her socialized system, through which she is embedded in her role as a child and youth care worker, and her newly emerged self-authoring system, through which she has become aware that multiple roles can co-exist and she can manage them:

Sometimes in this line of work I find that I lose myself in the job or I lose the fact that I'm a mother. You know, yes, I'm a child and youth care worker when I work, but I'm also a mom at home and I'm a daughter, and I'm a wife and I lose those bits of me sometimes when the work seems to be overwhelming all the other aspects.

Interviewer: How do you keep that separation between your work life and everything else?

Cathy: At work, I notify that my days off are my days off. I don't check any reports. I don't pick up any extra shifts. I don't answer my phone if it's work calling [...]. I go and I work my 12 hours and then when I'm off at 7 p.m., that's it, I'm off. That's when I'm the mom, that's when I'm a daughter, that's when I'm the wife and that's when Cathy is not a child and youth care worker.

Interviewer: Right, and how are you able to do that?

Cathy: A lot of self-reflection. Again, going back to my old manager saying, "Cathy stop," right? And I guess my daughter telling me that I work too much [...]. They are the days I realize, okay, you know what, maybe work has been consuming me too much.

Susan also talked about the separation of roles and the effort she put in to keep them separate:

I do not think about work at all when I leave there. I have become really, I've never, ever - some people would say to me, "I would never be able to do what you do; I would take it home." Once in a while, there's a young person who gets my heartstrings, but I think I'm really good at compartmentalizing work stuff and then just going home and like, I really go to self-care, I meditate, I read, I journal, yoga. I'm really good at my self-care, so do better than others, but so I think that - and I just know that if I bring it home, it will impact school, it will impact my relationships. And I think I've always known that, so I've always made a conscious effort to separate it.

Similarly, Joel described the elaborate strategies he has put in place to enable him to separate his work life from his home life:

So, a lot of self-care, a lot of relaxation techniques, lots of breathing, mindfulness. So, constantly being aware of how I am feeling and how I'm feeling not permeating into my work,

being able to understand and check things at the door, or when I can't, being able to remove myself from a situation or an incident. Availing of employee assistance programs and counseling services that I have access to, taking advantage of my sick days and my vacation days, because at the end of the day, if I can't take care of myself, I can't take care of anyone else. I think that's true for anyone, really.

For Karen, the main source of her struggle with separation came from feeling responsible for what was happening at work even when she was not working. Karen described her internal conflict between wanting to check in with her team and knowing that she should leave whatever happens while she is off to the supervisor on shift. When asked about the source of this conflict, Karen replied,

Yeah, that's my need to protect other people and I think it comes from... I mean, I can say, well, it comes from because I'm the supervisor and it's my job, but really it's my own stuff coming out right? I think it's my own need to kind of be part of the team and I don't feel part of the team when I'm out, when I'm at home and they're the ones, they're dealing with that kind of, those kinds of situations.

Emerging From Embeddedness

The biggest challenge for participants who were transitioning was the internal conflict associated with the transition process. The areas in which this conflict occurred varied among transitioning participants, but there was coherence in the meaning that participants ascribed to these events or situations. All participants reflected back on pivotal transition points and identified the importance of this conflict in triggering their own personal and professional growth.

When talking about what he found the most challenging in his role, Joel discussed his transition from working with “easy” children to more challenging youth. He described being “forced into dealing with that and that was very painful.” He also identified that the pain “really pushed” him to want to do even better.

Susan, in talking about a negative encounter with a young person, was able to question the validity of her own responses, saying, “I guess maybe the question is like, is it me and my values, or is just something that they don't like about me?” When asked about the impact this type of self-questioning has on her, Susan replied that “it sucks.” She then went on to say,

But then, I think like I mentioned earlier, I feel, maybe I'm wrong in saying this, I feel like I'm good at like recognizing the countertransference piece and then you're like, “Okay there's something I need to let go of here and then to hold onto something.” So [...] I have to like, meet my supervisor every week and talk about my clients and whatnot. I feel like, especially in the past year, I have become much more aware of that.

Susan's growth has been assisted by her supervisor and an education program she is enrolled in, in which she has been learning about the concept of “transference” and “countertransference.” Susan identified that this has helped her to start seeing things differently.

One of the drawbacks of relying so heavily on the opinions of others is that, once this is brought to conscious awareness, individuals can become self-conscious when in the presence of influential co-workers or supervisors. For Susan, who is transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, being on the floor with her supervisor, who she admires, interferes with her developing ability to make decisions based on her own emerging internal guiding principles:

But sometimes when someone else is watching, like my supervisor is to me, for example, she's phenomenal to me. I just watch her and I'm like, “Oh my God, she's so good.”

Interviewer: Right, so when you're with someone else, there's a tendency for you to not be...

Susan: Not feel so confident.

Interviewer: Yeah, have you had situations where you're there, but you had to pull yourself away from that to kind of be like, "Okay I don't care what my supervisor thinks, I'm just going to do this or..."

Susan: I catch myself getting in my head sometimes, and like focusing on what I should say and then I'll just kind of like, I don't know if I like manipulate my body so that I can't see them, or like I just kind of just focus on the young person and then just say whatever.

To prevent her socialized meaning-making system from overtaking her newly developed self-authoring system, Susan must literally block her sight of the person whose opinions she is at risk of keeping internalized. From an evolutionary perspective, Susan has developed her own internal voice and can use it as a guide in her work with the young people. Her voice is still fragile, however, and not yet fully able to withstand what Susan perceives as scrutiny from important others.

All transitioning participants talked about "not wanting to go back" and the valiant effort it took to prevent this from happening. Cathy, for example, said,

I think I'm always at risk to going back there because like I said, I'm the type of person I want to fix everything, I want to help everybody. So, I do feel at times that I'm starting to fall back into that hole, right? But it's something that I do actively.

Karen also talked about the struggle to prevent herself from slipping back to the old way of making meaning and the importance her supervisor plays in enabling her to do this:

I needed a supervisor to help me with that. I wouldn't have done it by myself. I needed somebody to be able to point out, "Well, notice how you're doing this" or "Notice how you're

not doing that” because sometimes I didn’t notice. I think that’s how I got to where I am and still have a long way to go.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the challenge themes unique to participants transitioning from socialized to self-authoring. These were *role separation* and *emerging from embeddedness*. The themes are congruent with the tasks of transitioning, which include recognizing that there are other ways of knowing, developing the capacity to question own beliefs and values, and developing internal views and beliefs to guide self and relationships (Baxter Magolda, 2008).

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the themes pertaining to the challenges that were identified by participants during the subject-object interviews. Among the 18 participants interviewed, there were developmental differences in what they identified as the primary challenges of their role and internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order and across organizations.

For socialized practitioners, the themes that emerged were *dealing with personal attacks*, *dealing with conflict*, and *dealing with ambiguity*. Challenges were related to assuming responsibility for others, holding others responsible for self, and the need for external guidance.

Self-authoring participants were challenged when they encountered barriers to meeting their own expectations of themselves. The themes for this group were *not meeting own values and standards*, *juggling multiple responsibilities*, and *witnessing others’ pain*.

The themes that emerged for transitioning participants were *role separation* and *emerging from embeddedness*.

Exceptions

As in Chapter 4, not all experiences of participants fit neatly into the themes for each developmental order. In this section, I present the exceptions.

Anna was the only socialized participant who did not express any difficulty dealing with the young people's behaviours, including swearing and verbal attacks. When asked about this, Anna said,

This is why I'm here. This is my job, this is what I signed up for. This is what I love. Not to see young people upset, but this is what I was just meant to do. I don't know, I'm like, "Okay, let's do this. What's going on? Let's talk about it."

When asked to rank her organization on a scale of 1-10, in support and challenge, Anna was one of the few participants who ranked her organization much lower in challenge than support.

Although she appears to be making meaning at the socialized order, she has many years of experience, a very supportive supervisor (by Anna's account), and is quite comfortable in her role.

Sharon, unlike the other socialized participants, identified that the most challenging part of her role was "trying not to take it home."

For Bonnie, a main source of frustration was that the staff did not keep the homes for which she was responsible tidy enough. She explained it in the following way:

It's just frustrating. Because it seems that they, for me, they are such easy tasks to complete, and again, on different levels, you know, I grew up and I always - my mom used to make my bed, and then she told me how to make my bed, and then that was a task that I did. So, I would like to instill that in the youth workers, and I feel like I have gotten to the position that

I am as a [...] manager, by being able to complete tasks that were taught to me [...]. So, it just frustrates me.

Bonnie's description illustrates her socialized meaning-making system. Bonnie is embedded in her values around housekeeping, with which she appears to be uncritically and unknowingly aligned. The failure of her staff to share these values, coupled with Bonnie's inability to reflect on the values, has led to her feelings of frustration, for which she appears to hold the staff responsible.

Final Remarks

The data from the qualitative interviews indicates that the way in which participants make meaning impacts what they identify as the primary challenges in their roles, and there is coherence within developmental orders and across organizations. It is becoming clear that the situation, as it relates to individuals' experiencing of their roles, is more complicated than just developmental level interacting with job responsibilities. In the next chapter, I look at the ways in which participants cope with the demands of their role and the types of organizational supports that are necessary for them to be able to cope effectively.

CHAPTER 6: COPING WITH THE DEMANDS OF THE JOB

The results of the thematic analysis of the SOIs related to the challenges of the job were presented in Chapter 5. In this chapter, I present the ways in which participants responded to these challenges. In particular, I answer the questions:

1. How do different meaning-making systems influence how practitioners cope with the demands of the job?
 - a) How do they cope with the demands?
 - b) Do practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with the demands of the job in ordered ways so that there is internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order?
2. What role does the organizational environment play, if any, in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems?
 - a) Is there coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations?

During the subject-object interviews, participants were asked how they coped with the demands of the job and how supportive their work environments were. To illustrate the internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order, the themes are presented in three sections: socialized, self-authoring, and transitioning. As mentioned in Chapter 4, of the 18 participants in the study, seven were socialized, seven were self-authoring, and four were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring.

Table 9 provides an overview of the subject-object balance at each constructive-developmental order (Kegan, 1982) and the coping themes from participants.

Table 9

Subject-Object Balance of Constructive-Developmental Orders and Participant Themes on Coping with the Challenges and Demands of the Job

Developmental order	Subject (embedded in)	Object (can reflect on or take control of)	Themes from participants (coping)
Instrumental	Needs, wishes & interests	Impulses & perceptions	N/A
Socialized	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Needs, wishes & interests	Escape Responsive supervision Acknowledgment from management Support from co-workers
Transitioning	N/A	N/A	Increasing awareness
Self-Authoring	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	Interpersonal concordance & mutuality	Taking control Consultative supervision
Self-Transforming	Inter-individuality and interpenetration of systems	Personal autonomy, identity & ideology	N/A

Note. Table constructed with information from Kegan (1982).

As reported in the previous two chapters, the interviews were analyzed thematically. I started with the category “coping” and searched the data set to identify and code related excerpts from the interviews. I added the category “support” because the need for support, to be able to cope, came up so frequently in the interviews. After the coding was completed, I engaged in an iterative process of identifying themes. Patterns and themes of coping and support (which were eventually merged into one category) were analyzed through a constructive-developmental lens (Kegan, 1982, 1994).

There were epistemological differences in the ways in which participants coped with the challenges of their roles, and, overwhelmingly, participants highlighted the critical importance of support and supervision in enabling them to cope with the demands of the job. Inherent in this is the impact of the organizational environment on practitioners' ability to cope.

The Socialized Mind

As identified in Chapter 5, the primary challenges for participants making meaning at the socialized order were:

1. Dealing with personal attacks
2. Dealing with conflict
3. Dealing with ambiguity

The ultimate goal for individuals at the socialized order is to be “in alignment with [...] a value creating surround” (Kegan, 1994, p. 171). Because those who are at the socialized order are embedded in the interpersonal, incidents and events that disrupt this alignment, such as being verbally attacked or mired in conflict, can be experienced by the socialized individual as a *disruption of the self*. Coping, therefore, requires much more than just exercising a set of skills. Coping with the many *insults to self* that socialized participants reported experiencing on the job requires a rebalancing of the relational equilibrium or a shift to a new way of knowing.

Escape

From a constructive-developmental perspective, individuals at the socialized order do not have the capacity to “regulate or subordinate” the claims others make on them; they are regulated by others (Kegan, 1994). When socialized practitioners are personally attacked by or engaged in conflict with a young person, for example, they see the young person as responsible for their (the practitioner's) emotional reaction to the attack. Individuals at the socialized order are unable to

assume responsibility for their own feelings in response to a perceived insult. Instead, they would perceive the other as “making them mad,” or “making them feel bad.” “A person can only take responsibility for that which she actually is able to *know* responsibility can be taken” (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 15). Without the personal authority to see that they can be responsible for their own reaction, and in control of their own feelings, socialized practitioners can be placed in an untenable position – the very source of their distress, as they experience it, is also the source of their relief from the distress.

For the socialized individual, the “looming failure to preserve a collection of irreconcilable experiences may be experienced as a difficulty *holding himself together*” (Kegan, 1994, p. 167). This sets up a dynamic in which practitioners, without their own internal system that can mediate and regulate their experiences, may regularly encounter situations in which:

1. They feel like they are falling apart.
2. They have no way to put themselves back together.

The only viable coping options, from the perspective of the socialized individual, are assistance from an “other” that can serve to mediate the impact of the distressing event, or escape from the situation that is causing distress. Both of these themes showed up in the interviews with participants. The need to escape is presented in this section.

Five socialized and three transitioning participants discussed the urge to “check out” or “get away” when they were faced with situations that they found extremely challenging. This took many forms, one of which was disengaging from the young people. Tracy, while talking about how she copes with young people swearing and yelling at her, expressed the following:

I guess the best thing to do is try to shut down as much as possible so that you're not offering anybody, you're not offering yourself as a target. And disengage and try to find something

that's [...]. Appeal to your teammate. If it's a teammate that you know quite well, say, "I can't do it with so and so today because they're just not responding to me. They don't like me or maybe they've never liked me period and they're just not giving me any slack at all. So can you deal with Johnny today and I'll deal more with the kitchen work?" or something like that. Tracy expressed that when she reached her "breaking point," she needed to get out. If she could not physically leave the home, which would be her preference, she would escape in her head or "mentally disengage." As Tracy put it, "You look for whatever relief you can find." When asked what happened when she couldn't get any relief, Tracy said, "Well, it's very draining. It's very soul draining. It's very disheartening. You can't find someone to relieve you. It's just really difficult, that's the only way I can describe it."

Other socialized participants also expressed that they felt overwhelmed when they did not get the opportunity to get away on their own. Julie talked about "checking out and checking back in." When asked what that looked like, she said she liked to play games on her phone or watch TV, where she was "not thinking." Susan described the need to physically leave the room when experiencing an emotional reaction to a young person:

Because he would like physically get us pissed off [...] and say really vulgar things about women, how like being raped and that just bothers me, as a woman - sure something like that would bother you too. So that stuff, I know it was coming from a place of pain and I get that, but it just still really pissed me off and that's where I, being like, I turn around, I had to leave the office and like 1, 2, 3, like started counting, counted, just those things he'd say. And I think he knew it pissed me off and he would push me away, so he'd continued to do it and I was like, "He's getting to me," so I'm trying to really not be so emotional.

At the socialized order, individuals do not have the capacity to “fix” the damage done by another in the context of the relationship – this is outside of their control. Their only option to re-establish their relational equilibrium is in the hands of the other (usually a dysregulated young person). In the absence of this, they do what they have to do to escape the discomfort or “get relief.” Cathy, for example, relayed a comparable example to Susan’s of having to leave the room during a challenging incident:

I have a habit of going down to our office especially, you know, in those screaming-at-you, yelling moments that I’ll, you know, look at the youth and go, “Okay, I can see you’re angry right now and you’re not able to actually speak with me calmly, so I’m going to walk away and I’m going to give both of us some space.” And I’ll go downstairs in the office and I kind of pace back and forth and go, “It’s not about you, it’s not about you, it’s not about you, it’s not about you.” And I do that for like, 30 seconds, and like, huh, okay, back upstairs I go again [laughs].

Cathy’s chanting of “it’s not about you” illustrates that Cathy has some awareness that she can have control over her own emotional response and retreating to the office is an attempt to exercise this control. She is developing her “internal voice” (Baxter Magolda, 2008), although still subject to the relational pull.

Escape also showed up in attempts to control the work schedule. Some participants tried to minimize the amount of time they would have to spend with particular young people, preferring to work late evening or overnight shifts. Others used sick leave or vacation time. Joel stated,

For me the big thing is to run away. Sometimes you need to take that sick leave thing and go out of town for a few days. And I’m lucky to have a doctor that is very supportive of my mental health. So when I need it, it’s there for me.

Denial was another form of escape, albeit psychological, described by some socialized participants. In describing how she deals with young people being aggressive towards her, Gina articulated that she does not personalize the behaviour, yet rather than deal with it directly, she pretends it didn't happen:

I've been called everything under the sun, but I guess you just go back the next day and you pretend like that didn't happen, because I'm very empathetic. So, if someone snaps at me or a young person loses his mind and calls me every name that they've ever heard I think, "Why? Did I do something?" Or was it, you know what? Their mom didn't show up that day, there was no call and no - I just try to get to the root of why and I guess not focus on, not make it personal. Because most of the time, it's not. So I just don't let that get me down and if you bring it back every shift, then you're never going to make any progress. You're going to be reliving that over and over and then you'll dwell on those things all the time.

Interviewer: Yes. How are you able to not bring it back?

Gina: Sleeps helps me and even if it's in the back of my mind I just fake it, so I make it. I put on a happy face and ask how their day was and pretend like it didn't happen, unless they want to have a conversation about it or they bring it out and sometimes they'll apologize out of the blue. Sometimes they won't; sometimes just moved on like it never happened and that's okay too. I just don't know if there's a particular way or anything that I do cognitively to bring it back. I just don't.

While the notion of going into a new shift with a "fresh approach" is not reflective of any particular developmental order, it is the use of this approach to avoid dealing with unpleasant situations that reflects meaning-making at the socialized order. Gina is aware that she "should not personalize" the behaviour of the young person. However, for individuals making meaning at

the socialized order, telling them not to personalize rude or vulgar comments from the young people can be “interpreted as an invitation to be colder, more callous, even indifferent, or to take up a position of greater distance in relation to the other” (Kegan, 1994, p. 126). Gina’s tendency to “pretend” the incident didn’t happen illustrates this distancing. She does not bring up the incident, she waits for the young person to raise it – thereby keeping any potential resolution of the situation in the hands of the young person.

In one of the most extreme examples of the desire to escape, Natasha, now self-authoring, relayed the following story while reflecting back on her early days as a front-line practitioner:

The first thing that came to my mind was driving into a shift to where the team was quite toxic itself [...] there was so much bitching and competitiveness to get ahead there was really not a supportive team environment, the manager was very absent so didn't know what was going on [...] to top it off the clients themselves were really high need, angry, violent, hurting, you know the drill. I remember driving to a shift and saying, “Oh my God” and having this knot in my stomach driving to the shift. I actually remember wishing I had a car accident so I didn't have to go to the shift - like I don't want to die [laughing]. Just a broken leg or something so I don't have to go [...] that was the most stress I felt, actually wishing that the car accident would really work.

Interviewer: That's a pretty significant amount of stress. What made that so stressful?

Natasha: I think the lack of support from management, the lack of support from your team, and then the fact that you are working with - some of my favourite kids are the ones with the most extreme behaviours. But if it is a good team then it doesn't really matter what the behaviours look like because you're all on the same page, you all keep trying, you are supporting each other [...]. It doesn't matter what the behaviours are if you are supported, you

will feel supported [...]. I think that combination of toxicness - like the same kid with a different team, I used to look forward to going to a shift.

Natasha's example highlights the level of stress that practitioners can experience in the role and the way in which the work environment, including supervisory support, can mediate or exacerbate that stress response. This will be discussed more in the next section.

In some cases, socialized participants needed to escape from the job in order to separate work and home life. Separating from the workplace challenges required considerable effort and energy, as described by Joel in the following passage:

So, the need to pull myself out of that is when I leave my shift. I really just have to leave. After having a difficult day, my phone turns off, no one can reach me. Go home and relax, use my various techniques. Oftentimes, I'll put on, I have a diffuser, for five essential oils for instance. So, using those and doing some meditation and relaxation, and trying to process what I've taken on because I find a lot of times, once you start to take on that trauma, once you start to really think about it, you're not thinking about all the good you're doing. You're not thinking about the benefits of what you're doing. It's just the trauma at that moment; it's just overwhelming. But I feel like being able to come back after the fact, relax, pull myself away from the workplace, and really think about all the good I'm doing really helps pull me away from that up to a degree - almost makes it worth it that you're taking on that trauma.

Similarly, Sharon expressed that not being able to "switch it off" hurt her relationship with her own children. She explained that she had a long drive home from work and this gave her time to separate and do some "mindfulness." The need to escape when encountering a situation that exceeds our capacity to cope, or threatens our very way of being, is explained by Kegan (1982) as a form of assimilation:

Assimilative integrity can become the clinical defensiveness so dramatically characterized by social isolation or even, in the more extreme exercises of control, by delusions. Psychotic delusions represent the most costly of victories over a threatening environment, because in the creation of (rather than the interaction with) an environment, the person has largely cut himself or herself off from the “informing complexity” which nourishes development. (p. 170)

Responsive Supervision

At the socialized order, individuals see their “present internal circumstances and future external possibilities as caused by someone else” (Kegan, 1994, p. 175). They look outside of themselves for answers and solutions and rely on expert authority to assist with decision-making. All participants in the study who were making meaning at the socialized and transitional orders reported relying heavily on direction and guidance from their supervisors to help them cope with the demands of the job and, in some cases, to help promote growth. This is congruent with their reliance on feedback from others, as reported in Chapter 4, and their difficulty dealing with ambiguity, as reported in Chapter 5.

The following example from Cathy illustrates the important role her supervisor played in assisting her to stop taking on the young people’s “stuff”:

It actually took one of my managers at the time sitting me down and going, “What are you doing?” I’m like, “What do you mean, what am I doing? I’m doing my job.” “No, you’re not. You’re not doing your job. You’re doing more than your job. You shouldn’t be doing this. You shouldn’t be doing that.” And I was like, “Oh my God, you’re right. You’re right, I’m not doing that.” But it was kind of her having to almost like slap me across the face to realize like, “Stop what you’re doing!”

Similarly, Susan relayed that she counts on her supervisors to make visible to her that which is invisible:

If we're in negative head space, if we're burned out [...]. They're like, "Okay, so there may be some of the stuff going on with the young people that is impacting your personal life that you may be taking home and not realizing."

In a related manner, Sharon referred to her supervisor as her "grounding" and said, "She's really good at sort of bringing me back to earth, grounding me..." Sharon also shared an example of the way in which her supervisor taught her to provide "negative" feedback to a client:

So, she started off having the conversation. I could listen to how it would go. Then, it would go where we would both have that. Then, she'd sit in the room while I had that conversation. And now, it just comes naturally and I don't even realize that I'm doing it.

Miranda emphasized the importance of having someone to "go through things with you" and "debrief after a big incident." According to Miranda, without the supervision "you just get overwhelmed by it and if something gets intense, you're kind of anxious." She had experienced some changes in her workplace which resulted in a new and "more structured" supervision model. The benefits of the increased supervision, according to Miranda, are that "you're able to talk to your supervisor and have more, like, support, and not just someone telling you what to do. It's more just, 'Okay. Well, you've done that right, but maybe you should have,' you know?"

Miranda also talked about the importance of clear direction from her supervisor in helping her to start setting some personal boundaries between work and home.

Similarly, Julie shared that if she did not receive constructive criticism she would feel "very discouraged" and "feel like the environment is not one that's promoting, like, being

self-aware and learning and continuing and getting better.” Julie added that feedback helps her evaluate herself. Tracy, on the other hand, needed support that was more directive:

The type of support that's going to let you know that maybe what you're doing is the best thing at that given time [...]. It's most important to feel supported by your team members and your supervisor. I'm a great believer in every ship needs a captain. If you don't have someone to set the pace and sort of have the expectations for what should happen, then it's very easy to feel scrambled and I don't know, misaligned and just confused.

Bonnie relied heavily on direction from her manager. When asked how she would cope if her manager was not available, she replied that there were other managers with whom she regularly consulted. Bonnie could not conceive of doing her job without consistent access to a manager for support and guidance.

Susan identified that when she was “really self-aware” and felt herself becoming “negative or burnt out” and in need of a “self-check,” she would go to her supervisor and say, “It’s time.” Susan expressed that she was particularly at risk of getting drawn into gossip and without the direct support of her supervisor, she could feel the negative group dynamics “take over” and impact her work, “which also impacts the young people.” This is indicative of Susan’s socialized and self-authoring systems at work. Susan is aware of and can identify what she is doing, yet is still subject to the process of giving others’ responsibility for herself. She appears to have no choice but to not take responsibility for herself and “quickly falls back into constructing others as responsible for this aspect of herself” (Lahey et al., 1988, p. 25).

Participants emphasized that, to be helpful, the guidance they received from their supervisors needed to be accepting and non-judgmental. Julie expressed that she feels most supported when she makes a mistake or a “not great judgment call,” or is questioning herself, and others

acknowledge that she made the mistake and they are “still on the same page.” Susan talked about the value of supervision being a “safe place” where employees can talk about what is bothering them and receive constructive feedback and praise from supervisors.

When asked what would happen without the support and supervision they received, participants did not mince words. Julie replied, “That would be horrible. I would probably leave. I don't know how you could do it if you weren't supported. It would be very hard. It would, like, mentally would be a lot harder.” This was echoed by Karen, who said, “I don't know. I don't think I'd last. To be honest, I don't think I can do it all on my own. I think I would, I'd probably get dragged down or burn out quickly.” Susan disclosed that she would “probably use a lot of sick leave, honestly, because I mean, that sucks.” Joel revealed, “I don't know if it would be sustainable for me to even be doing what I'm doing, at the level I'm doing it anyway.” Sharon stated, “That's where a lot of burnout would probably come from if you're not supported.” In describing what the ongoing support meant to her, Sharon said, “The world. That allows me to go home to my own children at night and function as a normal human being.”

Cathy, in one of only a couple of examples of participants not feeling supported in the workplace, described a situation in which she felt “betrayed” by the organization and “hurt” not to have the support from her supervisor. This is in line with Kegan's (1994) assertion that “The experience of challenge without support is painful” (p. 43).

Acknowledgment From Management

All participants talked about the importance of management being available and attentive. Socialized participants were mostly concerned about being noticed, acknowledged, and validated. The importance of “being seen” by senior management was raised so consistently, by six participants at the socialized order and all those transitioning, that I disentangled this element

from the broader role of supervision to ensure that it receives the level of prominence with which it was proffered by participants. This need to be seen is consistent with Kegan's (1982) contention that, to be responsive, a holding environment (in this case the organizational environment) must recognize and support individuals at all orders of development and recognize them for "who they are."

Being acknowledged by senior management was identified by some participants as crucial to their own view of themselves as important and valuable employees. Sharon stated that these did not have to be extravagant actions: "It might be, 'Sharon, how are you?' It might be walking down the hallway and the manager putting his hand on my shoulder and going, 'Are you all right?' Very... it's nothing over the top." The importance of those "small gestures" was reiterated by Bonnie:

It means that for all the work and for all the hard days that I have here, people do notice, and I know that it's sometimes really hard in this industry for people to take time out to say, "You are doing a great job, we appreciate you. You are amazing." But just having every now and then people say those few little words to you [...] I just think that that makes you, it makes your job worthwhile when people recognize you [...]. It doesn't matter how big or small the gesture is. Just that tiny little bit of recognition.

Joel, who had recently assumed some new responsibilities, expressed that while he "really enjoyed stepping up and taking on those roles," without acknowledgment from someone "in a higher role" than him "it would just never be sustainable." According to Joel,

There's only so much you can do to push yourself without burning yourself out. Because you can push, and push, and push, but if no one's supporting, valuing you, recognizing you, it's hard to feel like what you're doing is really worth that extra effort.

Joel shared the following example of being acknowledged:

Last month, our senior management sent a handwritten letter to our team, acknowledging all the work that we've done [...] and really let us know, "We're here, we're looking and we're proud of what you're doing." Nothing feels better than that kind of acknowledgement [...]. Before we received that, we were at a point of feeling just broken and burnt out and exhausted [...]. We had acknowledged ourselves what we've done, but then we received that letter and that acknowledgement. It's like, "You know what, we're doing good. People are recognizing it's hard, but it's worth it." That was a sentiment right across the board for my team. Everyone read it and you could just see the smile come on their faces because they felt recognized. Again, it's really easy to recognize when someone makes a mistake or does something not up to par. Sometimes, we easily overlook the good because there's so much other stuff that needs to be dealt with. That worked really well.

Without receiving that external acknowledgment and ongoing "push" as Joel described it, individuals with a socialized mindset have difficulty knowing how they are doing. In the midst of dealing with challenging situations with the young people, the absence of any external guidance leaves these practitioners feeling defeated. When Cathy was asked what would happen if she went for long periods of time without getting any feedback from her supervisor, she replied,

You feel like you're not getting the support or that you're not being seen. You know, you just kind of feel like okay, you come in, you worked your 12 hours, you go home, no one really cares. I think it's kind of like, depressing in a way. I think it would have a toll on the work that I do, because you know if I'm not feeling that what I do is important, I mean, I'm not going to be giving my all into everything that I do. But if I am being told, "You know what, Cathy, you had a really hard day but you got through it, good job!" then I am going to come

into my next shift thinking, “You know what, I got through the other day. I can get through today too.”

Inherent in Cathy’s statement is that her work is “important” when it is acknowledged by others. She has few internal standards through which to assess the value of her work in the absence of external feedback.

Natasha, in reflecting on challenging days on the front-line and the support from her manager, said,

That particular manager, whenever we finished our night shift or day shift, we would call [...] and speak to her the whole way home just debriefing nothing particularly that had happened, but just knowing that you can call and when bigger things did happen, she could pull you back to, “No, last week when she did this.” I guess for me that was really important because it wasn't just support when things went wrong, it was that constant support. And then when crisis did happen, she knew how to support us because she had been through [...] a kind of ongoing relationship I guess [...]. Knowing it was available, knowing [...] we were not a burden to her. Like, it wasn't a problem to ask for that support if you needed it, yeah.

Most participants identified that they were very satisfied with the level of acknowledgment they received from management in their workplaces.

Support From Co-Workers

In addition to support from supervisors and management, all participants at the socialized order, and those who were transitioning, cited support from their co-workers as pivotal to their ability to do the job. This aligns with their reliance on external resources and embeddedness in the interpersonal realm.

Support from colleagues was framed by Julie as a “combination of co-workers who value you and respect you” and that “you could build relationships with.” The confidential nature of the role, and limits on with whom information could be shared, was also raised by Julie:

Not having people to share it with, like I can't really talk to my family about it. It wouldn't have the same effect on them, telling them a story as it would a co-worker [...]. So, if I wasn't able to do that with my co-workers, I would have to re-evaluate like how I process things and deal with them. It would change me for sure.

Karen shared a related example of colleagues “reaching out” to her during a very busy period and asking her how she was doing, if she needed anything, and offering to take on some of her duties. Karen described the communication as “really very, very supportive.” Likewise, Susan emphasized the value of “really supporting each other and being like, ‘Are you okay?’” Bonnie talked about being “moved every day” by “little feel-good emails” sent out by the staff “when something great happens” with one of the young people that they are working with. For Bonnie, “it just brings so much happiness because, you know, they are so happy, and that young person and participants are so happy, and it's great that you can have that experience in residential care. That makes me feel good.” Gina highlighted the importance of everyone on the team “being on the same page.”

Tracy, in a slightly different vein, articulated that she wanted a co-worker who would step in and help out when she is dealing with a difficult situation with a young person:

If I was in the situation which it was just me being targeted, I would be quite upset if my teammate was just standing there and maybe not doing anything to, not supporting me if need be. I'm not saying you expect your teammate to do it all the time, but there's certainly times when an attempt could be made to diffuse the situation or maybe not so much diffusing, even

if someone says, “Hey, why are you talking that way to Tracy?” instead of kind of leaving you there, watching the young person do this to you and not doing anything to intervene.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the themes related to coping with the challenges of the role for participants making meaning at the socialized order. These participants generally coped in one of two ways: by attempting to remove themselves from the distressing situation, or by relying on support from others. The themes were *escape*, *acknowledgment from management*, *responsive supervision*, and *support from co-workers*.

Some of the “triumphs” (Kegan, 1982) of the socialized order are that individuals have the capacity to internalize and identify with the values and beliefs of their social surround and are able to subordinate their own interests on behalf of this greater loyalty. Socialized employees can be dedicated, very good at aligning with and meeting the expectations of others and following an “externally supplied directive” (Kegan, 1994, p. 125).

The limits, or costs, of this order of consciousness are that individuals are subject to the expectations of others and have difficulty exercising their own independent thought (Kegan, 1994). Perhaps most limiting, as it relates to the demands of working in residential care, is that individuals at the socialized order experience others as responsible for their feelings and assume responsibility for the feelings of others. In the socialized meaning system, because the orientation is toward a sense of connection and belonging, individuals experience criticism as destructive to the self (Popp & Portnow, 2001).

The ways in which participants with a socialized meaning-making system coped were illustrative of the strengths and limits of their order of consciousness. As stated by Kegan (1994), “The automatic and unself-consciousness moves we make to neutralize what we experience as

unbalancing forces reveal not the commitments we *have* but those that *have us*, those with which we are identified (pp. 161-162).

The Self-Authoring Mind

The self-authoring system is able to “*relate* to one’s interpersonal relationships and intrapersonal states rather than be made up by them” (Kegan, 1994, p. 176). For self-authoring participants, coping was related to their ability to perform their jobs to their own standards.

Taking Control

Unlike at the socialized order, those who are self-authoring are able to subordinate multiple or contradictory demands to a supervening principle, their own internal system of governance, which can regulate the demands (Kegan, 1994). When feeling overwhelmed, rather than automatically rely on others for direction, all self-authoring participants talked about their need to take control of the situation. This is illustrated in the following excerpt from Lucy:

I like to plan [...] particularly paperwork. Because I feel if I can get that paperwork done [...] I do feel like I could be a bit more in control, and then I can project when it's going to even out. So irrelevant of behavioural issues or you know, all that sort of stuff that comes along with the unpredictability of working with clients, I can sort of go, “Well, I know in three weeks’ time, paperwork is not going to be an issue.” And I can focus on that other stuff. I think there’s predictability in chaos, in terms of when I’m working with clients, I can respond to that [...]. “Okay, well, this is what we’re doing now, so I will just put a support in place for that.”

Joel outlined the process in which he will “sit down and start rewinding, start thinking about everything that's happened, trying to focus on the positive things and the accomplishments.” Joel further went on to describe the content of his thinking during these times, “Well, did this make a

difference for someone? Did this make a difference for youth? Did I help another worker on my team accomplish something, or grow, or be able to build that relationship with the youth that the youth have trouble building?”

Natasha described asking herself similar questions when reflecting on a challenging situation:

So, did I do everything I could have? If I didn't, what stopped me? Was it unsafe for me to keep pushing one angle? Was it that I didn't have the skills? Was it just that it wasn't supported by other people? So, looking at that as well. But usually, it's talking about it with the team. Because then they are like, “Did you ever think of this?”

Self-authoring participants described the steps they go through to resolve conflict or solve problems. They looked to themselves for solutions. When they did consult with others, it was to gather information that they could compare to their own internally generated set of guidelines.

They “owned” their decisions. Dennis described his decision-making process below:

Well depending on what the situation is, I try to look at whatever the million outcomes could be, just like you would as a youth care worker. I don't know if I heard this somewhere or I came up with it, but I always said that being a youth care worker or being a good youth care worker is partially about trying to predict the future. It just is. And yes, so I wouldn't just go into something blindly, like sit down and I'll make notes. “So if I say this, what is it that they might say back? They're probably going to come at me from one of these three different areas. If they come at me from one of these three different areas, then what am I going to say?” Not planning the whole entire conversation necessarily, because that's not possible. Great yes, but that's just not reality. But yes, I don't necessarily go to a situation like that blindly, even though I haven't asked for help from somebody else. I try to plan things out as much as I can.

Instead of being shaped by outside events, self-authoring individuals have an internal system that “reconstructs and regulates them according to its own way of determining value” (Kegan, 1994, p. 173). When participants who were self-authoring did get triggered by something, they had the capacity to recognize what was happening and take control of their reaction. Dennis identified that in these types of situations, he needs to “stop and think, breathe for a minute like [...] this is why I'm feeling this way. I need to get past that and then deal with whatever it is that's just been said.” In a similar vein, Kyra described taking control of her own self-care, stating, “I hope that at this stage, I've learned some individual internalized coping skills. I have a really good support system and self-care plan for myself.”

Consultative Supervision

Unlike individuals at the socialized order, those who are self-authoring use relationships as a means of enriching their own understanding and experience – the process of working together provides a broader context for articulating, discussing, and challenging their own thoughts and ideas (Kegan, 1994). All participants who were self-authoring talked about support in terms of having someone they could go to as needed, to vent or bounce ideas off.

Dennis talked extensively about adapting to his new role as a supervisor and the support he received from his own manager in the early days. He described the supervision process in the following way:

I've gone in and specifically met with her a few times and said, “Okay, this is what happened. This is what I did. I'm pretty sure I'm right.” And yes, so far, with the exception of giving some advice here and there, it's been like, “No, you have done exactly what you should have done and you've handled that well.” Part of it I guess is probably looking for, like,

acknowledgment, but I want to know if, “Have I missed something?” Because hello, I could miss a lot of stuff in the beginning, right? So having that resource is awesome.

Tara availed of a similar type of support when she became a new supervisor. As relayed by Tara,

Knowing that they were there if I had to phone them at 8:00 in the morning on something or knowing that even the small things that wasn't too small, I wasn't bothering them [...] even though I probably knew the answer to the question, but just having them confirm that what you're doing is correct, or “I would do this” or “How about you try this” and that kind of thing without minimizing, you know, that you're calling for a simple little thing again.

Ryan emphasized the importance of having someone “to vent to, to just throw a whole bunch of stuff out.” He also referenced the importance of consulting with himself when he forgets to practice his own self-care strategies. According to Ryan,

Sometimes it's practicing what you preach [...] a lot of my job is trying to help young people cope with stress, so you need to apply all of that stuff in your own life because you know it works. You do forget to do that sometimes [...] you'll be so stressed out. You're like, “Maybe I should do what I tell kids to do all the time - that might be a good idea.”

Raymond referenced, several times in the interview, his tendency to “consult with theory.” Unlike socialized individuals, who can become blindly enmeshed with theory as the source of their values and beliefs, Raymond demonstrated that his own “system of governance” was fully developed and he was able to check out multiple theories and critique them through his internal filter. Not unlike Tara and Dennis, who consulted their supervisors as a sounding board for their internally generated ideas, Raymond used professional literature to do the same. In reference to a

particular philosophy of child and youth care practice, Raymond explained that he often went back and re-read the material to keep himself connected to the field:

I think those cornerstones, those tenets, guide us when we don't know what to do, like when we're a little lost. You're not sure what's going on. You kind of go through those and go, "Okay, I thought I've abandoned that one, what's going on that I abandoned that?" You know? "What need do I have right now in this moment [...] that I decided to abandon them?" And then all of a sudden you're in a different space because of those. Because you can't keep it all in your head, right?

Although the form of supervision and support that self-authoring participants identified needing was different than for socialized participants, their responses to the question about not having any support were very similar. Ryan and Tara both expressed their appreciation for "being part of a community." Kyra replied,

Oh my goodness, it would be - I know we talk so much about compassion fatigue and burnout and those kinds of things, I think it would be very different [...] like even the person that will go home to my family, the person that would be driving home in the car, the person that would interact with the public, just - it would be a different person.

For Joel, "having that support network has made all the difference. So that I've started to deal with my own, my own things, my own trauma, my own struggles, but I developed this network of people." Raymond expressed, "Because of the support over the period of the year, I developed a level of proficiency, efficiency, general competency that I know was expedited because of that support." Raymond was unable to conceptualize a scenario in which he would not receive help if he needed it, stating,

I'm very confident to know what I know, but I'm also very certain of what I don't. I'm not interested in demonstrating my incompetence to anyone. I'd just as soon say I am incompetent, I don't know. "Can you help me?" I'd go down until I find at least someone or read something that gets me going.

Raymond did acknowledge "if nobody would have helped me, I guess I would have persevered."

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the themes related to coping with the challenges of the role for participants making meaning at the self-authoring order. Participants who were self-authoring had the internal capacity to cope with the demands of the job and relied on others as sounding boards. The themes were *taking control* and *consultative supervision*.

The main strength of the self-authoring system is that there is now an internal self that can create and preserve roles and regulate relationship. Self-authoring individuals do not assume responsibility for others' responsibilities; have less difficulty dealing with ambiguity, conflict, or criticism; and have the capacity to internally manage the demands and expectations of others (Kegan, 1994). They are concerned with consequences related to personal integrity and meeting their own standards. The self-authoring system is able to operate "in a swirling field of socially constructed realities, agreed upon constructions or traditions, and interpersonal loyalties and expectations" (Kegan, 1994, p. 173).

The limitation of the self-authoring order is that individuals are subject to the ideologies and principles of their internal system of governance and therefore not able to reflect on them (Kegan, 1982, 1994). Subsequently, individuals who are self-authoring are invested in maintaining psychological control over their identity and autonomy. When their underlying guiding principles are threatened, self-authoring individuals can experience this as a threat to

their identity. They can become trapped in their ideology. As mentioned previously, the limits of self-authoring meaning-making were not as evident among participants as were the limits of the socialized order.

The Transitioning Mind

As in Chapters 4 and 5, many of the same themes, with regard to coping with the demands of the job, emerged for transitioning participants as for those who were socialized and self-authoring. Much of the interview material for transitioning participants has been presented in the socialized and self-authoring sections of this chapter. In this section, I present information that was unique to those who were transitioning.

Increasing Awareness

During the transition from socialized to self-authoring consciousness, individuals are engaged in the process of “reconstructing the relationship between self and other” (Kegan, 1982, p. 187). Participants who were transitioning described the ways in which they relied on training and learning opportunities to help them cope and to increase their awareness. Joel, for example, relayed,

I've been very lucky to have people who really value learning opportunities for me so that I can develop my skills, who tried to push me to do better [...] who have regular supervisions with me, who sit down and talk to me and say, “Here's what you've been doing great, here's where I think you could possibly develop a little bit more. Do have any issues? What can I do for you?”

Susan credited the graduate university courses she was doing along with weekly sessions with her supervisor for helping her to sort through when there is something she needs to “let go” and “hold onto.” Susan figures she has “become much more aware” in the last year.

Participants from three organizations mentioned training they had received in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI). This training teaches specific interventions that can be used with young people to prevent, respond to, and debrief crisis situations. It appears that the main benefit of this training for participants was in giving them something to hold onto in those moments when they became lost or stuck. As Cathy articulated, “I guess around TCI training [...] one intervention might work one day, might definitely not work the next, so it’s kind of go to my toolbox based on the situation that’s going on and how much chaos is going on and the level of intensity.” TCI language was scattered throughout the interviews as participants identified various ways in which they tried to manage the situations they encountered on the job. Tara, reflecting back on her days as a front-line practitioner, shared,

Most of it to me just comes back to my TCI, really, right? “This is not about me.” I think of the iceberg and the behaviours around top and then down bottom is the needs and the behaviour and I’m always telling myself that “This is not about me, it’s about something bigger and this person needs me.”

Cathy also identified how she used the skills she had learned to remain present, “not to fall into those conflict cycles,” and try not to get her “back up” when she is being called names, but to “reel it back in.” For Joel,

A lot of it is utilizing the training that I’ve received as a child and youth care worker, particularly through TCI, asking my core questions and just being mindful of that going into an incident or a situation, dealing with those traumas and pain, so that I can keep a level head.

Training and supervision were clearly quite useful to transitioning practitioners and they appeared to use these in two ways: first, as an external guide to how they should feel and behave (Kegan, 1994) while still developing their own internal framework; secondly, the exposure to

“ways of knowing” more complex than their own, along with the support provided in supervision, contributed to an environment in which these individuals were open to trying out new *ways of being* in relation to the demands of their job.

This differs from what was expressed by self-authoring practitioners, who did not reference any particular training courses but talked more generally about how training and education had influenced their own beliefs and practice.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented the theme related to coping with the challenges of the role that was unique to participants transitioning from socialized to self-authoring. This theme was *increasing awareness*.

The primary strength for individuals who are transitioning is the developing capacity to see more complexly. “When we see that we are not made up by the other’s experience, we then have the capacity not to take responsibility for what is now genuinely and for the first time not ours” (Kegan, 1994, p. 127). Transitioning participants in the study credited training and supervision, in conjunction with the challenges of the role, as contributing to their development. They were able to utilize their newly emerged worldview to extricate themselves from situations in which socialized participants were still trapped. Because their way of knowing is becoming more complex, individuals who are transitioning are able to “see and act upon more elements” (Berger, 2002, p. 37) of any given situation.

The costs of transitioning are the conflict, confusion, and feelings of having “lost something” (Kegan, 1982). Individuals who are transitioning are also susceptible to “being brought back into the relationship by the other” (Kegan, 1994, p. 127) versus bringing themselves back. As expressed by Berger (2002),

While some people travel the path more quickly than others, development is a process, not a race. There are costs to movement just as there are costs to stillness; a person's current place in the journey is a measure of the opportunities she has been given and which costs she has chosen to pay along the way. (p. 39)

The Provision of Supervision

As mentioned previously, nine participants from four organizations were supervisors or managers. Throughout the interviews, they provided examples of the ways in which they supervised and supported the employees for whom they were responsible. Although unintended, this provided an opportunity to report on supervision practices within four of the five organizations from the supervisors' perspectives and to compare these to the practices identified by front-line practitioners as being necessary and useful.

Participants described supervising others as exhilarating, awesome, and anxiety-provoking. Those who were self-authoring or transitioning identified it as their favourite part of the job, even though it was a significant source of anxiety. Alternatively, those at the socialized order declared that supervision was the part of the job they liked the least.

Developmental Supervision

Most supervisors acknowledged the importance of supervising employees differentially based on their needs. Tara referenced the need to recognize that supervisors and employees often bring different expectations to supervision. Kyra, similarly, discussed the ramifications of providing constructive feedback to employees who may be operating at different developmental levels:

I think it's just because you are having a direct impact on a person; like you're not saying they are not good enough, but you're talking about what's happening is not okay and you have to make sure you frame that in ways that - because you don't want to damage someone's ego, but

you do have to confirm it sometimes to need to determine what's the best way to have conversations and they're always difficult. Ideally, the best outcome is their self-awareness and some insights, and that's wonderful and that's not always what happens, and it tells me kind of where someone's at.

Similarly, Natasha emphasized the necessity of providing constructive feedback to employees, saying,

Regarding feedback and development areas as well, I found sometimes, because it's so stressful, people shy away from giving feedback around what you can improve [...]. I know it's a stressful job, but I want to tell them where they can improve [...] otherwise, you don't develop skills or you can just feel stuck like you're not getting any better.

Karen, also talking about constructive feedback, thoroughly outlined the process she uses to provide formal supervision:

You have a very clear developmental plan and you talk about strategies of “how are you going to meet your goals and any issues that are coming up?” That’s fairly basic, fairly easy, right? Newer supervisors can do that, especially when you ask the person to make their own goals. It’s pretty basic. The more integral piece of supervision is like, when I drive to work in the mornings, I think about “Okay. Who’s working, and what do they want from me?” So when I first went to the facility, I met with everybody and said, “What do you want from a supervisor?” And some people said, “I need to know you know what you’re doing.” And other people said, “I just don’t want you asking how my weekend was.” And so that was really telling. So, when I kind of got to where I know what everybody wants, I can start my day with them right from the get-go the moment I walk through the door [...]. You’re with people in supervision, or in every day, and you notice the way they are, you notice things that

they like, things that they don't like, the way they build relationships with the kids, and so you start to put little pieces together and start to figure things out. And then when you sit down in supervision and you ask them, "Okay, what are your goals?" and they'll say something completely random that you think, "It is not what you need to be working on right now. Like, you need to know how to write better reports, you need to know how to be with this boy."

The descriptions from Kyra, Natasha, and Karen all suggest supervision that responds to employees based on where they are developmentally. Dennis explicitly articulated the need to be aware of practitioners' developmental capacity. He stated,

I've got obviously a group full of people that are all on different levels of development. Right? That makes things difficult sometimes. To be able to either guide a conversation sometimes I have to be careful how I interact with one person, then be careful in a different way on how I interact with another person, but all at the same time, and in front of other people [laugh].

Karen was also explicit in discussing developmental supervision:

I think one of my staff would be there 25 years right through till - well one guy was literally two weeks in. So all kinds of different levels of development, all kinds of different levels of personal development, and all kinds of different experiences and how they make their own meaning, and so you have to be able to speak to each one of them.

The importance of recognizing where practitioners are, developmentally, and providing them with what they need was articulated quite powerfully by Kyra, who said,

I think being well aware of the population that you serve, you can't just say, "Well, she signed up for it" because that is not helpful. I've heard that too many times throughout the years, but it's not as simple as that [...] to say you're being paid to be here doesn't solve anything. It's

about making sure that you are able to have those real conversations and being able to understand where each person stood individually and then what they need as a group and intervene differently.

Caring

All supervisors displayed genuine appreciation and caring for their colleagues and subordinates. This is illustrated in the following comments from Raymond:

The values and beliefs that we share, you know, and certainly at different levels of expertise in terms of understanding each other's roles, there is - it works well for me. Now I'm not sure if they would say the same about me, however, when I think of them I smile. I love going to work every day. When people are sick, I'm genuinely concerned. I know that they, that their efforts are always 100% [...] and subsequently they're role modeling for the rest of the organization. I just, I do not worry. It's just wonderful. And when they have a tough day, they know how to manage it. They know how to rely on each other.

Kyra displayed the same level of gratitude for her team, stating,

I think being able to be with that team every day who genuinely care so much about the young people, who have a dark sense of humour, who understand, who have those difficult conversations but still are able to be okay, 'cause it's not - I've been in places before where you had difficult conversations and relationships have been destroyed. Some would say there weren't probably relationships to begin with, however, you know what I mean.

The sentiments expressed by Raymond and Kyra both speak to the types of positive environments in which they work and to which they have contributed. The organizational environment will be discussed more thoroughly in the Chapter Summary.

Bonnie also expressed considerable caring for others, conveying that not only did she regularly “check-in” with her own team, she also offered to provide support to employees for whom she is not directly responsible. According to Bonnie:

I like to make sure that I am very open to people coming to me and talking to me [...]. So I like to engage them in communication to let them know that it's okay to come and talk to me, you don't just need to talk to one person or another. But that's a very personal choice [...] for a lot of people, they only like to talk to their direct supervisor.

The impetus for providing this type of supervision comes from her own experiences and what she has identified as being important to her in her relationship with her own supervisor. Bonnie said, “I think it makes everybody feel valued when someone else checks in with you.”

What is most striking is that all of the supervisors discussed practices that mirrored what the front-line participants identified as being important to them.

Section Summary

In this section, I presented themes from the supervisors who participated in interviews. The themes were *developmental supervision* and *caring*. All supervisors discussed the importance of supporting and supervising employees based on their needs.

Ratings of Workplace Support and Challenge

As an additional measure of the ways in which participants experienced and coped with the demands of their roles, particularly with regard to the organizational environment, they were asked during the interviews to rate their workplaces on the dimensions of challenge and support. The scale ranged from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest (Not at All) and 10 being the highest (Extremely). Fifteen participants rated the amount of support they received as 7 or higher. All three who rated their organization lower than 7 on support were at the socialized order and two

were from the same organization. Fifteen participants identified their organization as 7 or higher for the amount of challenge. Of the three who rated their organization lower than 7 for challenge, two had socialized meaning-making systems and one was self-authoring. Ten participants rated the support they received from their organization as higher than, or equal to, the level of challenge. These ratings relate to the research question: How do practitioners with different meaning-making systems experience the organizational environment? The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Participant Ratings of Organizational Support and Challenge by Developmental Order

Participant	Developmental order	Support	Challenge
Tracy	Socialized	5	9
Julie	Socialized	9	10
Miranda	Socialized	6	4
Gina	Socialized	9	8
Anna	Socialized	8	2
Sharon	Socialized	10	8
Bonnie	Socialized	10	8
Cathy	Transitioning	5	7
Joel	Transitioning	8	7
Karen	Transitioning	10	7
Susan	Transitioning	8	7
Dennis	Self-Authoring	10	8
Raymond	Self-Authoring	9	9
Kyra	Self-Authoring	8	8
Tara	Self-Authoring	8	6
Natasha	Self-Authoring	8	9
Lucy	Self-Authoring	8	9
Ryan	Self-Authoring	8	9

Note. Scores for Support and Challenge reflect a rating scale of 1-10, with 1 being Not at All and 10 being Extremely.

The implications of these findings are referenced in the chapter Summary and discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 8.

Summary

The practice of child and youth care and supervision in residential care can be extremely challenging. For the participants in this study, it was clearly their caring, empathy, and desire to make a difference that propelled them to continue to return to work day after day, even in the early days of their careers when the work took a much greater toll on them.

Although participants were making meaning in different ways and working in different roles, across different organizations, all could recount moments in which they felt anxiety, fear, pain, sadness, and overwhelmed. For some participants, the situations they dealt with had triggered their own personal mental health crises. They talked of feeling drained, going home too tired to talk to their spouses or go out with their friends, and needing to go to extreme measures to separate themselves from the job and the young people's pain, as well as their own. Nonetheless, they persisted. In this section, I present a summary of the ways in which participants coped with the demands of the job.

Developmental Differences in Coping

The research questions focused on how mental complexity contributes to individuals' experiences. Among the 18 participants interviewed, there were developmental differences in how they coped with the demands of the job, and coherence among participants of the same epistemological order and across organizations.

The themes that emerged for socialized participants were *escape*, *responsive supervision*, *acknowledgment from management*, and *support from co-workers*. Those who were making meaning at the socialized order relied heavily on external support and validation to cope with the challenges of the job and, when that was not readily available, needed to get away from stressors in the environment.

Self-authoring participants were able to take ownership of the challenges they experienced on the job and generate their own solutions, relying on others as consultants for their own internally generated ideas. The themes for participants at the self-authoring order were *taking control* and *consultative supervision*.

For transitioning participants, who are making meaning at both the socialized and self-authoring orders, most of their coping strategies aligned with those for socialized individuals. The theme that was unique to participants who are transitioning was *increasing awareness*. This theme relates to the growth-oriented nature of the transition period.

Exceptions

There was one noteworthy exception to the way in which socialized practitioners experienced the organizational environment and, subsequently, coped with the demands of the job. Two practitioners work with the same organization and are both making meaning at the socialized order. They reacted to the organizational culture, however, in very different ways. One of them identified the organization as extremely supportive and articulated that the combination of support and challenge has propelled her personal growth. This individual rated the organization extremely high in terms of challenge, but qualified her rating by saying “in a good way.” The second individual, on the other hand, decried the lack of support she received from the organization and rated it as very challenging.

How can two individuals, both making meaning at the same order of consciousness, experience the same environment in such different ways? From a constructive-developmental perspective, there is a possible explanation. The first individual has identified with the values and beliefs of the organization and uses these as handholds to help her get through difficult situations. She can recite things she has learned from her co-workers and supervisors that she

finds useful. She is poised to transition to self-authoring and is becoming aware of how much her own perceptions contribute to her experiences. The second individual has been with the organization for a longer period of time. The values and beliefs she holds dear are from an earlier period in the organization's history and are not congruent with where the organization is currently. During the interview, the second individual expressed frustration at all of the changes that have occurred over the years and often referenced how things used to be.

The organization in which both participants work was described by other participants as extremely supportive. The second individual, however, does not experience the environment as safe or supportive. She would like to see "more rules" to protect the staff from the young people, who are "becoming more aggressive." For individuals who are in need of external guidance and have very clear ideas around what that should look like, being required to make their own decisions in challenging situations "can be experienced as an abandonment, a refusal to care, and a disorienting vacuum of expectation" (Kegan, 1982, p. 186).

The situation with these two participants suggests that the same support can be interpreted quite differently by different people, even of the same developmental order. It also serves as a reminder that our way of making meaning is just one part of who we are; it is not all of who we are.

Impact of the Organizational Environment

It is clear from the information shared by participants that coping with the demands of the job, for individuals at all developmental orders, occurs within, and is influenced by, the organizational context. As stated by Kegan (1982), "Our well-being (or lack of it) is as much as anything a reflection on the quality of those most intimate 'supports' which, from the point of view of our current evolutionary truce, are confused with ourselves" (p. 193). In this study, the

psychosocial elements of the holding environment, consisting of co-workers, supervisors, and managers, was referenced repeatedly by participants. The importance, and type of, support required by each of these groups has been presented in the previous sections.

Participants in this study came from organizations that were considered supportive. On a scale from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest, four of the five organizations were rated by participants an average of 8 or higher in support, and the fifth was rated an average of 6. Even in the organization with the lowest rating, participants were able to identify at least one supervisor who had supported them. All participants expressed that they enjoyed their jobs, and only two participants rated their organization below 7 for support. Additionally, four of the organizations had at least one supervisor in the study who was making meaning at the self-authoring order. This is, I suspect, an unusual situation.

From the information presented, it appears that supervisors and managers are providing socialized practitioners with access to self-authoring capacity that they can “borrow” to know what is expected of them. The provision of training and guidance from supervisors in giving socialized practitioners a handhold to get them through the toughest times, particularly when they are at risk of personalizing the behaviours or losing themselves, has likely contributed to the socialized participants being able to cope as well as they have. Without the necessary supports, the job has the potential to cost the socialized practitioner or supervisor “much more dearly” (Kegan, 1994, p. 123) than those who are self-authoring.

Issues related to the organizational environment and its impact on individuals’ ability to cope with the demands of the job will be further explored in the Discussion Chapter.

Promoting Developmental Growth

We experience growth in mental complexity in response to the demands placed upon us and the challenges and supports in our environments which can hinder or promote our development. Being in over our heads may not be a bad thing. “In fact, it may be just what is called for provided they also experience effective support” (Kegan, 1994, p. 43). Considering the percentage of participants in this study who were making meaning at the transitioning and self-authoring orders, it appears that their organizations may be environments that are not only providing adequate holding for employees where they are, but also promoting the development to the next order of mental complexity. Virtually all participants, across all developmental orders, referenced their own personal growth that had occurred in response to the demands of their job.

Although the child and youth care worker role triggers a lot of pain, being supported to work through these painful experiences can lead to growth. For example, Joel experienced serious mental health issues triggered by an encounter with a young person. He had the highest vicarious trauma and burnout scores in his organization. It could be argued that the job was taking a much more significant toll on Joel than just about anyone else in the study. However, Joel’s capacity to manage and reflect on his struggle was qualitatively different than that of some other participants who were still at the socialized order. Joel is transitioning towards self-authoring and credited the trauma he experienced on the job with facilitating his developmental growth.

These and related issues will be explored more thoroughly in the Discussion Chapter.

Final Comments

The data from the qualitative interviews indicates that practitioners with different meaning-making systems cope with the demands and challenges of the job in ordered ways so that there is

internal coherence among participants of the same epistemological order within and across organizations. Additionally, the organizational environment appears to play a role in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems.

CHAPTER 7: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT, COMPASSION SATISFACTION, SECONDARY TRAUMATIC STRESS, BURNOUT, AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

To examine the effects of developmental level on participants' experiencing of their work roles, I used the Leadership Development Profile (LDP) as the developmental assessment tool and the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL) as the measure of participants' experiences. I looked at the relationship between the LDP and the ProQOL dimensions of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout. The research question addressed was: Does the meaning-making system influence the experience of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, or the symptoms of burnout?

The Work Environment Scale (WES) was used to answer the question: What role does the organizational environment play, if any, in mediating or exacerbating the demands of the job for practitioners with different meaning-making systems? The relationship between the work environment and compassion satisfaction, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress of participants at different developmental levels was analyzed.

Results of the Leadership Development Profile

I chose to use the LDP as a developmental measure because it has been used in conjunction with the subject-object interview (SOI) in multiple studies and has been identified as a suitable alternative to assessing developmental level (Brown, 2012; Cook-Greuter, 2004). Its advantage is that it is a quick scale rather than a long interview. The LDP assesses development through seven action logics representing "transformations of leadership" (Rooke & Torbert, 2005). The action logics, from lowest to highest, are: Opportunist, Diplomat, Expert, Achiever, Individualist, Strategist, and Alchemist. Although the action logics assessed by the LDP focus on leader

development, they map roughly to Kegan's constructive-developmental orders as shown previously in Table 4 and again in Table 11.

From their research with thousands of leaders, Rooke and Torbert (2005) reported the distribution of participants profiling at each action logic. The LDP results for participants in this study are compared to results from Rooke and Torbert (2005) in Table 11.

Table 11

Leadership Development Profile Results for Participants (n = 99) Compared to Leader Sample

LDP score	Comparable SOI score	Participants		Leader scores
		N	%	%
Opportunist	Instrumental	0	0	5
Diplomat	Socialized	1	1	12
Expert	Socialized	32	32	38
Achiever	Self-Authoring	59	60	30
Individualist	Self-Authoring	7	7	10
Strategist	Self-Transforming	0	0	4
Alchemist	Self-Transforming	0	0	1

Note. Table created with information from Rooke and Torbert (2005).

It is noteworthy that there were higher percentages of individuals at the three lowest action logics in the sample of leaders from Rooke and Torbert (2005) than in the current sample of child and youth care workers and supervisors. Conversely, the percentage of participants at the Achiever action logic was double for the current sample than it was for the leader sample. This comparative information is helpful in contextualizing the data set for this study and will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

Results of the Professional Quality of Life Scale

I chose the ProQOL as a measurement tool because I was interested to see if practitioners may be more or less susceptible to experiencing burnout, vicarious trauma, or other related difficulties depending on their constructive-developmental level. I was also interested to see if compassion

satisfaction, which has been found to be a moderator of secondary trauma but not burnout (Stamm, 2010), was a suitable proxy measure of job satisfaction. Stamm (2010) provides average scores, based on research from hundreds of studies, for each ProQOL construct. Cut scores for the ProQOL are presented in Table 12. The cut scores are selected points set at the 25th, Mean, and 75th percentiles of the ProQOL.

Table 12

ProQOL Cut Scores

	Compassion satisfaction	Secondary traumatic stress	Burnout
Bottom Quartile (25 th Percentile)	44	43	42
Mean (50 th Percentile)	50	50	50
Top Quartile (75 th Percentile)	57	56	56

Note. Cut scores are from The Concise ProQOL Manual (p. 18), by B. H. Stamm, 2010, Pocatello, ID: ProQOL.org. Copyright 2008 by Henry E. Stamm. Reproduced with permission. Scores shown in table are t-scores.

The ProQOL scores for participants in this study compared to the cut score distribution are presented in Table 13. The participant group scored higher than average in the areas of compassion satisfaction and secondary traumatic stress, and close to average in the area of burnout.

Table 13

Distribution of Participant ProQOL Scores in Comparison to ProQOL Cut Scores

ProQOL cut scores	Compassion satisfaction		Secondary traumatic stress		Burnout	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bottom Quartile	7	7	0	0	11	11
Median	47	47	20	20	61	62
Top Quartile	45	45	79	80	27	27

Note. N = 99

Results of the Work Environment Scale

Originally, I had planned to use the WES to assess the work environments of the organizations participating in the study and hoped to use organizational culture as a mediating variable. I anticipated 6-8 organizations with approximately 8-15 participants from each organization. When this did not work out, I set aside the goal of including the organizational culture of particular agencies as a predictor variable. Although it was not possible to calculate aggregate scores for each of the organizations involved, I could still use it as an individual level variable, providing a measure of participants' work environments that could be used to examine whether perceptions of work environment affected participants' experiences.

As described in Chapter 3, the WES (Moos, 2008) is a 90-item, true-false questionnaire. The WES consists of 10 subscales divided into three dimensions: Relationship (involvement, co-worker cohesion, supervisor support); Personal Growth/Goal Orientation (autonomy, task orientation, work pressure); and System Maintenance/Change (clarity, managerial control, innovation, physical comfort).

Participants' WES mean scores and standard deviations, in comparison to those of the Health Care Work Group, are presented in Table 14. The Health Care Work Group is a relevant

comparison group comprised of employees of outpatient medical and psychiatric clinics, community mental health centres, hospitals, psychiatric institutions, children's residential treatment centres, university-affiliated medical and dental schools, and long-term care facilities (Moos, 2008).

Table 14

Participant WES Scores Compared to Health Care Work Group

Subscale	Participants N = 99		Health Care Work Group N = 8663	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Relationship Dimensions				
Involvement	6.81	2.02	5.80	2.15
Co-worker Cohesion	6.61	1.71	5.47	2.01
Supervisor Support	6.08	2.22	5.00	2.16
Personal Growth/Goal Orientation Dimensions				
Autonomy	6.70	1.85	5.41	1.88
Task Orientation	6.54	2.03	5.92	1.94
Work Pressure	4.98	2.32	5.34	2.15
System Maintenance Dimensions				
Clarity	5.59	1.95	4.89	1.92
Managerial Control	6.07	1.66	5.36	1.82
Innovation	5.69	2.55	4.13	2.28
Physical Comfort	5.80	2.47	4.21	2.18

Note. Health Care Work Group data from the WES Manual (p. 115), by R. H. Moos, 2008, Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden, Inc. www.mindgarden.com. Copyright 1974, 2008 by Rudolph H. Moos. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

The participants group scored higher than the Health Care Work Group in all areas except Work Pressure, and that is the only dimension in which a lower score is more positive.

Exploratory Data Analysis

In this section, I begin to address the question of whether the LDP is related to compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, or the symptoms of burnout. Each of the three ProQOL variables was transformed using \log_{10} (logarithm), because the data was skewed, particularly for Group 3.

Figure 1 shows the box plots for burnout by LDP.

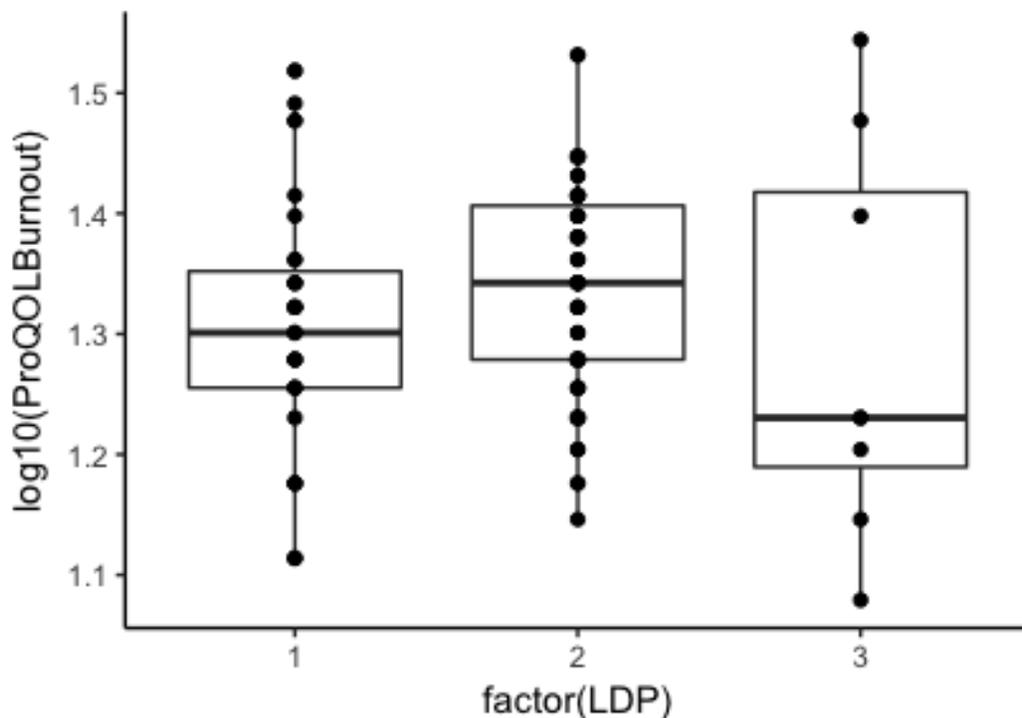


Figure 1. Burnout by LDP scores. 1 = Expert, n = 33; 2 = Achiever, n = 59; 3 = Individualist, n = 7.

For Group 1, there was a larger spread of scores in the 1st and 4th quartiles than the 2nd and 3rd quartiles, illustrating the wide range of responses. Group 2 is the most symmetric of the three. Group 3 has the greatest variability.

Figure 2 shows the box plot for secondary trauma by LDP scores. I expected that secondary traumatic stress may decrease as developmental level increases – this is not reflected in the data. The box plot for Group 3 is again skewed. Group 3 only contains seven participants, however, so

any interpretation of the data must be cautious. Group 1 has more variability in Q4, with an interquartile range scrunched around the median. The highest and lowest scores for this set of box plots were from Group 2, although these were outliers. Removing the outliers would result in the highest and lowest scores being similar for Group 1 and Group 2.

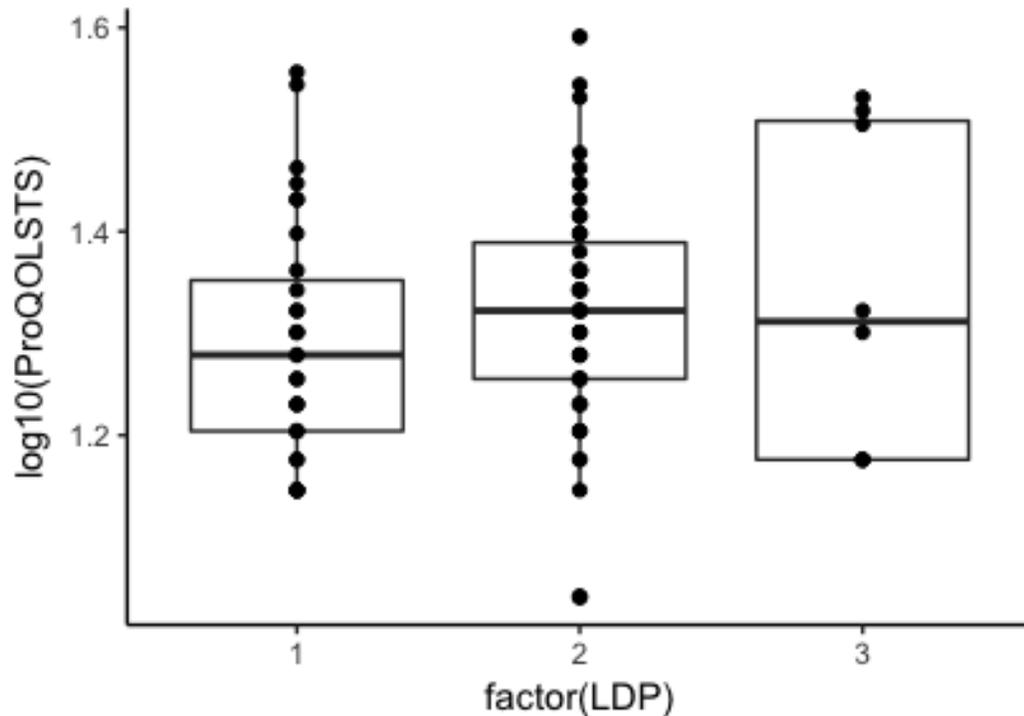


Figure 2. Secondary traumatic stress by LDP scores. 1 = Expert, n = 33; 2 = Achiever, n = 59; 3 = Individualist, n = 7.

Figure 3 shows the results for compassion satisfaction by LDP scores. The Expert (Group 1) and Achiever (Group 2) groups appear to have similar centres, while the Individualist (Group 3) group has a higher median. There is considerable variance in Groups 1 and 3, and Group 3 is skewed. There are outliers in Groups 2 and 3 that impact the range, particularly in Group 3.

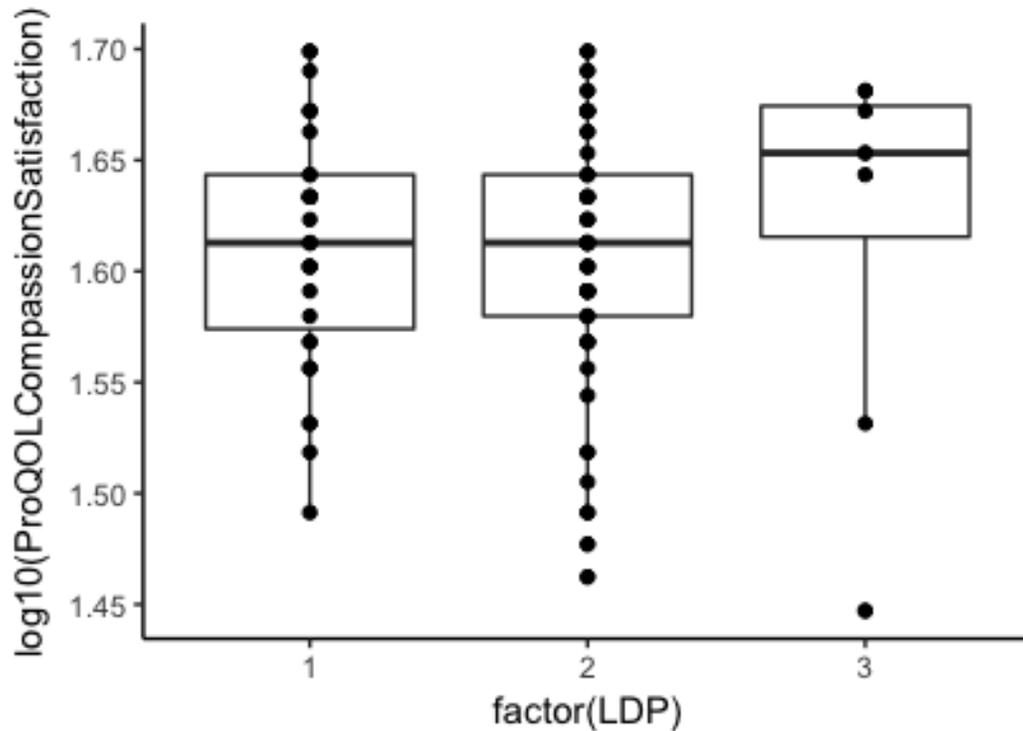


Figure 3. Compassion satisfaction by LDP scores. 1 = Expert, n = 33; 2 = Achiever, n = 59; 3 = Individualist, n = 7.

The Linear Relationship Between Developmental Level and ProQOL Measures

I used linear regression to model the relationship of the LDP to compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout. I ran three regression models, first with LDP and compassion satisfaction ($F(2, 95) = .216, p = .806$), then secondary traumatic stress ($F(2, 95) = .965, p = .385$) and burnout ($F(2, 95) = 1.496, p = .229$). The LDP was not a significant predictor in any of the three models. There was no direct relationship between the LDP and the three variables and no reason to suggest that follow-up analyses would be useful.

Analysis of Relationship Between ProQOL, LDP, and WES

To address my research question on the role of the organizational environment and determine if work environment was a contributor to the relationship between developmental level and

compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout, I used the results from the Work Environment Scale (WES), LDP, and ProQOL.

To assess whether there was a mediating relationship between work environment and developmental level and ProQOL subscales, I attempted to build regression models using LDP and selected WES subscales (involvement, co-worker cohesion, supervisor support, autonomy, task orientation, work pressure, and clarity) as predictor variables and compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout as dependent variables. I chose those particular scales from the WES because they aligned with characteristics of the holding environment as described by Baxter Magolda (2009) and were congruent with the themes that emerged from the interviews with 18 participants. The results are presented in Table 15.

For compassion satisfaction, the relationships with involvement, autonomy, and supervisor support were significant ($p < .05$). Interestingly, the relationship between compassion satisfaction and supervisor support was negative – as supervisor support went down, compassion satisfaction went up (and vice versa). I examined the survey questions for the Supervisor Support subscale to assess whether they may be inadvertently skewed towards a particular developmental order. This subscale consists of nine questions that assess

the extent to which management is supportive of employees and encourages them to be supportive of one another, for example: how often supervisors compliment an employee who does something well, how often they give full credit to the ideas contributed by employees, and whether employees feel free to ask for a raise. (Moos, 2008, Appendix A, Interpretive Report Form)

The questions are fairly generic, as would be expected in a standardized assessment tool, and do not address key areas that emerged from the interviews such as providing ongoing direction and acting as a sounding board.

Table 15

Compassion Satisfaction, Secondary Traumatic Stress, and Burnout Regressed on the LDP and WES Scales

Variables	Compassion satisfaction			Secondary traumatic stress			Burnout		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
LDP	.206	.023	.799	1.497	.930	.111	.532	.682	.438
Involvement	.827	.330	.014*	-.229	.380	.549	-.675	.279	.017*
Co-worker Cohesion	.037	.347	.916	.310	.400	.440	.055	.293	.851
Supervisor Support	-.669	.328	.044*	.327	.378	.389	.363	.277	.193
Autonomy	.750	.355	.038*	.561	.410	.174	-.902	.300	.003**
Task Orientation	.524	.321	.106	-.429	.370	.249	-.414	.271	.130
Work Pressure	.046	.204	.822	.869	.235	.000***	.733	.172	.000***
Clarity	.340	.319	.289	-.381	.368	.303	-.320	.269	.249
R ²	.292			.240			.462		
(df) F	(8, 90) = 4.637			(8, 90) = 3.553			(8, 90) = 9.666		

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .0001.

The relationship between secondary traumatic stress and work pressure was significant ($p < .0001$). As work pressure increased, so did secondary traumatic stress. This is not a surprise, as an increase in work pressure (or the experiencing of work pressure) would likely leave employees more vulnerable to experiencing secondary trauma.

On the dimension of burnout, the relationships with involvement ($p < .05$), autonomy

($p < .01$), and work pressure ($p < .0001$) were significant. As involvement and autonomy went down, burnout went up and as work pressure increased, burnout increased.

There were no significant relationships between the LDP and ProQOL or WES. Like the results from ProQOL scales regressed on LDP, there was no statistical relationship between the LDP and the ProQOL variables (compassion satisfaction, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout), even when controlling for work environment.

Several factors may have contributed to these findings. First is the restricted range of the sample, which may not have been reflective of the general population of child and youth care workers and supervisors in residential care. The sample was not random; participants were recruited primarily through purposeful, convenience, and snowball sampling strategies. It appears that the response rate may have been skewed towards those who were older and had considerable experience. The average age of participants was 38 and the average number of years of experience was 12. The range of LDP scores was also restricted. Only 33% (Diplomat and Expert) of participants were the equivalent of socialized or transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, and the remaining 67% (Achiever and Individualist) were either self-authoring, transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, or transitioning from self-authoring to self-transforming. This reflects either an issue with the LDP as a developmental measure, or a higher percentage of transitioning or self-authoring individuals than would be expected in the general population (Kegan, 1994; Rooke & Torbert, 2005).

There were also restricted range issues with the scores on the WES and the ProQOL. The ProQOL scores were, on average, higher than the norms (Stamm, 2010). Participant scores for all three measures, on average, clustered around the median and top quartile. This may have impacted the results.

Additional Analysis With Outliers Removed

The presence of outliers in the data set can contribute to regression results (Goodwin & Leech, 2006). All seven of the LDP Individualist participants had leverage scores more than twice the mean. For the models of secondary trauma, compassion satisfaction, and burnout regressed on LDP, the boxplots showed some outliers. Outliers were considered using Cooks distance (influence on the model) and leverage (unusual influence of single observed values on the predicted values). No values of Cooks D were high enough to be a concern. Seven values of leverage were close to being twice the average value, but all of them were members of the highest score on the LDP and removing them would require removing the entire group. Instead, I removed five scores that were outside the fences of the boxplots (1.5 x the mean added to or subtracted from the 3rd and 1st quartile, respectfully). I ran regression models for all three ProQOL dimensions by LDP using the revised data set.

The box plots for compassion satisfaction, shown in Figure 4, and burnout, Figure 5, showed similar patterns to that for the full data set. The data is still skewed for Group 3 in both sets of box plots with a wide range of scores in Groups 1 and 2.

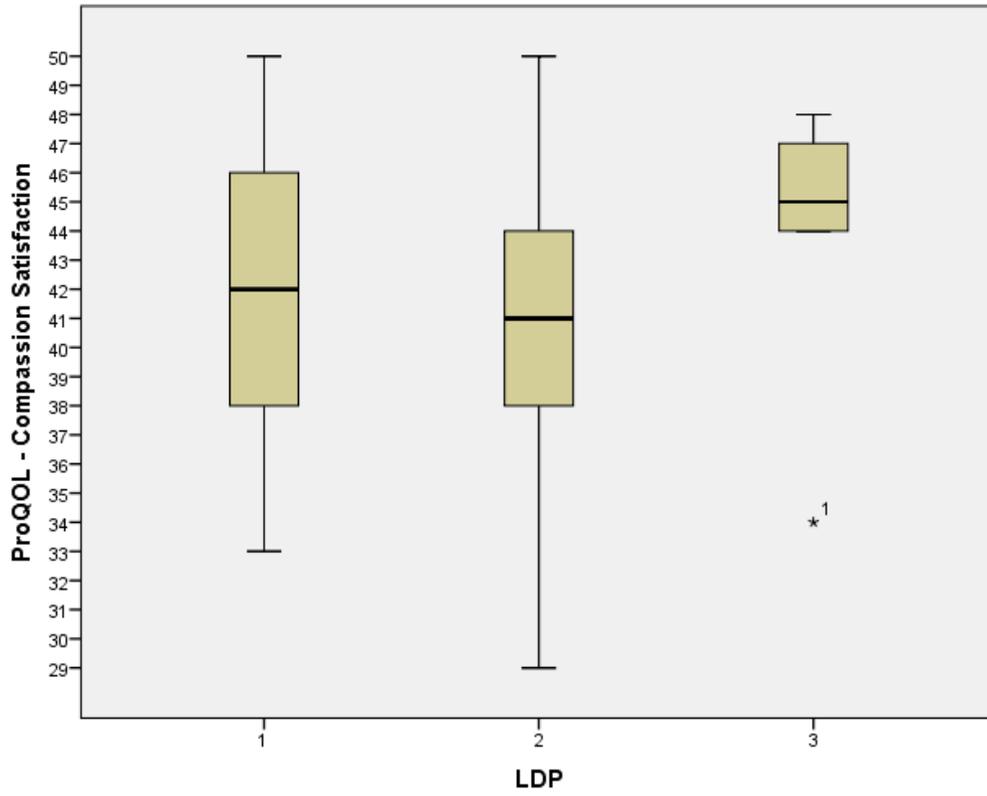


Figure 4. Compassion satisfaction by LDP. 1 = Expert, n = 31; 2 = Achiever, n = 57; 3 = Individualist, n = 6.

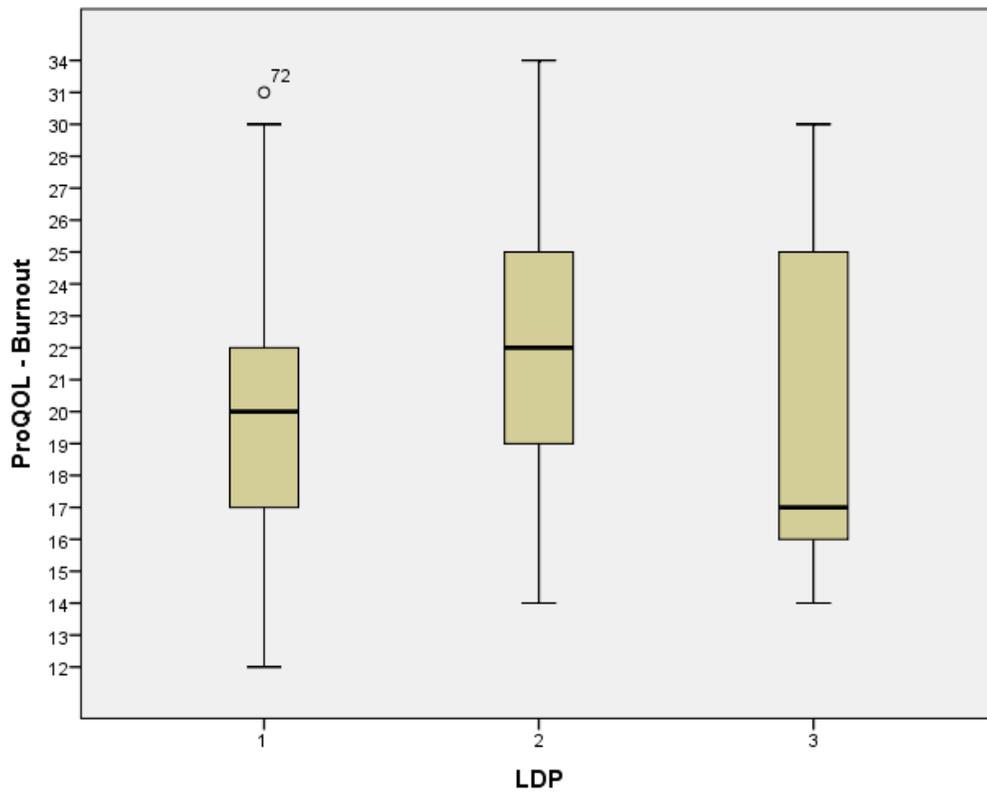


Figure 5. Burnout by LDP. 1 = Expert, n = 31; 2 = Achiever, n = 57; 3 = Individualist, n = 6.

The box plots for secondary traumatic stress are shown in Figure 6. These box plots are also similar to those for the full data set. All three groups are skewed, indicating that there is more variability in scores above the median than below.

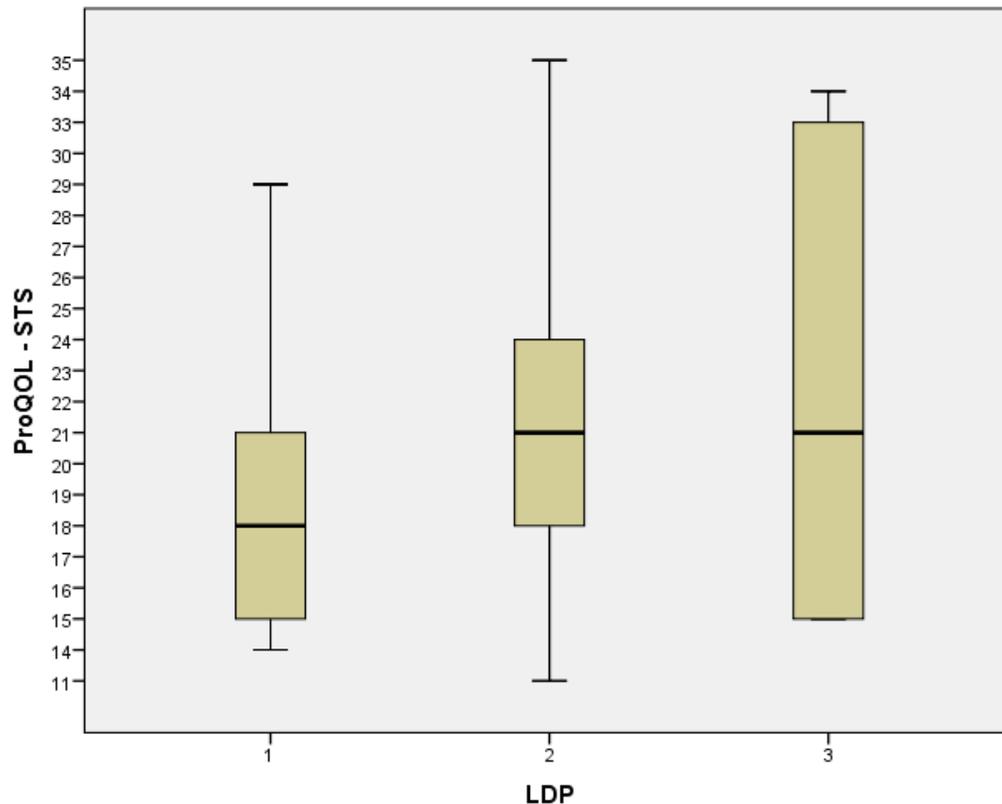


Figure 6. Secondary traumatic stress by LDP. 1 = Expert, n = 31; 2 = Achiever, n = 57; 3 = Individualist, n = 6.

To explore these findings further, I ran regression models with the outliers removed for the three ProQOL scales on LDP. The models for compassion satisfaction ($F(2, 90) = .27, p = .764$), burnout ($F(2, 90) = 1.012, p = .377$), and secondary trauma ($F(2, 90) = 1.706, p = .187$) were not significant.

To further explore the relationship between the ProQOL scales and LDP (with outliers removed), I created a model with the subscales of the WES that had been significant in previous regressions: supervisor support, work pressure, autonomy, and involvement. The results are

shown in Table 16. Involvement ($p < .001$) was the only dimension significant for compassion satisfaction. For burnout, the relationships with autonomy ($p < .05$), work pressure ($p < .001$), and involvement ($p < .01$) were significant. There was also a significant relationship between secondary traumatic stress and work pressure ($p < .01$), and secondary trauma was the only ProQOL dimension that had a significant positive relationship with the LDP ($p < .05$). I am cautious about reading too much into this latter finding, as it is likely a result of the impact that removing the outliers had on the data set.

Table 16

ProQOL Subscales by LDP and WES Subscales

Variables	Compassion satisfaction			Secondary traumatic stress			Burnout		
	B	SE	p	B	SE	p	B	SE	p
LDP	.435	.853	.612	1.913	.878	.032*	.586	.688	.397
Supervisor Support	-.366	.342	.288	-.187	.352	.596	.070	.276	.800
Autonomy	.596	.373	.114	.257	.384	.505	.741	.301	.016*
Work Pressure	.123	.209	.557	.642	.215	.004**	.609	.168	.000***
Involvement	1.039	.293	.001**	-.225	.301	.456	-.774	.236	.001**
R ²	.192			.187			.377		
(df) F	(5, 88) = 4.175			(5, 88) = 4.054			(5, 88) = 10.633		

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Since it appeared that the work environment may be important irrespective of developmental orders, I was interested in exploring the relationship between the WES and ProQOL. I ran a correlation model using the following subscales of the WES: supervisor support, autonomy, involvement, work pressure, clarity, and task orientation, along with the three ProQOL

subscales. The results are shown in Table 17. There is high correlation among most of the WES dimensions with each other and with the three ProQOL subscales. Interestingly, supervisor support is positively correlated with compassion satisfaction and negatively correlated with burnout, but there is no correlation between supervisor support and secondary traumatic stress. Also interesting is that work pressure correlates positively with secondary traumatic stress and burnout, but not with any of the other WES subscales. This perhaps indicates that secondary traumatic stress and work pressure cannot be buffered by the other aspects of the work environment.

Table 17

Pearson Correlation Matrix Among WES and ProQOL Subscales

	IN	CC	SS	AU	TO	WP	CL	CS	BO	ST
IN	1	.550**	.584**	.419**	.547**	-.082	.451**	.435**	-.480**	-.211*
CC	.550**	1	.427**	.410**	.452**	-.161	.411**	.314**	-.377**	-.156
SS	-.584**	.427**	1	.690**	.403**	-.008	.438**	.225*	-.344**	-.138
AU	.419**	.410**	.690**	1	.297**	-.037	.358**	.309**	-.436**	-.210*
TO	.547**	.452**	.403**	.297**	1	-.039	.626**	.424**	-.427**	-.253*
WP	.082	-.161	-.008	-.037	-.039	1	-.040	-.028	.375**	.352*
CL	.451**	.411**	.438**	.358**	.626**	-.040	1	.370**	-.403**	-.253*
CS	.435**	.314**	.225*	.309**	.424**	-.028	.370**	1	-.685**	-.289**
BO	-.480**	-.377**	-.344**	-.436**	-.427**	.375*	-.403**	-.685**	1	.646**
ST	-.211*	-.156	-.138	-.210*	-.253*	.352*	-.253*	-.289**	.646**	1

Note. * $p < .05$ (2-tailed). ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

IN = Involvement, CC = Co-worker Cohesion, SS = Supervisor Support, AU = Autonomy, TO = Task Orientation, WP = Work Pressure, CL = Clarity, CS = Compassion Satisfaction, BO = Burnout, ST = Secondary Traumatic Stress.

Interaction Between Merged LDP Groups and ProQOL

Participants in the Expert and Achiever levels may not be far apart developmentally. The Expert action logic maps to the socialized order, at the top end, and the Achiever action logic maps to the self-authoring order at the bottom end. Presumably, both groups would include those who are transitioning from socialized to self-authoring. The Expert action logic has been identified by Cook-Greuter (2004) and Bartone et al. (2007) as corresponding with Kegan's (1982) transition from socialized to self-authoring. Furthermore, Torbert (Torbert & Livne-Tarandach, 2009) considers the Achiever to be the last of the "Conventional" developmental levels and the Individualist to be the first of the "Post-Conventional," thereby further aligning the Achiever group with the Expert group. To check out the theory that they may be close developmentally, I combined the Diplomat, Expert, and Achiever groups and ran some analysis.

First, I recomposed the groups by merging the Achiever group with the Diplomat/Expert group; then I created box plots for the new groups. Figure 7 shows the box plots for secondary traumatic stress by the newly configured LDP groups (LDP Merged). The median for participants at the Individualist level is marginally higher than for the Diplomat, Expert, and Achiever group combined. Both groups are skewed with wide variance in the data. In the Individualist group, the most variability occurs in the interquartile range. The combined group (Group 1) contains the highest and lowest scores and the most variability is in Q4.

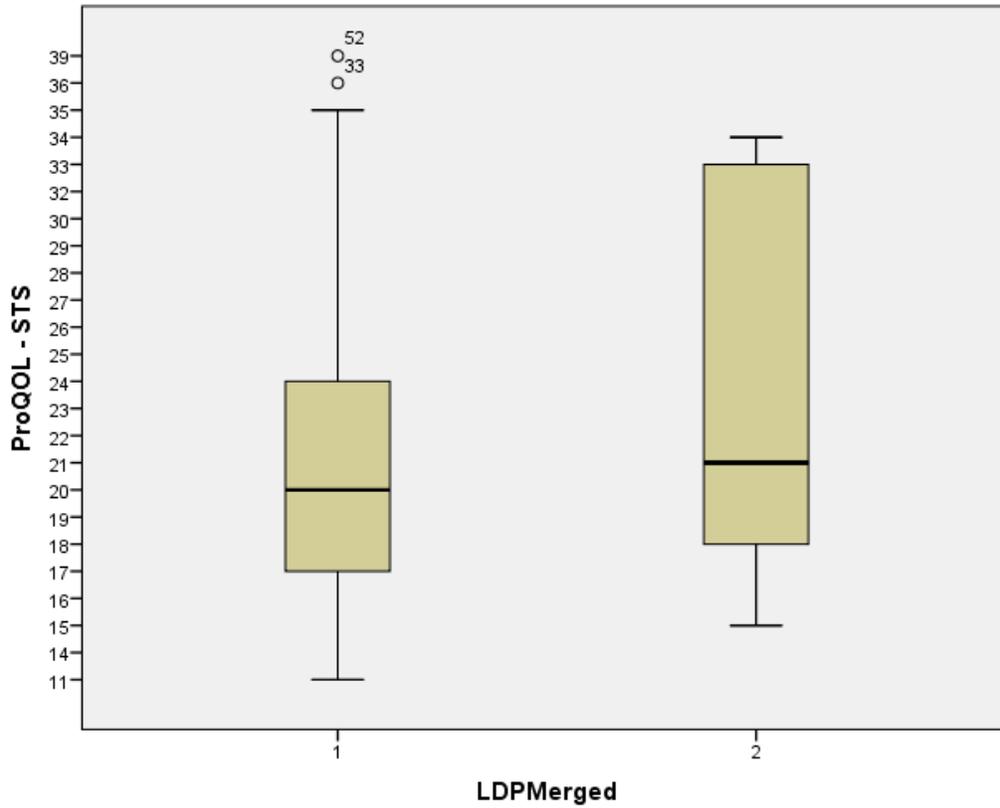


Figure 7. Secondary traumatic stress by LDP merged. 1 = Diplomat, Expert, and Achiever combined, n = 92; 2 = Individualist, n = 7.

Figure 8 shows the box plots for burnout by LDP Merged. The median for burnout is lower for the Individualist group than for the combined group. This is suggestive of the predicted direction. However, the Individualist group is still skewed while the combined group is relatively symmetric.

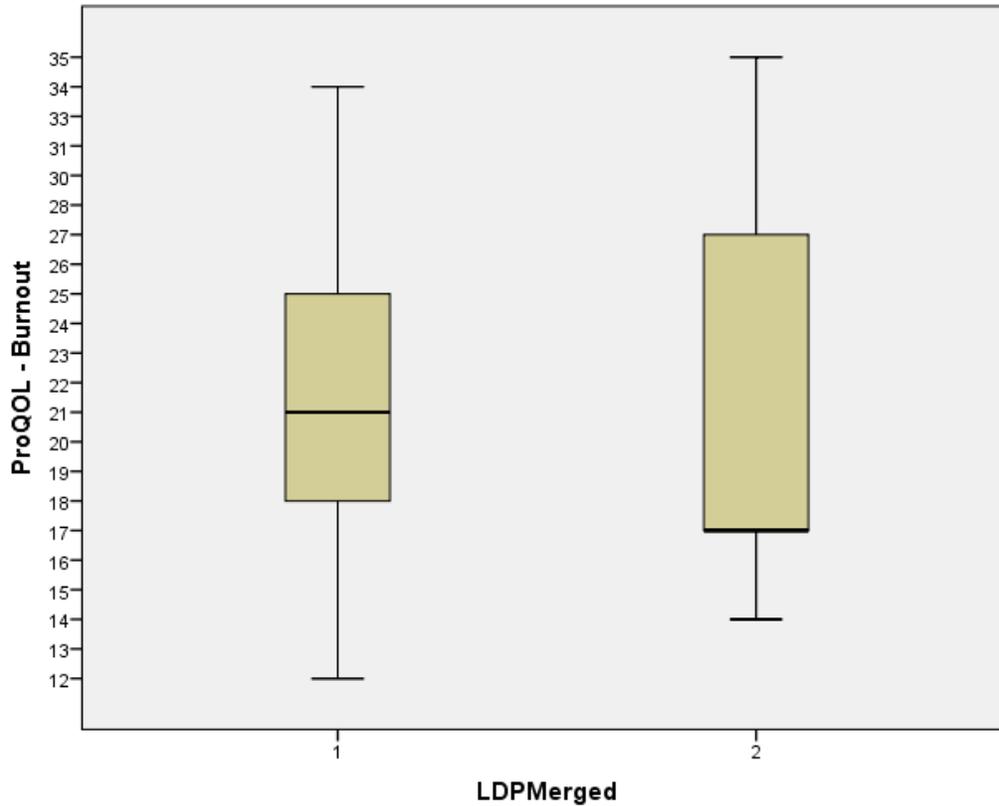


Figure 8. Burnout by LDP merged. 1 = Diplomat, Expert, and Achiever combined, n = 92; 2 = Individualist, n = 7.

In Figure 9 are the box plots for LDP Merged and compassion satisfaction. The Individualist group is skewed with a new outlier. The combined group (Group 1) has a wider range of scores and the variability is more equally distributed throughout the 4 quartiles. This is not surprising given that Group 1 has 92 participants and Group 2 only has 7 participants.

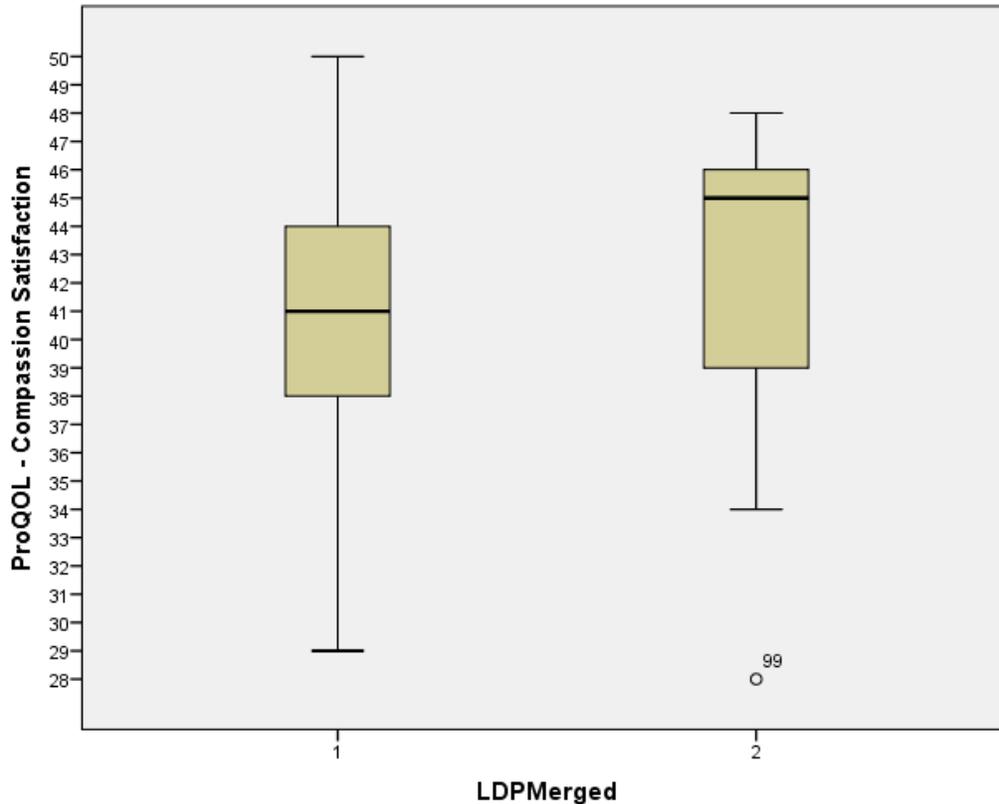


Figure 9. Compassion satisfaction by LDP merged. 1 = Diplomat, Expert, and Achiever combined, n = 92; 2 = Individualist, n = 7.

The Linear Relationship Between ProQOL Scales and the Merged LDP

To explore the relationships between the merged LDP and compassion satisfaction, secondary vicarious trauma, or burnout, I ran regressions for each of these dimensions with the merged LDP scores as the predictor variable and compassion satisfaction ($F(2, 95) = .330, p = .720$), secondary traumatic stress ($F(2, 95) = .297, p = .384$), and burnout ($F(2, 95) = .878, p = .419$) as the dependent variables. The LDP was not a significant predictor in any model.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the results of the LDP, ProQOL, WES and the relationships between them. The first question I attended to was whether practitioners with different meaning-making systems vary in their experiencing of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, or the

symptoms of burnout. Box plots and regression results using the LDP as a predictor variable and the three dimensions of the ProQOL as dependent variables were presented. The box plots indicated that some of the data was skewed. The regression results were not significant, and my initial conclusion was that there is no relationship between the LDP and ProQOL measures of compassion satisfaction, secondary vicarious trauma, and burnout.

The WES was added to the regression model to assess the relationship between work environment, developmental level, and the experiencing of compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout. Some of the factors on the WES were significant, but there was no significant relationship between the LDP and ProQOL or WES. Modifying the data to remove outliers and merge LDP categories also produced regression results that were mostly not significant.

Factors that may have contributed to the results will be thoroughly explored in the Discussion Chapter.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore the impact of constructive-developmental level on child and youth care workers' and supervisors' experiences in residential care. My interest was in examining whether Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental theory might provide a new and useful lens through which to view the practice problems commonly found in the child and youth care field, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. In this chapter, I summarize the key research findings and discuss the implications and potential of these findings for child and youth care practice in residential care and in relation to the aforementioned practice problems. I also describe the contribution of this research to the literature. In the next few sections, I review the findings from all data sources organized around each research question.

Job Satisfaction and Success

Participants who were interviewed described the ways in which they experienced job satisfaction and success in their roles; there was coherence within constructive-developmental orders and across organizations. All those who were making meaning at the socialized order derived satisfaction through positive interpersonal interactions. They felt good about their work when they knew they were making others happy, people liked them, and they received positive feedback from their peers and supervisors. For some socialized participants, these themes actually showed up during the interviews with me when they expressed concern about whether they were giving me the "right" answers. This did not happen with the other participants.

Self-authoring participants experienced satisfaction and success in myriad ways. The congruence across this group was not in the content of their experiences, but the way in which they were constructed. These individuals had their own internal measures by which to gauge success and felt satisfaction in their roles when they met their own goals and expectations.

Rather than being liked, those who were self-authoring were focused on being competent. Self-authoring participants reflected on their own growth and experienced enjoyment from helping others to grow.

Participants who were transitioning experienced satisfaction and success in similar ways to those who were socialized. They also wanted to make others happy, but as part of a broader mandate to make a difference. Positive feedback and support from their supervisors were important because it helped them to know what to do and also helped them to grow.

It was clear from the interviews that constructive-developmental order impacts how practitioners and supervisors experience their roles in the areas of job satisfaction and success. It was also clear that, while this speaks to the various *sources* of job satisfaction across developmental orders, it does not necessarily speak to the *prevalence* of job satisfaction for one group over another. All participants, during the interviews, presented as caring, committed professionals who really enjoyed their jobs (most of the time) – and this did not vary by developmental level.

It is perhaps not surprising, then, that when the compassion satisfaction subscale of the ProQOL, the other measure of job satisfaction, was regressed on development (as measured by the LDP) the results were not significant. The ProQOL was administered to 99 participants. The mean scores for compassion satisfaction were very high, indicating that 93% of participants in the study experienced average to above-average compassion satisfaction compared to standardized scores (Stamm, 2010). These results will be discussed further in the Implications section of this chapter.

Challenges

The practice of child and youth care in residential care, as a front-line worker or supervisor, can be physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually draining. Practitioners often work in environments where they are exposed to various manifestations of aggressive, assaultive, and disturbing behaviour and their physical safety may be jeopardized. At a practical level, they manage the risks in the environment and ensure safety for the young people and themselves. At a deeper level, they interface with the pain of the young people (Anglin, 2002) and provide opportunities for growth and healing. For many new practitioners, their foray into residential care marks the first time they have been exposed to the types of abuse, neglect, and other forms of trauma that have been experienced by the young people in their care. The job can take a toll on even the strongest individual. One of my goals in conducting this research was to understand how much and what kind of toll the work may take on practitioners - how they coped - and whether this varied depending on how they were making meaning.

All participants experienced challenges in their roles. As with job satisfaction, there was coherence within developmental orders and across organizations. For those who were socialized, the challenges mirrored the areas through which they derived satisfaction. These individuals were most impacted when they felt personally attacked or in conflict with others. Because of their reliance on clear direction and feedback, dealing with ambiguity was also difficult for them. In child and youth care, there is very little black and white. Intervention plans can be developed and guidelines can be provided, but many situations call for on-the-spot judgment calls to be made by practitioners. For socialized practitioners, it is extremely difficult to “exercise your own judgment” or “trust your gut” when the source of your judgment, or gut, is external to yourself.

The challenges identified by self-authoring participants also matched their sources of satisfaction. They experienced the most difficulty when they were not able to meet their own standards and expectations. Having to juggle multiple responsibilities compromised their ability to perform all aspects of their roles competently. Because these participants - all supervisors - gained satisfaction from helping others grow, witnessing others' pain and knowing there was nothing they could do but provide support was also a challenge.

Individuals who were transitioning from socialized to self-authoring were straddling both worlds. The challenges unique to this group were related to the process of transitioning itself. These individuals were triggered to grow by the challenges of the job in conjunction with support from their supervisors. They were all able to articulate the situations that led to internal conflict and the growth that had come out of that conflict. Transitioning individuals were developing relationships to the relationships in which they had been previously embedded. Those who were still predominantly socialized continued to rely on the external support and guidance from their supervisors, and concrete coping strategies, while those who had become predominantly self-authoring were able to assume more responsibility for their own coping. They were all, however, conscious of the pull that others still had on them and needed to exert conscious effort not to slip backwards.

The other measure of challenge was the ProQOL, specifically the secondary traumatic stress and burnout dimensions. As with compassion satisfaction, the results were not significant when these two measures were regressed on the LDP.

Coping With the Demands of the Job

The various ways in which participants were able to cope with the challenges and demands of their roles were also influenced by their meaning-making structures. Those who were socialized

relied on direct and responsive guidance from their supervisors and support from their co-workers. They very clearly expressed that without the support they would not be able to do the job. Being noticed and acknowledged, particularly by management, was also important because it helped them to know how they were doing and motivated them to keep going through the tough times.

When socialized practitioners weren't supported, their primary method of coping was to escape. It is not new information for anyone working in the field of residential care that in homes where the work is particularly challenging, there is higher sick leave usage, employees try to switch their shifts more regularly, and overnight shifts become more popular. What is new, perhaps, is the understanding of what may be underlying this behaviour. Rather than trying to "take the easy way out," those at the socialized order may be just trying to hold themselves together. The socialized participants in this study, although they reported feeling the need to get away, also provided many examples of staying and dealing with very difficult situations because the support was there for them to be able to cope.

Self-authoring individuals rely on support from their supervisors too, although they are more likely to initiate the contact and use the supervision as an opportunity to share their thoughts and bounce around ideas. When self-authoring participants became overwhelmed by the demands of the job, they usually responded by taking control of the situation.

Participants who were transitioning were ripe for education and learning opportunities. They were aware that they were "seeing things differently" and open to trying out new ideas and strategies - that they got from external sources - as they unknowingly worked to develop their own internal guiding structure. As mentioned in the previous section, the transition itself can be quite stressful as individuals essentially shed their old way of knowing as they grow into the new

way. As they transition, individuals become less identified with their previous loyalties and torn between maintaining this new distance and being fearful of it. Transitioning individuals are aware of this inner conflict but experience it through the socialized mind, which can provoke guilt and fear at abandoning what they are leaving behind and disorientation about what lies ahead (Kegan, 1994). Practitioners who are transitioning, therefore, were not just having to cope with the demands of the job, they were also coping with the demands of the transition.

The Role of the Organizational Environment

When I started this research, I was interested in seeing how the organizational environment interacted with constructive-developmental order. In particular, I wondered if individuals at the socialized order might be more strongly influenced by the work environment and those who were self-authoring would be better able to disentangle themselves from the organizational culture and therefore, less impacted.

Results of the correlations between the WES dimensions and ProQOL subscales indicated that the environment was equally important on several dimensions for all participants. This is consistent with Berger's (2002) findings in her study of teachers with different levels of mental complexity and their school environments. It is also congruent with material from the interviews, in that all participants, regardless of developmental order, referenced elements of the workplace that were essential to them in being able to do their jobs. The differences between developmental orders lay in the *way* in which individuals were impacted. Unlike socialized practitioners, who were somewhat at the mercy of the organizational environment, those who are self-authoring had the ability to exert control over the environment. The differences are perhaps more subtle than can be detected in a standardized assessment tool like the WES. Also, as referenced in Chapter 7, there was likely not enough variance in the sample for sound statistical analysis.

As mentioned previously, I was not able to collect enough data to do the modeling I had originally envisioned, which would have included several participants from each of six to eight organizations. I therefore tried the alternate strategy of recruiting individuals directly rather than through their organization. This strategy did produce enough participants (64) across five organizations that I was able to use my original selection criteria for the SOIs (ProQOL scores) and also gain some measure of the impact of the organizational environment. In addition to these 64 participants, there were 35 participants across 26 other organizations. This likely influenced the results, particularly with regard to the WES scores, and the relationship between the WES and LDP.

In the interviews, there was coherence of participants' experiences within constructive-developmental orders and across organizations. Participants in this study all came from organizations that they considered supportive. Four of the five organizations were rated an average of 8 or higher in support, and the fifth was rated a 6. Even in the organization with the lowest rating, all participants interviewed were able to identify at least one supervisor who had supported them. The following comments were typical during the interviews:

“Honestly, anybody that you’re going to speak to, we’re all going to say the same thing, like, it’s an absolutely amazing place to work.”

“So, I think they really do an amazing job at acknowledging that and they always send out, like, email thank-yous and they give us different things and they really value us. I think that helps the morale.”

“It meant everything. It meant that they truly cared.”

“I’ve actually said, always in my job I feel supported by various levels and ranks in management and I always have [...]. Like at the moment, I’m going through a placement breakdown and I am getting support left, right and centre, which is unbelievable.”

All participants identified that they received the support they needed from their organization and most articulated that they would not be able to do their jobs without the support provided. Based on the descriptions offered by participants, there was evidence that at least four of these organizations provided supervision that was developmentally appropriate for individuals making meaning at the socialized and self-authoring orders.

The regression analyses showed relationships between elements of the work environment and compassion satisfaction, secondary trauma, and burnout. That there was no significant relationship between the ProQOL and the LDP does not necessarily mean that there is no connection between the two. It is perhaps the case that the experiences of individuals at all developmental levels are impacted by the work environment in equal measure, yet in divergent ways. It is the differential impact that showed up in the interviews with participants.

In my data set, there were not enough organizations or practitioners who were struggling. This is an interesting finding in itself, given the public discourse around residential care and the problems commonly associated with it. The majority of participants in this study, although rating high in vicarious trauma, also rated high in compassion satisfaction and rated their organizations above the norms on the WES. Most participants liked their jobs, found them very challenging, and received enough support from their supervisors to tackle those challenges. Several factors related to selection bias may have contributed to these results. These are outlined in the section on Limitations.

Implications of the Study

My initial interest in studying this topic was to find a new, perhaps more useful, way to conceptualize some of the problems that exist in residential care. The findings of this research are in line with those of previous studies in which constructive-developmental theory was used to explore the experiences of professionals in other disciplines (see, for example, Berger, 2002; Fantozzi, 2010; Hasegawa, 2003; O'Donovan-Polten, 2001). My results offer suggestive evidence that constructive-developmental theory could provide a useful framework through which to view the experiences of child and youth care workers, with implications for child and youth care practice, education, training, supervision, and organizational management in residential care. I start this discussion by exploring what the child and youth care field appears to demand of practitioners from a constructive-developmental perspective.

What are the Mental Demands of Child and Youth Care Practice in Residential Care?

In order to provide the right supports for practitioners and supervisors in residential care, at all developmental orders, we need to understand what the environment is asking of them. What is the mental capacity required to be able to do this work? Some of the information provided by participants on the types of challenges they face and supports they need are clues to the demands placed upon them. They must be able to navigate multiple relationships, take charge, set limits, maintain personal boundaries, and assume responsibility for their decisions. They need a coherent self that can transcend across situations, deal decisively and effectively with conflict and crisis situations, enter freely into relational engagement (without becoming embedded in the relationship), and engage in reflective practice - and that is just to start.

As previously identified, effective child and youth care practice is generally perceived to require a considerable amount of self-awareness and “use of self” (Fewster, 1990; Garfat, 2003).

In the child and youth care literature, and often in practice, these concepts are sometimes discussed as if “self” is the same for everyone. This carries with it an implicit demand that we be able to see ourselves in a certain way in relation to others and that we have “a reflexive relationship” (Smith, 2009, p. 134) with ourselves. When viewed through a constructive-developmental lens, it becomes clear that only self-authoring individuals would have the capacity for the type of insight described in the literature as being essential to effective practice. As Kegan has expressed (1982),

If one’s inner experiences just ‘show up’ there, so that the self-conscious self is an audience for its inner experiencing, then insight turns out to be insight into why the audience reacts as intensely to the content as it does, rather than into why or how the author writes the script or drama as he does. (p. 132)

The different capacities for insight between socialized and self-authoring individuals was evident in the interviews. Gina, for example, talked about her difficulty dealing with certain types of foul language from the young people. She recognized the origin of her difficulty in this area but had no capacity to do anything about it. Her insight essentially served as an explanation for her reaction. Dennis, on the other hand, talked about new insight he had recently gained and his reaction to this insight was

Yes, that I need to be careful about, if somebody says something like that, I don't immediately say something. I stop and think, breathe for a minute like, “This is why I'm feeling this way. I need to get past that and then deal with whatever it is that's just been said.” It was a big jump for me though because that's always frustrated me, deeply frustrated me. But I never really understood why. Knowing why helps a lot.

Even the notion of “self-care” may not be truly accessible to individuals until they are self-authoring. When socialized and transitioning participants in the study talked about self-care, there was a prescriptive quality to their descriptions. They usually depended on someone else - a supervisor or therapist - to tell them what they needed to do to take care of themselves. They also tended to rely on very stringent protocols to be able to separate work from their personal lives. Their capacity to reflect on what was going on for them internally, and take ownership of their experiences, was not yet developed. In Miranda's interview, for example, she talked about the pain of letting go of a relationship with a young person who moved out of the program in which she worked. Her focus was on the origin of her pain, e.g. she could not see him every day, and she was sad that someone else was now doing all of the things she used to do for him. Miranda identified that she had become too attached to this young person and, although it had gotten a bit easier to deal with because she was able to see him occasionally, she was intent on ensuring that in future relationships “there’s not so much of the attachment.” Her strategies for ensuring this did not happen again included conscious attempts to implement boundaries between work and home:

You just kind of realize how much it hurts, so you don't want to make it so that you feel that much attached to a person. So, I just kind of decided it's important to spend time with family and friends. There was a lot of time when my family and friends kind of came last and I picked up overtime. So, I don't really do that too much anymore.

Miranda did not demonstrate the capacity to establish boundaries with the young people while at work without implementing such rigid separation between roles. In comparison, self-authoring participants talked about the ways in which they knew themselves and relied on this knowledge to keep themselves in check.

The expectations of child and youth care workers, as described in the literature and from participants in this study, demand more from practitioners than just acquisition of knowledge or skills, or demonstration of specific behaviour. They have within them implicit demands for practitioners to be operating from a particular logic or way of knowing. They make “demands on our mind” (Kegan, 1994, p. 5) that appear to require self-authoring mental complexity.

Reconceptualizing Practice Problems

Although the field of child and youth care appears to demand a self-authoring way of making meaning, this does not mean that individuals who are not yet self-authoring cannot perform these responsibilities. The self-authoring consciousness does not need to come from their own minds (Kegan, 1994). The participants interviewed in this study clearly showed that the job can be done, and done well, by individuals at the socialized order as long as they have the necessary support. As a field of practice, we need to ensure that we provide what is needed for child and youth care workers to be able to perform the tasks that are “over their heads” (Kegan, 1994). Knowing what types of supports are necessary may first require a reconceptualization of some common practices and practice problems.

Boundaries and limit setting. In their interviews, Miranda and Julie talked about “developing a backbone.” This type of language is typical in the child and youth care field. It is not unusual to advise practitioners, often in the early days, that they need to be more assertive, develop boundaries, set limits, and so on. Clearly these are important areas in child and youth care practice. We can inadvertently do more harm than good, however, when we focus on skill teaching and acquisition alone. Practitioners can be left feeling confused and inadequate as if there is something wrong with them. Constructive-developmental theory can help us, and them, to understand that there is *nothing* wrong with them; they are just not yet making meaning in a

way that has allowed them to develop a backbone. The issue is in the fit between where they are developmentally and the demands placed upon them. Kegan (1982) asserts that individuals in the socialized order are

Prime candidates for the assertiveness trainer who may tell me that I need to learn how to stand up for myself, be more “selfish,” “less pliable,” and so on, as if these were mere skills to be added on to whoever else I am. The popular literature will talk about me as lacking self-esteem, or as a pushover because I want other people to like me. But this does not quite address me in my predicament or in my “hoping.” It is more that there *is* no self independent of the context of “other people liking.” (p. 96)

When viewed through a constructive-developmental lens, an inability to set limits and maintain boundaries is not a failure of character or a lack of knowledge, it is a matter of vision. Practitioners making meaning at the socialized order do not see themselves as separate from others in a way that would allow them to create personal boundaries that clearly define where they end and the other begins. A person at the socialized order would be “truly heroic once in the role of helper but nonexistent in the superordinate activity of creating the roles in the first place or overseeing their operation” (Kegan, 1994, p. 96). As articulated by socialized participants during the interviews, this could show up in practitioners solving young people’s problems for them or working to avoid conflict at all costs. It can also include an inability to maintain control over the environment.

Practitioners at the socialized order, in the absence of clear guidance and direction, could also respond to the young people based on their own emotional reactions to the behaviours. In some cases, this could result in overly strict or punitive responses. Sharon, for example, believed that the young people required more discipline than the organization permitted and found it

challenging to refrain from “dishing out” consequences. Sharon’s beliefs about discipline came from her upbringing. Her desire to be more punitive was also connected to her socialized mindset, in that when young people were rude to her, she held them responsible for her feelings. Not being able to respond to that behaviour with a consequence resulted in Sharon feeling like the child had “won.” Likewise, Tracy decried the lack of discipline in her current work environment, as this left her without the external structure she needed to maintain order, and Gina experienced negative reactions to the young people when they talked about assaulting women.

Vicarious trauma, burnout, and turnover. There were no significant relationships between the LDP and the ProQOL measures of secondary traumatic stress and burnout. I am therefore cautious about proposing that any relationship exists between developmental order, as measured by the LDP, and the experiencing of secondary trauma or burnout. That said, the information provided by participants in the interviews indicate that socialized and transitioning practitioners, as assessed through the SOI, may be at higher risk of experiencing secondary trauma and burnout than those who are self-authoring *if they do not receive the necessary supports in the environment*. This was clearly articulated by one of the socialized participants, who said, “That’s where a lot of burnout would probably come from if you’re not supported.” Other participants vocalized that they would probably leave their jobs if they did not have the support they currently experienced. This fits with the theme of *escape* that emerged for socialized participants.

I used the highest and lowest ProQOL scores from each of the five organizations to select participants for interviews, on the assumption that these may yield practitioners making meaning at different developmental orders. A cursory review of the ProQOL scores and SOI scores

indicates that there may also be some relationship between constructive-developmental order, as assessed by the SOI, and experiencing of compassion fatigue, *irrespective of the organizational environment*. As identified in Chapter 4, of the four participants who scored highest in compassion fatigue for their organizations, three were making meaning at the socialized order, and one was transitioning. Of the six who scored lowest in compassion fatigue, only one was socialized, one was transitioning, and four were self-authoring. Although these numbers are quite small, and no claims of generalizability can be made, there is a visible trend. The four individuals who were selected randomly were more evenly distributed, with two socialized, one transitioning, and one self-authoring. As previously noted, five managers were self-authoring. That the selection criteria generated such an equal split of socialized and self-authoring participants, in the directions anticipated, further suggests that there may be a relationship between the experiencing of secondary traumatic stress and burnout, as measured by the ProQOL, and constructive-developmental order, as assessed by the SOI. When examined against the themes that emerged for participants at the socialized and self-authoring orders, it is not surprising that participants at the socialized order may be more susceptible to experiencing compassion fatigue.

The interview results also suggest that it may not necessarily be the job itself that results in high turnover or burnout – it may be the lack of support in combination with the demands of the job. All participants in this study worked in very challenging environments and yet the most novice participant had two years of experience. Several of the participants, mostly self-authoring, had over ten years of experience at their current organization. Although the turnover in residential care may be high in general, the participants in this study tell a different story - of

how to support, develop, and therefore retain child and youth care workers in residential care. This is discussed more thoroughly in the next section.

Implications for the Organization: The Role of the Holding Environment

When I started this research, I anticipated significant differences in the ways in which socialized and self-authoring practitioners experienced their roles and were able to cope with the demands of the job. While there certainly were some differences, one of the most compelling findings from this study was that so many practitioners, supervisors, and organizations were doing so well. This speaks, in part, to the profound influence of the organizational environment. Participants in this study, across all developmental orders, demonstrated the importance of “being held” by their organizations.

Providing adequate holding to employees across developmental orders can be a tricky balance. “Environments that are weighted too heavily in the direction of challenge are toxic; they promote defensiveness and constriction. Those weighted too heavily toward support without adequate challenge are ultimately boring; they promote devitalization” (Kegan, 1994, p. 42). Two examples from the interviews may illustrate this. Anna was the only participant who rated her organization significantly lower for challenge than support. After many years on the job, Anna was still making meaning from a socialized system. It is possible, if this has been an ongoing circumstance, that Anna has not experienced the type of challenge that other participants mentioned as being pivotal to developmental growth. On the other hand, Tracy rated the job as being much more challenging than supportive and she was also at the socialized order after several years on the job. In the reverse of Anna’s situation, the extremely challenging nature of Tracy’s job coupled with a perceived lack of support may have contributed to her lack of developmental growth.

As relayed by participants in this study, individuals making meaning within the socialized system require clear direction and guidance. Programs that provide no structure would likely be too challenging for socialized practitioners but allow for the autonomy craved by those who are self-authoring. Likewise, organizations that operate within a relational framework may be appealing to employees who are self-authoring but perceived as lacking in clarity and too ambiguous for those who are socialized. In the study conducted by the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth (2013) referenced in the literature review, the program was described as relationship-focused and strength-based. All of the staff were trained in a relationship-based approach. Yet, the majority of problems were related to rigid, punitive, and controlling reactions to the behaviour of the young people. Did the meaning-making systems of child and youth care practitioners play a role in this? Did the lack of structure result, ironically, in more rigid responses? It is impossible to say for sure without studying the program directly. The findings of this study, however, suggest that a mismatch between the mental complexity of practitioners and the organizational environment could have contributed to the outcome.

In a job that primarily demands a self-authoring way of knowing, individuals who are not yet making meaning at this level of complexity need access to self-authoring consciousness that they can borrow (Kegan, 1994). Ideally, this would come from the organizational community - management, supervisors, and co-workers - who would comprise the holding environment. "Ultimately it is the community's collective consciousness itself that is the source of order, direction, vision, role-creation, limit-setting, boundary management, and developmental facilitation" (Kegan, 1994, p. 104). Interpersonal interactions between individuals of varying developmental capacities within an organization can help to broaden their perspectives, challenge them to experiment with new ways of thinking and behaving, and become a catalyst

for growth (Kegan et al., 2001). The organizations involved in this study appeared to provide holding environments for their employees, and the self-authoring consciousness of the supervisors was regularly “lent” to those who were socialized.

When residential programs are set up on models that are over the heads of most practitioners working there, they may be destined to fail. The staff can become frustrated and confused, not understand what is expected of them, and, in the absence of clear direction and support, respond to the young people based on instinct and “common sense.” Program drift and unsafe practice can occur. A supportive climate with a supervisor that is in tune with employees’ developmental needs may buffer the demands of the job by providing practitioners with the necessary resources to effectively deal with the young people’s challenging behaviours, while an unsupportive climate may compound the challenges presented by the young people. With an understanding of, and strategic focus on, transformational growth, the environment can provide the external supports needed for individuals to do the job effectively from their own meaning-making systems, while also promoting development to a more complex way of knowing. It was evident from the examples shared by participants that a focused effort to provide socialized practitioners with the guidance, support, and acknowledgment they require can help ensure that the external source of authority to which they are aligned is not the young people.

Promoting developmental growth. According to Kegan (1994), a holding environment: provides both welcoming acknowledgment to exactly who the person is right now as he or she is, and foster’s the person’s psychological evolution. As such, a holding environment is a tricky transitional culture, an evolutionary bridge, a context for crossing over. It fosters developmental transformation. (p. 43)

Just as child and youth care practitioners must provide holding for the young people in their care, so too must the organization provide holding for the practitioners. An effective holding environment provides an “ingenious blend” of support and challenge (Kegan, 1994, p. 42), as presented in Table 18.

Table 18

Characteristics of a Holding Environment

Support	Challenge
Respecting individuals’ thoughts and feelings and affirming the value of their voices.	Drawing individuals’ attention to the complexity of their work decisions and discouraging simplistic solutions.
Helping individuals to view their experiences as opportunities for learning and growth.	Encouraging individuals to develop their own personal authority by listening to their own voices.
Collaborating with individuals to analyze their own problems and engage in mutual learning.	Encouraging individuals to share authority and expertise, and work interdependently with others to solve problems.

Note. Table created with information from Baxter Magolda (2009).

To encourage growth, supervisors can expose socialized practitioners to new ways of seeing and thinking, point out that they are responsible for how they feel, and gently challenge them to reflect on parts of themselves they are not yet able to see. It may be useful for practitioners to know that what they are experiencing is normal, over time they will come to experience things differently, and eventually the job will not impact them in the same way that it does currently. As identified by transitioning participants during the interviews, it is helpful when supervisors bring their unconscious processes to conscious awareness. This allows them to “Make what is hidden unhidden, and learn what it actually takes to master it” (Kegan, 1994, p. 76). Also important is

that supervisors practice patience and acceptance throughout this journey of development. During the interviews, when participants referenced their own growth, it was always in the context of the support they had received that had enabled them to grow. Sharon, for example, while talking about her relationship with her supervisor, said,

I am amazed that even in the last 12 months, how much I've learned. You never stop learning. I know that my mum and dad have always said that to me, but I thought "bullshit." That's so true. I've learned probably more the last 12 months than I have over the last 10 years about myself.

The participants in this study were at different places on their journeys of development based on when and where they started, how far they had travelled, and the challenges and supports they encountered along the way. There is nothing deficient or inadequate about someone being behind others on the road. To assist others with developmental growth, as Baxter Magolda (2009) suggests, we need to be "good company" for the journey. It is also important to realize, as highlighted by the transitioning participants in this study, that sometimes when employees are struggling this may be related to developmental growth. As stated by Kegan (1982), in reference to the transition from one order to the next,

These are the moments when I experience fleetingly or protractedly that disjunction between who I am and the self I have created; the moments when I face the possibility of losing myself; the moments that Erikson refers to hauntingly as "ego chill." The chill comes from the experience that I am not myself, or that I am beside myself, the experience of a distinction between who I am and the self I have created. (p. 169)

If supervisors and managers are in tune with and can recognize when this is happening, they can adequately applaud and support the development of their employees, and of each other.

While the practice of child and youth care might render many practitioners in over their heads, it may also provide accelerated, agentic (Valcea et al., 2011) developmental opportunities. The number of individuals transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, and the number of self-authoring participants in this study, may be an indication of this. Individuals develop to meet the demands of their environment when their current way of making meaning is not sufficient (Popp & Portnow, 2001). Helping others to develop a self-authoring mind requires “instructive unwillingness on the part of the authority to answer all the questions or provide all the solutions” (Kegan, 2015). The field of child and youth care is ripe for this because the inherent ambiguity associated with the role makes it impossible to answer all of the questions. Since residential care can be a challenging environment for almost everyone who works there, developmental growth is practically inevitable if the psychosocial environment provides the right balance of support. “Providing a bridging environment that both recognizes the old interpersonalism but refuses to be swept into it is actually more than hand holding [...]; it is the holding of the whole life enterprise” (Kegan, 1982, p. 186).

Supervision

Knowledge of adult development and how to promote it could be beneficial to ensuring that job expectations are realistic and attainable. Based on the results of the interviews, for socialized practitioners, expectations need to be clearly articulated and supervision should be initiated and directed by the supervisor. Waiting for these individuals to request assistance could be problematic, since there may be times when they are not aware that assistance is needed. Several examples were provided during the interviews of practitioners only becoming aware that they should modify their practice, or take better care of themselves, when this was pointed out to them by their supervisor. Individuals at the socialized order require direct guidance to get them

through the toughest times, particularly when they are at risk of personalizing the behaviours or losing themselves. Supervision needs to include concrete feedback and suggestions coupled with gentle challenge that introduces new possibilities for thinking and seeing.

Practitioners who are self-authoring are able to be self-directive and will ask for help. However, they still require a supervisor who will be responsive and available. It is important for self-authoring practitioners that there be resources available in the organization that they can seek out as needed.

Implications for Child and Youth Care Education and Training

An understanding of students' constructive-developmental needs, and ways in which to facilitate the growth of mental complexity, would be useful to trainers and instructors in child and youth care education programs in two main ways. First, it would help instructors to align their expectations with students' capabilities and provide adequate supports for students at varying developmental orders. Second, it would equip instructors to strategically create an environment that facilitates developmental growth.

Ultimately, the goal of child and youth care training is to prepare practitioners to work effectively with the young people and families in their care. When viewed through a constructive-developmental lens, this requires that training is both competency-based and transformational. In other words, how training is delivered is just as important as what is taught.

Participants will take different things from training and education depending on their experience and where they are developmentally. Concrete skills and strategies taught in training can be used by individuals who are socialized as an "external authority" that they can access in moments when they do not know what to do. Based on the information relayed from participants, it appears to also be important that they receive training that provides the "how to" information

they are reliant upon while also being challenged to grow. Supporting the growth of self-authoring learners could involve encouraging them to consider diametrically opposed perspectives to their own (Drago-Severson, 2007).

Practitioners with different mindsets require different forms of support and challenge to participate effectively in learning opportunities. For participants who are socialized, being asked to share their perspectives or opinions during training may be overwhelming if they do not first know what valued others think. To facilitate transformative learning, facilitators can encourage socialized learners to see themselves as being capable of generating good decisions and having important perspectives, and to look inward to come up with their own ideas. Explicitly acknowledging their ideas and perspectives will support their growth and transition process (Drago-Severson, 2007). Self-authoring individuals, on the other hand, will feel validated and supported when they are provided with opportunities to share their own perspectives and demonstrate personal competency.

Berger (2002) has provided recommendations for pre-service teaching programs that would be applicable in a child and youth care classroom, and Baxter Magolda (2009, 2010) has written extensively on how to create post-secondary learning environments that support the development of “self-authorship.”

Contribution to the Literature

One of the purposes of this study was to introduce Kegan’s (1982, 1994) constructive-developmental theory to the field of child and youth care and explore ways in which it might be used to reconceptualize some of the practice problems. In that regard, the study contributes to the literature in three useful ways.

First, this research suggests that constructive-developmental theory is a valuable lens through which to view the experiences of child and youth care workers. The findings in this study open up new areas of potential inquiry with regard to some of the practice problems identified in the literature along with other areas such as child and youth care education, training, and supervision.

Second, an unexpected finding in this study suggests that the dominant narrative of high turnover and burnt out practitioners in residential care is incomplete. The participants in this study demonstrated that there are residential programs, in multiple countries, in which practitioners are well supported, satisfied in their roles, and enjoying long-term careers in the field.

The third contribution is methodological. In this study, I used two measures of development: the SOI and the LDP. Both produced compatible but different results. While the LDP was useful in producing developmental scores for a large number of participants, it did not provide the depth of information gleaned from the SOIs. If I had only used the LDP as the developmental measure, the results of this study - and my understanding of participants' experiences - would have been much different. The SOI, particularly as it was adapted for this study, proved to be a useful tool for eliciting information about how individuals experience their work in residential care. There were some challenges associated with coordinating the LDP and SOI, particularly that the LDP and SOI scores for participants who were interviewed did not all match. This result is not surprising, given that these were two different measures, assessing individuals based on related, but different, developmental theories. There may have been other factors, reviewed in the next section, which contributed to the results in relation to the LDP scores. There was also some promise, however, in how these two measures fit together. These are all areas for further study.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable information about the use of constructive-developmental theory as a lens through which to view the experiences of child and youth care workers in residential care, it is not without limitations. The primary limitations included:

1. Restricted range issues
2. Recruitment and sampling restrictions
3. Assessment issues
4. Limited scope of inquiry

The first limitation is the restricted range of the sample, which may have been skewed towards older and more experienced practitioners. The range of LDP scores was also restricted. Only 33% (Diplomat and Expert) of participants were the equivalent of socialized or transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, and the remaining 67% (Achiever and Individualist) were either transitioning from socialized to self-authoring, self-authoring, or transitioning from self-authoring to inter-individual. There were also restricted range issues with the scores on the WES and the ProQOL, with both being higher than the norms. The skewed sample likely contributed to the finding that there were fewer than expected individuals and organizations that were struggling. The majority of participants ($N = 75$) were 30 years of age or over, and the average length of experience was 12 years. Previous studies have found that younger (Decker et al., 2002; Lakin et al., 2008) and less experienced (Barford & Whelton, 2010; Braxton, 1995) practitioners are more likely to experience burnout or turnover.

The sample was not random; participants were recruited primarily through purposeful, convenience, and snowball sampling strategies. Many of my recruitment advertisements and invitations to participate were distributed by colleagues who are actively involved in the child

and youth care field and many participants worked in programs that were connected to the field. This likely introduced bias into the recruitment process, in that organizations involved in professional networking may function differently than those that are not connected. Additionally, practitioners who respond to an ad to participate in research may not be reflective of all child and youth care practitioners.

My recruitment materials informed potential participants that I was looking for individuals who worked in residential care with young people who had “complex needs and challenging behaviours.” I left it to individuals to select themselves in or out. For those whom I interviewed, I familiarized myself with their organizations and verified that they met the selection criteria. For the remainder of the 99 participants, however, there was no independent verification of the nature of their work in residential care. It is possible in some cases that the comparisons were unequal. The inclusion of supervisors in the sample was another limitation. While this provided some benefits, particularly with regard to the interview material, it also introduced an extra variable into the data which may have impacted the quantitative results.

The LDP was chosen as a practical and efficient way to get a developmental measure for a large number of participants, not as verification of the SOI scores. As referenced in Chapter 4, the SOI and LDP are different methods measuring distinct developmental constructs. That said, the inconsistencies between the SOI and LDP scores for the 18 participants who were interviewed raise interesting questions about the relationship between the SOI and LDP, and about the LDP scores for the larger group. Jones (2015) administered the SOI and GLP (a variation of the LDP) to 11 participants and her agreement rate between the two measures was only 18% (two out of 11). Jones (2015) identified contextual variation and bias introduced by the GLP assessment as two of the factors that may have contributed to her results.

It is possible that participants' SOI and LDP scores may reflect their range of development as measured by both tools. As stated by Jones (2015),

The interior world of any individual is a complex landscape that cannot be fully characterized by just one action logic or developmental stage. Instead, an individual's developmental experience has been described as an "ongoing process of evolution" (Lahey, Souvaine, Kegan, Goodman, & Felix, 2011, p. 25, as cited in Jones, 2015), and any assessment (whether conducted with the GLP or interview) is but a snapshot of that complex process. (p. 286)

It is also possible that the way in which the LDP was administered impacted the developmental assessments of participants. I used the 18-item, split half version of the LDP instead of the full 36-item version. I made this choice for two reasons. First, the LDP was one of three survey instruments that participants were asked to complete. To prevent them from being overwhelmed, I decided to go with the shorter sentence completion test. The second reason for using the 18-item version was practical: The cost of paying for scoring for the 36-item LDP would have been prohibitive. The 18-item version was recommended by David Rooke of Harthill Consulting as the most viable option. As mentioned previously, the LDPs were rated by expert scorers from Harthill. Single scorers were used to rate the LDP and this may have impacted the results, as double scorers are generally recommended to increase validity (Jones, 2015). It is also possible that completing the ProQOL and WES prior to the LDP could have influenced participants' responses.

During this study, I did not focus on the instrumental or self-transformational orders of meaning-making, or the transitions from instrumental to socialized or self-authoring to self-transformational. My initial focus was on the socialized and self-authoring meaning-making

systems, since they are the most prevalent. However, this is still a limitation of the study. These other areas are important and relevant and should be considered in future research.

To fully answer all of my research questions, I needed a wider variety of participants and different methodology. Standardized assessment tools, like the WES and ProQOL, are useful for picking up on general themes but not able to detect nuances in experiences.

Future Research

This research answered some questions and raised many more. Some of the areas for future research come from the limitations of this study. To gain a more complete picture of the experiences of child and youth care workers through a constructive-developmental lens, it would be useful to find environments composed mostly of socialized practitioners and/or supervisors. It would also be beneficial to target practitioners who are unhappy or struggling in their roles, or former practitioners who left the field because they could not cope with the demands of the job. Dysfunctional organizations, or those that are struggling with high turnover, may provide ripe areas of inquiry.

The finding that most of the self-authoring participants were supervisors was interesting. It raises questions, based on the presumption that promotion into a supervisory position would be based on competence, regarding the potential relationship between constructive-developmental order and job competence. In a different area of inquiry, it would be useful to purposefully recruit managers, supervisors, and practitioners who have been identified as competent and effective (and perhaps those who are incompetent/ineffective) to explore the relationship between constructive-developmental order and competence and effectiveness.

To gain a solid understanding of how to promote developmental growth a longitudinal study would be needed. Doing such a study and strategically introducing elements into the

environment to promote development could also provide useful information about holding environments. The holding environment itself is another area for potential inquiry, particularly with regard to how it could be operationalized. While this was attempted, in part, in this study by including the WES, the restrictions in the participant pool and assessment tools did not yield the anticipated results. It would be useful to conduct a study looking at organizational influence with a design to include organization as a mediating or predictive variable.

Conclusion

Almost everyone hired to work in residential care starts off overwhelmed by the demands of the job. Most seasoned practitioners are able to reminisce, usually with a mix of horror and amusement, about their first couple of years in the field and the challenges they faced. New practitioners can encounter situations that are completely foreign to them, such as constant acting out behaviours and frequent displays of aggression from the young people. Due to the complexity of the role, there is potential for considerable mismatch between practitioners' developmental capacities and their job requirements. New practitioners generally respond to these challenges in one of three ways: they grow; they leave; or they oversimplify the demands of the job in an effort, perhaps, to decrease the anxiety associated with their disequilibrium.

Often, these difficulties are attributed to the steep learning curve that exists as practitioners gain experience, confidence, and competence over time and subsequently become better able to handle more complex aspects of the job. While there is certainly some validity to these explanations, constructive-developmental theory offers an alternate framework for understanding some of the challenges. Having a framework that would enable us to properly support practitioners and supervisors where they are, while providing the right kind of environment to facilitate growth, could provide new opportunities for learning and development.

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APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE
(PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the *last 30 days*.

1=Never 2=Rarely 3=Sometimes 4=Often 5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
- _____ 11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a [helper].
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
- _____ 25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

APPENDIX B

Work Environment Scale (WES)

Sample Questions

1. The work is really challenging.
2. People go out of their way to help a new employee feel comfortable.
3. Supervisors tend to talk down to employees.
4. Few employees have any important responsibilities.
5. There's a strict emphasis on following policies and regulations.

Note: Questions reprinted from the WES Manual by R. H. Moos, 2008, Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden, Inc. www.mindgarden.com. Copyright 1974, 2008 by Rudolph H. Moos. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

APPENDIX C

The Leadership Development Framework

© Harthill 1998/2015

Sentence Completion Form

An analysis of your responses in completing the 18 unfinished sentences in this form enables a profile to be drawn up which gives insight into the sense-making behind your actions, and so enables the central 'action logics' of your work and life to be identified. This analysis will be presented to you in your individual Leadership Development Profile (LDP).



Directions for completion

- To the best of your understanding complete each of the 18 sentences which follow – there are no right or wrong answers.
- Complete all the sentences at one sitting if possible.
- Please respond freely and honestly – this document will be treated confidentially.
- After each response use the tab key to progress to the next field
- Please ensure your contact details are completed on this page and that your initials and date of completion (but not your name) are entered on all other pages.

Your details

Name

Role title/position in organisation

Organisation

Address

Telephone

Email

Date completed

If you have any questions about the form please telephone Harthill on +44 (0)1600 714419 or email lynn@harthill.co.uk

Your initials

Date

Office use



1 *When a child will not join in group activities*

2 *If I had more money*

3 *Being with other people*

4 *When I am criticised*

5 *A man's job*

6 *The thing I like about myself is*

7 *If my mother*

8 *When people are helpless*

9 *What gets me into trouble is*

10 *Education*

11 *I am powerful*

12 *A good boss*

13 *At my worst*

14 *When it comes to organising my time*

15 *I feel sorry*

16 *A girl has a right to*

17 *Sometimes she / he wished that*

"She / he" should be read as she by women or he by men

18 *When I get angry*

APPENDIX D

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Questions to get at how participants cope with and experience the demands of the job:

1. What are the most significant challenges you face in your role?
2. What is the worst thing about....?
3. How does this impact you?
4. How do you cope with these challenges? How do you take responsibility for these challenges?
5. How do you remain in control of the challenges in your job?
6. When do you feel most competent? Least competent? What is it about.....that contributes to these feelings?
7. What is the most satisfying part of the job for you? What is the best thing about this?

Questions to get at how participants experience the environment:

1. Do you feel supported in your job?
2. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being Not at All and 10 being All the Time, how supportive is your work environment?
3. Who does the support come from? What would you need to feel more supported?
4. Do you feel challenged? What would you need to feel more/less challenged?
5. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being Not at All and 10 being All the Time, how challenging is your work environment?

APPENDIX E

Invitation to Participate (Organization)

I am looking for programs that provide residential group care to children and youth to participate in a research project titled *Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care*.

Participation in this research project is voluntary.

The principal investigator in this research project is Heather Modlin, PhD candidate at the University of Victoria, School of Child and Youth Care. This research is being conducted to satisfy requirements for a PhD in Child and Youth Care.

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of child and youth care workers in residential care through a constructive-developmental lens. The research will investigate how child and youth care workers with different mindsets experience and cope with the demands of the job and whether this varies by organizational environment.

I am looking for residential programs that meet the following criteria:

- Must employ 6 or more full-time child and youth care workers;
- must provide group care to young people with challenging behaviours;
- must house a minimum of two young people in the residential program; and
- must be in operation for at least one year.

Managers, directors of programs or individuals in charge whose organizations have volunteered to participate will simply be asked to forward an invitation to participate (that I will provide) to their employees. The research will be conducted with full-time individual child and youth care practitioners and supervisors (I am not specifically targeting supervisors, I am simply open to having both front-line workers and their immediate supervisors participate). All participants will be required to complete an online survey. Some participants will be asked to participate in a personal interview.

All participants (front-line child and youth care workers and supervisors) will participate during non-work hours unless otherwise specified by the employer.

Please also feel free to forward this invitation to managers, directors or people in charge of programs or organizations who may fit the study criteria. Because research participation is voluntary, the Executive Director or person in charge of the organization should not pressure employees to participate.

If your program or organization is interested in participating or if you have questions, please contact me at hmodlin@uvic.ca.

Sincerely,

Heather Modlin
Principal Investigator

APPENDIX F

Invitation to Participate (Individual)

Project Title: Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care

Researcher: HEATHER MODLIN, PhD CANDIDATE, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, hmodlin@uvic.ca

Supervisor: DOUG MAGNUSON, PhD, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care*.

The purpose of this research is to study the different ways that child and youth care workers in residential care experience and cope with the demands of the job.

My research questions are:

1. How do child and youth care workers with different mindsets experience and cope with the demands of the job?
2. Does this vary by organizational environment?

Participation:

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are employed as a child and youth care worker in a residential program or as a supervisor of a child and youth care residential program, and your organization has agreed to participate.

Child and youth care workers and supervisors will participate during non-work hours.

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary. Because research participation is voluntary, you are not obligated to participate and your employment should not be impacted if you do not choose to participate. Your employer or supervisor will not have access to the data or the names of staff who participated from their organization nor will the researcher inform them whether staff from the organization have volunteered.

Completion of the surveys can be conducted from any computer, and interviews will be conducted at a location chosen by participants.

Procedures:

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will be provided with instructions on how to complete a series of surveys administered online using Mind Garden's Transform

Online Survey. These can all be completed at the same time, and will take between 20-40 minutes to complete. You can log in to Mind Garden from your personal computer.

After the surveys have been completed, some participants will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss their experiences as a child and youth care worker in residential care. If you have been selected to participate in an interview, I will contact you through email within 4 weeks after you complete the online surveys. If you do not wish to participate in the interview, you have the right to decline.

I will conduct the interviews in person, at a time and location determined by the participant. Interviews will take between 45 minutes and 2 hours, and can be terminated by participants at any time.

All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. To protect your anonymity, pseudonyms will be used.

Please be advised that information about you that is gathered for this research study (including identifiable information) uses an online program located in the U.S. As such, there is a possibility that information about you may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the U.S. government in compliance with the U.S. Patriot Act.

Inconvenience:

The only potential inconvenience that participation in this study may cause is related to the amount of time you will need to commit to completing the surveys and potentially participating in an interview.

Benefits:

The benefit of this research, for participants who participate in the interview, is the opportunity to talk about yourself and your work, which may be enjoyable for some.

With regard to contributing to the state of knowledge, a richer understanding of child and youth care workers' developmental diversity could inform practices that would help supervisors more strategically support practitioners. Exploring the experiences of child and youth care practitioners in residential care and the differential responses of practitioners to their work environments, could help to decrease the magnitude of problems currently experienced in the field, and lead to a reduction in the number of practitioners burning out and/or leaving the field. This could have significant implications for the education, training and development of child and youth care workers and, ultimately, lead to more effective, higher quality care provided to young people and their families.

Risks:

There are minimal risks to you of emotional or psychological discomfort or stress by participating in this research.

Withdrawal of Participation:

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. Should you withdraw, your data will only be used in the study if you provide express permission for this to happen.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

- The principal investigator will be the only person who will have access to identifying information of participants.
- Pseudonyms will be used for all participants on interview transcripts and coding sheets.
- Participants and programs will be anonymous in the dissemination of results.

All data will be stored securely.

Limits to Confidentiality:

- Limits due to recruitment: Participants may be referred to the study through a third party at the organization or the Executive Director or designated authority.
- Some programs may have a small to medium number of staff.
- Limits due to incidental findings: If I am provided with information during an interview that results in my concern for the welfare of a minor, based on practices that are unethical or harmful, I must report this concern to the jurisdictional child welfare authority.

Questions or Concerns:

- Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of page 1;
- Contact the Human Research Ethics Office, University of Victoria, (250) 472-4545
ethics@uvic.ca

To volunteer to participate in this study, please contact the principal researcher, Heather Modlin, directly at hmodlin@uvic.ca.

APPENDIX G

Invitation to Participate (Revised)

Project Title: Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care

Researcher: HEATHER MODLIN, PhD CANDIDATE, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, hmodlin@uvic.ca

Supervisor: DOUG MAGNUSON, PhD, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care*.

The purpose of this research is to study the different ways that child and youth care workers in residential care experience and cope with the demands of the job.

My research questions are:

1. How do child and youth care workers with different mindsets experience and cope with the demands of the job?
2. Does this vary by organizational environment?

Participation:

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are employed as a child and youth care worker in a residential program or as a supervisor of a child and youth care residential program. Child and youth care workers and supervisors will participate during non-work hours.

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary.

Completion of the surveys can be conducted from any computer, and interviews will be conducted at a location chosen by participants.

Procedures:

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will be provided with instructions on how to complete a series of surveys administered online using Mind Garden's Transform Online Survey. These can all be completed at the same time, and will take between 20-40 minutes to complete. You can log in to Mind Garden from your personal computer.

After the surveys have been completed, some participants will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss their experiences as a child and youth care worker in residential care. If you have been selected to participate in an interview, I will contact you through email within 4

weeks after you complete the online surveys. If you do not wish to participate in the interview, you have the right to decline.

I will conduct the interviews in person, at a time and location determined by the participant. Interviews will take between 45 minutes and 2 hours, and can be terminated by participants at any time.

All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. To protect your anonymity, pseudonyms will be used.

Please be advised that information about you that is gathered for this research study (including identifiable information) uses an online program located in the U.S. As such, there is a possibility that information about you may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the U.S. government in compliance with the U.S. Patriot Act.

Inconvenience:

The only potential inconvenience that participation in this study may cause is related to the amount of time you will need to commit to completing the surveys and potentially participating in an interview.

Benefits:

The benefit of this research, for participants who participate in the interview, is the opportunity to talk about yourself and your work, which may be enjoyable for some.

With regard to contributing to the state of knowledge, a richer understanding of child and youth care workers' developmental diversity could inform practices that would help supervisors more strategically support practitioners. Exploring the experiences of child and youth care practitioners in residential care and the differential responses of practitioners to their work environments, could help to decrease the magnitude of problems currently experienced in the field, and lead to a reduction in the number of practitioners burning out and/or leaving the field. This could have significant implications for the education, training and development of child and youth care workers and, ultimately, lead to more effective, higher quality care provided to young people and their families.

Risks:

There are minimal risks to you of emotional or psychological discomfort or stress by participating in this research.

Withdrawal of Participation:

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. Should you withdraw, your data will only be used in the study if you provide express permission for this to happen.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

- The principal investigator will be the only person who will have access to identifying information of participants.
- Pseudonyms will be used for all participants on interview transcripts and coding sheets.
- Participants and programs will be anonymous in the dissemination of results.

All data will be stored securely.

Limits to Confidentiality:

- Limits due to recruitment: Participants may be referred to the study through a third party at the organization or the Executive Director or designated authority.
- Some programs may have a small to medium number of staff.
- Limits due to incidental findings: If I am provided with information during an interview that results in my concern for the welfare of a minor, based on practices that are unethical or harmful, I must report this concern to the jurisdictional child welfare authority.

Questions or Concerns:

- Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of page 1;
- Contact the Human Research Ethics Office, University of Victoria, (250) 472-4545 ethics@uvic.ca

To volunteer to participate in this study, please contact the principal researcher, Heather Modlin, directly at hmodlin@uvic.ca.

APPENDIX H

***Invitation to Participate
(Short Version)***

Project Title: Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care

Researcher: HEATHER MODLIN, PhD CANDIDATE, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, hmodlin@uvic.ca

Supervisor: DOUG MAGNUSON, PhD, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

You are invited to participate in a research project titled *Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care*.

The purpose of this research is to study the different ways that child and youth care workers in residential care experience and cope with the demands of the job.

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary.

Procedures:

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will be provided with instructions on how to complete a series of surveys administered online using Mind Garden's Transform Online Survey. These can all be completed at the same time, and will take between 20-40 minutes to complete. You can log in to Mind Garden from your personal computer.

After the surveys have been completed, some participants will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss their experiences as a child and youth care worker in residential care. If you have been selected to participate in an interview, I will contact you through email within 2 weeks after you complete the online surveys. If you do not wish to participate in the interview, you have the right to decline.

To volunteer to participate in this study, please contact the principal researcher, Heather Modlin, directly at hmodlin@uvic.ca.

APPENDIX I

Email Response Script

Excellent. Thank you! I really appreciate your interest in participating in the study Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care.

I have attached the Invitation to Participate, which provides more detailed information about the research. If you have any questions after you have read this feel free to ask.

Prior to participating in the study, you are required to sign a consent form, which is attached. You can return the signed form to me through email at hmodlin@uvic.ca or fax at 709-XXX-XXXX. Once I receive your signed consent form I will forward you instructions on how to access the online surveys.

Heather Modlin
Researcher

APPENDIX J

Consent Form

Project Title: Coping through a Constructive-Developmental Lens: An Examination of the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care

Researcher: HEATHER MODLIN, PhD CANDIDATE, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, hmodlin@uvic.ca

Supervisor: DOUG MAGNUSON, PhD, SCHOOL OF CHILD AND YOUTH CARE, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research:

The purpose of this research project is to study the different ways that child and youth care workers in residential care experience and cope with the demands of the job.

My research questions are:

1. How do child and youth care workers with different mindsets experience and cope with the demands of the job?
2. Does this vary by organizational environment?

This Research is Important because:

Constructive-developmental theory offers a potential explanation for the differential challenges faced by child and youth care workers. Using the theory as a backdrop to the demands of the job could perhaps provide a new clue about potential sources of stress or difficulty for child and youth care workers that have not been previously identified or clearly articulated.

The research could contribute significantly to the education, training, support and supervision of child and youth care workers.

Participation:

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are employed as a child and youth care worker in a residential program, and your organization has agreed to participate.

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary.

Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position or how you will be treated. Your employer will not be made aware of who participates in the study.

Procedures:

If you consent to voluntarily participate in this research, you will be provided with instructions on how to complete a series of surveys administered online using Mind Garden's Transform Online Survey. These can all be completed at the same time, and will take between 45 – 90 minutes to complete. You can log in to Mind Garden from your personal computer.

After the surveys have been completed, some participants will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss their experiences as a child and youth care worker in residential care. If you have been selected to participate in an interview, I will contact you through email within 2 weeks after you complete the online surveys. If you do not wish to participate in the interview, you have the right to decline.

I will conduct the interviews in person, at a time and location determined by the participant. Interviews will take between 45 minutes and 2 hours, and can be terminated by participants at any time.

All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. To protect your anonymity, pseudonyms will be used.

Please be advised that information about you that is gathered for this research study (including identifiable information) uses an online program located in the U.S. As such, there is a possibility that information about you may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the U.S. government in compliance with the U.S. Patriot Act.

Inconvenience:

The only potential inconvenience that participation in this study may cause is related to the amount of time you will need to commit to completing the surveys and potentially participating in an interview.

Benefits:

The benefit of this research, for participants who participate in the interview, is the opportunity to talk about themselves and their work, which may be enjoyable for some.

Risks:

There are minimal risks to you of emotional or psychological discomfort or stress by participating in this research.

Withdrawal of Participation:

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation.

You may withdraw by sending a message to the researcher you are withdrawing.

Should you withdraw, your data will only be used in the study if you provide express permission for this to happen. Otherwise, your data will be destroyed immediately upon your withdrawal from the study.

Continued or On-going Consent:

If you are selected to participate in the second part of the study (individual interview) you will be asked to sign a separate consent form at that time.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

The principal investigator will be the only person who will have access to identifying information of participants.

Pseudonyms will be used for all participants on interview transcripts and coding sheets.

Participants and programs will be anonymous in the dissemination of results.

All data will be stored securely.

APPENDIX K

Mind Garden Instructions

Thank you! I really appreciate you agreeing to participate in the study *Coping through a Constructive Developmental Lens: Examining the Experiences of Child and Youth Care Workers in Residential Care*.

To complete the online surveys, please log in to Mind Garden's Transform Online Survey using the login link: <http://transform.mindgarden.com/rsvp/18727>

When you are completing the demographic questions on page 1, if you are working in a specific program within your organization, please identify that program in your answer to Question 6 (Employer).

The surveys will usually take between 20 – 45 minutes to complete. You can complete them all at the same time (this is preferred) or in multiple settings. You can log in to Mind Garden from any computer.

If you have difficulty accessing the surveys, or any difficulty completing them, please feel free to contact me through email at hmodlin@uvic.ca.

After the surveys have been completed you may be asked to participate in an interview to discuss your experiences as a child and youth care worker in residential care. If you have been selected to participate in an interview, I will contact you through email within 4 weeks after you complete the online surveys. If you do not wish to participate in the interview, you have the right to decline.

Heather Modlin
Researcher