Bodies of Work:
Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Experiences of Trust

by

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We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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Abstract

Community-based anti-violence counsellors provide vital support to survivors of gender-based violence. In this phenomenological qualitative study, I explored anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust, and how these experiences of trust contribute to the sustainability of their working roles. I conducted five individual interview sessions with community-based anti-violence counsellors, incorporating the arts-based method of body mapping to focalize embodied experience. In analyzing collected data, I employed reflexive thematic analysis, in the tradition of Braun and Clarke (2006, 2022). Four central themes emerged, framed within the greater pattern of *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*. In the first theme, *Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety*, trust was presented as an interactive process that is rooted in safety, involving relational connection between the body and the mind, and the self and others. The second theme, *The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation*, highlighted how affirmation of one's role through one's felt sense of competency and trustworthiness contributes to role sustainability. In *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance*, trustworthiness was explored as being built through knowledge, connectedness, and intentions that are aligned between self and others, including one's colleagues and employing organization. The final theme, *Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism*, emphasized the importance of reflexivity, attunement, and relational care in creating sustainability in anti-violence counselling work. These findings indicate that trust, as a process occurring both within and beyond the self, played a substantial role in the sustainability of community-based anti-violence counsellors' working experiences. This study identified a need for a multifaceted approach to bolstering trust, which involves embodied connection, reflexivity, relational safety, and organizational support, in order to encourage sustainable working practices for anti-violence counsellors.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The community-based anti-violence sector plays a significant role in addressing outcomes and preventing instances of gender-based violence, defined as acts of violence perpetrated against individuals based on their gender expression, identity, or perceived gender (Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC), 2023; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Jaffray, 2020). This includes employing anti-violence counsellors to support people who have experienced gender-based violence, identified from hereon as "survivors." Existing literature exploring community-based anti-violence counselling support has focused primarily on the needs of survivors who access anti-violence services; less attention has been paid to community-based anti-violence counsellors themselves, who serve as a critical support for survivors (EVA BC, 2023; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Rossiter et al., 2020).

Existing research has identified challenges impacting anti-violence counsellors, and factors supporting the maintainability of their work (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brend et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). These risk and supportive factors have largely been conceptualized through an individualizing, quantitative lens (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). In writing this thesis, I expanded beyond the existing literature's focus on maintenance and avoiding harm, exploring the concept of sustainability in application to anti-violence counselling. I followed Reynolds' (2010) definition of sustainability as an "aliveness, a spirited presence, and a genuine connectedness with others" (p. 18), which keeps counsellors rooted and bolstered in their work. Creating sustainability in counselling practice within the community-based anti-violence sector is of great importance, both for the benefit of counsellors,

and for maintaining ethical, ongoing support for the survivors whom they serve (Reynolds, 2021; Rossiter et al., 2020).

Within existing literature, embedded within many of the supportive factors for anti-violence counsellors is the concept of trust: in oneself, in one's community and relational supports, and in the potential for a less violent future (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brend et al., 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). Anti-violence counsellors' needs for trust often align with their clients'; both are "human beings in need of trusting relationships within which to learn, grow, and heal" (Brend & MacIntosh, 2021, p. 48). Thus, trust may serve as a clear touchstone by which to explore participants' experiences of sustainability in their work as anti-violence counsellors, thereby expanding upon existing knowledge of how to bring sustainability into this work on individual, organizational, institutional, and systemic levels (Brend & MacIntosh, 2021; Cornell & McGavin, 2021; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Reynolds, 2014, 2021).

Trust has been identified both as an embodied process, and as a necessary feature of embodiment; in turn, embodiment is theorized to be a key component in creating sustainability for frontline workers (Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Goldberg, 2007; Reynolds, 2011, 2021; Sodhi, 2012). Embodiment describes the complex interaction between the self and the self's lived-in world (Cornell & McGavin, 2021). It is a holistic approach to being, which incorporates understandings of the body, emotions, thoughts, and behaviours within context (Cornell & McGavin, 2021; Kwon, 2022; Tantia, 2021). Dismissal of, or ignorance to, embodiment is quite common in research processes; however, embodiment has great power as both a concept, and a

basis for research into more sensitive, supportive, and empowering explorations of participants' lived experiences (Cornell & McGavin, 2021).

My purpose in writing this thesis was to explore how anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust contribute to the sustainability of their work, in order to build upon existing understandings of how anti-violence counselling work can become sustainable. This initial chapter serves as a foundation for this thesis. I contextualize anti-violence counselling, then discuss how I sought to address identified limitations in existing literature through this study. I detail the purpose of this study, including my guiding rationale and objectives. Following this, I reflect on my positioning as a researcher. I close the chapter with an outline of the structure of this thesis.

Contextualizing Anti-Violence Counselling

Understanding the environment in which anti-violence counsellors operate serves to contextualize these counsellors' experiences within their working lives. To contextualize the population whose experiences I sought to understand, I examined existing literature on the dynamic historical, social, and environmental contexts that have influenced community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles.

Gender-Based Violence

In this thesis, I sought to explore the experiences of anti-violence counsellors, not the experiences of survivors of gender-based violence. However, briefly exploring existing literature on gender-based violence will serve to better contextualize the discipline of anti-violence counselling. Gender-based violence has been identified as both a global public health pandemic and a significant public health issue in Canada specifically (United Nations, 2023; Rossiter et al., 2020). This type of violence encompasses a range of abusive behaviours, including physical,

psychological, and sexualized acts of violence (Jaffray, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2021). Gender-based violence is rooted in oppressive social frameworks and systems that contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequity and inequality, and disproportionately affects women, girls, and transgender and non-binary people (Fleming et al., 2015; Jaffray, 2020; Savage & Cotter, 2019). Existing literature has demonstrated gender-based violence can detrimentally impact survivors' quality of life, including leading to financial hardship, loss of shelter, and physical and mental health challenges (Haworth-Brockman, 2013; Miller-Perrin et al., 2018).

Historical Responses to Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence has been a pervasive issue throughout history. Before the 1960s, there was no organized response to gender-based violence in British Columbia (Leavitt, 2007, as cited in Rossiter et al., 2014). In the 1960s and 1970s, a grassroots response to sexual and intimate partner violence against women emerged, with six sexual assault centres opening in British Columbia (Leavitt, 2007, as cited in Rossiter et al., 2014). Drawing from feminist and anti-oppressive literature and approaches, which recognized and aimed to mitigate the effects of oppression, inequity, and inequality within society, teams at these centres worked to address the lack of crisis support and counselling services for survivors of sexualized violence (Leavitt, 2007, as cited in Rossiter et al., 2014). Alongside legal changes to protect women, an institutional response involving government support followed in the 1980s and 1990s, with the establishment of anti-violence services including assault centres, counselling programs, and transition houses for women who had experienced violence (Rossiter et al., 2014). Efforts largely followed a peer counselling approach, characterized by limited government regulation or standardization (Rossiter et al., 2014).

The Community-Based Anti-Violence Sector

In the past three decades, policies and practices in anti-violence efforts have increased in both complexity and standardization, with an integrated sector forming to address gender-based violence (Rossiter et al., 2014). The community-based anti-violence sector, also referred to in existing literature as the gender-based violence sector, is comprised of organizations that provide both preventative and responsive measures to address gender-based violence (Rossiter et al., 2020; Rossiter et al., 2014; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). Preventative efforts include public education and advocacy efforts relating to crisis intervention, promotion of gender equity, challenging harmful systemic norms that perpetuate abuse and violence, and lobbying for the implementation of interventions and policies against gender-based violence (Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). Responsive efforts within this sector have included providing affordable and accessible housing, safety planning, education, outreach, and counselling services, accompaniment in navigating legal, justice, and healthcare systems, and facilitating social reconnection for survivors (Rossiter et al., 2020; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). In recent years, some services have expanded their mandates to provide support to transgender and nonbinary clients in addition to cisgender women, recognizing that gender-based violence disproportionally impacts these populations (Rossiter et al., 2014).

In British Columbia, the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) acts as a centralized umbrella organization within the anti-violence sector. In addition to leading public education and prevention initiatives against gender-based violence and linking its member organizations to government and policymakers, EVA BC provides funding advocacy, support, and training to nearly 300 community-based anti-violence programs across the province (EVA BC, 2023; Rossiter et al., 2014). Amongst these programs are 91 Stopping the Violence (STV)

Counselling and Outreach programs, which are funded by the Ministry of Justice, and were developed in 1992 to provide targeted, community-based counselling support to survivors of gender-based violence, including those who have experienced sexual assault, relational abuse, and intimate partner violence (Rossiter et al., 2014; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). Many anti-violence counsellors in British Columbia who are working in the community-based anti-violence sector practice within STV counselling programs.

Experiences of Anti-Violence Counsellors

The lived and working experiences of anti-violence counsellors are varied. Counsellors working in community-based programs have diverse credentials, including relevant life experience, counselling or social work degrees, and pre- and post-employment training (Rossiter et al., 2014). These counsellors provide necessary trauma-informed and accessible counselling support to survivors (Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Rossiter et al., 2020; Rossiter et al., 2014). Expectations of such workers are often pluralistic. Although their primary role may be to provide psychological support and tools, community-based anti-violence counsellors frequently also support survivors in navigating complex structural systems. As such, they must have a working knowledge of pertinent institutional, legislative, community resource, and policy information; this adds further complexity to their roles (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020).

Continuous exposure to clients' complex circumstances and narratives of their traumatic experiences, paired with limited resources, lack of peer, professional, and internal connection and support, and systemic and organizational barriers, has been posited within existing literature as further increasing the complexity of working in community-based anti-violence counselling roles (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Rossiter et al., 2014). Individual,

organizational, and systemic factors contribute to counsellors' ability to uphold ethical standards and maintain sustainable practice (Rossiter et al., 2014; Reynolds, 2021). Experiences of isolation, disconnection, ruptured trust, and hopelessness are common amongst under-supported anti-violence counsellors; existing literature has identified that these factors may increase counsellors' risk of developing work-stress-related conditions (Fusco, 2013; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Merchant & Whiting, 2015; Reynolds, 2019; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020).

Limits of Existing Literature

Although some existing literature explores the experiences of community-based anti-violence counsellors, existing studies on workers in the anti-violence sector have focused on anti-violence workers in general, demonstrating an absence of specialized attention to anti-violence counsellors' experiences (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Voth Schrag et al., 2021). Many existing studies have focused on deficits and risk factors; this is at odds with the anti-oppressive and strengths-oriented praxis of the field itself (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Rossiter et al., 2020). When strengths and supports have been addressed in existing literature, these have been predominantly framed within individualizing and cognitivizing paradigms that discount the importance of relational, collective, and embodied experiences (Cornell & McGavin, 2021; Reynolds, 2009). In the following section of this chapter, I expand upon these noted limitations.

Damage-Centred Research Modeling

Anti-oppressive and feminist discourse has long been referenced and incorporated into training and practice within the anti-violence sector; yet, existing research on workers has mainly been individualizing, damage-centred, and deficit-based, focused on the documentation of risk and protective factors for stress-related conditions experienced by study participants (Babin et

al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Rossiter et al., 2014, Reynolds, 2021; Tuck, 2009; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Damage-centred research modelling has been critiqued for oversimplifying individuals' behaviours and their outcomes, which are in actuality influenced by the dynamic interactions between various contextual and experiential factors (Reynolds, 2010; Rossiter et al., 2014). Damage-centred and individualizing research has been critiqued for pathologizing worker behaviours, creating narratives of deficiency, disempowering workers, and neglecting to adequately emphasize systemic challenges, all of which are at odds with the anti-oppressive theoretical underpinnings of anti-violence work itself (Rossiter et al., 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Tuck, 2009). These critiques, which underline the importance of selecting research methodologies that are aligned with the values of anti-oppressive work, informed my approach to this thesis. Through this alignment, I sought to produce trustworthy research that more wholly represented anti-violence counsellors' lived experiences.

Previous literature has explored damages to counsellors that occur in their work, including compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout (Babin et al., 2012; Cummings et al., 2018; Hernandez et al., 2007; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013). From a critical social justice orientation, Reynolds (2021) and Rossiter et al. (2014) have critiqued the focus on burnout, vicarious trauma, and compassion fatigue as individualizing, noting a lack of attendance to the contextual and systemic challenges which contribute to the development of these damages. This lack of contextual understanding is at odds with the anti-oppressive roots and intentions of the community-based anti-violence sector (Reynolds, 2021; Rossiter et al., 2014). Reynolds (2010) noted that deficit-based narratives can perpetuate systemic harms within community-based support work contexts, placing responsibility for damage not only on workers,

but also on the survivors with whom they work. This indicates a need for ethical, participant-centred research that expands beyond damage-centred orientations, and attends to both participants' strengths, and to the contextual factors that influence their working experiences.

Individualization of Worker Experiences

Alongside damages, anti-violence workers' internal and external supportive factors – including self-care, resilience, autonomy, community, adequate training and supervision, and alignment with organizational policy – have been broadly addressed, typically within the aforementioned framework of risk and protective factors (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Such supports have mainly been explored from an individualizing 'internal' versus 'external' paradigm, which neglects the relationality and intersubjectivity that exist between these paradigmatic features. Reynolds (2019) noted the importance of collective and relational orientations to understanding and establishing sustainable models for frontline work. In pursuing novel research, I hoped to expand understandings of the individualization of supportive factors to also recognize collective and relational experiences, thus further enriching the existing discussion of supports for anti-violence workers within the literature.

Absence of Embodiment Discourse

Existing explorations of anti-violence workers' experiences have focused mainly on individual participants' emotional and cognitive experiences of being supported or unsupported, and on counsellors' behaviours in seeking or creating supports (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Although thoughts, feelings, and

behaviours have been centred in existing research, these phenomena have been primarily examined quantitatively; the "felt senses" of being supported have not been directly explored. Felt senses refer to the emergent, whole, and embodied experiences that people have of situations that go beyond words (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Cornell & McGavin, 2021). To be embodied requires that a person be connected to themselves and their surroundings; a sense of disconnection is a notable experience of anti-violence counsellors experiencing work-related stress (Reynolds, 2019; Tantia, 2021; Tarshis & Baird, 2018). This implies that a qualitative phenomenological exploration of embodied experience would be of value to better understand anti-violence counsellors' experiences.

Body Mapping: An Underutilized Method

Body-mapping is an arts-based method employed within both research and therapeutic settings (de Jager et al., 2016). As an approach to storying lived experience, body mapping is an inherently self-reflexive practice, requiring participants to externalize their embodied experiences in visual and written form (de Jager et al., 2016). Although body mapping has been employed in research on numerous practitioner populations, including nurses, occupational therapists, and social workers, no research was located for this review which utilized body mapping with counsellors in general, or anti-violence counsellors specifically (Harrison et al., 2022; Quong et al., 2021). Having completed a non-exhaustive review of existing literature on body mapping (see Appendix A), I inferred that applying body mapping as a generative tool could serve to support anti-violence counsellors in both recognizing and narrating their own embodied experiences of trust, thus supporting phenomenological inquiry.

Trust: A 'What', or a 'How'?

As noted previously, trust has arisen in numerous publications regarding anti-violence workers, including by Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014), Kulkarni et al. (2013), Murray & Graves (2013) and Wood et al. (2017); however, trust is not clearly or consistently defined across these publications. Additionally, these authors have addressed trust as a relevant cognitive factor, or a 'what', which protects workers from potential damage, thus centring existing deficits and an individualizing, cognitivized perspective on worker wellness. Instead, aligned with the anti-oppressive perspective of the field, I endeavored to understand 'how' trust is experienced in an embodied and sustainable way by anti-violence counsellors, thus centring what is desired and hoped for in working experiences, and exploring trust as a dynamic, process-based phenomenon, rather than an objective factor (Tuck, 2009).

Purpose of the Study

In pursuing qualitative research and exploring embodied experiences of trust, while prioritizing the perspectives of community-based anti-violence counsellors, I hoped to establish a more nuanced understanding of sustainable practice for this population. My purpose in writing this thesis was to explore anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust, and how these experiences guide sustainability in anti-violence counselling work, from an anti-oppressive perspective. Drawing on embodied experience, I aimed to understand how anti-violence counsellors experience the phenomenon of trust, and the role that trust plays in supporting sustainable, meaningful, embodied connections, within their working roles. My selected approach diverged from the damage-centred, quantitative, and individualizing orientations taken by previous research on this population (Reynolds, 2019; Tuck, 2009). Instead, I utilized the

qualitative, arts-based embodied inquiry method of body mapping as a conversational catalyst to explore participants' experiences in a relational manner.

Study Objectives

The overarching objective of this study was to investigate the embodied experiences of anti-violence counsellors concerning their experiences of trust, and how these pertain to sustainable practice. In addressing this objective, I sought to: (a) move beyond the damage-centred, individualizing, and quantitative approaches that prevail in existing literature; (b) explore embodied trust as experienced by anti-violence counsellors; and (c) expand upon understandings of anti-violence counsellors' experiences of trust, as this phenomenon pertained to the sustainability of their work.

Research Questions

To address the study objectives, I constructed two research questions:

1. How is trust experienced in an embodied way by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles?
2. How do these experiences relate to the sustainability of community-based anti-violence counsellors' work?

Philosophical Positioning

In expanding upon the philosophical underpinnings that guide my approach, I identified the scholarly understandings via which I critiqued existing research and practice, as well as the underlying beliefs that have influenced my research design and orientation. These underpinnings include a relativist ontological approach, social constructionist epistemology, and theoretical foundations in anti-oppressive practice and justice-doing. Nested therein are the concepts of

desire-based research modelling, sustainability, relationality and intersubjectivity, and critical embodiment. These elements are further detailed below.

Ontology: Relativism

I founded this thesis in relativist ontology, due to its contextual and critical nature. Relativism posits that reality and truth are shaped by context, and the perspectives and interpretations that occur therein (Pringle & Booysen, 2018). As such, a multiplicity of possible truths and realities exist within the relativist ontological framework. To note that there are multiple truths is not to say that truth and reality do not exist within this framework; rather, it is to say that realities are inherently non-neutral, are crafted interactively and in context, and must be witnessed as such to be understood (McNamee, 2014). As such, a relativist ontological perspective requires that a researcher maintains a critical awareness of the contextual elements at play throughout the process of research design, data collection and analysis (McNamee, 2014). Critical awareness of context is integral to the anti-oppressive roots of anti-violence counselling; as such, relativism is a logical ontological basis on which to situate the current research.

Epistemology: Social Constructionism

In alignment with relativism and the idea of multiple truths, and with respect to the vital role that context plays in peoples' experiences, critical social constructionism posits that our lived experiences shape how we envision and label the world (Finfgeld, 2001). This epistemological perspective offers a view of individuals as multidimensional, without universal definitions for identity; as such, it accounts for intersectional identities and unique variances (Finfgeld, 2001). Within a critical social constructionist perspective, persistent societal messaging around dominant narratives is not seen as empirically valid, but rather, as informed by social processes, and therefore based upon societally negotiated, and thus relational,

understandings (Finfgeld, 2001). As such, social constructionism pulls into question the idea of 'dominant' as 'correct'; meaning is constructed, and therefore relative (Kendi, 2019; Finfgeld, 2001). Exploring trust as socially constructed may serve to reveal how experiences of trust vary depending on contextual and relational factors, and to build an understanding of which of these factors contribute to its presence.

Concern has arisen regarding researchers using social constructionist positioning to shape study outcomes in alignment with their own biased perspectives. However, doing research that is diligently aligned with social constructionism requires a depth of reflexivity which negates this concern (McNamee, 2014). In writing this thesis, I adhered to the definition of reflexivity as provided by McNamee (2014), noting reflexivity as the process of acknowledging how one's own experiences, beliefs, and assumptions may influence one's role in a research project. Continual reflexivity and evaluation of my own biases and assumptions, as well as the engagement of two experienced supervisors, helped to support the rigour of the research process (Berger, 2015; McNamee, 2014).

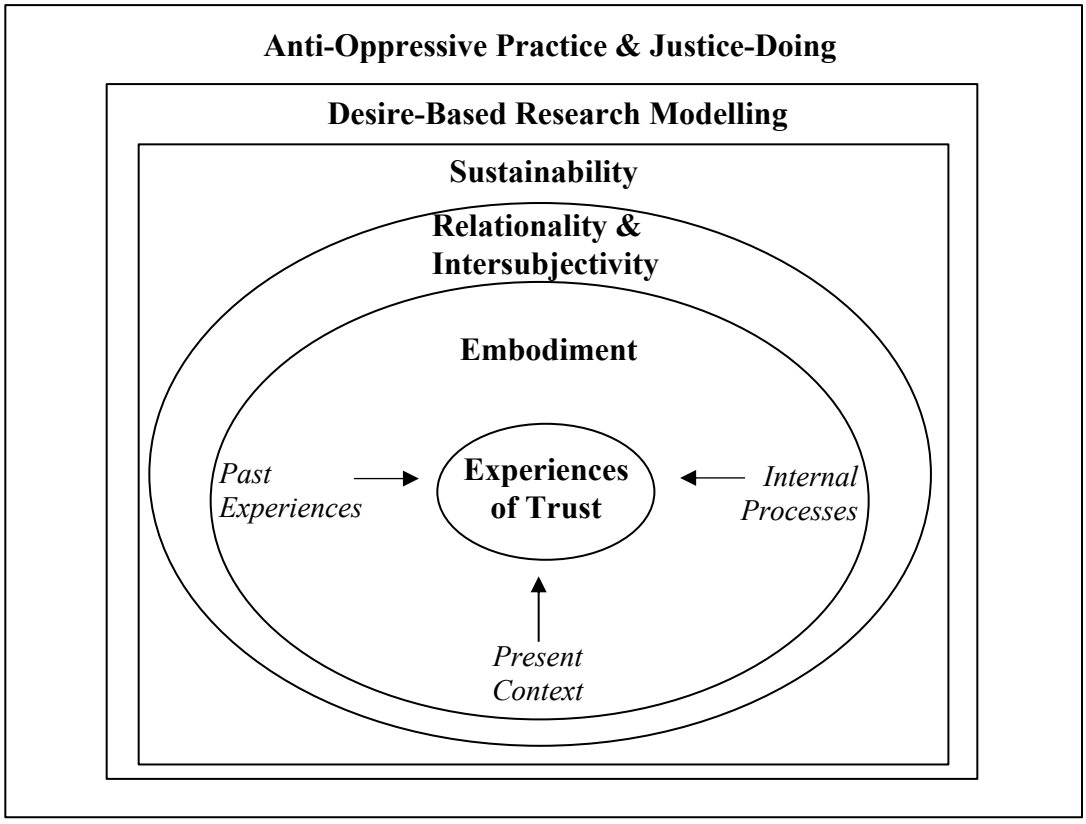
Theoretical Framework

I have aligned this thesis with the core principles of community-based anti-violence work, which, as previously noted, is founded in anti-oppressive practice. While I expand upon the phenomenological methodological approach taken within this research in Chapter Three (Methods), to ensure the impact and relevance of this research, I intentionally chose to found my theoretical framework in practical approaches, rather than relying on purely abstract theoretical concepts. To achieve this, I utilized an integrative framework rooted in Reynolds' (2021) collective ethic of justice-doing, which incorporates Tuck's (2009) desire-based research model to explore the hoped-for phenomenon of sustainability in anti-violence counselling practice. I

focused on the embodied and relational experiences of trust amongst anti-violence counsellors; as such, the concepts of critical embodiment, as well as relationality and intersubjectivity, are also integral to the theoretical framework of this thesis. In addition to providing a visualization of my guiding framework (see Figure 1), I also further define and explicate the interconnections between these components below.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework



Note. See the sections below for further information on the concepts as labelled in this figure. The model of embodiment is informed by Sodhi (2008).

Anti-oppressive discourse and justice-doing. As noted, anti-violence counselling is informed by anti-oppressive discourse and practice. Anti-oppressive practice is largely

constructed from collective action approaches, which emerged in the 1960s, rooted in a critical examination of conventional social work and research methods (Mullaly, 1997). Anti-oppressive approaches have critiqued the systems responsible for placing blame on individuals, who bear the consequences of the flawed structures themselves (Mullaly, 1997). In prioritizing the collective, taking an anti-oppressive lens means bearing witness to the interconnections between social struggles; meaningful change needs to come from relational experiences, rather than discrete and isolated actions of the individual (Reynolds, 2010).

These fundamentals of anti-oppression informed Reynolds' (2021) collective ethic of justice-doing, which identifies justice as actionable and relational. Reynolds noted that justice is 'done' through the enactment of collective care, attending to and addressing power (including the power of language), honouring resistance, and creating safety within relationships (Reynolds; 2011; 2012; 2014). Through this thesis, I hoped to 'do justice' in nurturing solidarity with participants, and challenging limitations existing in both research and counselling practice. I intend to carry forward the findings to policymakers within the anti-violence counselling sector, making the findings of this research accessible and actionable, and encouraging meaningful relational change to improve the working experiences of anti-violence counsellors.

Desire-based research modelling. As noted previously, much of the existing research on anti-violence workers' experiences has been risk-oriented and damage-centred. An alternative approach can be found in Tuck's (2009) desire-based research modelling, which orients toward the wholeness of participants' lived experiences in context, to uncover the hope, agency, and complexities nested therein. Tuck (2009) explained desire-based modelling as an ideological shift that goes beyond the dichotomized binary of reproduction and resistance, to explore a third, complex and unwieldy category: desire. In exploring this third category, what may otherwise be

perceived as “damage” can be more wholly interpreted as coming from a place of hope, alternative action, and lived experience or *complex personhood* (Tuck, 2009). Such action recognizes a person as embedded within a greater map of their contextual connections and complex relationships to others. This model is epistemologically anti-oppressive, aligns with social constructionist epistemology, embodied subjectivity, and intersubjectivity, and is intended to be incorporated alongside populations experiencing systemic oppression (Tuck, 2009). In my exploration of the experiences of anti-violence counsellors – a population who are integrating anti-oppressive practice, and actively working against systemic oppression – such an approach held promise.

Sustainability. In alignment with desire-based modelling, Reynolds (2011, 2019) has provided an alternative approach to existing, deficit-based models for approaching community-based work, to explore that which is hoped for. Reynolds’ (2010, 2011, 2021) model of *collective sustainability* encompasses the relational and embodied experiences that support community-based frontline workers in experiencing an “aliveness, a spirited presence, and a genuine connectedness with others” (2010, p. 18), which helps practitioners to stay present and feel supported in their work. This modelling aligns with the anti-oppressive praxis underpinning community-based, justice-oriented counselling initiatives.

Though sustainability has not been featured in participant research on anti-violence workers, it is worth noting that Reynolds’ work is incorporated into training materials offered through EVA BC (2023) and British Columbia Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH, 2023), lending further credibility to the application of such concepts with this working population. Additionally, concepts nested within Reynolds’ (2010, 2011, 2019, 2021) model of sustainability, including hope, collective care, and community, have been recognized in existing

literature on the experiences of anti-violence workers, though these concepts are presented as factors in a deficit-based framework, at odds with the field being studied (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Wood et al., 2017). In expanding beyond existing research to explore anti-violence counsellors' experiences of trust as they pertain to sustainability, I aimed to both understand the role trust plays in sustainable practice, and to conceptualize counsellors' experiences with attendance to contextual, embodied, and intersubjective factors.

Relationality and intersubjectivity. As I further explore in Chapter Two (Literature Review), individualization of experiences can be witnessed in existing research regarding anti-violence counsellors' experiences of stress, which have largely centralized individual self-care as a strategy for managing work-related stress (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013). Lykou (2021) proposed a parallel between the individualization of social issues within the hierarchical modelling of Western society, and the rift between the self and society that is often experienced by people subjugated within this hierarchy. The move from individualization to recognition of context is common in feminist and anti-oppressive critiques and is present in an oft-quoted statement within anti-oppressive discourse: "the personal is political" (Hanisch, 1970).

In framing lived experiences as experiences of the body within a socially constructed world, they are no longer experiences of the individual, but instead, relational and intersubjective experiences of the embodied self in relationship with others, with society, and with the world (Lykou, 2021). In exploring the phenomenon of trust in this manner, it expands beyond an internal and isolated experience, and into an intersubjective, relational, and embodied phenomenon. In approaching the current research from relational and intersubjective lens, I

hoped to move beyond damage-centred, quantitative, and individualizing research orientations, which cannot, in isolation, adequately address sustainable practice (Reynolds, 2021).

Critical embodiment. While the term 'embodiment', also identified in the literature as 'embodied knowing' or 'embodied subjectivity', may appear individualizing, critical conceptualizations of this concept challenge this perception (Sodhi, 2008). As previously noted, embodiment is defined as the experiences of the body in the context of the world beyond it; it is a fundamentally relational phenomenon (Kwon, 2022). Sodhi (2008) created an expansive definition beyond this, identifying embodied knowledge as the complex interactions of present context (including tangible and intangible elements), internal processes (including feelings, thoughts, and senses), and past experiences. When integrated into social constructionist and anti-oppressive perspectives, embodiment radically challenges the status quo, and is foundational to justice-doing (Egan, 2020; Reynolds, 2021).

To approach embodied subjectivity from an anti-oppressive and social constructionist framework is to acknowledge that within a society featuring dominant hierarchical narratives, some bodies are more heavily policed, politicized, or privileged than others; this means some embodied subjects are more likely than others to experience dysregulation, disadvantage, and subjugation, whilst other embodied subjects are more likely to experience privilege, advantage, and power (de Jager et al., 2016). In other words, as Ahmed (2017) stated, "feminism can begin with a body, a body in touch with the world, a body that is not at ease in a world, a body that fidgets and moves around, […] as things don't seem right" (p. 22). For this thesis, in pursuing an intentional inquiry into participants' embodied experiences through relational and arts-based methods, I hoped to capture the nuanced and personal understandings of what does seem 'right', and what elevates trust, for counsellors practicing anti-violence work.

Researcher Positionality

Ethical transparency is key for maintaining research integrity, and to assure the well-being of those involved in research (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Trussell, 2014). Self-positioning is an essential aspect of this commitment, particularly within the qualitative paradigm, and anti-oppressive frameworks, both of which are relevant in this study (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Reynolds, 2009). As such, as a researcher, I aim to engage in continuous reflection on how my own social identity and positionality may influence my engagement with existing literature, my work with participants, and my representation of participants' experiences (Trussell, 2014).

I am a queer White femme living on the unceded territories of the Lekwungen and Sencoten-speaking peoples of the WSANEC, Esquimalt, and Songhees nations. My Whiteness, choice to clothe and decorate my body in a way that aligns with normative societal expectations ascribed to my assigned gender at birth, and my status as a settler and as a median-income earner, all privilege me in a society that centralizes wealth, settlerhood, the gender binary, and Whiteness. Such identities serve as a shield when the decentralized aspects of my identity may put me at a disadvantage in navigating systems and oppression. Should I choose to trust in only my own biased lens, the normativity of dominant Western knowledge frameworks that privilege me – including the frameworks that are foundational to the colonial institution in which I am conducting research – may enable me to overlook the injustice experienced by those who do not share in such privileges. Through a process of intentionally and continually 'unsettling myself' and remaining critical of my own knowing, I may participate in moving toward decolonial and anti-oppressive praxis, which is aligned with both the framework of this research and the field it aims to explore (Reynolds, 2019; Reynolds & Hammoud-Beckett, 2018; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

In speaking further to my privilege, my attendance to my own positionality has often been a deliberate choice resulting from my engagement in academia and anti-violence work. Engaging with critical, anti-oppressive counter-narratives has illuminated to me the processes by which colonial constructs are built and maintained, challenging the notion that Western ways of knowing are superior. This knowledge shapes my perspective as a researcher and informs my interpretations of the world and the phenomena therein. Understanding and exploring my positionality and the associated power differentials through intentional, chosen pursuit – rather than through external enforcement and oppression – is, in itself, a privileged act (Milner, 2007).

Considerations for the Current Study

In situating myself and considering the influence of my engagement in the study, it was an ethical imperative to explore my lived and known experiences (Pringle & Booysen, 2018). I have spent most of my brief professional life working in community-based anti-violence efforts, as a support worker and counsellor. With roots in anti-violence work and intentions to continue growing where I am professionally planted, I have a personal, vested interest in the elements that support counsellors in staying whole and connected in their work, and maintaining trust in themselves, their colleagues, and organizations, so that they may sustainably support clients. In my time in this sector, I have witnessed many others step away from this work, citing a number of challenges: feeling 'burnt out' and exhausted, a loss of trust in employers, and a loss of hope for meaningful change. I have grappled with similar challenges, which I have experienced as both isolating and individualizing; yet, I have also been sustained in, and by, this work, and the relationships I hold within it.

My encounters with violence, anti-violence, and counselling work are not universally applicable. As someone who has both experienced gender-based violence and engaged in anti-

violence work, it was, and is, of importance to consider how contextual nuances and intersections of identity mold and differentiate both my and others' experiences and ways of knowing (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Milner, 2007). I inhabit roles as both an insider and outsider in relation to research participants, engaging with identities that are simultaneously personal and professional (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Milner, 2007). I also found myself reflecting upon the role of my insider identity as a potential 'hall pass' to morality, and the potential to utilize aspects of my identity to inadvertently wield my own bias. To maintain ethical research practices, transparency, and 'do justice' within this insider-outsider dynamic, I sought to navigate my literature review and my novel research with intentionality, ongoing awareness towards power dynamics, practicing continual self-reflexivity, and witnessing participants first and foremost as people (Reynolds, 2020; Milner, 2007). I heeded the words of Adams (2003) as cited in Badwall (2016), who emphasized that the practice of reflexivity ought not to be perceived as a magic remedy operating in isolation, but rather, as a project of the self: ongoing, intentional, and fundamentally immaterial. This commitment aligns with my counselling lens of anti-oppression and justice-doing, and contributes to the dismantling of the powerful–powerless dichotomy present in models that value researcher perspectives over those of participants (Reynolds, 2020).

This research is fundamentally limited, interpretive, and subjective (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Milner, 2007). In ethically pursuing this topic, I remained aware of the specificity of my area of inquiry. Although some anti-violence workers may be survivors themselves, I did not seek to focalize practitioners' own experiences as survivors, should they identify as such; I did not focus on experiences of violence, nor did I explicate counsellors' approaches to counselling,

their effectiveness as counsellors, or the needs and experiences of the survivors whom they have served.

Structure of Thesis

This thesis comprises five chapters and nine appendices. Through these chapters, I journey from head, to heart, to feet: mapping a body of work in literary parallel to the generative research method of body mapping. This is a nod to the embodied exercise of reflecting on one's head (learnings), heart (intentions), and feet (actions), which I learned from Samantha Loppie, who served as director of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre at the time of my second-year counselling internship. I integrate it here in recognition of my ongoing tethering to anti-violence work, and my process of enacting both counselling practice and research as an embodied being.

In the pages to come, I begin in the "head." In Chapter Two (Literature Review), I share the relevant existing literature that informs this research, including contextualizing the work and experiences of community-based anti-violence counsellors, exploring existing research and its limitations, expanding upon existing research on sustainable practice, identifying sustainability and embodiment, and defining and examining body mapping as a method. In Chapter Three (Methodology), I elucidate the methodology employed in this study, as well as the selected methods for data collection and analysis. In Chapter Four (Findings), I journey to the "heart": outlining the novel data that I co-created and analyzed, including exploring the analysis process and the ensuing results of this study. I move to the "feet" in Chapter Five (Discussion), where I integrate learnings, intentions, and actions to provide an in-depth discussion of these results and their integration into the existing knowledge and literature in the field, followed by a consideration of study limitations, my proposed directions for future research, and my own experiences of engaging in the current research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

To position this study within the broader context of literature on sustainability, trust, and embodiment in anti-violence counselling, I reviewed a number of relevant topics. In this chapter, I provide a comprehensive foundation of why this study is needed. In addition to reviewing existing literature on anti-violence counsellor experience, I also provide a critical analysis of this existing research, highlighting notable limitations; identify Reynolds' (e.g., 2011, 2019) model of sustainability as an alternative framework via which to explore anti-violence counsellors' experiences; and explicate existing literature on trust and embodiment.

Experiences of Anti-Violence Counsellors

In the following section, I provide an overview of existing research on the experiences of anti-violence counsellors, including critically examining commonly employed terminology, and identifying both risk and protective factors for counsellors' well-being. Given the limited research specifically focused on community-based anti-violence counsellors, this review segment is broad in scope, incorporating literature on community-based anti-violence workers as a general working body. This category may include support workers, shelter workers, social workers, and victim services workers.

Defining Key Concepts: Compassion Fatigue, Vicarious Trauma, and Burnout

Existing literature has explored how engaging in work with clients who have experienced violence and trauma can have adverse effects on anti-violence workers. In conducting a non-exhaustive review of existing literature, three terms arose regularly that denote the stress-related challenges facing anti-violence counsellors: compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and burnout. These phenomena are noted as prevalent among workers engaging with survivors of gender-based violence (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al.,

2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Although distinct, existing research indicates that these three phenomena often coexist amongst helping professionals, including anti-violence counsellors (Cummings et al., 2018). Many existing studies have explored them concurrently, under the umbrella of *work-related stress conditions*, or conflated them entirely, resulting in a lack of clarity within the literature (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Cummings et al., 2018; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). As Branson (2019) noted, "the phenomena of clinicians being physically, cognitive, emotionally, mentally, socially, and/or spiritually affected by bearing witness to other's trauma is a source of perplexity" (p. 2). The following definitions of these terms are those used in the context of this thesis.

Compassion fatigue. *Compassion fatigue*, a term coined by Figley (1995), is defined as a state of exhaustion and distress resulting from the stress of close contact with individuals who have experienced traumatic events, and is identified by changes to the practitioner's behaviour and experiences (Brown et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2021; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019; Voth Schrag et al., 2021). Terms used synonymously with compassion fatigue in reviewed literature included *empathy fatigue* and *secondary traumatic stress*, the latter of which was also coined by Figley in 1995 (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). This feeling is often associated with a sense of helplessness, resulting from a counsellor's perceptions of their client's unattainable needs, combined with an absence of resources to support said client (Branson, 2019).

The term *compassion satisfaction* has arisen in the literature as an antonym of compassion fatigue (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Stamm, 2002; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Compassion satisfaction refers to the satisfaction gained by helping others (Cummings et al., 2018). In the context of counselling, compassion satisfaction directly refers to the experience of gratification and success resulting from a counsellor's working role, thus demonstrating a dialectic: to enact compassion is both supportive, and aversive, to those working in such roles (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019).

Vicarious trauma. *Vicarious trauma*, a term coined by McCann and Pearlman (1990), has been identified in existing literature as a distinct phenomenon impacting cognition, in which a person not only experiences stress, but also traumatization as a result of secondary exposure to others' traumatic experiences (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Tarshis & Baird, 2018). Vicarious trauma is commonly seen as cumulative, with the potential to exert substantial and ongoing impacts on professionals' lives (McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Co-victimization is another term that has been used synonymously with vicarious trauma (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Tarshis & Baird, 2019).

The concept of vicarious trauma has brought awareness to the impacts of trauma work on professionals. However, it has also been critiqued as oversimplifying and individualizing the challenges facing counsellors (Frey et al., 2017; Hernandez et al., 2007; Reynolds, 2021). Vicarious trauma suggests that counsellors' experiences result from hearing the traumatic content present in their clients' stories. Such framing suggests that harm occurs on an individual level from client to counsellor, in the process placing responsibility on both the client and the counsellor, and erasing other relational elements (Reynolds, 2021). In ascribing to this belief, the broader contextual elements, including systemic barriers, the counsellor's history, and

organizational restrictions, may be overlooked (Reynolds, 2021). Several alternative terms have arisen, which instead orient towards counsellors' collective strengths in working relationally alongside their clients: *vicarious resilience*, coined by Hernández et al. in 2007, refers to the sense of strength that practitioners feel in witnessing clients' resilience; and Reynolds' (2021) term *vicarious resistance* describes how hearing clients' narratives encourages practitioners to enact justice (Frey et al., 2017; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kim et al., 2021; Tarshis & Baird, 2018).

Burnout. The phenomenon of *burnout* is distinct from compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma. Burnout was defined similarly amongst relevant publications in which it was featured: as a state of exhaustion resulting from prolonged and heightened stress, not necessarily related to primary or secondary exposure to trauma or potentially traumatic events (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kim et al., 2021; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Wood et al., 2019). It is identified by experiences of apathy, lack of motivation, depersonalization, and emotional exhaustion (Hayes, 2013). Burnout is not exclusive to those working in helping professions; rather, it is a common outcome of people being under-supported, appreciated, and compensated within occupational roles (Branson, 2019; Cummings et al., 2018).

Like vicarious trauma, the concept of burnout has faced criticism within the community-based anti-violence sector and helping field. Anti-violence workers' experiences of so-called 'burnout' are often construed as resulting from personal inadequacy or a lack of readiness to face the innate challenges of the profession (Figley, 1995; McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Reynolds, 2011). Reynolds proposes that harm more often originates within the oppressive structures that impair workers from responding to clients' suffering in a dignified and ethical manner, and that

most challenges on the organizational and individual levels can be traced back to systemic origins (Reynolds, 2009, 2011, 2019). When workers are unable to enact their ethics, the resulting discrepancy of this ethical transgression leads to what Reynolds (2011) calls spiritual pain, or ethical pain: an alternative framing of the symptoms that have come to be identified in the helping field as worker burnout.

This burnout paradigm has been critiqued as prescriptive and individualizing, assigning exclusive responsibility, failure, and weakness to individual workers (Babin et al., 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Reynolds, 2011). Another common statement of the burnout paradigm claims that exposure to survivors' stories will inevitably lead to burnout. This perspective has been critiqued as fostering the false belief that engaging in anti-violence counselling work is inherently unsustainable, which diverts attention from the potential for organizational, sectoral, and systemic changes that could bolster sustainability of workers in this field (Reynolds, 2011). Reynolds' (2011) critiques of the burnout paradigm highlight how attributing its formation solely to the individual's actions paints an incomplete picture. Doing so ignores contextual and relational factors that influence worker experiences. Orienting towards systemic harms, as opposed to individual failures, shines a light on the systemic elements that contribute to unsustainable working experiences (Reynolds, 2011).

Risk Factors for Anti-Violence Workers

Moving beyond definitions, work-related stress conditions including burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma are cited in existing literature as prevalent among counsellors working with survivor populations (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). A variety of risk factors have been identified that contribute to the

development of work-related stress conditions, existing on individual, relational, organizational, and systemic levels. These include personal experiences of gender-based violence, years of experience, insufficient internal supports, direct and indirect exposure to trauma, insufficient external supports, burdensome workplace expectations, incongruence with workplace policy, oppression in the workplace, and systemic limitations; such factors are further explicated below.

Personal experiences of gender-based violence. Based on national data, the majority of community-based anti-violence workers are women, who are at risk of gender-based violence, including sexualized violence, intimate partner violence, criminal harassment, as well as work-related stress conditions (Rossiter et al., 2020). In a survey by Kulkarni et al. (2013) involving 236 anti-violence workers, the majority of respondents had experienced relational trauma in childhood or adulthood. Similar findings from a study in northern British Columbia found that nearly 97% of transition house workers had experienced gender-based violence and relational trauma themselves (Bishop & Schmidt, 2011). Such experiences of traumatic stress are associated with challenges in both self-trust and in trusting others (Murray & Graves, 2013). In interviews conducted by Alani and Stroink (2015), some participants noted that their own traumatic experiences interfered with their work. These findings are complex, as many helping professionals have their own histories of personal trauma and exposure to gender-based violence, and often pursue this work as a result of personal passion and experience (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014).

Years of experience in the field. Some research suggests that younger counsellors with less experience in the field are at higher risk of developing work-related stress conditions (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Wood et al., 2017). Quantitative research conducted by Kulkarni et al. (2013) and Voth Schrag et al. (2021) supported this finding, revealing that increased levels of

compassion fatigue were linked to younger age. Kulkarni et al. (2013) posited that this finding did not relate explicitly to age, but to accumulated experience: older respondents likely had developed resilience, trust in their own competence, and wellness management strategies over time, which were opportunities not yet encountered by younger counsellors. Other researchers have noted the opposite: those with more years of accumulated experience are also at an increased likelihood of developing vicarious trauma, as increased time in the field leads to more opportunities for exposure to both traumatic content and scenarios leading to a sense of helplessness (Cummings et al., 2018; Michalopoulos & Aparicio, 2012).

Insufficient internal supports. Relating to the above findings regarding accumulated experience, anti-violence workers who have less constructive internal supports, sometimes referred to as "coping skills" (e.g., Hoogendam & Maki, 2023, p. 4), are at a higher risk of developing work-related stress conditions (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Wachter et al., 2019). Lower levels of resiliency, higher levels of cynicism, and absence of hope and trust are associated with poor outcomes for counsellors, including a higher likelihood of developing work-stress-related conditions (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Wood et al., 2017). The use of self-isolating stress management strategies, such as avoidance, denial, and self-blame, may increase the risk of developing work-related stress conditions (Killian, 2008; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2017). A heightened desire to take care of others is noted amongst anti-violence workers, at times to the detriment of their well-being (Alani & Stroink, 2015). The absence of sufficient self-boundaries can lead to unclear distinctions between work and personal life, leading to increased risk for burnout and compassion fatigue (Alani & Stroink, 2015).

Direct and indirect exposure to trauma. It is known that community-based anti-violence counsellors routinely encounter clients' narratives of their traumatic experiences, which increases the risk of experiencing work-related stress (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Rossiter et al., 2020). Qualitative data analyzed by Brend et al. (2020) demonstrated that all participants were routinely exposed to, and required to respond to, clients' shared narratives of their traumatic experiences. Repeatedly hearing stories of others' traumatic experiences impacts both one's sense of safety, and one's trust in others (Iliffe & Steed, 2000; McCann & Pearlman, 1990). Being exposed to traumatic content is also a risk factor for the development of both compassion fatigue and burnout (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014). Counsellors regularly providing direct crisis services to clients who have experienced gender-based violence and trauma are at higher risk of developing compassion fatigue (Voth Schrag et al., 2021). Brown et al.'s (2020) 98-participant study on compassion fatigue amongst Philadelphia intimate partner violence (IPV) service providers found that 36% experienced compassion fatigue and 39% reported experiences of vicarious trauma.

Challenges may arise for workers due to the particularities of the difficulties that their clients are facing, especially those who are actively in crisis and are at high risk of experiencing future violence. It has been indicated that the counsellors of clients experiencing active crisis, and those who have experienced more serious physical abuse and complex trauma, are at higher risk of developing compassion fatigue (McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014). Counsellors may feel a sense of hopelessness, helplessness, or failure when supporting clients who choose to return to abusive partners or unsafe situations (Fusco, 2013; Merchant & Whiting, 2015). They may also fear experiencing violence themselves when working with clients who have been harmed by

high-risk perpetrators (Fusco, 2013). Fears relating to perceptions of safety may impact counsellors' trust that their working environment is safe (Brend et al., 2019).

Insufficient external supports. A lack of external supports, both within and outside of the workplace, has been implicated in the development of work-related stress conditions (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024). Vicarious retraumatization may occur as a result of engaging in anti-violence work without appropriate external support. This is marked by a reduction in feelings of control, safety, and trust in both self and others (Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Chouliara et al., 2009, as cited in Murray & Graves, 2013). Workers in helping professions may be hesitant to share their work-related challenges with their own personal support system, due to concerns about burdening others, divulging triggering material, and maintaining client confidentiality (Houston-Kolnik et al., 2017). These limitations may lead counsellors to seek out personal counselling to process their feelings; utilizing personal counselling time for processing work-related stressors may indicate an absence of adequate supervision and social support at work (McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014). Lack of trustworthy professional support from colleagues and supervisors contributes to negative outcomes for counsellors (Dworkin et al., 2016). In the absence of adequate professional support, workers may feel lost as to how to process the challenging material that they are exposed to at work (McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014).

In a quantitative study conducted on anti-violence workers' self-reported strategies for managing workplace and traumatic stress, workplace supervision, team support, training, and occupational resources lowest were endorsed less frequently: not because of these strategies were unsupportive, but because they were often lacking or absent from organizational procedures (Wachter et al., 2019). Inadequate training and supervision may impact counsellors' trust in themselves and their competencies, further contributing to their risk of developing work-related

stress conditions (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Merchant & Whiting, 2015). Higher agency turnover and lower self-reports of professional support are correlated with higher burnout scores, higher workloads, lower supervision satisfaction, and lower salaries (Dworkin et al., 2016; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2019). Results of a quantitative survey administered by Babin et al. (2012) demonstrated that challenges communicating with management accounted for a considerable portion of the emotional exhaustion and reduced sense of personal competency as experienced by anti-violence agency employees.

Burdensome workplace expectations. Unmanageable workloads contribute to negative outcomes for anti-violence workers (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2017). Individual counsellors may be expected, either by themselves or their organizations, to extend themselves to meet these systemic demands. This may lead to the adoption of high caseloads and a larger number of hours working directly with clients, both of which have been associated with greater risk for vicarious trauma and burnout (Benuto et al., 2019; Dworkin et al., 2016; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023). The risk of developing compassion fatigue increases for counsellors committing more than 40% of their work time to direct client services (Wood et al., 2017). Increased perceptions of coworkers' stress can also contribute to a higher likelihood of developing compassion fatigue and burnout, as well as negative perceptions of agency management (McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014).

Oppression within the workplace. Gender-based and other forms of violence are perpetuated even within the work of anti-violence counselling, directly exposing workers to potentially harmful content. Counsellors experiencing oppression within the workplace are likely to leave their working roles more often (Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2019). Participants who identified as African American had a higher turnover intention, potentially

relating to microaggressions and oppression within the workplace (Wood et al., 2019). Exposure to microaggressions – the verbal and behavioural slights which covertly communicate hostility regarding the target's perceived identity – is prevalent among anti-violence workers and is positively correlated with compassion fatigue (Voth Schrag et al., 2021). In a study by Voth Schrag et al. (2021), on average, counsellors were exposed to one form of microaggression within anti-violence work; of these exposures, approximately 33% were racist, 15% heterosexist, 17% gender discriminatory, 12% ableist, and 20% sexist. Such microaggressions in the workplace impact workers' sense of safety and trust (Voth Schrag et al., 2021).

Incongruence with workplace policy. Misalignment with organizational values was shown in numerous studies to be a predictor of both burnout and vicarious trauma (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Vicarious trauma and burnout have been associated with a sense of little control and autonomy within the workplace, which is related to a lack of workers' connection to, congruence with, and trust in workplace values and policy (Kulkarni et al., 2013; McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014). Policies and procedures that are seen as maligned, ineffective, or unsupportive to clients lead to increased turnover, job dissatisfaction, and burnout (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Merchant & Whiting, 2015). Noted frustrations with barriers instated by workplaces included hierarchical structuring in workplace environments, counsellors being barred from engaging in cultural practices and shared activities with clients due to prohibitive organizational policies, and organizationally instituted session time limits with clients, which counsellors perceived to have detrimental impacts on the depth and breadth of provided services (Alani & Stroink, 2015). The community-based anti-violence sector is underfunded, which often results in organizations experiencing challenges with meeting

their visions, intentions, and values; a frustration that is deeply felt on the frontlines (Reynolds, 2011; Rossiter et al., 2014).

Systemic limitations. Participants in several studies noted challenges that felt largely out of control both on individual and organizational levels, which related to systemic issues of oppression, resource disparity, and the occurrence of global influences, such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brown et al., 2020; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). Of 98 respondents to Brown et al.'s (2020) study, 51% reported feeling frustrated by the societal conditions of their work, including lack of funding for housing and mental health. A lack of funded resources available to clients, including counselling, has been shown to generate feelings of powerlessness and frustration among anti-violence workers (Merchant & Whiting, 2015). Interview respondents to Alani and Stroink (2015) noted the weight of systemic oppression both on themselves and others, and the lack of resources within the community as contributing factors to burnout and compassion fatigue.

Respondents to a study by Trudell and Whitmore (2020) noted that policy and procedural changes relating to the COVID-19 pandemic had induced feelings of uncertainty, heightened isolation, and responsibility, which led to experiences of burnout. Reynolds (2011) noted that this burnout arises not from the nature of counselling work itself or a counsellor's intrinsic features, but from encountering situations wherein structural and institutional barriers impede workers from providing requisite care to clients, leading workers to independently bear the weight of structural burdens. Responses to bearing such a weight can show up as enmeshment, when a counsellor may transgress ethical boundaries and take on a sense of personal responsibility for a client; or as disconnection, wherein a counsellor may lose empathy, hope, and motivation within their work (Reynolds, 2019).

Protective Factors for Community-Based Anti-Violence Counsellors

Much of the existing research on anti-violence workers has centralized deficits and risk factors, and has explored said factors via quantitative means (Babin et al., 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019). However, some protective strategies to prevent and combat vicarious trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and burnout for community-based anti-violence workers have also been identified in existing literature (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Tarshis & Baird, 2019). Although many prevention strategies centre the actions of individual workers, including practices of self-care and cause engagement, there is a growing body of literature that emphasizes the vital role of organizations, underscoring the significance of collective care efforts in workplace culture, policies, and practices to support community-based anti-violence workers (Rossiter et al., 2020). Like risk factors, the protective factors that support counsellors in doing anti-violence work occur on individual, relational, and organizational levels; most often, on numerous levels at once (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2017). Protective factors include adopting practices of self-care, the presence of resilience, personal connections to the work, autonomy, social and professional support, inclusive agency policy, and adequate training.

Self-care. Self-care refers to the attentive fulfillment of one's own needs through a variety of methods and activities (Alani & Stroink, 2015). This concept is recognized to have arisen through Black feminist movements in the 1970s, and is commonly attributed alongside a well-known quote by activist Audre Lorde: “caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare” (The Audre Lorde Project, 2017). Self-care practices have been identified as a safeguard against vicarious trauma and stress, while also promoting increased levels of compassion satisfaction (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wachter, 2019).

Additionally, self-care practices have been identified as an ethical imperative that supports counsellors in decentring themselves within their work, so that they may centre the experiences of their clients and maintain ethical practice (Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association [CCPA], 2021; Reynolds, 2019).

The majority of existing vicarious trauma interventions for counsellors working with survivors are based on self-care for stress management. 'Self-care' is a term that is commonly incorporated into modern professional training materials, including those provided to anti-violence counsellors in British Columbia (BCSTH, 2023; EVA BC, 2023). Specific self-care strategies are based on individual needs and preferences. Common strategies include engaging in psychoeducation, mindfulness interventions, arts and recreational programming, and alternative medicine therapies (Kim et al., 2021). Beneficial self-care strategies include caring for one's own physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being (Alani & Stroink, 2015). Building coping resources, addressing one's own unresolved personal trauma, developing social supports, and engaging in wellness activities have all been identified as beneficial self-care strategies for combating work-related stress conditions (Murray & Graves, 2013). Professional self-care strategies are also encouraged, including managing one's caseload, seeking quality supervision, and learning to recognize one's particular warning signs of early burnout and compassion fatigue (Murray & Graves, 2013).

Scholars including Brend et al. (2020), Hoogendam and Maki (2023), and Reynolds (2019) have challenged the perspective that self-care is a singularly adequate response to experiences of community counsellors' workplace stress, noting that this framing may serve to further individualize, responsibilize, and alienate workers. In considering that an individual must necessarily interact with others to practice many forms of self-care, it becomes clear that self-

care is not entirely insular to an individual, but an inherently relational process. One must be able to locate support on both personal and professional levels to engage with many types of self-care (Murray & Graves, 2013). Researchers have asserted the need for organizational involvement in supporting staff to engage in self-care, including providing adequate benefits and compensation, and a parallel need for adequate community care, or care that occurs between workers (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019).

As employers, anti-violence organizations hold responsibility for preventing work-related stress (Benuto et al., 2019; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023). In their 2018 study, Tarshis and Baird asserted several key areas in which organizations must support their workers in developing to best combat work-related stress conditions: self-esteem, self-observation, self-care, awareness, resilience and empowerment, and recognition of personal trauma histories. These suggestions were echoed by other researchers (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017). Supporting staff in practicing self-care, minimizing the amount of direct client work, distributing workloads appropriately among staff, accepting workers' specific needs regarding caseload management, and empowering workers to voice their own needs have all been voiced as beneficial (Benuto et al., 2019; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2019).

Presence of resilience. Resilience – which refers to one's ability to maintain well-being and functioning in the face of stress, trauma, or adversity – has been identified as supportive against burnout, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wachter et al., 2019). In a study of 214 trauma counsellors, Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014) found three individual factors that contributed to counsellor resiliency: mastery, or

comprehensive knowledge of therapeutic methods and applications; role competency, specifically, the ability to influence and communicate with others; and stable self-esteem, which supported positive self-image. Higher age has been correlated with greater resilience amongst anti-violence workers (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021). In alignment with findings on mastery, Kulkarni et al. (2013) suggested that such a correlation is not due to age itself, but that more time spent working enables service providers to develop more effective strategies for maintaining their well-being. Aligning with findings on the value of role competency and communication skills, results from a study of 69 participants conducted by Babin et al. (2012) demonstrated the importance of communication competence in protecting participants from burnout. Respondents to Brend and MacIntosh's (2020) qualitative interviews, all of whom were actively working as trauma counsellors and self-reported being highly resilient, demonstrated strong capacities for mentalization, which they identified as an underpinning factor for clearly communicating with others.

Many existing understandings of resilience have been critiqued as over-emphasizing individuals' responsibility for developing this key factor in isolation (Reynolds, 2020). Resilience has been asserted as a relational phenomenon, based on access to privilege, rather than arising through individual hardiness (Reynolds, 2020; Rossiter et al., 2020). Resilient workers often have strong external social and experiential support and historical external supports, indicating that resilience arises through interaction (Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2015; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Wachter et al., 2019). An ecological model for resilience takes these contextual factors into account, aligning the concept of resilience more clearly with relational frameworks (Lawrence, 2018).

Personal connections to the work. As was noted when exploring prevalent risk factors, many counsellors enter into this field of work as a result of their own lived experiences (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Bishop & Schmidt, 2011; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Rossiter, 2020). Findings by Voth Schrag et al. (2021) demonstrated that historical experiences of violence during childhood or adulthood were not associated with increased reports of compassion fatigue. Based on their qualitative findings, Brend et al. (2020) also refuted the claim that personal trauma histories played a role in professionals' re-traumatization or burnout. Different outcomes in data may be based upon a variety of contributing factors, including differences in culture in the study locations, limitations of the studies themselves, and other contextual factors in counsellors' individual lives (Brend et al., 2020; Voth Schrag et al., 2021).

Lived experiences of violence may not only encourage survivors to work as anti-violence service providers, but also serve as a protective factor against work-related stress conditions. Personal experiences of relational violence may contribute to counsellors' values against violence, and a desire to work with other survivors (Brend et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013). Pursuing work from a values-based perspective may be protective and contribute to a sense of purpose and fulfillment within the work, thus protecting against burnout (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Kulkarni et al., 2013). In the wake of one's own experiences of violence, engaging in this work may lead to post-traumatic growth and compassion satisfaction (Cummings et al., 2018).

Individuals may also choose to engage with initiatives that extend beyond the limitations of their work, to participate in upstream anti-violence efforts. Engaging in research, policy initiatives, and broader systemic efforts that are aimed at addressing community-wide issues and preventing violence and trauma before they occur can provide community-based anti-violence counsellors with a sense of purpose and a safeguard against the adverse effects of their direct

client work and the systematic barriers they face within it (Kulkarni et al., 2013). Such engagement may be restricted by myriad factors, including limits on counsellors' time, available funding, and organizational structuring regarding policymaking (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Rossiter et al., 2020).

Worker autonomy. In alignment with supporting worker empowerment, other research has encouraged organizations to support worker autonomy, particularly by allowing workers to practice decision-making and have some control over their work (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Wachter et al., 2019). This includes management encouraging frontline staff to participate in building organizational policy, strategic priorities, and decision-making processes, as well as supporting staff in holding flexible hours and working locations, within confidentiality policy (McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014).

Social support. A greater sense of community, which is present when workers align with organizational values, contributes to higher levels of workplace and compassion satisfaction, and lower compassion fatigue (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wood et al., 2019). In their study, Brend and MacIntosh (2021) explored experiences of workplace social support for anti-violence social workers. Results revealed five common sub-themes that contributed to a supportive workplace community: a sense of safety, mutual care, trustworthy support, non-judgmental interactions, and autonomy (Brend & MacIntosh, 2021). Furthermore, trust in both one another, and in one's employer, contributes to a supportive workplace (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019).

Similar findings by Slattery and Goodman (2009) indicated that workers' self-reported wellness was bolstered by peer and supervisory workplace relationships that prioritize respect,

safety, and trust. Tarshis and Baird (2018) encourage organizations to create space for peer support, endorse personal counselling for workers, and encourage social support and connection within the workplace. Such suggestions were corroborated by other researchers' recommendations for regular peer-to-peer debriefing, and trustworthy social supports (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Babin et al., 2012; Dworkin et al., 2016; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019).

Professional supervision. Professional supports, including ongoing check-ins, formalized mentoring, and adequate clinical supervision are all of benefit to staff (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Babin et al., 2012; Dworkin et al., 2016; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Cummings (2018) and Rossiter (2020) both encouraged management to incorporate screening tools such as The Professional Quality of Life R-IV (ProQOL R-IV), a scale used in several of the presented studies and designed to measure caregiver compassion fatigue, compassion satisfaction, and burnout, in their check-ins with workers (ProQOL, 2023). However, the ProQOL R-IV has been critiqued as insufficient as it does not evaluate the systemic context in which such experiences arise, and implementing screening tools has also been critiqued as overly clinical and disconnective for workers (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Wachter et al., 2019; Voth Schrag et al., 2021). Inventory-based measures have also been critiqued as more representative of practitioners' privileged locations and access to power, rather than of their professionalism and mental wellness (Reynolds, 2019).

Trauma-informed and inclusive agency policy. Maintaining trauma-informed care within organizations on both the worker and client levels has been noted as important (Tarshis & Baird, 2018). Such an approach requires that supervisors hold disciplinary knowledge of trauma, and impart this knowledge to workers; that professional boundaries and strong supervisory

relationships are maintained; and that both self- and community care are encouraged and bolstered (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Tarshis & Baird, 2018). A component of trauma-informed practice is recognizing the potential presence of systemic trauma and oppression that workers are facing within and outside of their roles (Wood et al., 2019). Recommendations have included reducing the stigma of vicarious trauma, encouraging empowerment, and maintaining awareness of systemic challenges faced by both workers and the clients they are involved with (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brown et al., 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2021). Trauma-informed and anti-oppressive worker wellness can be further promoted through the establishment of clear, consistent, and fair workplace guidelines and policies that apply to all agency members (Wood et al., 2017). Such clarity helps to bolster both trust and safety among workers (Voth Schrag et al., 2021).

Adequate training. Job training, communication and stress management training, and education on vicarious trauma are essential in preventing work-related stress conditions within the community-based anti-violence sector (Babin et al., 2012; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017). Workplace safety can be bolstered through the provision of training focused on anti-oppressive practice, along with strategies to prevent and address microaggressions and abusive behaviour (Wood et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2019).

Limitations of Existing Research

As evidenced in the previous section, existing research has focused on risk and protective factors for the development of pathologized conditions and symptoms in individual workers, often ascribing to an ideology of individualism. From this, it is clear that most research in this area has oriented towards a deficit-based empirical framework that is at odds with sustainability-oriented and anti-oppressive approaches. Encouragements for remedial actions have primarily

emphasized prescriptive, individual actions for avoiding damage: individual work of the counsellor to practice self-care, self-reflection, and seek further training; and individual work of management staff to encourage self-care, provide individual consultation, and create and enact policy and training opportunities for workers.

The common orientation taken, and actions called for, in existing literature are towards witnessing workers as individual 'staff' and avoiding risk, rather than witnessing workers as a collective of 'people', and creating sustainability (Reynolds, 2019). Although relational and community-based supports were noted as important in numerous studies, the presence of the subjective agency required to engage in such connections was widely assumed; additionally, such information arose in the context of a prevention-focused paradigm, rather than one centred around sustainable practice. The terms "sustainability", "sustainable", and "collective" were only present in the discussion sessions of recent reports by Fernandes and Lanthier (2024) and Hoogendam and Maki (2023), aside from a single instance where the term 'collective' arose in reference to another article that was not thoroughly expounded (Wachter et al., 2019). This limitation can be witnessed as primarily representative of shifting language and trends within historical research; however, it stands as evidence that existing research on this population has historically not sought to understand experiences from a sustainability- and collectively-oriented framework. The works by Fernandes and Lanthier (2024) and Hoogendam and Maki (2023) represent the shift in discussion to which this thesis contributes.

Trust specifically arose in numerous studies, which noted the importance of creating trust within working relationships (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brend et al., 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). However, trust was explored from an individualizing

and cognitive lens, with no attention paid to participants' felt experiences of trust, or the process of how trust is created within relationships; while repeatedly noted, the phenomenon went minimally explored.

The lack of rich experiential data regarding relational experiences and trust is not only due to the theoretical orientations taken by the authors of existing research, but also due to chosen research methods. Many existing studies have been quantitative, and as such have not endeavoured to explore details of participant experiences (Babin et al., 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019). Further exploration is needed to expand beyond acknowledging the presence or absence of certain supports and risks, to understand how and why these elements are experienced by participants.

Another Way: Exploring Sustainability, Trust, & Embodiment

The majority of existing research and suggestions for change in support of anti-violence workers are individualizing and deficit-based. However, this literature also provides a needed context to the current research. Framing my approach around what is missing from existing research may be questioned as asynchronous with my call for sustainability- and desire-oriented modelling. In recognition of, and building upon, the substantive work looking at the individual and perception of damage, I am advocating for a shift in perspective to include an alternative approach through exploring sustainability and embodied experience, focused on what is desired and hoped-for (Reynolds, 2010; Tuck, 2009). Such an approach does not directly oppose existing damage-centred and individually focused frameworks; instead, it exists in relation to them, disrupting the hegemony in thinking in this area of research (Tuck, 2009). In the following section of this literature review, I explore the relevance of Reynolds' (2010, 2011, 2019) concept of collective sustainability as an anti-oppressive and sustainability-oriented alternative to existing

frameworks of research and practice. Following this, I explicate the roles of trust and embodied experience in facilitating sustainable practice.

Sustainability: Moving Beyond Avoidance, to Desired Action

Existing conceptualizations of sustainability are informed by environmental justice movements, which go beyond damage-centred narratives regarding caring for the environment to also encompass social, structural, and other contextual dimensions (Reynolds, 2010). Reynolds (2021) noted that true sustainability extends beyond just resistance to worker harm; it also incorporates transformative justice and attends to worker context. To Reynolds (2021), sustainability is relational, involving the interconnections and interdependencies of people and environments within context. Reynolds (2010) identified sustainability as connectedness with others, or the embodied "aliveness," that one experiences in community-based work when adequately supported by both self and others. When conditions for sustainability are upheld, Reynolds (2011, 2019) wrote of what she terms a *Zone of Fabulousness:* the ideal collective conditions in which workers can enact other collective ethics, support one another, collaborate, be imperfect, stay accountable and embodied in their work, and find their work meaningful.

Mapping Trust as a Sustaining Support

In speaking of the sustainability that arises from perceptions of one's work having meaning and mattering, Reynolds (2011) described it as being influenced by "a kind of trust over the long haul, a confidence based on experience, and perhaps something more sustainable than hope" (p. 38). The idea that trust and hope are interconnected and that trust has the potential to be more sustainable than hope is not unique to Reynolds' work. Hope has been explored philosophically by Ratcliffe (2023) as an interdependent factor that often necessarily arrives alongside trust, and by Becker (1996) and within the counselling psychology field by Koehn and

Cutcliffe (2012) as a necessary characteristic of trust. Trust has also been noted as a contextual component of settings that promote hope (Jason et al., 2016). Although both concepts involve the presence of faith, hope can be described as embodying the potential for positive outcomes, informed by the desire or beliefs of their occurrence; in contrast, trust can be described as embodying reliance upon competence or potential, informed by existing experiences (Reynolds, 2010; Siegrist, 2010).

Trust has been asserted as a fundamentally relational process involving the dynamic interaction between and within individuals, groups, and combinations thereof (Hsieh & Ku, 2017). Trust has been noted as highly relevant to anti-oppressive practice; it is derived from the interaction between individuals, functioning through relationships and constructed rules, and influenced by context, history, and other organizational aspects (Brown, 2009; Hsieh & Ku, 2017; Sztompka, 1999). Within the context of counselling and social work, relational trust is considered to be an essential component of rapport-building and establishing a therapeutic alliance with clients; this said, counsellors' own experiences of trust in self and others remain unexamined (Cossar et al., 2016; Hsieh & Ku, 2017).

The importance of trust to worker wellness has been more broadly identified in terms of its role in worker performance and resiliency (Bromiley & Cummings, 1996; Otola et al., 2024). As noted in the review of literature on anti-violence workers, the absence of trust held in both self and others is a predictor for the development of work-stress-related conditions and other adverse outcomes (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray & Graves, 2013; Wood et al., 2017). Existing research has implied that trust is nurtured through the presence of reliable internal and external supports, and that trust itself nurtures workers in maintaining resilience and connection to their work (Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013;

Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). Trust was noted in the relevant literature as both a self-reflexive process (trust in self; being worthy of trust) and a relational process (trust in supports; being trusted by others) (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). However, as much of the existing research was quantitative, many details on participants' experiences of trust were absent. The relational nuances of said trust were not identified in the context of anti-violence workers or sustainability. Absent from this exploration was what this trust meant for participants and how they experienced it in an embodied, felt way.

Trust and Embodiment

Also referred to as 'embodied subjectivity', embodiment is a relatively new understanding of the body and mind, arising from the work of phenomenological philosophers in the mid-20th century, including Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Dewey, and Gadamer (de Jager et al., 2016; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]). It contradicts the notion of mind-body dualism, instead claiming that the body and mind are intertwined; rather than "[having] bodies, we *are* our bodies" (de Jager et al., 2016, p. 18). Such a perspective acknowledges the limited nature of our bodies, and therefore our knowledge and capacity for understanding the world (Barthold, 2014; de Jager et al., 2016; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]; Todres, 2007). Within critical embodiment discourse, objectivity and neutrality are recognized as impossible; all that is known and experienced is processed through, informed by, and cannot be severed from historical and social embodied experience (Barthold, 2014; de Jager et al., 2016; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]). As such, living within a body is an ongoing act of becoming; the 'self' is an unfolding process, rather than an unchanging entity; and, rather than *holding* identity, the body and identity are *intertwined* (Allegranti, 2011).

Exploration of trust and embodiment is limited concerning the population at hand. However, trust has been identified within nursing and psychology research as an embodied process, and within social work research as a necessary feature of embodiment (Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Goldberg, 2007; Sodhi, 2012). In a qualitative study on social workers that explored embodied knowledge, Sodhi (2012) found that trust in one's own embodied knowledge is necessary to carry this knowledge into work with clients in a meaningful and supportive way. All participants of this study noted the importance of trust in working in embodied and sustainable ways (Sodhi, 2012).

In bringing embodiment beyond the individual, notions of embodied intersubjectivity – the interactive, shared experiences that happen between people, including the feelings, movements, sensations, imagery, and spoken language as well as the broader lived experiences, aspects of identity, power dynamics, and physical attributes of the meeting environment – may also be reflected upon (Carroll, 2021). According to Di Paolo and Jaegher (2015), trust is a phenomenon that arises as a part of this embodied intersubjectivity.

A counsellor who maintains ethical practice is also practicing self-reflexivity, understands their own care needs, is aware of their own contextual privileges and biases, and acknowledges how their witnessed identities may influence their work with, and perceptions by, their clients (CCPA, 2021). As such, recognition of one's embodiment – the cultural, relational, environmental, and bodily domains that make up one's being – is integral to ethical practice (Sodhi, 2012). Embodied knowledge is the knowledge that resides in and is gained through the body via past experiences, present context, and internal processes, and serves to inform counselling work with clients (Nagatomo, 1992, as cited in Sodhi, 2012; Shaw, 2004). Awareness of one's own embodied and emotional reactions provides significant information to a

practicing counsellor, allowing them to recognize and address common concepts such as countertransference and congruence (Bager-Charleston et al., 2018).

Synthesis for the Current Study

Existing research on anti-violence workers largely takes an individualizing and risk-oriented approach. While existing research provides important context on risk and protective factors, sustainability and desired outcomes have been underemphasized. Sustainability, as framed by Reynolds (2010, 2011, 2019, 2021), is a relational and transformative process that extends beyond harm resistance to encompass justice, connectedness, and embodied hope in community-based work. In alignment with this, trust is both a relational and self-reflexive process, rooted in dynamic and contextual interactions. While trust plays a role in supporting anti-violence workers, existing research lacks depth on how these workers experience trust in an embodied and nuanced way.

Chapter Summary

Several risk factors for the development of stress-related conditions, as well as protective factors for their prevention, have been identified in existing literature. These factors are complex, and feature individual, organizational, and systemic origins. Existing literature highlights a need for a comprehensive support system for anti-violence counsellors to navigate these factors, but such supports have not been explored from a relational and sustainability-oriented approach. Within this literature review, I highlighted the need to develop a nuanced understanding of existing concepts regarding counsellors' experiences. I critiqued the hegemony of individualizing and quantitative perspectives taken by existing research, which do not thoroughly address the nuanced systemic and relational challenges that impact counsellors who are working in the community-based anti-violence sector.

Trust has been identified as a significant protective factor to anti-violence workers in maintaining resilience and connection to their work, but has not been the central focus in existing literature. Existing literature does not provide a comprehensive or embodied understanding of trust, nor the role that this phenomenon plays in sustaining anti-violence counsellors in their working practices. Furthermore, embodiment, which contributes to ethical practice for counsellors, has yet to be directly researched in the context of anti-violence workers. In the current study, in emphasizing the relational and embodied dimensions of trust, I invite a shift in perspective: from mitigating harm, to cultivating sustainability; and from focusing on individual resilience, to nurturing collective sustainability (Reynolds, 2011). This sets a foundation for my inquiry into how counsellors' embodied experiences of trust can support sustainable, ethical, and transformative practices within the context of anti-violence counselling work.

Chapter Three: Methods

In this study, I sought to build an understanding of anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust, and the role that this phenomenon plays in the sustainability of anti-violence counsellors' working roles. Before this study, descriptions and contextualized understandings of experiences of trust as felt by anti-violence workers were notably absent from literature. In addressing this gap and exploring sustainability, I took a qualitative approach, underpinned by phenomenological methodology, to explore embodied trust and sustainability within participants' working roles. In so doing, I aligned my theoretical model with the praxis of anti-violence work itself, in order to better understand how this work can be sustained. I utilized the arts-based method of body-mapping to support in the elucidation of content during separate semi-structured interviews with five anti-violence counsellors. In analyzing the collected data, I chose to employ the analytical method of reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) due to its alignment with the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the current research. In this chapter, I provide a rationale for and exposition of the selected research paradigm, methodology, and methods.

Qualitative Research Paradigm

In exploring research approaches, qualitative research was most aligned with exploring the nuanced and embodied experiences of anti-violence counsellors, as well as the guiding philosophies of this study. It has been posited that investigating trust via a qualitative approach can allow a researcher to explore this factor within the context of participants' lives, thereby conceptualizing its meaning more comprehensively (Lyon et al., 2012, as cited in Hsieh & Ku, 2017). As Kendrick (2016) stated, there is potential for a distinct richness to arise from the relational and intersubjective process of qualitative research:

> "When we research human lives, our own lives as researchers inevitably become entangled in the lives of our participants, just as their lives become entangled in ours; it is the complexity and subjectivity of that entanglement that enhances and promotes the richness and authenticity of qualitative research." (p. 17)

Qualitative research is descriptive and exploratory, allowing the researcher to develop a detailed and thick description of participants' lived experiences (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). This fit appropriately with my research objectives and questions, which were exploratory, open-ended, and focalized participants' embodied working experiences.

Phenomenological Methodology

As noted by Allan-Collinson (2016), phenomenology is derived from the Greek *phainomenon*, referring to something that has been illuminated. It is the study of phenomena captured through lived experiences: things "as they present themselves to, and are perceived in consciousness" (Allan-Collinson, 2016, p. 2; Bhattacharya, 2017). As a research approach, phenomenology focalizes the lived experiences of participants, regarding subjectivity as a valid, meaningful, and worthwhile focus of inquiry (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Allan-Collinson, 2016). The nested concept of *epochē*, which is core to phenomenological methodology, involves acknowledging and suspending one's own assumptions and understandings of the world in the hopes of getting as close as possible to describing a phenomenon's essential characteristics (Allan-Collinson, 2016; Todres, 2007).

Phenomenological methodology endeavors to investigate and describe phenomena in essence. In interpretive forms of phenomenology including hermeneutic and existential phenomenology, the descriptions of the explored phenomena – which are, in the case of the current study, embodied trust and sustainability – will always be filtered through the

interpretations of the participant, then researcher, then reader; any constructed descriptions are therefore inherently subjective (Allan-Collinson, 2016). This key idea is termed *intentionality*, which refers to the intersubjective relationship that always exists between the self and the beyond-self (Bhattacharya, 2017). In viewing subjective experience as inherent and inescapable, phenomenology shares roots with the current study's guiding ontological and epistemological foundations of relativism and social constructionism respectively (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; McNamee, 2014; Todres, 2007). In recognizing that context influences perspective, intentionality mirrors reflexivity, which is inherent in the ethic of justice-doing that guides the current research (Bhattacharya, 2017; Reynolds, 2021).

As noted in Chapter Two, the concept of embodiment itself has its roots in phenomenological inquiry (de Jager et al., 2016; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]; Todres, 2007). As such, considering the theoretical underpinnings and objectives of the current study, exploring embodied experiences via a phenomenological methodological approach was a good fit. Grounding my research in an interpretive phenomenological approach, which honours the foundations of this study, allowed me to bring intentional focus to anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of the phenomenon of trust and sustainability with the recognition that these experiences are socially constructed, relationally understood, embodied, relative, and variable (Allan-Collinson, 2016; Todres, 2007). Furthermore, in alignment with my hope to challenge the damage-centred hegemony that exists in published research regarding anti-violence counsellors' experiences, phenomenological methodology enables and encourages the contesting of taken-for-granted conceptualizations of phenomena (Allan-Collinson, 2016). In this way, taking a critical embodied stance towards employing phenomenological methodology fits well with desire-based research modelling, which is "concerned with understanding complexity,

contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives," and strives to upend preconceived assumptions of experience (Tuck, 2009, p. 416).

Research Questions

When approaching research from an interpretive phenomenological perspective, there is less interest in the "factual status" of an experience or instance (i.e., whether or not, how often, and in which contexts it happens), and more interest in the patterns of these experiences (van Maanen, 1988, p. 10, as cited in Bhattacharya, 2017). In seeking to understand how the phenomena of trust and working-role sustainability are experienced in embodied ways, and how embodied trust contributes to sustainability within anti-violence counsellors' working roles, I constructed the following two research questions:

1. How is trust experienced in an embodied way by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles?
2. How do these experiences relate to the sustainability of community-based anti-violence counsellors' work?

Research Design

This study is focused on the experiences of five anti-violence counsellors, who were interviewed in August and September of 2024. In the sections below, I explicate the research design, providing information on procedures, participants, and selected methods for data collection and analysis.

Procedures

Participant recruitment. Following the reception of Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) approval (see Appendix B), I recruited for this study using purposive and snowball sampling via a recruitment email (see Appendix C) and poster (see Appendix D). This

recruitment email included a brief synopsis of the study intentions, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and contact information for those interested in potentially participating. The email and poster were disseminated to all member organizations listed on the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) website that had an active STV program at the time of review, with the request that these organizations distribute the Recruitment Email and poster amongst their relevant counselling staff. I also sent the email and poster to the British Columbia Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH) for dissemination via their weekly newsletter and social media. All involved organizations acted as neutral third parties, supporting in the sharing of the recruitment poster and email, with no further involvement in the research.

Determining eligibility & consent. After receiving expressions of interest from prospective participants via email, I sent all interested parties a structured Participant Invitation Letter email (see Appendix E), which included a digital copy of the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix F) and a link to schedule an interview time. I encouraged participants to ask any clarifying questions that were not answered within the forms or invitation letter, in order to make a well-informed choice regarding their participation. Regardless of whether they met study criteria, I returned email contact to all interested parties. After participants had completed and returned the informed consent form and selected an interview time, I contacted consenting and eligible participants with a Participant Follow-Up email (see Appendix G). In this email, I confirmed the times and dates of their interviews, reminded them of the interview process, and provided a link and instructions for filling out the demographic survey (Appendix H) prior to their interview.

Demographic survey. To bolster understandings of participants' contextual experiences and identities, demographic data was collected via an online survey. Specific inquiry explored

participants' identities, including gender, sexuality, and racial or ethnic identities, as well as their experiences in anti-violence counselling, including their registration status with regulatory bodies for counselling, their educational backgrounds, their perceptions of their compensation for their working roles, and the number of years they have been working as a counsellor generally, and in the anti-violence sector specifically. Participants completed this survey prior to engaging in the interview process.

Interviews. I conducted individual, semi-structured interview sessions via Zoom. Employing this online platform allowed for the engagement of participants from across British Columbia, while maintaining accessibility and minimizing inconvenience. These sessions were to take a maximum of two hours, and took an average of 1.5 hours to complete per each individual participant. Interview sessions began with a guided body mapping art activity, which took an average of 20 to 30 minutes, followed by a semi-structured interview, which ranged between 40 and 60 minutes per participant. Expected timelines followed the precedent set by existing research that utilized body mapping in conjunction with qualitative interviews (Fidyk, 2019; Griffin & Ismailios, 2014; Harrison et al., 2022; Ludlow, 2012; Lys et al., 2018; MacGregor & Mills, 2011; Macken et al., 2021; Maina et al., 2014; Mason, 2018; McCorquodale & DeLuca, 2020; Mitchell, 2006a; Mitchell, 2006b; Morton et al., 2021; Naidoo, 2021; Ryan et al., 2022; Senior et al., 2014; Tarr & Thomas, 2009; Vincent, 2014). I employed a set of semi-structured inquiry prompts during the interview process (see Appendix G). The entirety of the interview session was recorded and transcribed, to account for discussion that occurred concurrently with the body map creation process.

Follow-up. Following completion of the interview, I sent each participant a brief email thanking them for their participation and reminding them to share a picture of their completed

body map, if they so desired. I also provided each participant with a $50 e-gift card. This choice of compensation was informed by the research conducted by Macken et al. (2021). With intent to centre participants' voices, after I had transcribed the interview data, I provided each participant with a copy of the interview data for their review. Participants then had two weeks to review the transcripts and inform of any needed changes or clarifications before I moved forward in the data analysis process. Following the completion and approval of this thesis, I will directly provide all participants with a brief report of the study findings.

Participants

This study focused on exploring the experiences of five community-based anti-violence counsellors specifically, to understand how the sustainability of this work may be improved. Although participants could speak to their experiences working in the community-based anti-violence sector more broadly, the focus was on exploring participants' experiences specifically within their roles as community-based anti-violence counsellors. With awareness of these constraints, participants' experiences are not reflective of the sector as a whole, nor are their experiences representative of all agency workers.

For this study, I interviewed five participants in total. This number was selected based on practical considerations, following from the precedent set by Mason's (2018) existing thesis research employing body mapping. Although the number of participants in existing body mapping research publications vary widely, it is clear that studies with a small number of participants still result in the collection of rich data (Fidyk, 2019; Horne, 2011; Kwon, 2021; Ludlow, 2012; Lu & Yuen, 2012; MacGregor, 2009; MacGregor & Mills, 2011; Maina et al., 2014; Mason, 2018). This is also consistent for thematic analysis research at the master's level (J. Woodend, personal communication, March 2024).

The scope of this study was limited to counsellors who were working in community-based anti-violence counselling programs in British Columbia, Canada when the research was conducted. People who did not hold an active role as an anti-violence counsellor at the time of research, or who hold this role outside of BC, were not eligible to participate. This study was designed to be accessible and inclusive to folks of varying racialized and cultural identities, abilities, sexual and gender orientations, and other backgrounds and identities.

The following table introduces participant demographic data sourced from the demographic survey (see Appendix H), which helps to contextualize the experiences of the interviewed participants. This contextualization is important in qualitative research to inform transferability of the findings to other contexts (Hellström, 2008, as cited in Braun & Clarke, 2022; Yardley et al., 2015). Participants were encouraged to select their own pseudonyms for use in both analysis and publication; these pseudonyms are introduced below.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Alice	Juniper	Catherine	Amanda	Tina
Age	30	39	30	40	55
Current Gender	Woman	Pan-gendered	Woman	Woman	Woman
Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	Pansexual	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Heterosexual
Racial/Ethnic Identity	Indian	German	White	Black	Middle Eastern
Level of Education	Master's Degree	Master's Student	Master's Degree	Master's Degree	Master's Degree
Time in Counselling Practice	2 years	1 year	2.5 years	7 years	3 years

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Alice	Juniper	Catherine	Amanda	Tina
Time in CBAVS	2 years	1 year	2.5 years	Many years	3 years
Counselling Registration Status	Not registered	Not registered	Registered	Registered	Registered
Average Caseload / Week	20 clients / week	16 clients / week	20 clients / week	14 clients / week	7 clients / week
Community of Practice Size	Large urban population centre (100,000+)	Medium population centre (30,000+)	Medium population centre (30,000+)	Preferred not to disclose	Large urban population centre (100,000+)
Earning Living Wage?	No	No	No	Yes	No

Note: All identifiers within this table (e.g., gender and racial/ethnic identity) are in participants' own words.

Data Collection Methods: Body Mapping & Semi-Structured Interviewing

For the purposes of this study, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews to gather phenomenological data. Semi-structured interviewing is commonly employed in phenomenological research. Within the current study, employing this methodology allowed for the flexible and emergent exploration of participants' embodied experiences of the phenomenon of trust, as was relevant to the sustainability of their working roles (Allan-Collinson, 2016; Bhattacharya, 2017). As noted, part of my intent in pursuing this study was to deviate from the individualistic lens perpetuated within existing literature. Although my selected interview method involved individual interview sessions with each participant, I approached participants' lived experiences as embodied interactions within a socially constructed world, and thus

witnessed their experiences as shared and relational rather than isolated and individual (Lykou, 2021). Conducting qualitative interviews between myself and participants, focusing upon embodied and lived experience, transformed the interview process from purely internal or solitary into a relational, intersubjective process.

Inspired by the body mapping research of Kwon (2021), MacGregor and Mills (2011), Macken et al. (2021), Maina et al. (2014), and others (see Appendix A), I utilized the arts-based approach of body mapping as a generative tool to elucidate participants' embodied experiences. I led a guided body-mapping activity, nested within semi-structured interview sessions with each participant. I developed brief inquiry prompts for use during the data collection process (see Appendix I), which were grounded in my findings from my literature review on body mapping (see Appendix A), as well as my exploration of interviewing methods (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2015; Bhattacharya, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2022; Chase, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2020; Moen, 2006). These prompts guided participants to create their body maps, and served as the foundation for interviews, guiding participants in sharing their experiences of embodied trust and sustainability within the contexts of their working roles. Participants were encouraged to reference their completed body maps during the interview process, to support them in conceptualizing and communicating their unique experiences. As such, body maps served as a qualitative artifact, dynamically supporting the creation of interview data (Wallwey & Kajfez, 2023). To maintain participant centring and an interpretive approach, I created room for emergent design by maintaining flexibility in discussion, and flexibility in time requirements during individual interviews, within the bounds of participant expectations as outlined in the consent form (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). Based on participants' responses to the provided

interview prompts, I employed follow-up questions to help participants expand upon what they shared.

In consciously acknowledging my own professional connection to this area of inquiry, I recognized this research process had the potential to be emotionally evocative not only for participants, but also for myself, as both a researcher and an insider (Gastaldo et al., 2012; Milner, 2007; Pringle & Booysen, 2018). To navigate this process with intentionality and remain reflexive of my own praxis, I participated in debriefing with my thesis supervisor, connected with my greater support network, and reflected on my experiences on my own throughout the research process.

Body mapping. The dichotomy between art and science has perpetuated academia, artificially separating art as a felt process, and science as a process of reason (Eisner, 2006; O'Donoghue, 2009). As such, arts-based research is often witnessed as antithetical (Skop, 2016). Despite this, arts-based methods are growing in popularity. In alignment with the phenomenological methodology and guiding theoretical model employed in the current research, the foundation of arts-based research is experience (Shusterman, 2010). Body mapping is one such approach to visually representing lived and embodied experience, reflecting not only the creator's embodied experiences, but also their economic, political, and social processes, and the meanings and connections present in their life stories (Gastaldo et al., 2012). As such, it is an anti-oppressive, co-creative, and embodied method, in clear alignment with the epistemological, methodological and ethical underpinnings of the current research. In the sections below, in order to further rationalize my choice of including body mapping as a method of accessing information on participants' embodied experiences, I further explicate the history, anti-oppressive

underpinnings, experiences of participants, core components, common alterations to the process, and identify the process that I took in employing body mapping as a method.

History and applications. Body mapping was originally designed as a creative qualitative method, implemented with women diagnosed with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), as a narrative therapeutic device and tool for community mobilization. It has since expanded as both a research method, and a therapeutic modality (Maina et al., 2014). In its traditional form, body mapping involves the creation of a life-sized tracing of a participant's own body, which is then filled with symbols, slogans, and drawings through a reflective creative process, to become a symbolic exposition of one's socio-cultural context and selfhood, including thoughts, feelings, physical sensation, notions of spirit, and experiences (de Jager et al., 2016; Gastaldo et al., 2012). Body mapping has been applied in many scenarios: as an educational tool; as a therapeutic approach; and, in many cases, as a co-productive strategy for formal and informal qualitative research. This includes applications for political advocacy and promoting policy change; drawing awareness to individuals' experiences within healthcare and other systems of power; as a communication and community engagement strategy; for planning, including human geography; and research with children (de Jager et al., 2016; Maina et al., 2014; Pellitero & Hunter, 2020; Skop, 2016).

Anti-oppressive underpinnings of body mapping. The history of body mapping is rooted in anti-oppressive activism. Since its inception, body mapping has been utilized as a way to share and uphold oppressed, stigmatized, and non-dominant experiences (de Jager et al., 2016). Accordingly, empowerment through story is integral to the body mapping process. By encouraging participants to story and share their own experiences from an embodied perspective, body mapping de-centres normative ways of knowing and seeing, thus enabling the questioning

of negative assumptions about self and body, and the development and stability of self-definitions for both self and body (de Jager et al., 2016). Body mapping allows for the representation of structural barriers, intersecting identities, and self-management strategies that participants use to navigate their lived experience in bodies with barriers (Dew et al., 2018; Gamlin et al., 2011; Skop, 2016). Centralizing bodies that are marginalized and stigmatized — including bodies that have experienced relational violence, bodies of colour, disabled bodies, and gender-diverse bodies — enables the creation of normalizing representations, which can be very empowering (Allegranti, 2011; Rice et al., 2015).

Encouraging awareness of the body and its processes as components of integrative lived experience also serves to further subvert dominant narratives of mind-over-body, and thought-over-feeling, thus enacting anti-oppressive practice (de Jager et al., 2016; Herman, 2015; Lennon, 2014). In this way, the visual processing and embodied awareness that are offered by the method of body mapping allows for the invisible to become visible, and the decentralized to be centralized (de Jager et al., 2016). Providing an alternative to therapeutic interventions that are based in verbal and written language, body mapping creates space for pre-verbal or non-verbal imagery and communication to take place (Chesner & Lykou, 2021; Gastaldo et al., 2012; Ogden et al., 2006). Visual narratives may capture a richer account than what is accessible through solely verbal means (Chapman et al., 2001). In further subversion of dichotomies of power, body mapping is a co-constructive process, focalizing the relationality and dialogue between researcher and participant (Gastaldo et al., 2012). This, too, serves to decentralize the voice of the researcher and to empower the voices of the participants.

As de Jager et al. (2016) noted, the three primary attributes of body mapping are social justice, embodied awareness, and knowledge production and translation. Recognition of the

importance of lived experience, creating meaning through arts-based storytelling, and the value of embodied process all align clearly with Reynolds' (2021) commentary regarding sustainability, as well as notions of desire-based research modelling and critical embodiment, demonstrating the viability of employing this method in the current research.

Participant experiences of body mapping. Existing research has identified participants' experiences with, and perceptions of, the body mapping process. Skop (2016) identified that body mapping supports individuals in wholly integrating mind, body, and social context into a visual story, exploring pain experiences nonverbally, and generating social narratives and liberatory storytelling for individuals who are navigating marginalization. Body mapping can demonstrate through art what is not easily communicated with words, facilitate a sense of community, and result in participant-driven content (Brodyn et al., 2021). As a preliminary step in exploring the viability of body mapping as an employable method within this study, I completed a non-exhaustive review of existing studies that have used body mapping (see Appendix A). These studies revealed consistent experiential themes, including participants' heightened self-awareness and self-reflexivity, increased awareness of others, destigmatization and perspective-taking, personal empowerment, a noted sense of connection and belonging, and trust-building through vulnerability (Maina et al., 2014; Skop, 2016). Such findings align with the important elements of collective solidarity, including meaning-making, connection, and justice-doing (Reynolds, 2021).

Components of body mapping. On its own, body mapping facilitates the collection of arts-based, spoken, and written, first-hand accounts of experiences (Coetzee et al., 2019). It is most commonly used as a generative tool, and integrated alongside other techniques to support the collection of rich and dynamic participant data (Coetzee et al., 2019). Although efforts have

been made towards further operationalizing body mapping as its own methodology, including by Coetzee et al. (2019) and de Jager et al. (2016), the body mapping process followed in existing studies has varied widely. For their systematic review of existing body mapping research, de Jager et al. (2016) developed a list of 10 operationalized criteria; however, articles varied greatly in their adherence to this research, with some featuring only four of the 10 criteria.

Although usually representative of individual participants, body-maps are typically completed in community and reflected upon collectively (de Jager et al., 2016). Supportive accompaniments include a testimonio (i.e., a brief, first-person written narrative) and a key to describe the visual elements of the body map (Gastaldo et al., 2012). Although typical, the three elements of the body map, testimonio, and key have been appropriately altered for the purposes of particular studies and therapeutic applications (de Jager et al., 2016). Gastaldo et al. (2012), who have developed a set of considerations for the use of body mapping as a research method, note that particular mapping activities pursued by a given researcher are flexible and are dependent on the nature of both the proposed research questions and design of the study. Instead of formulating operationalized criteria by which to pursue body mapping as a research method, researchers have some flexibility, aligned with the philosophical underpinnings of the method, to alter the process as is suitable for their own research design, research questions, and populations they are working with.

Common alterations to the body mapping process. One common alteration to the traditional body mapping process involves how the visual component of the body map is completed. In some examples, a singular body map is completed by multiple participants, in the case of studies by Chenhall et al. (2013), Maina et al. (2014), and Martin et al. (2018). This method may serve to depressurize the creative and participatory process for participants and be

more accessible within a limited period. However, it may also lead to inaccurate or incomplete representations of experiences and a lack of representation of individual experiences not shared by the collective. As an alternative approach to reducing the amount of time and effort that a full-size body map requires, individual, smaller-scale, standardized body maps have also been used in several studies, including those by Joarder et al. (2014), Naidoo (2021). Providing an already completed body outline may serve to demystify the beginning steps of the body mapping process, but it may also fail to accurately represent a participant's conceptions of their own body. Smaller-scale body maps may not have the same intended outcome, or fit the same variety and richness of data, which a larger space allows for.

It is also common for researchers to incorporate body mapping within or alongside other research methods. Many existing articles note the collection of audio data during the creation process, to enrich and diversify collected data beyond written and visual accounts (Brodyn et al., 2021; Crivello et al., 2009; Griffin & Ismailios, 2014; Macken et al., 2021; Mason, 2018; Mayra et al., 2022; McCorquodale & DeLuca, 2020; Mitchell, 2006a; Mitchell, 2006b; Naidoo, 2021; Tarr & Thomas, 2011). Although body mapping requires the collection of storied data, it does not call upon researchers to solely employ it in the context of narrative methodology or methods (Coetzee et al., 2019). It may be integrated alongside other methodologies and other methods of inquiry, including thematic analysis (e.g, Brodyn et al., 2021; Dew et al., 2018; and Griffin, 2011), phenomenology and interpretive phenomenological analysis (e.g., (Harrison et al., 2022; Klein and Milner, 2019; and McQorquodale & DeLuca, 2020), and feminist relational discourse analysis (e.g., Mayra et al., 2022).

Application of body mapping within the current study. My approach to body mapping was informed by Gastaldo et al.'s (2012) guidelines for research via body map storytelling,

Skop's (2016) methodological guide for employing body mapping in research settings, de Jager et al.'s (2016) guidelines as outlined within their systematic review of body mapping, and Coetzee et al.'s (2019) ethical guidelines for using body mapping in qualitative research, in addition to integrating knowledge from the many articles explored within my review of existing body mapping literature (see Appendix A). This study drew from Gastaldo et al.'s (2012) encouragements regarding informed consent materials to be used for body mapping research: information regarding the produced artwork and data, the process of the study, participants' rights and confidentiality, potential risks and benefits, and researcher-practitioners' ethical obligations were included.

Having determined that it was appropriate to employ body mapping flexibly, I followed several common alterations to suit the purpose and scope of this study. I incorporated only the visual elements of this method to suit the research questions and design, excluding written testimonios, and limiting body mapping prompts to the creation of a visual body map. In place of a written narrative component, I incorporated individual interviews to capture participants' experiences collaboratively, to better align with the theoretical and methodological foundations of this study. A second alteration to this technique was to employ small-scale (A4-sized) body maps, created during the one-on-one interview sessions. This alteration was employed with success by both Joarder et al. (2014) and Naidoo (2021), and was made with the goal of minimizing energy and time burdens on participants. Due to the complexity and risks of misinterpretation when analyzing arts-based data, the completed body maps were not directly analyzed. Instead, they served as a generative and referential tool during the interview process, and are presented in Chapter Four as visual accompaniments to the analyzed data (see Figures 2, 3, & 4).

As per de Jager's (2016) definition, the body mapping activity was completed and reflected upon in community (between the individual participants and myself as the researcher). Participants were provided with a list of potential art materials that they may want to use to complete their map and were encouraged to utilize materials that they had access to; honoraria was provided to support participants in accessing these materials, if they were not readily available. I provided participants with the option to photograph and share the artwork that they completed during the interview process, to be presented as visual accompaniments to the analyzed data upon the completion of this study. As only a digital copy of the body maps was collected, participants were able to keep the original copy of their body maps. Participants were informed not only of the use of their artwork for research purposes, but also of the publicized use of their body map as a part of a research publication (de Jager et al., 2016; Gastaldo et al., 2012).

Data Analysis: Reflexive Thematic Analysis

In this study, I utilized RTA to analyze collected data. RTA, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2022, 2006), is a systematic approach for comprehensively organizing and explicating data by identifying, analyzing, and communicating discernible patterns located therein. Within thematic analysis, patterns in data are identified from the data itself (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006). RTA requires the researcher to continuously oscillate between the completed dataset and the coded data that is being examined, so the analyzed data may be reflected upon and verified throughout the analytical process (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006).

A wide variety of forms of collected data, including interview data, are amenable to analysis via RTA (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Of the analytical methods utilized in existing body mapping literature, the most common approach is to employ some form of thematic analysis (Brodyn et al., 2021; Coetzee et al., 2019; Dew et al., 2018; Gamlin et al., 2011; Griffin, 2011;

Gunn, 2017; Harrison et al., 2022; Ludlow, 2012; Lys et al., 2018; Macken et al., 2021; Maina et al., 2014; Martin et al., 2018; Mason, 2018; McCorquodale & DeLuca, 2020; Naidoo, 2021; Orchard et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2022; Senior et al., 2014; Vincent, 2014). In addition to its common integration alongside body mapping and semi-structured interviewing, I selected RTA for several other reasons, the simplest of which is that it is accessible to a beginner researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006). As Braun and Clarke (2022, 2006) noted, RTA is relatively quick to learn and practice, and the results are generally accessible to read. As RTA features theoretical flexibility, it is easily integrated within a variety of research paradigms (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006). Incorporating RTA into a research design that utilizes alternative qualitative methodologies is seen as acceptable and valid, so long as it is done with intentionality and reflexivity (Braun & Clarke, 2022). As such, RTA provided me with the appreciable freedom to apply phenomenological methodology and my own theoretical framework of desire-based research modelling and justice-doing, all the while keeping participants' voices central through both inductively and deductively developed analysis. Akin to the seeking of the "essence" of a phenomenon within phenomenology, RTA explores themes as "a core, an 'essence', which is evident through different facets, each presenting a different rendering of the 'essence'" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p. 208). RTA can also serve to highlight existing similarities and differences within a data set, generate unanticipated understandings, and produce analyses that serve to inform the development of policy, all of which are hoped-for outcomes of its employment in the context of the current study (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006).

Inductive and deductive thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2022) propose two primary orientations to analyzing the dataset, the first being *inductive*, where the analysis, including generation of codes and themes, is driven by content located within the dataset itself.

The second orientation is *deductive*, meaning top-down, and "shaped by existing theoretical constructs, which provide[d] the 'lens' through which to read and code the data and develop themes" (p. 10). Applying both phenomenological methodology and RTA involves intentionally seeking the core "essence" of experiences and phenomena, which would necessitate an inductive orientation (Allan-Collinson, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2022). However, the core concept of intentionality within phenomenology, and the core concept of reflexivity within RTA, both assert that researcher influence is an inevitability of the qualitative research process. My entry into data analysis was underpinned by my guiding theoretical model, influenced by justice-doing and desire-based research modelling, and my intent was to explore the specific, predetermined phenomena of trust and sustainability. As such, in engaging in RTA, my analysis inevitably involved a deductive orientation.

This said, in employing qualitative methodology, my primary intention was to explore experiences rather than to test the validity of existing theory (Bhattacharya, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2022). As such, within the guiding 'lens' of my theoretical model, I also explored the experiences of trust and sustainability inductively: I approached participants' experiences of these phenomena as they appeared within the data, and explored the thematic patterning that arose through the coding process, rather than arriving to the analytic process with an existing expectation of what themes to look for (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Analysis and themes were both driven by, and continuously grounded in, the experiences of participants. In support of my utilization of both inductive and deductive orientations, Braun and Clarke (2022) noted that in employing RTA, a researcher need not exclusively employ inductive or deductive analysis; rather, these approaches exist more as "a spectrum than a dichotomy" (p. 56), and the meaning-making process of coding data can encompass both approaches.

Semantic and latent analytic treatment. Semantic and latent analytic treatment refer to the focus of meaning within the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022). While semantic analysis explores surface-level and explicit meaning within the data, latent analysis explores implicit and covert meaning that is "between the lines" of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). My approach to RTA involved identifying both latent and semantic discourse within the data. Latent coding in particular, which critically explores conceptual meaning within the data, aligned with the critical social constructionist epistemological roots in which the current study was founded (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006). As an anti-violence worker myself, the ability to engage reflexively with data through both semantic and latent coding, within the context of my guiding theoretical framework, added a rich complexity to both the experience and its outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Over the data collection and analysis process, I was grateful to take an academic leave from my working role within the anti-violence sector. I had dedicated and focused time in which I was able to lean into identity as "researcher" and more clearly witness the edges and realities of my own identity as "in-group member," which certainly shaped my responses to the data and my analytic process, and supported my engagement in reflexive process with my own positionality, as I identified in Chapter One.

Six-phase model of thematic analysis. Following my call for participants, interview data was generated very rapidly over several weeks, at which point I began the process of analysis. In employing RTA, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2022, 2006) distinct-yet-recursive, six-phase model to that researchers must adhere when practicing this method. This process involved (1) building familiarity with the data set, (2) organizing the data into initial codes, (3) identifying potential themes within the initial codes, (4) reviewing and refining the potential themes, (5) specifically defining the themes, and (6) producing a final report of the analysis.

Phase one: Building familiarity with the dataset. The first step involved actively familiarizing myself with the data, including transcribing, repeatedly reading, and making initial notes of ideas and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). While transcribing the data into initial tables on Microsoft Word, I began to form initial notes on themes, recording these as comments on the documents alongside early codes. As an example, an early theme that began to emerge was around participants' personal identifications with their working roles, with similar language being used to describe this experience across transcripts. As I navigated this process, I recognized working experiences in participants' disclosures that resonated with me personally. I remained mindful of how my own subjectivities regarding participants' experiences could influence my interpretations; the intersubjective reality of RTA became abundantly clear (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Phase two: Organizing the data into initial codes. I moved into the second stage of generating initial codes, systematically coding intriguing features across the entirety of the data set, and compiling data that was pertinent to each code (Braun and Clarke, 2022). According to Braun and Clarke (2022), codes refer to the discrete threads of meaning, or singular ideas, which are foundational to the meaningful fabric of a theme. In this step, I began to truly get a sense of the "adventure" that Braun and Clarke (2022) speak of when they identify the analytic process, and the expanding-and-contracting, folding-and-unfolding nature of this analytic method. For ease of organization, I moved my transcripts into Microsoft Excel. I searched in each discrete response for codeable latent and semantic meaning, in addition to coding threads of meaning that arose across numerous responses. Initial codes were represented by brief phrases or even single words; for the example used in Phase One, codes such as "natural fit," "helper identity," and "seeing clients is the easiest part" arose, amongst many, many others.

Phase three: Identifying potential themes within the initial codes. I located and consolidated the codes and all relevant data into potential themes, defined by Braun and Clarke (2022) as the patterns of meaning evident across the data that are relevant to the guiding research question(s). Within RTA, a concrete set of guidelines for consolidating codes into themes is not provided; determining the scope and edges of a theme therefore falls to the researcher, and is informed by their own understanding of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In identifying potential themes, my own process involved referencing my guiding theoretical model, engaging in reflexive practice through self-reflective journalling, and organizing codes based on a combination of perceived latent and semantic meaning. While there are no concrete guidelines, Braun and Clarke's (2022, 2006) general guide to generating themes requires first organizing all codes into potential thematic groupings. Codes which are similar to each other may be grouped together into discrete themes, and codes which diverge help to accentuate the thematic parameters of each theme (Braun & Clarke, 202). In following this processs, I moved all codes into a Microsoft Word file and used colour coding to identify which codes were relevant to which participants (for example, Amanda's coded extracts were orange, while Tina's were blue). I then began to collate similar codes and separate dissimilar codes, circling between the original transcripts and the coded extracts to construct initial discrete themes. For example, emerging from the codes of "helper identity" and "natural fit" was the early theme of *More than Just Work.* While many codes focalized experiences of trust and sustainability, distinct differences between codes helped to differentiate initial themes. An example of an early distinction was my early thematic mapping of participants' identified experiences into separate themes of *Trust in Self* (e.g., the code "self trust as an inner knowing," versus *Trust in Others* (e.g., the code "communication with others helps build trust in others").

Phase four: Reviewing and refining the potential themes. I reviewed and assessed the potential themes for functionality in relation to both the coded excerpts and the complete data set, thus creating a thematic 'map' (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Starting from my list of colour-coded codes loosely clustered around initial themes, which were both categorical and seemingly innumerable, I circled this phase for several dedicated weeks; I explored organizing my early themes both in my Microsoft Word document, as well as with paper and pencil, as I continued to understand the meaning of the data set. Through this process, I continued to revisit my original transcripts and early coded extracts, so as to ensure representation of important data. A variety of meaningful patterns were noted in the data, some of which were relevant to my specified areas of inquiry, and some of which were not; with the support of my supervisor, I engaged in careful consideration of which themes to carry forward into the next phase of analysis. As I visited and revisited (and revisited) my preliminary themes in the context of the data, each iteration brought more clarity and refinement (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In this phase, *More than Just Work* evolved into the subtheme of *Counsellor as Role-Identity*, in order to more finitely capture participants' experiences of "being" counsellors. This step also allowed me to revisit early themes which I had identified as distinct, including *Trust in Self* and *Trust in Others*, in order to account for outstanding and conflicting codes, including "trust in others supports trust in self" and "self-trust influenced by trust from others." It became clear that participants' experiences of self-trust and trust in others were not entirely distinct, but rather, connected. Reorganizing these codes and initial themes resulted in an evolved theme of *Self-Trust and Trust in Others as Connected and Sustaining*, accounting for the link between self-trust and trust in others.

Phase five: Specifically defining the themes. In this phase, I defined, specified, and named the themes. I determined the uniqueness of each theme in the context of the other themes,

ensured the selected themes clearly answered the research questions, and determined the clarity of each represented data extract within each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In this process, I circled between my document of coded extracts, now arranged into clear thematic groups; the original transcripts; and compared and contrasted each theme with the others, in order to assure both its uniqueness and its general "fit" into the greater analysis. I mapped themes and sub-themes in both digital lists on Microsoft Word, as well as physically in the form of paper mind-maps, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2022). The confines of my research questions became thoroughly apparent at this stage. My initial draft of my findings became unwieldy and expansive. While I began with ten initial themes, through an ongoing process of clarifying and circling back my specific lines of inquiry, I eventually landed on four distinct themes, with a range of subthemes throughout, all of which had clear relevance to my research questions. All four themes were nested within an overarching pattern of meaning, *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*; this is further identified in Chapter Four (Findings). As a part of this process, I found a home for the example subtheme of *Counsellor as Role-Identity* within the greater theme of *The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation.* I also further defined my early theme of *Self-Trust and Trust in Others as Connected and Sustaining.* I created and applied the term *connected assurance* to describe the witnessed connection between trust in self and trust in others; reflecting this, I retitled the theme as *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance*.

Phase six: Producing a final report of the analysis. The sixth phase involved selecting, analyzing, and re-connecting the compelling excerpts from the data with the research question and existing literature, in order to produce the analysis presented in a written report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This phase was only possible once I had determined that all themes accurately

accounted for all important, relevant-to-inquiry data. The written report in question serves as Chapter Four (Findings) and Chapter Five (Discussion) within this thesis. In this final report I share the complex and nuanced collected data, summarized within themes and contexualized by both the guiding research questions and existing literature, in order to demonstrate the contributions of the current study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research design for this qualitative study, which was based on phenomenological methodology. The purpose of this study was to explore anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust, and how these experiences contribute to the sustainability of their working roles, using online semi-structured interviews and body mapping, combined into one-on-one, intersubjective research sessions with each participant. I employed the analytic method of RTA, including my own distinct process for navigating its use, in order to explore how collected data answered the guiding research questions. The findings of this analysis are described in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Findings

I interviewed five anti-violence counsellors regarding their experiences of embodied trust in the context of their work, and how these experiences related to sustainable practice. Utilizing RTA, themes were developed using combined illustrative and analytic treatment of data extracts. In response to my two research questions, "how is trust experienced in an embodied way by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles?" and "how do these experiences relate to the sustainability of community-based anti-violence counsellors' work?", I identified the overarching pattern of meaning, *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*. In this chapter, I expand on my interpretive account of four distinct themes that I have embedded within this pattern of meaning. Three participants (Alice, Juniper, and Tina) provided photographs of their body maps; these serve as visual accompaniments to the findings.

Theme Summary Table

The summary table below serves as a preview of the analysis, identifying the central organizing concept and scope of each theme as per Braun & Clarke's (2022) recommendations. Each theme is nested within the greater pattern of meaning, *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related Processes*. In this pattern of meaning, trust and sustainability are identified as relational, interconnected phenomena that are present in the working experiences of anti-violence counsellors. Table 2 presents as a summary of the four themes.

Table 2

Theme Summary Table

Theme	Characteristics
Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety	Trust is a dynamic, interactive process involving both the 'head' (cognition) and the 'heart' (body) and occurring both between, and within, the self and others, both signaling the role of connectedness in its formation. Experiences of trust are rooted in a felt sense of relational

Theme	Characteristics
	safety (both in 'head' and in 'heart'), and the presence of trust evolves and shifts through ongoing interactions.
The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation	Participants personally identify with the role of 'counsellor', and experience affirmation of their role through witnessing their own competency in action, thus supporting trust in themselves (self-trust), which supports role sustainability (the sustainability of one's working role).
Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance	Relational elements of sustainable trust (trust that can be sustained) – specifically, self-trust – contribute to connected assurance (the deep-rooted assurance that develops through consistent, meaningful interactions and connections between self and others). Conversely, connected assurance was identified as a contributing factor to building sustainable trust. Specific facets of connected assurance include: knowledge-building; being trusted by clients; connection with colleagues; and, for organizational trust (trust in one's employing organization), having organizations act in ways which align with the counsellor's role objectives.
Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism	Attunement and reflexivity act as supportive anchors to self-trust. In conjunction, these factors contribute to 'reflexive realism' (a process by which counsellors sustain their working roles, and develop and maintain self-trust, by acknowledging and honouring their own capacities, abilities, experiences, and limitations). The experiences of both the counsellor and the client can impact their trust in the therapeutic relationship; reflexive realism supports the navigation of this complexity. The self extends beyond the role of counsellor, and needs extend beyond the internal. As such, a component of practicing reflexive realism, and thus sustaining their work, is for counsellors to experience care and support from outside of themselves.

Overarching Pattern: Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related

The overarching pattern of meaning, titled *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*. This pattern encapsulates participants' embodied experiences of trust, and how these experiences relate to sustainability in their own practices as anti-violence counsellors. The meanings of trust and sustainability were not operationalized to participants during the semi-structured interview process. Instead, participants were encouraged to define and explore these

concepts from their own perspectives throughout the interview process. Trust and sustainability were introduced separately during the interview process; however, participants repeatedly tethered these experiences together as related experiences. Specific definitions varied; however, both trust and sustainability were identified as dynamic, interactive, relational processes involving both the self and others. Participants emphasized the importance of a variety of relationships in creating trust, which supported sustainability within their work, and how these relationships interact as a complex, interwoven process between the self and the beyond-self. Juniper's statement below is an example of this:

> "The nature of the work is… (pause) in itself quite nebulous. Umm, so I think these conversations around trust are… extremely important. Umm. Because there's not as clear of a road map, right. […] Umm… and having the balance between trust in all of those different relationships… really provides the protection to keep that work safe. If I didn't have the trust with the client, we would get nowhere, right? If I just had the trust to, you know, other coworkers, but I didn't trust myself, I wouldn't know what to do in the room with the client… If I was just… relying on trust in myself, I would have major blind spots, and miss things, and potentially do harm. So, it's a really needed interaction of those different relationships of trust, that, um, enable the work to be productive and safe at the same time."

Similarly, Alice reflected on her own process during the body mapping activity, naming the interwoven nature of self-trust and trust in others and identifying "three groups that are areas of trust: like myself, and then the clients, and then the… managerial people":

> "When I first thought of this […] topic, I… my first instinct was to think about trust between me and clients? Umm… and as I read about it more, it was between me and

> myself… but in the client work. But then […] I thought about trust within… like me and my manager, or me and my clinical supervisor. Like, that trust… that's also important, because like, it helps me to do the job, and it also helps me trust myself."

This overarching pattern of meaning demonstrates the interconnection of trust and sustainability, and how these phenomena arise through interactive processes both within the self, and between self and others. Next, the themes related to participants' perspectives on trust and sustainability are described.

Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety

For study participants, trust arose as more than just an abstract feeling; it was a vital element of what wove them into their working communities. This resulted in my exploration of *Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety*. For clarity, I have separated this theme into three subthemes. The first subtheme, *The Head and the Heart*, gathers participants' identifications of trust as arising through the processes of connection to their 'whole' self, encompassing their embodied, felt experiences, and their thoughts and cognitions. A second subtheme, *Trust as Felt, Embodied, Safe, Connected,* explores how this connectedness to self – alongside connection to others through co-creative, communicative, and interactive processes – provides a sense of safety, allowing individuals to show up authentically and collaboratively. A third subtheme, *Distrust, as a Felt Sense, as Protective,* represents participants' experiences of distrust as embodied processes which signalled the absence of safety and connectedness within their working environments.

The Head and the Heart. Trust was indicated to be both a cognitive and embodied process. In trust, these processes of 'head' and 'heart' were not contrasting and separate, but rather, connected and interwoven. Participants indicated that they experienced both thoughts and

feelings of being at ease, comfortable, and safe in the presence of trust. Tina noted cognition itself as a felt process, naming she felt trust "in my brain… so I can feel my head, like, my thoughts change." Similarly, Amanda noted trust as felt in "… my brain. My head. Yeah, because having the knowledge of that… it has to come from your brain." Alice indicated that for her, trust was an embodied, sequential process with "a step involved," which began in the cognitive: "It's not all at once, it's more… […] it starts from the head, goes to my stomach, and then it goes to my… voice." Juniper identified her experience of trust as both cognitive and embodied, involving a felt sense of being at ease: "centred, relaxed […] warm temperature"; cognitive awareness: "clarity and confidence of thought"; and connection: "grounded, connected, heartfelt emotion, depth of experience." Juniper also noted a "wisdom" in attending to both the embodied and the cognitive:

> "… at our best, we are integrated between systems, right, we're not just like just here or just here, so having that kinda.… rather than being just analytical, keeping it really grounded in body and heart, definitely adds wisdom to it, rather than it being a theoretical exercise."

To summarize, participants shared that trust was both a cognitive and embodied process, with cognitive experiences of trust reported as 'felt' and physicalized, indicating these processes as connected to one another.

Trust as Felt, Embodied, Safe, Connected. Participants identified trust as an embodied and relational process that protects and supports them in relationships. Felt sense of safety – the intuitive "inner knowing" or "gut feelings" informed by external information, which led participants to feel that they were safe within environments and relationships – was identified as a key component of how they knew trust was present. Catherine noted: "Yeah, I think of trust as

just… sort of like an inner knowing? Umm, and… when I'm not feeling trust, that's usually… I usually try to listen to that feeling." She continued:

> "I'm just going to put a little bit of yellow in my belly because that feels like a place where I usually have a sense of knowing… […] when I feel comfortable versus when something feels uneasy? […] I, I feel like when I'm feeling trust it's a little bit… lighter? And I'm kind of trying to represent that with the yellow."

Felt sense of trust was also identified by participants as a release from embodied stress and a sense of ease in the body, including by Tina, who noted trust was felt as "no tension." Similarly, Catherine noted that breath had a role in her felt sense of trust, and represented this on her body map: "It feels like when it's present… I can breathe more easily. Can try to draw a little lung… […] I feel like the biggest thing is feeling like… I can sort of breathe easier." Alice noted her own felt sense of trust as "a kind of relief," stating, "when I'm noticing my body less, that's kind of a sign that I'm feeling… relaxed, or okay," and saying of trust:

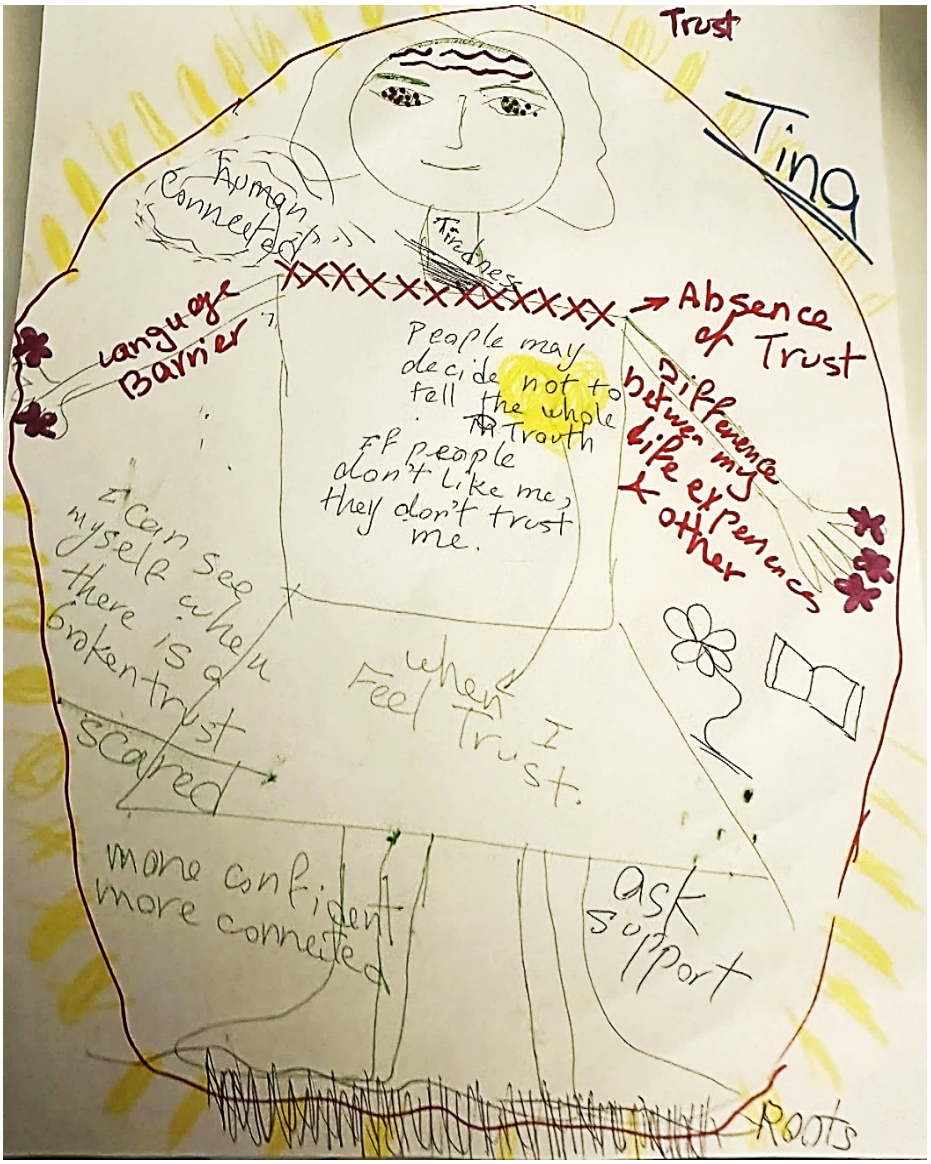
> "It's not something that's kind of on the brain, it's not something that's jagged or it's not… it's not something that's kind of creating some sort of mess in the, in the body. […] I had this kind of visualization of me taking that breath. Of, where… and I wrote like, I wrote like, trust – slash – relief there? […] it's less so relief, and more so kind of, it's… maybe expelling something, or expelling the stress out of my body."

For several participants, this experience of ease and release in the presence of trust was connected to feeling safe. Alice distinguished that her own sense of safety was both internal-relational, occurring as a 'felt sense' within the self, as well as a felt sense that arose between self and others, noting "the sense of safety to me is very important. Like, feeling safe within myself, and feeling safe within, umm, my interactions with different people… that really helps." Safety

arose as a theme early in the process of Alice's body mapping experience. She drew a safety vest within a cluster of symbols around "the metaphor of construction," signifying trust as complex, co-created, and protective. She noted: "The safety vest came in […] because I think there was a prompt of […] part of what helps you feel trust or what helps you know that there is trust…" Amanda also identified trust as an interactive, exploratory process, rooted in safety, and as foundational to counselling: "trust is […] a foundation which, umm, effective counselling is built [...] effective collaboration is built, enabling ourselves to explore our experiences and work towards, umm, healing and empowerment together. More collaborative, in a safe space." Tina identified trust similarly, stating "I think trust is… a feeling of being able to disclose yourself, or to be vulnerable, and be safe at the same time." Tina demonstrated trust as a circle of "yellow shiny sparks" protectively surrounding her drawn body.

Figure 2

Tina's Body Map



"And when trust is present, that's the whole circle around me, with the yellow shiny sparks."

Grounded connectedness both to the self, and openness to the world beyond the self, played a distinct role in how participants defined trust for themselves. Catherine identified trust as grounded connection, storying it through brown roots at the feet of her body map: "I feel like I feel trust when I have a sense of groundedness […] I feel like brown kind of symbolizes that but just feels like a grounding colour to me." Tina identified trust as creating ease and openness in connection to others: "I am an introverted person, not very good in making connections and

getting close to people, but when there is trust… it's very easy to make jokes and make fun and try to get close to each other." Juniper identified trust as grounded connection to others:

> "I'd say trust is… the ability to maintain connection to another person in a way that is open and grounded and centred, where you're not losing your own sense of self or centre. Footing with openness, right. Not footing with closed-ness. I think that's the key difference. For sure."

In summary, participants' responses indicated the role of trust as protective and supportive, both arising through, and enabling, felt, embodied, and safe connection with others.

Distrust, as a Felt Sense, as Protective. Like trust, distrust was noted as a felt process. Participants identified a number of embodied cues that signified the absence of trust and safety. Some of these cues were based in feelings of instability and fear, including for Juniper who mentioned "shifting eyes," and for Tina, who said of distrust, "I probably can spread it over my body. […] I can see myself… smaller … when there is no trust, or broken trust. And… umm, like scared." This was also relevant for Catherine: "and when it's [trust is] not present, I feel it in my throat, closing… and in my… knees get kind of wobbly… umm, I feel like my voice gets shaky"; "and when I'm not trusting myself, I tend to get very flustered."

Catherine, Alice, and Tina all identified 'gut feelings' as embodied cue that trust was not present. Tina stated, "when I feel, not too much trust, yeah, it's anxiety in my stomach. So I put it in my stomach part"; Catherine noted:

> "I think that the stomach is also representative of my relationships with my clients… like when I have concerns for their safety, usually that's a place where I can feel that. […] And I associate that distrust with sort of a like a… heaviness in my stomach or like… a drop in my stomach."

This also held true for Alice:

> "When there is stress, I notice my tension goes to things that are happening in the body. […] I have a pretty active stress response, and that's located in my gut usually. So… or my kind of muscles, back muscles. Umm, so there's that tenseness and stiffness and just kind of… umm… sharpness that I feel within the body."

For participants Tina and Amanda, absence of trust generated uncertainty and instability, with broken trust indicating a rupture to safety. Amanda said, "I feel that… trust being broken, I don't feel as safe." Tina noted:

> "I think at the end of the day it's about safety, right, that feeling safe… losing my job then I won't be safe, if people don't like me […] they cannot trust me […] they will hurt me, so I want to be safe… Yeah, I think the deepest layer is about safety."

In reflection, participants identified distrust as a felt experience that signals an absence of connection and is based in desire for safety. When witnessed alongside participants' descriptions of trust as a process involving both internal connection to body and mind, and external connection to others and the world, interlinked with their own perceptions of safety, this finding further contributes to the notion that trust is an embodied response to safe connection with others. This emphasizes the vital role of connectedness in cultivating trust.

The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation

In constructing this theme, I explored how the development of a felt sense of trustworthiness helps counsellors to navigate challenges that may arise within their working roles. In the subtheme *"Counsellor" as Role-Identity*, I identified how for anti-violence counsellors, professional and personal identities are intertwined, exploring participants' reflections on their own sense of purpose and felt connection to their work. In a second

subtheme, *Role Affirmation: "Feeling Trustworthy" through Witnessing Own Competency in Action***,** I identified how trust is not only cultivated between counsellors and their clients, but also within the counsellor themselves. This self-trust, or trust in oneself, is reinforced through role affirmation, wherein counsellors who are witnessed as "trustworthy" experience recognition and validation of their professional identity and purpose.

"Counsellor" as Role-Identity. Participants noted relating to the "role" of counsellor intrinsically. Participants expressed that their personal identities were entwined with their professional identities, picturing the work of being a 'helper' as a form of self-actualization, and as an enactment of one's values, passions, and purpose. Alice, Catherine, Tina, and Juniper all identified the role as a 'natural fit': Alice noted that working with clients "feels natural to me"; Juniper stated "that part is easy"; and Tina identified that "seeing clients is the easiest part." Juniper identified that her working role felt authentic and value-aligned:

> "I […] have definitely found for the first time that it is, umm, work that uses all of my kind of… temperament and abilities in a way that isn't valued in a lot of other types of positions. […] this is the first place where I felt like 100% of me can actually show up."

Similarly, Amanda noted a sense of authenticity and value alignment within the work, both contributing to her professional sustainability: "I'm a very determined person. I'm not just hard-working, I'm determined, I'm focused, so this plays a very big role in the body map as one of the advantages of… of a successful journey as a counsellor." She also noted that her working role was not only an enactment of her values, but a way of modelling the importance of caring for others: "I set myself to be a role model to my children."

All participants identified that counselling work was personally rewarding, and finding satisfaction, empowerment, and validation in client work. Tina noted: "… when I started

working, I really enjoyed working with people who had experienced trauma […] I found it very satisfying, working with this population." Tina also noted that as a survivor, her own historical experiences and desire to support others underpinned her passion for the work:

> "I experienced domestic violence for a long time, when I was in my country, and I was with my husband. So, umm… and in my country, I… I was a medical doctor back then. So, I used to work in the area that people weren't very wealthy… so we had a lot of women who were living under domestic violence, and sexual assault, like, they don't know where to go. […] And so… probably my knowledge and my experiences helped me to stay with this population."

In referring to her journey to becoming an anti-violence counsellor, Amanda also noted that being a counsellor and helping others was driven by passion, which served as a substantial motivator in the work:

> "I […] was driven by the passion, the happiness I derive from it, from helping. […] And it's always been, it's been a joy and pride for me to help or assist people in violent situations, or situations like this. […] Because it's something that's driven out of passion, I don't ever see… see myself getting tired, or maybe not wanting more clients."

Overall, this subtheme highlights participants' identifications of personal alignment with, satisfaction in, and desire to do their work. This reflects that the work extends beyond responsibility, and into self-concept; participants reflected on 'being counsellors' not only as a role, but as a personal identifier. This merging of identity and vocation can support sustainability, as it imbues participants' work with a sense of purpose that exceeds external expectations and obligations.

Role Affirmation: "Feeling Trustworthy" through Witnessing Own Competency in Action. Participants noted that the counsellor's role is to provide quality support to clients, which requires the establishment of a trusting client-counsellor relationship. This integral role of trust was encapsulated simply by Juniper: "if I didn't have the trust with the client, we would get nowhere, right? […] So really, the foundation is trust. Relationship is the work."

In establishing trust with clients, participants experienced feeling trustworthy: an embodied, sustaining experience of witnessing clients' success and trust in them, thereby affirming one's role as a trustworthy and "helpful helper." In describing this sense of trustworthy competence, Tina noted it made her feel "lighter" and said: "… when you do counselling and you see you and your client are both happy, and when you are going forward together… yeah, it's such a good feeling […] and it's like… like shiny things." She continued: "I can feel it in all my body. Also maybe in my heart, because it's… such a good feeling […] especially when I have… so like, the problem is something that I can deal with that in that session, or I am familiar." Amanda stated that she was sustained by witnessing how her competency contributed to her clients' success, noting: "… my ability to handle my time in a very good way, such that I solve [clients'] problems, keeps me going as well." Catherine also identified this sense of helpfulness and trustworthiness, reflecting on her previous working role as a social worker:

> "I feel like when I was on the child protection end, it was more about… um, identifying concerns, and this end feels a lot more like addressing concerns? […] I get to support people in making change and recognizing their strengths and doing all of these amazing things that, umm, you don't get to see when you're just the person who points out, umm, what the concerns are. […] I have had enough experiences over the last year to feel like, you know, I'm seeing the successes of my clients are having. I'm not at all taking

ownership of those successes, or feeling like I'm personally responsible for them, but really… just kind of feeling a lot of gratitude for being able to walk beside clients along this journey. And, and it's sort of allowing me to trust that I am playing some role in their successes, and in their healing, which is really amazing."

Similarly, Alice shared:

"The most rewarding thing is… when, umm, I can, I can kind of… map the journey for clients, people come in with like, maybe a 10 in their own kind of stress level, and as we go along, I can see that they're maybe at… and this is my assessment, that they're maybe at like a four, or… they're, they're much lower on that scale […] and then another rewarding part is when clients literally say to me, like, this has been really helpful. I'm really glad I got to do this and I got to explore these concepts in my life."

In summary, in this subtheme, I charted participants' experiences of trustworthiness and competency as felt experiences, contributing to the sustainability of their work. Reflecting on this subtheme within the context of the overarching theme of 'the trustworthy counsellor', it is clear that sustainability in counselling is not solely limited to managing external factors like organizational supports and workload; it also involves cultivating a sense of identity and purpose, both of which arise in trusting relationships.

Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance

As I previously identified, participants posited sustainable trust – trust which can be sustained – as a relational and process-based phenomenon. In the theme of *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance,* I explored how trust and sustainability are interrelated processes, further identified as *connected assurance*: a deep-rooted assurance that develops through consistent, meaningful interactions and felt connectedness with both self and others. For counsellors,

connected assurance, which supports trust in relationship to self and beyond, arises through knowledge-building (identified in the subtheme, *Knowledge-Building, Supports Competency, Supports Self-Trust),* as well as communication with and reassurance from clients (identified in the subtheme, *Client Trust Bolsters Self-Trust & Sustainability)* and colleagues (see the subtheme, *Strong Back, Soft Front: Connected Assurance with Colleagues*). Connected assurance also informs counsellors' trust in their employing organizations (see the subtheme, *Organizational Trust).* This has implications for the long-term sustainability of counsellors' practices.

Knowledge-Building, Supports Competency, Supports Self-Trust. A clear component of feeling competent revolved around the sense of inner preparedness for client sessions, including having the right information to provide to clients; this included for Amanda, who stated, "I try so hard to provide with tools and strategies to increase their self-esteem."

Several participants noted the importance of knowledge-building through training, exposure to new information and client situations, and research in affirming self-trust within their working roles, including Alice: "I kind of felt like, oh, this is even more rewarding, because I actually get to use the skill set that I've been training for." She continued:

> "So when I think of trust within myself in this context, I think of… am I doing the right thing with clients. So umm, having both of those things, umm, more knowledge of how to work with clients, and skills for reassurance of, umm, am I actually doing certain things that are actually helpful… those are really helpful for me to trust in myself.'

Catherine also represented knowledge-building on her body map, by drawing

> "… a little book, just to represent the research and training that I find and really helpful… especially for managing some of my own… some of my trust in myself, in that I'm doing the work adequately and that I'm not causing any harm."

Similarly, Tina noted the importance of knowledge accrual to bolstering her own sense of competency: "when I have a client and I need to increase my knowledge, if I need to learn something to help them better, I get more experience."

To summarize, having relevant knowledge to support clients was held as important to participants, with intelligence and competence being witnessed as markers of self-trustworthiness.

Client Trust Bolsters Self-Trust & Sustainability. It was clear from participants' disclosures that being trusted by clients not only bolsters one's sense of security in the role, but also supports trust in self. It aids in establishing a secure base from which 'deeper' counselling work can be done, as well as supporting participants in feeling grateful for the work they get to do, thus contributing to role sustainability. On her body map, Juniper identified:

> "… clients at the centre and a green heart, that is very open… so just like radiating a lot of, well, I think, I guess the words that came […] were centred open, then warm strong and hopeful… those are my experiences with the client. There's actually a lot of trust and a lot of like, not worrying about what happens next, or consequences or anything like that, just really yeah the ability to be hopeful and open."

Catherine said:

> "I genuinely do feel a very… deep trust in my relationships with clients, and in the relationships that we've built, umm, and that's been really cool to see… the times that I've felt kind of compelled to like, push back, or hold someone's feet to the fire a little

bit, I've kind of surprised myself with my own comfort in doing that? That's something that when I was in school I would've been like, hmm, I don't know… and it's been, been totally fine, and quite lovely actually a lot of the time."

Juniper expressed similarly:

"I trust them enough… and our relationship enough… to be able to try things that I know are safe, and to be able to trust my intuition a little bit more … rather than just sticking to a really rigid protocol, for example… or like, textbook approach or something… always operating within the sort of framework of safety, and, you know, not destabilizing people, right, stability first, stability and containment and all of that. But, you know, being able to present some gentle challenges and things like that, in a way that I know isn't gonna, you know, destabilize the relationship, and ultimately promote progress, and the feedback I get from them, and the changes that I see, does support that and validate it."

Regarding gratitude for clients' trust, Catherine noted:

"I often think about, umm, the openness and the trust that clients have with me, and it's a real privilege to sit with them. I mean, sometimes people will bring in, like, their journal, and read excerpts of it to me, which is something I can't imagine doing. And people are so so vulnerable, and talk about some extremely, extremely personal things, and umm… yeah, it's amazing. It's really challenging, but umm… there's not a single day that I'm not grateful to be doing this work, at the same time."

Overall, being trusted by clients contributed significantly to participants' sense of self-trust and role sustainability.

Strong Back, Soft Front: Connected Assurance with Colleagues. Having established that self-trust extends beyond the self, it becomes clear that relational processes help to bolster

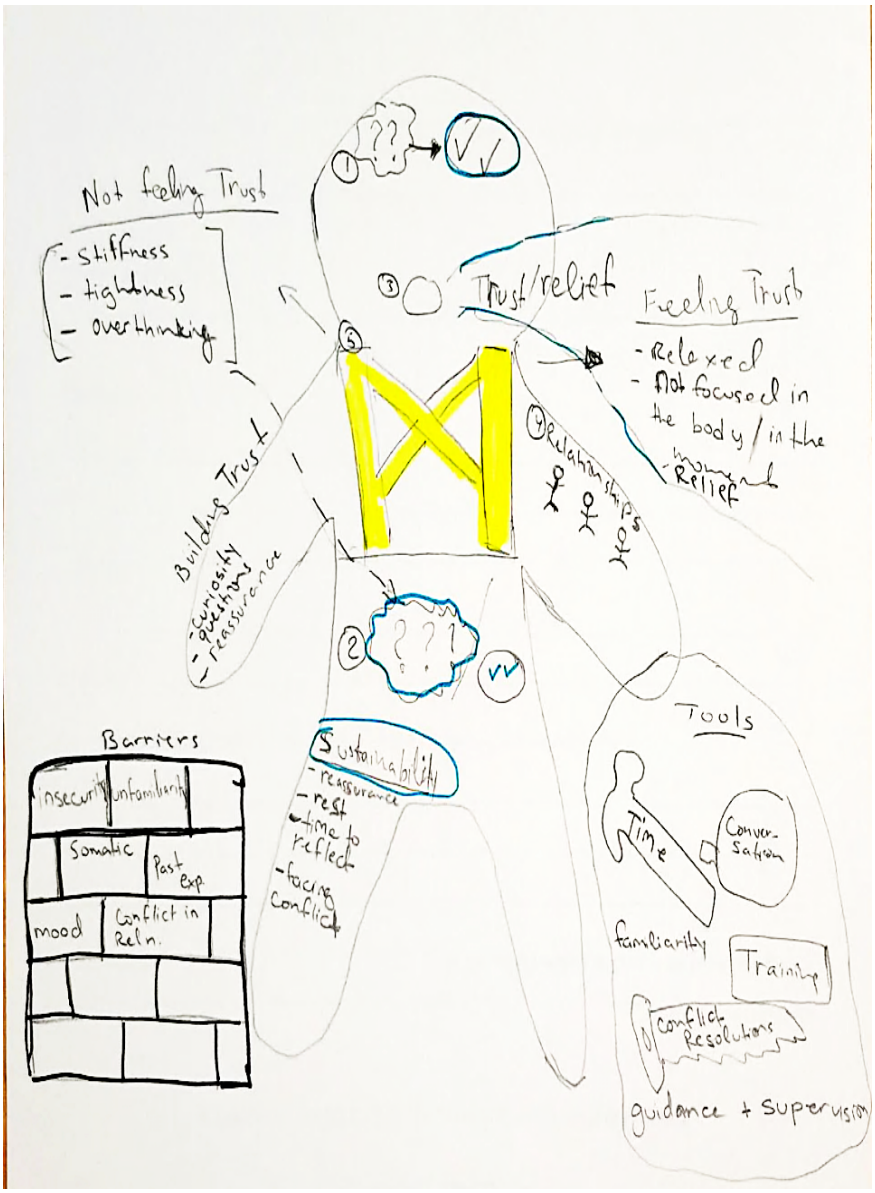
experiences of self-trust; and that in order for self-trust to take place relationally, trust in others is required. For counsellors, relationships with colleagues are particularly salient, including for Juniper, who stated: "… I think there's a beautiful energy and potential to collaborate and get a lot done in a really positive direction when there is trust on a team."

Regarding her colleagues, Catherine noted "I do feel quite a bit of trust in the work that they are doing… […] I'm very lucky to have the team that I have, and the community that I have, and I'm just so grateful."

In representing colleagues as supports, Catherine added to her body map "a couple of stick figures, just on the outside of my body, just to represent the outside support… that helps to sustain this work, which I think is a really big component." Alice also represented her own working supports as "stick figures [to] represent all three dimensions of trust there."

Figure 3

Alice's Body Map



"... stick figures [to] represent all three dimensions of trust there."

Having relational trust creates *connected assurance*: the comforting sense that one can do the work that needs to be done, with the support of and connection to those around them, is seen as capable by others to do this work and is thus able to trust the self. Alice shared:

> "With people, I find… there is quite a lot of trust. I think I'm very lucky and privileged that when I do need support from people around me, with management and coworkers, it

> is there. Umm, and, when I need more support for clients with the same people it's also there. So… I feel very comfortable in that trust."

Poetically, Alice used her dominant hand on her body map to represent the assurance found through connection to her team: "I kind of turned to my left hand, and funny enough I am left-handed, so I sort of… wrote the relationship part there, because that's kind of way of connection." Similarly, for Tina, the hands were a place of growth and connectedness: "I think I feel trust mostly in my hands and fingers… […] so see, flowers, as the trust in my fingers."

Connected assurance with colleagues is further specified in the nested subthemes *Trust as a Reciprocal Process*; *Communication Supports Trust*; and *Self-Trust as Reassurance from Trusted Colleagues.*

Trust as a Reciprocal Process. Within this greater subtheme, participants also identified the importance of a reciprocal trust dynamic within colleague relationships, wherein one is both trusted and able to trust. Catherine represented this on her body map:

> "I definitely think my hands are sort of the place where envision, umm, that kind of shared support. I think of it as like reaching out, sort of… actively reaching out, or almost like kind of passing some of the heaviness of the work? […] So the symbol that I'm using to represent that is an arrow going in both directions… because I think that as much as I can pass some of that to my coworkers, I, I'm also happy to take some of that from my coworkers. And even though it sounds a little bit cheesy, I feel like it's a lot lighter when you're sharing it in either direction? It becomes a lot more manageable."

Amanda also represented reciprocal trust on her body:

> "I drew trust between my shoulders… […] meaning trust comes and goes, and the position… the shoulder position is where something… you can lean on someone or someone can lean on you."

Tina also shared:

> "If I need support, I, I ask them, and I trust that… as soon as possible, someone will reach me out. And if I need something they can help me. And if they ask me, I'll definitely do it. So this is something that I feel in my job place."

Communication Supports Trust. Trust between colleagues, as well as sustainability in working relationships, were identified by participants to be dialogical processes, arising through open and clear communication. This sharing included both structured consultation opportunities, as well as unstructured peer check-ins. Alice represented tools to support sustainable trust on her body map, including "time, conversation, [and] feeling familiar."

Catherine represented this on her body map:

> "So I've just added, umm, a little mouth with a speech bubble to represent communicating with the team and, umm, having opportunities for sharing. That's a kind of, umm, in group supervision, but also as a wider team… to share problems that are coming up and umm… sometimes just to engage in a broader conversation about work…"

She continued:

> "I love having the opportunity to consult with them sort of more casually, or more informally, than in like a supervision, which is once a month. So just to kind of check in, or just to say like, Oh my God, I had a terrible day, and I just need to just like scream into the void for a second or something! (laughs) Like just having someone to kind of

commiserate with sometimes… that's really powerful and helpful… and, yeah, I mean the work is sort of isolated in some ways, so having opportunities to kind of come together."

Tina noted that she was content to have less casual communication with colleagues, but recognized the importance of this type of peer connection as a collectively sustaining factor for her team:

"Giving space to myself to… spend some time on counselling, or even like, meetings, like a shared meeting or whatever just for human connection, not just focusing on work… it's hard for me to get to this point, because I was just focused on what I was going to do as a counsellor, or as a colleague. Or as a team member, and… because I was introverted I didn't need too much, you know, human connection… but then I learned maybe I don't need, but other people might need, and they feel better when I just spend a little time… 'okay, what do you do, where do you want to go for vacation' or whatever."

Self-Trust as Reassurance from Trusted Colleagues. While the importance of felt senses and intuition to self-trust were clear in the data, these factors alone did not provide an exhaustive explanation of what self-trust is. In isolation, these factors were not enough to sustain best practice; external assurance was also required. In Juniper's words, "If I was just… relying on trust in myself, I would have major blind spots, and miss things, and potentially do harm."

Catherine noted:

"With my colleagues I feel that kind of… sharing the load is really helpful, and like, sort of a space where… I can just double check my intuition and make sure I haven't missed things? […] I think that, you know, having things like group supervision… so, so important for me to feel like… wait, maybe I do know what I'm doing, maybe I didn't miss anything… […] and so much of my consultation is just saying like, OK, I did this

this and this, like, what did I miss? And then being told like, no, you didn't miss anything. Or me saying, like, I feel like I have no idea what I'm doing… and then having everyone be like, yeah! That's a crazy situation! I don't… I don't know what I would do, you know, so I think you handled it OK! So just getting that reassurance from other people and feeling like… I'm not a fraud in this role or something… that's really powerful."

She continued:

"… I said something in supervision today, and I was like, "this is going to sound so terrible…" and my clinical supervisor was like, "no, that's normal." And it's just like, ahh. Sometimes just kind of like a sigh of relief. Like, I haven't done anything wrong… I haven't…"

Alice identified a "flip-flop" in her own trust in self, which came about repeatedly through a cycle of doubt and trust in her own capacity to do good work. External reassurance was pivotal in settling this "flip-flop":

"When I, umm, saw the topic, I really reflected on this flip-flop that I experience pretty often… in like, trusting in my capability and ability, and… my skills and stuff, in, and, as a counsellor, and then sometimes it goes to the other extreme… or like the other side, of, sometimes I just feel like I don't know what I'm doing. (laughs) Because I am still fresh… feel fresh in the work, like it's only been a couple years only, so, yeah that's what, what came up when I saw the, the prompt. That there is this kind of, flip-flop, and needing to kind of talk to myself through it, or talk to management through it…"

She continued:

"Having guidance on my work, having supervision in my work… those really help with the trust overall, like especially in the trust in myself, but also, umm, with other people as

> well. […] Partially it's… reassurance? […] … reassurance of like, I'm doing… there's like, this capacity in me. More so with the supervision that I get… but also, like, I'll get feedback indirectly from my coworkers, or I'll get feedback from clients when we do our surveys, and usually there's positivity there, so, that's been helpful for my trust in myself that yeah."

Catherine noted the ability to rely on others' expertise and fill in the gaps in her own knowledge, thus decreasing the amount of responsibility placed on her to know everything:

> "It's almost like quality assurance, in some ways, like to make sure that things aren't getting missed, and sometimes people do have ideas that I haven't thought of, or other ways of thinking about things that I'm not. So it's helpful for me to kind of get unstuck, when it feels like I'm kind of spinning my wheels."

In summary, connected assurance describes how reciprocal, relational experiences in which one is witnessed as capable by allies who they themselves witness as capable, supports trust in both self and in others.

Organizational Trust. For participants, a key factor in sustaining their working roles was identified as having trust in their employing organization. Juniper shared: "the role of management and systems is to enable that the work can proceed in the first place, because without those containers, we wouldn't even be here." I separated factors of trust in one's employing organization into the following subthemes: it is *Proven Over Time,* involves *Being Trusted*, requires *Available, Reliable Support, Reasonable, Human Expectations,* and *Trustworthy Professionalism*, as well as *Aligned Priorities,* with clients at the heart of the work; these subthemes are further identified below.

Proven Over Time. Across relationships, trust was identified by participants to take time to establish, including by Amanda, who stated: "trust doesn't just, doesn't just emerge. I don't just give you my trust, and you give me your trust; it takes time sometimes." This includes for the establishment of organizational trust, which requires witnessable trustworthy behaviour to take place across time. Referring to trust in colleagues and management, Alice mentioned "I think it's grown over the years."

Similarly, Tina said:

> "When time just passes, I think… through the time, I'm working in the place that I'm working right now for two years, and I think now we have such a good level of trust, because we've worked a lot, so, sometimes, yeah, I go, we just need some time with people. To… and especially for me, because it's hard for me to trust people at first sight, so I can probably… some other people are like me."

Being Trusted. Being trusted by leadership within the organization was important to creating a sense of trust in the leadership. This included the ability within supervisory relationships to voice concerns and feel heard and understood, not having to "play defense," being able to be vulnerable and unknowing, and to have interactions be exploratory and human. Catherine noted:

> "So, if there are times where problems come up, I feel very comfortable to say, I think we're missing a piece here. Or, I don't agree with this plan. And that hasn't happened a lot in the work, but when it has, it's been very well received. And, umm, I'm very grateful for that, and it hasn't been the case in all of the jobs that I've had, so, umm, I never feel like I have to… sort of like, over-explain myself. Or like, really really work to justify and advocate."

She continued:

> "This week I was trying to advocate for us to… sort of go above and beyond to sort of think outside the box on how to provide services in a time of crisis… and my manager was like, 'yeah, that's fine, that sounds great, I trust your judgement.' And I was like 'oh, okay, great!' I don't really have to kind of… work too hard to make a case for things like that. Which is really nice."

Juniper identified workplace supports as enabling her to show up whole and imperfect, demonstrating them on her body map as "a… protective heart… and that is fellow counsellors and supervisor… and kind of… the words associated with that were safe, vulnerable, authentic, OK to question and be unsure." She also noted:

> "My level of openness is way higher on a team where there's trust, where those pieces around vulnerability, umm, even in terms of like… if I'm having a question or some self-doubt, or like, how do I handle this or that… I feel like I can actually come to the team with that and not be worried that it's going to backfire."

Available, Reliable Support. The reliability and availability of professional supports was important to participants' trust in their employing organizations. Juniper noted:

> "And the management is actually… very great and flexible and accommodating in that kind of way, for sure. They're very, uhh, supportive of, so far in my experience here… if we feel like we are needing something or some added support, they're pretty open."

Regarding her trust in leadership, Alice noted:

> "I think it's coming from very practical spaces of like, I've needed… I've wanted to do a training, and most, more often than not, there's support from, from management for me to get training. Or I've needed, umm, you know, funding for programs… you know, for

clients, or I've needed, you know, support from other coworkers for my clients, and… if it's kind of within our, our system, it's there, it's readily available, and there's this sort of enthusiasm of, yes, of course we can do that."

Tina referenced leadership as a support when there were relational breakdowns elsewhere in her working experiences, noting:

"… if I feel that there is a lack of trust between me and one of my colleagues, I say, I ask for support from my manager, or other colleagues, I am very good with that area, to ask for support. I mean, even if I feel that it seems like… yeah, there is a lack of trust, or even like a disconnection? I try to ask and try to, yeah, work through that."

Reasonable, Human Expectations. Reasonable expectations from the workplace, including being able to take time off and having a manageable caseload, were cited as important to trusting the organization. All participants noted feeling that their caseloads were manageable, though each participant's caseload was different (see Table 1 for more information). Catherine identified flexibility in caseload management, with each counsellor on her team being able to take on "whatever works best for them" in terms of number of clients per day.

Regarding her expected caseload, Juniper noted:

"I'd say… like pacing wise and the expectations, it's… they have made it quite sustainable; I think. […] So when I entered, I thought, you know, this is actually quite a reasonable load… and there is a lot of time for reflection, for case conceptualizations, for research, for all of those pieces as well as training and development; so from that aspect I'm quite… quite happy, things are very balanced, for sure."

Trustworthy Professionalism. Ability to trust in leaderships' professionalism was important to participants, with Tina noting "[if my supervisor] says something about the job, I

think I can trust [her]… […] if she speaks like in the environment of policy, or of job responsibilities, I think that's clear that I can trust."

Amanda noted the importance of reliable respect and understanding for her professional boundaries in establishing trust with leadership:

> "When their understanding is there, we can create boundaries, when it's necessary, trust can exist, and respect is there a lot more. […] In everything, it matters. You don't trespass into people's personal affairs because you work together. You know the difference between friendship and work hours, and umm, normal time that people spend with their families and others. You don't pick up your phone in the middle of the night to call me about a job… or to call me about, umm, it could be something necessary or not vital at all… but you respecting my, my private space, matters a lot."

Aligned Priorities. Shared priorities, focused on keeping clients at the heart of the work, helps to create trust between counsellors and their organizational leadership, providing counsellors with support to fulfill their role as helper. This alignment serves to depressurize the counsellor's isolated role in supporting the client, creating a strong base from which to provide support. This was important for Juniper:

> "I think that's where is big on trust, too, this consensus that clients… it's clients first, everything else is… other obligations or allegiances, are, are really secondary to the trust of the client. […] And that's really how I see the core of the work, and the order of… kind of the order of operations, or the order of priority, is right. […] I think that allows me to have that full openness with clients, 'cause that that outer layer is really protecting it, and I feel like… like they get it and have, you know, shared concerns, shared…

whatever, like all the things are shared there. So there's a lot of trust there and shared priorities probably too."

Catherine identified that collaborative changes to organizational policy which aligned with client-centred and trauma-informed practice allowed for the relief of some of the systemic pressures that she was facing in her work:

"And I'm actually feeling a lot better about the wait list right now, umm, it's definitely getting smaller, and we're able to provide some more support now… like we have a wait list support group that we offer a few times a year which is really helpful. And now we've started it more of a triage process. So when people are identified as being higher risk, we're able to typically get them in quite a bit quicker… so sometimes they can jump the line, but there's also some people… kind of, we have done a big check in with all the folks who have been on our wait list for… for a long time, so sometimes we're able to identify and catch some of those people who weren't initially triaged properly or in the way that we're doing it now I should say. Umm, so I feel a little bit better about that."

To conclude this subtheme, organizational trust – the trust held by participants in their employing organizations – was identified as a key factor in role sustainability. Organizational trust takes time and consistency to establish. To experience organizational trust, the counsellor must feel trusted by leadership, have access to reliable and readily accessible organizational supports, be held to reasonable caseload and energetic expectations, experience respect of their professional boundaries, and feel aligned with organizational priorities.

In summary of this theme, sustainable trust (in both the self, and in others) is a relational phenomenon that arises through connected assurance: the consistent, meaningful interactions and felt connectedness with both self and others, which result in a deep-rooted sense of assuredness.

Connected assurance can arise through knowledge-building; communication with and reassurance from clients and colleagues; and reciprocated connection, including with colleagues and organizations, thus influencing organizational trust (trust in one's employing organization).

Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism

As noted in other themes, participants repeatedly identified self-trust as a key component of creating sustainability in their work. Catherine displayed the importance of self-trust on her body map: "I included a heart as well, which I think is kind of… representative of my self-trust in the work that I'm doing." I identified a process that I have titled *reflexive realism*, through which this self-trust became transformative and sustaining. Reflexive realism was identified as a combined process of practicing *attunement* — a factor of embodied presence in counselling practice, characterized by "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present-moment, and non-judgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4) — and reflexivity. I defined reflexivity in the context of research within the first chapter of this thesis. In the context of counselling work, reflexivity refers to the process of reflecting upon how the self engages with both self and others in the context of one's working role (Dixon, 2019; Reynolds, 2011). Engaging in reflexive practice helps a practitioner to understand the ways in which their own biases, values, identities, and judgements may impact their relationships with clients, and their perceptions of their work (Dixon, 2019).

For participants, the process of reflexive realism involved acknowledging what factors of clients' experiences fell beyond their individual influence, alongside focusing on the support that they *could* provide to their client within the counselling environment, thus considering and honouring their own capacities, abilities, experiences, and limitations. As Alice noted regarding the role of counselling in clients' lives: "… it might not fix everything, it might not… kind of,

we might not kind of come to a closure about their experience, but there's some sort of difference to be made." I further explored the process of reflexive realism within several self-descriptive subthemes, which I expand upon in the pages to follow*: Attunement & Reflexivity as Entwined Anchors of Self-Trust; Knowing/Being Enough: Self-Trust as Internal-Relational; Experiences Beyond the Relationship Impact Trust in the Work;* and *Self as Beyond the Role, Care as Beyond the Self*.

Attunement & Reflexivity as Entwined Anchors of Self-Trust. Being able to reflect on the self within one's context, and attune to one's own experiences, were indicated numerous times in how participants identified the presence of trust in both self and others. To feel trust was to feel a deep-rooted sense of assuredness in self, and connection to the world beyond the self. As a result, I identified the fourth and final theme of *Attunement & Reflexivity as Entwined Anchors of Self-Trust.* Catherine noted:

> "I kind of associate trust with the feeling of, like, self-assuredness? So when I'm trusting myself, I'm generally feeling pretty grounded, and pretty calm, and comfortable. […] I feel this sort of… lift, and I feel this sort of… groundedness at the same time, in the work that I'm doing, and in, in my ability to navigate some of this hard stuff that comes up."

Amanda identified, "trusting myself makes me know what to do."

Juniper also named experiencing trust as an embodied, attuned, and reflexive connection to her own inner competency and wisdom, demonstrating this on her body map:

> "I actually also added self as another level, there, 'cause I think that trust too, intuition and self and wisdom, is really actually pretty fundamental as well… so it was, yeah, down here, in purple, and the words there were deep self-knowledge, emotional as-is-ness, waves, intensity, acceptance, groundedness. Umm… yeah and that kind of goes all

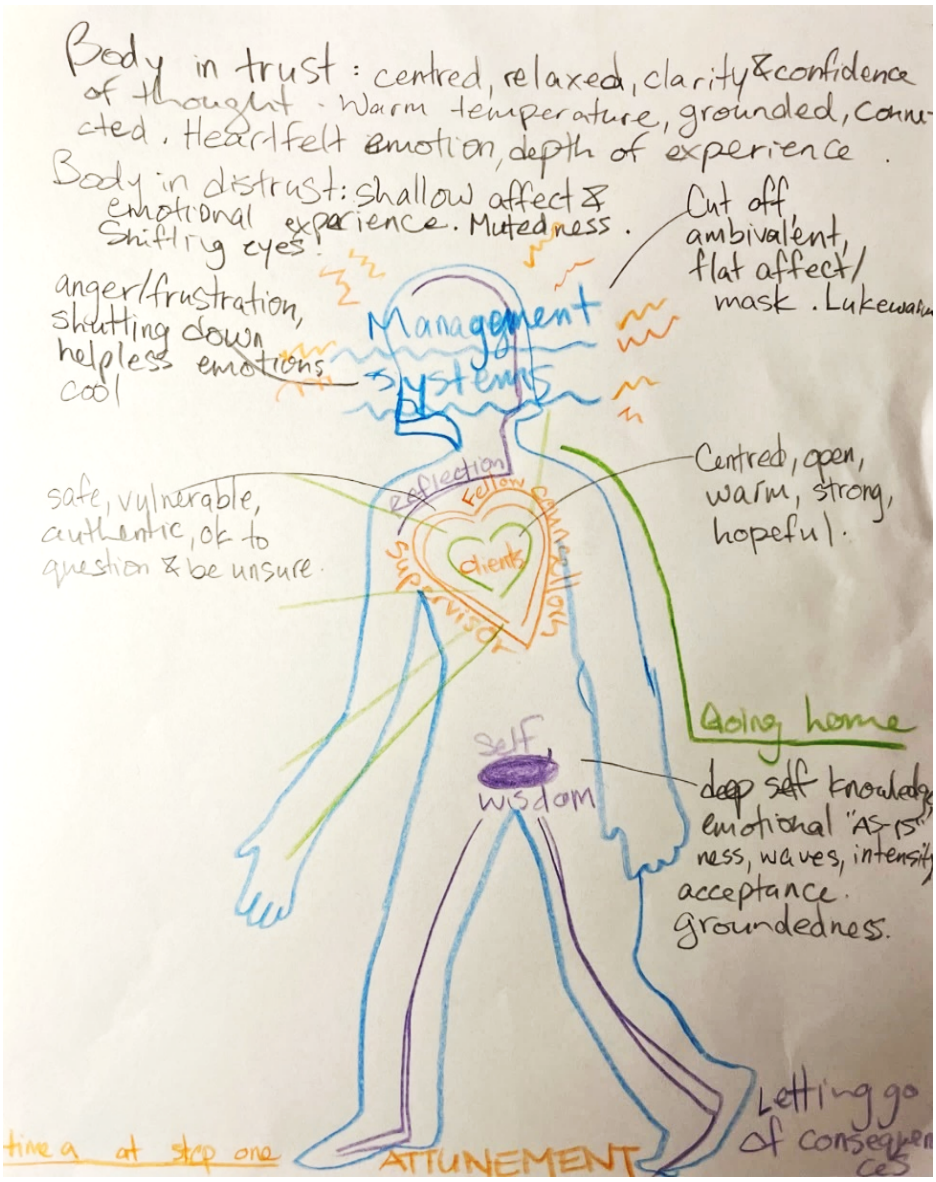
> the way down, to the legs, and the feet, and really informs, you know, the direction that I go, and that I walk."
>
> She continued with a definition of the 'emotional as-isness' that she spoke of:
>
> "… it's just kind of like whatever is coming up, I guess just non-judgmental, yeah the waves that kind of, yeah, just accepting whatever is there… which I don't… don't share necessarily with clients, or with other counsellors, or with like, anybody. But you know, that… that continuous, sometimes turbulence, sometimes… just like the constant shifts and waves for me, that I am internally aware of."

Attunement to both the self, and to clients' needs, rather than getting caught up in detached ideas of 'how to help' was also identified by participants as supportive. Attunement served a sustaining factor, a support to trust-building in self and client relationships, and a component of reflexive realism. The centring of clients and their stories was a component of this, including for Catherine, who noted the importance of not "getting caught up in my own agenda of what I think we should be doing or talking about" when in sessions with clients. Similarly, Juniper noted:

> "… kind of the base, in terms of terms of sustainable practice as well, is attunement… so just staying really in the moment with clients, and really grounded to, anchored to, the person… rather than getting carried away by systems and theories and knowledge and all of that… and worries and anxiety that spin out of that… uhh, and then one step at a time. And really that's… really that informs the way I'm able to, yeah, I think, keep the… the counseling relationship in practice sustainable."

Figure 4

Juniper's Body Map



"... attunement... so just staying really in the moment with clients, and really grounded to, anchored to, the person..."

Juniper continued:

"I think I was surprised at how much… attunement has to do with sustainability. Umm, because I know it's something I'm very intentional about, but maybe I thought it was for the client… and I didn't realize how much it was also for me. Yeah, how… how it

> actually, like, keeps me grounded as well, and it keeps me more open and hopeful, I think, because… yeah, again… theories are not the transformative piece."

In this sub-theme, active engagement in attunement and reflexivity were identified by participants as factors that contributed to a sense of self-trust, acting as anchors for, and conjunctive factors in, the process of reflexive realism. For participants, this process was an important part of maintaining sustainable working practice.

Knowing/Being Enough: Self-Trust as Internal-Relational. An underlying dynamic of self-trust involved believing in one's existing capacity and competency to 'do good work' regardless of perceived 'expertise' by others, suggesting that self-trust exists as an internal-relational process of reasoning and care 'between' the self and the self. Despite not being the answer to systemic injustice, witnessing one's own work as hopeful and important was essential in supporting role sustainability.

Also relevant to self-trust was participants' belief that they were not static, and were capable of growth as practitioners. Regarding trusting one's existing competency, Amanda noted: "In everything I do, it doesn't matter if I do it correctly or not, I trust myself to do it, trust that I can do it better, or that I'll improve if I'm not doing it well." For Alice, this existing trust in self arose as follows:

> "I don't know every type of therapeutic model and practice, and I don't know everything about being a counsellor ever, but also trusting myself to use my knowledge and skills to the best of my abilities, and grow the knowledge at least, or grow the practical parts, when I have space for growth, when I have time for it."

In summary, self-trust was identified as an internal-relational process, occurring between the self and the self. Recognition of potential to expand competency was highlighted as important, and a key component of the reflexive realism.

Experiences Beyond the Present Impact Trust in the Work. As Alice stated clearly, "sometimes things outside of the counselling world… things effect how we embody trust." Alice noted the impact of "mood"; on her body map, Tina symbolized the "rooted causes here, in feet" of distrust in others that had been present all her life:

> "I remember many things from my childhood, a lot of messages, like… There is no friend in the world, like, no friends except family, friends will be an enemy one day […] I know it's rooted in my childhood, right? So, I understand that I need to work with all my inside and my awareness."

Alice acknowledged the importance of "time to reflect" to building understanding and sustainability. Juniper symbolized her own reflective process during the "actual time slots where I do some reflection, as well as like when I need it around cases, and around what's going on in my own dialogue, or emotional world around client stuff" as a purple line connecting head, to heart, suggesting this process as both embodied and cognitive.

This attuned and reflexive engagement with the self through reflexive realism, and acknowledgement of external influences on trust, was also noted by participants as a key component of maintaining self-trust within the therapeutic environment: particularly in the context of feeling 'untrusted' by clients. Acknowledging that trust can be challenging for them for reasons beyond the counsellor's reach and releasing anxious expectation and desire to be trusted immediately, was voiced by several clients. For Catherine, her own process of

establishing trust with clients involved "recognizing that it's going to be a challenge, and that that is normal, that it makes sense, based on their experiences." She continued:

> "I had a really hard time when I was starting with just like… trusting that I knew what I was doing, and that I was going to be capable of supporting people who have experienced the kinds of things that our clients have experienced, in a way that's meaningful and productive and not causing harm, and not just wasting anybody's time or kind of spinning our wheels. And umm… it has definitely reduced over time, and yeah, I think now… well, part of it is that I sort of try to reframe it as engaging in reflexive practice when I get that impostor syndrome… and just trying to really remind myself that that's coming from a place of really, really deep care for the people that I'm working with."

Amanda noted:

> "I try to get to know my clients, I get to know their situation, what's involved in their case, or anything, and then… I view the trust. […] Sometimes, it takes a lot of time and work and energy for clients to come around and trust you."

Alice identified tools that were supportive to trust-building as "familiarity and curiosity," and indicated her own internal dialogue regarding this:

> "I don't expect clients to trust me right away, and… if I feel like that there's like kind of hesitancy, or maybe a discomfort with clients in the first couple sessions, for me that's a reminder that they can't trust me right away. They've known me for maybe like two hours, in my life, or in their life. And that helps me trust myself, of like, you need to calm down, like you don't need to stress about this.

The protectiveness of this internal dialogue also extended in situations where the participant experienced distrust in a client's disclosures, including for Tina:

> "I think in my professional life, I can have a good degree of trust… so I, I immediately can translate for myself that okay, this is the story of the client, and this is true. It doesn't matter if you can trust or not, if you're not sure that what they say is true or not, it is true for themselves. So look at it through this lens. […] Like okay, this is their truth, and I can trust them. Like the reality… it's not my job to investigate their reality."

Alice mentioned that "clients might mention some things… one session and then… backtrack and talk about something that they were going through […] during the time of earlier sessions," and how this can shake her sense of trust. She also mentioned using reflexivity and inner dialogue to navigate this challenge by:

> "… talking to […] myself, and reassuring myself that um… sometimes people talk about things and, like, they like, it might not have like been relevant or important or they might have missed it because sometimes – and I've experienced this too, in like, my own kind of, umm, experience of counselling – where sometimes you just think about a topic or an experience like so much internally and by the time you get to… the session, it's like, oh I've already had so many thoughts about this, or I don't know what parts to share, or what parts you've already kind of worked through, so it's also me trusting… myself and the clients that it's… it's probably insignificant as to why that's happened."

To summarize, taking a realistic, reflexive stance to one's role and capabilities also involved acknowledging the external influences that play a part in one's trust in self, and in one's experiences of role sustainability. This enabled a compassionate perspective on one's own capacity for trust-building and trusting others.

Self as Beyond the Role, Care as Beyond the Self. Aligned with the sub-theme of working experiences and self-trust being impacted by the world beyond the role, is another sub-

theme: counsellors are humans with lives beyond their work; they require breaks from and care outside of the work in order for their roles to be sustained. Catherine acknowledged this in reference to her body map:

> "… looking at the rope around my wrists, and like, the things that are kind of hanging off my dress here… it makes me want to like, physically shake these things off myself. And I think, umm, that's a good reminder that I do need to do things to feel like I'm kind of… putting away the day."

Specific self-care strategies ranged from the reflective (Amanda writing down "the stressful activities that I go through and what gives me freedom and space") to the distractive (Tina using "computer game on my phone that can really distract me from all of the negative things … it's very good for me"); the uniting factor was that they involved engagement with an activity or another being beyond the confines of the self, and beyond participants' work, suggesting 'self-care' is a relational process, exceeding what is available internally through isolated reflection. Catherine symbolized sustainability on her body map as processes that she engaged with beyond the self, drawing "a little tree just to represent, kind of, taking time away from the work," and noting the importance of "just getting outside or engaging in the other parts of my life that are, umm, a little bit lighter… just to kind of bring some balance." Catherine continued:

> "The things that I identified as being really sustaining are… sort of outside of me? So like the tree, and the book are kind of like… off to the sides of my body, and then I have like, the little arrows by my hands which… again, are like kind of outside of me, or sort of like… to the outside of me at least."

Similarly, Juniper represented time away from the work on her body map as a green line, noting: “this one here… is green, and that’s going home and just being able to leave it and go home and… have a life outside of this.”

Tina named that trusting herself to practice self-care took time to develop:

> “It took many years for me actually, when I was back home. Yeah… umm, for many years, when I… for five, four years when I started working, I used to think… about the job place all evening, and overnight, until the next morning. And I thought, no, this is not the way I should be, so, I’m not sure what I need… but then, now I am totally okay to leave everything, even the most severe things happening at job […] I think I’m very good in managing, like… if I’m close to burnout, or like emotional tiredness, I will understand so early. So, I will take some time off taking care of myself.”

Tina went on to note that this shift to being able to take time away from the work was not exclusively internal; it required the support of her employing organization. She noted she “learned a lot in [her] current job place” about self-care, and that “they really emphasize if you need off-time, just go off, if you want to […] they really, really ask us to do self-care.”

Reviewing her body map, Catherine noted:

> “The things that I identified as being really sustaining are… sort of outside of me? So like the tree, and the book are kind of like… off to the sides of my body, and then I have like, the little arrows by my hands which… again, are like kind of outside of me, or sort of like… to the outside of me at least.”

Relationships themselves were identified as self-care, suggesting that participants’ conceptualization of the term ‘self-care’ was relational in meaning, not isolated to the actions of the self. When asked about self-care, Tina noted “I enjoy spending time with my daughters […]

talking with friends…"; Amanda noted "I go out with my family, family love and support matters to me and it keeps me going…"; and Catherine identified:

> "I think about the support from people in my life who are not in this kind of work, and who are not kind of just… steeped in this context all the time, and the way that they can kind of… pull me out of those, like, harder days."

In summary, counsellors need care. This care exceeds common definitions of 'self-care' as internal, with participants noting the importance of relational supports in their lives beyond the work. This links back to a greater pattern of meaning around the role of connectedness in trust and sustainability, which is central to the current study's findings.

Chapter Summary

In this study, I explored participants' felt experiences of trust and sustainability within their working experiences. I combined illustrative and analytic treatment of data extracts from five interviews, identifying four themes, nested within a pattern of meaning titled *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related.* This included the theme of *Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety*, in which I identified trust as an interactive process of both body-and-cognition, self-and-other, founded in a felt sense of safety. This was followed by theme *The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation*, in which I explored participants' personal identification with the role of 'counsellor'; participant experienced affirmation of their working role and, by extension, themselves, through witnessing their own counselling competency in action, thus contributing to role sustainability. Next, in the theme *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance*, I identified the concept of connected assurance as a contributing factor to trusting the self, others, and employing organizations. Connected assurance requires perceiving oneself as trustworthy, and this trustworthiness is accessible through building

knowledge and meaningful relationships with the self, clients, colleagues, and one's employing organization. Lastly, I explored the theme *Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism,* noting self-attunement and self-reflexivity act as supportive anchors of reflexive realism; self-trust as internal-relational (between self and self); external experiences can impact trust within the counselling space; and the self exceeds the professional role of "counsellor," highlighting the need for external care and support in creating sustainability. I shared participants' identifications of trust as an internal-relational and external-relational process that arises through connection, and identified trust as a meaningful contributor to sustainability in participants' working practices.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The overarching objective of this study was to explore how anti-violence counsellors embody trust and how these experiences pertain to sustainable anti-violence counselling practice. For this study, anti-violence counsellors shared how they experienced trust as both an internal-relational (between self and self) and external-relational (between self and others) process, which arose through connection. Trust was also reported as an integral component of creating sustainability in their working practices. Nested within the overarching pattern of meaning, *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*, four main themes emerged: *Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety; The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation*; *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance;* and lastly, *Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism.* In addition to providing insight into counsellors' embodied experiences of trust as a process-based and relational phenomenon, these four themes also served to help inform how sustainable working practices for anti-violence counsellors are created and supported. In this chapter, I connect the main findings to the contextualizing literature, outline implications for practice, highlight contributions to research and theory, identify limitations and considerations for future research, and review my own experiences as researcher.

Main Findings

The concept of trust is evident in previous literature regarding the working experiences of anti-violence professionals (e.g., Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brend et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2022; Wachter et al., 2019). However, existing literature exploring anti-violence counsellors' working experiences did not focalize trust; scholars only addressed trust as a relevant cognitive-behavioural phenomenon, which protects workers from potential damage, and

did not explicitly identify trust as a phenomenon warranting specified inquiry (Kulkarni et al., 2013; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018). Furthermore, scholars in counselling psychology have not explored trust from an embodied standpoint, and the concept of sustainability did not arise within existing qualitative or quantitative research in this area of inquiry. Instead, the commonly taken orientation has been towards mitigating risk and avoiding the development of work-stress-related conditions, rather than towards cultivating sustainability (Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Brend et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013). In the current study, I sought to help address these gaps in the reviewed literature and disrupt the hegemonic way of thinking. In orienting towards a hoped-for outcome, I pursued phenomenological inquiry, focalizing anti-violence counsellors' embodied experiences of trust as they contribute to working-role sustainability.

As explored in Chapter Three (Methodology) and Chapter Four (Findings), I organized anti-violence counsellors' shared experiences into four main themes, mapping an understanding of the complex, process-based, and relational nature of trust within their working experiences. In illustrating the main findings of this study, I shared my understanding of how the four themes addressed my research questions ("how is trust experienced in an embodied way by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles?" and "how do these experiences relate to the sustainability of community-based anti-violence counsellors' work?") and served to disrupt the hegemony asserted in existing research. As implied by the overarching pattern of meaning *Trust and Sustainability as Relational and Related*, participants explicitly identified trust as a sustaining element within all four of the finalized themes. Due to the integrated nature of the findings, I relay how themes addressed the research questions concurrently, rather than separately.

Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety

Scholars in other fields of study have identified trust as both an embodied process, and as a necessary feature of embodiment (Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Goldberg, 2007; Sodhi, 2012). In the current study, the first theme, *Trust, as Connectedness, as Safety,* aligned with these existing findings, and extended their relevance to the experiences of anti-violence counsellors. Within this theme, I addressed the relevance of the first research question ("how is trust experienced in an embodied way by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their working roles?") by seeking an understanding from study participants about their embodied experiences of trust. Participants reported that trust was indeed experienced in embodied ways. The three nested sub-themes, *"The Head and the Heart": Trust as Cognitive & Embodied*; *Trust as Felt, Embodied, Safe, Connected*; and *Distrust, as a Felt Sense, as Protective*, align with and expand certain aspects of the existing literature, and depart from others; I explore these aspects in detail below.

The Head & the Heart. In this study, anti-violence counsellors indicated that trust exists not only as a cognitive experience, but also as an embodied, felt experience; and, rather than being separate, these processes are intertwined. This finding is consistent with existing literature on embodied subjectivity, which contradicts the notion of mind-body dualism, and acknowledges participants' experiences of the body and mind as components of a whole (Allegranti, 2011; Bager-Charleston et al., 2018; Barthold, 2014; Carroll, 2021; Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]; Todres, 2007). As quoted in Chapter Two, rather than "[having] bodies, we *are* our bodies" (de Jager et al., 2016, p. 18). In the current study, anti-violence counsellors articulated that when trust exceeds cognitive experience, they are impacted emotionally and physiologically, which influences how they experience being and feeling safe and sustained within their working roles.

Trust as Felt, Embodied, Safe, Connected. In exploring safety and trust as felt, embodied experiences, this study contributed a novel perspective to existing literature on these phenomena in the context of anti-violence workers. Anti-violence counsellors' reflections on the interwoven nature of their experiences of "feeling trust" and their experiences of "feeling safe" indicated that trust and safety are integrated phenomena. This finding is consistent with Ben-Porat and Itzhaky's (2014) qualitative study on social workers working with survivors of intimate partner violence; specifically, the identified theme of *Needing to feel safe.* Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014) identified this safety as self-constructed and highlighted the importance of safety in establishing and supporting trustworthy working relationships for anti-violence workers. The integration of trust and safety were also indicated in other existing literature, including by Brend and MacIntosh (2021), Voth Schrag et al. (2021), and others (Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Brend et al., 2019; Chouliara et al., 2009, as cited in Murray & Graves, 2013; McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Iliffe & Steed, 2000; Slattery & Goodman, 2009). The current study extended and updated these findings by exploring what this safety felt like for anti-violence counsellors, and how they identified the presence of felt safety was connected to trust. In this study, anti-violence counsellors repeatedly identified trust as an experience of ease, comfort, and connectedness to the world beyond the self, including other people, indicating that feeling safe and connected contributed to experiences of trust.

Distrust, as a Felt Sense, as Protective. For anti-violence counsellors, distrust was "felt" as an embodied experience of disconnection and discomfort, and indicated the absence of safety. These findings highlight both anti-violence counsellors' desire for safety, and the importance of connectedness in establishing and maintaining trust. This is consistent with research by Brend and Macintosh (2021), Slattery and Goodman (2009), and Voth Schrag et al. (2022) in their

studies exploring experiences of secondary traumatic stress. The current study's findings corroborate these scholars' recognition of the importance of trust, whilst also orienting towards sustainability, rather than towards mitigation of damage. Furthermore, despite the risk-oriented modeling present in existing research, including by Brend and Macintosh (2021), Slattery and Goodman (2009), and Voth Schrag et al. (2022) amongst others, anti-violence workers' experiences of distrust have not previously been researched (Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Brend et al., 2019; Chouliara et al., 2009, as cited in Murray & Graves, 2013; McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Iliffe & Steed, 2000). The current study makes an important contribution by exploring the phenomenon of distrust.

The Trustworthy Counsellor: Self-Trust and Sustainability through Role Affirmation

Findings from the current study indicated that anti-violence counsellors' own felt sense of trustworthiness to others, and their ability to fulfill their role requirements, served as foundational components of the trust which they held for themselves. This resulting self-trust contributed to the sustainability of their work. Existing literature on anti-violence workers has explored internal supports, including confidence (e.g., Babin et al., 2012; Brend and MacIntosh, 2021; and Tarshis and Baird, 2018), existing knowledge (e.g., Babin et al., 2012; Wachter et al., 2019; and Wood et al., 2017), and resilience (e.g., Ben-Porat and Itzhaky, 2014; Kim et al., 2021; Kulkarni et al., 2015; and Taylor et al., 2018). Furthermore, the concept of "trusting the self" is not novel to this study (Govier, 1993), However, the concept of self-trust has not emerged within existing literature on anti-violence worker populations, suggesting that the experiences of self-trust as held by anti-violence counsellors remained unexplored until the conduction of the current study. In this study, self-trust arose as an intersubjectively supportive process of being affirmed in one's working role; this diverged from the framing of similar

supports such as confidence and resilience within existing literature, which were identified as specifically "internal" and individualized (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017). Findings from the two subthemes, *"Counsellor" as Role Identity,* and *Role Affirmation: "Feeling Trustworthy" through Witnessing Own Competency in Action*, are further explored below.

"Counsellor" as Role Identity. Anti-violence counsellors shared an entwinement of their personal and professional identities, noting that being a counsellor felt innate and authentic. As such, being able to support clients as their counsellor felt personally rewarding and empowering. This finding parallels recent sectoral research by Fernandes and Lanthier (2024), in which anti-violence workers noted they experienced both personal fulfillment and a strong sense of purpose regarding their work. Existing literature has also found that anti-violence workers tend to have a heightened desire to provide care to others, and many people pursue anti-violence work due to their own historical experiences of relationship violence (Alani & Stroink 2015; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2011; Brend et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013). The current study expanded upon these findings into a discussion of working role sustainability, with anti-violence counsellors identifying that personal tethering to the work was a great strength, supported their sense of meaning in their working roles, and contributed to role sustainability.

Common narratives regarding vicarious trauma and burnout claim that exposure to survivors' stories is what contributes to these work-stress-related conditions (Frey et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2021; Reynolds, 2011; & Tarshis & Baird, 2018). In contrast, in the current study, anti-violence counsellors repeatedly expressed gratitude and privilege for receiving clients' disclosures, and clearly identified that clients were the "easy" part of their working experiences. So long as they felt capable of providing support to clients, anti-violence counsellors reflected on

their work as sustainable, and even uplifting. This finding provides a desire-based framing which aligns with results from the studies by Babin et al. (2012) and Kulkarni et al. (2013), which indicated that anti-violence workers' stress arose from an inability to support clients in navigating unsupportive and harmful systems, rather than from exposure to clients' stories themselves.

Role Affirmation: "Feeling Trustworthy" through Witnessing Own Competency in Action. Anti-violence counsellors experienced role affirmation through being able to enact the fundamental duties of their working roles, identified as "providing support to clients." This affirmation of competency supported anti-violence counsellors' experiences of self-trust and their felt sense of trustworthiness, thus bolstering their role sustainability. Competency was explored by previous researchers as a supporting factor for anti-violence workers (Babin et al., 2012; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017). In the current study, in enacting their role of supporting clients, counsellors were able to affirm the significance of their working roles, therefore supporting the meaning of their work and increasing its sustainability. This finding aligns with existing literature on compassion satisfaction, which refers to the sense of satisfaction gained by helping others (Cummings et al., 2018). Within this theme, ability to help others was tethered to experiences of personal purpose and worthiness, indicating that "helping" affirmed counsellors' role and identity as "helper."

The concept of role affirmation may have some relevance to Ben-Porat and Itzhaky's (2014) existing model of counsellor resiliency. These researchers explored three primary factors contributing to resiliency – mastery; role competency; and stable self-esteem – and posited that these factors arose interactively, rather than in isolation (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014). Ben-Porat & Itzhaky's (2014) study focused on individual experiences of these factors, and the internal-

interactional processes occurring between them; understandings of external influences upon these factors were not explored. While the theme of role affirmation involved similar elements to the factors noted by Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014) – including holding pertinent knowledge, feeling able to fulfil one's role, and sense of self-trust – anti-violence counsellors' disclosures of experiencing role affirmation indicated that this phenomenon is not based on internal skills or capacities. Instead, role affirmation relied on the presence of a trustworthy external support system which enabled counsellors to "do the work that needs to be done", and feedback which allowed them to feel competent. This finding aligned with Reynolds' (2020) position on resilience: that it cannot be developed in isolation, and requires privileged relational experiences of support and care from those around a practitioner.

Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance

Trust was sustained through ongoing, relational, and meaningful assurance, which anti-violence counsellors shared to be a crucial component of role sustainability. I applied the term connected assurance to describe this phenomenon. The value of connectedness and relational support has been explored by a number of researchers in existing literature on anti-violence workers' experiences (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Slattery & Goodman, 2009; Tarshis & Baird, 2018). It corroborates findings in existing literature regarding the importance of having a supportive workplace, team, and supervisor (Dworkin et al., 2016; McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014; Wachter et al., 2019). However, the concept of connected assurance, and representing the relationship between connectedness and trust within relational experiences, is a novel contribution which this current study has made to the existing body of literature on anti-violence counsellors' experiences specifically.

Knowledge-Building, Supports Competency, Supports Self-Trust. Anti-violence counsellors reflected on how expanding their working knowledge helped them feel more competent in their roles, thereby strengthening their sense of self-trust. The exploration of competency as an internal support for counsellors, which helps to stave off experiences of work-stress-related conditions, has been explored in existing data by researchers including Babin et al. (2012), Wachter et al. (2019), and Wood et al. (2017), all of whom reflected on the importance of job training and education for counsellors. Rather than looking at knowledge as an "internal support," findings from this study suggested that for anti-violence workers, knowledge was built through engagement with external sources, thus indicating knowledge as relationally accrued, and therefore beyond-the-self. As such, the current research contributes to a more nuanced understanding and collectively-oriented interpretation of the role of knowledge-building in anti-violence counsellors' experiences.

Client Trust Bolsters Self-Trust & Sustainability. Being trusted by and receiving positive feedback from their clients supported anti-violence counsellors in feeling meaningfully anchored to their working roles, thereby supporting role sustainability. Although existing qualitative research by Wood (2016) explored the value of connectedness between counsellor and client in terms of its benefits to rapport-building with clients, their study did not explore the positive impacts upon the practitioners themselves; nor did these researchers identify trust as a component of this connectedness. Anti-violence counsellors reflected that it was their role to provide support; this said, their identifications of feeling supported by clients' trust in their work indicated they are also bolstered and uplifted in their interactions with clients, thus exposing the reciprocity which was present within their client-counsellor dynamics. This reciprocity has yet to be explored explicitly within other existing literature on anti-violence counsellors' experiences,

though it was noted in existing articles as an area deserving exploration (Frey et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2021; Tarshis & Baird, 2018).

Strong Back, Soft Front: Connected Assurance with Colleagues. For anti-violence counsellors, working in a supportive team environment was essential to creating and upholding sustainable working practices. Several existing empirical studies, including by Slattery and Goodman (2009) and Tarshis and Baird (2018), identified the value of centring safety and clear communication in creating truly supportive relationships between counsellors and their supervisors. In the current study, it was clear from anti-violence counsellors' experiences that the need for support extended beyond only supervisory relationships; rather, all counsellors' relationships, including to their colleagues, clients, supervisors, and organizational leadership, benefitted from the presence of embodied, safe connection, and therefore trust. This finding aligned with existing assertions on the need for readily accessible opportunities for peer-to-peer debriefing, social supports, and community care models for anti-violence counsellors (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Babin et al., 2012; Dworkin et al., 2016; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019).

Several subthemes were identified within this greater subtheme. In the nested subtheme *Trust as a Reciprocal Process,* trust was further identified as a process which was catalyzed both through individual counsellors' behaviour, and through a reciprocal, mutual process of working "with" one another. Thus, trust was recognized as a collaborative and collective effort, rather than something which could be applied by an individual person in isolation. This extended a desire-based, sustainability-oriented approach to similar findings (by Ben-Porat and Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Murray and Graves, 2013; and Wood et al., 2017) regarding the importance of collective supports in mitigating the presence of work-stress-related conditions for

anti-violence workers. The self-explanatory nested subtheme of *Communication Supports Trust* aligned with qualitative findings by Babin et al. (2012) and Brend and MacIntosh (2020) on the value of communication skills in supporting anti-violence. Rather than exploring communication specifically as a 'skill', findings from the current study posited that communication was an experience occurring between two people, which boltered trust. As such, for interviewed anti-violence workers, communication played not only a role in working role sustainability, but also in the sustainability of trust itself.

Existing research studies (e.g., Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Tarshis and Baird, 2018; Wachter et al., 2019) used the language of "internal" and "external" supports to explore counsellors' experiences of being supported in their work. Contradicting this separative languaging, within the current study, anti-violence counsellors' experiences of connected assurance challenged the separation between self and others as wholly distinct. Within the nested subtheme of *Self-Trust as Reassurance from Trusted Colleagues,* anti-violence counsellors' disclosures made it clear that their own notions of trust in themselves – and, therefore, their senses of their own worthiness and capacity to "do the work" – were interconnected with the feedback and support which they received from their trusted colleagues. As such, trust in self was revealed as closely linked to trust in others, and was identified as a relational experience in and of itself.

Organizational Trust. Anti-violence counsellors shared their experiences of trust in their employing organizations, and how this trust could be both developed and upheld. Existing literature has identified the responsibility which organizations hold in preventing work-related stress conditions (Benuto et al., 2019; Dworkin et al., 2016; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; McKim & Smith-Adcock, 2014; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2017). Much of

the research has focused on "what's missing" from anti-violence workers' experiences, including insufficient workplace supports (e.g., Baird and Jenkins, 2003, and Chouliara et al., 2009, as cited in Murray and Graves, 2013), burdensome workplace expectations (e.g., Benuto et al., 2019; Dworkin et al., 2016; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; McKim and Smith-Adcock, 2014; and Wood et al., 2017); oppression within the workplace (e.g., Voth Schrag et al., 2021 and Wood et al., 2019); and incongruence with workplace policy and misalignment with workplace values (e.g., Alani and Stroink, 2015; Brend and MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; and Wood et al., 2019). My approach of exploring via desire-based modelling differentiates the current study from existing research, and disrupts the damage-centred hegemony in thinking; rather than exploring what was missing, I primarily sought to explore what was sustaining counsellors in their relationships with their employing organizations. This exploration provided a desire-based mirror of the damage-centred assertions of previous researchers: sufficient workplace supports; reasonable workplace expectations; mutual understanding and respect within the workplace; and congruence with workplace values were all identified as contributing elements of organizational trust. The findings from this research indicated that trust in organizations played a vital role in role sustainability.

A novel contribution within this theme was how trust in organizations is *Proven Over Time*, rather than being instantaneous and innate. While time was identified as a supportive factor in a number of existing studies, including by Bemiller and Williams (2011) and Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014), it was largely explored in terms of "taking time away" from the work for self-care, rather than regarding the development of trustworthy workplace supports taking time to establish. In contrast, existing research did identify risk-oriented findings regarding the

development of work-stress-related conditions over time: McCann and Pearlman (1990) shared that experiencing repeated challenges in anti-violence work over time would ‘chip away’ at a person’s wellness, thus reducing their working capacity. Findings from the current study demonstrated anti-violence counsellors oriented towards time as a desired phenomenon, thus providing a desire-based exploration of existing damage-centred research which identified time as a factor (e.g., Bemiller and Williams, 2011; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; and McCann and Pearlman, 1990). For anti-violence counsellors in the current study, repeated supportive action occurred over time, creating meaningful trust and a sense of being cared for within, and being congruent with, the workplace. In this way, anti-violence counsellors indicated that time played a role in both development of trust and role sustainability.

Another required element in the development of organizational trust was *Being Trusted*. Anti-violence counsellors shared that experiencing trust by their employer in turn led to more reciprocal feelings of trust in their employer. This nested subtheme echoed findings by Brend and Macintosh (2020) and Wachter et al. (2019), both of whom reported the importance of supporting worker autonomy, allowing workers to practice decision-making and have some control over their work. Slattery and Goodman (2009) also reported the importance of mutually-trusting supervisory relationships, indicating the importance of reciprocity of trust between a supervisor and a counsellor. In the current study, anti-violence counsellors indicated that the importance of reciprocal trust was not limited to their relationships with supervisors, but also with management and leadership, indicating a felt sense of trust was important not only in their direct working relationships, but throughout organizational structuring. This aligned with qualitative findings by Hoogendam and Maki (2023) that both trusting and be trusted by organizational leadership played a role in anti-violence worker wellness.

Available, Reliable Support for anti-violence counsellors from organizational leadership and management was also indicated as an important part of developing trust in one's employing organization. This echoed the works by Tarshis and Baird (2018) regarding constructing readily available supports for workers, as well as other researchers' assertions on the importance of incorporating ongoing professional supports, including ongoing check-ins, formalized mentoring, and adequate clinical supervision for staff (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Babin et al., 2012; Dworkin et al., 2016; Tarshis & Baird, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). Within the current study, anti-violence counsellors identified that having these supports be reliable and available as-needed was of particular salience.

Reasonable, Human Expectations – including caseload and time management expectations, and what was expected of anti-violence counsellors beyond their regular working hours – were brought forth as contributing to the development of trust in their employing organizations. Anti-violence counsellors voiced hoped-for reasonable expectations, which supported the development of trust and sustainable working practices. These findings extend a desire-based approach to Benuto et al. (2019), Wachter et al. (2019), and Wood et al. (2017, 2019)'s risk-mitigative assertions regarding expectations of workers: in order to reduce burnout amongst anti-violence workers, organizations must minimize direct client work, equitably distribute workloads amongst staff, and acknowledge and accept workers' specific needs regarding caseload management.

Anti-violence counsellors also brought forth the need for *Trustworthy Professionalism* in their relationships with management and their employing organizations; counsellors shared that their trust in organizational leadership was bolstered when leadership regularly practiced reliable, dependable professional boundaries and behaviours. This aligned with findings by Alani and

Stroink (2015), as well as Tarshis and Baird (2018), who made note of the importance of professional boundaries. Anti-violence counsellors' experiences as explored within the current study extend these authors' findings regarding the importance of professional boundaries, connecting their experiences to trust and sustainability.

A final need contributing to the development and maintenance of trust in anti-violence counsellors' employing organizations was identified as *Aligned Priorities*, with clients held at the centre of the work for both counsellors and their employing organizations. Anti-violence counsellors shared that alignment of values between themselves and their employing organizations bolstered their trust in their employing organizations, and this trust played a role in creating a sustainable and supportive working environment. This finding provides a desire-based orientation towards the risk-oriented theme in existing literature which I reviewed in Chapter Two as *Incongruence with Workplace Policy*. Specifically, I identified existing literature on how counsellors' own values misalignments with organizational values can predict work-stress-related conditions (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). The current study extends this existing research by locating trust specifically as a relevant phenomenon to the experience of values congruence with anti-violence counsellors' workplaces.

Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism

Reflexive realism was identified as a process by which anti-violence counsellors sustained themselves within their working roles, and developed trust in themselves, through an entwined process of attunement and reflexivity. As noted previously, existing literature on anti-violence workers commonly separated "internal" and "external" supports for avoiding burnout into discrete categories (Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Tarshis & Baird,

2018; & Wachter et al., 2019). Diverging from this categorical approach taken within previous literature, anti-violence counsellors in the current study shared that the sustaining supports within their working roles were experienced as internal-relational processes, indicating that these categories were not as discrete as indicated by existing literature.

Knowing/Being Enough: Self-Trust as Internal-Relational. In this study, anti-violence counsellors indicated that self-trust involved believing in one's own existing capacity regardless of perceived "expertise" beyond the self. In this way, self-trust was also a relational process occurring "between" the self and the self. Also relevant to this theme was anti-violence counsellors' belief regarding the non-static nature of "self." In the current study, anti-violence counsellors shared that the sustainability of their work was supported when they trusted themselves as a changeable and capable beings, who were both able to grow and were soundly competent at their current stage of experience. Although researchers have explored how a lowered sense of confidence in one's own competencies can play a role in the development of work-related stress conditions (e.g.,Alani & Stroink, 2015; Merchant & Whiting, 2015), the language of "trust in the self" was not present in reviewed literature regarding risk or supportive factors amongst anti-violence counsellors. This study makes a novel contribution to the literature through its exploration of anti-violence counsellors' experiences of self-trust, extending a desire-based and trust-oriented perspective to the existing damage-centred literature (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Merchant & Whiting, 2015).

Experiences Beyond the Relationship Impact Trust in the Work. Anti-violence counsellors identified that their historical personal and working experiences influenced both their ability to trust others within their work, and the degree to which they could trust others. Anti-violence counsellors acknowledged that their embodied experiences of trust within their work

were impacted by experiences which exceeded their working roles; the context of their lives fundamentally impacted their experiences of trust in both themselves and in others. Their sharing demonstrated the inextricable role which their experiences beyond their working lives played in creating sustainable working practice. While some existing literature explored how anti-violence workers' own traumatic experiences may lead to the development of work-stress-related conditions (e.g., Alani and Stroink, 2015; Ben-Porat and Itzhaky, 2015; Bishop and Schmidt, 2011; and Kulkarni et al., 2013), only one study by Murray and Graves (2013) indicated that these experiences may influence workers' trust in self and others. The current study both aligns with and extends these findings to the experiences of anti-violence counsellors specifically, while also emphasizing trust as a desired and protective phenomenon.

Self-Attunement & Self-Reflexivity as Entwined Anchors of Self-Trust. As noted in Chapter Four (Findings), attunement refers to the embodied process of "paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present-moment, and non-judgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). In practicing attunement, anti-violence counsellors noted being able to recognize their own perceived incompetencies and competencies as rooted in the context of their lived experiences, thus exceeding the individual-blaming and pathologizing dialogue which often arises within existing research conducted within the burnout paradigm (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014; Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Reynolds, 2011; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). This embodied perspective-taking enabled anti-violence counsellors to reflect upon their own strengths within their work, and witness what contributed to the sustainability of their working roles. Counsellors' framings of both their limitations and their capacities as practical strengths was a novel contribution to existing literature exploring the experiences of anti-violence counsellors specifically.

Self as Beyond the Role, Care as Beyond the Self. Anti-violence counsellors' notions of both 'self' and 'self-care' exceeded common individualizing notions of 'selfhood'. In research by Alani and Stroink (2015) and Kim et al. (2021), explorations of anti-violence workers' selfhood were restricted to the bounds of the body and participants' own individual experiences. Existing research has identified that individuals are responsible for supporting and uplifting themselves through self-care, so as to avoid the development of work-related stress conditions (Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; Wood et al., 2019). In the current study, demonstrating this internalization of problems larger than herself, Tina explicated her own experiences of responsibilizing herself for "managing" burnout. Findings on self-responsibilization for managing workplace stress serves as an indication of the individualizing and pervasive nature of the burnout paradigm within existing literature, as I reviewed in Chapter Two (Babin et al., 2012; Ben-Porat & Itzhaky, 2014).

Like with "internal" and "external" supports, existing literature has separated care by "self" and care by "others" into distinctive categories (Baird & Jenkins, 2003; Chouliara et al., 2009, as cited in Murray & Graves, 2013). In the current study, in parallel with other themes, rather than exploring categories of care as strictly "internal" and "external," anti-violence counsellors' experiences indicated that these worlds were inextricably intertwined. Anti-violence counsellors' expansions of self-care into the more-than-self as explored in the current study echo Brend et al.'s (2020) findings that for anti-violence workers, self-care itself was experienced as an inherently relational process.

Anti-violence counsellors' reflections featured expositions of the systemic burdens which they felt as weight when working in the anti-violence field, and which required them to step away from the work and to connect with their supports. Anti-violence counsellors voiced

needing to take time away from the work, and to distance themselves from systemic challenges facing clients, in order to sustain themselves in their work. This aligns with Bemiller and Williams' (2011) findings that anti-violence workers benefit from time spent away from their working roles.

Implications from Findings

Findings from this study indicate that anti-violence counsellors experienced trust and sustainability as relational, related, and embodied processes. Self-trust, supported through role affirmation and reflexive realism, and relational trust, reinforced through connected assurance, served as entwined components of a foundation for sustainability in the working experiences of anti-violence counsellors. Trust was rooted in a felt sense of safety and connectedness, with both phenomena being present in the anti-violence counsellors' working experiences. In the following section, I explore the implications from these findings, noting both theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical Implications

As noted in Chapter One, I grounded this study in a process-oriented and practical framework, involving a nested model in which trust was witnessed as an embodied experience which occurs within relational experiences, and plays a role in sustainability. For this study, my theoretical understanding of sustainability was heavily informed by the work of Reynolds (2011, 2019), whose explorations of collective sustainability and frontline worker wellness expand beyond individualizing expositions of worker experiences. I explored participants' experiences of sustainability from a desire-based research lens, informed by the work of Tuck (2009), focalizing the ways in which counsellors witness their work as sustainable, and how the phenomenon of trust within the context of counsellors' working roles contributes to this

sustainability. I sought to explore trust as an embodied, relational, and desired phenomenon, in order to understand how it contributes to sustainability in the working lives of anti-violence workers, and thus expand upon understandings of how to establish and maintain working environment which supports sustainable practice and "does justice" for anti-violence counsellors themselves. In alignment with the field under study, this was informed by a greater approach of anti-oppressive practice and justice-doing (Mullaly, 1997; Reynolds; 2011; 2012; 2014; Rossiter et al., 2014; Wade, 1997, as cited in Reynolds, 2012).

Trust and sustainability as desired phenomena. Through study findings, I witnessed the potential for anti-violence counsellors to enact their important work in a way that is sustainable, relational, and features reciprocity with colleagues, clients, and organizational leadership alike. This exposition of trust as a desired, hoped-for, and intersubjective phenomenon, both of and beyond the body, aligns with Tuck's (2009) exploration of desire:

> "There is a ghostly, remnant quality to desire, its existence not contained to the body but still derived of the body. Desire is about longing, about a present that is enriched by both the past and the future. It is integral to our humanness" (p. 417).

Locating the experiences of anti-violence counsellors from a desire-based orientation allowed for a rich exploration of the hoped-for and hopeful elements of anti-violence counsellors' working lives (Reynolds; 2011; 2012; 2014; Tuck, 2009). Participants' disclosures indicated that trust and sustainability were indeed desired phenomena within their working lives, existing within and between self and others.

Sustainability as a relational process. Themes which arose from both semantic and latent coding processes were consistent with my guiding theoretical model. Within the overarching pattern of meaning present in the findings from this study, which I titled *Trust and*

Sustainability as Relational and Related, participants illuminated that their experiences of sustainability were intersubjective, and influenced by relational phenomena, including trust. The indication that relational phenomena influenced sustainability is consistent with the extensive theoretical body of literature by Reynolds (e.g., 2011, 2019), who speaks to establishing ethical, relational practice amongst community-based frontline workers. Reynolds (2010) cultivated the model of collective sustainability as a relational and intersubjective phenomenon which exceeds individual traits, instead existing as a mutually reinforced process within the working settings of frontline workers, including practitioners who are involved in anti-violence work. Conditions of this model include relational engagement in justice-doing, meaningful relational connection, and embodied-hope (Reynolds, 2010).

As a collective ethic, justice-doing stands in resistance to the violations of social justice which are so often present in community work (Reynolds, 2011, 2014). The modelling of collective ethics, or the value-based principles which unify helping professionals in solidarity with one another, is informed by practices of anti-oppressive activism (Mullaly, 1997; Wade, 1997, as cited in Reynolds, 2012). Justice-doing specifically involves several features, including centring relational ethics of justice and belonging; enacting solidarity and collective care; addressing power; critically engaging with language; honouring clients' resistance; and structuring relationships to feature safety for all (Reynolds; 2011; 2012; 2014). Reynolds (2010) stressed that doing justice is something which happens collectively in a community, not through isolated action. Reynolds (2019) who challenged the perspective that self-care is a singularly adequate response to experiences of community-based counsellors' workplace stress. Researchers have noted that this framing of self-care may serve to further individualize, responsibilize, and alienate workers (Brend et al., 2020; Reynolds, 2019). Results from the

current study align with such notions. Furthermore, anti-violence counsellors posited that such individualization also impacted their sense of trust, thus bringing the phenomenon of trust into the existing discussion of working role sustainability.

Creating relational safety is a cornerstone of Reynolds' (2021) collective ethic of justice-doing. While trust is not explicitly mentioned within Reynolds' model, the integration of trust alongside safety by anti-violence counsellors in the current study suggests it may be covertly present within justice-doing as an enacted process. Furthermore, within the current research, the ethic of justice-doing arose as a component of sustainable practice, as evidenced by anti-violence counsellors' experiences of role identification, connected assurance with their colleagues, and how perceived alliance with their colleagues and employing organizations supported trust-building. Additionally, "doing justice" was a component of reflexive realism; beyond the acknowledgement of the beyond-capacity and one's own need for care, reflexive realism involved anti-violence counsellors engaging with the systemic barriers within their working roles from a critical and connected place, acknowledging through reflexivity their own limits and capacities to support their clients. As such, this study positions the phenomenon of trust within existing theory on justice-doing.

Trust as relational and sustaining. Experiences of trust as a reciprocal process as witnessed in the current research were consistent with the work of Reynolds (2011, 2020) regarding the importance of connectedness to doing justice in frontline work, as well as others' assertions regarding the role of collective action (Mullaly, 1997; Reynolds, 2021; Rossiter et al., 2020). Findings from the current study that anti-violence counsellors' experiences within and beyond their work are mutually impactful also diverge from the common orientation taken in existing literature, which orients towards workers as individual "staff," versus a collective of

"people" (Reynolds, 2011). This individualizing approach has been challenged by Reynolds (2011, 2019) as detrimental to sustainability in working practice, as it omits important contextual and experiential elements which occur in workers' lives beyond their working hours. Findings from the current study that experiences with systemic oppression specifically had impacts upon anti-violence counsellors' working experiences of trust align with Reynolds' (2011) critiques of burnout, in which she posits that burnout arises from institutional and structural barriers impeding counsellors from providing care to clients, which challenge counsellors' ability to do their work, rather than from some internal or innate individually-held absence of skills and capacity. Findings extend the existing discussion by exploring the role of trust specifically within counsellors' working experiences.

Relational models of understanding individuals' experiences within the context of their lives have been explicated in existing literature (Hanisch, 1970; Lykou, 2021). Within her relational modelling of frontline worker experiences, Reynolds (2011) emphasized person-centred practice in terms of recognizing both clients and practitioners as people; to be person-centred is to enact relationships, and to be relational is to be connected. The processes of witnessing, being witnessed as an agent of, and experiencing meaningful change and transformation in both clients and the self, are necessary meaning-makers within community work (Reynolds, 2011). Such witnessing contributes to positive perceptions of one's usefulness in the eradication of injustice (Reynolds, 2010). The importance of meaningful relational connection was clearly indicated within themes from the current study, in which role affirmation, connected assurance, and reflexive realism were acknowledged as thematically salient experiential phenomena. Reflexive realism, connected assurance, and role affirmation exist within a desire-based orientation to achieving sustainable working practices, influenced by

relational interactions between the internal self and external world (Finfgeld, 2001; Tuck, 2009). The current research identified and acknowledged these distinct-yet-related phenomena, framing them within a desire-based orientation, which both extends existing theoretical understandings of anti-violence workers' experiences and provides a grounded witnessing of Reynolds' (2010, 2011) conceptions of meaningful relational connection.

Also in regards to meaningful relational connection, findings from the current study indicated that being trusted by others – including both colleagues and clients – supports anti-violence counsellors in trusting themselves. The finding that working with trusting clients is in itself a sustaining experience for anti-violence counsellors brings to mind the concepts of vicarious resilience, wherein counsellors experience a sense of strength in witnessing clients' resilience (e.g., Hernández et al., 2007), and vicarious resistance, wherein hearing clients' disclosures serves as encouragement to practitioners (e.g., Frey et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2021; Reynolds, 2021; and Tarshis and Baird, 2018). As such, this study contributes a trust-oriented exploration of anti-violence workers' relational experiences to existing literature, and expands upon existing literature on how counsellors are supported by their working relationships.

Trust as embodied. Within my guiding theoretical model, I applied Sodhi's (2012) model of embodiment, which identified embodiment as a threefold process involving past experiences, internal processes, and present context. This aligns with Siegrist's (2010) existing description of trust as a reliance upon competence, which is informed by existing experiences, as well as with social constructionist epistemology, which posit individuals' perspectives are impacted by the world beyond the self, and beyond the present moment (Finfgeld, 2001). In the current study, I have conceptualized anti-violence counsellors' experiences as embodied processes which are influenced by their working contexts. These findings align with notions of

critical embodiment as explored in the literature review; within embodiment discourse, life in a body is perceived as an ongoing act of becoming; the 'self' is process-based, rather than static; and, rather than *holding* identity, the body and identity are *intertwined* (Allegranti, 2011; Bager-Charleston et al., 2018; Barthold, 2014; Carroll, 2021; de Jager et al., 2016; Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Gadamer, 2006 [1992]; Todres, 2007). Applying this language of the embodied self to the current study, anti-violence counsellors' shared reflections on trust may be witnessed as an embodied relational process existing "between" self and self and self and others, rather than "within" self.

In the current study, findings on embodied experience were consistent with existing literature by Sodhi (2012), which posited the importance of "being" embodied in enacting meaningful, supportive work with clients. Embodied knowledge – the knowledge that resides in and is gained through the body via past experiences, present context, and internal processes – is aligned with the practices of attunement and self-reflexivity, which anti-violence counsellors shared in the current study as components of building self-trust (Nagatomo, 1992, as cited in Sodhi, 2012; Shaw, 2004). Attunement and reflexivity were not acknowledged in existing reviewed literature on counsellors' embodied experiences of trust, suggesting the current study has made a novel contribution to the literature on anti-violence counsellors (Di Paolo & Jaegher, 2015; Goldberg, 2007; Sodhi, 2012). However, the positioning of self-awareness and reflexivity as contributing processes to doing "good" counselling work is not conceptually novel. This positioning has been noted by Reynolds (2020), Sodhi (2012), and these practices are also encouraged within CCPA (2021) guidelines for counsellors. Additionally, the concepts of attunement and reflexivity echo Sodhi's (2012) assertions that embodiment involves a

combination of past experiences, internal processes, and present context; such elements are relevant to both attunement and reflexivity (Dixon, 2019; Kabat-Zinn, 1994; Reynolds, 2011).

Embodiment as sustaining. Also in alignment with the current study's findings on embodied subjectivity, Reynolds (2011, 2021) makes note of the importance of embodied processes, including embodied-hope, in nurturing the sustainability of frontline work. Reynolds (2011) indicated that hope – specifically, believed-in, embodied-hope – is a necessary element to collective sustainability, and that workers must bring hope to work with clients as a part of enacting justice. In dehumanizing societal conditions, Reynolds (2021, 2011) proposed that hope is where workers might locate our humanity to remain person-centred, and that this hope is in itself an act of resistance against despair. When speaking of embodied-hope, Reynolds (2011) described it as being "a kind of trust over the long haul, a confidence based on experience, and perhaps something more sustainable than hope" (p. 38). Consistent with this description and with existing literature which posit hope and trust as related phenomena (e.g., Becker, 1996; Jason et al., 2016; Koehn and Cutcliffe, 2012; and Ratcliffe, 2023), anti-violence counsellors' experiences of trust being established over time as explored in the theme *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance* indicate that sustainable trust and embodied hope are related, and perhaps parallel, concepts.

Practical Implications

Having reviewed the findings of this study, I offer a number of practical implications. These implications extend across individual, organizational, institutional, and systemic levels, in order to address and support trust-centred practices amongst anti-violence counsellors, with the objective of supporting role sustainability for these vital workers.

Individual level. Based on the anti-violence counsellors' experiences, exclusively employing strategies at the individual level may place an excessive onus on counsellors to navigate the weight of systemic challenges which exceed these counsellors' own individual capacities (Frey et al., 2017; Hernandez et al., 2007; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Reynolds, 2021). Although individual actions such as self-care strategies (e.g., Brend et al., 2020; Brown et al., 2020; Kulkarni et al., 2013; and Voth Schrag et al., 2021) can play a role in sustainability, they may be insufficient in isolation. Findings from the current study suggest that practicing reflexivity, attunement, and connecting regularly and intentionally with others supported anti-violence counsellors in cultivating sustainability within their working roles. Drawing from results in the themes of *Self-Trust as Reflexive Realism* and *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assuranc*e, I encourage practitioners to reflect upon their own internalized narratives of self-responsibilization for burnout, and remain critical of the origins of these perspectives, as a component of their own reflexive processes. Cultivating an awareness of the embodied cues which arise for both experiences of trust, and of distrust, may support counsellors in understanding what impacts and sustains their own working practice. Furthermore, developing an awareness of how their own contexts and histories have shaped their ability to trust others could be helpful for deepening self-understanding and supporting reflexive practice (Pringle & Booysen, 2018; Reynolds, 2019; Sodhi, 2012). These processes need not take place in isolation; actively engaging in supportive communities of practice may provide a critical space and circle in which counsellors can share their learning and experience collective support (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Reynolds, 2019).

Organizational level. In referring to the organizational level, I identify the systems and processes existing within specific anti-violence organizations which serve to shape its operations

and interactions. This level includes internal policy-building, team dynamics, leadership practices and communication channels, and allocation of existing resources (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024).

Anti-violence organizations face conflicting pressures. Their mandates often focalize providing support for survivors; meanwhile, they generally operate within a neoliberal, capitalist societal framework, which itself can contribute to the violence which they stand in opposition of (Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Reynolds, 2011; Wood et al., 2019). This reality imposes real constraints on organizations' values and aspirations. As such, innovative, collaborative solutions are required to reduce organizations' reliance upon value-misaligned approaches, such as shifting responsibility solely onto individual workers (Frey et al., 2017; Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023).

In alignment with work by existing researchers (including Alani and Stroink, 2015; Brend & MacIntosh, 2020; Hoogendam and Maki, 2023; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019; and Wood et al., 2019), and with consideration of the findings of the current study, I assert that organizations must seek to remain faithful to their own mandates to centre and support the clients accessing their services. As explored in the theme *Sustainable Trust as Connected Assurance*, anti-violence counsellors' trust in their employing organizations is supported where the values underpinning their work are represented in the policies of their employing organizations, and enacted in the behaviours of organizations' leadership and management. Emphasizing prioritization of clients, whilst also acknowledging systemic limitations, may support the development of trust between organizations and their staff. For instance, enacting clear, reliable, and consistent communication regarding policies and procedures, and continually reflecting upon and adjusting to themes arising for frontline workers,

could be helpful in establishing and maintaining relational trust, and therefore supporting sustainability. Furthermore, anti-violence counsellors voiced that trust in their employing organizations, and therefore the sustainability of their work, was supported when they were continuously acknowledged by leadership as human beings with lives which extended beyond their working roles. This finding supports Reynolds' (2020) assertion that organizations' commitment to person-centred practice should extend not only to clients, but also to staff, who should both be witnessed first and foremost as people.

In this study, anti-violence counsellors shared that respectful connection with colleagues and leadership contributed to trust in both self and others within the workplace, and supported the sustainability of their working roles. Extending beyond encouraging workers to "do" self care, into actively creating time and space for self-care practices within working hours, establishing and encouraging accessible and reliably available support circles, and developing true communities of practice, are of importance at the organizational level to building trusting, supportive, and collectively accountable teams (Reynolds, 2011, 2020). These assertions regarding support and time for self-care and community care echo suggestions made by other researchers exploring anti-violence worker experiences, including Bemiller and Williams (2011), Ben-Porat and Itzhaky (2014), Hoogendam and Maki (2023), and Kulkarni et al. (2013).

Institutional level. I identify the institutional level as the governing bodies which influence organizations and the anti-violence sector, and which often uphold broader systemic norms through the creation of laws and policies which shape how organizations operate. While not focused upon in the current research, several anti-violence counsellors provided clear commentary regarding the challenges they faced in navigating inadequate funding and overburdened support services. Policy-makers must be aware that increasing funding and support

for agencies which employ anti-violence counsellors is critical to addressing lengthy waitlists and challenges relating to staffing shortages (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Rossiter et al., 2014, 2020; Slatter & Goodman, 2009; Wood, 2016). Additionally, greater investment in research which focalizes the well-being and sustainable practices of anti-violence counsellors, and which centres embodied and felt experiences, are essential to creating stability for anti-violence workers, whose work is essential to survivor populations (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023). Considering findings from the current study, further research could serve to inform future training opportunities for anti-violence counsellors, supporting their ongoing knowledge-building and therefore self-trust.

Systemic level. The systemic level refers to the structures and dynamics of power which operate across multiple institutions and influence society as a whole, shaping norms, values, and practices (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024; Rossiter et al., 2014, 2020). Although there are layers of support which can be implemented below the systemic level to address systemic harms, large-scale systemic change is also required to bring about meaningful and truly sustainable change (Fernandes & Lanthier, 2024). Current economic and social systems, from which experiences of violence and oppression arise, require substantial reforms in order to create upstream support and measures which prevent violence from occurring in the first place (Alani & Stroink, 2015; Brown et al., 2020; Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Trudell & Whitmore, 2020). Distancing from individualizing, paternalistic, mind-body dualistic, and risk-oriented paradigms, in favour of collectively-oriented, embodiment-focused, and desire-based modelling, as has underpinned this study, is a proposed component of the needed shift at the systemic level. Challenging the centralization of dominant narratives at other levels may support hoped-for “upstream” change at the systemic level (Hoogendam & Maki, 2023; Reynolds, 2011; Rossiter et al., 2014, 2020). This

challenging may be supported by ongoing reflexivity, awareness-building, and collective action, all of which were identified within this study as connected to trust and sustainability.

Study (De)Limitations & Considerations for Future Research

In this section, I name the main delimitations and limitations of this study, clarifying its scope and the implications for its broader applicability. Following this, I identify limitations, and introduce considerations for future research which could serve to bridge these gaps.

Study Delimitations & Future Considerations

There are delimitations which are innate to qualitative research and self-reported data specifically, which impact empirical generalizability. Given the current study's focus on the experiences of five community-based anti-violence counsellors, these findings are not meant to be universally generalizable to all counsellors who meet participant criteria for this study, nor more broadly generalizable to counsellors working in other areas. As a qualitative study rooted in social constructionist epistemology, this study does not serve to define what trust or sustainability would look like for all anti-violence counsellors (Finfgeld, 2001). Instead, it serves as an exposition and analysis of the experiences of the five interviewed anti-violence counsellors, with the underlying aim of generating contextualized, situated knowledge and developing in-depth understanding of anti-violence counsellors' experiences, and extending existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Rather than focusing on generalizability, I encourage readers to explore the presence of transferability - wherein the participants, settings, context, and circumstances may be evaluated as potentially applicable to other settings by the reader themselves (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Yardley et al., 2015).

Although this study followed qualitative methodology, much of the existing research on this population has been quantitative (Babin et al., 2012; Kulkarni et al., 2013; Pringle &

Booysen, 2018; Voth Schrag et al., 2021; Wachter et al., 2019). Qualitative methodology can be an excellent framework via which experiences can be explored and ideas can be constructed (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). Exploring the experiences of this population allowed me to recognize themes within the data. These themes could be moved forward into further qualitative research, in which these themes are posited as individual phenomena worthy of more thorough and explicit exploration. Potential phenomena which come to mind are reflexive realism, connected assurance, and sustainable trust. Results can then be taken forward into mixed- and quantitatively-based research methodologies, to build empirical validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). The development and research of quantitative measures for concepts I identified within this study, including reflexive realism, connected assurance, and sustainable trust, could allow for the evaluation of both the broader impacts and prevalence of these constructs on sustainable working practices for counsellors. Operationalizing these terms through future quantitative or mixed-methods research may support the development of organizational interventions, such as staff surveying, training, and supportive structuring, so as to create a more sustainable network for anti-violence counsellors to practice within.

RTA offers a number of benefits, as outlined in Chapter Three (Methodology); however, there are also delimitations to this methodological approach (Braun & Clarke, 2022). As the subjective "weaver" of the themes which were identified throughout Chapters Four and Five, I have played a situated role in both collecting data (i.e., my voice was present as researcher during the interviewing process), and in interpreting the meaning of the results (i.e., I wove the findings into themes). My observations have been neither impartial, nor entirely unbiased, and my own subjectivities have undoubtedly influenced the telling of study participants' stories. However, this is a fundamental component of RTA; as Braun and Clarke (2020) identify, such

qualitative research aims to contribute knowledge which serves as "part of a rich tapestry of understanding" (p. 6), rather than creating complete and perfect understanding, as quantitative research prioritizes.

The data collected for this study was rich and multi-faceted. Due to the focused nature of a thesis project and the specificity of the guiding research questions, important data was not able to be included in the final analysis (i.e., outside the scope of the designed project). This included explorations of anti-violence counsellors' experiences of distrust in systems, the systemic and institutional roots of unsustainability, self-protective methods for surviving unsustainable working environments, and an exploration of anti-violence counsellors' experiences of utilizing body mapping as a data collection tool. Further research in these areas would help to better understand not only the importance of trust and sustainability, but the diversity of other experiences which surround these phenomena.

Study Limitations & Future Considerations

Limitations refer to aspects of the study which restrict the depth of findings, and are often unintentional within the research process (Johnson & Christensen, 2020). Due to the nature of the data collection process, which focused on exploring anti-violence counsellors' experiences as they arose in-context, unanswered questions remain. While it was a deliberate choice not to explore counsellors' theoretical orientations, further inquiry into the theories which guide anti-violence counsellors' practices may have been beneficial in further situating participants' contexts. Future research regarding the application of body mapping, and exploring embodied experience, may benefit from inquiry regarding participants' own alignment with and existing knowledge of arts-based and embodiment-focused therapeutic methods.

Data on role compensation was collected during the demographic survey, with the intention of understanding if financial compensation is relevant to role sustainability. While four of the five anti-violence counsellors noted that they were not earning a living wage, no clear themes arose from the interview data regarding the role which financial compensation plays in role sustainability. Anti-violence counsellors repeatedly asserted their gratitude for being able to engage in anti-violence counselling work, and their desire to remain in their working roles. This juxtaposition between inadequate financial compensation and desire to remain in the work raised questions as to how compensation for one's working role may be defined more broadly than through financial gain, and the complexity of engaging in work that is inadequately funded. Further exploration of anti-violence workers' compensation, and how this contributes to, or detracts from, the sustainability of their working roles, may help to expand on practical understandings of how to support sustainable practice through compensation.

Additionally, the concept of "systems" arose several times in interviews, and in participants' quotations; while context can provide some information regarding participants' meaning, "systems" were vaguely defined by participants, indicating a need for further research regarding how anti-violence counsellors define and view the systems within which they work.

Although the completion of small-scale body maps was ultimately a well-posited choice, based upon the restrictions of both time and the remote (via Zoom) interview process, several participants commented on spatial limitations. As such, it must be acknowledged that spatial restrictions may shift how people story their experiences. Completion of larger-scale body maps may garner different results.

As this study relied on a convenience sample, all participants happened to be from medium to large population centres (cities featuring over 30,000 residents and over 100,000

residents, respectively). As such, I was unable to build an understanding of the experiences of any workers in rural and small communities. Further research exploring these workers' experiences specifically would be of value, to better understand how to create sustainable working practices for anti-violence counsellors who are working in smaller and more rural communities.

Lastly, this research identified the importance of relational connection; however, all interview data was collected via individual interviews. While a case can be made for the inherently relational qualities of semi-structured interviews and RTA as methods, exploring anti-violence counsellors' experiences within the nested environment of a community of practice may lead to a more comprehensive and collectively-oriented understanding. Future research which is more collectively-oriented, such as focus group interviewing and completion of body maps within a group setting, may enable the continued development of a rich story regarding the collective elements of sustainability for anti-violence workers, and help to better understand how collective sustainability may be applied with, and relevant to, this worker population.

Researcher Experiences

Engaging in this research in parallel with my own anti-violence working role was both challenging, and heartening. Interviewing fellow counsellors as research participants in a one-on-one capacity – a conversational environment that was similar-but-different from my day-to-day work, in which I'm used to being in the "counsellor's" chair, rather than the "researcher's" – resulted in an acute sense of tension. As researcher, I navigated an ongoing process of reflexivity, attunement, and reflection regarding my own identity: my own working experiences as an anti-violence worker, which often paralleled participants' sharing; my own identity as an in-group member, which led to a felt sense of kinship and solidarity with the participants whom I

was so grateful to interview; and my natural inclinations towards "being a counsellor," which led to a desire to provide support and intervention when challenging-to-disclose experiences arose for participants during the interview process. As much as these experiences contributed to the complexity of the research process, they also allowed for rich intersubjective engagement with both the study participants, and the gathered data. It is my hope that through their participation, this study's participants were able to experience some of the connected assurance which I know I experienced in speaking with each of them.

While my counselling role asks me to engage in embodied process, academia has requested that time and time again, I return to the head. Through this thesis, I have attempted to maintain entwinement between, and connection with, both my "head" and "heart." The irony of navigating the complex and meaningful process of writing a master's thesis, whilst also engaging in complex and meaningful anti-violence work, whilst also maneuvering through the various challenges of existing as a relational being over the past several years – and, all the while, trying to build an understanding of sustainable practice – is not lost on me. My learnings from the research process were a humbling reminder that sustainable working practice is something I continue to aspire to within my own working life, and is not possible to attain in isolation. For myself, creating sustainable practice has involved slowing down and acting with intention, in accordance with my own guiding values, as I have sought to do throughout my engagement in this study.

Final Reflections

In this study, I have sought to explore the complex, embodied phenomenon of trust as experienced by anti-violence counsellors within their working roles, and how these experiences influence role sustainability. Trust is experienced by anti-violence counsellors as a dynamic,

embodied, and inter-relational process. Although further research is necessary to generate complex and nuanced understandings of the role of trust in sustainable working practice for anti-violence counsellors, the themes which arose from this study suggest that trust is an embodied, felt process, the presence of which supports role sustainability. Experiences of trust influence role sustainability across numerous dimensions in anti-violence counsellors' lives and work: trust of the self; trust for and by peers, clients, and leadership; and trusted alignment with the working values of their employing organization. As the community-based anti-violence sector continues to evolve in response to clients' needs, anti-violence organizations must consider how they might nurture counsellors who are not only individually competent, but also connected in trustworthy communities of practice, thus supporting the sustainability of this vital work.

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Appendix A: Existing Literature on Body-Mapping

Table 4
Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Brett-MacLean, 2009, "Body mapping: embodying the self living with HIV/AIDS"	Canada	Public health	Men with HIV/AIDS diagnoses. N = 3. Convenience sampling.	To demonstrate how body-mapping can be utilized to explore embodiment.	Body mapping facilitates personal introspection and meaning-making, intertwined with individuals' illness narratives. It can provide insights into patients as whole individuals, uncovering	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted; pseudonyms used. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Body maps and testimonios created during wellness retreat, then exhibited publicly. No other methods noted.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

Table 4
Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
					information pertinent to their treatment and education. By heightening awareness of illness as it is experienced through the body, body mapping establishes a means to connect therapeutically with patients and their unique						

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					journey of illness.						

Brodyn et al., 2021, "Body mapping and story circles in sexual health research with youth of color: Methodological insights and study findings from Adolescent X, an art-based research project"	USA	Sexual health	Youth of colour in Chicago. N = 24. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore young people's relationships between their social contexts and sexual health	Arts-based methods encourage participants to reflect upon and express complex issues, particularly those related to bodily experiences. By sharing body map narratives, participants can foster a sense of community among themselves. Body mapping is participant-centred, ensuring their active involvement and contribution.	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted. Compensation: $130 in cash for participating in a 3-day workshop. Payment received at the end of the third day of participation.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Research took place over 3 days (3 hrs. each). First day involved story circle / body mapping; second session was survey / body mapping; third session focus group / body mapping / survey.	(1) audio recordings and transcriptions from story circle; (2) visual images from mini and full-body maps; (3) written testimonios; (4) audio recordings and transciptions from body	Inductive thematic analysis.	Story circle builds comfort, community, addresses power imbalances, results in participant-driven content. Body mapping goes beyond verbal communication, facilitates sense of community, results in participant-driven	Lengthy + complex (multiple methods + abundant data to transcribe / analyze); no in-depth/individual interviews may limit honest disclosure.

mapping activity; (5) closed-ended, multiple-choice survey; (6) audio and transcriptions from focus group.	content. Survey is convenient and confidential. Focus group allows for detailed, participant-driven content to arise. Group interactions create more novel data. Justice orientation.

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Chenhall et al., 2013, "Engaging youth in sexual health research: Refining a 'youth friendly' method in the Northern Territory,	Australia	Public health	Australian youth. N = 118. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore the young Australians' perspectives regarding sexual health	Body mapping was selected as it is highly participatory, helping to cross barriers between researchers and participants, and make space for creativity; both of which the authors deemed as important in working with youth.	Confidentiality: Hypothetical scenarios were constructed to investigate sensitive information while safeguarding individuals' privacy, serving as the foundation for the body mapping activity.	Life-size maps created collectively by smaller subgroups of participants. Single body-mapping session (time unknown); participants encouraged to collectively create body maps; facilitated conversation during and following art creation period.	Unclear; appears to be (1) visual body map data and (2) narratives (unclear whether recorded and transcribed, or	Not addressed.	Collective completion of body map may depressurize experience for youth participants and support them in ways listed previously.	Collective completion of body map may lead to inaccurate, dishonest, or incomplete representations of experience.

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Australia”						Compensation: Educational benefit.		written)			

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Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Coetzee et al., 2019, "Body mapping in research"	South Africa	Social and behavioral health	General populous. Number of participants not addressed. No sampling method noted.	To describe the methodology of body mapping, and demonstrate its place alongside other accepted methodologies and social and behavioural research	Note that rationale for use of body mapping is not always clear, leading to challenges w/ trustworthiness of studies	Confidentiality: Authors recommend researchers should disguise participant identities by using pseudonyms, and remove personal identifiers from transcripts prior to data analysis.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Body mapping is used alongside other qualitative methods, including focus groups and interviews.	(1) visual body map and (2) written testimonios. Note that data collection depends upon specific studies; not	Thematic analysis.	Playful; fun; flexible; able to capture imagination and complex experiences; can bridge language barriers; can bring research into the public sphere; can be applied as both	Not appropriate in all settings; may need to be combined with other methods to be most effective.

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						Compensation: Not addressed.		concrete		a tool for eliciting data, and as data themselves	

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Crawford, 2010, “If "the body keeps score": Mapping the dissociated body in trauma narrative, intervention and theory”	Canada	Therapy	Survivors of trauma. Number of participants not addressed. No sampling method noted.	To describe how body mapping can be employed as a therapeutic intervention to encourage embodiment-based healing amongst survivors of trauma	Body mapping allows for exploration of alexythymia and somatic complaints within setting of narrative-based therapy	Confidentiality: Fabricated client created from composite of various real clients; expressed permission granted for author to do so. Compensation: Therapeutic benefit.	Individual life-size maps, created by clients; individual page-sized 'Tracing books' created by clients. Life-sized maps created over the course of 4 therapeutic sessions; individual, page-sized 'Tracing book' size body maps created	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
							independently by clients				

Table 4
Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Crivello et al., 2009, "How can children tell us about their wellbeing? Exploring the potential of participatory research approaches within	England; research collected in Ethiopia, Peru, Vietnam and India	International development	Children experiencing poverty in Ethiopia, Peru, Vietnam, and India. Number of participants not addressed. No sampling method noted.	Explore the concept of "wellbeing" in the context of a long-term research project exploring lives of children growing up in poverty across several countries.	Body mapping produces detailed descriptions of specific experiences that can be later addressed individually in interviews. Multifaceted, easy to use with older children, enjoyable, creates diverse information.	Confidentiality: Not specifically addressed; no identifying information included in article. Compensation: Not addressed.	Life-sized body maps created individually by participants. Used in conjunction with individual interviewing.	Body map data; interview data	Not addressed.	Versatile and user-friendly with older children; revealed insights into school experiences, family dynamics, and more; encouraged lively discussion.	Younger children felt uncomfortable / imitated peers, impacting data validity; younger children found it difficult to explain discomfort visually; may be time-consumi

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young lives"											ng and less engaging for children to have to do both interviews and body maps; active facilitation is essential, meaning significant researcher time is

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											required; translation issues may occur

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Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Dew et al., 2018, "Complexity embodied: Using body mapping to understand complex support needs"	Australia	Health & social development	Adults with cognitive disabilities and complex support needs (N = 29); young adults with complex support needs (N = 13). Purposive sampling.	To explore the adaptation and implementation of a body-mapping protocol with adults and young people with complex support needs.	Body mapping allows for the exploration of complex and sensitive topics through non-verbal storytelling, making it potentially more accessible to people with complex support needs than other methodologies.	Confidentiality: Participants asked to choose a pseudonym for use in all research reporting; identifying information removed from testimonios and maps. Compensation: $50 voucher provided to each participant	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants (with assistance from researcher team, as needed). S1: 6 groups (3-6 participants each) underwent two 3-hour workshops over two consecutive days (12	(1) Visual data from body maps (coded according to symbolic key); (2) written testimonia; (3) researcher field notes	Thematic analysis & constant comparison.	Accessible; compensation provided; clear coding of visual data; methods thoroughly explained and rationalized.	No transcribed data - all verbal disclosures recorded as field notes, which may impact authenticity or intended meaning of participants' statements;

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Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
						per day of study.	workshops total). S2: 3 groups (2-7 participants per group) and 3 individual participants underwent three two-hour workshops / individual sessions to complete their body maps.				complex team required to carry out large # of workshops; complex coding process to analyze symbolic data.

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Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

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Fidyk, 2019, "Trauma-sensitive practice for new teacher standards: Addressing the epidemic of our times"	Canada	Education	Grade 6 "girls." N = 8. Convenience sampling.	To explore how girls' experiences with arts-based activities and embodiment techniques might inform educators about both pedagogical practice and mental health interventions	Body mapping encourages cultural inclusivity and allows for the honouring in body, gender, language, and spiritual differences, which the author deemed important. The author placed emphasis on methods which utilize imagination	Confidentiality: Not specifically addressed; no identifying information in article. Compensation: Food and drink provided during sessions; therapeutic benefit.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Six group sessions, 60-90 minutes in length, involving combination of body mapping and participatory poetic inquiry. Sharing circles incorporated; length not noted.	Collected data not clearly noted. Can be extrapolated that data included visual data from (1) body maps; (2) intervi	Not addressed.	Flexible; embodied / body-based; reflective and reflexive.	Methods not clearly noted or described; lengthy time requirements; collected data not clearly described; unclear how data was analyzed; ethical concern

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					and symbolic meaning.		Individual semi-structured interviews with each participant at end of study.	ew data; (3) researcher's notes from check ins/outs and group discussions.			s regarding unclear boundaries in therapeutic role of researcher; potential appropriation / misrepresentation of indigenous ways of knowing.

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Gamlin et al., 2011, "'My eyes are red from looking and looking': Mexican working children's perspectives of how tobacco labour	Mexico	Children's health	Indigenous Mexican children. N = 28. Convenience sampling.	To explore the perceptions of indigenous Mexican children regarding the impacts of agricultural labor on their physical well-being	To communicate felt and embodied experiences without the use of written language, and breaks through language barriers. Historical success with using body mapping for research with children was noted.	Confidentiality: Not specifically addressed; no identifying information in article. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Creation of body maps took place over 2 days (2 sessions). Participants created body maps based on prompts, and wrote commentary regarding their body maps.	(1) visual data from body maps; (2) written narratives by participants who could write	Thematic analysis.	Allowed for bridging of language barrier; arts-based methods are noted to work well with children; occurred in familiar setting.	No transcribed data; minimal written data (only provided by children who could write).

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affects their bodies”											

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Gastaldo et al., 2012, "Body-map storytelling as research"	Canada	Public health	General populous. Number of participants not addressed. No sampling method noted.	To demonstrate the use of body-mapping as a research methodology	May be a deeper, more reflexive process than other methods; can be supplemented with other means of data collection.	Confidentiality: Noted that body maps allow for visibility while avoiding disclosure of identity. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Three one-hour workshops.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Body maps simultaneously protect the anonymity of individuals, while also visually acknowledging participants as complete human beings: thus offering a means	Visual data requires significant reflexivity and participant feedback regarding coding in order to remain participant-centred and non-biased.

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										of visibility without compromising personal identity.	

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Griffin & Ismailios, 2014, "A dialogue of necessity: Attending to teacher candidates' informal music experiences"	Canada	Teacher education	Music teachers in training. N = 20. Convenience sampling.	To explore the experiences which shape the perceptions of teachers-in-training regarding music teaching	Body mapping cited as uniquely empowering, supporting participants in reflecting on and demonstrating their own complex narratives through art.	Confidentiality: One participant became co-author. Other participants' identities not disclosed. Compensation: Co-authorship for one participant; otherwise not addressed.	Individual body maps, created by participants. Size & materials not noted. Body maps created independently. Oral and written narratives also collected through individual, conversational interviews. Length of process not disclosed by authors.	(1) Visual data from body maps; (2) oral and (3) written narratives; (4) data from conversational follow-up	Narrative analysis	Combination of visual, oral, and written narratives, as well as interview data, leads to diverse and rich data set.	Compensation not noted. Ethical concerns regarding sampling methods / data collection from required coursework. Methods are not thoroughly describe

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								interviews			d, nor is the collected data.
Griffin, 2011, "Tip-toeing past the fear: Becoming a music	Canada	Teacher education	Music teachers in training. Number of participants not addressed.	To explore how the musical experiences of music teacher trainees informs their	Not addressed	Confidentiality: Pseudonyms used to protect anonymity and confidentiality.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Body mapping activities were	(1) visual data from body maps; (2) transcribed record	Thematic analysis	Streamlined use of visual arts-based method utilized with arts-based	Unclear methods of analysis; ethical concerns as research participation

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educator by attending to personal music experiences"			Convenience sampling.	teaching practices		Compensation: Not addressed; participation noted as required component of coursework.	integrated into the coursework, followed by group discussions to collectively reflect on the outcomes.	ings from group discussions		topic; allowed for complex narratives to emerge.	was not optional.
Gunn, 2017, "Body mapping for advocacy: A toolkit"	South Africa	Therapy	South African women w/ HIV/AIDS. Number of participants not addressed.	To provide therapeutic benefit to women living w/ HIV + AIDS	Body maps are individually and contextually rich; they serve to raise awareness for survivors' rights and support	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Therapeutic benefit.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Workshop took place over 5 days / 30 hours.	Not applicable.	Thematic analysis	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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			No sampling method noted.		advocacy efforts						
Harrison et al., 2022, “We know what they’re struggling with: Student peer mentors’ embodied	Canada	Health sciences education	Second-year nursing students, acting as peer mentors. N = 10. Purposive sampling.	To explore student peer mentorsâ€™ perceptions of teaching during the peer mentorship process, in the context of health professions education	Body mapping allows for exploration of tacit and embodied knowledge	Confidentiality: Participants recruited 'at arm's length'; psuedonyms used. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants, including body map, testimonios, and key. A semi-structured interview, following a guide specifically	(1) Follow-up interview and (2) body map "testimonio" data	Hermeneutic phenomenological method; thematic analysis	Multiple sources of data (interview, written story, and visual data).	Methods not clearly noted (unsure whether interview or body map was created first; timeline of data collectio

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perceptions of teaching in a health professional education mentorship program"							developed for this study, was also conducted.				n process not provided; size of body map unclear). Unclear whether body mapping occured in group or individual setting.

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Hemmings, 1995, "Communicating with children through play"	UK	Therapy	Children experiencing grief. Sampling method / N Not applicable.	To describe how body mapping can be used to support bereaved children in connecting with their emotions.	Not addressed.	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Child's body traced onto a large sheet of paper; art materials were used to decorate and paint it. Child then presented with a list of feelings to consider.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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Horne, 2011, "Conquering AIDS through narrative: Longlife positive HIV stories"	South Africa	Public health	Bambanani women's group. N = 5. Sampling method not addressed.	To explore the illness narratives told by people living with HIV	Body maps are a form of "autopathography" by which people can story their accounts of illness.	Confidentiality: Anonymity not maintained; first names disclosed; consent methods not detailed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Specific methods not addressed.	(1) visual and (2) verbal representations of experiences with AIDS (details unknown)	Not addressed	Provided considerable time for in-depth visual and written analyses to be created regarding body map.	Time-intensive; lack of noted compensation; challenges with participant confidentiality; unclear methods.

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Joarder et al., 2014, "Meaning of death: An exploration of perception of elderly in a Bangladeshi village"	Bangladesh	Gerontology / anthropology	Five elderly males and three elderly females from a Bangladeshi village. N = 8. Purposive sampling.	Examine how the elderly in a Bangladeshi community perceive the concept of death and investigate how this perception influences their overall state of well-being.	Supplement the information gathered through interviews with tangible, visible findings. Develop a more concrete model describing the occurrence of death, specifically how the spirit enters the body, where it	Confidentiality: Data anonymized; informed consent process. Compensation: Not addressed.	Line diagram of human body provided to participants to mark the location of the "soul." Used in conjunction with in-depth, informal interviews and informal discussions.	tape-recorded and transcribed interview data, translated from Bengali to English	Thematic analysis.	Integration with other methods; accessible for participants who were mostly unable to write; incorporation of informal discussion was participant-centred and	Significant time investment due to multiple methods; interview topic was sensitive (involving death) which researchers named as an ethical challeng

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					resides, and how it departs the body upon death. Helped researchers triangulate their findings with the interview responses, thereby enhancing the depth and reliability of their research.					culturally significant.	e; potential challenges in translation from Bengali to English

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Kwon, 2021, "Body mapping as embodiment and witnessing and its implications for art education"	USA	Arts education	S1 = Women survivors of violence / sexual assault (N = 4 (S.A. survivors); N = 8 (IPV survivors)). S2 = Graduate students in arts education (N = 14). Purposive &	To explore how body mapping might be implemented to evoke embodied witnessing, particularly within the context of art education	Author notes the potential for body mapping to promote embodiment and witnessing, which are key to the study at hand.	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Eight 1.5-hour-long group art workshops. Followed by 45-minute, semi-structured individual interviews.	(1) Visual data from body maps; (2) written key and testimonio; (3) field notes taken during workshops; (4) field notes taken	Narrative analysis.	Interviews allowed for further analysis of arts-based representations and their meanings.	Lengthy data collection period; data analyzed using unclear methods; no transcribed audio data (only notes) may be more easily misinterpreted or

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			convenience sampling.					during interview			misremembered.
Ludlow, 2014, "Witnessing: Creating visual research	Canada	Public health	Geriatric inpatients on dialysis. Number of participants not addressed.	To demonstrate how body-mapping can provide opportunity to witness the	Body mapping was selected to provide patients with a chance to visually convey their experiences of the	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Therapeutic benefit.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. 16 sessions w/ 5 patients (as long taken as was	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Researcher reflexivity; therapeutic benefit.	Not a clear representation of methods.

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memos about patient experiences of body mapping in a dialysis unit”			Sampling methods not addressed.	visual stories of dialysis patients' experiences	sensations, thoughts, and emotions experienced during their dialysis treatment.		needed to complete).				

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Ludlow, 2012, "Body mapping with geriatric inpatients receiving daily hemodialysis therapy for end-stage renal disease at Toront	Canada	Public health	Geriatric inpatients on dialysis. N = 5. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore if body mapping can support participants in storying their sensations, pain, and experiences	Body mapping was used to discover how it might serve to give voice to participants' experiences of illness	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted. Compensation: Therapeutic benefit.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Took place over 3 sessions, administered during patients' dialysis treatment (1 body map created per participant, per workshop). Semi-structured interviews	(1) body maps; (2) researchers' written observations and field notes; (3) 3 semi-structured interviews; (4) researcher's illustr	Interpretive social science; arts-based inquiry; thematic analysis.	Incorporation of researcher "witnessing" gives another lens.	Heavy expecations of participants (multiple body maps expected to be completed by each participant); large time commitment required; lack of compensation;

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o Rehabilitation Institute: A qualitative study"							followed each session (in-depth, one-on-one). Following this, researcher completed autoethnographic, responsive illustrations to the completed body maps to incorporate "witnessing."	ated responses to the body maps			qualitative exploration that aims to answer yes/no question.

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Lu & Yuen, 2012, "Journey women: Art therapy in a decolonizing framework of practice"	Canada	Therapy	Indigenous Canadian women. N = 8. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore Indigenous women's process of healing from experiences of intimate partner violence	Not addressed	Confidentiality: Women could choose whether to display their names or not; anonymity was participant-led. Compensation: Not addressed.	Three-day body mapping workshop held over two weekends. Entire process was documented by researchers. Following this, the body maps were displayed at a nearby commercial gallery.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Strengths-based.	Methods not clearly outlined.

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Lys et al., 2018, "Body mapping as a youth sexual health intervention and data collection tool"	Canada (NWT)	Sexual health	Female youth aged 13-17. N = 41. Purposive and snowball sampling.	To explore the implementation of body mapping as an arts-based activity within the FOXY sexual health intervention program, as an educational intervention in the NWT, and as a research	Article aimed to explore validity of body mapping as a research tool with youth participants, as it has not been used widely for such a population, and never in Northern Canada within published research contexts.	Confidentiality: All data anonymized and confidential. Compensation: Participants provided with sexual health and counselling resources. Option to take body map home.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Body mapping was prompted by 8 guided visualizations across 8 discrete sessions. Length of body mapping activities not addressed. Semistructured interviews with each	(1) Visual data from body maps; (2) transcribed interview data; (3) FOXY peer leader/facilitators' written reflections; (4)	Thematic analysis.	Reduced burden on participants by incorporating data collected from research team; body maps displayed during interview as visual aid appeared to	Potential bias of research team who participated may skew data positively towards use of body mapping; interview questions restricted to

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				data collection tool			participant, with body maps displayed during interview for reference (27-67 min. In length). Written reflections by seven peer leaders/facilitators following activities. Field notes were taken by lead researcher	lead researcher's field notes		support in in-depth reflections; structured body mapping methods led to structured inquiry based on visualizations for interview portion of data	reflecting on visualizations, which may limit participants' disclosure of other novel information; visualizations may not fully encapsulate individuals'

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							during FOXY workshops.			collection.	experiences or needs.

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MacGregor, 2009, "Mapping the body: Tracing the personal and the political dimensions of HIV/AIDS in Khayelitsha, South Africa"	South Africa	Public health	Bambanani women's group. N = 5. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore the individual and societal aspects of HIV/AIDS in Khayelitsha, by analyzing the work of the Bambanani women's group.	Body-mapping provides a relational, body-oriented methodological approach which can help to counteract fears of HIV.	Confidentiality: Anonymity not maintained; first names disclosed; unclear informed consent process. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Specific methods not addressed.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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MacGregor & Mills, 2011, "Framing rights and responsibilities: accounts of women with a history of AIDS activism"	South Africa	Public health	Bambanani women's group. N = 5. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore the individual and societal aspects of HIV/AIDS in Khayelitsha, by analyzing the work of the Bambanani women's group.	Body maps from historical study used as a conversational tool in present-day interviews and written content	Confidentiality: Anonymity not maintained; first names disclosed; unclear informed consent process. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants.. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews referencing back to historical body mapping exercise; written, open-ended dialogue by participants.	(1) individual written narratives; (2) transcribed data from semi-structured in-depth interviews, and (3) photographs	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Body maps as point of reference to encourage sharing	Lack of noted compensation; challenges with participant confidentiality; unclear methods.

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								of body maps with (4) written annotations by each woman			

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Macken et al., 2021, "Body mapping in a drug and alcohol treatment program: Eliciting new identity and experience"	Australia	Mental health	Youth in drug treatment & staff members of treatment program. N = 6 youth; 3 staff. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore potential of body mapping as a data collection method in research in residential AOD treatment for adolescents	As program in which the study takes place is holistic and multi-disciplinary, body-mapping was selected as a way to explore identity, emotions, and experiences as aspects of complex narratives.	Confidentiality: Informed written consent. De-identified transcripts and audio recordings were stored securely on a password-protected server folder with restricted access. Quotes integrated into	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. 2.5hr workshop, followed by 0.5hr semi-structured interview.	(1) Visual data from body maps; recording & transcription of interviews with (2) participants and (3) staff; (4) post-works	Inductive thematic analysis.	Compensation provided; brief; attention given to power dynamics between participants and researchers.	Body mapping only representative of participants' experiences in moment of creation.

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						publications as indented text, using pseudonyms to safeguard identities. Compensation: A3-size photo print of body map; $50 gift card honorarium.		hop group discussion recording; and 5) researcher field notes			

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Maina et al., 2014, "Living with and teaching about HIV: Engaging nursing students through body mapping"	Canada	Public health	1 course professor, 1 body map facilitator, 1 nursing student, 1 person living with HIV (N = 4). Convenience sampling.	To explore how people with different lived experiences / roles perceive body mapping as an educational tool	Body mapping provides a secure environment where people can engage in conversations about the interconnected aspects of their lives, such as personal experiences, emotions, cultural influences, political dynamics, and socio-economic	Confidentiality: 3 of 4 participants became co-authors - anonymity not maintained. Pseudonym used for remaining participant (person with HIV). Compensation: Participants listed as co-authors.	Life-size map created collectively by participants, during single 4-hour workshop. Workshop followed by 0.75-1.5hr conversational interviews between researchers and individual participants.	(1) visual data from collective body map; (2) audio recorded and transcribed data from each interview	Thematic analysis; participant-researcher model.	Variety of perspectives due to varied participant identities; combination of collective and individual data.	Only 4 participants with differing identities; no exploration of power dynamics between participants; no compensation to marginalized participant.

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					factors, all in the context of HIV/AIDS.	Marginalized participant (person w/ HIV) was not compensated in any addressed manner.					

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Martin et al., 2018, "Including the voices of children and young people in health policy development: An Irish perspective"	Ireland	Health policy development	Children 8-12. N = 48. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore the understanding of health among children and young individuals, and identify the elements that promote or hinder their adoption of healthy lifestyles	Approach of using children's self-created, visual representations allowed for a more open and non-directive interviewing style when exploring specific aspects of a healthy lifestyle, as opposed to a more structured approach.	Confidentiality: Rigorous policy emphasizing confidentiality and anonymity was strictly followed during consultation. All group participants committed to maintaining others' confidentiality.	Collective, life-size body maps, co-created by participants and researchers (groups of 7-9 children each). Ideas written onto the map; younger children also provided drawings/illustrations. Other methods also used: life line activity;	Written & visual data from (1) body map, (2) life line, and (3) place mat visual activities.	Thematic analysis.	Playful and fun for children; arts-based methods allowed for non-linguistic representation to bridge language barriers.	Only written / visual data collected (no interviews) - limits interactive element of research / opportunities for clarification on symbolic

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						Compensation: Not addressed.	place mat activity.				meaning.

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Mason, 2018, "Exploring the discourses of compulsive hair-pulling: A body mapping study"	Canada	Social work	Adults with compulsive hair-pulling. N = 4. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore the narratives shared by women with compulsive hair-pulling regarding the intersections of their experiences and social discourses regarding behaviour, physical appearance, and	Group method & session timing: authors cited this approach as anti-oppressive, collaborative and co-creative; a more logistically and economically feasible way to gather participants / collect data, and based off of	Confidentiality: Ongoing informed consent regarding privacy. No identifying information used in research; pseudonyms used. Compensation: $50 provided at outset of initial session; travel costs were	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants during five consecutive weekly group sessions (2 hours in length; 10 hours total group time).	(1) Visual data from high-res photographs of body maps; (2) audio data + full written transcriptions from each session; (3)	Thematic analysis.	Compensation provided; clear deliniation between researcher descriptions of body maps and participants' narratives; methods were rationalized substant	Significant time investment: process was lengthy (5 weeks) and significant transcription was completed.

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				mental illness.	previous literature. Body mapping was selected as research goals were to explore embodiment and explore intersections of self and society, as well as for therapeutic benefit; body mapping noted to align with these goals.	refunded to access the location of data collection.		detailed field notes by both facilitators, including self-reflection prior to and following each session.		ially; author participation; co-facilitation model.	

Table 4
Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Mayra et al., 2022, "Breaking the silence about obstetric violence: Body mapping women's narratives of respect, disrespect and abuse	India	Public health	Cisgender women who have experienced childbirth in public health settings. N = 8. Convenience sampling.	To explore and document women's experiences of and expectations for respectful care, disrespect and abuse during childbirth	Authors claim that body mapping can effectively represent both respectful and disrespectful births among women, serving as a valuable tool for comprehending women's encounters in a contextualized way, which focalizes	Confidentiality: Informed consent regarding photography of body maps, and to audio record the interview. Women selected pseudonym for themselves to label their map and be addressed by that name in the study.	Individual life-size maps, co-created by participant and researcher. 3 hours of individual sessions (split into 3-4 separate sessions) during which birthing map, birthing story, and reflexive notes were co-created by participant	(1) visual birthing map; (2) written birthing story; (3) reflexive notes (field notes taken by researcher on intervi	Feminist relational discourse analysis (FRDA).	Researcher support w/ body map creation allowed for body mapping participation by folks with physical challenges; body map allowed for rich and intersectional	Study location of women's homes may have limited their honesty in disclosing details of their lives / experiences of violence; lengthy commitment for

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during childbirth in Bihar, India"					need for justice and change.	Compensation: Not addressed.	and researcher.	ew environment); (4) transcript and audio recording from session		data to be collected.	researchers and participants.

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McCorquodale & DeLuca, 2020, "You want me to draw what? Body mapping in qualitative research as Canadian socio-political	Canada	Mental health	Single working mothers of young children. N = 7. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore what mindfulness means to the working mothers of young children	Authors note that there has been limited exploration of mindfulness from a phenomenological perspective using body mapping, thus presenting an untapped opportunity. Noted that body mapping struck as particularly relevant for	Confidentiality: Participants discouraged from putting identifying info. in body maps / testimonios. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, co-created by participant and researcher. Method varied based on individual practical considerations: 2 participants met over 4hrs of time; other participants broke session up into 3 separate meetings (either in	(1) demographic data; (2) visual body-map data; (3) audio and transcription from during the body-map session; (4) audio and	Phenomenological thematic analysis.	Explicitly explores strengths; authors explicit in their positionality / theoretical alignments.	Time-intensive; lost potential data by allowing for participants to complete body maps alone / not in a shared and recorded environment; not explicit in where

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commentary”					exploring experiences in a phenomenologically "pre-reflective" manner.		group or alone). Following completion of body map, shared group / individual interviews took place.	transcription from follow-up group/ individual interviews			cited data is collected from, leading to confusion regarding voice; concerns regarding unclear sampling protocol.

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Mills, 2019, Art, "Vulnerability and HIV in post-apartheid South Africa"	South Africa	Regional health	South African women living with HIV. Number of participants not addressed. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore the spoken, unspoken, and visual narratives of South African woman activists & artists who have been engaged with the HIV crisis	Body mapping noted as a way to explore both inner & outer worlds simultaneously; body mapping can be revisited over time to share in-the-moment narratives, allowing for comparison of changes over time to complex experiences; arts-based methods	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Justice oriented; brings research into the public sphere.	Not representative of full experience, but of a specific moment-in-time; concerns that arts-based methods may mask the structural dynamics

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					allow for the articulation of suffering & represent the need for justice						underlying illness.

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Review of Existing Literature on Body Mapping

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Mitchell, 2006, "Body and illness: Considering Visayan Filipino children's perspectives within local and global relationships of	Philippines	Children's health	Children living in Purok Dagat (Bacolod City, Philippines)/. N = 88. Convenience sampling.	To explore childrens' narratives regarding their bodies and illness within the framework of poverty, unsanitary living conditions, and social marginalization.	Provide children with a platform to express perspectives and concerns regarding their health and bodies. Body mapping could offer an engaging and enjoyable method for children to focus on and discuss self-drawn images of their own	Confidentiality: Due to cultural beliefs, use of pseudonyms was frowned upon; participants and parents wished to use real names, which was agreed to by ethics committee.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants during a group workshop. Followed by focus groups and individual interviews.	(1) visual data from body maps; audio-recorded, transcribed and translated data from (2) workshops; (3) focus groups and	Critical visual methodology.	Allowed for bridging of language barrier; arts-based methods are noted to work well with children.	Researcher not from participant community; lack of clarity on focus groups / other methods; analysis method not participant-centred.

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inequality”					bodies instead of using standardized representations, provide non-verbal and verbal avenues for expressing their thoughts about their bodies and well-being, and eliminates the need to physically indicate or touch their own bodies.	Compensation: Not addressed.		(4) individual interviews			
Mitchell, 2006, “Child-centred? Thinking critically about children's drawin	Philippines			To explore how body mapping may be implemented as a child-centred research method							

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gs as a visual research method ”											

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Morton et al., 2021, "Silent voices, absent bodies, and quiet methods: Revisiting the processes and outcomes of personal knowledge production	Canada	Community health	Canadian Indigenous youth participating in community theatre project. N = 10. Convenience sampling.	To explore body-mapping as a "quiet method" of research to navigate translating voice in Canadian-Indigenous research frameworks	Authors propose body mapping as a "quiet method" which might offer participants an opportunity to share complex narratives in their own symbology, without needing to rely on colonial language; as such, body mapping	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. Round one interviews (before final production); 2-day body-mapping workshop (after final production); and round two interviews (6 months after workshop).	(1) transcribed data from round one interviews; (2) visual body maps; (3) transcribed data from follow-up interviews	Not addressed.	Consideration of Indigenous ways of knowing; use of conversational interviews to pad body mapping; represent personal visual-narratives. Process involve	Data only representative of moment-in-time; concerns for use of magazine imagery as it may affirm stereotypes; lengthy process due to 6-month follow-

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through body-mapping methodologies among indigenous youth”					may be an emancipatory methodology					d multiple methods for data collection, thus increasing richness of collected data. Participant centred process.	up. Lack of compensation to participants; little information provided regarding methods of analysis and methodology informing intervie

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											wing process.

Table 4
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Naidoo, 2021, "Application of a body map tool to enhance discussion of sexual behavior in women in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe"	South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe	Sexual health	Women in South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. N = 88. Convenience sampling.	To explore how pre-drawn, standardized body maps may be used to to stimulate discussion of sexual behaviour in research and healthcare settings; specifically exploring narratives of pleasure and pain	Standardized body map was developed and tailored specifically for use with the population of interest, in order to facilitate conversation regarding topics which may be seen as taboo, confidential, or sensitive.	Confidentiality: All participants provided informed consent prior to outset of data collection. No identifying information used in final article. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, A4-sized body maps; standardized template filled in individually by participants using limited implements (pens). Standardized body map template was provided to clients to fill in with their experiences, followed by a semi-	(1) Visual data from body maps; (2) oral and (3) written participant narratives during workshop; (4) transcribed intervi	Thematic analysis	Some standardization may be of benefit to researchers, in more easefully comparing and interpreting written and visual data. Structure may increase	Standardized map is not reflective of all bodies; does not allow for participants with physical differences to accurately map their own experiences. Particip

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							structured interview.	ew data.		participants' engagement with activity / disclosure of information.	ants may interpret standardized map as vulgar, inappropriate, embarrassing, or inaccurate depending on their own embodied / cultural experiences.

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Nöstlinger et al., 2015, "Coping with HIV in a culture of silence: Results of a body-mapping workshop"	Belgium	Public health	Migrants coping with HIV. N = 10. Sampling methods not addressed.	To assist HIV-positive migrants in managing their HIV status, while gaining a deeper understanding of their experiences, and conveying said experiences to the community through art	Rationale for use of body mapping not addressed.	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Map type not addressed. 3-day body-mapping workshop.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Facilitated participants' shared exploration of their own lived experiences of HIV.	No exploration of rationale or employment of body mapping as methodology.

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Orchard et al., 2014, "Imagining adherence: Body mapping research with HIV-positive men and women in Canada"	Canada	Public health	Canadian men and women living w/ HIV/AIDS. N = 11. Convenience sampling.	To explore use of body-mapping with people living with HIV/AIDS	Through body mapping, individuals are empowered to take control of data generation and visual representation of their lived experiences in a manner distinct from more typical qualitative methods, which are often orchestrated	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants. 4-day workshops.	Not addressed	Thematic analysis	Abided by traditional body-mapping framework combined with interview data, which allowed for complex representation of participants'	Vague exploration of method specifics.

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					by researchers and reliant on textual data.					lived experiences.	

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Ryan et al., 2022, "Mapping the abject: Women's embodied experiences of premenstrual body dissatisfaction through body-mapping"	Australia	Mental health	Cisgender women with experiences of PMS. N = 460 (survey); N = 16 (body maps). Sampling methods not addressed for survey. Body mapping participants	To explore how cisgender women who report experiencing premenstrual body dissatisfaction construct and experience their bodies through body-mapping	Not addressed	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Face-to-face, one-on-one body-mapping session; body maps took between 60-90 minutes; descriptions of body maps lasted between 4-11 minutes. This was followed by semi-structured interviews of	(1) visual body map; (2) audio data of body map description; (3) transcription of interview data.	Thematic inductive analysis	Exploration of embodied experience; community sampling; combination of audio and visual data.	Study isolated to focus on cis women; not all data utilized (data waste); concerns regarding sampling; lengthy time to provide one-on-one sessions.

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			recruited by convenience sampling.				40-70 minutes in length.				
Solomon et al., 2008, "Living and thriving with HIV / AIDS"	South Africa	Therapy	Men with HIV/AIDS diagnoses. Number of participants not addressed.	To demonstrate experiences of HIV/AIDS through body mapping	To promote conversation and enhance understanding regarding HIV education, prevention, treatment, and support.	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted; pseudonyms used.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants.	(1) visual data from body maps; (2) written	Not applicable.		

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			Sampling methods not addressed.			Compensation: Not addressed.		testimonios			
Stevens & Le Roux, 2011, "A human rights violation: The forced sterilization of HIV positive	South Africa	Public health	Women living with HIV who reported forced sterilization. N = 4. Sampling methods not addressed.	To understand the experience of women living with HIV who report forced sterilization	Unable to explore; full article unavailable.	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-size body maps, created by participants. Single-day body mapping workshop.	Unable to explore; full article unavailable.	Unable to explore; full article unavailable.	Unable to explore; full article unavailable.	Unable to explore; full article unavailable.

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women"											
Tarr & Thomas, 2011, "Mapping embodiment: methodologies for representing pain and injury"	England	Research methodology	Professional dancers who had experienced physical injuries. N = 205. Convenience and snowball sampling.	Examine the potential of visualization technologies like 3D body scanning and mapping to enhance our understanding of		Confidentiality: No identifying information included. Compensation: Not addressed.	Three-dimensional, digital map of physical body through computer software, co-created by participants and researchers. Mixed methodology -	Three-dimensional scanned body maps with participants' pain areas marked; questionnair	Thematic analysis	Integration alongside other methods allowed for rich data collection; enabled participants to visualize and map	Scanner / software limitations for diverse body shapes / sizes; researcher and participant challenges with using

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				embodied experiences, using data from a dance injury research project.			questionnaires, body mapping, and semi-structured interviews.	e data; transcribed interview data		their pain in a more physicalized way than with words alone.	computers / software.
Santen, 2014, "Into the fear-factory: Connecting with the traumat	South Africa	Therapy	Children and adolescent survivors of trauma.	To describe how body mapping can be incorporated into trauma treatment plans for supporting children	As a body-oriented practice, body mapping was selected to support a dissociated client in exploring connection to body in a	Confidentiality: Identifying information redacted; pseudonym used; consent attained. Compensation:	Individual life-size maps, created by client. Body maps explored over course of 90 therapy sessions.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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ic core”				and adolescents	way that felt accessible.	Therapeutic benefit.					
Santen, 2015, “Treating dissociation in traumatized children with body maps”	South Africa	Therapy	Children and adolescent survivors of trauma.	To describe how body mapping can be incorporated into trauma treatment plans for supporting children and adolescents.	Not addressed.	Confidentiality: Not addressed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.	Not applicable; body mapping not utilized as research methodology.

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Senior et al., 2014, "Young clean and safe?Young people's perceptions of risk from sexually transmitted infections in regional, rural and	Australia	Public health	Australian youth. N = 171. Purposive & convenience sampling.	To explore the perceptions of sexually transmitted infection risk held by young people.	To stimulate data, based on evidence that drawing effectively engages young people in the research process, promotes participant empowerment and places value in youth perspectives.	Confidentiality: Hypothetical scenarios were constructed to investigate sensitive information while safeguarding individuals' privacy, serving as the foundation for the body mapping activity.	Life-size maps created collectively by smaller subgroups of participants. Single body-mapping session (time unknown); participants encouraged to collectively create body maps; facilitated conversation during and following art creation period.	(1) visual data from collective body maps; (2) transcribed data from conversations	Thematic analysis	Collective completion of body map may depressurize experience for youth participants and support them in ways listed previously.	Collective completion of body map may lead to inaccurate, dishonest, or incomplete representations of experience.

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remote Australia”						Compensation: Educational benefit.					

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Silva-Segovia, 2016, "The Face of a Mother Deprived of Liberty: Imprisonment, Guilt, and Stigma in the Norte Grande, Chile"	Chile	Gender studies	An Andean woman, referred to as "Satu," who was incarcerated in a Chilean prison serving a 10-year sentence for her involvement in drug trafficking. N = 1. Purposive sampling.	Explore the unique challenges faced by women offenders; and analyze how the face serves as a symbol of stigma for incarcerated women, focusing on self-portraits created through body mapping.	Body mapping noted as emancipatory; recognizes and visualizing pain and suffering; aligns with feminist approach; allows for representation of socioeconomic and educational differences, as well as exploration of self-	Confidentiality: Pseudonym used. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual, life-sized body maps created by participants. Body maps created across ten two-hour group sessions. Body mapping followed by group and individual interviews.	Written and visual data from body map; individual interview data and group interview data (unclear how this was record	Intertextual analysis	Justice oriented; provided ample time for creation; largely written content may increase ease in coding and analyzing data; incorporation of written, drawn, and intervie	Focus of study at odds with methodology (study focuses on face, while data collected represented more than the face); analysis method appears extrapolate data

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					image, experiences, decisions, and future expectations.			ed / transcribed)		w data creates richness.	not communicated directly by participant (potentially biased). Unclear interview data collection process.

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Author(s), Year, Title	Country of Origin	Research Setting	Participant Details	Aim of Article	Rationale for Body Mapping	Ethics (Confidentiality & Compensation)	Map Type & Methods	Data Collected	Analytical Methods	Method Strengths	Method Limitations
Sweet & Escalante, 2015, "Bringing bodies into planning: Visceral methods, fear and gender violence"	US, Mexico, Spain	Community development	Feminist planners in New York City, Mexico City and Barcelona. N = 10. Sampling methods not addressed.	To explore how body mapping might be applied as a means of understanding gender violence and fear, while also examining its potential as a therapeutic tool, and to promote and raise awareness and familiarity of body	To explore the potential use of body mapping as a planning tool to understand and analyze fear, gender violence, and as a means of facilitating community healing.	Confidentiality: No identifying information disclosed. Compensation: Not addressed.	Individual life-size maps, created by participants during two hour-long group workshops.	(1) visual data from body maps; (2) written testimonios	Collaborative meaning-making; content analysis	Demonstrated feelings, perceptions, and embodied experiences that researchers sought to locate; brief and simple collection process.	No opportunity for feedback / clarification on body mapping (ie. through an interview process).

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				mapping as a tool for safety auditing.							

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Vincent, 2014, "Experiments with bodies in social space: Towards a contemporary understanding of place-based identities at the social history	Australia	Community development	Residents of Wagga Wagga, Australia. N = 8. Convenience sampling.	To explore concepts of self, other, and place, as well as their representations, within the context of a social history museum.	To represent the intersections of identity, place, space, and movement.	Confidentiality: Anonymity not maintained; photos and names disclosed in article. Compensation: Therapeutic and educational benefit.	Individual life-size maps created by participants during two day-long body mapping workshops (MAP:me method). Individual interviews followed. Body maps were later turned into three-dimensional body sculptures;	(1) visual data from body maps; (2) written testimonios; (3) transcribed individual interview data; unclear if there was	Thematic analysis	Variety of data collected; process noted as enjoyable for participants.	Methods not clearly outlined; process of developing MAP:me is unclear; analyzed data is unclear.

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museum”							exhibited publicly.	other data collected			

Appendix B: University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) Approval

University of Victoria

Office of Research Services I Human Research Ethics Board
Michael Williams Building Rm B202 PO Box 1700 STN CSC Victoria BC V8W 2Y2 Canada
T 250-472-4545 I F 250-721-8960 I uvic.ca/research I ethics@uvic.ca

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	**Jon Woodend** (Supervisor)	**ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER:** Expedited review - delegated	**24-0155**
PRINCIPAL APPLICANT:	**Cassidy Smith** **Master's student**	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:	09-Aug-2024
		APPROVED ON:	09-Aug-2024
UVIC DEPARTMENT:	**Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies EPLS**	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE:	08-Aug-2025

PROJECT TITLE: **Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust**

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS:
Breanna Lawrence - Co-principal investigator, University of Victoria

DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: **None**

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:
TCPS 2 - CORE 2022 Certificate Cassidy Smith.pdf - 22-Apr-2024
Participant Follow-Up.pdf - 03-Jul-2024
Inquiry Prompts.pdf - 03-Jul-2024
Demographic Survey REVISED 08.09.pdf - 09-Aug-2024
Participant Invitation Letter REVISED 08.09.pdf - 09-Aug-2024
Recruitment Email REVISED 08.09.pdf - 09-Aug-2024
Recruitment Poster REVISED 08.09.24.pdf - 09-Aug-2024
Informed Consent Form REVISED 09.08.2024.pdf - 09-Aug-2024

Conditions of approval

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

Amendments
To make changes to the approved research procedure in your study, please submit "Amendments" or "Annual renewal with amendments" form. You must receive research ethics approval before proceeding with your amended protocol.

Renewals
Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a “Request for Renewal” form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

Project Closures
When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a “Notice of Project Completion” form.

Certification

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria's policies for research involving human participants.

Dr. Sandra Gibbons
Chair, Human Research Ethics Board

Dr. Cindy Holder
Vice-chair, Human Research Ethics Board

Certificate Issued On: 09-Aug-2024

Appendix C: Recruitment Letter

Hello,

My name is Cassidy Smith. I am a Master's student in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. I am seeking participants for an activity- and interview-based study exploring sustainability in anti-violence counselling work.

I am hoping for your support in connecting with counsellors who are engaged in Stopping the Violence counselling roles in British Columbia, and that your organization will be able to share this call for participation regarding my upcoming study.

Please see the information below, and the attached poster. If you are able, I would appreciate if you can distribute the attached poster and below information to anyone who might be eligible and interested:

Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust

I'm working on a new research study on the experiences of anti-violence counsellors, and I need your help!

I am completing a research study as a component of the Master's Program in Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. I am seeking participants for an activity- and interview-based study on sustainability in anti-violence counselling work.

The goal of this study is to explore how counsellors' experiences of embodied trust - the trust which we feel in an embodied way, for both ourselves and for others around us - contributes to the sustainability of anti-violence counselling work. Understanding how you experience embodied trust within your working role will help to build on knowledge of sustainable working practices for counsellors.

Would you like to help? To see if you are eligible, please read the criteria below:

Who Can Participate?

- Adults currently working in a community-based anti-violence counselling role in British Columbia, Canada.
- You are willing to engage in a demographic survey, as well as an a maximum 2-hour, audio-recorded, confidential, virtual (Zoom-based) arts-based activity and follow-up interview.

- You are willing to share your experiences of trust in the context of your counselling work, including the possibility of exploring challenging emotions during the research activities.
- You are comfortable with exploring your experiences in a processed-based way, through creative expression and conversation.
- You are able to contribute 2-4 hours of your time to research activities (including correspondence, data collection, and review).

Why You Should Participate:

- Make a difference by contributing to understandings of sustainable working practices for counsellors.
- Explore your embodied experiences through writing, visual art, and conversation.
- $50 honorarium for participation.

If you fit this criteria, and are interested in helping, please contact me directly at cassidys@uvic.ca, and I will be in touch.

Thank you,

Cassidy Smith (she/they)
cassidys@uvic.ca

Appendix D: Recruitment Poster

CALL FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS:

Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust

Are you...

- An adult working in a **community-based anti-violence counselling role** in British Columbia, Canada?
- Willing to engage in a **demographic survey**, as well as an **online, confidential, audio-recorded interview, including an arts-based activity and follow-up conversation?**
- Willing to share your **experiences of trust** in the context of your counselling work, including the possibility of exploring challenging emotions?
- Able to contribute 2-4 hours of time to research activities?

Why participate?

- **Make a difference** by contributing to understandings of sustainable working practices for counsellors
- **Explore your embodied experiences** through writing, visual art, and conversation
- **$50 honorarium** for participation

If you would like to learn more, please email cassidys@uvic.ca.

This study is approved by the Human Research Ethics Board at the University of Victoria, and is being conducted by Cassidy Smith, a Masters in Counselling student at the University of Victoria, working under the supervision of Dr. Jon Woodend. Interested individuals should contact privately at cassidys@uvic.ca if they wish to maintain their confidentiality.

Appendix E: Participant Invitation Letter

Dear *Invitee*,

Thank you so much for your interest in this research!

(If the invitee asks questions that are not answered within the consent form or email template, answers will be provided here.)

More information on the process of this study is detailed below. I have also attached a copy of the study's informed consent form to this email. This form will expand upon the purpose of this project, what is offered in exchange for your participation, and further information on the study components.

If you agree to participate in this study following your review of the attached informed consent form, please complete the electronic consent form, and select a date and time for your interview on the time-slot survey (attached as links at the end of this email).

This study involves completing the demographic information survey, an expressive arts activity following the method of body mapping, and an individual, narrative-styled interview. The activity and interview portions of this study will focus on your experiences of trust within your anti-violence counselling work. Please be aware that this may involve exploring challenging emotions relating to your experiences. All aspects of this study are to take place online, via email and Zoom. Both the activity and interview portions of this study will be audio recorded.

Once we have completed the interview, I will transcribe this session word for word. Approximately 2 – 4 weeks after your interview, I will email you the transcript for your review. This will allow you to ensure that your experience has been captured accurately. You will also have an opportunity to review the written report prior to its finalization, so you can give feedback on the accuracy and appropriateness of the findings in connection to your own experience.

Please see and fill out the consent form at the link below:

- *Link to consent form*
- *Link to interview time-slot survey*

If you have any additional questions, or require more information before making your decision on whether or not to participate, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your time and interest!

Sincerely,

Cassidy Smith
M. A. Student
University of Victoria

Appendix F: Informed Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies

Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust

Who is conducting the study?

You are invited to participate in the study entitled Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust, that is being conducted by Cassidy Smith at the University of Victoria under the supervision of Dr. Jon Woodend.

Cassidy Smith is a Master's student in the Counselling Psychology program at the University of Victoria. Dr. Woodend is an assistant professor in the department of Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies at the University of Victoria.

If you have further questions about your participation that are not answered in the document below, please contact Cassidy at cassidys@uvic.ca. You can also contact Dr. Woodend by email at jonwoodend@uvic.ca.

What is the purpose of this study?

The intention of this study is to examine how counsellors 'experiences of embodied trust — the trust which counsellors feel in an embodied way, for both themselves and for others around them — contributes to the sustainability of anti-violence counselling work.

Understanding how you experience embodied trust within your working role will contribute to understandings of sustainable working practices for counsellors.

You are being recruited for this research via a request distributed to member agencies listed on the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia (EVA BC) website, or through related networks and connections.

You are eligible to participate in this study if you: (1) are over the age of 18 (i.e., a legal adult); (2) are currently working in a community-based anti-violence counselling role in British Columbia, Canada; (3) are willing to share your experiences of trust in the context of your anti-violence counselling work; and (4) are able to engage in the current study willingly and with informed consent.

It's your choice whether or not you want to take part in this study.

Your participation is voluntary.

If I choose take part in this study, what will I do?

If you take part in this study, you will:

- Fill in a basic demographic survey, including information on your experiences as an anti-violence counsellor;
- Participate in an individual, narrative-styled interview involving a structured expressive arts activity. The interview portion of this study will be facilitated over Zoom, will be a maximum of 2 hours in length, and will be audio recorded via Zoom audio.
- Have the opportunity to review a transcript of your interview, following the completion of demographic survey and the interview portions of the data collection process. At this time, you will be able to request the removal of any information you do not want included in the research.

The demographics survey is intended to provide context regarding your lived experiences. The survey will include request for basic demographic information, including your age, gender, sexual orientation, racial/ethnic identity, and level of education. It will also ask questions regarding your registration status as a counsellor, your working history in the anti-violence and counselling fields, if you are compensated fairly for your working role, and to provide information on anything else you would like us to know about you and your context.

During the expressive arts activity, you will be prompted to create a personal 'body map' (a printer paper-sized drawing of your body, filled with symbols, words, and other imagery) to represent your experiences of trust within your anti-violence counselling role. In order to complete the body mapping exercise, you will need access to the following materials:

- A sheet of paper (approximately A4-size (8.5x11, or regular printer-size) or larger). This can be regular printer paper or from a sketchbook / art paper;
- (A) drawing implement(s) of your choice (e.g., pens, markers, pencils, coloured pencils);
- Any other arts-based materials which you wish to utilize for your own creative process (e.g., collage materials; paints; etc.); and
- Paper or computer software for your own note-taking purposes.

In creating your body map, researchers request that you do not include any identifying information (e.g., your name, photographs of yourself, other identifying information) so as to maintain your anonymity.
Your completed body map will not be analyzed as data. However, you will have the option to send in a photograph or scanned copy of your completed body map to researchers, to be included as a visual component of the study.

Following the body mapping activity, an individual narrative interview will take place between yourself and the researcher. This interview will last approximately 30-90 minutes, and will involve prompts and questions regarding your working experiences, with particular focus on embodiment and trust. You will be asked questions about: your experience of the body mapping activity; your experiences as an anti-violence counsellor (specifically, your experiences of trust within your working role as an anti-violence counsellor); and about what sustains you in your

work. These questions will help to explore your embodied experiences, the role of trust, and what contributes to working sustainability for you.

Please be advised that this research study includes data storage in the U.S.A., via online programs that are located and can be accessed from the U.S.A. (SurveyMonkey and Zoom). As such, there is a possibility that information about you that is gathered for this research study may be accessed without your knowledge or consent by the U.S. government, in compliance with the U.S. Freedom Act.

You do not have to answer any questions or complete any steps that make you feel uncomfortable.

How long will this take?

In total, your participation will take approximately 2-4 hours of your time, including the informed consent process, demographic survey, activity and interview, and optional transcript review process.

What are the possible harms and discomforts?

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including: (a) time commitment for completing the demographic survey, activity and interview, and review the transcript; (b) use of your own arts materials (e.g., paper, pens/pencils, and other desired art supplies) for the arts-based body mapping activity.

There are potential risks which may arise as a result of your participation in this research. This includes (a) feelings of discomfort or challenging emotions which may arise as a result of the subject matter; and (b) you may experience stress or fatigue following your participation.

If challenges resulting from your engagement in this study persist, and you wish to seek support, you are encouraged to seek out local mental health services:

- Canadian Mental Health Association: https://cmha.ca
- Canadian Mental Health Association of BC: https://cmha.bc.ca

This study is intended to explore your professional and working experiences, not your personal experiences of violence. It is anticipated that risks will not exceed what is typical and expected within your working role. Researchers encourage you to remain aware of your own capacity to explore any information which you experience as vulnerable.

To prevent potential risks, you may decline to answer any of the proposed questions, may choose what you share and don't share, and may withdraw from the study at any time until the completion of the data analysis process. To withdraw from the study, please contact the researchers directly at the contact information listed on this form (i.e., Cassidy Smith at cassidys@uvic.ca, or Jon Woodend at jonwoodend@uvic.ca).

If you choose to withdraw from the study at any point prior to the completion of the data analysis process, your body map and interview data will be omitted from data analysis, and will be destroyed.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

Participating in this research will allow you to (a) contribute to researchers' understandings of sustainable working practices for anti-violence counsellors; (b) explore your own embodied experiences of trust within your working role through writing, visual art, and conversation; and (c) a monetary honorarium ($50) for your participation.

Will I receive any compensation for taking part in the study?

To compensate you for your contribution to this study, and to offset inconveniences related to your participation, you will be provided with a $50 prepaid gift card (EverythingCard) following the completion of your individual interview.

Compensation will not be revoked should you choose to withdraw from the study following your interview.

Who will see my information?

- Researchers will take efforts to protect your anonymity throughout the research process. Pseudonyms will be used during the analysis of interview data. Your name and all identifying information will be removed during the transcript review process, and will not appear in any reported findings.
- Researchers will take efforts to protect your confidentiality throughout the research process. Due to the nature of interview-based research, confidentiality during the data collection process is limited. The researcher will be able to see your face and hear your voice via the Zoom hosting platform. You will have the option to keep your camera off for the duration of the interview, if you so choose. In efforts to maintain confidentiality, please join the individual interview from a location which is quiet, private, and comfortable for you.
- Following data collection, only the research team will have access to collected data, including surveys, audio recordings, and transcripts. Both file sharing and cloud-based recording will be disabled on the Zoom platform. The interview audio recordings will be downloaded from Zoom directly to the researcher's private, password-protected computer. Interview audio files and transcripts will be kept in password-protected digital files, which will exclusively be accessed by members of the research team (Cassidy Smith and Dr. Jon Woodend).
- If you choose to participate in this study, any collected, de-identified data will only be used in this study, for the purposes of this thesis research.
- Once data is made publicly available, you will not be able to withdraw your data.

Following the completion of this research, recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed. It is anticipated that data will be stored securely for up to five years following the date of the workshop and interviews.

How will the study results be shared?

It is anticipated that study results will be shared with others as follows: (a) as a thesis presentation; (b) presented at academic research conferences; (c) published in a peer-reviewed journal article; (d) shared directly with participants in a report; e) shared directly to anti-violence organizations in a report; and (f) posted on UVicSpace, an open-access repository of digital scholarly works.

Please note:

- You may end the interview at any time.
- You may change your mind and withdraw from this study until the completion of the data analysis process. There is no need to explain why you have changed your mind.
- If you withdraw from the study your contribution will not be used in the analysis or final report.
- Each time you complete a research activity and meet with Cassidy, you will be reminded that your participation in the study is voluntary, and asked if you wish to continue to take part.
- If you have further questions, or require clarification about your participation in this research or about the `````````` \, please contact Cassidy Smith at the email address cassidys@uvic.ca.
- You can also contact the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria at 250-472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca, to check the ethical approval of this study, or to raise any concerns you might have.

Please remember that participation in this study is voluntary.

Consent:

I have read this consent letter…….....yes…….no

I have had the opportunity to ask questions...……...…….....yes…….no

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary .....yes……no

I understand that I can withdraw my consent until the completion of the data analysis process…….....yes…….no

I agree to take part in the study……..…….....yes…….no

I agree to have my interview audio recorded……..…….....yes…….no

Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

Please print a copy of this form for your records.

Appendix G: Participant Follow-Up Email

Dear *Invitee*,

Thank you for completing your Informed Consent Form and signing up for an interview time slot. Our interview is confirmed for (*TIME, DATE*), and will take place over Zoom. Please aim to join the Zoom from a place that is comfortable and private, and have your art supplies (as outlined on the consent form - a copy is attached to this email) available to you for use during the interview.

Please see the Zoom link here***: LINK HERE.***

Prior to the interview, please complete the demographic information survey at the following link: ***LINK HERE***.

If you have any other questions, or require more information, please get in touch! I'm looking forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Cassidy Smith
M. A. Student
University of Victoria

Appendix H: Demographic Survey

Do you agree with each statement:

- I am over the age of 18 (i.e., a legal adult)
- I am currently working in a community-based anti-violence counselling role in British Columbia, Canada
- I am willing to share my experiences of trust in the context of my anti-violence counselling work
- I am comfortable with exploring my experiences in a processed-based way, through creative expression and an interview
- I am aware that the interview and activity portions of this study may involve exploring challenging emotions relating to my working experiences
- I am able to engage in the current study willingly, and with informed consent.

Demographic Information

Age: _____
Current Gender: _____
Sexual Orientation: _____
Racial/Ethnic Identity: _____
Level of education: _____

Pseudonym

To support your confidentiality, we are requesting that participants choose a pseudonym, which will be attached to the experiences which you share in this study. This pseudonym will be used during data analysis, as well as in the final written report.

Chosen pseudonym: _____

Anti-Violence Counsellor Specific Demographics

Are you registered with a regulating body for counsellors (e.g., BCACC, CCPA)?

_____

How long have you been a practicing counsellor? _____

How long have you been working in the community-based anti-violence sector?

_____

From your perspective, are you earning a living wage within your working role?

_____

Is there anything else you would like us to know about you / your context?

_____

Appendix I: Interview Protocol & Sample Interview Questions

Preamble

- My name is Cassidy Smith, my pronouns are she/they, and I am a student researcher at the University of Victoria.
- I am completing this study as a component of my master's degree in counselling psychology at UVic.
- I myself am an anti-violence worker at Victoria Women's Transition House Society here in Victoria, and am passionate about thiss field of work, so this topic is close to heart for me.

Purpose & Goals of Research

- The objective of this study is to explore how counsellors' experiences of embodied trust - the trust which we feel in an embodied way, for both ourselves and for others around us - contribute to the sustainability of anti-violence counselling work.
- In particular, my research questions are:
- What are the embodied narratives of trust which are experienced by community-based anti-violence counsellors in their counselling practice?
- How do these experiences relate to sustainability in counselling practice?
- How does embodied inquiry, through the use of body-mapping, support counsellors in storying these experiences?
- Understanding how you experience embodied trust within your working role will help to build on the knowledge of sustainable working practices for counsellors.

Informed Consent

- This interview will be audio recorded
- Should take a maximum of 2 hours
- Any identifying data will be kept confidential
- A reminder to please not use any identifying information in your body map (ie. photos, your real name)
- Right to withdraw at any time
- Right to skip any questions which you're not comfortable with or sure about
- What is the pseudonym which you chose for yourself?

Body Mapping Information

- **Explain what body mapping is:**
    - A process of creating art (e.g., drawing, painting or other arts-based techniques) that visually represent people's identities and aspects of their lives, bodies, and the world they live in
    - Provides a non-verbal method for expressing "experiential states," such as trust, which may be difficult to verbally articulate
    - Can be used for therapy, advocacy, providing treatment information, and for research
    - No one single method/process
- **How it will be employed for research purposes:**

- We will be doing a mini guided body mapping exercise using your own paper / art supplies.
- The topic for the body map will be: " Exploring Anti-Violence Counsellors' Embodied Narratives of Trust."
- I will use guided questions to facilitate this process.
- This process is intended to be interactive; feel free to verbally share while you are creating.
- The exercise will be followed by a narrative-styled interview to explore your completed body map, as well as delve further into your experiences.
- Only share/express what you are comfortable to.

- Any questions before we get started?

Body Mapping Inquiry Prompts

1. Draw an outline to represent your body. How will you decide the position you will draw your body in? How will you decide what colour to draw the outline in?
2. Consider the unique experiences, needs, supports, and challenges which shape your experience as an anti-violence counsellor. We will explore through symbols, ideas, and images on your body map.
    a. Mark areas on your body map where you feel trust in the context of your working role - what does this trust look like? What symbols might represent trusted relationships or beliefs? Use colours / symbols and reflect on why these particular areas feel the way they do.
    b. Mark areas on your body map where you feel an absence of trust in the context of your working role - what does this look like? What symbols might represent relationships or beliefs? Use colours / symbols and reflect on why these particular areas feel the way they do. How might you represent barriers to trust within your working role?
    c. Physical manifestations of trust - how does trust physically manifest for you in this work? What do you notice posture/movement/tension when you feel trust? How does your body react when trust is broken and challenged / established or supported?
    d. What practices help you to build trusting relationships within your work? How would you represent these practices as symbols on your body map?
    e. What practices help you to maintain a sustainable practice within your work? How would you represent these practices as symbols on your body map?
3. Encourage participants to record both supports and challenges on their body maps; support them in considering the interconnections between the items they include within their body map.
4. Anything else you would like to include to help better describe and story your experience?

Individual Interview Prompts

1. How did the process of body mapping feel for you, in regards to articulating embodied experiences of trust?
2. Explore the visuals / symbols which participant used in their body map.
3. In regards to your body map: which areas did you note feeling trust in? / absent from?

4. Did anything surprise you from your body map?
5. How did it feel doing this activity?
6. What have you learned from this process?
7. What sustains you in your work? How have you storied this in your body map?
8. Can you briefly tell me the story of you becoming an anti-violence counsellor?
9. What community do you practice in?
10. When I say "trust," what does this mean to you in the context of your work as a counsellor?
11. Tell me about your experiences of trust in yourself within your work as a counsellor.
12. Tell me about your experiences of trust in others (e.g., management, coworkers, systems, other relationships) within your working relationships as a counsellor. How does this impact your "felt senses," or how you feel in your body, at work?
13. Reflecting on your counselling experiences, how does your body react when trust is broken or challenged? Can you describe a particular instance?
14. Reflecting on your counselling experiences, how does your body react when trust is established or supported? Can you describe a particular instance?
15. How does your personal understanding of trust influence your approach to counselling? How is this reflected in your bodily experiences in your work
16. What did the body mapping activity add to our discussion today?
17. If we didn't have the body mapping activity, what do you think we may have missed about your experience in our discussion?
18. Is there anything else you want to talk about?

Closing

- Thank participant for sharing story
- Reminder of confidentiality
- Data to be transcribed & returned to you within 1-3 weeks for review; you will then have 1 week to review before it goes forward to analysis
- Compensation in the form of $50 prepaid card will be sent to you within the week via email — do you have a preferred email address for this to be directed to?
- If you wish to send a picture of your body map by email please do so; I'll remind you of this when I send you the transcribed data for your review
- Any final comments or questions