

Towards a Theoretically Informed Practice:  
A Study of Koru Mindfulness Teachers in Higher Education

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Thank you!

## Dedications

*For Elia*

### Blessings For Presence

Awaken to the mystery of being here  
and enter the quiet immensity of our own presence.

Have joy and peace in the temple of your senses.

Receive encouragement when new frontiers beckon.

Respond to the call of your gift and the courage to  
follow its path.

May the flame of anger free you of all falsity.

May warmth of heart keep your presence aflame.

May anxiety never linger about you.

May your outer dignity mirror an inner dignity of  
soul.

Take time to celebrate the quiet miracles that seek  
no attention.

Be consoled in the secret symmetry of your soul.

May you experience each day as a sacred gift woven  
around the heart of wonder.

*--John O'Donohue*

(Intrator & Scribner, 2014, p. 73)

### Abstract

Mindfulness is gaining acceptance and use in many sectors of society, including education. As a pedagogical tool, mindfulness is one of many contemplative practices used within Contemplative Education (CE) to enhance student learning. Mindfulness is also part of the growing number of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). Within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), MBIs are increasingly accessible through student services and other well-being initiatives to assist students in navigating academic life. The growing body of research carried out across a wide variety of disciplines and diverse cultural contexts points to the increasing global use of mindfulness in higher education (HE). However, research on mindfulness teachers is relatively limited compared to research on students. This study aims to inform, empower, and challenge current practice and teacher training in mindfulness by providing an investigation into the lived experience of a group of mindfulness teachers in higher education.

This study investigates 12 participants and the researcher. Participants were Koru Mindfulness teachers working in higher education. Koru Mindfulness is a stand-alone mindfulness curriculum designed for 18–28-year-olds. All participants were trained Koru Mindfulness teachers working in HEIs. The study used the Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects (TMRHS). TMRHS is a qualitative research method that draws from thematic analysis and is grounded in the phenomenology of Husserl and the critical realist Lonergan's theory of cognition. TMRHS guides participants and researchers through a systematic reflective process. Results indicated that mindfulness teachers go through an identifiable process by which they both claim and embody the role of mindfulness teachers. Underpinning mindfulness teachers' decision to teach is a desire to reduce suffering and increase student well-being. They are informed and influenced by their personal contemplative experiences, values, and spirituality. Archer's morphogenic approach provided a theoretical framework to inform understanding of the proposed identifiable process of claiming and embodying the role of mindfulness teacher. This theoretically informed analysis at the intersection of higher education and mindfulness teaching provides a framework to consider research and practice and possible avenues for impact. However, at the core of this study is an individual's agency and decision-making. The personal aspect of teaching is paramount when

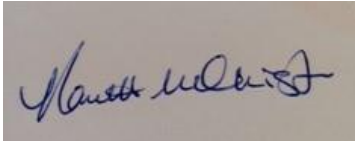
considering risk reduction, enhancing best practices, and responding to some of the most ardent criticisms of mindfulness teaching.

*Keywords:* mindfulness teaching, higher education, Koru Mindfulness, morphogenic approach

### Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for any other award or credit at this or any institution of higher education. To the best of my knowledge, the thesis is wholly original, and all material or writing published or written by others and contained herein has been duly referenced and credited.

Signature:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in blue ink. The signature appears to be "Hannah McQuinn".

Date: 15 September 2022

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### List of Abbreviations

ACHA	American College Health Association
ACMHE	Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education
AF	Analytical Framework
AR	Autonomous reflexives
BHI	Benson Henry Institute
CCMH	Center for Collegiate Mental Health
CCMIS	Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (see CMind)
CE	Contemplative Education
CEP	Cultural Emergent Property
CGT	Critical Grounded Theory
CI	Contemplative Inquiry
CIIS	California Institute of Integral Studies
CMind	Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (see CCMIS)
ComR	Communicative reflexives
CPT	Cognitive Processing Therapy
CR	Critical Realism
EA	Emerging Adult/Emergent Adulthood
EdD	Doctor of Education
E-U-J-D	Experiencing-Understanding-Judging-Deciding
FR	Fractured reflexives
GEM	Generalized Empirical Method
HE	Higher Education
HEI(s)	Higher Education Institution(s)
HR	Human Resources
IE	Integrative Education
IUP	Indiana University of Pennsylvania
IUP	Indiana University of Pennsylvania
KM	Koru Mindfulness
KMT(s)	Koru Mindfulness Trainer(s)
LGBT	Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender
LMS	Langerian Mindfulness Scale (see also MMS)
MBCT	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
MBI(s)	Mindfulness-Based Intervention(s)
MBI: TAC	Mindfulness-Based Intervention: Teaching Assessment Criteria
MBPs	Mindfulness-Based Programs
MBSR	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
MLLC	Mindfulness Living and Learning Community
MMR	Mixed Method Research
MMS	Langer Mindfulness/Mindlessness Scale (see also LMS)
MR	Meta-reflexives
PCF	Participant Consent Form
PEP	Personal Emergent Property
PI	Personal Identity
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
SEP	Social Emergent Property
SIIP	Self-focus, Instability, In between, Identity, Possibilities
SI	Social Identity
SMART	Benson-Henry Institute-Stress Management Resiliency Training
TE	Transformative Education
TM	Transcendental Meditation
TMRHS	Transcendent Method for Research with Human Subjects
TP	Transcendent Pluralism
UNic	University of Nicosia
VPREC	Virtual Programmes Research Ethics Committee

## Chapter 1 Introduction

I entered full-time teaching when I moved to Cyprus from the United States in the late 1990s. Before that, in the United States, I volunteer-taught English and basic literacy skills to immigrants, refugees, and other community members in the Seattle area. In Cyprus and the US, I have enjoyed teaching all ages. I particularly enjoy teaching young adults, but some of my most rewarding teaching has been as a teacher-trainer providing in- and pre-service training. Since coming to Cyprus, I have almost always taught, at least part-time, at the University of Nicosia (UNic). I usually teach writing courses, English language courses, communication courses, and pre-term academic preparedness workshops for new and international students. I was the curriculum coordinator and teaching development specialist for a faith-based pre-K, primary and secondary school for several years. I have also worked for an NGO with many programs, including education programs for children in conflict. I am also the mother of brain-injured, very pre-term twins (born at 30 weeks) who have benefited from my tenacity to explore options for brain plasticity and growth. I have drawn on and incorporated contemplative practices, including mindfulness, into my teaching and my life for many years. However, it wasn't until I started my EdD that I discovered other people using contemplative practices in their teaching, opening me up to contemplative education, pedagogy, and practice.

My first formal introduction to contemplative pedagogy in HE came through reading *The Heart of Higher Education* by Palmer and Zajonc (2010), which promotes a philosophy of integrative education.

A truly integrative education engages students in the systematic exploration of the relationship between their studies of the "objective" world and the purpose, meaning, limits, and aspirations of their lives. The greatest divide of all is often between the inner and outer, which no curricular innovation alone can bridge. The healing of this divide is at the heart of education during the college years, rightly understood (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 10).

Compelled by the authors' wisdom and vision, I threaded the twin themes of contemplation and living an undivided life into my pre-thesis doctoral work. Parker and Zajonc (2010) propose that "good scholars" can become agents of change by asking honest, open questions of colleagues about *their* experiences and visions as educators - and then seek points

of theoretical and applied convergence between us" (p.132). My commitment to this type of scholarship shaped my approach to an area of study.

My first experience of exploring contemplative practices with others was in 2013. I attended the European Symposium for Contemplative Studies in Berlin, Germany, the first pan-European symposium for contemplative science. Presenters from neuroscience, social sciences, economics, education, and contemplative traditions addressed the theme of "Personal and Societal Change from the Contemplative Perspective" (Mind and Life Europe, 2019). Attending this symposium altered the trajectory of my studies and shifted my focus to contemplative work in higher education (HE). This study explores the lived experience of twelve Koru Mindfulness teachers working in higher education, who, like me, were drawn to incorporate mindfulness into their professional lives.

Mindfulness as a concept and practice is gaining acceptance and use in many sectors of society, including education. The growing body of research carried out across various disciplines and diverse cultural contexts points to the increasing global use of mindfulness in higher education (HE) (Aldahadha, 2013; Hoerberichts, 2012; Monatas, Segura, Eraso, Oggins, & McGovern, 2014). What mindfulness is, how it is used in education, and by whom are all areas ripe for investigation in this burgeoning field. Research on mindfulness teachers is an evolving area of research within the field. Mindfulness in higher education is typically applied as a well-being intervention or a pedagogical tool. While most study participants teach academic content classes, Koru Mindfulness is a stand-alone curriculum and fits most neatly as a mindfulness-based intervention (MBI). Mindfulness and related mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) are increasingly accessible in higher education (HE) through student services and campus-related well-being centers (Greeson, Juberg, Maytan, James, & Rogers, 2014; Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000; Mermelstein & Garske, 2014; Oman, Shapiro, Thoresen, Plante, & Flinders, 2008). Mindfulness as a well-being intervention is included in the literature review because Koru Mindfulness aligns more closely to an MBI than a pedagogical tool. However, like me, most Koru Mindfulness teachers working in higher education also teach content courses. Consequently, I included mindfulness as a pedagogical tool in the introduction but not in the literature review. MBIs are included in the literature review because of their shared attributes with Koru Mindfulness.

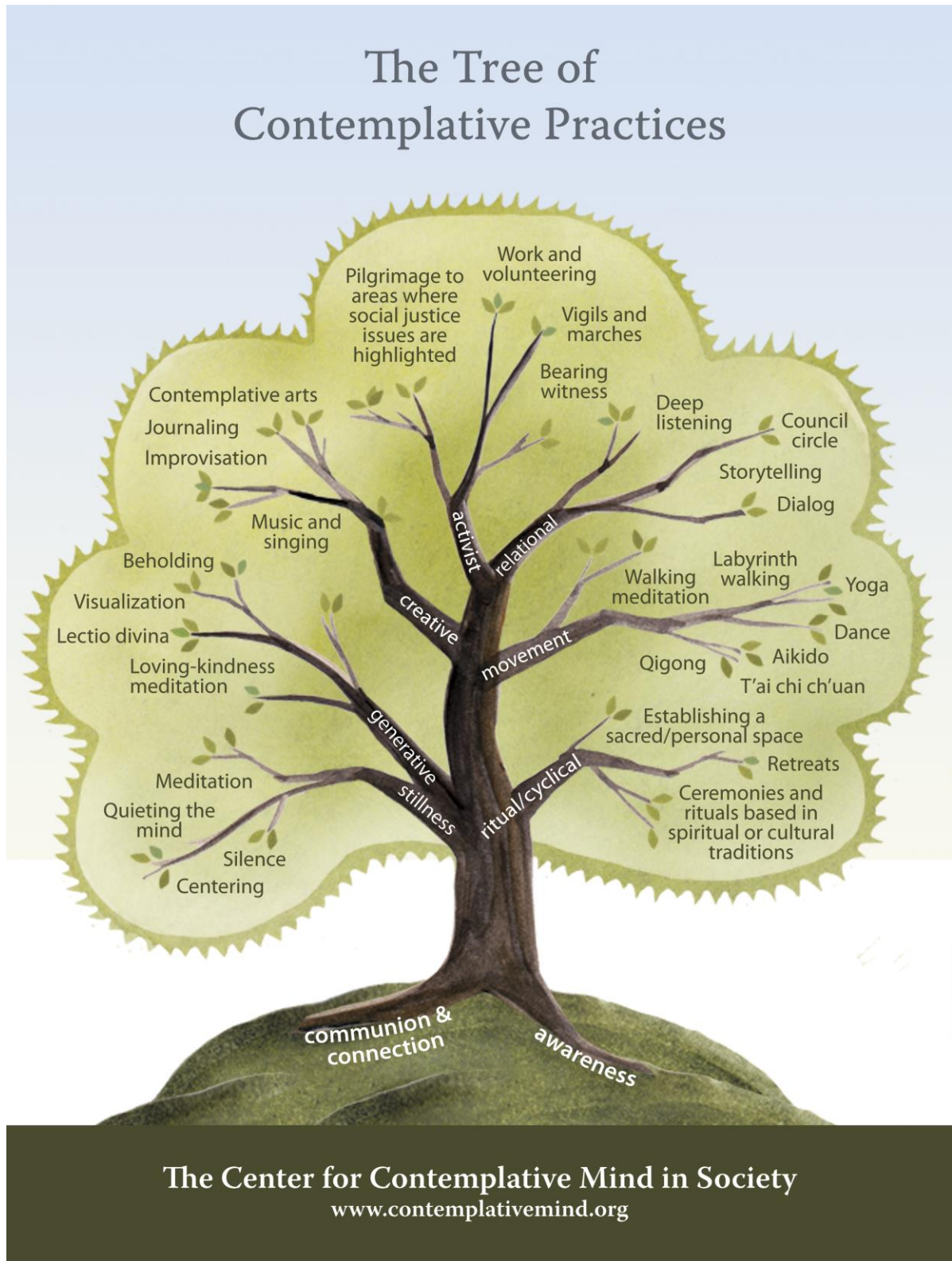
As a pedagogical tool, mindfulness is one of many contemplative practices used within Contemplative Education. Although still emerging, research and commentary into the



pedagogical role of contemplative practices, including mindfulness, is growing (McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010; Bai et al., 2014; Ergas, 2014, 2017; Zajonc, 2016; Roeser, 2016; Schonert-Reichl & Roeser, 2016). The body of research on mindfulness and education typically showcases the positive effects of practicing mindfulness or employing contemplative pedagogical practices. Lauding it as a path to enhance and support deep learning, increase self-regulation, build empathy and compassion, and help transform students, faculty, education, and the wider world. Criticisms and concerns regarding mindfulness teaching in education range widely yet commonly include the commodification of mindfulness teaching or “McMindfulness,” the level of transparency of appropriation of spiritual practices in teaching or “stealth” Buddhism, and the appropriateness of mindfulness meditations generally (Crowder, 2016; Dunkley & Loewenthal, 2013; Hyland, 2016; Van Gordon, Shonin, & Griffiths, 2016, Purser, 2019). Whether mindfulness is seen for good or for ill, these studies rarely focus on the role and personhood of the mindfulness teacher. More commonly, the literature available for teachers are handbooks and first-person narratives rather than research study results (Schonert-Reichl & Roeser, 2016; Grace, 2011; Didonna, 2009; Barbezat & Bush, 2014).

### **1.1 Mindfulness in Higher Education**

Whether applied as a pedagogical tool or a wellness intervention, mindfulness can help regulate thoughts and focus attention, including a focus on one's embodied experience. In pedagogy, mindfulness is integrated into instructors' pedagogical methods in traditional, content-based courses. Mindfulness is also growing in use as a well-being intervention to improve sleep, manage academic stress, and cope with general anxiety. In some instances, these areas overlap. For example, I invite students to regulate their stress and anxiety about public speaking through mindful breathing and thought awareness. In teaching and learning, mindfulness is part of a wider whole of contemplative practices and pedagogies in education, often known as Contemplative Education (CE). The Tree of Contemplative Practices (*Figure 1: The Tree of Contemplative Practices*) showcases different types of activities teachers may draw from when incorporating contemplative practices into their teaching. These practices generally, but not exclusively, invite students to focus their attention inward and explore their embodied experience of learning. Zajonc (2016) contends that those involved in the development and growth of CE are "interested in the recovery and development of the contemplative dimension of teaching, learning, and knowing" (Zajonc, 2016, p. 22).



*Figure 1: The Tree of Contemplative Practices*

Reprinted with permission for educational purposes. Retrieved from <http://www.contemplativemind.org/practices/tree>.

*Recovery* is a key word in Zajonc's statement. Integration of contemplative practices into teaching is arguably a centuries-old tradition that has been minimized as modern, westernized educational systems have developed. CE's deepest roots are found, according to Morgan, in antiquity, "starting with archaic trance ritual practices, followed by early monastic traditions of Classical Greece (5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC) and Classical India (2<sup>nd</sup> century BC--13<sup>th</sup> century AD)" (Morgan, 2015, p.199). Morgan (2015) concludes that the current rise of CE is a "third wave," a reemergence of contemplative education, and concludes that the "contemplative has been a continuing but not always obvious presence in education...[thus] contemplative education isn't something faddish. Rather the contemplative state of consciousness that grounds this educational approach is an essential part of who we are and how we learn" (p.198).

Zajonc (2013) characterizes the reemergence of contemplative education in North America as a "quiet pedagogical revolution" (p. 83) marked by the establishment of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (CMind) in 1995. CMind is now in the process of shutting down. However, the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE), which CMind established, is continuing as a robust and growing professional association.

The global use of mindfulness training in higher education (HE) is evidenced by the body of studies conducted in and out of North America and has been carried out across a wide variety of disciplines and diverse cultural contexts (Aldahadha, 2013; Hoeberichts, 2012; Monatas, Segura, Eraso, Oggins, & McGovern, 2014). The results are generally promising. DuFon and Christian (2013, p. 172) developed faculty and student groups that promoted mindfulness and contemplative pedagogy on their campus and in the surrounding community. The groups are reported to provide "fuller and richer learning for students" and greater satisfaction for educators. What Morgan (2015) identifies as consistent throughout each of the contemplative education movements, or waves, is the presence of contemplatives. These are the individuals whose own contemplative practice is an embodied and conscious experience practiced and developed over time. This aspect of personal, embodied experience is addressed later in relationship to mindfulness teachers, training, and qualifications but is included here to emphasize the need for rigorous and reviewed studies that can substantiate, challenge, and refine good practices in CE and mindfulness-based interventions in HE.

HE programs and interventions focused on enhancing the well-being of students and the broader HE community, including faculty and staff, are increasingly incorporating mindfulness

into the offerings. This can range from general programs on "stress management" to very specific interventions, such as helping students manage binge drinking (Mermelstein & Garske, 2014).

## **1.2 Mindfulness and Teaching and Learning**

Mindfulness is arguably one of the most popular and recognizable contemplative methods used in contemplative education today. Contemplative education is often discussed in conjunction with transformative education (TE) and integrative education (IE) to leverage contemplative practices to help foster the conditions by which transformation and integration can occur (Palmer, 2010; Byrnes, 2012; Miller, 2015). Transformative education roots are in emancipatory approaches to education; education aimed to empower the learner towards critical thinking, as opposed to a knowledge transfer educational model, and to take action to reduce inequities and improve societal conditions (Freire, 2005; hooks, 1994). Integrative education encourages cross-disciplinary teaching so students can make connections across curricula and reduce siloization among faculty and disciplines.

Byrne (2012) proposes that a contemplative orientation in teaching "creates space for learning and is a model of education that links the inner and external life in meaningful, transformative ways" (p.16). Palmer (2010) broadly outlines integrative education as aiming to "think the world together" rather than "think the world apart," to know the world in a way that empowers educated people to act on behalf of wholeness rather than fragmentations" (p.22). Contemplative education provides for both experiential and reflective learning and brings attention to the direct experience of the learner. A key component of contemplative education is an orientation toward transformation through contemplative practice and personal experience. Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, and Bai (2014) contend that "most if not all higher educational settings have at least an implicit or tacit contemplative dimension" (p.4). Contemplative education focuses on employing contemplative methods that engage with the personal experience of learning. As illustrated below, a contemplative orientation toward learning can be incorporated in subtle ways.

Whether in the form of aspiring to hold the creative tensions of multiple perspectives or polarities in a conversation from a place of equanimity; sitting a few minutes in engaged silence with one's class, supporting, enacting, and drawing from the intersubjective field of learning; listening from and being the relationship with one's students; engaging in contemplative practices with one's students before, during, and after class; occasioning situations that attend to the class subject in relation to the dynamics of our richly

dimensioned inner lives (cognitively, somatically, aesthetically, emotionally, spiritually) and outer world, contemplative approaches to teaching and learning are informed by the needs for wholeness, integration, interrelatedness, completion, and unity.

Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, & Bai, 2014, pp. 4,5

The surge in mindfulness-related activities on university campuses supports an intentional reimagining of the vision of purpose and practice for higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Ergas, 2017; Owen-Smith, 2018). Owen-Smith (2018) contends that "Contemplative methods are requisites for the creation of a new type of academy that best meets the needs of students, staff, faculty, administrators, and communities beyond the campus gates" (p.101). This new type of academy includes, in part, an equilibrium between inner learning and outer awareness, thus challenging "a world obsessed with outer achievements and a blindness that prioritizes the acquiring of information over knowledge and virtue" (Ergas, 2017, p. v).

Practices or exercises are often key components of contemplative education. For example, mindfulness teaching is frequently associated with a seated meditation focusing on the breath. In an education setting, the goal of such exercises is not to be better at breathing per se but rather to increase an individual's capacity for and quality of focused attention. Alternatively, Langer proposes that mindfulness can "best be understood as the process of drawing novel distinctions" (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 1). Ellen Langer is a professor and researcher and has been a faculty member at Harvard University since 1977 (Harvard University, 2018). Langer's approach to mindfulness is not anti-meditation but rather takes the view that a present-moment mindset can be attained directly through drawing novel distinctions and is, therefore, not dependent on meditation practice to situate oneself in the present (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). In Langer's approach, the focus is on noticing new things. Drawing novel distinctions keeps the viewer situated in the present, leading to a greater sensitivity to context and perspective as well as greater personal control and, thus, an improved quality of life (Langer, 2000). Langer suggests that mindfulness is not a "cold cognitive process" but rather a process that involves the whole individual and has a subjective "feel" of "a heightened state of involvement and wakefulness or being in the present moment" (2000, p. 2).

Langer uses the term *mindful learning* in a specific way and distinguishes between mindfulness and mindlessness.

A mindful approach to any activity has three characteristics: the continuous creation of new categories, openness to new information, and an implicit

awareness of more than one perspective. Mindlessness, in contrast, is characterized by an entrapment in old categories; by automatic behavior that precludes attending to new signals; and by action that operates from a single perspective. Being mindless, colloquially speaking, is like being on automatic pilot. (Langer, 2000, Kindle Locations 342-346)

The implications for education, of being mindful, or as Langer puts it being *mindless*, are serious for Langer. She proposes suffering is both directly and indirectly linked to personal, interpersonal, and societal mindlessness and that schools are the main culprit of creating mindlessness. Schools create suffering by being unintentional in their teaching, and unintentional teaching results in mindlessness (Langer, 2000; Langer, 2014; PopTech, 2013). Schools, including HEIs, contribute to mindlessness in at least two ways: by promoting the evaluation of self and others and diminishing the value of uncertainty by teaching "to seek or accept information as if it were absolute and independent of human creation" (Langer, 2014, Kindle Locations 121-122). Langer (2014, Kindle Locations 308-319) identifies seven pervasive and debilitating mindsets, or myths that undermine genuine learning and consequently stifle creativity, inhibit questioning, and diminish self-esteem.

These seven mindsets that create mindlessness include:

- The basics must be learned so well that they become second nature.
- Paying attention means staying focused on one thing at a time.
- Delaying gratification is important.
- Rote memorization is necessary in education
- Forgetting is a problem.
- Intelligence is knowing "what's out there."
- There are right and wrong answers.

(Langer, 2014, Kindle Locations 308-319)

For Langer (2014), these *mindless* mindsets are inherent in the North American educational system, perpetuate mindlessness, and are detrimental to learning and thus detrimental to society. As such, pervasive mindlessness contributes to suffering, whereas mindfulness, and the correlated curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving associated with a mindful mindset, contribute to a richer quality of life (Guilbert, 2017). Langerian mindfulness has been described as "a doctrine and method" where the reductionist approach and medical model that equates mind and brain "is replaced by an integrative paradigm where the bio,

psycho, social, and spiritual components of well-being and health are expanded in line with the independent status of mind" (Fatemi, 2018). There is an inherent view toward personal and societal transformation through the integrative paradigm of Langerian mindfulness and contemplative education more broadly. Teaching encompasses the whole person of the student and the teacher within and as part of society. The practices focused on in the Koru Mindfulness curriculum fit more neatly into the wellness interventions or MBIs and are discussed in Chapter 2. However, the underpinnings of mindfulness as an educational tool or wellness intervention remain consistent.

Contemplative education includes nurturing awareness of the inner experience. This awareness can be leveraged for the transformation of self and, crucially, to take action to benefit beyond the self, as illustrated in the case of Naropa University. Naropa identifies as "Buddhist-inspired and nonsectarian" and "rooted in contemplative education, a teaching and learning approach that integrates Eastern wisdom studies and the arts with traditional Western scholarship" and holds claim as "the birthplace of the modern mindfulness movement" (Naropa University, 2020, p. 1). Naropa University promotes itself as a university where "experiential learning meets academic rigor. Where you challenge your intellect and unlock your potential. Where you discover the work you're moved to do — then use it to transform our world" (Naropa University, 2020). Contemplative practices are integrated throughout university life, including administration, teaching, and learning.

Although contemplative practices in HE are designed to facilitate an inward, first-person focus, the intention is for students to apply the understanding and move beyond the personal. Contemplative practices in education "place the student in the center of his or her learning so that the student can connect his or her inner world to the out world. Through this connection, teaching and learning is transformed into something personally meaningful yet connected to the world" (Barbezat & Bush, 2014, p. 6).

Course-specific and content-related contemplative practices focus on the material being studied. This may include poetry, economics, art, communications, science, philosophy, or any other course offered at an HEI. An example of design principles is included in Table 1: Design Principles of Contemplative Practice in Content Courses below. Notice that the contemplative practice supports the learning aim and that students are supplied with the rationale for the practice, clear instructions, and an opportunity to process and reflect on their experience of the practice.

*Table 1: Design Principles of Contemplative Practice in Content Courses  
Adapted from (Zajonc, 2016, pp. 22-24)*

<b>Design Principles of Contemplative Practice in Content Courses</b>	
<b>Context:</b>	<b>Who are you teaching?</b>
Intention:	What is the pedagogical aim of the exercise?
Practice:	Choose a practice that suites the context and aim. Then give students a rationale, clear instructions, and opportunities for questions. Gently lead the exercise.
Process the practice afterward by:	Journaling concerning their experience Having students talk in pairs about their experience Having a class conversation

Table 2: Categories of Contemplative Practices used in Higher Education below showcases possible contemplative practices and associated intentional outcomes. For example, medical students could be led through a visualization practice recalling the human digestive system and building students' capacity for recalling information. This visualization practice could also be used in conjunction with a mindful eating practice. One found in the Koru curriculum that is popular in other mindfulness curricula is the slow and intentional eating of a raisin.

*Table 2: Categories of Contemplative Practices used in Higher Education  
Adapted from (Zajonc, 2016, pp. 22-24)*

<b>Categories of Contemplative Practices used in Higher Education</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Outcome Intention</b>	<b>Possible Practices/Exercises</b>
Capacity-building	Equanimity, stress reduction, or emotional balance	Mindfulness exercises: breath, walking, reading, listening, viewing
	Concentration, attention, and close observation	MBSR and related MBIs Concentration exercises Exercises for cultivating emotional balance (CEB) (Cultivating Emotional Balance, 2021)
	Memory and exact sensorial fantasy	Beholding Visualization Silence
	Discernment, judgment, or relational exercises	The alternation between "focused attention" and "open monitoring" (see Lutz, Slagter, Dunne, & Davidson, 2008)
	Will or discipline	Meditative movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• Tai chi</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qigong</li> <li>• Authentic movement</li> <li>• Eurythmy</li> <li>• Contemplative dance, e.g., Helberg, Heyes, &amp; Rohel, 2009)</li> </ul> <p>Analytical and settled meditation (Dalai Lama in Meltrotra, 2005)</p>
<p>Compassion and Community: Cultivating Empathy Support and Compassionate Action</p>	<p>Directed at the cultivation of empathy, compassionate concern, and altruism strengthens ethical qualities in the individual and deepens caring relationships with others</p>	<p>Empathy, compassion, and loving-kindness practices, e.g., Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education (CCARE) (Stanford University, 2021)</p> <p>Pilgrimage Community service/outreach Ecological care</p>

The use of contemplative practices is increasing in higher education, and new courses in contemplative studies are being added annually at such HEIs as Brown University, the University of Virginia, Syracuse University, and the University of Southern California (Benefiel, 2019). For example, The University of Michigan School of Music offers a Bachelor's in Fine Arts in Jazz and Contemplative Studies, emphasizing skills and meditative practices to enhance creativity (University of Michigan, 2021).

Brown University offers a Concentration in Contemplative Studies (Brown University, 2021). The concentration at Brown University consists of core courses and concentration track courses that require students to study both science and humanities. Students use third-person and first-person approaches to analyze "the cultural, historical, and scientific underpinnings of contemplative experiences in domains such as religion, art, music, literature, and health" and "practical experience of contemplative techniques and methods," which provides an "integrated understanding of the role of contemplative thought and experience in societies and on the individuals who constitute them" (Brown University, 2021, para. 2). These examples highlight an integrated and transdisciplinary approach to education. They are examples of the potential applications of contemplative practices in higher education learning contexts. This integrated approach to learning exemplifies an interest in educating the whole person. In addition, integration provides an opportunity for scholar-practitioners, teachers who are contemplatives, to show up in their work with students as their whole selves (Bai, et al., 2014).

Research can play an essential role in assisting the education community in making informed decisions about what approaches, initiatives, and interventions support students and faculty. Research can help fill in knowledge gaps, challenge perceptions, and illuminate areas of inquiry previously unrecognized. Research into mindfulness teachers and those who incorporated contemplative practices into pedagogy or student wellness initiatives is promising but scant, especially compared to research on students. This study investigates the lived experience of 12 higher education mindfulness teachers. Each teacher has been trained and presents a set curriculum called Koru Mindfulness. They work in various higher education institutions (HEIs) across North America as academics, health professionals, higher education administrators, or any combination thereof. The knowledge and understanding gained from this study may help address the gap between what we know from student-focused and lesser teacher-focused research.

The Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects (TMRHS) informed my research design (Perry, 2013). TMRHS is a qualitative research approach rooted in phenomenology and critical realism. TMRHS incorporates attributes of qualitative interviewing and thematic analysis and fits well with the focus on personal experience inherent in mindfulness.

My participants were Koru Mindfulness teachers working in various higher education institutions. Aspirant teachers must be accepted into the Koru program and complete the required training and related activities to become certified Koru Mindfulness teachers. To be accepted into the course, individuals are typically required to have completed a formal mindfulness-training program or to have a similar experience with mindfulness training. Similar experiences could include working with a mindfulness or meditation teacher or attending multiple mindfulness-based retreats, having experience facilitating or teaching groups, having experience working with diverse groups or having diversity training, or having an ongoing personal practice for at least six months. They must participate in at least one silent mindfulness meditation retreat for a minimum of three days (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018d). The certification process typically takes between six months and two years. During this time, candidates complete a three-phase training program: attending a three-day Koru Mindfulness training workshop, teaching three Koru Mindfulness courses, and participating in four online consultation meetings with Koru faculty and other Koru teachers-in-training. In addition, candidates submit a portfolio to the Koru Center faculty, which contains specific video examples of the candidate facilitating training, a personal essay, and student evaluations from at least three taught courses.

Certification is not guaranteed and is up to the discretion of the KM faculty, who may suggest further training and experience (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018e). The applications for certification are assessed using the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (MBI: TAC) (Crane et al., 2012).

### **1.3 Chapter Conclusion**

My life is infused with contemplative practices from many traditions. Exploring lived experience and mindfulness related to education formed a natural intersection for my doctoral study. Although my ecclesiastical home is Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, Catholicism, and many other traditions and science enrich and inform my contemplative practices. Bentz and Shapiro (1998, p. 68) propose four primary functions of scholarly inquiry when attempting a mindful inquiry:

- personal transformation;
- the improvement of professional practice;
- the generation of knowledge; and
- an appreciation of the complexity, intricacy, structure and—some would say—beauty of reality.

I care about the topics and people this research investigates, and I hope this study fulfills each function outlined above.

I have gone through the Koru Mindfulness training and have taught several four-week Koru courses. I have used contemplative pedagogical practices in my teaching for many years. While I value contemplative practices, including mindfulness, I recognize contemplation can be disruptive. I am cautiously encouraged about the expansion of mindfulness in HEIs. While there are many things to consider, it is arguably the teacher who is at the center of the growth of mindfulness. Indeed, the teacher is the frontline gatekeeper to students' experience. This merits inquiry. This study investigates the lived experience of twelve Koru Mindfulness teachers, including me, by looking to answer the research question:

How is it possible to characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education?

### **1.4 Organization of Thesis**

Following this introduction, the thesis is organized into several chapters. First is the literature review, where I outline literature relevant to mindfulness teaching and teachers in higher education, including the growth of the use of MBIs in higher education and the well-being and

mental health issues of the students HEIs serve. In addition, I engage with literature on the purpose of higher education and the concern over an alleged therapeutic ethos in education. This leads to some criticisms of mindfulness in education, namely the commodification and McDonaldization of mindfulness and the levels of transparency and openness of mindfulness practice roots. The final sections of the literature present the Koru Mindfulness program and literature on mindfulness teachers in higher education. The study design and process methodology focusing on the Transcendental Method for Human Subjects is in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 outlines the analytical framework based on the work of Margaret Archer and a morphogenetic approach which informs the findings and discussion in Chapter 5. A concise summary of recommendations and the researcher's reflections conclude the thesis in Chapter 6.

**Chapter 2 Literature Review**

The Koru Mindfulness short courses Koru Basic and Koru 2.0 fit most neatly within the context of mindfulness-based interventions or mindfulness-based programs (MPS). The focus is on giving students first-person experiences with mindfulness practices that they can apply and use in their lives. Koru Mindfulness provides focused, systematic, and sustained training in mindfulness meditation practices. Each course is a stand-alone course running over four weeks and meets once a week. Some Koru teachers are qualified mental health professionals, including psychiatrists, psychologists, medical doctors, social workers, and counselors. However, being a mental health professional is not a requirement for Koru Mindfulness certification. Koru Mindfulness teachers may and do work in various capacities in higher education. The following section contextualizes mindfulness as part of wellness interventions in HEIs. However, most study participants teach HE content courses. Participants generally teach Koru as a stand-alone Koru course (outside of academic, credit-granting courses) in addition to their academic teaching, research, or staff responsibilities. Crane et al. (2017) have clarified essential and flexible ingredients programs and teachers should meet to be considered mindfulness-based programs (MBPs). Programs incorporating mindfulness differ from MBPs/MBIs, where the main pedagogical focus is mindfulness practices and sustained first-person experiences. The table below outlines how the Koru Mindfulness curriculum meets essential and flexible element criteria for MBPs set out by Crane et al. (2017, p. 993).

*Table 3: Essential and Flexible Ingredients of Mindfulness-based Programs*  
Adapted from (Crane, et al., 2017, p. 993)

	<b>Essential Elements</b>	<b>Flexible Elements</b>
<b>MPB</b>		
1.	Is informed by theories and practices that draw from a confluence of contemplative traditions, science, and the major disciplines of medicine, psychology, and education	The founders of Koru Mindfulness are medical doctors with specializations in psychiatry working in higher education. Their medical knowledge, specialization in psychiatry, work with young adults, and contemplative practices and traditions influenced the development of Koru Mindfulness.
2.	Is underpinned by a model of human experience which addresses the causes of human distress and the pathways to relieving it	Koru Mindfulness invites students into first-person experiences of contemplative practices, which, in turn, assist students in recognizing any underlying causes of their dis/stress and the distress of others. Koru Mindfulness training explicitly urges teachers to assist

		students in recognizing the value of pausing and responding to stressors rather than reacting. This way, students can make an informed and less emotionally charged response plan to stressors.
3.	Develops a new relationship with experience characterized by present-moment focus, decentering, and an approach orientation	The metaphor of a car stuck in mud illustrates how Koru Mindfulness fulfills essential element #3. Koru Mindfulness draws on metaphors to help students comprehend mindfulness-based concepts such as <i>acceptance</i> . In place of possible reactions such as anger, frustration, or blame, students are encouraged to <i>accept</i> the situation (dismiss unproductive reactions), reorient themselves to the reality that the car is stuck, decenter the focus on the stuck car, and move swiftly into problem-solving.
4.	Supports the development of greater attentional, emotional, and behavioral self-regulation, as well as positive qualities such as compassion, wisdom, equanimity	Koru Mindfulness encourages capacity growth for self-regulation and positive qualities through sustained mindfulness practices. The metaphor associated with capacity building uses increasing cup sizes (for example, doppio normale, demitasse, doppio lungo, latte/cappuccino). Each session has a reflective group discussion, and students are required to keep a reflective journal and log of their meditation practice length and type. Teachers use these opportunities to help students explore if and where their capacity in any area is building.
5.	Engages the participant in a sustained intensive training in mindfulness meditation practice, in an experiential inquiry-based learning process and in exercises to develop insight and understanding	Each Koru Mindfulness Basic and Koru 2.0 session includes teacher-led sustained mindfulness practices. A new mindfulness practice is introduced and practiced each week. Previously taught practices can also be revisited and built on. Students must practice <i>gratitudes</i> and some form of mindfulness meditation daily and keep a reflective journal and practice log. The teacher views these through hard copy records or the Koru Mindfulness app and teacher dashboard. There is continual monitoring of students through in-class discussion and teaching.
<b>MBP teacher</b>		
1.	Has particular competencies which enable the effective delivery of the MBP	Aspirant Koru Mindfulness teachers must meet criteria such as experience leading groups, personal mindfulness meditation practice, and completing Koru Mindfulness training. To maintain certification, KMTs must be in good standing with the Koru Mindfulness Center, update their training, and pay an annual fee.
2.	Has the capacity to embody the qualities and attitudes of mindfulness within the process of the teaching	KMTs' capacity to embody the qualities and attitudes of mindfulness within the teaching process is assessed by Koru Mindfulness teacher-trainers/faculty and regularly monitored through the certification renewal process.
3.	Has engaged in appropriate training and commits to ongoing good practice	Koru Mindfulness certification is at the discretion of the Koru Mindfulness Center and is only granted to aspirant KMTs who have met the appropriate training and exhibited good practice skills and sound judgment.

		Certification can only be maintained through ongoing involvement with the Koru Mindfulness Center and KMT community, including assessment of practice and paying fees.
4.	Is part of a participatory learning process with their students, clients or patients	Koru Mindfulness sessions are teacher-led experiential sessions that include group mindfulness meditation practices and group discussion and sharing. Each session introduces a new mindfulness practice and builds on previously taught and experienced mindfulness practices.
	<b>Flexible Elements</b>	<b>Koru Mindfulness</b>
<b>MBP</b>		
1.	The core essential curriculum elements are integrated with adapted curriculum elements and tailored to specific contexts and populations	Koru Mindfulness has been developed to consider the unique needs and developmental milestones of young adults attending HE. Consideration of specialized group needs, such as medical students, are mentioned during training and can be developed with the teacher beyond initial training.
2.	Variations in program structure, length, and delivery are formatted to fit the population and context	The Koru Mindfulness curriculum is designed for young/emerging adults studying in HEIs. The recommended 70-minute sessions and four-week course lengths have been established based on the founders' combined years of experience in designing and running courses at their university. Koru Mindfulness center staff showed adaptability during the Covid-19 pandemic by helping KMTs develop and deliver KM remotely to their students. KM also has a mobile/cell phone app for students and a dashboard for teachers.
<b>MBP Teacher</b>		
1.	Has knowledge, experience, and professional training related to the specialist populations that the mindfulness-based course will be delivered to	Koru training is designed for those working with young adult/emergent adult populations in higher education. Aspirant KMTs apply for acceptance into the KM training. In addition to aspirant KMTs' previous knowledge of and experience with young/emergent adults, teacher training also includes specialized training for young/emergent adults, presenting the program to HEI stakeholders for approval, and materials and suggestions for promoting the program on campus.
2.	Has knowledge of relevant underlying theoretical processes which underpin the teaching for particular contexts or populations	The KM training includes theoretical training on human development and well-being concerns for young/emergent adults in HE. This is in addition to KMT's previous knowledge of young/emergent adults and HE structures within their specialized teaching or practice areas.

My study included participants from North American higher education institutions, and much of the literature reviewed here reflects a North American emphasis. I felt that the research literature directly related to mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education was insufficient to craft a reliable literature base for this study. Handbooks and narrative accounts were more

available than peer-reviewed papers focusing on mindfulness teachers in HE. Therefore, I expanded the literature search and drew from broader categories, including contemplative education, mindfulness-based interventions, and additional relevant areas. I narrowed the scope of the review to areas directly relevant to and helpful for interpreting results, employing the analytical framework, and making recommendations in later chapters. This chapter provides an overview of the development of mindfulness as a well-being intervention. Literature discussing the purpose of education is included as a foundation for laying out some of the most relevant criticisms of mindfulness in higher education. The discrete Koru Mindfulness course is included in section 2.2 so that it can be read considering the literature base.

### **2.1 Mindfulness-based Interventions and Higher Education**

In North American HEIs, mental health interventions generally fall into one of two categories: traditional, non-mindfulness-based interventions and mindfulness-based interventions. These distinctions are not necessarily exclusive. Indeed, many campus-based mental health services draw on traditional and mindfulness-based interventions and use them in combination. "The theoretical standpoint of MBIs is that patients are not always equipped to make the most informed and conscious choices when meeting external stressors" (Federman & Ergas, 2018, p. 718). The Koru Mindfulness curriculum and program fits most neatly into the category of MBIs. On some campuses, it is a stand-alone program, and on others, it is used in conjunction with the university's well-being services. In mindfulness teaching, it is common to encourage the cultivation of reflection in different ways. One basic practice to help cultivate reflection is inviting students to pause before acting. Through practice, an individual's ability to respond to stressors rather than to react to stressors increases. Mindfulness practices to help individuals increase their capacity for stress and be less reactive and more responsive imply students are then able to deal more constructively with stress and make better decisions about coping with life events. An example is an emphasis on present-moment awareness, without judgment, and additionally engaging in wonder or curiosity about one's reaction or the actions of others. The inclusion of thinking about others in this way, as can also be found in *metta* or loving-kindness meditations (Fargo, 2022; Pidgeon, Ford, & Klaassen, 2014), may also nurture the cultivation of compassion and empathy with others and is included in the Koru Mindfulness curriculum.

Many contemplative practices draw from Eastern meditation practices. However, Langer (On Being, 2017) contends that instructing people to *be in the present moment* has become part



of folk psychology and is not particularly useful alone. Drawing on her research, including research on transcendental meditation (TM) and longevity (Alexander, Chandler, Langer, Newman, & Davies, 1989). Langer explains:

[M]indfulness, for me, is the very simple process of actively noticing new things. When you actively notice new things, that puts you in the present, makes you sensitive to context. [...] [T]he Eastern notions [of...] meditation is also useful, but it's quite different, and different ways of getting to the same place. Meditation, no matter what kind of meditation, is engaged to produce post-meditative mindfulness.

(On Being, 2017, para. 15,17)

Mindfulness is defined in many ways. These variations are used and privileged within different discourses. For example, the "Eastern" definition is privileged within the discourse of Buddhism, while the "Western" definition, exemplified by the work of Ellen Langer, is privileged within the discourse of academic social psychology (McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010). In the discourse of research on MBIs, mindfulness is generally presented as secular but is essentially "Eastern" due significantly to the clinical applications pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn and Buddhist influences inherent in MBSR (Grossman & Van Dam, 2013). Table 4: Survey of Mindfulness Definitions displays several possible definitions of mindfulness, including the Williams and Kabat-Zinn (2011) definition that Koru Mindfulness teachers generally use.

Table 4: Survey of Mindfulness Definitions

<b>Survey of Mindfulness Definitions</b>	
Present-centered, non-judgmental awareness	(Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2011, p. 6)
Mindfulness shows us what is happening in our bodies, our emotions, our minds, and in the world. Through mindfulness, we avoid harming ourselves and others.	(Hahn, 2013, p. 8)
Mindfulness isn't just about knowing that you're hearing something, seeing something, or even observing that you're having a particular feeling. It's about doing so in a certain way — with balance and equanimity, and without judgment. Mindfulness is the practice of paying attention in a way that creates space for insight.	(Salzberg, 2015, para. 9)
Broadly conceptualized, mindfulness has been described as a kind of nonelaborative, non-judgmental, present-centered awareness in which each	(Bishop, et al., 2004, p. 232)

thought, feeling, or sensation that arises in the attentional field is acknowledged and accepted as it is.	
Mindfulness can "best be understood as the process of drawing novel distinctions."	(Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 1).
Mindfulness is the aware, balanced acceptance of the present experience. It isn't more complicated than that. It is opening to or receiving the present moment, pleasant or unpleasant, just as it is, without either clinging to it or rejecting it.	(Boorstein, 1995, p. 60)
Mindfulness in its most general conception offers a new way of being aware that can serve as a gateway toward a more vital mode of being in the world. We become attuned to ourselves.[...] Mindfulness in its most general sense is about waking up from a life on-automatic. [...M]indfulness helps us awaken and with this reflection on the mind we make choices and change possible.	(Seigel, 2007, pp. 4,5)
Mindfulness is simply a state of open, nonjudgmental, and nondiscursive attention to the contents of consciousness, whether pleasant or unpleasant.	(Harris, 2011, para 5)

Traditional, non-MBI interventions on North American HEI campuses may include activities such as "prevention and outreach, support groups and workshops, individual counseling, and self-help" (Cieslak, et al., 2016, p. 109). Mindfulness-based interventions may be integrated into these types of traditional interventions or can stand alone. MBIs can take many forms. Cieslak et al. (2016) proposed six non-mutually exclusive categories of MBIs currently in use across North American HEIs. These include mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT), guided meditations and Yoga classes (individual and group), mindfulness-based technology, compassion training, and mindful eating. The Koru Mindfulness curriculum draws from all six categories.

Juberg et al. (2019) propose that "MBIs offer a viable treatment option for university behavioral health settings," especially for members of the university community who present "with a heterogeneous range of symptoms that may not be captured by a single diagnostic strategy" (p.195). Juberg et al. (2019) propose that for people who present with a varied range of symptoms, "one particular treatment strategy" may not adequately meet their treatment needs (p.195). Juberg et al. (2019) also propose that employing an MBI that focuses on transdiagnostic processes could help conserve already limited university behavioral health clinic resources. While MBIs may help conserve HEI health clinic resources, the ethicality of offering MBIs must

be maintained. The Greeson, Juberg, Maytan, James, & Rogers (2014) article outlines that Koru's positive outcomes are on par with MBSR. However, Witt (2015) uses this same study to suggest that Koru is an appropriate intervention for use in counseling injured female-student athletes. Advocates of MBIs for use in HEIs, especially those HEIs looking to economize, must be prudent in protecting both students and practitioners and use caution not to over-prescribe mindfulness as a panacea. It is encouraging to see relevant research continue to build and grow. For example, the progression from the Greeson (2014) article to the Juberg (2019) study indicates developing scholarship and scholars on mindfulness and HE. This study can add to these academic conversations. Additional cautions for employing MBIs in HEIs are included in Chapter 4.

The most widely recognizable clinical adaptation of mindfulness is mindfulness-based stress reduction. MBSR is generally considered the gold standard of clinical mindfulness programs due in part to its prominence and the body of related clinical research conducted on it. Subsequently derived mindfulness-based interventions are numerous (Carmody, 2014). MBSR was founded in 1979 by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn of the University of Massachusetts Medical Center (The Center for Mindfulness, 2017). The training programs combine Buddhist-derived meditative practices and dharma teachings with science, medicine, and psychology. Kabat-Zinn offers this understanding of dharma:

One might think of dharma as a sort of universal generative grammar (Chomsky 1965), an innate set of empirically testable rules that govern and describe the generation of the inward, first-person experiences of suffering and happiness in human beings. In that sense, dharma is at its core truly universal, not exclusively Buddhist. It is neither a belief, an ideology, nor a philosophy. Rather, it is a coherent phenomenological description of the nature of mind, emotion, and suffering and its potential release, based on highly refined practices aimed at systematically training and cultivating various aspects of mind and heart via the faculty of mindful attention.

(Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145, citation in original)

The program and training are generally presented as secular programs (The Center for Mindfulness, 2017; Carmody, 2014), as is Koru Mindfulness. MBSR, and related mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, are popular research areas and part of the larger landscape of mindfulness-based interventions associated with education-based wellness initiatives and clinical practice (Lao, Kissane, & Meadows, 2016; Roeser, 2016).

Another contribution to the Western application of mindfulness is the relaxation response pioneered by Dr. Herbert Benson. First published for general audiences in 1975, *The Relaxation Response* (Benson & Klipper) outlines Dr. Benson's technique for achieving deep relaxation, a technique developed partly from his research with Transcendental Meditation practitioners. TM utilizes a silent mantra meditation, the repeating of a word or phrase for an extended period, for example, twenty minutes. The book has been republished and updated several times, and research on the relaxation response continues today (Yeung, et al., 2014). Benson's work helped establish mind-body medicine and wellness skills training which have, in turn, informed the development of Koru Mindfulness. The Benson-Henry Institute (BHI) at Massachusetts General Hospital is an example of the field of mind-body medicine being integrated into clinical care, research, and training programs (Benson-Henry Institute, 2018). Notably, BHI offers training and certification for the BHI Stress Management and Resiliency Training (SMART) model, which includes relaxation response-based skills. In addition to clinical use, SMART continues to be adapted and researched in various settings, including general and medical education sectors as well as humanitarian and relief work (Babaei, Askarizadeh, & Towhidi, 2017; Benson-Henry Institute, 2018; Chemali, Smati, Johnson, Borba, & Fricchione, 2018; Dyrbye et al. 2017; Sood, Sharma, Schroeder, & Gorman, 2014).

The demand for student wellness support in North American HEIs is increasing, and MBIs are being integrated into approaches to meet those rising needs. For example, Newton and Ohrt (2018) incorporated mindfulness-based practices into group sessions to support students in processing grief and bereavement. In any 24 months, approximately 39-49% of HE students in North America have experienced grief due to death (Newton & Ohrt, 2018; Hardison H. G., 2005). Being a student complicates the grieving process, threatens academic progress, and increases the possibility of *complicated grief*, a form of prolonged bereavement that can result in long-term physical and psychological health concerns (Newton & Ohrt, 2018; Hardison H. G., 2005). Newton and Ohrt (2018) recognize that students are more likely to seek help if they are experiencing a lack of motivation, an inability to concentrate, anxiety and decreased academic performance, chronic pain, and trouble sleeping than they are for symptoms of grief. However, all these symptoms may be related to a student's grief (Hardison, Neimyer, & Lichstein, 2005; Janowiak, Mei-Tal, & Drapkin, 1995; Sagula & Rice, 2004; Servaty-Seib & Hamilton, 2006). In considering the available literature, I propose that there may be a disparity between the levels of grief experienced by students and grief support offered by HEIs. This disparity could imply a

lack of appreciation for the impact of grief on students by HEIs. Mindfulness integrated into HEI-offered group work for bereaved students is an example of where mindfulness can be integrated into HEI well-being and support programs. In this section, I highlight Kabat-Zinn's MBSR and Benson's mind-body medicine because each program is historically relevant to the development of mindfulness programs in North America, including Koru. Before collaborating and developing the Koru program, Dr. Maytan had been using mind-body medicine with students, and Dr. Rogers had been using Buddhist-inspired mindfulness practices (Rogers & Maytan, 2012). Koru Mindfulness is typically taught discretely as a stand-alone program and, in my opinion, fits more neatly into the area of MBIs. Therefore, although I believe the Koru Mindfulness curriculum can be adapted to support pedagogical applications, the emphasis of this literature review will be on mindfulness in support of well-being. This is in keeping with the consensus made by Crane et al.(2017) that MBSR and MBCT have created the base on which most contemporary mindfulness-based programs (MBPs) and MBIs have been built or informed by. Given that both Koru founders are MDs/Psychologists and MBSR is referred to in the Koru training, I believe it is safe to conclude that Koru fits within the scope of MBPs/MBIs informed by MBSR.

MBIs are being used to support students in many ways, including stress reduction, academic evaluation anxiety, eating disorders, and substance abuse. However, using MBIs or any intervention in support of student well-being raises issues about the purpose of higher education and the role of HEIs. The following section discusses student well-being and the notion of a therapeutic culture or ethos in education and how this relates to MBIs and mindfulness teachers.

### **2.1.1 Student well-being and a therapeutic ethos**

Student well-being and student wellness are often used interchangeably. This is due, in part, to the difficulty in defining what wellness and well-being are. In their multi-disciplinary review of well-being research, Dodge, Daly, Huyton, and Sanders (2012) conclude that most well-being research has focused on expressing the nature of well-being rather than providing a definition for well-being. The authors contend a definition of well-being is needed and offer one centered on a state of equilibrium, drawing attention to the difference between the description and the definition of a construct.

Ng and Fisher (2013) propose that well-being is typically argued as either one's subjectively perceived functioning or related to a person's objective conditions and broader environment, namely quality of life. Quality of life social indicators is typically used at the

policy level. Ng and Fisher contend that well-being research must extend beyond this subjective/objective dichotomy and “acknowledge, if not embrace, the dynamic interaction and reciprocal nature of multi-level well-being” (p. 318). Multi-level well-being “highlights the mediating role of immediate settings, experiences, organizations or communities” and “signals the importance of the inter-relationship between person and environment” (p.317) rather than viewing well-being as either an individual attribute or external conditions. This illustrates some of the complexities of defining and supporting well-being on an individual and a policy level.

Student wellness and well-being are part of the HEI landscape. The focus of this section is to outline different types of student wellness issues HEIs face and juxtapose those to the idea of a therapeutic culture in education. This brief exploration will help establish a base for understanding concerns and criticisms of mindfulness in higher education, considered later in the chapter. The next section begins by broadly outlining student wellness issues.

Perez and Ode (2013) identified five broad areas in which current topics on student wellness issues in higher education might be categorized. These include emotional, social, intellectual, physical, and spiritual wellness (Perez & Ode, 2013). Their edited volume of sixteen authors, all working in higher education, explores issues of health and well-being and education and well-being as it relates to wider social impact. Ultimately, they propose that curriculum and projects should be aligned with the "mission of stewardship" (Perez & Ode, 2013, p. 2). Aligning curriculum and projects requires HEIs to employ an interdisciplinary approach to student well-being. Modifications to the Teaching-Research-Service expectations should be made within HE models to "include skills needed among faculty to include projects, curriculum, and initiatives that can emerge from real-life problems" (Perez & Ode, 2013, p. 2). Perez and Ode (2013) recognize the broad range of areas in which student wellness should be considered. They also propose that faculty be aware of and contribute to wellness initiatives. Recognition of the student as a whole person is in keeping with proponents of contemplative, integrated, and transformational education. Perez and Ode (2013) notably call for HEIs to equip faculty with the skills necessary to adjust their practice and overtly aim to leverage real-world problems in their teaching, research, and service to impact student well-being. The notion that faculty should be equipped with skills by their HEI brings into focus questions regarding the purpose of higher education and the role of higher education professionals. One long-standing area of research is the affective domain or emotional wellness of teaching and learning.

Emotional wellness is one aspect of student well-being. The affective domain of learning and teaching has been legitimized as a component of higher education pedagogy through the work of Rogers (1969; 1980) and subsequently influenced authors who recognize that learning can justifiably involve ideas and feelings (Palmer, 1997; Ranson, 1998; Beard, Clegg, & Smith, 2007). Although the impact of emotions on learning is well documented, the purpose of HEIs and the role higher education professionals have in supporting student wellness, including emotional wellness, has not reached a consensus. Furedi (2004) coined the term *therapy culture*, which essentially asserts that contemporary society has turned so far toward emotions that a therapeutic imperative has emerged in Anglo-American societies. Consequently, personhood has become redefined by an assumption of vulnerability. For Furedi (2004), a therapy culture is characterized by an emphasis on pathology, vulnerability, and emotionalism. This vulnerability is inherent in terms such as *at-risk* and pathologizes what had previously been considered normal stress of life. This move toward a therapeutic ethos has disrupted society, including education. Furedi has influenced others. For example, Ecclestone and Hayes (2008) contend that a therapeutic education is dangerous and leads to students developing a diminished self and hinders student development and resilience. Teachers consequently limit academically challenging their students so as not to disrupt them emotionally. In turn, students are forced to become dependent on authority figures and act in ways pleasing to authorities rather than expressing themselves freely. Ecclestone and Hayes (2008) state that therapeutic education does not "lift young people out of everyday problems, whether those problems are banal or serious. Instead [it] immerses young people in an introspective, instrumental curriculum of the self, and turns schools into vehicles for the latest political and popular fad to engineer the right sort of citizen" (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2008, p. 64). Bruinila (2012) comes to a similar conclusion of students acquiring a diminished self, positing:

"The entrepreneurial ethos and the therapeutic ethos represent power. This power shapes and retools young adults to fit in with its needs without using force or domination, but rather by enabling them as targets to realise what is supposedly good for them. In this way, flexibility and self-responsibility mean a diminished self, a limited possibility to speak and to be heard by ensuring that one implicitly learns to find mistakes in oneself and blame only oneself". (Bruinila, 2012, p. 484)

Thus, the question arises, what are students learning about themselves, power structures, and their place in the world? Purser (2019) proposes that much of the teaching of mindfulness is

guided by a therapeutic ethos "aimed at enhancing the mental and emotional resilience of individuals," claiming this endorses neo-liberal assumptions that "everyone is free to choose their responses, manage negative emotions and 'flourish' through various modes of self-care" (p.11). Purser (2019) asserts that most teachers of mindfulness "rule out a curriculum that critically engages with the causes of suffering in the structures of power and economic systems of capitalist society" (p.11). Within higher education, there are clear examples that counter this. For example, Law Professor Rhonda Magee (2019) integrates mindfulness in her teaching and speaking, addressing racial justice disparities. Similarly, Beth Berila, Ph.D. (2016) incorporates mindfulness and other contemplative practices into her teaching and work, including integrating "mindfulness and somatics into her work in unlearning and healing from oppression" (2022, p. para. 3). In this thesis, Appendix B: Collected First-person Narratives from Published Works contains first-person narratives, many of which reference critically engaging with social problems. Within higher education, Purser's critique of mindfulness has some clear opposition.

However, two salient issues arise from these criticisms for this thesis. First is the central role of the teacher to make decisions about what and how mindfulness is taught and integrated into their teaching. And secondly, it is important to recognize that each person is also negotiating those decisions within structures of power and economic systems. Employing the analytical framework in this thesis assists in finding ways to consider the context in which teaching takes place and the constraints and enablements a teacher encounters. These constraints and enablements may or may not contribute to mindfulness curricula that marginalize or ignore sources of suffering. The benefit I received from incorporating a morphogenetic approach to my data analysis is a heightened awareness that I must consider the cultural and social structures in which individuals and groups are making choices. I present this in more depth in Chapter 4.

Mindfulness encourages awareness, both a focused awareness on one's immediate experience and an open awareness beyond the self. In this way, mindfulness creates an opportunity for shifts in mindset, a change in one's relationship to stress, and, potentially, a greater open awareness of and curiosity about causation. The loosely defined notion of a therapeutic ethos may exist or may have existed in various forms. But drawing from Coontz (2016), nostalgia may obscure a clear understanding of the current education environment for students by harkening back to a time that never was. Whatever the case, rather than returning to a time before "therapeutic culture" was coined, one must consider how to move forward in the service of students and faculty and the role education plays in society.



More than a decade after Furedi and his initial influence, it is undeniable that there has been an increased demand for and proliferation of campus-based student wellness services. For example, the American College Health Association surveys have found that students are reporting higher rates of depression, loneliness, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. This generation of students may lack resilience, which in turn can impact their abilities to overcome challenges and face difficulties in their undergraduate years, thus leading to the problems reported by the American College Health Association (ACHA) survey (American College Health Association, 2019). Given that college is such an important developmental period for young adults, it is necessary to understand students' mental health struggles as they seek to integrate their intellectual and social development and the role higher education plays. Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm (2005) voice concern that HE's emphasis on rational empiricism and narrowing focus on professional and occupational training "has led to the neglect of larger social issues concerning authenticity, spiritual growth, identity and integrity, purpose and meaning (p. 6).

With the massification and commodification of higher education on the rise, more diverse populations are accessing higher education, including access through technology. Consequently, HEIs are competing for market share. I propose that HEIs have a responsibility toward their students' well-being in addition to their vested monetary interest. HEIs should prioritize student well-being as the line between student and customer becomes more blurred. However, it seems reasonable to posit that part of that responsibility is avoiding creating environments that cultivate diminished self-worth, learned helplessness, or lack enough substance to support a growth mindset (Claro, Paunesku, & Dweck, 2016; Crum, Jamieson, & Akinola, 2020). This brings back into focus the purpose of education and the role of the teacher.

Limiting the purpose of education exclusively to intellectual development negates the complexity of the human experience, the influence of emotions on learning, and the benefits of integration of the self. Clegg (2004) voices concern that the production of self rather than the discovery of self has become the goal of higher education. There are those who may see the inclusion of emotional wellness in opposition to the purpose of higher education. However, it is important to recognize that students in the United States report that stress, anxiety, depression, and sleep difficulties as the top negative impacts on their academic performance, meaning they "received a lower grade on an exam, or an important project; received a lower grade in the course; received an incomplete or dropped the course; or experienced a significant disruption in thesis, dissertation, research, or practicum work" (American College Health Association, 2019,

p. 5). Mindfulness interventions offer complementary approaches to help encourage better outcomes for students. Mindfulness-based interventions neither promote nor deny the value of emotional experience, but neither do they suggest an unmitigated encouragement of positive self-esteem or emotionalism. This is done through drawing attention to the present moment without judgment and experiencing either focused attention or open awareness of experience. This absence of judgment provides an opportunity for observation and, ultimately, an acknowledgment of the situation *as it is* so that action can be taken. The observational, judgment-free nature of mindfulness-based interventions asks the individual to observe, understand, and then act. A student's self-esteem is neither stoked nor diminished through the first-person process of gaining awareness. In addition, students are encouraged to make informed choices and take appropriate action from the insights that arise from their mindfulness practices. In describing this process, Chang (2018) argues that "the key to deciding between non-doing or action is in our wise-discernment, which at salient times can empower a practitioner not be a 'doormat,' but instead to sidestep metaphorical 'boulders'" (p.25). Thus, mindfulness is not an endless cycle of introspection but a step in a practice of both inward and outward observation and reflection leading to an understanding of the self and the self in relationship to the other and the wider community on which action non-doing or action takes place. Chang's argument comes in response to the "McMindfulness" critique, just one of several critiques leveled against the current surge in mindfulness practices. The following section outlines and addresses critiques directly aimed at mindfulness in education contextualized in today's higher education landscape.

### **2.1.2 Critiques of mindfulness teaching in higher education**

Criticisms of mindfulness in higher education and beyond focus largely on two areas: the teaching of mindfulness and the origins of mindfulness practices. One criticism is that mindfulness is being McDondalized into a sort of "McMindfulness" that is unwittingly leveraged, usually by well-intentioned teachers of mindfulness, to support capitalism and a neo-liberal agenda without addressing the structural and cultural conditions that create the need for stress management. A second area of concern is the relationship between the contemporary teaching of mindfulness and the inherent, but often not acknowledged, contemplative roots in spiritual practices and religious traditions. This can be problematic in several areas, including the appropriation of spiritual traditions, the distancing of mindfulness from ethical teaching, and the lack of transparency in teaching, which can lead to "stealth Buddhism" and the like. "Stealth" Buddhism refers to providing teaching based on spiritual concepts without being transparent with

learners. Although the “stealth” critique is typically, and I posit, unfortunately, collocated with Buddhism, I propose that any teaching that includes unstated goals for the learner is problematic. This next section focuses on these main critiques of mindfulness in the higher education context. The criticisms are revisited again in the discussion chapter.

### ***2.1.2.1 Commodification, McDonalidization, Teacher Certification, and Criteria for Best Practices***

Commodification is a critique of both mindfulness and higher education (Chaplin & Forseth, 2015; Hyland, 2016; Plante, 2016). "McDonalidization" is the application of principles from the fast food industry, namely efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control, to other industries, organizations, and sectors of society (Wienclaw, 2019). This includes higher education. Coined by George Ritzer (1993), the concept of McDonalidization arises from Max Weber's concept of rationality and is an example of how processes can be reduced to their most elemental steps, made as rational as possible, and thus threaten to "reduce the ability of human beings to use their creative and imaginative powers and their ability to do things for themselves" (Wienclaw, 2019, p. 2). Hayes (2017) contends that the McDonalidization of Higher Education has failed in its attempt to "rationalize and improve higher education for students and academics" (p4) in part due to the turn toward a therapeutic culture in education and that a therapeutic culture "does not create active human agents" (p.11). Purser (2019) too proposes that mindfulness is guided by a therapeutic ethos "aimed at enhancing the mental and emotional resilience of individuals," claiming this endorses the neo-liberal assumptions that "everyone is free to choose their responses, manage negative emotions and 'flourish' through various modes of self-care" (p.11). However, unlike other critics of the therapeutic ethos, Purser (2019) criticizes this framing because not everyone *is* free to choose and posits that most teachers of mindfulness "rule out a curriculum that critically engages with the causes of suffering in the structures of power and economic systems of capitalist society" (p.11). Purser (2019) calls for the inclusion of such topics into teaching, including the teaching of mindfulness. Purser's insistence on the inclusion of troubling topics is in stark contrast to academics such as Frank Ellis, who proposes to skirt the topics altogether. Ellis, like Purser, finds fault with a therapeutic ethos. However, Ellis proposes to withdraw such departments in which systemic causes of stress, exploitation, disenfranchisement, and suffering may be explored and potentially remedied.

Higher education is now expected to be inclusive which means that it must host a miscellany of pseudo-intellectual misfits – gender studies and black studies are two

obvious examples – which are hostile to notions of intellectual rigour, objective truth, evidence and, above all, as this author can personally attest, to free speech and academic freedom. Gender studies and black studies have no place in a university: they are little more than grievance factories; they should be targeted for immediate closure. Vice chancellors, university secretaries, the heads of departments and schools, who do not defend the essentials of a university for reasons of ideological and financial expediency, or who fail out of plain cowardice to confront the charlatans, cease to preside over a university. (Ellis, (2010) in Cox, 2017, p. 57)

So, while there may be an agreement by some to the existence of a therapeutic ethos in education, the approaches to remedying this can be seen as quite different, and thus again, the question of the purpose of higher education is raised. Pedagogically, studies such as Ergas and Hadar's (2021) eight-year study show that both personal and educational transformations can occur even with students who do not continue a formal mindfulness practice beyond the length of the HE courses. Students who participated in mindfulness-based HE courses experienced effects consistent with MBSR and Koru Mindfulness programs, such as stress reduction as well as transformational educational experiences (Ergas & Hadar, 2021). The authors posit that "many students recognized mindfulness as an educational practice that had transformed their view of the nature of education and sometimes of life itself" (Ergas & Hadar, 2021, p. 1). One study respondent noted, "Education is the turning to independent thinking, to self-discovery and development. Enjoyment is not necessarily a part of it, and sometimes suffering *is*. Suffering engenders questioning far more than comfort" (Ergas & Hadar, 2021, p. 21). Drawing primarily on expository writing, it may be difficult to differentiate between the type of therapeutic ethos proposed by either Ellis (2010) or Purser (2019) and the type of caring education championed by supporters of CE and mindfulness in HE. I propose this is, in part, due to the embodied, phenomenological experiences associated with contemplative practice and justifies why studies that invite creative and innovative opportunities for reflective exploration into lived experiences are needed to ensure an ethical and validated way forward. Insufficient academic research may, in part, create space for practices that are, in fact, not helpful and may even cause harm. Selected criticisms of mindfulness are explored in the following sections. The McDonalidization of mindfulness and "stealth" Buddhism are highlighted because they are major criticisms, and Koru Mindfulness may be susceptible to these criticisms.

McMindfulness typically refers to a type of mindfulness teaching that is a set program and may be exploitative. For example, mindfulness could be exploitative in a workplace "where a non-judgmental approach could position employees to experience passive exploitation" by their employer (Chang, 2018, p. 25). McMindfulness is usually reproducible, "cookie cutter" training sessions that comply with a set format, typically offered in organizations, often with required attendance, and may be described as secular. Lemon and McDonough (2018) strongly reject the value of mindfulness teaching programs that are susceptible to McDonaldization in the academy. They claim the following types of approaches represent McMindfulness and separate out the deeply held principles of mindfulness understood correctly.

[Mindfulness] is not the cure to [complex shifts in HE]. It is not an intervention, a program offered through Human Resources (HR) to alleviate stress, nor is it a short one day off-site training that is undertaken to 'fix' the problems that exist in contemporary higher education contexts. It does not cure stress alone. It is not a one size fits all. It is not a script. It is not to be used in an instrumental way to enable academics to become more productive. It is not about being told to be more mindful, or to meditate so you can display mindful qualities. It is not a microchip that is placed within one's brain that translates into actions, strategies and ways of being.

(Lemon & McDonough, 2018, pp. 262,263)

Lemon and McDonough (2018) contend that the current academic is working in a new model of education, and what it has meant to be an academic has changed. However, McMindfulness or Uber-mindful approaches outlined above separate the deeply held principles of mindfulness from practice. This is damaging to the practice and the potential benefits. They assert mindfulness allows individuals to look at situations with openness and curiosity and that mindfulness "is a way of being. It comes from the heart. It comes from an individual. It comes from a way of being and experiencing the world. It develops over time and can look different for different people" (Lemon & McDonough, 2018, p. 263).

The inquiry into appropriate and best practices of mindfulness in higher education ought to be explored by understanding the current culture and context of higher education and how mindfulness is being used. First, mindfulness teaching is typically viewed as an additional skill or approach higher education professionals are adding to their primary qualifications. This primary qualification may be in a person's teaching discipline, such as law, history, mathematics, physics, art, drama, anthropology, literature, and so on. Likewise, faculty and staff working

primarily with wellness programs may seek additional training and certification. Here one's primary qualification is likely to be in psychology, nursing, social work, counseling, educational leadership, or similar. In addition to receiving training, some may seek to add mindfulness to their professional qualification. They may seek formal certification in addition to their primary academic or professional qualifications, for example, Koru Mindfulness or MBSR.

MBSR remains the most widely recognizable qualification in mindfulness training, and developers of other mindfulness teaching programs often refer to MBSR (Crane, et al., 2017). The list of training options seems ever increasing. At present, there is no one national or international body ultimately recognized to regulate or evaluate all mindfulness programs. However, there are assessment tools available for practitioners and certification-granting organizations. For example, Mindfulness-Based Interventions - Teaching Assessment Criteria (Bangor University, 2021) has been shown to be a reliable and valid tool for assessing the impact of teacher integrity on student outcomes (Crane, et al., 2013). Drawing from psychology, Goodman (2016) cautions that the idea of a definitive best practice contributes to the McDonalidization of psychotherapy and is linked to a neoliberal marketplace.

One problem is that patients—in this neoliberal, capitalistic marketplace of ours—have already had their desire and self-understanding shaped to such a degree that the deck is loaded (Binkley, 2011; Brown, 2015). Subjectivity is already oriented and positioned for symptom-oriented and symptom-reduction based languages. Marketing has been effective and—as always—links well with the economic needs of an existing system. So, when a patient comes into the room and says, “I want ‘Cognitive Behavioral’ treatment,” we must imagine where they learned this and how it jibes with a particular approach to product acquisition. (Goodman D. M., 2016, p. 88)

It is, therefore, prudent to think carefully about accreditation and certification for mindfulness teaching to simultaneously support mindfulness and minimize mindfulness McDonalidization. Since the teaching of mindfulness is so available in popular culture, students and HEI staff and faculty may already feel that they know what mindfulness teaching is, like Goodman's experience of patients wanting a specific type of treatment. Although guidelines and tools are to be expected, the primary indicator of the quality of the teaching of mindfulness is the qualities of the teacher and their depth of experience and understanding of how to invite students into experiencing mindfulness for themselves. Kabat-Zinn (2013) speaks to the central and essential importance of the trainer when he writes:

(MBSR) was developed as one of a possibly infinite number of skillful means for bringing the dharma into mainstream settings. It has never been about MBSR for its own sake. It has always been about the M. And the M is a very big M [...] That said, the quality of MBSR as an intervention is only as good as the MBSR instructor and his or her understanding of what is required to deliver a truly mindfulness-based program. (Kabat-Zinn, 2013, p. 281).

Here we see the centrality of the mindfulness teacher in delivering quality programming and Kabat-Zinn's reference to the dharma, a term used in Buddhism and Hinduism. This reminds us that various mindfulness practices have historical roots in religious traditions. Many teachers of mindfulness have come to the practice through their own spiritual traditions. Hyland (2017) posits that McM mindfulness correlates with the McDonalidization of spirituality as well. The next section considers spirituality in higher education, the notion of "stealth" Buddhism, and transparency and authenticity in the teaching of mindfulness.

#### ***2.1.2.2 "Stealth" Buddhism and Spirituality in Higher Education***

"Stealth" Buddhism refers to the teaching of mindfulness meditation as a Buddhist practice connected to Buddhist values without openly acknowledging it. The criticism is not with Buddhism but rather with teaching mindfulness and promoting a value or belief system without being transparent with learners. A well-publicized claim of "stealth" Buddhism in the United States is *The MindUP Curriculum* for K-8 classrooms, published through Scholastic Books, in which the terms "Buddhism" and "meditation" are replaced with "neuroscience" and "Core Practice" (Brown, 2016, p. 85; 2019). This is allegedly done to make mindfulness more palatable to those who may be uncomfortable with the idea of participating in Buddhist meditation practices. "Stealth" Buddhism, secular Buddhism, and Buddhist Trojan Horse all convey the notion of mindfulness teaching infused with some level of Buddhist teachings that intentionally or unintentionally indoctrinates participants with Buddhist values (Brown C. G., 2016).

However, given the covert nature of "stealth" Buddhism, those values are watered down. I would argue that the criticism of "stealth" Buddhism is a misleading term in that the criticism could be levied against any indoctrination agenda set out by contemplative practice teachers that fail to acknowledge or disclose any personal or curricular value commitments they are advocating. So while most mindfulness programs taught outside of a religious tradition or community may be rooted in Buddhist mindfulness practices (Crane, et al., 2017), this does not automatically infer that the mindfulness teacher is propagating Buddhist teachings. Without additional study into

mindfulness teachers' motivations and practices, I propose that the term “stealth” Buddhism is a criticism too narrowly levied on the Buddhist community and may be distracting from any core issues of ethics and moral judgment within the larger mindfulness teaching community.

Similar to the distancing of practice and values found in “stealth” Buddhism, Hyland (2017) contends that the marketization and commodification of MBIs have resulted in McM mindfulness and thus-

divorces mindfulness from its spiritual and ethical origins in Buddhist traditions. [...]

Without such an ethical and educational foundation – actively connected with engaged Buddhist foundations aimed at individual and social transformation – mindfulness becomes just another fashionable self-help gimmick that is unlikely to be of any lasting individual or social benefit. (Hyland, 2017, p. 1)

Although criticism may be justified, these claims reflect the long-reaching influence of MBIs, and the Buddhist roots incorporated into the original MBSR program from which they developed. This highlights the narrow Buddhist-only lens to which some attribute mindfulness and contemplative practices. Ergas (2014) has described mindfulness as being grounded in both Western monotheistic traditions as well as East-Asian traditions yet currently embarking into a “blurry terrain” in education (p.70). Compson (2017) points out that concepts such as “religion” and “secular” are ever-evolving concepts, often defined in opposites or binaries. Compson (2017) argues, “Rather than debating whether mindfulness is or is not Buddhist or religious, my suggestion is that a better question to focus on is ‘is mindfulness helping in reducing suffering?’, be that on an individual or corporate level” (p.39). Regardless, it is likely that there will be objections on any number of fronts, as expressed here by Gravois (2005).

There’s no place for [mindfulness meditation] in the academy. This is spirituality in the classroom. This is Buddhism Lite. Meditative silence is a home for the demonic. How can you grade inner experience? This is pseudoscience. You can do the same thing with Prozac. How do you justify having students pay all those tuition dollars to do ... nothing? (Gravois, 2005, p. 10)

The objections outlined by Gravois (2005) highlight the necessity for transparency and self-reflection by scholar-practitioners as well as the larger contemplative community in HE. HEIs that offer mindfulness courses, such as Koru, may use venues related to faith groups, yoga, or meditation, as well as typical on-campus classrooms, wellness and medical centers, and student learning support offices (Master's in Psychology Network, 2020). Rather than shun spirituality, it



is possible to appreciate that spiritual traditions can offer hope and pathways into community and understanding of self and one's inner wisdom (Palmer, 1993). Palmer (1983, 1993) recognizes that wisdom traditions, the core wisdom shared between religious or spiritual traditions, offer much for the spirituality of education as a means by which educators can reconnect with inner wisdom and community. However, he also acknowledges that "past marriages of religion and education have done education at least as much harm as good" and that spiritual traditions have been used "to obstruct inquiry rather than encourage it," leading to a fear of truth rather than a welcoming of truth "in all its forms" (Palmer, 1993, p. xi). Palmer encourages respect for spiritual traditions other than one's own and an openness to learn from them. Wisdom traditions add a sense of positive contribution to society as "the cultural outcomes, including religion, philosophies, myths, songs and written texts, which all people, primitive or civilized, have produced to pass down their knowledge to future generations" (Blomme & van Hoof, 2014, p. 4). This spacious understanding of wisdom traditions accommodates religious movements, secular philosophies, as well as Western and Eastern philosophies. An open, non-prescriptive understanding of and appreciation for various spiritual, religious, and philosophical paths is helpful in looking at the origins of mindfulness meditation and in considering contemporary mindfulness meditation in higher education. Gallagher (2007) encourages educators to view teaching as an intentional act of intellectual hospitality, of welcoming the stranger and inviting students to join various conversations about essential issues such as religion.

One of the fundamental purposes of education in the liberal arts [is] to situate students' experience in the "here and now" in terms of multiple instances of "there" (other cultures) and "then" (other times). The comparative study of religion aims to fulfill that purpose by inviting students to entertain a variety of "what if" questions that can provide multiple points of entry into the religious worlds of others. That process of entertaining seriously how others make meaning of the world through their religious acts and convictions, much more than the factual knowledge it yields, is the beginning of religious literacy.

Eugene Gallagher (Connecticut College, 2018, para. 12)

Holding this type of hospitality is useful for understanding the origins of contemporary meditation practices as well as recognizing similarities across traditions. Hospitality also holds space for an appreciation of spiritual practices without the necessity to abide by or believe in the doctrine or dogma associated with various traditions. Mindfulness training can be an entry point for students, and the ethicality of transparency is central. Sheldrake (2017) proposes that

meditation is a spiritual practice that is recognizable across many traditions. Acknowledging the origins of practices, as well as the historical linguistic use of "mindfulness," can help address some of the concerns and criticisms around the teaching of mindfulness and better equip teachers to meet student needs as well as their own for authenticity and transparency in teaching (Sun, 2014).

Spirituality is increasingly important to students, evidenced by the responses of HEIs to accommodate student interests (Master's in Psychology Network, 2020). For example, the University of Chicago has introduced a Spiritual Life Office with the aim to support "students, faculty, and staff from any religious background, as well as those seeking non-traditional spiritual options" (Master's in Psychology Network, 2020, para. 22). Additionally, the breadth and scope of student offerings and inclusion of traditions over various HEIs is notable. Thirty HEIs were spotlighted as leading the way in meditation for mental health "because of a dedication to the research and information of the human brain, as well as a passion for spreading the knowledge and benefits of meditation on mental health" (Master's in Psychology Network, 2020, para. 1). Within those thirty HEIs student groups to provide support to students from different backgrounds. Some of the groups represented across those thirty HEIs include Atheist, Humanist, Secular, Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Wiccan, Quaker, Sikh, Universalist, and Zoroastrian. There are also five types of meditation programs, including Samatha Meditation, Zen Meditation, the Art of Living Foundation, Mindfulness Meditation, and Twenty Minutes Still. The Art of Living Foundation focuses on managing stress, increasing focus, and teaching meditation skills. Mindfulness Meditation is designed to teach mindful meditation outside of a religious context. Twenty Minutes Still is offered every weekday morning for members of any religious and spiritual tradition. (Masters in Psychology Network, 2020, para. 22).

While it is unreasonable to expect that everyone teaching a mindfulness course be a comparative religious scholar, what is reasonable is to expect mindfulness teachers in HEIs to have a broad understanding of mindfulness taught in their context. For example, Koru Mindfulness courses use Jon Kabat-Zinn's widely used definition of mindfulness: "learning to pay attention, without judgment, to your present moment experience" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). In this way, mindfulness teachers can provide students with a working definition and a framework of mindfulness for use in the immediate context of the training without denying or diminishing the evolving and continuing conversations and contentions around defining

mindfulness. Carmody (2014) recognizes the complexity of the Eastern and Western approaches and states, "Since no universally agreed-upon criterion is on the horizon, it is unlikely that views on the "true" nature of mindfulness will be reconciled [...] Therefore, it may be helpful to scrutinize the perceptual skills trainees are asked to cultivate in the training exercises" (p.49). Similarly, McCown, Reibel, and Micozzi (2010) encourage mindfulness teachers and their class participants to come to deeply understand the definition and discourse of mindfulness in their own contexts. Teachers of mindfulness and students will be better served by understanding the origins and contemporary applications of mindfulness practices rather than avoiding the complexities that accompany them.

The following section outlines the Koru Mindfulness program, followed by a discussion of contemplative practitioners in contemporary higher education.

## **2.2 Koru Mindfulness**

Koru has been evaluated for efficacy (Greeson et al., 2014), and the Greeson et al. (2014) study is used in promotional material by Koru Mindfulness. The study results compare Koru favorably to results seen in MBSR. In addition to expressive writing and [cognitive processing therapy] CPT, "Koru Meditation" was highlighted and proposed as a treatment intervention "to target anxiety, the psychological impact of sustaining an injury, and other mental health concerns" in university-aged female athletes (Witt, 2015, p. 97). Koru Mindfulness (KM) was also studied in relation to helping students cope with Covid-19 stress. KM participants reported increased mindfulness over the duration of treatment. The increase in mindfulness predicted, "lower stress and anxiety outcomes" (Weis, Ray, & Cohen, 2020, p. 9). This most recent study is of particular interest because "most mindfulness-based intervention studies involving college students have not assessed mindfulness as an outcome measure or examined whether changes in mindfulness explained the benefits of treatment" (Bamber, Bamber, & Schneider, 2016; Weis, Ray, & Cohen, 2020).

An example of how Koru Mindfulness is being used is seen in the Indiana University of Pennsylvania's (IUP) Mindfulness Living and Learning Community (MLLC) (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 2020). IUP's Mindfulness Living and Learning Community offers courses and resources for faculty and students. IUP's MLLC mission includes providing opportunities for students to "develop a personal mindfulness practice, deepen the capacity for insight and reflection; learn ways to reduce stress and increase confidence; and cultivate a more compassionate attitude toward themselves and others" (Indiana University of Pennsylvania,

2020, para. 3). The MLLC information page encapsulates much of how mindfulness is presented in HEIs by highlighting limitations in the current education system and recognizing how mindfulness can assist in navigating learning, reduce stress, and regulate emotion.

Our education system is rooted in the traditions of rational thinking and outward observation. Mindfulness offers us a different perspective on what it means to be focused and engaged. As our culture becomes increasingly interconnected and digitalized, it can be difficult to keep up due to constant interruptions, multiple demands, and the stressors of daily life. Learning mindfulness skills can empower students by increasing their capacity to become more present and aware of thoughts and emotions. (Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 2020, paras. 1,2)

Although the Koru method can be adapted for any population, it has a specific focus on serving young adults. The Koru Mindfulness program focuses on "teaching mindfulness, meditation and stress-management to college students and other young adults" (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018b). Required readings and resources for Koru Mindfulness teachers have included works by Jeffrey Arnett (2000, 2004, 2014), who first proposed the term *emerging adulthood* to describe a phase of life distinct from young adulthood and adolescence. Emerging adulthood is a theoretical framework that recognizes the end of adolescence and the beginning of young adulthood as a distinct life stage, and most north American students in higher education fall into this demographic (Arnett J. J., 2015; Lowe & Arnett, 2020). In many countries and societies, three key markers for reaching adult status include "accepting responsibility for oneself, making independent decisions, and becoming financially independent" (Arnett J. J., 2007, p. 69). In America and other similarly industrialized societies, emerging adults are typically "twenty-somethings" who are experiencing a lengthening of time in reaching traditional criteria for adulthood (Arnett & Tanner, 2006). Emergent adults may also experience extended time in higher education as well as prolonged job instability and time taken to become financially independent (Arnett & Tanner, 2006). Tribble (2015) coined the acronym SIIP as a mnemonic device to assist in remembering Arnett's five defining features of emergent adulthood, noting "[o]ne might think of an emerging adult taking a long "siiip" of life before making final commitments" (p.4). These five features include **s**elf-focus; **i**nstability; a feeling of being **i**n-between; **i**ntity exploration; and **p**ossibilities/optimism (Arnett, 2000; 2004; 2006; 2014). This prolonged path to adulthood has become normative in the United States, although experienced somewhat differently across education levels, income, social classes, races, and ethnicities. This

is also having an influence on institutions such as higher education as well as family relationships (Furstenberg, 2010, 2015).

Neuroscience research also shows substantial changes in the emerging adult (EA) brain. Educated emerging adults experience important "developmental changes in cognition, metacognition, and epistemic cognition" (King & Strohm Kitchener, 2015, p. 121). The emerging adult brain also shows structural and functional changes which seem to consolidate at around 25 years and correspond to neural correlates in EA behaviors such as thoughtfulness, emotional regulation, and decisiveness (Taber-Thomas & Pérez-Edgar, 2015; Daveya et al., 2019). Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood covers the age range from 18-29, with a more direct focus on ages 18-25. The search terms emerging adulthood, emerging adults, or emergent adults bring up over 185,000 matches in the Discover library search engine data bank and more than 145,000 hits in theses and dissertations through ProQuest and numerous results found through the freely accessible Google Scholar search engine. These search results attest to the growing research interest in mindfulness, Koru, and this demographic. The development of Koru Mindfulness is informed, in part, by research on emergent adults, including the work of Jeffrey Arnett, as referred to above (Arnett & Tanner, 2006; Arnett J. J., 2007; Arnett J. J., 2014). Although higher education has a range of ages of students, most students attending HEIs in the United States fall within the demographics of 18-30 years of age, thus justifying a mindfulness curriculum designed with their specific needs and development appropriately in mind (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020).

Koru was designed specifically for young adults and differentiates itself from other programs developed for older adults and general populations in several ways (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018c):

- It teaches mindfulness meditation as well as stress-management skills
- It is taught in four, weekly, 75-minute classes, using a brief model to accommodate the busy schedules of young adults.
- It is highly structured with daily homework of a mindfulness log and 10 minutes of mindfulness practice
- It is taught in small, diverse groups
- It employs active teaching to address skepticism and build motivation
- It uses stories and metaphors relevant to the lives of young adults.

The program takes its name from the "New Zealand Māori word for the spiral shape of the unfurling fern frond. The word literally means 'looped' or 'spiraled,' but the shape symbolizes harmony or balanced growth, representing layered growth around a stable center" (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018c, par. 5).

While the developers overtly acknowledge that many of the techniques taught in the course have traditional roots, primarily Buddhism, they do not promote the course as being underpinned by any particular faith or spirituality commitments. Rather, they describe the course as taking a straightforward approach, contextualized within student life, and "stripped away anything that felt too vague or wishy washy" (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018a). Dr. Rogers expresses gratitude to her Buddhist sangha, and Dr. Maytan acknowledges Bahá'í writings as the center of her spiritual life in the acknowledgments of their co-authored book (Rogers & Maytan, 2012), implying they do have personal commitments underpinning their personal practices. In week three of Koru 2.0, a 10-minute Dharma talk, described in the training material as "short inspirational or instructional teaching" that "doesn't need to be particularly elaborate or profound" is included (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, n.d., p. 18). However, the topic is not prescribed, and KMTs are encouraged to choose a topic relevant to their class's needs, such as self-compassion, the nature of impermanence, or skillful speech. Certified KMTs are encouraged to adapt the course to the needs of their students while maintaining the integrity of the course. This encouragement provides the safety of boundaries in teaching while leaving enough space for creativity to respond to student needs and contextual expectations. It also limits the risk of Koru Mindfulness devolving into McDonalidization. The following is an excerpt from Koru Mindfulness training materials that illustrates the developers of Koru Mindfulness sharing responsibility with and putting trust in teachers to adjust the curriculum to class needs. This also points to the value of the level of the practitioner's contemplative and teaching experience. The *Final thoughts* quotation below is an excerpt from the Koru Mindfulness training material.

### **Final thoughts**

The division of teaching points into different classes, though hopefully helpful, is artificial. You will see this clearly when you wade into your first Koru class. The very first question may raise the issue of dealing with persistent, anxious thoughts, and you may find yourself reaching for the Boiling Pot metaphor, which would be exactly the right thing to do. What's most important is to meet your students where they are. Listen to what they are saying and asking. Are they having trouble making the time to meditate?

Then help them problem solve. Are you seeing confusion about the differences between meditation and mindfulness? Go back and review these concepts. Is every other comment a harsh self-judgment? Remind them again about building compassion through releasing judgment. Do you hear a lack of acceptance behind a voiced frustration? Point it out and help them understand acceptance. Please use this guide as a framework to aide you as you teach Koru. (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, n.d. b, p. 12)

### **2.2.1 The Koru Method**

Dr. Holly Rogers and Dr. Margaret Maytan first piloted the Koru method in 2005. They designed the method specifically to serve the university students at Duke University, where they both worked as psychiatrists. Dr. Rogers had been teaching meditation classes, and Dr. Maytan had been running mind-body skills groups. They had been working independently with separate groups of emergent adults. They both recognized that the student populations they had been working with were having trouble engaging in and completing the courses they had been teaching them. Attrition rates were high. It was apparent that a different model of teaching was needed for this younger age group. The women collaborated on an approach and course design that combined their knowledge and experience of traditional meditation and mind-body skills along with the developmental characteristics and needs of emerging adults. Koru continued to be refined through extensive work with Duke University students and later presented for popular use in the 2012 publication of *Mindfulness for the Next Generation: Helping Emerging Adults Manage Stress and Lead Healthier Lives* (Rogers & Maytan, 2012). Training and certification programs outside of Duke University followed and continue through The Center for Koru Mindfulness (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018a). In 2014, the method was tested through a randomized control study and showed comparable results to MBSR (Greeson et al., 2014). Dr. Rogers published *The Mindful Twenty-Something: Life Skills to Handle Stress...and Everything Else* in 2016.

### **2.2.2 Koru Mindfulness curriculum and course structure**

The Koru program teaches mind-body skills as well as traditional Buddhist-derived meditation. The curriculum focuses on practical skills "students can use to manage their stress, focus their minds, and gain perspective on issues and challenges," applying "age-old techniques[...]to the specific context and challenges of the college environment" (The Center for Koru Mindfulness, 2018a). Classes are typically limited to 12 students and are "opt-in" only, meaning students choose to take these courses. Each class runs 75 minutes and meets once a

week for four weeks. Each class has a "check-in" where students share their experience of the week before embarking on the new learning for the day. Meditations and skills are scripted for consistency, and students are expected to practice daily for at least ten minutes, attend each class, and keep records of their practice times, daily gratitude, and any personal notes or questions either through a written meditation log or through the Koru Mindfulness app. Students are not assessed, and typically no academic credit is awarded.

Resources developed by The Center for Koru Mindfulness® are the intellectual property of the center; however, a brief outline of the curriculum is provided below to aid in understanding what KMTs are teaching. Course participation by students is by choice or "opt-in". Once accepted to the course, students are expected to commit to attending all four sessions for Koru Basic and Koru 2.0.

*Table 5 Brief Outline of the Koru Mindfulness ® Curriculum*

<b>Brief Outline of the Koru Mindfulness ® Curriculum</b>	
<b>Koru Basic</b>	
An introduction to mindfulness and meditation. Taught as a weekly, 75-minute class over four weeks, with ideally about 12 students. Prescribed required readings. Attendance to all four classes and practice log completion is required.	
<b>Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dynamic Breathing &amp; Diaphragmatic Breathing</li> <li>• Walking Meditation</li> <li>• Guided Imagery</li> <li>• Eating Meditation</li> </ul>	<b>Guided Meditations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Body Scan</li> <li>• Gatha</li> <li>• Labeling Thoughts</li> <li>• Labeling Feelings</li> </ul>
<b>Koru 2.0</b>	
Builds on and adds to skills and meditations in Koru Basic, increases student time spent in daily practice, and adds chair yoga. Taught as a weekly, 75-minute class over four weeks, with ideally about 12 students. Prescribed required readings. Attendance to all four classes and practice log completion is required.	
<b>Koru Retreat</b>	
A half-day (four-hour) silent mindfulness retreat. No requirements or limits on attendance numbers.	

**2.2.3 Koru Mindfulness teacher training, certification, and support**

To become certified Koru teachers, individuals make an application to the Center for Koru Mindfulness. Individuals are expected to have a personal meditation practice. Once accepted, individuals attend a three-day residential training and run courses at their home



institutions. Individuals send selected video recordings of their own teaching (not of students), have online meetings/conferences with the teacher trainers, and submit a portfolio that includes all the above plus a reflective essay. Once certified, KMTs must pay annual fees and be in good standing with The Center for Koru Mindfulness to retain their use of materials and the name Koru Mindfulness as well as support services.

Koru Mindfulness teachers have access to the Koru Mindfulness app dashboard, teaching and marketing materials, institutional and conference materials, website tutorials and FAQs, various online discussion forums, as well as an optional online *sangha*. Koru Mindfulness staff are available for additional individual support when needed. Additionally, an optional "teachers in the wild" group for KMTs not affiliated with a traditional university is available synchronically online. Ongoing professional development is available through a train-the-trainer program. This certification course has been added for already qualified Koru Mindfulness teachers who wish to train others for initial certification to teach the Koru Mindfulness program. All teaching and teacher training materials are copyrighted, and the intellectual property of the Center for Koru Mindfulness and can only be used on the approval of the Center for Koru Mindfulness by individuals whose memberships are current and up to date.

Koru Mindfulness faculty assess candidates using set criteria adapted from the Mindfulness-Based Interventions: Teaching Assessment Criteria (Crane, et al., 2012) and the Dreyfus Scale of Competence (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986). This safeguards consistency in assessment and in keeping current with developing mindfulness teaching standards.

Koru Mindfulness teachers in higher education are a subset of the wider category of mindfulness teachers and expanding out to include all higher education professionals who include contemplative practices in their work, whether that be in the wellness arena or pedagogy, or both. The following section explores this group of higher education professionals.

### **2.3 Mindfulness Teachers in Higher Education**

One of the primary motivators for undertaking this study is the scant amount of literature available on teachers of mindfulness and other contemplative approaches in higher education. At present, the most readily available published sources giving insight into the lived experience of mindfulness teachers in higher education come in the form of narrative, first-person collections, and single volumes written by higher education professionals on a specific topic or area. As editors of a volume on mindfulness in the academy, Lemon and McDonough (2018) acknowledge that they are writing and making content choices from a place of privilege.

Academic freedom and the ability to write about the work we perceive to be valuable is associated with this book. We are privileged to be able to curate the final product, and as authors we are all writing from a state of privilege, we have opportunities to reflect and write about the ways we have embedded mindful perspectives and practices in our work. (Lemon & McDonough, 2018, p. 266)

Although informative, even inspirational, sources such as these remain primarily anecdotal. Until these accounts are taken as a whole and systematically reviewed and synthesized, the deep understanding that can be gleaned from them as a corpus of information and knowledge remains untapped. However, the accounts do show a generally predictable pattern of the positive influence of personal contemplative experience motivating higher education professionals to incorporate practices into their professional work, be that teaching, researching, leading, or any combination of these.

In her research into identity formation in early-career academics, Marian Fitzmaurice (2013) recognized a moral component to identity construction. She found that her study participants experienced becoming an academic as a "cognitive and emotive process" that was undergirded in a morality "grounded in virtues of honesty, care, and compassion" and that being an academic was a "way of being in the world," taking on a role that is multifaceted and includes teaching, research, and service (Fitzmaurice, 2013, p. 621). She proposes that dialogues that focus on values and practice over regulations and output can help the university be a place where both personal and professional growth, in the service of students and the wider society, can take place. The values in these dialogues correlate strongly with the values found in contemplative, integrative, and transformational education. These shared stories also seem to share a common theme of becoming oneself, a practice that Nixon (2018) argues is connected to a practice and disposition of contentment stemming from an attunement to and understanding of the world in which one operates, as well as one's human agency. This is no small task given the dynamic conditions mindfulness teachers find themselves in, including shifts in HE, the complexities of mindfulness practices, and the ever-changing larger world (Barnett, 2004; Gibbs & Barnett, 2014).

Byrnes (2009,2012) observed similar themes in her portraiture study of three teachers of young learners in a contemplative US primary school. Byrnes found that an understanding of humans' basic goodness, being of service in the world, authenticity of self, and present-moment, focused attention were primary foci of a contemplative approach to education. Contemplative

education, she asserts, has transformative potential for learning communities, beginning with the relationship between the contemplative practitioner/teacher and their own mind, body, and heart that leads to a transformative journey of both knowledge and self-knowledge. Contemplative teaching is, to Byrnes, a third way of teaching. This third way embraces wholeness in that it extends beyond technique (hand) and reflection (head) to include one's inner wisdom (the heart).

However, this transformational potential may be hindered by mindfulness teaching that does not go beyond individual instruction in stress management. Pinto and Close (2018) recognize the "individualistic and instrumental" version of mindfulness often encountered in HEIs "can be understood as little more than a neo-liberal technology of management that does nothing to address the structural causes of stress, anxiety, and pressure in the university. Instead, this version of mindfulness relies on the individual to simply find new ways to cope" (p.217).

Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, and Bai (2014) use the term "modern contemplative scholar-practitioner" to describe the type of higher education professionals that are informed and equipped to leverage the transformational potential of contemplative practice, including mindfulness (p.4). Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, and Bai (2014) observe that modern contemplative scholar-practitioners draw from and are informed by a myriad of sources. These include new branches of scientific thought such as neurophenomenology and cognitive science, social sciences, the humanities including positive psychology, perennial philosophy, art studies, environmental studies, ethics, and moral education, and learning organizations and leadership studies in business. These influences are in addition to or in conjunction with world wisdom traditions, such as Buddhist, Vedantic, Taoist, Quaker, Christian, Sufi, and ancient Greek. The authors conclude that "each [source is] advocating approaches to teaching and learning that affirm the significance of cultivating individual and collective forms of enhanced intelligence, wisdom, and well-being with our students through contemplative ways of knowing" (Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, & Bai, 2014, pp. 4,5). Contemplative ways of knowing should not be conflated with new age or alternative spirituality. This conflation colored the demographic understanding of who is teaching mindfulness teachers in a Scottish context when Bruce (2011) found most teachers to be "the preserve of middle-aged, middle-class women with university-level qualifications" (p.107). In surveying a range of available literature with first-person accounts in higher education, one quickly finds diversity, including gender, ethnicity, area of scholarship, and religious orientations (Barbezat & Bush, 2014; Lemon & McDonough, 2018; McCown, Reibel, & Micozzi, 2010; Grace, 2011; Gunnlaugson, Sarath, Scott, & Bai, 2014). A

small collection from these sources is found in *Appendix B: Collected First-person Narratives from Published Works*. Membership in the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education continues to rise. Members' diversity includes but is not limited to race and gender (The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, 2020). More study is needed to legitimately qualify the demographics of modern contemplative scholar-practitioners in higher education as a group as well as in comparison to their non-contemplative peers.

However, if indeed women are the majority of mindfulness teachers and if any professional risks are associated with mindfulness teaching, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, it does seem women in higher education pay a particular price for choosing an alternative way of being in the academy. Khoo (2018) contends that the culture of higher education is highly competitive, increasingly metricized, and that universities often only pay "lip-service" to being family-friendly or genuinely encouraging a work-life balance. Those academic staff who do prioritize work-life balance, often the woman or mother in a family, are disadvantaged in career progression. Khoo (2018) contends that the inability of the academy to recognize "the range and depth of experience that academic staff bring to their roles impoverishes our work culture" (p. 233). Khoo (2018) herself works to "sustain a good blend of work, personal life and activism" (p.233). She notes,

This quality of life comes at a price, and that price will be the rate of career progression (in the sense of academic promotion). I do not think of my career only successful if I am moving from level to level, but I do recognise all too well that an academic woman's ability to enact change and influence larger activities requires the signaling authority of a higher academic rank. [...] becoming a high level academic could mean bigger, more exciting opportunities and more power to transform the way things are done, both within the institution and beyond. But playing the finite game of 'career' within a university has its costs, and does not invite any sustainable change. (Khoo, 2018, p. 243)

While at present, there is a somewhat limited amount of research available on the lived experience of higher education professionals incorporating contemplative practices into their work, a review of available literature reflects thoughtful consideration of the risk to contemplatives' academic careers and the cost/benefit to both their students and own personal integrity as a member of society. One thing seems clear, those who choose to teach in this way, that is, intentionally incorporating contemplative practices into their professional lives of teaching, researching, and being, thoughtfully consider their choices and move into the role of

scholar-practitioners and a contemplative consciously and conscientiously. (See *Appendix B: Collected First-person Narratives from Published Works* for first-person narrative samples)

## **2.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter contextualized the teaching of Koru Mindfulness in higher education by providing a literature base that includes shifts in higher education, the purpose of education, and the complex historical and pedagogical roots of the teaching of mindfulness. The use of mindfulness in pedagogy and as part of Contemplative Education as well and Mindfulness-based Interventions in campus-based wellness programs, was given both a historical and developmental overview as well as outlining contemporary applications. This included criticism arising from a therapeutic ethos in higher education and the concept of McM mindfulness. Spirituality as an area of student wellness was presented alongside criticisms of “stealth” Buddhism and a need for transparency in the teaching of mindfulness. An overview of Koru Mindfulness was given, which included curriculum, training, and support, and acknowledged that teachers accepted into the training courses are required to have a personal contemplative or seated meditation practice. Lastly, a survey of the existing literature and narrative accounts of higher education professionals was synthesized to provide a context in which to view the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education in North America.

The next chapter outlines the study methodology and research process. My research methodology and process reflect my interest in accessing participants' own understanding of their lived experience related to teaching Koru mindfulness, as well as my desire to bring an analytical framework to my understanding of those experiences.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Methodology

Collectively, as students, teachers, and administrators, we have the wisdom and experience we need to meet the challenges of the century ahead—if we are brave enough to name what we care about, share what we know, and take the risks that transformation always requires. (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 17)

Over the years, whether working with immigrants and refugees, primary and secondary students, or teaching in HE, contemplative practices have become an integral part of my teaching. This integration has happened over time, slowly yet intentionally, as my relationship with contemplation has developed. When I started integrating practices into my teaching, I wasn't aware of contemplative education or mindfulness practices being used as a pedagogical tool or as a well-being intervention. It developed organically out of my desire to teach well, teach to the whole person, and be wholly present. As my understanding and knowledge grew, I came to appreciate that I was part of a larger contemplative community within education that was both encouraging and challenging. I became aware of issues such as practice appropriation, power dynamics, and the criticisms outlined in Chapter 2. As I explored research possibilities, lived experience research resonated with my research goals. Lived experience holds the capacity to look at individual experiences and how those personal experiences "resemble and respond to larger public and social themes" (Boylorn, 2008, p. 490). I was interested in individuals who, like me, were using contemplative practices in their teaching. I began to question the relationship between my role as an educator, my sense of self and development, my places of work, and the larger society. My interests intersected with my professional experience and the rise of mindfulness practices in higher education and created a unique opportunity for inquiry. Below are the steps I used to design a research study into mindfulness teachers' lived experiences. I used the qualitative research method Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects and an analytical framework based on a morphogenetic perspective to inform my analysis.

Completing my thesis was an iterative process of honing and refining. This is particularly apparent in the presentation of this chapter and in Chapter 5 Findings and Discussion. On reflection, I recognize three significant stages to my data analysis. First, I conducted the study according to the TMRHS protocol and produced a descriptive data analysis. In addition to themes, I recognized a pattern where participants recognized a meaningful role they could

occupy, mindfulness teacher, and that participants embodied this role, embodied role use. Although my methodology was sound, I was encouraged to revisit and leverage my data into a more substantial contribution in keeping to EdD requirements. At this point, I felt I had two choices. I could use my data to form a theory or draw on theory to inform my data. In the first case, I would reframe the data I obtained through TMRHS for use within the Grounded Theory (GT) family of methods (Babchuk, 2011). I seriously considered the developing methodological relationship between GT and Critical Realism and how this could inform my study and results (Charmaz, 2014; Edwards, O'Mahoney, & Vincent, 2014; Oliver, 2012). In addition, TMRHS methodologist Donna Perry developed a theory using her method (Perry, 2015; Perry, 2006). Therefore, it was reasonable to consider framing the study by drawing on GT. However, I chose the latter option: to draw on theory to inform my data.

I made this decision for two substantial reasons. First, I felt a theory-informed data analysis could elevate and focus my study of lived experience at the intersection of mindfulness and higher education. When interpreting my data using TMRHS, I had already drawn on critical realism and Margaret Archer's morphogenic approach. Since these foundations were already present in my work, I chose to extend my use of Margaret Archer's morphogenetic approach to form the analytical framework. The analytical framework helped me look at my data more critically, systematically, and holistically. This helped me ask more focused questions and construct a more robust data analysis.

Secondly, I had not set up my study as a grounded theory study. I was concerned about transparency and integrity with my participants and the approval I had gained from Koru Mindfulness to work with their teachers. Incorporating an analytical framework helped me grow in insight and discipline as a researcher and did not create additional ethical concerns. Through discussion and guidance with my supervisors, I constructed the analytical framework (AF) presented in Chapter 4. We discussed the AF placement within the thesis at some length. Other possibilities included placing it as part of the literature review, within the methodology chapter, or as a standalone chapter either before or after the methodology. I made my final decision based on where I thought the analytical framework would be most accessible to the reader, as a standalone chapter after the methods and before the findings and discussion. Finally, the third significant stage was the overall crafting of the thesis. Initial drafts drew heavily on the first-person narrative style, including how the research unfolded and my reflections on the process. Some readers felt this was, at times, difficult to follow or wavered too far from conventional

academic writing. I was encouraged to restructure the thesis, be intentional with signposting, and aim for a more traditional academic voice. The structure and presentation of my thesis reflect these shifts from initial analysis stages, layering in the analytical framework, and overall crafting to meet the rigor and requirements set out for the EdD.

### 3.1.1 Lived experience.

I was attracted to and chose lived experience research for several reasons. One reason is its capacity to compare individual lives with others without criticism (Boylorn, 2008). This echoed the suspension of judgment practiced in mindfulness and resonated well with my inner integrity and approach to life.

Boylorn (2008) proposes:

Research questions for [lived experience] method are generally centered on the lived experiences of the participants, but they also focus on the topic of research. Lived experience acknowledges every aspect of a person's life and identity, even those areas that are not directly connected to the research topic or question. (Boylorn, 2008, p. 4)

This acknowledgment of the complexity of personhood and consideration of areas not directly connected to the research topic or question provided me with the room to approach the research as I would want to approach a person or group of people. To generate evidence of lived experience, I considered methods to explore participants' "experiences, perceptions, beliefs and practices and social networks" (Neve, K. et al., 2021, p. 5). I drew from the literature on qualitative research techniques, including phenomenology, thematic analysis, and in-depth interviewing. Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, and Palmer (2019) propose that qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology is appropriate for investigating lived experiences. They emphasize that the understanding of lived experience is closely linked to how meaning is experienced and *the intentionality of experience* (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, & Palmer, 2019, p. 734).

Intentionality encompasses the idea that our consciousness is always directed towards something, which means that when we experience something, the "thing" is experienced as "something" that has meaning for us. (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, & Palmer, 2019, p. 734)

The authors highlight the value of descriptive phenomenology, referencing phenomenologist Edward Husserl, and lived experience data obtained through interviews or narratives, and



insisting that analysis be “data driven” (Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, & Palmer, 2019, p. 735). I chose to conduct interview over collecting narratives.

In-depth interviews involve individual discussions with a few respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The purpose of in-depth interviewing is to understand a person's lived experience and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2013). In-depth interviewing is a generic or general umbrella name for a technique that can include a range of formats, including free-form conversations and semi-structured interviews (Harvey, 2020). In-depth interviewing allows the researcher to engage with the research participant in a way that encourages a detailed exchange of information. This exchange assists the researcher in exploring and probing the perceptions and nuances of a participant's responses and can lead to understanding any underlying concepts of the research questions (Harvey, 2020; Public Health Action Support Team, 2020). This approach fits my research goals of exploring lived experience and my natural way of being with others. I carried out a mixed-method qualitative study for my Master of Arts in Language Teaching, and I became familiar with several more research methods during my EdD coursework. Because I was interested in the lived experience of people working across disciplines and at different HEIs, my time constraints excluded approaches such as action research or a single-HEI case study. I wanted to be able to access nuances unavailable through a questionnaire. I preferred the interaction of interviewing rather than asking participants to submit written narratives because interviewing gives the researcher the time and space to respond to participants in real-time and ask additional questions without taxing the participant with additional tasks.

I first read about the research method Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects (Perry, 2013) during the coursework phase of my EdD. Choosing TMRHS supports my research aims of exploring lived experience and aligns with the tenets of qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology outlined in Sundler, Lindberg, Nilsson, and Palmer (2019).

The following sections present Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects and my choice to narrow mindfulness teacher participation to Koru Mindfulness teachers to explore the research question:

How is it possible to characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education?

### **3.1.2 Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects.**

TMRHS is an approach that specifies a protocol by which to analyze the lived or phenomenological experience of study participants. TMRHS integrates elements of interviewing and thematic analysis. The TMRHS protocol systematically outlines steps to identify topics, synthesize data, and develop themes. This process is in keeping with thematic analysis, which also involves developing organizational and classification labels to describe the data. When using thematic analysis, the researcher constructs themes "to reframe, reinterpret, and/or connect elements of the data" (Kiger & Varpio, 2020, p. 3). Kiger and Varpio (2020) propose that thematic analysis can be used across a wide range of paradigms and entails more than description and categorization but does not extend so far as to develop theory.

Perry (2015; 2006) has used TMRHS to develop the theory of transcendental pluralism, which suggests that TMRHS could also be used with a Grounded Theory approach. The transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects is based on the critical realist Bernard Lonergan's theory of cognition and the descriptive phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and developed by Donna Perry (Perry, 2013). Perry (2013) asserts, "Reflective use of this method suggests that it has both investigational and interventional qualities, with transformative potential for both researcher and study participants" (p.262).

### **3.1.3 Critical Realism.**

Critical Realism influences this thesis in at least three significant areas: informing the data analysis within a morphogenetic perspective, contributing to TMRHS through the influence of critical realist philosopher Bernard Lonergan, and CR underpins my ontological and epistemological stance.

CR emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as an alternative paradigm to empiricism and positivism on one hand and anti-naturalism and interpretivism on the other (Zachariadis, Scott, & Barrett, 2013; ASA, 2016). However, there is not one "unitary framework, set of beliefs, methodology, or dogma that unites critical realists as a whole" (American Sociological Association, 2016, p. 1). Critical realism does not explain anything per se (Archer, 1979, 2013; American Sociological Association, 2016). Rather CR has been described as "philosophical well," a meta-theoretical position that is committed to formulating a "properly post-positivist philosophy" and a middle way between empiricism and interpretivism on one side and anti-naturalism and interpretivism on the other (American Sociological Association, 2016, p. 1;

Zachariadis et al., 2013, p. 856). Critical realism supposes “the existence of an ontological domain separate from the activities and cognitions of human beings” (Mingers, 2006, p. 20). In broad strokes, CR asserts that there is a reality operating largely independently of our awareness or knowledge of it and that our investigations into that reality are always “historically, socially, and culturally situated” (American Sociological Association, 2016, p. 3).

[T]he crux of critical realism is that social phenomena, be it actions, texts and institutions, exist regardless of interpretations of them; the social world is both socially constructed and real. In critical realism, emphasis is therefore placed on the constitutive role of meaning and language (Sayer, 1992). Realists agree with other philosophical positions (e.g. social constructionism) therefore that the naming of phenomena is of central importance, but differ in their commitment to a belief in the material reality underlying discursive accounts of social phenomena. (Parr, 2015, p. 195)

Ontological distinctions are made between *the real*, *the actual*, and *the empirical* as a “stratification of the world and of the nature of emergent properties” (Sayer, 2000, p. 10; Edgley, Stickley, Timmons, & Meal, 2016). The empirical is the domain of observation and experience: these are events observed or experienced through the senses (Mingers, 2006; Porpora, 2013; Griffiths, 2014; Clegg, 2016; Li, 2016). The ‘actual’ refers to events regulating events in the empirical domain yet generated or activated by powers and structures in the real domain. Events in the actual may or may not be observable. The ‘real’ contains those “mechanisms or causal powers that generate events”, or series of events, in the actual and empirical domains (Parr, 2015, p. 195). The real is made up of objects, both physical/natural objects as well as social objects such as governments or organizations. The real contains “‘generative mechanisms’ that contribute to our understanding of the ‘actual’, but which are not fully explanatory. Rather, they are ‘tendencies’ or causative agents” (Walsh & Evans, 2014, p. 2). With this ontological stratification, investigations viewed through a CR lens provide a provisional, yet ontologically incomplete, understanding of a phenomenon that can be reviewed and revised in the light of new research.

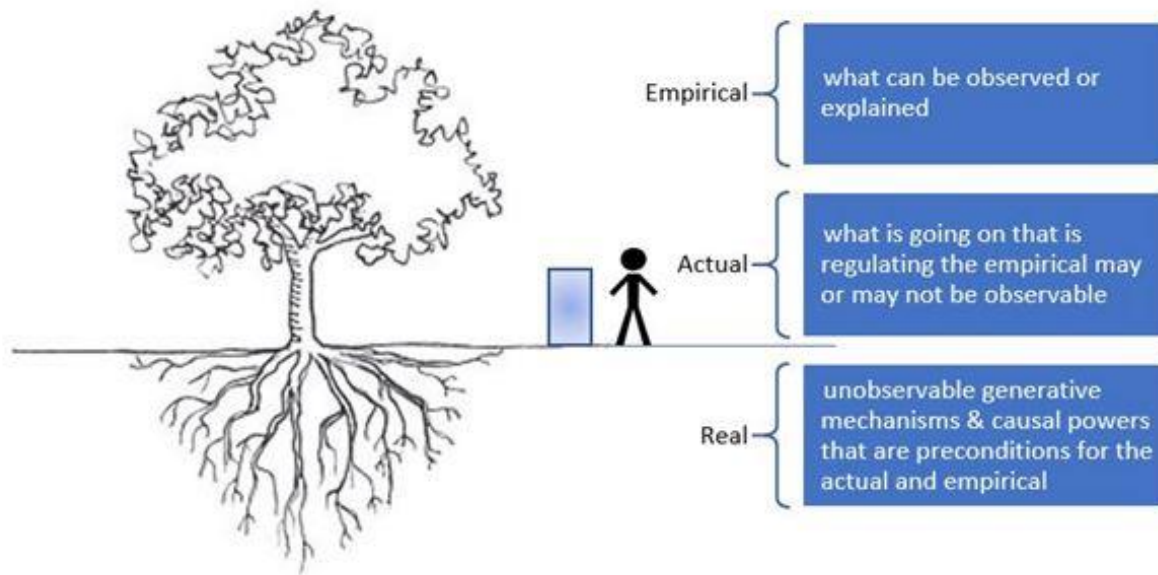


Figure 2: Three Ontological Domains of Critical Realism  
(Adapted from Walsh & Evans, 2014)

### 3.1.4 Bernard Lonergan's Transcendent Method.

Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) was a Canadian theologian, philosopher, scholar, and Jesuit priest (Bernard Lonergan Archive Marquette University, 2018). As a Jesuit, it is reasonable to assume he was well acquainted with Ignatian spirituality and the associated contemplative exercises, writings, and spiritual practices (Pinto, 2018). A very narrow but significant portion of Lonergan's thought is applied in this study, namely his theory of cognition (Beer, 2010; Kanaris, 2002). Lonergan was interested in understanding what one is doing when one is knowing. His monumental work on this topic is *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (Insight), published in 1957 and included what was initially called his Generalized Empirical Method (GEM) (Lonergan, 1992). In 1972 Lonergan published *Method in Theology* (Method), which outlined how his method could be applied to inquiry (Lonergan, 1972). Lonergan's method is interested in understanding human knowing and is based on his theory of human cognition. Perry (2013) adapted Lonergan's method in her development of the Transcendental Method for Research with Human Subjects. Lonergan recognized the need for the integration of disciplines and was concerned about the siloization occurring across the academy.

One of the aims of *Insight* was to achieve an integrated view of knowledge in order to overcome the fragmentation which had arisen as a result of increasing specialization in

academic disciplines. The way that Lonergan set about this was to make explicit the activities of the human mind when acquiring knowledge in any discipline (Walker, 2017, p. 113).

Dunne (n.d.) explains that the goal of GEM is to achieve a set of insights “into the data of cognitive activities, followed by a personal verification of those insights” and when applied in disciplines that study humans, “GEM incorporates the moral dimension by addressing how we know values that lead to moral decisions” (para.15). With GEM, participants act on knowledge they deem reliable.

GEM relies on a personal realization that we know in two different manners - commonsense and theoretical. In both, we experience insights, which are acts of understanding. In the commonsense mode, we grasp how things are related to ourselves because we are concerned about practicalities, our interpersonal relations, and our social roles. In the theoretical mode, we grasp how things are related to each other because we want to understand the nature of things, such as the law of gravity in physics or laws of repression in psychology. Theoretical insights may not be immediately practical, but because they look at the always and everywhere, their practicality encompasses any brand of common sense with its preoccupation with the here and now.

(Dunne, n.d., para. 11)

An appealing aspect of GEM for me as a lived experience researcher is that data is confirmed by the participant’s own experience and understanding.

Lonergan offers the philosophical world an account of human cognition that can be validated in the data of one’s own conscious experience, an affirmation of objective reality and an account of world processes which is in striking agreement with the findings of modern science. (Walker, 2017, p. 125)

Lonergan’s writings are vast and continue to be read and applied (Lonergan, 1992; Beer, 2010; McCarthy, 2015; Walker, 2017; Bova, Perry, Kane, Morris, & Fain, 2017).

### **3.1.5 TMRHS as a transformative and evolving method.**

TMRHS utilizes semi-structured interviews and asks open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews have been shown to help bring "to the surface the multi-dimensional nature of lived experience" (Galletta, 2013, p. 2). TMRHS is designed to invite the act of intention and open pathways to meaningfulness. The intent is to understand the meaning of the experiences and choices rather than a recounting of facts.

[The semi-structured interview] creates openings for a narrative to unfold, while also including questions informed by theory. It also leaves a space through which you might explore with participants the contextual influences evident in the narratives but not always narrated as such. (Galletta, 2013, p. 2)

It is the onus of the researcher to create openings for narratives to unfold and therefore the skill and ethos of the researcher are paramount to the quality of the research. Seidman (2013) asserts that "at the heart of interviewing research is an interest in the other individuals' stories because they are of worth" (p. 9).

It requires that we interviewers keep our egos in check. It requires that we realize we are not the center of the world. It demands that our actions as interviewers indicate that others' stories are important. (Seidman, 2013, p. 9)

Perry (2013) reflects on her personal transformation brought about during research, noting "we may indeed become aware of mistaken assumptions that we need to work to remove from our consciousness" and "the research participants in my studies have not only advanced my knowledge but inspired and strengthened my own personal authenticity (Perry, 2013, pp. 268, 277). Perry's experience showcases the potential for personal transformation through research and her impetus for greater social action on behalf of her study participants, noting:

I have found that my experiences as a researcher have moved me to greater social action on behalf of the vulnerable populations in my studies. Having had the opportunity to hear people's stories places a duty on me to make these studies known. (Perry, 2013, p. 277)

In choosing to use TMRHS, I committed to an essential process of continual self-reflection. I also committed to a deliberate and intentional state of being present with my study participants and creating a safe space to guide them and myself through discovery and understanding. Perry (2013) acknowledges that "precautions are in order [...] in that TMRHS must be approached as an emerging method that will continue to evolve" (p.280). TMRHS interviewees must "enter into interior reflection on their conscious acts to communicate them" (Perry, 2013, p. 268). The skilled and reflective researcher is critical to the research being carried out safely, ethically, and rigorously. I came into the research process with experience in The Circle of Trust® approach (Chadsey & Jackson, 2012; Palmer, 2009). The Circle of Trust® approach is a process of shared exploration that, when used by effective facilitators, is intended to create a safe space in which individuals are guided and supported in a small group to nurture

both personal and professional integrity and courage to act on understanding that may arise through the exploration experience (Teaching and Leading With Courage, 2022; Palmer, 2004; Palmer, 1997). I also kept reflective journals, had training in skilled listening, used interviews in my master's research, and had an established contemplative practice. All these skills helped prepare me for this study.

TMRHS is an evolving method. Results when using TMRHS can vary. They may be quite similar to thematic analysis, propose a theory (Perry, 2006; 2015), or report an overarching conceptual category supported by themes as in this pilot study which used focus groups with TMRHS:

Results reveal the overarching conceptual category of “engaged interdisciplinary inquiry” which includes six themes: (i) valuing interdisciplinary engagement; (ii) direct engagement; (iii) interior engagement; (iv) disengagement; (v) facilitated engagement and (vi) engaged researcher development. Results also suggest engagement depends on vigorous “back and forth”, or dialogue, with self and others, and demonstrate the study method is fruitful for cognitive inquiry.

Perry (2013) has outlined the basic structure of TMRHS, but TMRHS is an evolving and adaptable method.

## **3.2 Research Process using TMRHS**

### **3.2.1 Developing the interview guide.**

Steps in developing a study using TMRHS demand an ongoing reflective approach by the researcher in selecting a research question, reviewing the literature, and designing the study. Interviews are conducted in a natural style, using an interview guide (Appendix A), and yet remain flexible. Interview questions are designed by considering "the role of various contexts" (See Figure 3: Developing an Interview Guide: The Importance of Context Figure 3: Developing an Interview Guide: The Importance of Context ) and the cognitive operations of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding (E-U-J-D) (See Table 6: Inherent Norms and Operations of Consciousness in Lonergan's Cognition Theory) (Perry, 2013).

Each person, including the researcher, brings their own context to the interview, and a critical point, drawing on Lonergan (2003), is that a person's decisions are self-constituting. "With each decision, we not only choose an outcome in the world but also influence our own development and make ourselves into more or less authentic persons" (Perry, 2013, p. 271). Questions here include the influence of past experiences developmental context, such as "Have

there been other experiences or decisions in your life that influenced you in making this decision?" and deeper questions to "elicit the existential influence of a particular decision on the participant's subsequent development such as: How has this decision influenced your development as a person?" are added toward the end of the interview (Perry, 2013, p. 271). Questions related to the context of the researcher include questions related to one's own disciplinary, theoretical, professional, and personal context (Perry, 2013).



*Figure 3: Developing an Interview Guide: The Importance of Context  
Adapted from Perry (2013) Figure 1 page 270.*

Questions developed using E-U-J-D provide a heuristic structure to explore a human experience. For example, questions may be framed around a person's response to or experience of an event or used to "elucidate the experiences and cognitive processing leading up to" a decision taken (Perry, 2013, p. 269). Interviews are conducted in a natural style and remain flexible while using the interview guide. The development of the interview guide and subsequent interviews demanded an ongoing reflective approach, including reviewing literature and adjusting to participant contexts. Context awareness is a key feature in TMRHS, and this continual awareness helped me ultimately decide to use my chosen theoretical framework.

Seidman (2013) asserts that by asking participants to "reconstruct their experience and then reflect on its meaning, interviewers encourage participants to engage in 'the act of attention' that then allows them to consider the meaning of a lived experience" (p.19). Without actively and



intentionally giving attention to the reconstruction, experiences would simply be lived through without reflective meaning-making. However, when participants are attentive to reconstructing and reflecting on their experience, pathways to meaningfulness open up (Seidman, 2013).

TMRHS contributes additional support by adapting Lonergan's theory of cognition to help construct questions that intentionally guide participants into and through the act of attention on their experiences.

Each operation corresponds to inherent norms or levels of transcendence. This was originally developed by Canadian philosopher/methodologist/ theologian Bernard Lonergan (Benefiel, 2019; Perry, 2004; Perry, 2013). In Lonergan's theory of cognition, "Each operation of consciousness raises questions" (Benefiel, 2019, p. 9). Therefore, in Perry's (2013) adaption and application of Lonergan's theory in TMRHS, questioning begins with the interviewee's experience, which in turn raises questions on understanding of that experience. For example, one hears a loud noise (experience) and then questions the source of that noise (understanding). Questions of understanding lead to insights. Borrowing from Benefiel (2019, pp. 9,10), one questions if the noise was a firecracker, the backfire of a car, a gunshot, or from something else. Questions for understanding lead to insights and judgment of facts. For example, does one see evidence of a firecracker? Or is there a car in sight? Or perhaps a person running down the street with a gun in their hand? Insights are abundant, so they must be questioned, and these are a judgment of the facts. If, in this scenario, there is a person bleeding on the street, then the judgment of the facts strongly indicates the noise was from a gun being shot and most probably from the person running down the street. Now questions arise on what action to take, a conscious decision, and its corresponding inherent norm of being responsible.

*Table 6: Inherent Norms and Operations of Consciousness in Lonergan's Cognition Theory  
Adapted from Benefiel (2019) page 9 Table 1.1 and Perry (2013) Table 1 page 265.*

<b>Lonergan's Cognition Theory</b>	
<b>Inherent Norms</b>	<b>Operations of Consciousness</b>
Be attentive	Experience
Be intelligent	Understand
Be reasonable	Judge (of facts)
Be responsible	Decide

### **3.2.2 Piloting the interview guide.**

Prior to interviewing study participants, I piloted the interview guide with an experienced mindfulness teacher. I was able to test practical issues, such as technology. I made significant changes in the technology I used to connect with participants and the devices I used for the audio recordings. Additionally, I reconsidered and reworked some of the questions and the order of the interview questions. Piloting also helped me identify literature areas that I needed to explore and understand more deeply before moving forward with interviewing study participants.

### **3.2.3 Choosing Koru Mindfulness as the research context.**

The final reduction to Koru Mindfulness teachers in higher education provided an inquiry space that was not well researched yet relevant to higher education and personally interesting. I chose Koru Mindfulness primarily because it is a program designed for use in HEIs, and Koru Mindfulness Teachers are a bounded group to investigate. Koru Mindfulness teachers follow a consistent training, monitoring, and credentialing program that focuses primarily on teaching in higher education. The Koru program is informed by current developmental research, particularly the work of (Arnett, 2000, 2004, 2014) and the founders' experience working with students at Duke University. Koru is a relatively new and growing expression of mindfulness training in HE. At the time of starting my thesis, one study had been conducted on Koru's efficacy with students (Greeson, et al., 2014). There is a growing number of studies involving Koru Mindfulness; however, at the time of conducting the interviews, no duplicate or other randomized controlled studies on efficacy similar to Greeson, et al. (2014) had been done.

### **3.2.4 Protecting participants.**

Before starting any research, I applied for and received ethical approval from the University of Liverpool International Online Research Ethics Committee, Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) (see Appendix C). I also obtained a signed Letter of Authorization from a Partner Organization from The Koru Center for Mindfulness (see Appendix D). Teachers are dependent on The Center for Koru Mindfulness for professional development support and continuing certification. Therefore, it was necessary to minimize any potential risk to study participants. Thus, participation was completely voluntary and anonymous. I clearly communicated to both The Center for Koru Mindfulness and potential participants that my project was not intended to evaluate the Koru curriculum or The Center for Koru Mindfulness but rather to be an exploratory investigation of the lived experience of the Teacher. The complete anonymity of interview participants and the exclusion of founders and training faculty from the

interview process gave the greatest assurance that risk was minimized. In addition, all HEIs and identifying information of participants have been anonymized in the presentation of the study. Although this influenced options for ways of reporting data, I have been careful not to disclose identifiable information about participants to The Center for Koru Mindfulness through correspondence or verbal interaction.

### **3.2.5 Koru Mindfulness teachers as study participants.**

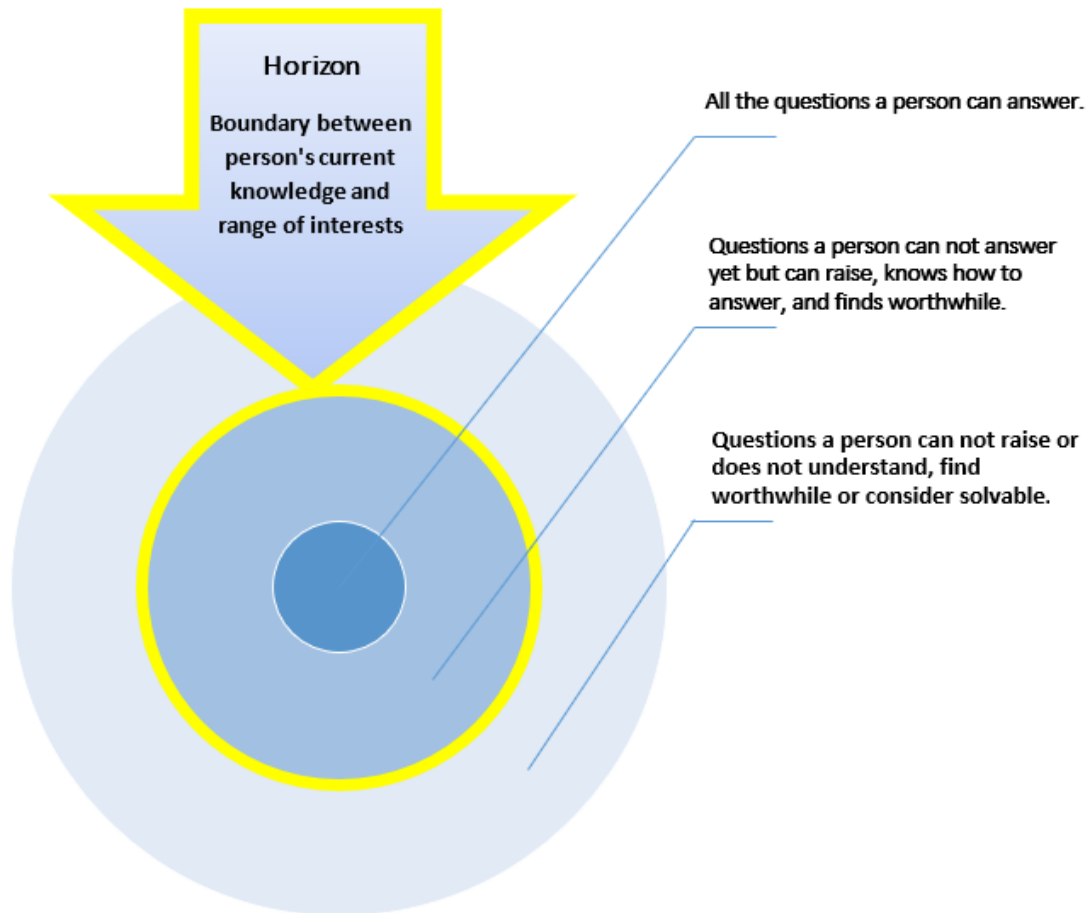
All study participants were Koru Mindfulness Teachers (KMTs). Koru Mindfulness Teachers are a self-selecting group of professionals, and The Center for Koru Mindfulness is the credentialing or certifying organization for KMTs

### **3.2.6 Sample size: seeking horizontal understanding.**

Based on previous studies using TMRHS and literature on thematic analysis more broadly, I proposed a sample size of 6-12 participants. The sample size using TMRHS is in keeping with other qualitative methods but has been defined by Perry (2013) as being guided by *horizontal understanding* and being consistent with Lonergan's philosophy. Horizontal understanding focuses on the horizon or space *between* questions participants can answer and questions they can raise. For example, the space between the questions a participant is able to raise but not answer any questions the participant cannot raise or does not understand is the horizon. When I, as a researcher, recognize that horizon, I can say I have reached a reasonable level of horizontal understanding. "The goal of TMRHS is to obtain a reasonable understanding of the current horizon of a target population about the research question" (Perry, 2013, p. 272). Recognizing horizontal understanding was part of the growth process for me as a researcher and in keeping with methodologist Perry's own experience.

[Horizontal understanding] should be a *reasonable* understanding of the participants' horizon on a particular issue. In my original dissertation [(Perry, 2006)], I reflected on that a lot and came to the conclusion that a complete understanding was probably impossible but that at a certain point one has to consider when one has a reasonable understanding in order to provide a coherent analysis and communicate the analysis to others. Otherwise, it just gets too big. But from the perspective of Lonergan's philosophy there might be some further questions that could be addressed in subsequent studies (D. Perry, personal communication, March 15, 2018).

A visual representation of horizontal understanding for guiding sample size using TMRHS based on Perry's (2013, pp. 271,272) and including the incorporation of Lonergan's (2001) description of human knowledge is depicted in Figure 5 below.



*Figure 4: Horizontal Understanding*

Reaching a reasonable horizontal understanding to complete data analysis is essential to using TMRHS. Crafting the interview script to guide participants through a first-person experience of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding (E-U-J-D) helps participants reach a (provisional) horizontal understanding of their own experience. I identify participants' horizontal understanding primarily through the interview process. When the interview conversation seems to no longer contribute new information, this typically signals an appropriate time to move on to a new question or close the interview. Drawing on critical realism and a morphogenetic approach (CR/MA) contributed significantly to my use of TMRHS in practical ways. First, my horizontal understanding expanded before and during the study. CR/MA offered

me a systematic way to consider contexts (see Figure 3) and influenced how I formed and asked questions. For example, as I guided participants through questions based on E-U-J-D, I listened for and asked questions to elicit an understanding of a participant's mode of reflexivity (see Table 6). Drawing on the morphogenetic approach gave me an additional layer, a lens, to consider how participants decided to become mindfulness teachers. In this instance, awareness of the morphogenic approach primed me to listen for modes of reflexivity. I then used this information to propose a theoretically informed understanding of the participants' process of becoming mindfulness teachers.

CR/MA influenced my internal question forming during the interview process and helped me raise questions I would not have raised without it. For example, I wanted to explore possible connections between HEI structures, departmental/institutional culture, and the broader context and each participant's decision to teach mindfulness (see Figure 3). As the interview progressed, I could intentionally seek to explore institutional policies and mindfulness teaching informed by CR/MA. If the HEI had a policy, the policy would fall within the empirical, observable CR domain (see Figure 2). Observable elements, such as formal HEI policies, fall within the CR "empirical" domain and are reasonably straightforward to compare. If a policy was in place, I could then ask questions about the policy's regulation and implementation, which occur in the "actual" domain. Here, the primary focus would be exploring support (enablements) or hindrances (constraints) to mindfulness teaching. I could also approach this in reverse. For example, If a participant had limited institutional and/or collegial support for teaching mindfulness, I could start by asking questions in the "real" domain. I could ask questions about the unobservable preconditions that either hindered (constrained) or supported (enabled) the participant's aim to teach mindfulness, be those personal, institutional, or societal.

I used E-U-J-D question ordering to guide participants through a first-person experience. CR/MA gave me a theoretical and ontological grounding that informed how I guided participants through that experience. During analysis, I could isolate components of CR/MA for deeper consideration. CR/MA informed my question formation before, during, and after the interviews. The TMRHS protocol provided a scaffold on which to build questions that are informed and guided by critical realism and a morphogenic approach. This complimentary combination helped reach various points of horizontal understanding. For example, the interview guide included questions on the impact of mindfulness teaching. Participants reached a horizontal understanding

when I, or they, posed questions they could not answer. I reached (reasonable) horizontal understanding at the point where additional questions justified further studies.

### **3.2.7 Participant recruitment.**

After receiving ethical approval through VPREC, the Koru Mindfulness faculty emailed the entire population of teachers and trainers-in-training an invitation to participate in my study. The Koru Center sent the email to the Teacher's network. Individuals interested in participating contacted me directly by private email. My University of Liverpool email address was included in the email sent by The Center for Koru Mindfulness faculty. The Center for Koru Mindfulness was not and has not been informed of who showed interest in participating. However, they were kept up to date with the progress of acquiring participants. The initial invitation to participate by email was enough to gain the final 12 participants. I have felt very supported by The Center for Koru Mindfulness faculty throughout the research process and never perceived any pressure to disclose or alter information or results in any way. It has been a very professional yet friendly relationship. The faculty were supportive throughout while remaining "hands-off" and never challenging my ownership of and responsibility for the project. Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (Appendix E) and Participant Consent Form (PCF) (Appendix F).

Interested participants contacted me through personal email. We then corresponded privately about the nature of the study and the interview process. I emailed each person a Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and Participant Consent Form (PCF) (See Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and Appendix F: Participant Consent Form (PCF)). Once participation was agreed upon, each participant emailed me their signed PCF as a PDF file. Given the distance between the participants and me, this was the most efficient and least taxing way of communicating for participants and for me. I scheduled interviews after I had the signed PCF from the participant.

### **3.2.8 Participant sample.**

The Center for Koru Mindfulness was established in 2013. Given the relatively recent establishment of the Center and the certification process, no consideration was given to the length of time as a Koru Mindfulness Teacher as selection criteria. The respondents were serendipitously geographically dispersed and from a variety of HEIs, so there was no need to adjust or make any accommodations for regional or institutional representation. No two participants were from the same HEI. I did not make any decisions based on age, gender, gender

preference, years of service, positions within HEIs, or religion. Participants included me, eleven women, and one man.

All invitation respondents were part of the Koru Mindfulness group of Teachers or trainers-in-training. At the time of sampling, there were 156 potential participants. This 156 represented the number of individuals who had attended the initial three-day Koru Mindfulness training and were either fully credentialed or in the process of becoming credentialed as certified Koru Mindfulness Teachers. Almost all of the 156 teachers and trainers-in-training were working in North America, and all participants in this study were working in North America. The Center offered to send out additional emails if the required 6-12 participants were not reached, but this was not necessary. Of the sixteen replies, two individuals were not included because they were not conducting Koru Mindfulness training in an HEI. The two final shows of interest came well after the first interviews had been arranged and were kept in reserve as possible future participants if needed. The final two respondents were thanked but, in the end, not interviewed.

### **3.2.9 Data collection procedures.**

All interviews, except one, were carried out via Skype between June and September 2016. Due to technical issues, one interview was carried out using WhatsApp. Interviews were recorded on a digital voice recorder, and a separate mobile phone voice recorder was used for backup recording. Only voice was recorded, although video was used during the interviews. Except for intermittent technical interference, primarily due to lack of bandwidth to support video, overall, interviews were of good technical connection and quality, and a sense of intimacy of interview was achieved.

Interviews were conducted using Skype. This provided me with a private and familiar environment that was relatively free of distraction. Although there were occasionally outside noises, these did not create any substantial obstacles to conducting the interviews. Conducting the interviews from my home also allowed for more flexibility in interview scheduling. I was in Cyprus during each interview, and all my participants were in North America. Interviews took place across a wide variety of time zones. On a few occasions, the WIFI connection was weak, the video was turned off to conserve bandwidth, and the interviews continued. All participants were either at their homes or places of work. When at work, participants were in a private office space with their doors closed. Although we were physically distant, the interviews themselves felt intimate and comfortable. I attribute this to the integrity and authenticity of the participants and the skills I brought to the process.

These online interviews were the first non-face-to-face interview carried out using TMRHS. Skype, as part of the umbrella of internet video calls, is increasingly part of the qualitative research landscape (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014). Skype interviewing has been shown to have an overall positive perception from research participants due to its flexibility and the availability of visual cues from researchers (Mirick & Wladkowski, 2019). When comparing in-person and Skype interviews, Krouwel, Jolly, and Greenfield (2019) found that in-person interviews yielded slightly larger word counts: people said more. Still, both methods produced a similar number of word topics and produced a similar number of codes when analyzing the qualitative data. Their findings suggest that in-person study interviews were marginally superior to video calls in that "interviewees said more, although this was on a similar range of topics" (Krouwel, Jolly, & Greenfield, 2019, p. 1). However, the difference is "modest," and given time and budget constraints, "video call interviews may be confidently justified within a qualitative research study" (Krouwel, Jolly, & Greenfield, 2019, p. 1). The primary challenges for using video calling, such as Skype, are the availability and use of technology. I found this to be true in my experience. Some interviewees needed technical support at the onset of the interview. Digital technologies such as Skype should be included as additional and alternative interviewing tools in qualitative research, "especially for participants who have logistical challenges meeting researchers face-to-face" (Mirick & Wladkowski, 2019, p. 3061). Thus, technologies such as Skype are appropriate interview tools for synchronous interviewing. They can offset or even overcome "time and financial constraints, geographical dispersion, and physical mobility boundaries, which have adversely affected onsite interviews" (Janghorban, Roudsari, & Taghipour, 2014, p. 1).

Online interviewing allowed me to carry out synchronous interviews across a large geographical area and accommodate time differences. Given my personal research experience and feedback from research participants taken during the time of the interviews, I support and concur that internet video calling is a valid option for conducting qualitative interviews. Given the expanding use and availability of internet video calling, it provides a continuing and promising area for exploration and use in research technology in education, health sciences, and elsewhere (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Hinman, Nelligan, Bennell, & Delany, 2017; Jowett, Peel, & Shaw, 2011).



### **3.2.10 Transcription and participant transcript checks.**

I transcribed all interviews in full and verbatim and did not use any transcription services. I listened to each interview recording several times before beginning transcription and did not use any automatic, automated, or voice-recognition transcription software. I used Express Scribe Transcription Software with a foot pedal to facilitate the manual transcription process. I produced my transcription documents using Microsoft Word, double-spaced with extra-wide margins to help facilitate manual coding and note-taking.

In some cases, I omitted the rapport-building discussion before the interview started in earnest and closing comments regarding artifact solicitation (a data collection step deleted from the study) and post-interview follow-up or other interactions not directly relevant to lived experience under study. Transcribing was time-consuming and physically taxing, two of several arguments questioning the cost of verbatim transcription in qualitative research (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006). However, verbatim transcriptions are part of the TMRHS protocol and did encourage my rigorous interaction with the data.

Once I had transcribed all the interviews, I emailed each participant verbatim copies of the transcripts for review. I invited participants to review and make changes to the transcripts and make comments. If I had questions about what I had transcribed, for example, to clarify meaning or any areas I could not clearly understand, I asked participants to clarify through emails. Most participants replied to the check-in emails with no or minor changes. One respondent corrected a transcription section where I had misunderstood a word. Only one respondent asked for more significant changes to the transcript, noting a shift in perspective between the interview and the transcription review time. Participants were re-invited to contribute artifacts as well as any additional comments. This third prompt stemmed from a desire to hear more deeply from participants on influence. I have included an excerpt from the original check-in email below.

...

Thank you again for spending time with me for my doctoral research.

I hope this finds you well. I know it has been quite a while since we connected.

There are three things I would like to touch base with you on.

Attached is a transcription of our conversation. Please read through it if you would like to. There is no need to read through it unless you wish to. You are welcome to send me any changes. Again, all information has been anonymized in the study.

In our conversation I mentioned including artifacts, (words, poems, sayings, images etc) that may be meaningful to you as a mindfulness practitioner and trainer. If there is anything you would like to contribute, I would be thrilled!!

Lastly, if there is anything you would like to add, please let me know. As I come to a close in my study, I wonder about how you and the others feel about what you are contributing to the Academy as a whole and the wider world, the bigger picture of our human condition. If you would like to comment on that, I would love to hear some thoughts.

*Figure 5: Excerpt from Check-in Interview Email*

### **3.2.11 Data processing: coding, interpretation and analysis using TMRHS.**

Once I had corrected the transcripts back from the participants, I began organizing the interview data. I followed the TMRHS protocol for interpretation and analysis as set out by Perry (2013). Interpretation and analysis of research results using TMRHS is a spiraling and self-correcting, hermeneutical process in which parts are understood within the context of the whole, and the whole emerges through an understanding of the parts (Lonergan, 2003). The analysis involves carefully reading and rereading data, thoughtful reflection, and integrating responses into a higher level of synthesis (Perry, 2013, p. 272). Perry (2013) details her process of interpreting and analyzing data using TMRHS in the following steps:

#### Data processing steps using TMRHS

1. Identification of participant declarations
2. Creation of topical summaries
3. Synthesis of topical summaries
4. Higher synthesis and interpretation
5. Identification of themes

Outlined below are the steps I took to code, interpret, and analyze data, and all interviewing, transcribing, and coding were carried out by me.

### 3.2.12 Identification of participant declarations.

The goal of this phase is to "obtain an accurate list of participant declarations, identification of key quotations, and an understanding of the individual horizon of each participant" (Perry, 2013, p. 25). I read through each transcript while listening to the recording and analyzing each text in detail. I wrote notes, labeled declarations, and formed questions. I was then able to make lists of participant declarations and key quotations. This process helped me reflect on the horizontal understanding of the study participants and myself (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). Each meaningful declaration was copied into an excel sheet by context and question number while being careful not to decontextualize the data. This facilitated access to declarations and context throughout the analyzing process.

At this point, I began to reflect more deliberately on contexts and began to think more intentionally about what a morphogenic perspective might bring to this study. Morphogenesis is a way of thinking about social change over time. The participant's declaration below illustrates her view that a change in languaging, exchanging resilience for burnout, could influence how medical students interact with and view mindfulness meditation practice. Potentially, students could frame their goal as an increase in resilience rather than efforts to stave off burnout. Morphogenesis happens in a three-phase cycle: 1) structural conditioning, 2) social interaction, and 3) social elaboration (Archer 1995). In this example, social elaboration would occur if medical students move towards increased resilience, as opposed to away from burnout, in relationship to the mindfulness teacher's change in language use. I elaborate on morphogenesis in Chapter 4 as my analytical framework.

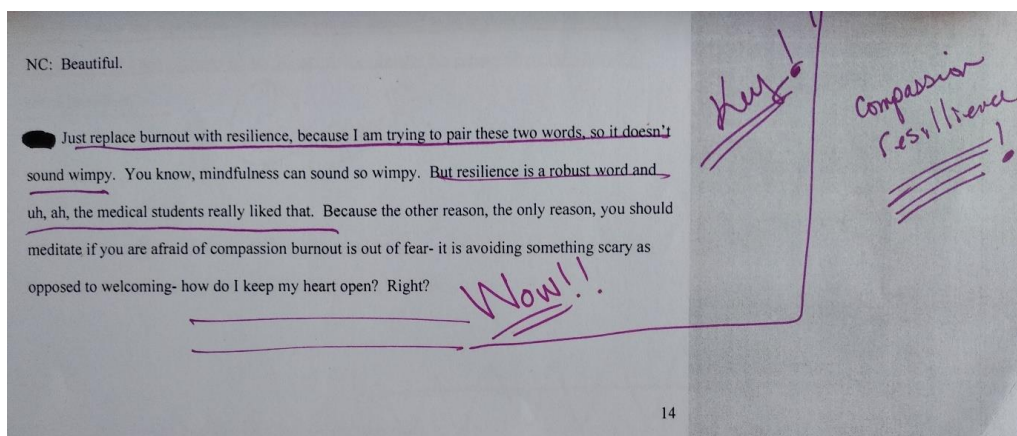


Figure 6: Example of Initial Identification of Participant Declarations

**3.2.13 Creation of topical summaries.**

At this stage, I began to group declarations into topical summaries. Creating topical summaries aims to "begin to cluster related declarations and illustrative quotations into topical areas" (Perry, 2013, p.273). I made visual representations of proposed topics by freewriting on large pieces of white paper, my whiteboard, and legal pads. This helped me visually identify possible topical summaries and refine topics before doing the considerable work of chunking text sections under topics while not decontextualizing declarations. This was an iterative process, with many changes made along the way.

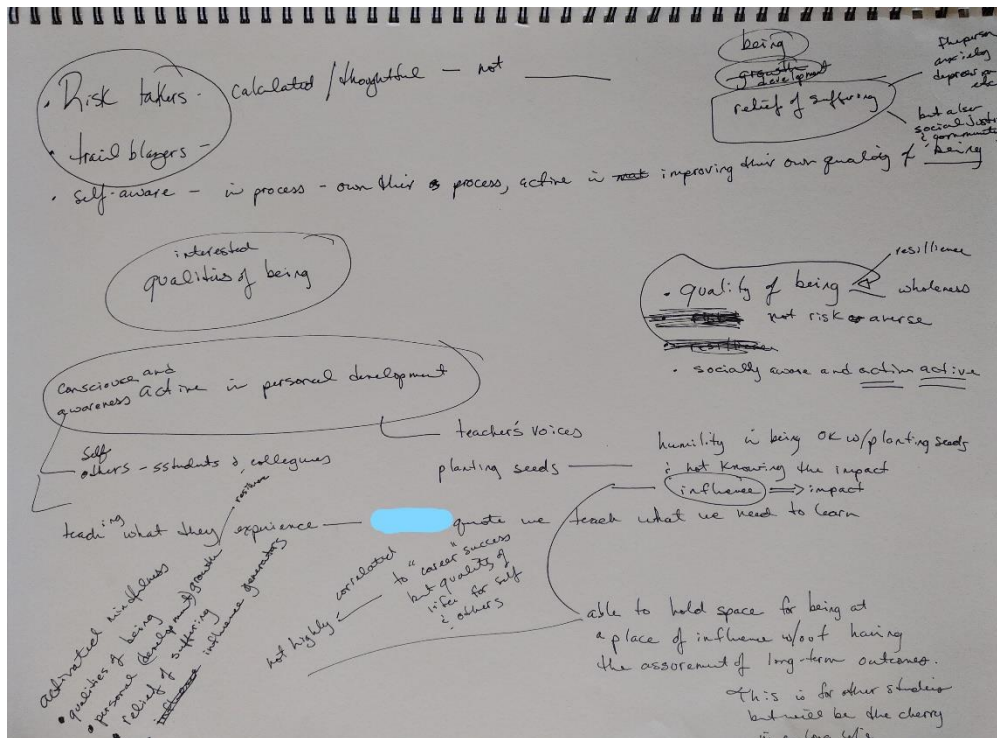


Figure 7: Example of Creation of Topical Summaries

**3.2.14 Synthesis of topical summaries.**

This step aims to gain a solid, initial understanding of similar data and declarations in relation to each other. I did this by taking each topical summary and the accompanying participant declaration and reading the summaries as wholes. I took notes and raised questions. This was an iterative and time-consuming process, but it helped me move more confidently into higher synthesis and interpretation.

Then I began actively "bracketing," as used by Perry (2013). Bracketing in TMRHS is objectifying rather than suspending beliefs or ideas and, by doing so, heightens the researcher's consciousness of what is under study. In this case, I am working with the text/transcriptions of

lived experience. Bracketing is not applied to every aspect of the research process, however bracketing in TMRHS occurs during all phases of the research process "and is engaged in by both researcher and participants because it is an act of deep reflection and wonder which participants and the researcher participate in" (Perry, 2013, p. 268).

Thus, bracketing becomes a continuous aspect of the research process. During each phase of the TMRHS protocol, I, the researcher, engaged in bracketing. I identified and objectified beliefs and ideas and took time to reflect on and be curious about them. For example, I held the belief that mindfulness practices are beneficial. Instead of suspending this belief, I objectified it. I thought about why I believed it, what sources I have for constructing that belief, and whether the literature and research data support it. I also had to consider how this belief affected and influenced my research. Through the ongoing back-and-forth bracketing process, I kept checking in on myself with curiosity and reflection. As I worked through the research process, this built-in TMRHS mechanism of bracketing through objectification and reflection gave me a self-correcting apparatus to understand, challenge, and modify or amend my belief when appropriate. As importantly, it also assisted in bringing formerly unrecognized, hidden biases and beliefs to the surface. The non-judgmental nature of deep reflection and curiosity intrinsic to TMRHS bracketing facilitated open and honest questions about my own experience and the experience under study. Objectification, rather than suspension, obliged me to be present with uncomfortable beliefs, biases, and even developing aspects of the data that became apparent through the back-and-forth nature of bracketing. My belief that mindfulness practices are beneficial developed to mindfulness practices can be beneficial given certain conditions.

### **3.2.15 Higher synthesis and interpretation.**

The goal of this phase is "to obtain a meaningful and coherent understanding of the data" by integrating "common topics into higher levels of thematic analysis" (Perry, 2013, p. 273). At this point, I collected common themes using excel sheets and hard copies to see how they might fit together into higher-level themes similar to Perry's (2013) practice of creating thematic folders and clustering relevant Word documents into those folders. My experience of this phase as being iterative and cumulative as possible themes diminish is in keeping with other researchers using semi-structured interviews.

Like other phases of a qualitative design, the shift from analyzing to synthesizing thematic patterns is iterative and cumulative. The process of looping back through data collection and analysis begins to ease up as the constitutive analytical threads are secured

in place. While some threads might still need reconnecting, or removal, there develops a gradual sense of having exhausted thematic possibilities at the level of coding and clustering codes into categories related to the research question. There is a bit of winnowing, too, as some thematic codes and clusters are placed on hold for later exploration. (Galletta, 2013, p. 150)

### **3.2.16 Identification of themes.**

This final stage of interpretation and analysis provides an answer to the research question by moving the researcher from individual data to "explanatory knowledge by which disparate data are unified in a comprehensive understanding of a systematic whole" or "higher viewpoint" (Lonergan, 2000, p. 465 as cited in Perry, 2013). Perry (2013) asserts that the "description of the final themes should reflect a deep understanding of dynamic processes of human development" (p.274). Vital to this phase is the idea that the thematic areas are analyzed individually but also in relation to each other, as well as the "research question, the study participants, the situational context, and the theoretical framework" (Perry, 2013, p. 273).

It is at this point that I decided using a morphogenetic perspective as an analytical framework could provide a meaningful lens by which to understand the lived experience of the study participants. A theoretically informed study could also contribute new and hopefully meaningful knowledge to the area of mindfulness teaching and related fields. The analytical framework is provided in Chapter 4.

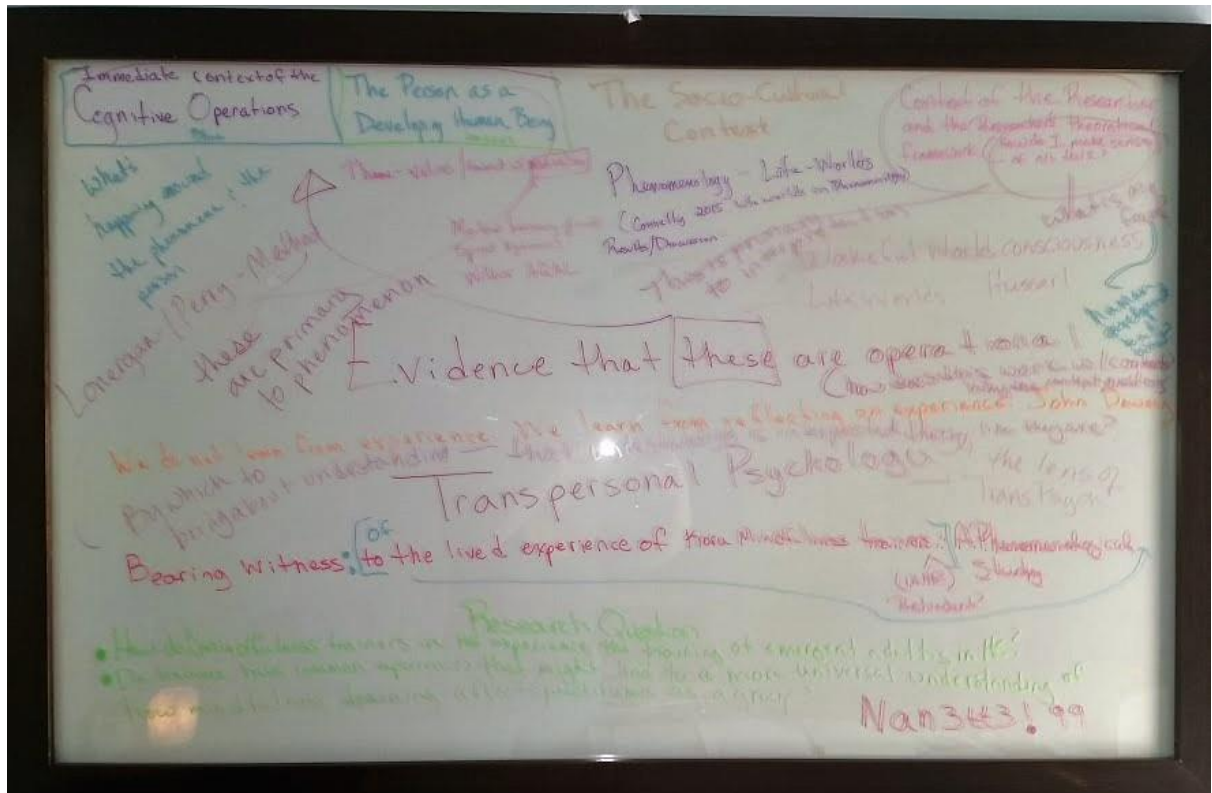


Figure 8: Example of Identification of Themes

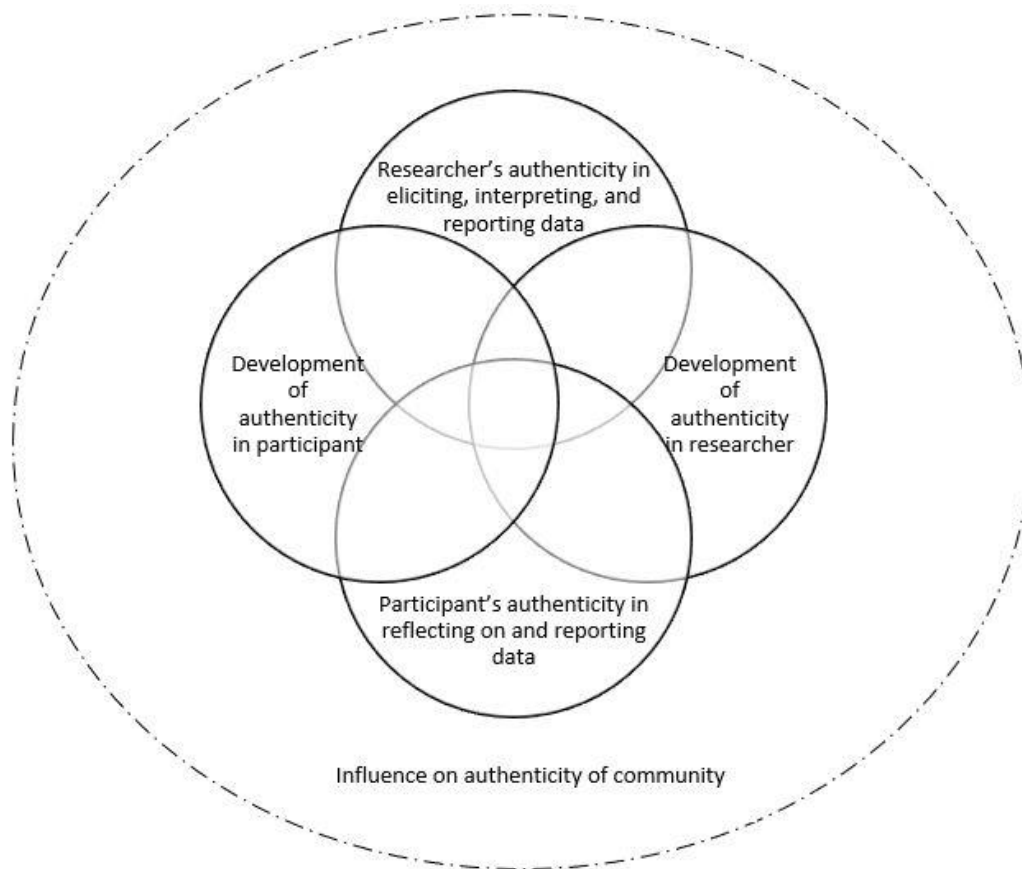
### 3.2.17 Validity and reliability.

Rigor in conducting and accurately reporting on the study has been achieved primarily through "validity-as-reflexive-accounting" where "researchers, the topic, and the sense-making process interact" (Altheide & Johnson 1994, p.489 as cited in Creswell & Miller, 2000). Genuine objectivity, for Lonergan, is the fruit of authentic subjectivity and the strict and rigorous adherence and commitment to reflective practice and reflexive accounting required for authentic subjectivity required to carry out the study.

For it is now apparent that in the world mediated by meaning and motivated by value, objectivity is simply the consequence of authentic subjectivity, of genuine attention, genuine intelligence, genuine reasonableness, genuine responsibility. Bernard Lonergan (Lonergan, 1972, p. 265)

In keeping with Lonergan's philosophy, as applied by Perry (2013), "our success in reaching accurate conclusions and in making good choices in applying those conclusions correlates with the degree to which we fulfill the transcendental precepts" of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible, which is termed "authentic subjectivity" (p.274). Perry (2013) has

identified five overlapping realms of authentic subjectivity that influence the objectivity of the research process (Figure 10). The realms are interrelated and work together in a "mutually transformative research process of authentic subjectivity" these realms together influence the fifth realm of authenticity concerning the adoption of the research findings and increased authenticity of a professional body or society (Perry, 2013, p. 275). The onus is on the researcher to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible in guiding research participants into interior reflection and eliciting, interpreting, and communicating the data.



*Figure 9: Five realms of objective subjectivity*

*Adapted from Figure 2. Five realms of authentic subjectivity (Perry, 2013, p. 275)*

This iterative and self-correcting cycle of reflection during the research and reporting process helps ensure a reliable level of accurate reporting of themes. It contributes to a solid foundation for the discussion of the findings. My doctoral thesis supervisor has monitored the research and my process of reporting.



### **3.2.18 Limitations.**

This study is limited to a small group of teachers working in a variety of HEIs, in diverse economic, political, and social contexts, all teaching the same stand-alone Koru Mindfulness curriculum. Because of the number of possible participants and commitments to anonymity, some aspects of research, such as age and gender, could not be included. The study does not include mindfulness teaching as a pedagogical tool, as part of larger or more diverse contemplative pedagogy curriculums, or other initiatives. Neither does the study include mindfulness teaching as part of larger or more diverse MBI wellness programs. The study covers a limited time period and one faculty member from each HEI. It does not study any one HEI in depth or a group of practitioners at any one HEI.

### **3.2.19 The researcher: background, beliefs, and biases.**

Drawing on the morphogenetic approach and critical realism and using TMRHS aligned well with my own ontological and epistemological commitments. Bentz and Shapiro (1998) encourage researchers to “reflect personally on the psychological, intellectual, and social meanings” of their research interests as well as their own ways of “engaging with ideas, data, methodologies, and decisions” (p.10). Perry (2013) also states that it is essential for the researcher to take a reflective approach throughout the research process “regarding underlying assumptions, experience, knowledge, and possible biases,” encouraging time for reflection on the research method, ethical concerns, and the researcher’s own consciousness (p.269). I chose an area of research that is meaningful to me. My theoretical and methodological choices reflect my values and willingness to take risks and challenges that I see as potentially bringing about growth or change. Understanding and insight are fundamental elements of personal emancipation and increased agency. The understanding that emerges from rigorous and robust research can be a catalyst for change and transformation. Actionable knowledge from research can generate change and transformation in higher education. Parker and Zajonc (2010) offer a "modest proposal" by encouraging those of us interested in transformation in the academy and endeavor to be "brave enough to name what we care about, share what we know, and take the risks that transformation always requires" (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 17). I chose a research area that I care about and have concerns about.

I care about the role of higher education in the larger society. In particular, I am concerned with how the educational experience contributes to the development of students, faculty, and staff. Contemplative practices, including mindfulness, can provide a way to a deeper

understanding of oneself and the relationship between the self, others, and the wider world. Designing and carrying out this study has given me the opportunity to interact with my own beliefs and biases while learning about others' experiences.

I am concerned about the effects of the marketization of higher education, a propensity to see students as customers rather than learners, and the marginalization of faculty and staff to customer-service providers. The continued siloization of higher education and higher education infused with competitiveness rather than collaboration seems a troublesome and ineffective way to support our need to deal with complex global political and environmental challenges.

## Chapter 4 Analytical Framework

### 4.1 Justification for Analytical Framework

An analytical framework (AF) provides a reasoned and consistent approach to understanding complex phenomena, such as decision-making or role-claiming. I have chosen to use an analytical framework to move beyond a descriptive interpretation of data and explore new and perhaps novel possible meanings to the lived experience of my research participants. Analytical frameworks can help construct meanings of complex situations or events because they separate out and then unify components of a phenomenon into a whole. I was able to use the morphogenetic perspective AF to critically consider participant declarations in several ways. This included separating out declarations in parts and then unifying them again in the whole of each individual participant's experience. The individuals' declaration could then be considered as a group within higher education and the larger society. The individual components of an event may have little inherent meaning on their own, but when brought together into a coherent whole, they provide new meaning (Davidoff, 2019, p. 3). Davidoff (2019) proposes that the new coherent whole derived from using an analytical framework is typically a narrative, map, model, or mathematical expression that "is uniquely helpful in making sense of that event or situation" (p.3). The new meaning that comes from the unification of a "phenomenon's individual components" can make the phenomenon more understandable (Davidoff, 2019, p. 3). In this study, the analytical framework helps provide a theoretical understanding of the process some individuals go through to become mindfulness teachers and how this process is related to agency, identity, and emergent properties that could potentially have an impact.

Analytical frameworks are helpful for planning, implementing, and evaluating the impact of improvement interventions (Davidoff, 2019, p. 7). Mindfulness teaching can be considered an intervention within higher education. Using an analytical framework can assist in evaluating any potential outcomes of mindfulness teaching interpreted from the research data. In this study, the analytical framework provides a theoretical lens to consider the impact and potential impact of mindfulness teaching on teachers, students, HEIs, and the wider academy and community.

I have chosen to use aspects of Archer's morphogenetic approach, a morphogenetic perspective, as the foundation for my analytical framework. The morphogenetic perspective can address human agency and social and cultural structures that can support change: *transformation* or contribute to things staying the same: *reproduction*. A morphogenetic perspective also aligns

with my critical realist commitments. Although not all aspects of the morphogenetic approach are fully developed in my reporting, the following section outlines contributions to my understanding of participants' lived experience. In findings and discussion, I draw from the morphogenetic approach to illustrate how Koru Mindfulness teachers thoughtfully consider taking on the role of mindfulness teacher, becoming social actors, and embodying their teaching role. I also draw out aspects of the morphogenetic approach to discuss potential influence and transformation mindfulness teachers and teaching may have in higher education and the larger society.

I have positioned the analytical framework between methodology and findings and discussion for two reasons. First, I incorporated the AF into my analysis after completing most of the TMRHS analysis protocol. Second, I draw on the framework for reporting and discussing findings. It seems integrating the framework into the discussion would be very cumbersome for the reader. I hope that positioning the AF just before the data presentation and discussion will facilitate making connections between the AF and my reporting without overburdening the reader.

#### **4.2 A Morphogenetic Perspective as Analytical Framework**

A morphogenetic perspective is rooted in the work of Margaret Archer. Archer's vast work has developed over time and continues to evolve, given that she is still actively working and writing. Archer has published extensively in sociology and education (Archer, 1979, 2013; Archer, 2014; Archer, 2009). Although still evolving, Archer sets out her argument for social theory over four volumes (2009; 1995; 2000, 2003), which Vandenberghe (2005) refers to as The Morphogenetic Quartet. In the first volume, initially published in 1988, Archer introduces her morphogenetic approach, which focuses on the relationship between human agency and cultural systems and social structures over time (Archer M. S., 2009). Archer proposes that cultural systems and social structures are always mediated through human agency and that without human agency, there are no cultural systems or social structures. Archer represents this in a three-stage sequence or cycle. For a visual representation, (see Figure 10).

Archer's proposals contrast with theoretical proposals that depend on the dialectic relationship between culture and agency and are more deterministic, meaning that an individual's power emanates out of their cultural systems (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Piirainen, 2014). Archer argues against the conflation of culture and social structures and proposes keeping culture and social structures related but separate (Archer M. S., 2009). This separation is termed

*analytical dualism* and contrasts with theoretical proposals that argue for Anti-dualism and accept a conflation of culture and social structures (Piiroinen, 2014) or duality, rather than dualism, of social structures, for example, in Giddens's structuration theory with stratified structural systems where agents and structures are conceptually inseparable (Archer M. S., 1982; Giddens, 1991). Wilmott (1999) argues for the acceptance of analytical dualism, remarking, "Analytical dualism does not deny that structure exists only through the activities of people: it simply accords structure-relative autonomy to explain such activities" (p.19). Analytical dualism contends that agency and structures are related but cannot be conflated. They must be kept "separate – distinct from and irreducible to one another" (Zeuner, 1999, p. 79).

Archer's 1995 publication focuses on theoretically supporting morphogenesis and countering alternate social theories. People, introduced as agents, encounter constraints and enablements. The force of the constraints and enablements on agents depends on different factors, such as the social position of agents and how an agent views projects they may be interested in pursuing. For example, a project could be teaching mindfulness in a person's higher education institution. The person's social position within the HEI, for example, if she is an adjunct faculty member or a dean or whether the HEI is in a religiously or politically conservative or liberal community, may affect agency. Archer argues that cultural systems and social structures can indirectly influence each other because cultural systems and social structures present constraints and enablements to agents. For Archer, structure, culture, and agency are viewed as analytically distinct and are "invested with distinctive properties and powers" (Lockett, 2008, p. 298).

Archer's (2000) third volume develops her theory of human agency based on a sequential account of nested identities that evolve over time. These nested identities and explored selfhood emerge from consciousness over time. Personal identity emerges from selfhood. Social identity emerges from personal identity. This is explored in more depth below in Section 4.7 and represented in Figure 13. Archer's (2003) fourth volume, *Structure, agency, and the internal conversation*, details how people define who they are by identifying personal concerns and choosing projects to commit to in light of those concerns. This is paramount to the theoretical analytical consideration of participants' process of choosing and committing to mindfulness teaching as a project that supports their personally identified concerns.

Regarding Archer's corpus of writing, Mutch (2017) warns against taking any of her works, in particular, *Realist social theory: the morphogenetic approach* (Archer, 1995), as a

terminal work and encourages one rather see each work as setting the stage for additional works. Archer (2007) discusses this herself in her work *The trajectory of the morphogenetic approach: an account in the first-person*, stating, "In this short piece, I have been given the rare license to explain the trajectory taken, though still to be completed, by my own theoretical work" (p.35). Archer's framework takes a non-deterministic approach and stresses agential reflexivity (Mutch, 2017). The framework provides an explanatory or analytical program by which any number of social questions can be approached.

### **4.3 Human Agency and Archer's Morphogenetic Approach**

To appreciate Archer's contribution, one must be ready to look at phenomena over time, in a three-part cycle or cycles. In Archer's morphogenetic three-part cycle, cultural and structural interaction with humans can lead to the possibility of cultural and social structures reproduction or transformation. In Archer, *reflexive deliberations* are internal conversations a person has with oneself. They are "the dialogues that people engage in inwardly and through which they define and clarify their beliefs, attitudes and goals, evaluate social circumstances and define projects based on their main concerns " (Archer, 2000; 2007; Caetano, 2015, p. 62). People's reflexive deliberations help inform and mediate the agency that they take to make their way through life. People deliberate in different ways, which Archer identifies as different modes of reflexivity. Identifying reflexivity was a key component of understanding the process participants undertook to become mindfulness teachers in their HEI. I link participants' reflexive deliberations to their process of identifying that mindfulness teaching is important to them and the actions they take to make that happen.

#### **4.3.1 Archer's reflexivity, agency, and decision making.**

Goodman (2017) finds Archer's focus on reflexivity as an attempt to go beyond the binary structure that agency explains action. Human reflexivity, for Archer (2007), is "*the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa* (p.4 italics in original). Reflexivity is the mediating mechanism between people and their social and cultural contexts and actions (Archer, 2007; 2012). Archer (2012, 2014) has identified four modes of reflexivity. Although each person, barring no significant developmental deficits, will engage in each mode at some time, Archer found most (normal) people have a preferred or dominant way of deliberating on the relationship between oneself and one's social context. The four modes are communicative reflexivity (moral communitarianism), autonomous reflexivity (moral libertarianism), meta-

reflexivity (self-critical moral engagement to transform structures), and fractured reflexivity (disorientation due to the tensions and contradictions of the social context) (Archer, 2014). Most of the time, study participants’ deliberations reflected a dominant meta-reflexive mode of deliberation. Characteristics of how each mode of reflexivity might manifest in a person's way of making their way through the world are outlined below. Meta-reflexives are arguably the most desirable mode for teachers because they are value-driven and critically consider courses of action and the context in which they take action, and fractured reflexives are the least desirable for teaching and pose a danger to themselves and others.

*Table 7: Modes of Reflexivity*  
*Adapted from Archer (2007, p.93) and (Goodman, 2017, pp. 120-122)*

<b>Modes of Reflexivity</b>	
<b>Mode of Reflexivity</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
<b>Communicative reflexives (ComR)</b>	<p>Those whose internal conversations require completion and confirmation by others before resulting in courses of action.</p> <p>Communicative reflexives consider the needs, wishes, and thoughts of others.</p> <p>They will require validation from other people before acting.</p> <p>They rely on trusted others to complete and confirm their tentative decisions.</p> <p>They consider how any action will affect other people, and the opinions of other people become very important.</p> <p>They are consensus seekers and value this over and above outcomes or values.</p> <p>They refer and may defer to others' thinking and action and will not readily "rock the boat."</p> <p>They are team players and value the smooth running of the team, even if that team has lost sight of the purpose of action.</p> <p>Leading change will be through consensus building rather than personal affirmative action.</p> <p>Communicative reflectives are vulnerable to action without thinking due to the desire to go along with group thinking.</p>

<p><b>Autonomous reflexives (AR)</b></p>	<p>Those who sustain self-contained internal conversations, leading directly to action.</p> <p>The autonomous reflexive can be a leader for change. They can be disruptive of social orders.</p> <p>They do not consider the emotional needs of others necessarily as relevant.</p> <p>They can be focused on specific goals, whether they be good or ill.</p> <p>They do not require the validation of others before they act.</p> <p>Their thinking is self-referential. That is, they refer to themselves for judgment as to the worth of acting.</p> <p>They may reinterpret professional codes and ethical practices to fit in with what they have decided is right.</p>
<p><b>Meta-reflexives (MR)</b></p>	<p>Meta reflexives are critically reflexive about their own internal conversations and critical about effective action in society.</p> <p>Meta reflexives are values-driven over and above considering outcomes or consensus.</p> <p>Meta reflexives think about whether there is a correct course of action, what drives thinking before action, and whether their own thinking is free from bias, cognitive errors, or delusion.</p> <p>Meta reflexives will consider paradigms and epistemologies that underpin professional practice.</p> <p>They will seek out an understanding of power structures and ethical positions.</p>
<p><b>Fractured reflexives (FR)</b></p>	<p>Those whose internal conversations intensify their distress and disorientation rather than leading to purposeful courses of action.</p> <p>Fractured reflexives are so disoriented and unclear that thought and action are difficult or impossible.</p>



	<p>Thinking about action or the matter at hand brings them no nearer to an answer. This then intensifies the feeling of distress.</p> <p>Values, consensus, or outcome thinking is secondary to personal survival in an uncertain world.</p> <p>Fragmentary thinking may be rooted in mental health problems, psychological disturbances, or disadvantaged social status.</p> <p>Any teacher who is primarily a fractured reflexive is likely to be a danger to themselves and to students.</p>
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The reflexive activity also helps people identify what they care about, such as relieving suffering or being wealthy. Reflexivity also mediates how one prioritizes the different things one cares about (Archer, 2003; 2012).

#### **4.3.2 Modus Vivendi.**

An individual's reflexivity generates active agency about what is important to them. Projects develop based on concerns. When these projects are successful, Archer suggests that these practices become a person's way of living or their *modus vivendi*. Archer (2007) proposes that through:

this *modus vivendi*, subjects live out their personal concerns within society as best they can. In shorthand, these components can be summarized in the formula <Concerns → Projects → Practices>. (Archer M. S., 2007, p. 42)

I apply this <Concerns → Projects → Practices> formula and the notion of *modus vivendi* to help characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education, particularly the process of coming to teach mindfulness.

#### **4.3.3 Agents, actors, and personal identity.**

The terms agent, agency, and actor have specific meanings in Archer's morphogenetic approach. Archer uses agents and agency to denote collectives of people stating, "Primary Agents are defined as collectivities sharing the same life-chances" (Archer, 2000, p. 263). Life-chances are related to issues such as privilege, economic status, gender, and language prestige. Agents are always humans, and agency is always "agency of something" (Knio, 2018, p. 413). **Primary Agents** have an acquired or involuntary agency from birth and are largely concerned

with reshaping the distribution of **social resources** (Archer, 2000). **Corporate Agents** are involved with reshaping **social change** (Archer 2000, 2007). Corporate Agents are organized interest groups such as “self-conscious vested interest groups, promotive interest groups, social movements and defensive associations” that are aware of what they want, can express that to others, and “have organized in order to obtain it” (Archer, 2000, p. 265). In contrast, Primary Agents do not have “a say in structural or cultural modeling” (Archer, 2000, p. 265). A morphogenetic perspective of corporate agency could inform the contemplative practice expansion in higher education and empower collectives to organize for social change more effectively.

For Archer (2000), actors are always agents first. A person becomes an actor when they take on individual roles. For example, in this study, an individual takes on the role of a mindfulness teacher. A person moves from being part of the plural agent to the individual actor as she or he occupies roles in society and occupies those roles by their own choice. Not all roles are open to all agents, and not all agents will become actors. Agents succeed in becoming actors when they are able to find roles they want to occupy and feel they are able to invest in those roles (Archer, 2000). This is a crucial aspect of the participants' process of choosing to pursue Koru Mindfulness certification. Archer (2000) proposes that actors “are defined as role incumbents and roles themselves have emergent properties which cannot be reduced to the characteristics of their occupants” (p.283). She also writes, “given the nature of social reality, we confront emergent properties which, in addition to our status as human beings [...] also make us into very different kinds of *agents* and very different *actors*” (Archer, 2000, p. 158). This will be an important aspect when, in the discussion chapter, I deal briefly with social justice issues related to mindfulness training.

Although a truly satisfying discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is worth recognizing that personal and social identity development is linked to role-choosing and role-occupying. Archer (2000) concludes that although adult human beings are “three-in-one”: *persons, agents, and actors*, “we never lose our genesis in the continuous sense of self which is formed non-discursively through our practical action in the world” (p.158).

Below, in Figure 10: The Emergence of Personal and Social Identity

from Archer (2000, p. 296, Figure 9.2), Primary Agents are identified as *the conditioned 'I'* and Corporate Agents as *the interactive 'We.'* The individual, the person, has an identity that emerges over time into one's individual identity and one's social identity. This emergent identity

is identified as *the elaborated "You"*. Social Identity (SI) is a subset of Personal Identity (PI) because our personal identities are much broader than our social identities. Personal identities are created in the three orders of reality—natural, practical, and social (Archer, 2000) of critical realism. As such, Archer (2000) argues that it is the individual who determines “where the self-worth that he or she derives from their social roles stands in relation to their other commitments in the world as a whole” (Archer, 2000, p. 13). It is the individual who must balance their concerns through prioritizing, and this determines “*how much* of themselves is invested in their social identities, and therefore *what* they will bring to living them out” (Archer, 2000, p. 13).

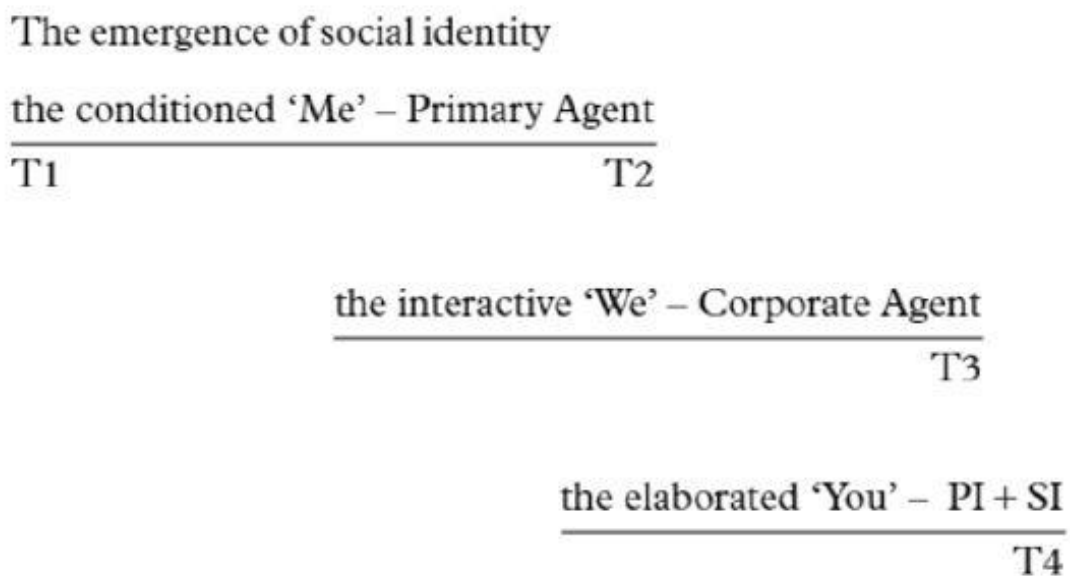


Figure 10: *The Emergence of Personal and Social Identity* from Archer (2000, p. 296, Figure 9.2)

According to Archer (2000), a person's commitments define them as a person and what kind of social actor they will become. In this study, the focus is on becoming a mindfulness teacher in higher education. The prioritizing of commitments is connected to reflexivity, "those conversations we have within our own minds that enable us to decide how we act in relation to the constraints and enablements of social structure" (Barratt, Appleton, & Pearson, 2019, p. 1). In Archer's three-stage model, reflexivity is the mediator between structure and agency: it is the "interplay between subjective personal properties and powers and objective social properties and powers" (Archer, 2007, p. 42).

#### **4.3.4 Collective reflexivity.**

In addition to personal reflexivity, Archer recognizes collective reflexivity. Collective reflexivity is shared reflexivity where group members share a reflexive co-orientation that bends back and "affects what they do (or decline to do)" about something or in a given situation. An example of collective reflexivity is how a department interacts and takes action together in a university (Archer M. S., 2013, p. 158). However, collective reflexivity does not imply that group members "have the same thoughts in their heads," share intentions, motivations, or have the same ultimate concerns (Archer M. S., 2013, p. 158). In addition, Nellhaus (2017) proposes that "collective reflexivity [is] conducted not just by saying, but also by doing" and is a combination of collectivity, reflexivity, and embodiment (p. 45). Nellhaus (2017) asserts that "embodied collective reflexivity is a prominent part of many people's lives, and so must figure in our understanding of how society operates" (p. 45). Mindfulness and related contemplative practices in higher education often include ideas related to both personal and societal change. Considering the collective reflexivity of HE + contemplative practitioners as a group could yield additional insights into the field of contemplation and transformation.

#### **4.3.5 The Morphogenetic Cycle.**

The morphogenetic cycle occurs in phases over time. The cycle starts at Time<sup>1</sup> with social structures/cultural systems already in place. Over time, humans act as agents as they interact with these structures and systems (Time<sup>2</sup>-Time<sup>3</sup>). The interactions are either contributing to change or to things staying the same. At Time<sup>4</sup>, the end of a cycle, actions either result in structural elaboration (morphogenesis) or reproduction (morphostasis)(M/M) (Archer M., 1995). This "continuing social interaction further consolidates or transforms these structures for future generations" (Pratt, 2014). Figure 10 below provides a visual representation of the three-stage morphogenetic cycle.

### The Three-Stage Model

#### Stage 1

##### **Structural conditioning**

**Time<sup>1</sup>**

Structural and cultural properties *objectively* shape the situations that agents confront involuntarily, and *inter alia* possess generative powers of constraint and enablement in relation to

#### Stage 2

##### **Socio-cultural interaction**

**Time<sup>2</sup>**

**Time<sup>3</sup>**

Subjects' own constellations of concerns, as *subjectively* defined in relation to the three orders of natural reality: nature, practice and the social.

#### Stage 3

##### **Structural elaboration (morphogenesis)**

##### **Structural reproduction (morphostasis)**

**Time<sup>4</sup>**

Courses of action are produced through the *reflexive deliberations* of subjects who *subjectively* determine their practical projects in relation to their *objective* circumstances.

Figure 11: The Three-Stage Model  
Adapted from Archer (1995, p. 157; 2007, p. 1)

Morphogenesis is a change in agency or culture or structure (Case, 2015). Culture and agency are causally related (Archer M. S., 2009). Cultural constraints influence the freedom of thought and belief individuals experience in daily life, yet culture is shaped and reshaped by people (Archer, 2009). In the morphogenetic approach, culture, structure, and agency influence each other toward transformation, *morphogenesis*, or reproduction, *morphostasis*.

The 'morpho' element is an acknowledgment that society has no pre-set form or preferred state: the 'genetic' part is a recognition that it takes its shape from and is formed by

agents, originating from the intended and unintended consequences of their activities. (Archer, 1995, p. 5).

The independent causal impacts of structures come from their capacity to constrain, enable, and motivate agents through vested interests (Archer, 2014b). Structural domains include such entities as "positions, roles, organizations, institutions, and, eventually, the global social system" (Archer, 2007, p. 40). Structural domains are directly relevant to higher education professionals.

Structure refers to human relationships between human actors and the relationships between social positions that humans occupy, such as "power, competition, exploitation, and dependency" (Porpora, 2013, p. 27). Structure has *emergent* properties that are real, influence practice, and yet are not reducible to either practice or practitioners (Li, 2016). In support of Archer's concept of emergent properties, Elder-Vass (2007), drawing from Stephan (1992), refines the use of emergence as follows:

Emergence is the idea that a whole can have properties (or powers) that are not possessed by its parts—or, to put it more rigorously, properties that would not be possessed by its parts if they were not organised as a group into the form of this particular kind of whole. Such properties are called emergent properties, and any entity that has one or more emergent properties is an emergent entity (Stephan, 1992, p. 27, cited in Elder-Vass, 2007, p. 29).

Emergent properties are relational. They are not contained within or reducible to the discrete elements themselves but could not exist apart from them either (Archer M. S., 1982).

Bureaucracies, schools, and universities are emergent relational entities and, therefore, "exist at a different level from that of human agency" (Willmott, 1999, p. 19).

Agency and structure are always causally interrelated; however, they remain ontologically separate and thus analytically distinct. This allows researchers to consider both separateness and inter-relatedness when looking at phenomena.

#### **4.4 Section Conclusion**

Drawing on the morphogenetic approach and related aspects of Archer's social theory enabled me to reach a theoretically informed characterization of the lived experiences of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education. As presented in the following chapter, participants showed a strong connection to their concerns and their pursuit of teaching mindfulness in their HEI. Conclusions drawn from the study conducted in this thesis propose that

study participants are involved in cultivating their own active agency through, in part, their personal mindfulness practice. Practicing mindfulness and eventually teaching mindfulness cultivates both personal agency and emotional equanimity and equilibrium. This then reduces certain types of suffering. In so doing, participants can constructively respond to, and I propose, rise above most criticisms and be well positioned to create impact.

Archer writes:

Being an "active agent" hinges on the fact that individuals develop and define their ultimate concerns, those internal goods that they care about most and whose precise constellation makes for their concrete singularity as persons. No one can have an ultimate concern and fail to do something about it. Instead, each seeks to develop a course(s) of action to realise that concern by elaborating a project, in the (fallible) belief that to accomplish the project is to realise one's concern.

(Archer, 2007, p. 42)

Although criticisms exist, Archer's morphogenetic approach offers a rich and detailed apparatus to explore phenomena such as decision-making. As a researcher, adopting a morphogenetic perspective heightened my awareness of social structures and cultural systems that study participants interact with as they attempt to exercise agency related to mindfulness teaching. Archer's modes of reflexivity informed but did not define my consideration of participants' declarations. Combining the hermeneutical structure of the TMRHS protocol with an informed morphogenetic perspective helped create an ontologically consistent and methodologically sound foundation for me to approach the study. The following chapter presents and discusses the study findings informed by a morphogenetic perspective.

## Chapter 5 Findings and Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

Zora Neale Hurston (1996) writes, "Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. It is a seeking that he who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world and they that dwell therein." (p. 143). Through this research project, I aimed to understand the lived experience of my participants better, "they that dwell therein," and myself.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the data showed that participants' lived experiences are complex, interwoven, and rooted in personal values. I characterize the lived experience of the Koru Mindfulness teachers (KMTs) teaching in higher education as a value-driven process of identifying concerns, developing projects, and establishing practices supporting those concerns. This process represents one morphogenetic cycle that culminates in KMTs' role-claiming and embodied role use of mindfulness teachers. As KMTs adjust their ultimate concerns toward sustainable practices that support pursuing their *modus vivendi*, however, this chosen role may change if being a Koru Mindfulness teacher becomes an unsustainable practice or no longer supports their ultimate concerns.

Two themes emerged from the data, mindfulness teaching as part of an undivided and embodied life and the value of mindfulness teaching certification (see Table 14: Themes and Descriptions). For each, I include subthemes, direct quotations from participant declarations, and make comments. Where appropriate, I incorporate insights drawn from a morphogenetic perspective and occasionally propose recommendations. I chose to keep the findings and recommendations in close proximity in order to focus on the link between results and recommendations. However, the explicit recommendations summary is in Chapter 6

Through my organizational choices, I try to cluster the ideas around each theme rather than asking the reader to hold information in their minds and link back to reported data or the analytical framework. I have included headings to help facilitate understanding of the organization of my reporting.

Through my analysis, I was able to characterize the lived experience of this group of KMTs in this way:

Participants thoughtfully pursued mindfulness teachings as part of a process that included identifying concerns, developing projects in support of those concerns, and, ultimately,



their desired way of being in the world. Participants claim and embody the role of Koru Mindfulness teacher as part of their *modus vivendi*: their way of life.

The following chapter presents and discusses the data findings. The chapter begins with demographic information, followed by the presentation and discussion of themes, and concludes with a findings summary.

The structure of the chapter reflects my initial data analysis using TMRHS and the subsequent application of my analytical framework. In sections 5.2 and 5.3, I present demographic information in two tables. The tables show the various types of HEIs the participants are employed by and how the study-participants sample size relates to the overall number of Koru Mindfulness teachers. I used this information to anonymously contextualize participants' work settings and set the sample size against the overall cohort of Koru Mindfulness teachers. With this information, I show the range of HEIs represented in the study by location, enrollment number, degree offerings, and funding sources by public or private institutions. This information aims to contextualize the study and support that the study size gives an acceptable representation of the larger cohort. Sections 5.3 and 5.4 aim to acquaint the reader with the research participants. Table 11 includes interview lengths and times to give an idea of how long the participant and I engaged in each interview conversation. Table 10 shows each participant's primary responsibility at their HEI and at what level they serve. Sections 5.2-5.4 work together to provide a foundation for understanding the immediate context of study participants and their roles in HE without compromising confidentiality.

In section 5.5, I present six identified topical areas that I later hone into themes and subthemes. This section serves as a bridge between demographic information and the creation of themes. The six topical areas are (i) risk-taking (professional self) and trailblazing; (ii) wholeness and resilience; (iii) planting seeds and realms of influence and impact; (iv) personal development as life-long learning and spiritual growth; (v) commitment to relieving suffering; and (vi) standing in the tragic gap. I present the topical areas to show the foundation for identifying the themes and subthemes.

The chapter then moves into themes. The table below presents the themes and subthemes introduced and discussed in sections 5.6 to 5.8.

Table 8: Themes and Descriptions

Themes and Subthemes	Descriptions
<p>Mindfulness teaching as part of an undivided and embodied life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prioritizing the Relief of Suffering</li> <li>b. Inadvertently Causing Suffering (trauma and microaggressions/power)</li> <li>c. Spirituality as part of personal wholeness and authenticity</li> </ul>	<p>Participants discussed the relationship between mindfulness, teaching, personal values, and their way of being in the world. Participants also talked about their relationship with spirituality, their experience as developing human beings, and coming to the decision to teach.</p>
<p>The value of mindfulness teaching certification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Internal validation</li> <li>b. Choosing Koru Mindfulness over other certifications</li> </ul>	<p>Participants discussed the experience and process that culminated in taking the Koru Mindfulness training and pursuing certification. This included validating their own skills and abilities for themselves as well as the value of credentials to others. Participants also discussed their choice of Koru Mindfulness over other certifications.</p>

Each section includes verbatim samples from the data and comments on those samples. Where I found it helpful to draw out and establish a specific connection with the literature, theme development, or my analytical framework, comments on quotations appear in the table. Some tables consist of clusters of participant declarations. Clusters show the type of group analysis I drew from to form themes and subthemes. I use tables to facilitate easy access to and organization of the material. In addition, I use expository writing to expand on or explain the data findings and provide cohesion and transitions between sections.

Section 5.9 focuses on viewing the data through a morphogenetic lens. I concentrated on two aspects: the internal conversation and pursuit of the good life represented in the formula <Concerns → Projects → Practices> (Archer M. S., 2007, p. 42) and identifying morphogenetic cycles within the data. In section 5.9.1, I used a case study of one participant, Jessie, to illustrate the process of moving through concerns to projects and practices in pursuit of the way she wanted to be in the world, her *modus vivendi*. Jessie's story arc exemplified the formula <Concerns → Projects → Practices>. Presenting her experience as a case study allowed me to show how applying the analytical framework helped me identify theoretical aspects of the lived experiences under study and gain a deeper understanding overall.

As evidenced in theme1 subtheme a, participants were interested in relieving suffering. More generally, the literature points to mindfulness and contemplative practices as a way to bring about transformation. I wanted to incorporate a way to consider the impact of mindfulness teaching through participants' lived experiences. In section 5.9.2, I construct a dialogue between the data and my application of the analytical framework. I suggest that morphogenesis/stasis, thus transformation, is theoretically possible because morphogenetic cycles can be identified within the data.

The chapter closes by characterizing the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers in higher education, answering the research question, and transitioning to the final chapter of the thesis.

## 5.2 Demographics

Table 9 below presents an overview of the HEIs participants worked at the time of the study. Detailing the type and location of HEIs is important when considering the context in which a participant is teaching and how the cultural systems and social structures may enable or constrain agency. The table outlines possible variables among HEIs, including the type, size, and location setting.

*Table 9: Types of HEIs Represented*

Types of HEIs Represented	
Public universities	4
Private universities	7
Public community or junior college	1
Undergraduate enrollment 0-5k	1
Undergraduate enrollment 6-10k	4
Undergraduate enrollment 11-15k	2
Undergraduate enrollment 16-20k	2
Undergraduate enrollment 21-25k	1
Undergraduate enrollment over 26k	1
Enrollment statistics unknown	1
City/Urban HEIs	6
Suburban HEIs	6
HEIs granting up to and including doctoral degrees	11

Table 10: Participant Representation in Relationship to Overall Numbers of Koru Mindfulness Teachers


	Study participant KMTs at onset of study in 2016	Full network of KMTs (certified and trainers-in-training) at onset of study in 2016	Full network of KMTs (certified and trainers-in-training) at close of study in 2018
Numbers	12	156	339 + 79 registered for upcoming initial training
Female*	11	Unknown/not asked	281
Male *	1	Unknown/not asked	58
Number working in higher education	12		248
Geographical location	North America -12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canada-1</li> <li>• Midwest-2</li> <li>• Northeast-3</li> <li>• Southeast-2</li> <li>• Southwest-1</li> <li>• West-3</li> </ul> 	Unknown/not asked	North America - 334 (Cyprus – 1) New Zealand-2 Norway =1 Singapore=1 Turkey = 1
Total number of certified Koru Mindfulness trainers**	12 in process at time of interview	Unknown	72**
* Gender identification here is presumed per interview process and such things as pronoun indicators on emails. Male and female numbers for the full KMT cohort was provided by The Center for Koru Mindfulness. Other identifiers such as years of service, age and so forth are not included in keeping with protecting participant identity.			
** The Center for Koru Mindfulness provided this additional information on certification siting that the numbers are significantly influenced by the initial time period teachers had to complete certification. From 2015 to August 2016 teachers had two years to submit portfolios. In August 2016 the time limit was changed to one year and consequently portfolio submissions for certification have increased significantly.			

Table 10 above compares the participant sample and the overall population of Koru Mindfulness

teachers at the time of the interviews and two years beyond the interview year. The combined number of Koru Mindfulness teachers, teachers in training, and registrations for upcoming training more than doubled in these two years.

### 5.3 Interview Lengths and Times

Interviews ranged from just under half an hour to nearly two hours. The mean duration was 1 hour, 5 minutes, and 4 seconds and the median time was 59 minutes and 44 seconds. Transcription word counts ranged from 3205 words to 10,073, with the mean at 5,882 words and the median at 5,060 words.

*Table 11: Interview Times, Transcription Word Counts, and Pseudonyms*

<b>Interview Times (hh/mm/ss)</b>	<b>Transcription Word Count</b>	<b>Gender Neutral Pseudonym</b>
00:28:51	4059	Chris
00:30:52	3205	Dana
00:44:24	3412	Lou
00:48:52	5158	Kadin
00:55:01	3654	Riley
00:58:05	4307	Jessie
01:04:26	4961	Evan
01:09:30	6401	Mel
01:14:12	9767	Bailey
01:36:13	8365	Taylor
01:44:12	10073	Sam
01:56:24	7221	Pat

### 5.4 Participant Demographics

Retaining confidentiality and preserving participant anonymity were my paramount concerns. Consequently, this limited the reportable amount of demographic information. There were only 156 possible participants at the time participation invitations were sent. At that time, Koru Mindfulness did not keep a record of gender or who was teaching in HEIs. However, women did outnumber men. As a result, I have chosen not to include gender as a demographic category. Likewise, I omitted age and more descriptive accounts of roles and responsibilities.

All participants had a minimum of a master's degree, and most hold either PhDs, MDs, or equivalent. Several participants also had additional training or qualifications in teaching or complementary modalities such as MBSR, MBCT, yoga, Reiki, essential oil therapy, or art

therapy. For confidentiality, I omitted all identifying characteristics of individuals and anonymized participants.

Table 12: Participant Pseudonyms, Primary Responsibilities, and HEI Position Level

Gender Neutral Pseudonym	Primary Responsibilities	HEI Position Level
Chris	Student Wellness	Director Campus Administration
Dana	Student Wellness	Practitioner
Lou	Academic	Adjunct Faculty
Kadin	Student Wellness	Campus Administration
Riley	Student Wellness	Campus Administration
Jessie	Student Wellness	Director Campus Administration
Evan	Academic	Professor
Mel	Hybrid Student wellness + teaching	Non-tenure Non-managerial
Bailey	Academic	Professor
Taylor	Academic	Associate Professor
Sam	Student Wellness	Director Campus Administration
Pat	Academic	Non-tenure
Nanette (not pseudonym)	Academic Study's primary researcher	Non-tenure

### 5.5 Processing Data

After completing and transcribing interviews, I carried out the five-step TMRHS protocol for processing data: identification of participant declarations, creation of topical summaries, synthesis of topical summaries, higher synthesis and interpretation, and identification of themes (Perry, 2013). In addition to my previous knowledge, I also drew from and made connections to Margaret Archer's morphogenetic approach to theoretically inform my understanding and interpretation of themes that emerged from the data on the lived experience of study participants.

After early coding and identifying participant declarations, I conducted the iterative process of creating topical summaries. I identified six topical areas: (i) risk-taking (professional self) and trailblazing; (ii) wholeness and resilience; (iii) planting seeds and realms of influence and impact; (iv) personal development as life-long learning and spiritual growth; (v) commitment to relieving suffering; and (vi) *standing in the tragic gap*. Thematic areas and

supporting participant declarations are provided in Table 13: Topical Summaries Yielded Six Thematic Areas below.

Table 13: Topical Summaries Yielded Six Thematic Areas

Topical Summaries Yielded Six Thematic Areas			
Thematic Area	Study Participant	Selected quotation	Comments
<b>Commitment to relieving suffering</b>	Jessie	Depressed and anxious is coming up over and over in our surveys. Why aren't we giving [students] these practices to deal with it?	Voices a concern arising out of her personal experience with students and student surveys
<b>Personal development as Life-long learning and spiritual growth</b>	Pat	[Deciding to teach mindfulness was] kind of a convergence of maybe two or more parts of myself [including] the more sacred religious aspects of mindfulness.	Reflects acknowledgment and value of spirituality as part of self and a process of moving into teaching. Also overlaps with wholeness.
<b>Risk taking (professional self) and trailblazing</b>	Sam	I started thinking is there a way of integrating this into my work life without coming across as being this wacked out yoga teacher?	Internal conversation reflects concerns, moving into projects and consideration of others' opinions
<b>Wholeness and resilience</b>	Riley	In my own life, in figuring out how to navigate, all those things come together ...You can give people really simple tools to kind of cope.	Inward reflection on experience outward expression of service-what we do and who we are
<b>Planting seeds and realms of influence and impact</b>	Pat	I am not totally clear and confident about what influence I am having on [students]... So that has made me [think] what can I do to help them experience a value in this in a small way that maybe ten years from now they look back and go, oh, yea, maybe I should check into that again. You know, I guess it's the planting seeds thing.	Inward reflection, outward observation, indicates beginning to form projects to practice
<b>“Standing in the tragic gap”</b>	Lou	I meet [students] where they are at. Where their pain is at and try to work with it from there. I know a lot of other instructors feel as though students should be behaving in a certain way, but they don't, and it is when they are having crisis within themselves - that's their crisis. And so, you meet them there.	Observation of students, articulation of student needs, willingness to go against what might be dominant cultural expectations on students and instructors – Lou is between what is and what could be.  The tragic gap is the space between what is and what could be. Palmer cautions that neither corrosive cynicism nor irrelevant idealism is helpful. Instead, one must stand in the “tragic gap” and hold the tension between reality and possibility (Center for Courage and Renewal, 2015; Palmer, 2004; Palmer, 1999)

For participants, teaching mindfulness was more about their own commitment to helping students manage their well-being rather than using mindfulness as a pedagogical tool. This made sense, given Koru’s structure and curriculum. I looked at the data again, paying particular attention to the context of each participant’s decision to take the Koru Mindfulness training and pursue certification to teach. Two themes emerged, (i) mindfulness teaching as part of an undivided and embodied life and (ii) the value of mindfulness teaching certification. Themes and subthemes are represented below in Table 14: Themes and Descriptions.

Table 14: Themes and Descriptions

Themes and Descriptions	
Themes and Subthemes	Descriptions
<p>Mindfulness teaching as part of an undivided and embodied life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Prioritizing the Relief of Suffering</li> <li>b. Inadvertently Causing Suffering (trauma and microaggressions/power)</li> <li>c. Spirituality as part of personal wholeness and authenticity</li> </ul>	<p>Participants discussed the relationship between mindfulness, teaching, personal values, and their way of being in the world. Participants also talked about their relationship with spirituality, their experience as developing human beings, and coming to the decision to teach.</p>
<p>The value of mindfulness teaching certification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Internal validation</li> <li>b. Choosing Koru Mindfulness over other certifications</li> </ul>	<p>Participants discussed the experience and process that culminated in taking the Koru Mindfulness training and pursuing certification. This included validating their own skills and abilities for themselves as well as the value of credentials to others. Participants also discussed their choice of Koru Mindfulness over other certifications.</p>

### 5.6 Theme One: Mindfulness Teaching as Part of an Undivided and Embodied Life

An undivided life here speaks to the integration of what one does and who one is as a developing human being. The term *integrity* is particularly fitting for two of its meanings: a state of being whole and undivided, as well as the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles (Becker, 1998; Google, 2019). Part of that honesty comes from KMTs' willingness to look deeply at and engage with their personal development and decision-making processes. Whether instigating first attempts at mindfulness on a campus (Bailey and Lou), working to



improve offerings within HEIs that had other forms of meditation available (Riley, Sam, Chris, and Mel), somewhere in the middle (Pat, Evan, Taylor, Dana) or championing the first attempts of bringing meditation to her campus and then seeing it strongly integrated into the life of her HEI (Jessie), all KMTs showed a deep connection between who they are as people and what they hoped to bring to students. They also embody their role as mindfulness teachers because they, themselves, endeavor to be embodied human beings, not separating their minds from their physical selves. Embodiment relates to the present-moment awareness of living in our bodies and how the embodied self interacts with others and the greater society (Gyllensten, Skär, Miller, & Gard, 2010). Embodiment refers to real things that constrain people as physical beings, such as their bodies, gender, historical context, and the like. Participants expressed a keen awareness of embodiment throughout the interviews.

For all participants in the study, committing to Koru Mindfulness training in some way was linked to a commitment to personal development applied in a professional setting with the intention of creating change, especially for, but not limited to, students. KMTs expressed their experiences with thoughtful reflection portraying a commitment to their integrity and authenticity in personhood. In the **Error! Reference source not found.**table below, representative declarations show how participants expressed teaching mindfulness in relationship to a commitment to maintaining an embodied presence and living an undivided life.

Study participant	Selected quotations	Comments
<p><b>Lou</b></p>	<p>I had a yoga [studio] and was teaching yoga and I really found that connection of that final posture, Shavasana [Savasana], when I was teaching it, to be rather profound for people and myself. And, well, then I started working at the college and teaching there, so the teaching kind of came back on. But I was always teaching courses that had to do with like stress and wellness and kind of [incorporated] these ideas into the courses. Then I went through a separation and a divorce, and during that time, I really started to embrace it a little bit more as trying to figure my own self out...Then I was working on my master’s and just started to research what would happen with mindful practice for post-secondary students in reducing anxiety. And that is really kind</p>	<p>Lou recounts an organic process of coming to teach mindfulness. She had a developed yoga practice (she owned a yoga studio) and found Savasana particularly profound for herself and others. Savasana, or corpse pose, is usually the final pose in a yoga class, where one lies on their back and remains still.</p> <p>Lou drew on contemplative practices to help her navigate through life events, including divorce, teaching at a college, and working on her Master’s degree.</p> <p>She was teaching courses connected to wellness and began to think how the contemplative practices she had experienced might also help post-secondary students reduce anxiety. This became her area of</p>

	<p>of what lead me to [Koru]...It was very organic. It was very step-by-step. I don't think five years ago, I would have expected this is what I would be doing. However, on another [pause] aspect of that, I have always been doing stuff like this. And teaching people like this.</p>	<p>research, and eventually she chose to be a Koru Mindfulness teacher.</p> <p>Lou's experience shows how her inner experiences informed her outer choices as she continues to develop. This fits well with the Mobius strip analogy.</p>
<p><b>Sam</b></p>	<p>I have always said that I feel like my personal development is totally connected to my professional development. And, I have also believed that as somebody who works, you know [with] organizations and staff, [that] when people are happy professionally, they are happy personally, typically. That there is a connection there. So I don't have a divide.</p>	<p>Sam readily acknowledges that her personal and professional development are "totally connected" and not divided. She perceives a general correlation between happiness at work and personal happiness.</p>
<p><b>Pat</b></p>	<p>[I] was in my doctoral program in education and really started thinking of myself more as a teacher, as an educator. And finally, actually working with students and I think bringing those two pieces [Buddhist and educator] of myself together was when I started thinking, hmmm, maybe I could facilitate [mindfulness] someday for people...By that time [I had] realized how beneficial it had been for me personally. And another piece for me happened was I started thinking about facilitating it; I think I first started thinking about facilitating it actually, with LGBT population. Because that was also an important part of me and my identity development... I have thought about in particular, bringing these benefits to that community. And I have not actually done that yet, but that is sort of the context in which I started thinking about it, was because it benefitted me so much and that, in particular, is an important part of who I am. And I have done other kinds of activism in working toward LGBT rights... and not even just political but community building. And so it seemed like ... that idea of how mindfulness can help us further our social justice and just kind of anti-oppression work. Whether it is on an individual basis or on a community basis. <b>Pat</b></p>	<p>Pat's experience demonstrates an integration of identity, vocation, and presence in the world that, although uniquely her own, is consistent with most of the participants. Pat's reflection illustrates the interconnectedness between how contemplative practices enhance her life and identifying that facilitating mindfulness meditation could be a role for her to claim and use in her context both as an educator and as a member of society.</p> <p>Pat speaks directly to the use of mindfulness teaching for anti-oppressive, social justice social change.</p> <p>Pat considers how mindfulness might further anti-oppression and social justice work.</p> <p>This illustrates prioritizing concerns and starting to identify projects from</p> <p>&lt;Concerns → Projects → Practices&gt;</p>

Bailey, Sam, and Lou’s quotations articulate personal values associated with teaching mindfulness and their more prominent roles as educators. They express ideas consistent with openness, freedom, and lifelong learning. Baily acknowledges that the TMRHS interview has helped bring to the surface an awareness of a value on freedom underpinning their teaching. Sam believes the world is a better place when people practice mindfulness. Lou references the non-judgmental quality of mindfulness, open awareness, and appreciation for life’s journey.

Study participant	Selected quotations	Comments
Bailey	<p>I really think that [freedom] is a theme that runs through why I do this and why I think it is important. And I think this kind of freedom, this free the mind kind of thing, is so important for young people because they are trapped. They are trapped in so many different ways, and they don’t understand the autonomy or the agency that they might be able to have if they are able to free their minds and stop trying to break free or strop trying to, you know, stop creating suffering for themselves, you know, in the situations, they are in. And so I think that is probably a theme that is there, that has been there all the time. And you know, it is great to voice it. It is great to express it because I haven’t yet until this interview and I think that’s really, that’s really uh, that’s really key.</p>	<p>Bailey values freedom and sees mindfulness teaching as a way to help others who are “trapped” connect with their own agency, autonomy, and freedom.</p>
Sam	<p>Well, I guess I must have some [values]. It must be connected to a desire to help people to live a fulfilling, healthy, whole life. In terms of value, I definitely believe that the world is a better place when people are practicing mindfulness... I feel that it teaches us to be more compassionate toward ourselves, more compassionate to others, more open, less judgmental. I mean, all of the things that it says it does, I believe it does. And I think we need that in the world. We need that in small communities. In bigger communities. And, you know, I feel like people who connect to that create ... a way of being with each other that is pretty contagious in a positive way...  <b>[Sam continues]</b>- Teaching people to be in the present. Teaching people to be in the moment. ... I think I have always felt like, as an educator, and a supervisor, and a developer of young professionals, awareness is huge. And</p>	<p>Sam recognizes a desire to help people live a “whole life.” Mindfulness can help one be more compassionate to self and others. She sees herself in several roles that intersect with helping young professionals, and mindfulness supports elements of her aims in helping others.</p>

	<p>helping people to have an awareness of who they are and how their thoughts work for them or work against them. I mean, really, if I had to say what I am an expert at, it is supervising young professionals [helping] these young people to become stronger professionals, to like themselves more as human beings and as educators. And there is such a crossover between [that] and some of this mindfulness stuff.</p>	
<b>Lou</b>	<p>My own personal values that I bring to this, I believe, would be to just continue to be open to the journey and to quit judging it and yourself as having to be a certain way... to value the fact that life is for living and it is sometimes messy, and it is not always the way you want it to be... And imparting to the students I have coming to me that there is great compassion for the fact that emotions are still connected with some of those expectations and “How do you sit with those?” and “How do you kind of accept those as what they are?” as well. And that’s what I try to impart and what I am working with myself right now with that [too].</p>	<p>Lou communicates an openness and transparency with herself and others of non-judgmentally accepting that life is “messy” sometimes and the role emotions play in navigating life. She values being “open to the journey,” and mindfulness can help one sit with the complexity of circumstances and emotions without giving up.</p>

Participants found it difficult to qualify and quantify impact on their HEI, the academy, and the wider world. They were able to share and process their experiences and reflect on the type of changes they observed. This included increased and extended programs, feedback from students, relationship building among faculty, and expanding programs into the local community. The selected quotations below support these findings.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Chris</b>	<p>Yeah, you know, hard to measure [impact]... So some people who have been through the Koru, they come to the [meditation] drop-in sessions and they have gone on a retreat. You [might] have a few people who are like, <i>woosh</i>, they are right in there. And you can feel [that they] have really gotten connected to this. Some people come and go through it and maybe that is all they do. Maybe they hit the drop-in once, maybe they don't. And maybe they come back to [Koru] 2.0 and say, “Oh my gosh. I felt so much better when I was doing the practice, but it is so so hard”. And so how we are influencing the whole campus culture is so hard to measure-I am not sure how I would say...</p> <p>One of the things that has been neat here... is some of the connections I have made with some of the other facilitators. So as a result of organizing some of this, and the training, two or three connections [have developed] with staff that are pretty deep around practice. Which is really neat. And so what I am finding too with the Koru group, because there’s probably 10, 11 of us now, is that [we get] together... People just want to connect with each other. Some of it’s “How are you finding this? When you’re leading this, where are you getting stuck?” or whatever. But I</p>

	feel like it is a deeper connection than that too. It is supporting everyone's own process and growth. So that has been a kind of a nice surprise.
<b>Bailey</b>	<p>Mindfulness is another area that is really finding its way onto campuses in the way we see Koru doing it in different kinds of settings. Most of them are coming out of counseling centers, and you know our university had absolutely no clue that that was happening, that that was important. You know, that is where we are at. It is just like new things happen elsewhere and we don't even know about it. And you need individuals who are kind of into that thing to bring it onboard and it is a slow process of raising awareness around it. I feel fortunate to have been able to be a catalyst for community engagement happening [in my area] and I am kind of thinking the same thing will happen with mindfulness ultimately: that I will be able to connect up with people who are interested in that. But, at this point, for my own work, that is where I am focusing on right now. I am focusing on my way of being of use to the students beyond just teaching classes and integrating in maybe some fresh ways and how we do what we do.[...]</p> <p>With regard to what I feel I am contributing to the "Academy as a whole and the wider world," I must say that my practice and efforts to integrate mindfulness into both are the most fulfilling work I've ever done.</p>
<b>Kadin</b>	<p>This weekly group kicked off the same semester that we started teaching Koru on our campus... and continues to grow and thrive like our Koru programs. Each week we see new faces and familiar faces in this group. The group is facilitated by me, my student interns, or occasional guest presenters. I am proud that I have contributed to developing this group and love the energy that comes from the students participating and sharing different mediation practices, successes and challenges. I even miss the group when we are on semester breaks and don't meet. This year we began to have students that are experienced meditators begin to lead the group sessions, and some have shared about their different cultural/religious practices related to meditation too. We did a Doodle Poll over Winter Break to have percipients give input into the practices we feature each week—helping us to design our Spring Semester Schedule.</p> <p>I do not know if many campuses have a meditation group like this, but it is a special part of the student experience [here] and a great way for students to end their week of classes together.</p>

The declarations support the idea that participants explored mindfulness teaching as part of a desire to live an undivided and embodied life more deeply. Within the theme of mindfulness teaching as part of an undivided and embodied life are three subthemes: a) prioritizing the relief of suffering, b) inadvertently causing suffering (trauma and microaggressions/power), and c) spirituality as part of personal wholeness and authenticity.

### **5.6.1 Subtheme A: prioritizing the relief of suffering.**

Participants often paused and restarted their responses when asked about personal values that influenced their decision to become mindfulness teachers. The pauses and re-starts may indicate that they were interacting with this idea of personal values concerning mindfulness teaching in a new or under-explored way.

Bailey's and Chris's experiences are consistent with other participants who moved into mindfulness teaching out of a recognition of the benefits mindfulness meditation had for them personally and a desire to bring that to others. Their responses indicate meta-reflexive deliberations, including responding to a social ideal of relieving suffering. The selected

quotations below illustrate that reflexivity mediated the process of identifying and prioritizing concerns and that relieving suffering is a high-priority concern.

Study participant	Selected quotations	Comments
<b>Bailey</b>	[About] three years ago, three and half years ago, things started to really click, and I thought, you know, I've got to take this to the next level. The kind of teaching I am doing at college speaks to it. It kind of dances with it a little bit, but it doesn't really come right out and say this is what it is about. And so, I started to get a little more serious about it.	These deliberations occur over a period of several years, indicating Bailey has been pursuing these concerns and following up on them with projects and practices. These point to teaching mindfulness as an ultimate concern.
<b>Chris</b>	So I got started with my own personal practice when I went through a yoga teacher training ... And on leaving that program, I felt really strongly that if we were going to be teaching yoga that we also ought to have a meditation practice. [the yoga instructor] really incorporated that in, and so that aspect kicked off my own practice and then interest and a lot of learning and listening and all those things... [Mindfulness] was kind of bubbling around the university anyway, and then a few people came to me who also had their own practice. Most of them were therapists in the area, separately just saying, "hey, let's develop something."	Chris demonstrates meta-reflexivity by questioning if yoga and meditation should be incorporated into her HEI's wellness programs. She gains additional learning, continues internal deliberations, and also listens and responds to colleagues interested in incorporating contemplative practices into the wellness programs. This demonstrates the micro-politics of developing concrete courses of action: projects

Both Riley and Mel value working with students to help equip them with skills that relieve suffering. This includes emotional regulation, finding identity, emotional and intellectual growth, and recognizing a life outside of their student experiences. They also comment on the value being a mindfulness teacher has for their own sense of purpose and development and what they bring through their presence. Riley expresses that mindfulness helps her live her life with intention and purpose and that being a Koru Mindfulness teacher helps her stay true to her desires for her own life. Mel says being a mindfulness teacher is a *weird* role that she sees working as a counterweight to academic and social pressures at her HEI. She values and hopes

students value her softness, compassion, kindness, and curiosity. Their responses are contextualized below.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Riley	I think it is a lot about being able to help ourselves and empowering people to help themselves. You know a lot of students that we see, they are so structured and scheduled and think it has to be one way and they fall apart when it is not. And I can identify with that. And you know, being able to let go and just let things be and to accept that and then to move forward in intention and purpose. You know that’s powerful stuff ... Trying to help them to regulate their own emotions and help them to own who they are and what they are experiencing. And to grow some emotional intelligence. I think emotional intelligence isn’t taught and cultivated in our culture. You know it is all about the academic piece. That is great and all but if you are not going to be emotionally intelligent and, uh, resilient, which is a word you hear a lot these days, you are not going to survive. So, I think, you know, all of those pieces. I try to live my life with intention and with purpose that comes from a mindfulness-based perspective and Koru helps me to be accountable to that and helps me to create the structure for that.
Mel	It is hard because there are so many of them [values] and at the same time, none of them really, you know. It is interesting because when I think about [values] in the context of this campus, in the context of my work here, there are so many people so wrapped up in life’s work. And also so wrapped up in this place. It can feel really tough and really cold. Like not just physically cold, like the winters here are cold, but also the space can be really [cold]. It is a tough space. It is a hard institution to get through. And so I think the sort of value that I kind of carry and that I hope the students relate to is the softness and the compassion and the kindness and the curiosity and really, <i>really</i> learning to find those attitudes when they can, to locate those attitudes when they can, when I can. I mean I have a hard time here. I have a hard time here... and mindfulness helps me. You know teaching it and studying it, practicing it, learning from different teachers. So, like bringing that softness here is really, to me, it is valuable...In some ways, you know, applied as a counterweight to what goes on here. You know, and I am aware of that role. It is a weird role.

In some way, all the values articulated by participants challenge us to consider the role and future of education. Ergas (2014) writes:

In its depth, mindfulness practice is revolutionizing the ‘taboo of subjectivity’ (Wallace, 2000), as it is becoming accepted as a first-person research methodology broadly-defined as ‘contemplative inquiry’ (Zajonc, 2009). Based on a historical review and sociological analysis, I suggest that it is the ‘hard’ ‘information’ gained by the research of ‘information’ that undergirds the first wave of what has been termed the ‘mindfulness revolution’ (Boyce, 2011) and its dissemination to education. The second wave, further establishing the postsecular age, will perhaps follow the more radical educational agenda reflected in science’s embrace of ‘contemplative inquiry’ in which

science/education/religiosity/healing will be further fused...[C]hange science as the ruler of contemporary society's conception of knowledge and you change education. (Ergas, 2014, pp. 59,60)

Participants generated data connecting their mindfulness teaching to personal values, including those they developed through their spirituality and spiritual journeying. Hyland (2015) proposes that “mindfulness is best thought of in cross-curricular terms as a dimension of learning, a capacity for insight and reflection which can be brought to bear on any curriculum activity” (p.16) and that mindful strategies of “non-judgmental, present-moment awareness of our mental states developed through stillness, breath meditation or mindful movement” can assist in developing “the reflective skills through which self-knowledge and empathy become embedded in the curriculum” (p.17). However, he contends mindfulness practices must continually be connected to their spiritual origins in order for moral development to be “maintained and consolidated” and that commodification and McM mindfulness undermine this connection (Hyland, 2015, p. 17). I don’t have a fully formed argument regarding values and mindfulness teaching. However, personal values are central to participants' decisions to teach.

Jessie recognizes her family experiences and relationships have influenced her values. Mindfulness teaching is part of her broader way of finding and fulfilling her life purpose. Jessie looked for ways to promote planet health and social justice in a positive, accessible way. She recognizes that cultures must shift for change to take place. I used italics to communicate emphasis in Jessie’s speech.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Jessie	So my personal values are much about <i>what is my purpose? Why am I here? What is my contribution to the safety, the resilience of the planet, the [state] of our relationships?</i> My dad was a Lutheran minister. My mom was a social worker. And I always said I would never be one of those and I am an odd combination of the two. And my dad was a great storyteller and so I think that his playfulness in terms of how his pedagogy and his theology, how he taught was really a mentor for me: that being belligerent and holier-than-thought and righteously indignant and all those things, that come with social-justice work sometimes, don’t really shift cultures. So, yeah. I guess that would be the values that I brought to this. I was looking for something that would be gentle and funny and consumable and yet really really important. Without beating somebody over the head with it.

Koru Mindfulness teaching is part of Jessie’s project development in pursuit of fulfilling her purpose. She exhibits agency and becomes a social actor at her HEI and her wider community by designing and offering mindfulness programs. Jessie recognizes that there needs



to be culture shifts for real change and transformation. Her social identity emerges through her reflexivity, mediating the cultural and social structures around her. Personal values influenced Jessie's and all participants' decisions and worldviews in marked ways. Declarations of values reflected participants' connection to their own place in the world and their relationship with others. The question on values allowed space for participants to articulate issues that matter to them and provided context for insight into issues around agency and purpose and the role of education. Drawing on a morphogenetic perspective and the work of Archer outlined in Chapter 4 informed my interpretation of the data by helping me move beyond the utterances to how internal deliberations have potential real-world outcomes and how these outcomes can potentially work for change. Critically, for theory-informed practice, mindfulness teachers are motivated to teach out of their own experience of mindfulness and organizing projects in support of their *modus vivendi* and ultimate concerns. These concerns reflect compassion and empathy for others and the social and physical world. Relieving suffering is a high concern. Teaching is a deliberate and deliberated choice that resonates with notions of wholeness, authenticity, and integrity of personhood. It is also an embodied experience meaning that participants embody attributes brought about by mindfulness practices and are constrained by real things such as their bodies, gender, and historical and cultural contexts. The next section explores choosing Koru Mindfulness, followed by a discussion on the impact of teaching.

Moving into mindfulness teaching is not necessarily a natural transition for individuals with personal meditation practices. Dana was not keen on the group structure of Koru. However, her meta-reflexivity helped her prioritize the potential well-being of others. Before moving into working with groups, Dana had had a self-reported transformational personal meditation practice for over four years. She had incorporated mindfulness techniques into therapeutic work with individuals. Moving into teaching groups, which is the Koru format, was something she wrestled with and did not decide to do easily. However, she felt the potential benefits of adding Koru to the menu of services to her university-based practice and gaining additional training for herself outweighed the hesitation to lead groups.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Dana</b>	I feel passionate about it and I think it's because of my own personal experience. ... I had a couple knee surgeries, and I couldn't do a lot of the athletic stuff that I used to do. And so, there was this huge loss in my new life and my husband was

like, go do this MBSR and you can use it with your patients and maybe your pain will get better. And so that was part of the motivation for doing that and I had [done yoga] but I didn't like sit still and meditate. But then I *had to sit still* because I couldn't move as much as I used to. So that, I felt like that leap was kind of life changing. It was this whole different way of being.

I am a very obsessive person and I tend to be just constantly in my head with my to-do list and doing stuff and thinking. And so, to shift and to [stillness] – the experience was this whole new opening into life... I did analysis during residency, and I feel like [meditation] has been more useful than analysis ever was in terms of actually feeling differently, like feeling less reactive, less angry about things, less anxious about things ... It has changed those experiences as well as giving me new insights [about] myself. So, I feel like where analysis for me, the way I used it, was more about 'Oh these cognitive understandings about how I work' whereas meditation was like 'Oh this is the experience'. So that's – personally it has been life changing and so, you know in a way that I feel it could be really helpful for patients. So that is why - I am doing it.

I avoided [leading mindfulness teaching classes] because of the group format. I hate leading groups and so, yeah, I just hadn't done it ... [I had] endured some other trainings that I was kind of interested in but didn't do it because of the group reason and also because [the other trainings] were sort of in-depth, over time, and I had small kids and it's hard to get away. So, this opportunity [to take Koru training] came up and a friend of mine had done it a year [prior] and wanted me to go... I was like, no I don't want to be in groups... [but eventually] I just went ahead and did the training.

Dana's decision to teach in a group format, even though it might be uncomfortable for her, exemplifies personal emergent property (PEP), one of the three main causal powers outlined by Archer (2007). The other two are Structural emergent properties (SEP) and cultural emergent properties (CEP), which are discussed later. Here, the emergent property is Dana's agency as a group leader and teaching mindfulness to a group, taking priority over her discomfort with leading groups. The power of PEP is exercised through the ability to reflect on and engage in inner dialogues and to take action. Dana's inner dialogue eventually brought her to the decision to take the Koru training. These inner dialogues are critical to "how we actively make our way through the social world" (p.65). Dana exercised PEP of agency by prioritizing the (potential or

emergent) well-being of her clients and deciding to go through Koru training and teach groups. She exhibited agency.

Evan's experience, presented in the table below, also exemplifies activated agency PEP. Evan is a long-time meditator. Her personal contemplative experience, pedagogical expertise, and commitment to students naturally led her to incorporate contemplative meditation practices into her teaching. Evan does not remember any specific internal deliberation in deciding to incorporate meditation into her teaching. However, her story indicates meta-reflexive processing, and her incorporation of meditation into her teaching suggests an activated PEP of agency.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Evan	I began to integrate some techniques of contemplative practice into my work three years ago. I didn't really think it through, but because [in my area of teaching] so much of success ... has to do with presence, has to do with being available and giving your attention, and, you know, <i>breathing</i> and being in touch with your body. So, I began to bring that into my ... classes as a meditation practice... That must have been 1980, 82. And it was just a helpful way for my students to learn the essence of being there, of being present... So, I mean, did I think about it beforehand? It kind of evolved naturally out of my pedagogy. So, it wasn't like "I am deciding that I am going to teach them [mindfulness] practice". I am teaching <i>them</i> and this [meditation] helps and needs to be taught, so how do I teach it? Ok, let's sit. Let's take a breath.

**5.6.2 Subtheme B: inadvertently causing suffering.  
(trauma and microaggressions/power)**

Overall, KMTs; perceived impact on students to be positive. I then asked if they saw any risks with mindfulness teaching. The selected quotations below represent the types of responses KMTs gave when asked if they think there is risk associated with mindfulness teaching. Responses ranged widely. Synthesizing the responses, most KMTs feel there is at least some risk for students. The risks primarily center around student mental health, where things could get, as described by Chris, "stirred up". This section discusses participant responses that highlight the need for trauma-informed mindfulness teacher training. Trauma-informed teacher training is a recommendation found in Chapter 6.

Mindfulness practices can bring a person into their body or into a memory quickly. Sam recalls a student seemingly having a panic attack. Teachers need to be able to refer students to appropriate support. Chris notes that reflection can be powerful but "if that's really disorienting for people or really turbulent, for whatever reason, maybe [a mindfulness class] is not what they

need right now.” Bailey characterizes this as the mindfulness class possibly opening a Pandora’s box. The larger context of these responses is included in the table below.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Bailey	Yes, yes, I do [think there are risks]...I learned that there are some people who are in a situation in their lives where this is bringing too quickly to the fore aspects that they need to, that they would probably do well to address but don't have the capacity at this point to address and a mindfulness class isn't going to be the right context. Instead, it kind of opens a Pandora's box.
Chris	Well that's an interesting question. You know we had a few situations where we had students come who are, have been, in real, in psychological trouble...I was pretty concerned about [one student] who had come through the training ... and was able to go in and see she was already working with a counselor...I don't think it's going to stir [things up], like the way we are doing it, and we are really clear that this is not therapy [and tell students] if you feel like things are kind of getting stirred up for you, we've got resources to recommend and connect you with. So that would be my only fear for somebody potentially if they were already kind of, you know, struggling...Because I think for some of us, like we've said, that sitting with yourself and that reflection can be really powerful but if that's really disorienting for people or really turbulent, for whatever reason, maybe that's not what they need right now.
Dana	I think the only risk would be with someone who (pause) might not have the ego strength to do that. I think it is unlikely because you have this selective population, pretty highly functioning and pretty well put together for the most part. There are some [pause]. We do get people who have psychotic breaks so I think that if you ended up with someone like that in your group... that could destabilize them too. I guess if you have someone with a major mental illness in the group that you are unaware of, that could potentially unravel them a bit. But I don't see any other risks.
Jessie	Gosh, what a great question. Are there any risks? People send me those articles all the time. Have you ever had anybody with a panic attack? Nope, I haven't. I know that the implementation at [my university] is a little bit different pathway, ... It is not counseling, and I think that the attraction for some of the counselors to send people to this experience has been very nice because it is perceived as not for, you know, you're not nuts. Right? You just need some extra brain power and that has been very helpful in terms of people's perception of what it is. It is not just for our students who are really really struggling.
Kadin	Not if we are doing it. (pause) Things come up. You know people have emotions that come up. They have trauma in their background. I don't think you could damage them. I think [a mindfulness teacher] could not know how to refer them or support what they are feeling possibly. So, I am training my social work interns to work with me this year and they will co-facilitate [and work with a trained KMT] to assist in a Koru class. They will be fine. It will be great for them. But other students may have good intentions, or they may be in it for themselves. [For example] if they are just becoming fanatics of meditation, they may all be about something, like Buddhists or a real particular practice. And we want to be non-denominational. We want to be open to anything. And so, I think we feel like the way we [conduct meditation classes] would not shame anyone, would not make anyone feel uncomfortable- where they want to come back, hopefully. I don't know. Unless they don't like the practice itself.
Riley	I don't think so, no. I mean, they have all been really lovely, anxious people who just need a bit of calming down.

<b>Sam</b>	That is a really good question...The very first class ... one of the guys felt that he was having a panic attack in the class. And I was like, <i>oh boy</i> . But you know, he got through it and I got through it and actually, of all the people in that class, he is the person who has continued his practice the most. So that is really encouraging to me. I don't think that there is any serious harm that could come from teaching Koru. No.
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Of particular interest is Kadin's response where she proposes that there isn't risk to students if "we are doing it," meaning if qualified and supported mindfulness teachers are facilitating the classes. She recognizes students may have trauma in their background, but she doesn't think teaching Koru can damage the students. However, as she continues to reflect and form her thoughts, she focuses on the qualities of the teacher. Damage could occur, she says, if the teacher does not know how to refer students to, for example, mental health support. Kadin is training social work students to assist in Koru courses. These students are closely supervised. Kadin goes on to posit that "other students may have good intentions, or they may be in it for themselves"-referring to non-supervised students, not in mindfulness teacher training. She gives the example of students becoming "fanatics of meditation" or that they "may all be about something, like Buddhists or a real particular practice," meaning a practice that is outside of mainstream mindfulness or meditation practices. Kadin recounts a student-led meditation experience from her HEI that became disruptive to the campus and had to be shut down. Kadin states that, as an HEI, they "want to be non-denominational." At Kadin's HEI, the students conflated religious practices with mindfulness meditation. This leads Kadin to point out not wanting to shame anyone or make anyone feel uncomfortable. She acknowledges potential risks and links safety for students back to the qualities of the teacher. This is an example of data supporting the notion of role claiming and embodied role use. One must embody the positive qualities of mindfulness to teach well and reduce student risk.

Archer (2012) proposes that what we, as people, care about most guides how we direct our lives, stating "what they care about most in the social order...their personal concerns become their compasses" (p. 1). Participants' concerns are arguably moral, ethical, and for the betterment of people and the natural world. All participants presented as ethical, moral, intelligent, and considerate people. However, even if well-intentioned, Archer (2012) points out that a person can "design and follow courses of action that are inappropriate to realizing their social concerns and whose negative outcomes rebound upon them" (p.1). I propose that the wide range of responses to the question of risk indicates that more attention is needed regarding any possible negative effects of mindfulness training. In this section, I draw attention to two interrelated

possible negative effects of mindfulness teaching that should be included in mindfulness teacher training: (re)traumatization and microaggressions. I start by presenting findings.

Responses from study participants ranged from no perceived risks to high levels of perceived risks. As discussed in Chapter 2, mindfulness meditation practices can be disruptive to some individuals. Disruptions can include re-traumatization (Treleaven, 2018). Re-traumatization, along with other disruptive experiences, would be an unintended outcome. Agents’ activities can have unintended consequences that work against reaching ultimate concerns, such as relieving suffering or transforming the academy.

The 'morpho' element is an acknowledgment that society has no pre-set form or preferred state: the 'genetic' part is a recognition that it takes its shape from, and is formed by, agents, originating from the intended and unintended consequences of their activities. (Archer, 1995, p. 5).

Evan’s full response to the question of risk is presented in the table below. Evan demonstrates her commitment to relieving suffering by taking action in support of students and minimizing the risk to herself of suffering if she came to realize she had inadvertently caused suffering. I have chosen Evan’s experience with a single student to illustrate impact on a student level and Evan’s way of minimizing risk.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Evan	Self-reporting has been the most revealing to me. Where a couple of students have had astonishing change in their life. One of whom was ... suffering, just suffering and just hated [their major] basically. And he got the courage, somehow, somehow, to work with his parents and he [changed HEI and major] ... He has developed a deep contemplative practice, which he continues. And I warned him. I said you’re taking to this way too fast with way too much enthusiasm. It is hard. This won’t be an easy road here. It is going to get really bumpy. And in my correspondence with him, he acknowledges it is bumpy, it has gotten bumpy but he is persevering and he is dedicated and his last sentence to me in the email was thank you for giving me a foundation for a meaningful life, I have never been happier than ... I am now. So [sometimes I get] that kind of feedback.... Now whether it will last and there will be a return to the agony, ... My immediate feedback from teaching this course is that students have some kind of profound and sometimes just helpful ways of dealing with their understanding of what is going on in their personal lives and their academic pressures.

Evan’s account portrays her role as a committed, experienced, and ethical scholar-practitioner. She has had students self-report in her class over many years. Evan teaches mindfulness as part of her disciplinary course and decided to add Koru Mindfulness as a professional qualification. She recognizes risks associated with mindfulness meditation and is willing and able to ensure

students receive additional support when needed. In the following selection, she describes the “astonishing change” contemplative practices brought to a student’s life. Evan has stayed in touch with the student over several years. Evan recognizes the limitations of Koru and her mindfulness teaching as an MBI. She posits that there are always risks, and teachers must pay attention to their students and know when to refer them to professionals.

Yes. I think there is always risk... There is huge risk. And what I think it requires is for anybody who is doing this work to pay attention to what is going on with their students... I think if I am there with the student and helping them through and then they have the support of their mates, it can be a really wonderful, positive experience. And then there are times that no, the damage is too great and they need to be helped by professionals.

**Evan**

Mindfulness teachers like Evan embody mindfulness principles such as awareness, compassion, empathy, and responsibility. Evan is confident, and her confidence empowers her to ensure students are cared for by the appropriate HEI services. She does not try to fix everything or everyone herself. Evan exhibits humility and wisdom by accepting the limits of her role as a mindfulness teacher.

Students can be (re)traumatized through mindfulness taught through meditation. Treleaven’s (2018) case study vignettes provide real-world examples of how unintentional oppressive power dynamics can re-traumatize mindfulness students. These often come in the form of microaggressions. Often but not always related to race, microaggressions or everyday aggressions are brief but commonplace verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative slights or insults often perpetuated unknowingly by the aggressor. Berila (The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, 2017; E.; Berila, personal communication, June 19, 2019) prefers the term *cumulative aggressions* over either micro or everyday aggressions. *Cumulative* communicates how the impacts of the offenses build. People are responding to the harm done through the cumulative effect of the constant and ongoing nature of the aggression, not merely a singular offense perpetrated by one person.

Power dynamics and privilege in teacher-led mindfulness meditation classes is an area in need of more research and should be included in teacher training courses. Even in well-intentioned adult education settings, “it is clear that facilitation does not occur on a neutral stage, but in the real world of hierarchical power relations among all adults, including teachers and

learners” (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998, p. 389). Berila (2016) explores how mindfulness can be effectively employed in support of anti-oppression pedagogy. The promotion of social justice can be inferred as part of KMTs' intentions for teaching. If social justice issues are not overtly integrated into mindfulness teaching, ultimate concerns may go unrealized. Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (1998) explain what is happening in traditional teaching settings.

Here we are presented with the unspoken assumption that the activity of teaching and learning must happen in a parallel universe to the real world because the power relationships that are omnipresent in the social and organizational settings of everyday life have been obliterated. By stripping learners and teachers of their place in the hierarchies of social life, this view assumes that we stage adult education where the politics of everyday life do not operate or matter. This view asks us to see teachers and learners as generic entities, unencumbered by the hierarchies that structure our social relationships. (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998, p. 390)

Students and teachers must be allowed and encouraged to participate in and show up in their wholeness of being. Asking or demanding that mindfulness teachers present themselves as value-neutral or spiritually void limits them and their students to “generic entities” unable to escape the criticisms of McMindfulness and “stealth” Buddhism. Spirituality is explored below.

### **5.6.3 Subtheme C: spirituality as part of personal wholeness and authenticity.**

Helping others to experience self-acceptance and freedom from suffering and judgment are some of the values described by KMTs. These values almost always circle back to a connection with the individual's own sense of being, purpose, and a desire for integration between what they do and who they are. This again points to meta-reflexive deliberations that help individuals consolidate and prioritize their concerns, create projects in support of those concerns, and find sustainable practices that are in keeping with their way of being in the world. Below, Pat responds to being asked about values that influenced her decision to teach. Her answer exemplifies the interconnectedness and, at times, tensions between values, spirituality, and the impact of teaching. Pat teaches in a public HEI without any formal religious affiliations. Through the interview process, Pat realizes she has been trying to teach mindfulness in a “value-less” way. This conflicts with her values and values in the Buddhist origins that helped draw her to mindfulness. Trying to teach mindfulness as a skill and being unsure of the appropriateness of sharing her values with students creates tensions for Pat. Pat is still figuring out how to “support



students to connecting mindfulness to their values.” Pat’s decision to teach mindfulness is value-driven. However, because Pat teaches at a public state HEI, she felt that her teaching of mindfulness needed to be taught as secular, without reference to Buddhist values. Pat’s experience showcases the challenges of teaching short mindfulness courses, which are particularly vulnerable to commodification, as secular. Hyland (2015) captures this as follows:

The principal weakness of the commodification of mindfulness strategies is that – by divorcing technique from underpinning value foundations – they militate against the achievement of the key objectives which account for their widespread appeal in the first place: the development of open-hearted awareness and emotional stability, the fostering of positive social values linked to self-compassion and empathy, and the enhancement of mind/body well-being in general. (Hyland, 2015, p. 14)

Trying to teach mindfulness as a value-neutral skill set can put teachers in conflict with their own inner values and ultimate concerns. In Archer’s model, reflexivity is the mediator between structure and agency: the “*interplay* between subjective personal properties and powers and objective social properties and powers” (Archer, 2007, p. 42). Here, Pat’s reflexivity interplays between her values and what she intuits or understands as the properties of her HEI and community. At this point, the expectation to teach mindfulness as value-free skills training constrains her agency. Archer writes:

Being an “active agent” hinges on the fact that individuals develop and define their ultimate concerns, those internal goods that they care about most and whose precise constellation makes for their concrete singularity as persons. No one can have an ultimate concern and fail to do something about it. Instead, each seeks to develop a course(s) of action to realise that concern by elaborating a project, in the (fallible) belief that to accomplish the project is to realise one’s concern. (Archer, 2007, p. 42)

Teaching Koru Mindfulness is an elaboration of a project to accomplish her ultimate concerns in service to others. Her lack of freedom to be fully authentic with her students is troubling. Later in the interview, Pat is unsure if she will continue with ongoing certification through Koru Mindfulness. However, as opportunities open, she plans to expand her mindfulness teaching within her community and in her HEI. Pat exercises active agency to adjust her projects and continue pursuing her concerns.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Pat	<p>That is an interesting question. I think it fits immensely... Probably in multi-factorial ways in that essentially that is what drew me into mindfulness and Buddhist practice, because that was the way that mindfulness was available at that time. I think now you can actually access, thanks to all of us who are trying to do this, you can access mindfulness in a non-religious way. But for me, at the time, it fit very well with my emerging values as a young adult. In terms of acceptance of what is. The idea that, the idea ... that ... pain is necessary, but suffering is optional. That life contains pain but how we choose to work with it and to behave as a result of it is up to us. And that, I think that is a value that made, and still makes, so much sense to me.</p> <p>When I think about how I believe we should be in this life, I found more resonance with mindfulness, and to be honest I think Buddhism. If you are looking to mindfulness ... to help ... sort of affirm your values, I almost think you might have to look to some of the Buddhist origins because... I think that that is what secular mindfulness is trying to avoid. [Secular mindfulness tries to avoid] promoting any particular value system. And so I have my values that drew me to mindfulness, but I guess maybe in an interesting way, I'm actually trying to teach these concepts in a value-less way. That has a ton to do with the context that I am in. Maybe everything to do with the context. Because if I was in a different context, I would have no problem at all bringing in values around social justice and how we treat each other. I mean, how, what we believe in ourselves but, and I do [bring how we treat each other into my teaching] but I think you can see me hesitating. I feel like I walk an interesting line with that. I haven't totally figured it out. It is tricky for me. Yeah. [Mindfulness training] definitely [emanates] from my own values. I haven't figured out how to necessarily support students to connecting mindfulness to their values. Because it's, I am trying to teach it more as a, as a skill, you know as a tool for self-care and for client-care. It is almost like a cognitive tool...rather than ... as a value system.</p>

Koru Mindfulness is taught as a secular program. Investigating participants' religious and spiritual backgrounds seemed almost incidental when developing the interview guide, and I was surprised that it proved to be a rich discussion area. Participants had varied religious backgrounds. Some expressed a current association with communities, including Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, and Unitarian Universalist groups. None of the study participants described themselves as secular or materialist mindfulness practitioners. When I asked if or how being a mindfulness teacher influenced their spirituality, I found that the theme of integration and integrity of personhood echoed here too. Participants' spiritual commitments influenced their teaching decision, but they did not see themselves proselytizing any particular tradition.

When I asked Chris if there was a spiritual dimension to her moving into mindfulness training, she had no hesitation in answering yes. Her response communicates a relationship between personal practice, connection with others, and finding purpose and direction. There is an integration between who she is and what she does.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Chris	<p>Yes. Yes, and huge. So, for me huge. What came to mind is that saying you teach what you need to learn. A little bit of that. I also feel like, even just leading the drop-ins [non-Koru drop-in meditation sessions], to just sit with people, is so powerful. And then to me, for my own practice and then in those conversations, to see students make a connection, just a simple connection between, (pause) just maybe they were able to be more mindful and not respond in a sort of reactive way in a situation with a friend or whatever. And to feel like, <i>wow</i>, this is so powerful for people. And you know, to then be able to feel it in my own life. So that is sort of the mindfulness piece and then I feel like, you know, the whole meditation and then [even] the Buddhism, to be really honest, beyond that is like, <i>whew, mind blowing</i>. Really. And so, so yeah. I feel like that, that really feels (pause). I feel like I have really found my path.</p>

Chris’s declarations point to her own learning and recognition of experience that is not limited to her Buddhist commitments. Palmer discusses education as a spiritual journey (Palmer, 1993). He emphasizes that teaching is not only about students but also about “the learner within the teacher” (Palmer, 1993, p. 44). He proposes that “If we let our teacher-self speak without allowing our learner-self to listen and follow, our own truth, our truth with ourselves, will be broken” (Palmer, 1993, p. 44). Chris’s observational and reflective process has allowed her to know herself better and recognize her “path.” This again supports that KMTs have engaged in internal conversations and prioritizing concerns leading to adjusted and clarified *modus vivendi*. Spirituality plays a part in this process. The following participants' comments further explore spirituality.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Taylor	<p>I have been in spiritual direction my whole life. So, from little on, I always wondered what my purpose was in life and my path in life, and is there a way I can be used to share that with other people? So, I’ve had many spiritual directors of all faiths [My background] is Catholic, Catholicism, although I really am not a religious kind of person... About seven years ago, I took a Buddhist class on our campus. It was taught by a Buddhist monk ... I was drawn to, not so much Buddhism, because I find it fascinating, but more about the concept of non-anxious presence. To live a life of non-anxious presence. To live a life of equanimity.</p> <p>I was so drawn to it [so deeply] that I came back to my university, and I said would you allow me to try to teach this to my students? Because in social work, in my profession, your presence and who you are, will provide a safe space for your clients. And if our therapists or social workers can learn to clear their mind and to be comfortable with themselves and be grounded with who they are, so much better will they be able to connect with another person.</p>

<b>Dana</b>	I think that another piece that is very appealing to me is [the spiritual aspect of meditation]. I am not from any religious background, but I have always been very interested in religions and kind of this spiritual seeker and after medical school I wanted to go to India for a year and study religions, kind of figure [things] out. So I do think that piece is very appealing.
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Taylor's response highlights a spiritual exploration that extends beyond her childhood upbringing in the Roman Catholic tradition. Taylor's spiritual life and understanding directly connect and influence her professional practice and how she views best practices in teaching and training social workers and therapists. She does not reject her Roman Catholic roots but rather incorporates her religious roots into her present-day life. The possibility of living in a state of non-anxious presence and "to live a life of equanimity" offered through Buddhist practices attracted her. Here again, we see a participant drawn to a way of life, a way of being in the world, and mindfulness meditation being part of that. Taylor's personal experience with the benefits of mindfulness meditation motivated her to ask her HEI for permission to integrate mindfulness into her teaching. She felt this could benefit her social work students and help them cultivate safe spaces for clients. She proposes that mindfulness meditation could help create inner spaces for therapists and social workers to understand better and accept themselves. This, in turn, can help them better serve clients. Dana expresses that even with her medical training, she is still interested in the spiritual aspects of religion. Mindfulness meditation has been part of her exploration of spiritual development. Dana is a medical doctor who integrates spiritual exploration into her way of being in the world. She self-identifies as a spiritual seeker. Her inner conversations and queries inform her practices, and she has made adjustments in her life along the way. She continues to seek and ask questions, and her inner and outer lives inform each other. None of the participants advocated Buddhism as necessary for experiencing the benefits of mindfulness. However, most participants encountered mindfulness training at some time and in some form through a Buddhist expression. Spirituality is clearly part of who participants are as whole persons and influences their values.

When asked if she makes a division between her personal and professional life, Pat initially responds that yes, she does make that distinction but quickly bumped up against her own horizontal understanding. She pondered and reflected on her experience, particularly in relation to her own spirituality and her commitment to social justice. One can see how, through the interview process, Pat was able to reflect on her lived experience and began to clarify for herself

the idea of an undivided life in relation to her own life experience. Pat refers to pondering notions such as her calling in life, legacy, and influence. Mindfulness teaching and social justice are major components of what her calling and legacy might be. Pat exemplifies meta-reflexive deliberations in that her choice to become a mindfulness teacher is values-driven. She seeks a right course of action, questions her own thinking, and considers what underpins her professional practice. Through the interview conversation, Pat begins to recognize that perhaps her own spirituality plays a larger role in her decision-making than she had previously thought.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Pat	Yeah. I tend to make that division [between personal and professional]. I think if anything, to do this [mindfulness training] in my professional world has kind of incentivized me or stirred me up for enhancing and deepening my practice and my understanding of my own practice on a personal level. Because it has become more important than ever for me to grasp why I think I want to do this. You know why I want to bring this to students and how to talk with them about that.
Nanette	Is that connected in any way to [your own] spiritual development
Pat	It doesn't, well, that's an interesting question. It doesn't feel that way...I don't think about this teaching piece as, at least on a daily basis, in terms of being part of my spiritual path. But, that is an interesting question. Because I have thought about, at times of, you know you, think about questions of your calling in life and what I'm leaving behind. And those kinds of big questions. I do think that this is part of that, for me...I do think of like what do I want to be... [about] my legacy or my gift to the people that I have worked with and influenced. And I definitely think of mindfulness as a component of that. I think of the social justice piece as another major component...So I think that it probably is more a part of my own spiritual path than I regularly recognize or think about right now.

Pat's reflection above demonstrates the complexities of various but related aspects of KMTs' internal lives, including the spiritual dimension of their development as human beings. Pat also conveys a commitment to the integration of her own personhood in what she does while still maintaining a divide between her personal and professional lives. So, while she may not overtly conflate the professional and personal self, her approach to work and personal growth reflects a commitment to reconciling what she does with who she is and harmony therein. For me, this represents an integrity of personhood and a desire for wholeness, and an integrated, undivided life. Pat clearly exhibits meta-reflexivity and her decision to teach mindfulness (with or perhaps without Koru certification, which is presented in subtheme 2). Teaching mindfulness is part of her process of identifying her concerns, creating projects, and finding practices that support her way of being in the world, her *modus vivendi*.

#### **5.6.4 Summary.**

As discussed above, KMTs' values and spirituality are deeply connected with a desire to relieve suffering, promote social justice, and empower others toward a greater sense of well-being. They are also committed to pursuing work that is fulfilling, purposeful, and transformational for themselves and others. We need to know more about how students are experiencing mindfulness classes and how to employ approaches that minimize risk, promote power equality, and maximize student and teacher well-being.

Through reflecting on participants' experiences and the HE context, an area of concern is the potential exploitation of mindfulness and mindfulness teachers by HEIs. Each HEI has unique qualities. However, in response to economic pressure, current trends in higher education indicate a preference for younger, less-expensive, less-experienced, non-tenured faculty and a move toward multi-year contracts (Thompson & Miller, 2018). This, combined with increasing demands on student well-being services, can leave students and faculty vulnerable and exploitable. The exploitation of mindfulness teaching and teachers should be an area of caution and further study. Study participants have shown a keen desire to help students. If other mindfulness teachers share the same concerns, then the vulnerability to exploitation by HEIs with high student demands and neo-liberal economic pressures is a troubling possibility.

#### **5.7 Theme Two: The Value of Mindfulness Teaching Certification**

Not having credentials or some kind of certification was troublesome for several participants. Participants typically pursued mindfulness teaching certification for two reasons. First, certification reassured participants that they were equipped to teach. This included acquiring or solidifying skills, gaining knowledge, and being part of a group or entity larger than themselves. The value of certification is internal validation, and gaining a credential was part of the process of their own quest for legitimacy in their role as a teacher. This process reflects a meta-reflexive commitment to values, ethically taking a correct course of action, and understanding structural powers.

Secondly, some participants felt that certification would increase external credibility, for example, in getting programs approved. This generally centered around an individual's perceived benefit of a credential for credibility that an external qualification might grant more than a need for skill building. I call this subtheme external credibility with HEI decision-makers and stakeholders. I use the term *permissions* to represent two meanings. A person's inner permission is where they feel confident to move forward in their plans and, secondly, gaining certification to

increase the likelihood that others will accept their plans. Typically, participants valued certification for both reasons, both/and rather than either/or, meaning participants sought certification to solidify their own confidence in their knowledge as well as make mindfulness teaching more acceptable in their HEI.

This section explores two subthemes to the theme value of teaching certification: validation and credibility and choosing Koru Mindfulness. Participant declarations that drove these themes are integrated into the discussion below.

### 5.7.1 Subtheme A: validation and credibility.

Study participants were often bringing mindfulness to their campuses in a novel way. They were among the earliest cohorts to attend Koru training. I see them as trailblazers and risk-takers, willing to try something new. They took the time, energy, and often money to commit to Koru training. This major undertaking shows a prioritization of mindfulness teaching over other goals requiring time and financial resources.

Sam expresses how taking the Koru Mindfulness course was part of her desire to integrate mindfulness meditation into her work life. She says that she “was really trying to legitimize some of what I was already doing” and posited that mindfulness teaching might come across as more legitimate than the yoga she was already teaching. She began to see mindfulness workshops at academic conferences and looked into seeing how mindfulness teaching could be part of her work life. Sam is positionally in leadership and has influence. Pursuing certification gave her internal permission and external validation. She states, “I think it just gives me more permission, more confidence to share more freely.”

Study participant	Selected quotations
Sam	And then I started thinking, is there a place to integrate [mindfulness meditation] into my work life, into my organization as a supervisor, as a teacher, as a person who is in a leadership position in a department that has some influence? You know, how can I integrate this without coming across as being this wacked out yoga teacher that is trying to bring yoga into the workplace? ...and at the same time, I was starting to think about this, I started to see it bubble, you know I started seeing it in some workshops at some conferences in my field about integrating mindfulness. I was like, OK, I am not the only one who thinks this way. So, I started doing some more reading. ... You know I was really trying to legitimize some of what I was already doing. And I think through the mindfulness lens it comes across as much more legit than as a (pause), through the yoga lens.
Sam	Well, again, I think it just gives me more permission, more confidence to share more freely.

Like many higher education professionals in this study, Sam is a multifaceted practitioner. She is in a highly responsible leadership position within her university and works with faculty, staff, and students. Her responses indicate she deliberates on her role and how her colleagues perceive her. She maintains a meta-reflexive mode in her deliberations because her thinking about colleagues’ perceptions is not about consensus (CR) but how perception might influence her putting projects into play. In addition to advanced academic degrees, Sam is a certified yoga instructor. She reflects here on her process of moving into the mindfulness teacher role and looking for legitimacy to help mindfulness be more accepted in her context. Sam’s leadership position in an influential department indicates a corporate agent dimension to Sam’s organizing projects in support of concerns. She is looking for a way to integrate mindfulness, something personally important to her, into her work life. This also supports wholeness. In addition, she begins to see mindfulness around her and begins to look for ways to legitimize what she was already starting to do. This indicates meta-reflexivity rather than autonomous reflexivity because AR would not need the validation of others before they act. Sam prioritized finding ways to go about expanding mindfulness on her campus and how to influence and draw others with her.

Jessie is also in a highly influential leadership position. I use her story later in the thesis to illustrate the morphogenetic cycle. Here though, I draw attention to Jessie’s tenacity in getting mindfulness accepted on her campus. She engages in internal deliberations about moving from her own practice to mindfulness teaching. She recognizes her own practice is part of a wider context and asks herself how she “can pull from all of the years of practice that I have had, thousands of years of traditions, how do I choose?” Jessie demonstrates meta-reflexivity as she organizes her concerns into projects. Eventually, Jessie does teach mindfulness on her campus. Gaining the Koru Mindfulness certification gave her inner validation, increased her confidence, and added external credibility to others.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Jessie	So it was like, is my meditation practice good enough? Do I know what I am talking about? You know that kind of question. Have I answered all of my own questions? So when something comes up, I will give them the right answer. And, you know, kind of, who can do this for me? Who can teach this for me? Maybe I am not the one to teach. And so really it was [about] confidence, like how do I pull from all of the years of practice that I have had, thousands of years of traditions, how do I choose? Right? And so what I did, then about five years ago, I literally hired some of my teachers from the community to come on campus and teach.



No study participants were required to add Koru certification to their repertoire of professional qualifications. Participants are a diffuse group working at different HEIs and in different socio-economical contexts. However, they all share a commitment to expanding the use of mindfulness. Agency isn't principally about what is required but about responding to what matters to oneself. Here we see that legitimacy matters to a group of people. Although diffuse, Koru mindfulness teachers become a corporate agent, and that agency is shared across the North American HE landscape. If this aspect of agency is consistent for future Koru Mindfulness teachers, then it would be appropriate to investigate if Koru Mindfulness as an organization could be seen as having agency and potentially impacting the culture of higher education.

### 5.7.2 Subtheme B: choosing Koru Mindfulness over other certifications.

Several participants described moving into teaching as an organic experience coming out of their practice. Kadin wanted to teach meditation but did not feel she had had enough personal practice. She deliberately set out to prepare herself by taking about a year to develop her practice. In contrast, Mel describes coming to teach Koru Mindfulness as a “backward” story. A colleague had asked her to co-teach Koru before going through training. Mel is a certified yoga instructor and had been teaching in other areas of wellness and body awareness and felt confident to slot into the role of teacher before going through teacher training. So while both participants expressed moving into mindfulness teaching as an organic or natural outcome of personal experience, they moved into the role of teacher differently.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Kadin</b>	Around January 2005, I knew that I wanted to start teaching meditation so that is when I started to create a daily practice. I kept a journal of where I was, the day and time, and what I was doing and some reflections about it. So... by the time I started teaching, it had been more than a year of trying to do that. And I think I'm pretty much there. I give myself one day off a week if I need to and that works out fine. I can always do 6 to 7 days a week, no problem.
<b>Mel</b>	The story is backward in some ways, you know. We already had a really good program. It was very much like Koru's program already actually ... It had a lot of similarities. We took a look at [the Koru curriculum] and we decided to dissect it and practice it and work with it that spring. And then the fall quarter we started teaching it together. So, I was again, backwards, teaching Koru before the training but I had the means to teach. You know, like it was already there, the stuff felt really natural and fluid to me. So, there I was, doing it before I was trained to do it and sort of got my bearings that way. Then I went to the training. That just solidified it as a program that [I could teach].

For many participants, like Bailey and Taylor, pursuing Koru certification was a choice over other credentials, such as MBSR. Several factors contributed to this decision, including lower fees than other options, manageability of training commitments, non-sectarian (i.e., not Buddhist), and a program specifically developed for college-aged adults. Koru Mindfulness is supported by research, has a ready curriculum, and offers ready-made, professional materials to present to stakeholders and decision-makers. In addition, the professionalism and personability of the Koru faculty and the reputation of Duke University, where the method was developed, added to the program's attractiveness. Koru offered skills training as well as a certification for those who completed the training. The certificate is offered by the Center for Koru Mindfulness and not by Duke University. Baily and Taylor expressed this process of questioning, investigation, and decision-making in the declarations below.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Bailey</b>	How qualified am I to be able to talk about this stuff when I have no credentials? You know there are a lot of people out now in mindfulness, a lot of people sort of taking it on in different ways but I thought, you know, I have got to have some kind of credential and some kind of experience where I know what connects with people and I know a little bit more about what doesn't. And how am I going to do that? ... So I looked into MBSR and decided I would do that training... And then I just serendipitously discovered Koru. And took a look at their program and realized, wow, well this is exactly what I am looking for. ... [it is] coming from the direct experience of the people who have developed it and it is oriented towards, you know, college students, towards emerging adults, towards millennials.
<b>Taylor Quote 1</b>	I have been in higher education for over 25 years and I know about young adolescents and I thought that this Koru curriculum could sort of help me with that. I live this stuff. I have a passion for it. I am trying to have our campus be a mindful campus and join the contemplative higher education... I think what I was drawn to [Koru] because they had a structure. They had conducted research. They had a best-practices and they already had a framework of what kind of things to do. And I thought that that could be something that maybe would give me, maybe it would be a better, not a better way, maybe another thing I could add to my class. And that is what made me [decide to take the training]. I was curious about it and so I went. I [already] teach emerging adults and so I went. The emerging adults' literature I already sort of knew but [Koru] already had practiced it. They already had seen it and they knew it was successful. So, I thought, you know, I am going to go through the certification program. And then why I did that was the hopes of coming back and having a more mindful campus for our students.
<b>Taylor Quote 2</b>	I have given talks in the community, and I think there is a hunger for it. One of the goals that I have for myself is to open up a mindfulness center here in [my city] ...I would like to be able to do some community-based mindfulness in the community and I think there is an openness to it. ... The outreach and engagement part of my university... contacted me and asked if I would teach some mindfulness. They asked if I would develop it and I told them that I wanted to be trained and get my [Koru] certification [first]. I have been [using] the Koru curriculum but I can't use that name

	[until I am certified]- and I hope I get certified. I will let you know if I flunk ( <i>soft laugh</i> ).
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Although Kadin had an established mindfulness practice and had known she wanted to be a teacher, specifically choosing Koru came out of her role and position at her university.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Kadin</b>	Whenever I could go to things like yoga classes or meditation classes or retreats, I would go. And we've taught yoga at our campus for more than 10 years by contracting with yoga instructors. So, I knew that when we could [teach mindfulness] that we should do it. Our director of our wellness center...has been a yoga instructor for a while and she has been meditating for 30 or 40 years. And it was really her idea to purchase the <i>Mindfulness for the Next Generation</i> book after she saw it at a conference a couple of years ago. And so, that is kind of where it came from... And so, I just got all the stuff and started reading it. Yeah, so it wasn't like a slow awakening. It was somewhat planned, I guess.

Kadin says choosing Koru was not like a slow awakening because it was part of what her director (boss) had planned. However, Kadin does show a process of prioritizing concerns when she says she knew that when they could, they should teach mindfulness on campus. She was already participating in yoga and meditation classes and retreats. Kadin was ready to look into Koru when her director gave her the program in book form. Eventually, she and her director took the Koru training to raise the legitimization of mindfulness teaching on their campus and reduce the need for contracting outside staff as they had done for yoga.

Pat values the Koru training but was not sure if she would continue through to certification. Taking the course and teaching gave her a sense of accomplishment and confidence in her ability to train others. The Koru curriculum and the skills taught through it were significant.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Pat</b>	Honestly, I don't know if I could have done this [start teaching mindfulness courses] if I could have had the courage or the support to do this as I have done it now. And that is definitely why I sought out and was interested in Koru. It felt like it was a way [to access] people that 'get it' already and have actually gone to the lengths of creating a curriculum around this and also with this particular population of emerging adults and the group that I am working with.

Pat's experience with Koru helped solidify and validate her skills and provided her with a higher education community. Pat identified a shift in her perception of the value of certification.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Pat	I have shifted a little bit on that since I first discovered [Koru] and decided to go to the training. I would say it was very important initially. And in my thinking about this being acceptable in my context, you know, at the school that I am at and among the particular faculty, I was thinking of it as very important. I have backed off a little bit on that just because... I am not entirely sure I am going to complete the certification. I haven't made a decision either way, but I am less convicted about it now. And so I feel like maybe it is not as important as I thought... I am not necessarily a Koru cheerleader. I am a cheerleader of the idea behind Koru I think the early stuff that they present [in Koru Basic] around acceptance, the idea of just acceptance of what is and really the core definition of mindfulness and all that I think is so valuable for students. And for anyone.

Pat has (potentially) adjusted her project of becoming Koru Mindfulness certified because it may not be as relevant to her ultimate concerns as she thought at the beginning. The training has helped her gain confidence, solidify skills, and expand her community, but the actual certification may not be as crucial to achieving her ultimate concerns as she thought. Pat had recently taken on a new position in a new city and in a new cultural context. Through our expanded interview, Pat realized she had been gaining a new contemplative community in her new setting, both within her HEI and outside. Mindfulness teaching had not become less of a priority for Pat, and only the certification may have become less critical to seeing her ultimate goals realized.

As discussed in Chapter 2, while there are guidelines for best practices, such as MBI: TAC (Bangor University, 2021; Crane, et al., 2013), mindfulness teaching is not highly regulated by any particular credentialing body such as board certification or licensing agency. Credentials for MBIs are granted at the discretion of the credentialing entity. For Koru, that is the privately-owned Koru Mindfulness Center. Gaining certification was almost always a personal decision made as part of designing projects to support prioritized concerns. No study participants were required to add Koru certification to their repertoire of professional qualifications. Participants are a diffuse group working at different HEIs and in different socio-economical contexts. However, they all share a commitment to expanding the use of mindfulness. Agency isn't principally about what is required but about responding to what matters to oneself. Here we see that legitimacy matters to a group of people. Although diffuse, Koru mindfulness teachers become a corporate agent, and that agency is shared across the North American HE landscape. If this aspect of agency is consistent for future Koru Mindfulness teachers, then it would be

appropriate to investigate if Koru Mindfulness as an organization could be seen as having agency that could bring about change.

It would also be interesting to know if contemplative practitioner-scholars throughout higher education have shown the same meta-reflexive prioritization of concerns. This would help the community understand if corporate agency can be identified in this group. A theoretically informed approach to exploring the contemplative community within higher education could help clarify and unify ultimate goals toward social change.

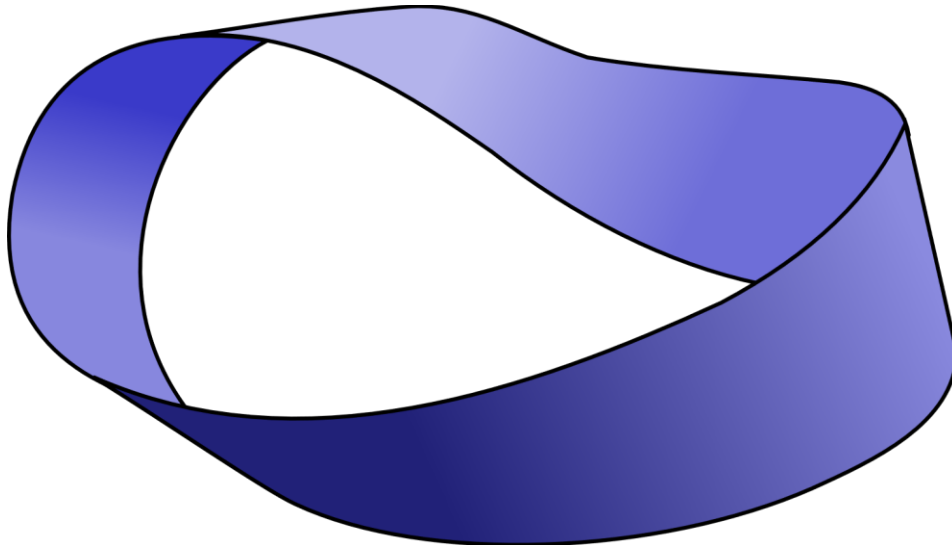
Choosing Koru was part of the participants' inner, reflexively deliberated journey in support of their ultimate concerns. This included considering the appropriateness of Koru Mindfulness in their context, financial and time commitments, and the status and content of Koru Mindfulness in comparison with other training options. Certification contributed to teachers' self-permission to teach, legitimizing their social identity in the role of mindfulness teacher (Archer, 2002, p. 18), and raising the credibility of mindfulness teaching in their HEIs. Further exploration into the corporate agency of credentialed and other types of groups is an area for further study.

## **5.8 Section Summary**

Participants' work in mindfulness teaching and their choices around Koru Mindfulness specifically stemmed from personal experience and beliefs about the benefits of mindfulness practice. They are endeavoring to teach what they know from who they are for the greater good. This illustrates two concepts from the thoughts and writings of Parker Palmer: closing the divide between who we are and what we do, our "soul and role," and "standing in the tragic gaps" (Palmer, 2004). Palmer uses the Möbius strip to illustrate the intimate and infinite connection between what one does and one's identity, the flow of one always influencing the expression of the other. See Figure 12: Möbius Strip. Tragic gaps are those spaces between what we know to be possible and the current difficult realities of life. Palmer sees having the capacity to stand in the gap as having the inner strength to hold both reality and hope at the same time and being neither corrosively cynical nor irrelevantly idealistic. Rather, it is the capacity to stand in the "tragic" gap between corrosive cynicism and irrelevant idealism, between what is and could be. Inner strength is necessary to hold both the present reality and our future hope at the same time (Center for Courage and Renewal, 2015). For example, we know that it is possible to live in peace even though we are currently living in times of war.

KMTs exhibit both positional as well as non-positional leadership. Choosing to teach mindfulness points to their tenacity, desire, and capacity to straddle the gap between the difficult realities of higher education today and a future, transformed higher education. They aspire to deliver mindfulness training to others because of the positive effects mindfulness has had in their lives.

The Koru curriculum speaks to increasing one's capacity to hold challenges, stresses, unknowns, and paradoxes. KMTs' choices to embrace and promote the Koru curriculum evidence their commitment to increase both their own and their students' capacities and to reduce the suffering that comes from shouldering difficult things, including the stressors of higher education.



*Figure 12: Möbius Strip*

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### **5.9 Viewing Results through a Morphogenetic Lens**

The following sections highlight how Archer's morphogenetic approach has brought a deeper understanding of the research data and assisted in answering the research question:

How is it possible to characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education?

First, I use Jessie's experience to illustrate the <Concerns → Projects → Practices> process, which culminated in her teaching mindfulness. Secondly, I draw on several participants' experiences to illustrate how the morphogenetic cycle can be used to think about the type of mindfulness teachers are having or could possibly be having throughout HE.

### 5.9.1 Using Jessie's Journey to illustrate <Concerns → Projects → Practices>.

Jessie, like many participants, had had a longstanding personal meditation practice. At the time of the interview, she had been hired nearly a decade earlier to establish a health education program at her university. Her moving into Koru training was a process that included assessing student population needs, the culture of her institution and community, and her unearthing of confidence and competence in mindfulness training. She had an inner and ongoing conversation with herself about bringing mindfulness teaching to her HEI. Her story reflects many of the elements common to participants. I adapted the concept of role claiming and embodied role use originally presented in Creed, DeJordy, and Lok's (2010) reporting on identity work and change. A combination of Jessie's personal experience with mindfulness meditation, a recognition of its benefits, and an outward focus on bringing these benefits to others led her to eventually establish mindfulness teaching in her HEI and add it to the menu of services available for students. The process is represented below in Figure 13: Internal conversation and pursuit of the good life.

Adapted from Archer, 2007, p. 89, Figure 3.



Figure 13: Internal conversation and pursuit of the good life.  
Adapted from Archer, 2007, p. 89, Figure 3.

The interview excerpt below provides supporting data on Jessie's concern for students who increasingly self-report anxiety and depression. She attempts to incorporate mindfulness into her HEIs student offerings many times before finally being able to do so. Each time she tries something new, she adjusts and develops courses of action in support of her concerns toward sustainable practices. Eventually, Koru Mindfulness is a project that she is able to implement and is accepted on her campus. Mindfulness teaching now becomes a sustainable practice for her and at her HEI. Jessie's quotations below illustrate this process and her tenacity to keep looking for a project that would be accepted at her HEI.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Jessie	<p>My background as a public health professional, knowing how to construct lesson plans and kind of approaching it from a pedagogy, if you will, paired with the public health model [helped in approaching the health education program] ... but how do we change a culture so I can get by with [introducing meditation]. That is part of the challenge. Now I have to say honestly some of my attempts to add mindfulness meditation to our menu of services was not allowed early on. Conversations with my boss, who is [a medical doctor] was, <i>well, you don't need to do that</i>, and <i>where is the justification for that?</i> So that happened, so that was probably going on ten years ago that I thought that this population would benefit from [mindfulness meditation], and I would have loved if someone had given this to me at age 18 rather than waiting many, many many years.</p> <p>... And then each progressive year that I have worked with this emerging adult population, they have shown up and self-diagnosed, named themselves more and more anxious.... This is what is trending. Depressed and anxious is coming up over and over again in our surveys. Again, why are we not giving them these practices to deal with it, so...</p>
Researcher Nanette	<p>When you first started thinking that this is “mine to do”, what kinds of questions did you have and how did you go about answering them? Especially because you had to go back and justify this to your people at the university.</p>
Jessie:	<p>Yes. So it was like, is my meditation practice good enough? Do I know what I am talking about? You know that kind of question. Have I answered all of my own questions? So when something comes up I will give them the right answer. And, you know, kind of who can do this for me? Who can teach this for me? Maybe I am not the one to teach. And so really it was [about] confidence, like how do I pull from all of the years of practice that I have had, thousands of years of traditions, how do I choose? Right? And so what I did, then about five years ago, I literally hired some of my teachers from the community to come on campus and teach.</p>
Jessie	<p>Because I participated with these pilots that we did and there was huge interest and curiosity and major misunderstandings and assumptions that it is all about relaxation and if you know how to meditate you can just relax yourself through anything. And so I knew that they were coming out of almost a sense of desperation. Wow, right? And then there would be this other group, the more mature, maybe some who had had military experience who would show up in their mid-twenties. Still emerging adults but they really shifted my thinking because they had done enough reading and exploring on their own, (<i>Jessie pauses</i>) been shot at (<i>pauses again</i>), to know this isn't just about relaxation. This is about the ability to focus and make sense of a very confusing world.</p>
Jessie	<p>The groups that I had then were put together just for students. We would start with 25-28. And the drop rate was just <i>whoosh</i>: we'd be down to 4 or 5 within two weeks, three weeks. They would not come to that large of group and that length of time... Going to the training itself down in Durham and meeting Libby and Jenny and Holly and just seeing the depth of their understanding and the elegance of the curriculum. You know, and <i>the amount of time</i> (pause). They weren't just putting together something for a market-ready product with all the mindfulness stuff out there. They know [their pedagogy] and I know the pedagogy. So that was affirming right from the very beginning. And being in the group of people from all over the country also, that was part of what had been missing for me, was having a conversation group, right,</p>



who were focused on emerging adults looking for the same thing. I didn't realize there was such a large group of people on the same quest.

Jessie's journey reflects a process of understanding and trusting her personhood and skillset in relation to being a mindfulness meditation teacher. Jessie's experience exemplifies the cognitive operations and corresponding transcendental precepts: being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and clear meta-reflexive deliberations. Jessie piloted programs on her university campus, allowing her to understand her context's dynamics better and confirm that mindfulness is valuable to her students and the university community. Jessie organized and participated in the pilot programs. She continued to ask more questions and expanded her horizon of understanding. She understood who her students are, what they have experienced, and that her community's perception of mindfulness was primarily limited to a relaxation technique. When Jessie started teaching students herself, she developed programs based on her experience and meditation tradition. She reflected on the success of these initial groups and eventually found Koru to be the right pedagogical fit for her context. Being a Koru Mindfulness teacher also provided her with a community of like-minded educators. Now, Jessie's HEI participates in community and national programs that promote compassion and well-being in health services. Jessie's story highlights the clarity of her ultimate concerns and how she created projects that brought about practices in her workplace that were in keeping with her way of being in the world, her *modus vivendi*. Jessie's attempts to add mindfulness meditation to programming were not allowed early on. She says she was constrained by her questioning and oppositional medical doctor boss. Additional questioning into structures and culture at her HEI and the surrounding society could have produced richer interview results to understand what the constraints and enablements were and what changed over time. Archer's (2007) morphogenetic approach informed my understanding of experiences like Jessie's and how future studies can delve more deeply into conditions that constrain and enable the implementation of mindfulness interventions. Over the life of her career, Jessie contended to provide students with best practices for positive well-being outcomes. Her inner convictions, practices, and values informed her process of defining her ultimate concerns and way of being in the world. Jessie's experience illustrates a meta-reflexive deliberation that led to exercising agency and role claiming and embodied role use. Embodied role use relates to the present moment of awareness of living in our bodies and how the embodied self interacts with others and the greater society (Gyllensten, Skär, Miller, & Gard, 2010). Embodiment refers to the real things that constrain people as physical beings, such as their bodies, gender, historical context, and the like.

For the participants in this study, the move into mindfulness teaching flowed out of a recognition of the influence that their own personal practice was having in their own lives and wanting to bring that experience to others. Jessie's experience illustrates Archer's sequence of prioritizing concerns, numerous attempts at creating projects, and ultimately establishing sustainable practices of integrating mindfulness into her HEI's wellness programs. Jessie's journey also demonstrates the emergence of Jessie as a social actor whose agency has interplayed with the social and cultural structures in her HEI and created change consistent with Jessie's ultimate concerns of bringing mindfulness to help reduce suffering. Jessie moves through understanding herself, exercises agency, and chooses to occupy the role of mindfulness (Archer, 2002, p. 18). Mindfulness teacher is not the only role Jessie occupies. It is part of her broader role in her HEI, her pedagogical training, and her experience in public health. However, her decision to occupy the role of mindfulness teacher and integrate mindfulness into wellness options comes from who she is as a human being and her way of being in the world, her *modus vivendi*.

### **5.9.2 Identifying morphogenetic cycles within the data.**

One of the areas the analytical framework helped me delve deeper into the data is around impact. Impact can be challenging to define and measure. I asked KMTs about their perceived impact on students, their HEI, and the wider world, including the academy. Koru courses run over four weeks with the option of adding a second phase and a half-day silent retreat. This does not give teachers or students much time to assess change. However, as established in the previous sections, KMTs engage in reflective deliberations about their mindfulness teaching, indicating their reflexivity and exercise agency. One of the three core causal powers in the morphogenetic approach is the ability to hold internal conversations (Archer, 2007). Archer (2007) identifies this as a personal emergent property (PEP). Exercising PEP is essential to how we "actively make our way through the social world" (Archer, 2007, p. 65). One exercises PEP through the ability to engage in and reflect on one's inner dialogue. PEP activates the other two core causal powers: cultural emergent properties and structural emergent properties. In education, culture might refer to student or community expectations, professional norms within an HEI, or an HEI's institutional or academic culture. Structure might include such entities as accreditation bodies, regulatory agencies, and HEIs. All three causal powers interacting together are necessary for agency to be activated. The properties are *emergent*, meaning they are latent properties that emerge through human action and agency but only under certain conditions.

Through our ability to reflect, we can choose to act or not. Whether our taking actions and exercising agency have the intended outcome is not guaranteed. I addressed an example of this in the subtheme of *inadvertent suffering*. SEPs and CEPs “have the power to constrain and enable people’s emergent properties” (Luckett, 2008, p. 300). KMTs were interfacing with all three emergent powers, their own and that of their cultural and structural contexts. Although Koru courses are short, KMTs are part of their HEIs, and their responses below indicate their agency is activating, enabling the emergent properties in their contexts as they complete and begin morphogenetic cycles.

I asked participants if they perceived any impact of teaching Koru mindfulness on students, their HEI, and the wider world. Selected responses are discussed below, beginning with students and then expanding to HEIs and the wider world.

KMTs' responses on the perceived impact on students came from any one or combination of their own experience, student self-reporting during classes, and feedback handouts and questionnaires. In general, they found this question challenging to answer, and varied responses are presented below. In reflecting back on the interview guide, the question may have been too broad, and it may have been helpful to define what might be included as impact. Participants often needed time to reflect at the moment on their experiences before commenting directly. The following selected quotations show some of the challenges KMTs face in thinking about impact. Getting students to meditate daily is difficult. This shows how meditation and mindfulness can be conflated even for teachers. Sam states she is not sure she is having the intended impact. It would have been good to ask her to state what she sees as the intended impact. Dana abstains from speculating on long-term effects but says students report sleeping better and feeling less anxious. One student found the group work “really helpful,” in addition to her personal therapy sessions. Baily says discussing student impact would be speculative but sees the Koru program as “really good at planting seeds.” Baily goes on to comment on the profoundness and beauty in-the-moment impact, even if the long-term effects are not known.

I don’t know, but when I am sitting there, in one of those Koru sessions, it is a whole different story because when we have the checking-in, and I listen to what they are saying, it is profound. [...] And it is just so beautiful, and it is so high impact in the moment. But then, long-term, who knows? **Bailey**

The following excerpts echo Bailey’s unknowing about the long-term impact on students. Sam initially considers the impact in terms of students adopting a daily meditation practice. Dana is unsure but says students self-report feeling less anxious after a Koru session. These thoughts, and Bailey’s quote above, are contextualized in the table below.

Study participant	Selected quotations
<b>Sam</b>	I do think it is a really hard... actually getting students to practice meditation on a regular basis is really hard. And if I set my bar, if I were to say to myself I only succeed if I can get kids to be meditating on a regular basis, I think I would feel like a pretty big failure... I am not sure ... I am having the [intended] impact ... [based on my] experiences so far. But in terms of the students feeling like they were able to grab onto some kind of perspective, some different perspectives or different ways of seeing of seeing life or some of the mindful daily practices, learning. ... a lot of the daily skills...I think they connect to those really well...[but] a daily 5-10-minute meditation is really hard.
<b>Dana</b>	My experience is pretty limited with getting feedback about [but] the feedback I got just immediately after the group was that people were less anxious and they were sleeping better and interested in continuing it and wondering how they were going to do that. As far as long-term effects, I don’t know. I also know that at least one person, who was seeing one of the therapists, gave me feedback that she found the group really helpful.
<b>Bailey</b>	Let’s see. That is an interesting question. Most of it is speculation. I mean, I can go from the students that I have taught and I can say that I have learned a lot from them and one of things that I have learned was that they don’t necessarily get out of it what I think I want them to or what I think they should get out of it. It lands in different ways with different people. This is not rocket science, it is just human, it is about being human. And so, I guess what I have realized is that the Koru curriculum is really good for planting a seed and maybe even watering it a bit and tending it for weeks and letting it sprout a little bit. And then the students go off and do whatever they do. And that is that letting go part. [ <i>Baily continues with quote included above</i> ] I don’t know, I don’t know, but when I am sitting there, in one of those Koru sessions, it is a whole different story because when we have the checking-in and I listen to what they are saying, it is profound. I mean there are people having experiences that I haven’t even had yet myself, having done this for 3 1/2 years. And it just so beautiful and it is so high-impact in the moment. But then long-term, who knows?

Using the morphogenetic cycle gave me the clearest way to justify that cultural and structural impact was potentially possible. KMTs’ agency was activated, and consequently, structural and cultural emergent properties could be as well. If change was reported, then I was confident that cultural and/or structural elaboration had occurred. For example, Sam, below, shares the changes she has introduced at her HEI between the time we had our online interview and my follow-up check-in email. The time of the interview is Time 1 (T<sup>1</sup>). Sam organizes

projects to support mindfulness teaching at her HEI. She executes several projects, interacting with faculty, students, and administrative bodies. These interactions take place between Time 2 (T<sup>2</sup>) and Time 3 (T<sup>3</sup>). Among other things, fifty-five people signed up for and opted-in for a mindfulness challenge. Sam had expected or hoped for possibly 15 people. Going from no mindfulness challenge to a challenge where 50 people opted in shows change. The changes Sam reports are the elaborations at Time 4 (T<sup>4</sup>). Were the research to carry on, Time 4 (T<sup>4</sup>) would become the new Time 1 (T<sup>1</sup>) and the start of another morphogenetic cycle. Excerpts from Sam’s check-in email reporting her actions, and her activated agency, are included below.

Study participant	Selected quotations
Sam	<p>As for your third question about contributing to the Academy... since I met with you there has been lots going on here. We brought [speakers] to present about mindfulness and engage a group of faculty and staff about how mindfulness can be more embedded in the university. I have done several training sessions with faculty and staff about ways to integrate mindfulness into their work with students, their syllabus, their 1:1 interactions. This has been very exciting. I have continued to teach Koru in residential settings and to staff.</p> <p>The biggest thing I have done is to introduce mindfulness in [my] department as a year-round area of focus. This has been by integrating it into large group trainings (180 staff), offering the [<i>The Mindful Twenty-Something</i>] book to any RA interested and having all of our professional staff read the book. Offering small group trainings on how to bring mindfulness to their residents. Lastly, I just completed a 30-day mindfulness challenge that I offered our 180 staff called [name omitted for anonymity]. It was something they could opt into and do independently. Each week I sent them their 5-6 mindfulness challenges and had them record what they accomplished. These included links to meditations and mindful activities that they could build into their week. I imagined 15 people would sign up for this. To my surprise, 55 people signed on. We just finished the four weeks. I did a pre- and post-test and have not had a chance to look this over yet.</p>

Sam’s contribution conveys a marked growth in programming at her HEI and a clear vision and intent to integrate mindfulness into the lives and work of those in her professional sphere of influence. Sam has worked to educate herself and others in order to bring mindfulness to her campus in constructive, collaborative, and meaningful ways. She remains sensitive to participants by using an opt-in model for personal practice as well as larger-scale training. Sam’s experience also shows how quickly mindfulness can be integrated into campus and across disciplines and departments. Sam has also worked with mindfulness training in her community. Sam is an experienced contemplative, educator, and administrator. She brings her whole self to her work with the hope of creating change and impact. Sam’s story illustrates how mindfulness

teaching is part of her commitment to well-being in her HEI and the wider community. She has organized projects that support her way of being in the world, her *modus vivendi*.

### 5.10 Answering the Research Question

Sam's statements above exhibit authenticity and integration of who she is with what she does. Again, this brings to focus that mindfulness teaching qualities and potential impact are contingent on the person and their commitment to ultimate concerns. Beyond how, what, and why we teach, Palmer (1997) posits that we rarely *ask who is the self that teaches?* Study participants demonstrated a keen sense of self and understanding of why they were choosing to integrate mindfulness teaching into their professional lives. Their decision was anchored in who they were and what they felt could benefit others. This is demonstrated through their meta-reflexivity and how they moved through consolidating concerns, organizing projects, and establishing sustainable practices and the personal values they hold.

The threats to ethical mindfulness teaching, such as the commodification of mindfulness and the exploitation of mindfulness for ignoble gains, are directly connected to the qualities of the embodiment of mindfulness by the teacher. Meta-reflexive scholar-practitioners will be values-driven and prioritize values supporting the greater good. Meta-reflexives endeavor to understand power structures and ethical positions and reflect critically on their own professional practice, biases, and, importantly, the values that drive them (Archer, 2007; Goodman, 2017).

In this chapter, I have reported on and discussed the data drawn from interviews with 12 people teaching Koru Mindfulness in HEIs through my own interpretation as a mindfulness teacher. This study was about the people who teach and are not evaluative of Koru Mindfulness as a program. Adopting a morphogenetic perspective helped inform my data analysis of the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in HEIs in order to answer the question:

How is it possible to characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education?

I characterize the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness teachers teaching in higher education as:

An intentional and measured process of identifying personal concerns and creating projects in support of those concerns culminates in identifying, claiming, and embodying the role of a mindfulness teacher.

Participants' decisions to become KMTs are linked to personal values and spirituality. This decision shows a commitment to best practices, providing quality experiences for students, and adding legitimacy and teaching credentials to their professional practice. Their choices are value-

driven and reflect an orientation toward living a life of integrity and wholeness. In short, participants showed an identifiable process of identifying concerns and designing projects, which culminate in sustainable practices. Participants predominantly held meta-reflexive internal conversations throughout this process. They found a possible role to occupy (i.e., Koru mindfulness teacher) and took steps (projects) toward practices (teaching mindfulness) in support of their ultimate concerns (relieving suffering and living an undivided life) (Archer, 1995; 2000). The notion of role-claiming and embodied role use helps summarize this process (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010). The role is *embodied* because KMTs have moved from competencies to leadership (teaching) that draws on cognition and understanding. Their understanding depends on experiences from having a body that exists in a wider “biological, physiological and cultural context” (Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991, p. 173; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Fisher & Robbins, 2015).

Becoming a Koru Mindfulness teacher has been a process of role-claiming and embodied role use. This process includes interaction with existing structural and cultural properties and prioritizing personal concerns. KMTs have developed into the embodied role of mindfulness teachers through reflection on and identification of a collection of personal concerns ingrained in personal values and spiritual commitments, together with feasibility for training options in their own contexts. This group of KMTs is self-selecting both in gaining Koru Mindfulness training and in participating in this study.

## Chapter 6 Conclusion

Parker and Zajonc' (2010) propose that "good scholars" can become agents of change by asking honest, open questions of colleagues about "their experiences and visions as educators- and then seek points of theoretical and applied convergence between us" (p.132). I have endeavored to support this vision by working toward a theoretically informed exploration of the lived experience of twelve Koru Mindfulness teachers in higher education. In the same spirit that they work to bring about change, I hope this research can, in some way, assist in bringing about positive transformation. In this final chapter, I reflect on my own learning, address limitations, and offer recommendations.

### 6.1 Recommendations

I have developed three recommendations to inform, challenge and empower mindfulness teaching in higher education. These recommendations draw from and build on results from this study and my own understanding and experience as a teacher, teacher-trainer, and mindfulness practitioner.

#### 6.1.1 Trauma-informed and trauma-sensitive teaching and teacher training.

As presented earlier in section 5.6.2, KMTs gave a wide range of responses regarding the level of risk to students. This implies that more awareness of possible adverse effects of mindfulness training should be included in teacher training. Individuals and teacher trainers can help minimize unintentional, future negative outcomes of (re)traumatization by requiring trauma-informed training and using trauma-sensitive teaching. In addition, aspirant mindfulness teachers should be encouraged to gain a deeper understanding of the mental health, cultural, and social contexts of their taught populations, increase awareness of referral services, and acknowledge more authentically and transparently capacities of their role as mindfulness teachers. Teacher trainers should prioritize equipping aspirant mindfulness teachers to be able to assess and recognize the limits of their teaching, experience, and available support structures in their own contexts.

It may be tempting for supporters of mindfulness to adopt a belief that all things mindful are ultimately or intrinsically benevolent. This is contrary to Archer's (2012) assertion that unexpected, negative outcomes can manifest when an individual unintentionally designs and follows "courses of action that are inappropriate to realizing their social concerns and whose negative outcomes rebound upon them" (p.1). An example of this in connection to mindfulness



teaching is presented by psychologists Farias and Wikholm (2015, 2019). They devote a chapter to "*The Dark Side of Meditation*," where they address possible adverse outcomes of meditation that they claim are seldom given voice. The authors acknowledge the research the chapter is based on is scant and dated and posit that the scarcity of research has more to do with meditation students' reluctance to self-report disruptive incidences than meditation teachers and researchers trying to hide something, noting that when meditation students encounter difficulties, they very often blame themselves for either doing something wrong or not doing something right (Farias & Wikholm, 2019). Treleaven's (2018) work seems to support this. He notes incidences where mindfulness students assumed the distress they experienced during meditation was a result of something they, the student, were doing wrong. He also points out unfortunate incidences where mindfulness trainers and teachers encourage students to continue with a practice that the student finds distressing, highlighting some mindfulness teachers' lack of understanding around traumatic stress and the (re)traumatization that can occur in these circumstances.

Treleaven (2018) points out that:

An estimated 90% of the population has been exposed to a traumatic event, and 8-20% of these people will develop posttraumatic stress disorder, or PTSD. This means that in any setting where mindfulness is being taught, there's a high probability that someone in the room has a history of trauma. (Treleaven, 2018, p. xvii)

The research participants in this thesis project expressed concern for their students' well-being and the larger society. However, good intentions do not automatically correlate to positive outcomes. It might be useful to relate those new to teaching mindfulness with the experience of early-career academics. Fitzmaurice (2013) found that becoming an academic was a "cognitive and emotive process" undergirded in morality and "grounded in virtues of honesty, care, and compassion" (Fitzmaurice, 2013, p. 621). In addition, Fitzmaurice (2013) contends that being an academic is a multifaceted role that typically includes teaching, research, and service but is ultimately a "way of being the world" (2013, p. 621). Fitzmaurice (2013) proposes that dialogues that focus on values and practice over regulations and output can help the university be a place where both personal and professional growth, in the service of students and the wider society, can take place. Mindfulness teachers and scholar-practitioners are likely to find these types of dialogues attractive and potentially useful. However, if students are experiencing (re)traumatization through their mindfulness classes, the advocacy for contemplative practices in higher education may be undermined.

### 6.1.2 Exercise spiritual hospitality.

As presented in section 5.6.3, KMTs' spirituality contributed to their development as human beings. Spirituality informed and helped form their values, concerns, projects, and way of being in the world. I recommend exercising spiritual hospitality for two reasons. First is a recognition that spirituality is an influential part of many people's lives, including the research participants. This was made clear by the rich data brought to the surface through the interview process. Participants' spirituality markedly influenced their life choices, their decision to teach, and the way they saw the world and their purpose in it. The second reason is to create enough spaciousness for students to be comfortable exploring their own and others' spirituality. Setting aside the spirituality of students and teachers limits one's ability to be fully present as a whole person and stifles the ways by which one can learn and teach. Spirituality is not the same as religiosity. Teasdale (1999) points out that not everyone who is religious is spiritual, and not everyone who is spiritual is religious. He asserts:

Being religious connotes belonging to and practicing a religious tradition. Being spiritual suggests a personal commitment to a process of inner development that engages us in our totality. [...] Spirituality is a way of life that affects and includes every moment of existence. It is at once a contemplative attitude, a disposition to a life of depth, and the search for ultimate meaning, direction, and belonging. The spiritual person is committed to growth as an essential ongoing life goal. (Teasdale, 1999, pp. 17,18)

Spiritual traditions can offer hope and pathways into community and understanding of self and one's inner wisdom (Palmer, 1993). Exercising spiritual hospitality offers a way to honor spiritual traditions without proselytizing or omitting contextual information, unfortunately resulting in "stealth" Buddhism. Palmer (1993) recognizes that wisdom traditions offer much for the spirituality of education as a means by which educators can reconnect with inner wisdom and community. However, he also acknowledges that "past marriages of religion and education have done education at least as much harm as good" and that spiritual traditions have been used "to obstruct inquiry rather than encourage it." This has led to a fear of truth rather than a welcoming of truth "in all its forms" (Palmer, 1993, p. xi). Palmer encourages respect for spiritual traditions other than one's own and an openness to learn from them. I call this practicing *spiritual hospitality* (after Gallagher's (2007) *intellectual hospitality*). Wisdom traditions add a sense of positive contribution to society as "the cultural outcomes, including religion, philosophies, myths, songs and written texts, which all people, primitive or civilized, have produced to pass

down their knowledge to future generations” (Blomme & van Hoof, 2014, p. 4). This spacious understanding of wisdom traditions accommodates religious movements, secular philosophies, as well as Western and Eastern philosophies (Blomme & van Hoof, 2014). A non-prescriptive understanding of and appreciation for various spiritual, religious, and philosophical paths is helpful in looking at the origins of mindfulness meditation and in considering contemporary mindfulness meditation in higher education. Gallagher (2007) encourages educators to view teaching as an intentional act of intellectual hospitality, of welcoming the stranger and inviting students to join various conversations about essential issues such as religion.

One of the fundamental purposes of education in the liberal arts [is] to situate students’ experience in the “here and now” in terms of multiple instances of “there” (other cultures) and “then” (other times). The comparative study of religion aims to fulfill that purpose by inviting students to entertain a variety of “what if” questions that can provide multiple points of entry into the religious worlds of others. That process of entertaining seriously how others make meaning of the world through their religious acts and convictions, much more than the factual knowledge it yields, is the beginning of religious literacy. Eugene Gallagher (Connecticut College, 2018, para. 12)

By exploring, appreciating, and practicing spiritual hospitality within a mindfulness course, participants may be able to connect more deeply with their own concerns and values as well as appreciate shared values across traditions. Spiritual hospitality could assist students and teachers as they develop as human beings.

### **6.1.3 Widening understanding of practice origins.**

The third recommendation is to widen the understanding of practice origins. This comes, in part, from my own experience of first being an Eastern Orthodox Christian at a very liberal university in the United States and living in a majority Eastern Orthodox Christian country, Cyprus. Many of my fellow undergraduate students in the United States were surprised that types of Christian prayer included a focus on breathing, submitting the mind to the heart, and so forth. I have to be sensitive to my context when teaching mindfulness in Cyprus to cultural perceptions of yoga, visualizations, and similar practices. Extending spiritual hospitality is useful for understanding the origins of contemporary meditation practices as well as recognizing similarities across traditions. Mindfulness can be an entry point for students to be able to navigate differences more openly and gently. Sheldrake (2017) proposes that meditation is a spiritual practice that is recognizable across many traditions. Acknowledging the origins of the

practice, as well as the historical linguistic use of “mindfulness,” can help address some of the concerns and criticisms around mindfulness teaching as well as situate mindfulness in the current yet ever-shifting contemporary context (Sun, 2014).

Meditation is a spiritual practice because it is about living in the present, which can also be experienced as living in the presence of a mind or consciousness or awareness greater than one’s own [...] Attempts to translate this experience into cultural and religious frameworks have led to many different terms, including Buddha consciousness, cosmic consciousness, God consciousness, Christ consciousness, true-Self, Formless Void, and undifferentiated Beingness. (Sheldrake, 2017, p. 25)

Exercising spiritual hospitality is essential because spirituality is part of the human experience. Teachers should be able to show up to students as their whole selves to ensure that students can also show up as their whole, developing selves.

Mindfulness teaching is not value-free because teachers are not value-free. One way to share knowledge about different traditions and values associated with practice origins would be to create a wiki-like topology. Creating a sort of topology is not my original idea. Someone brought it up in a conversation at a conference. However, making the topology open to additions and adjustments, as on Wikipedia, could diffuse ownership and allow students and teachers to participate in its creation and development. Something along the lines of topology could be a resource to promote understanding of practice origins, transparency, and authenticity in teaching.

## **6.2 Future Research**

Research into the lived experience of contemplative scholar-practitioners is growing, but more research is needed. Continued and expanded research into practitioner lived experience can help broaden and ground our understanding of what is taking place and how to help guide the growth toward a more contemplative higher education landscape. Zajonc (2010) posits, “If we would expand the worldview that supports education, we can find no better place to begin than by opening ourselves to the full scope of human experience” (p.23). Future research into the full scope of the human experience of teachers and students can assist us in supporting education and refining our understanding of the purpose and perhaps limits of education. Teachers are on the front line. They are who students see and interact with. Their lived experience is central to the experience of education, and additional study is warranted.

Incorporating theory into the study design and data analysis can strengthen the understanding gained through research. In addition to qualitative studies, TMRHS is appropriate

for inclusion as a method to use with Critical Grounded Theory (CGT) research, mixed methods research (MMR), and multimethod studies (Leavy & Hesse-Biber, 2008). As the use of CGT in organizational research increases, the epistemological and ontological harmony between TMRHS and CGT specifically may be beneficial in research related to mindfulness and contemplative pedagogy in higher education (Belfrage & Hauf, 2017, p. 251). Perry's theory, Transcendent Pluralism (TP): A Middle-Range Theory of Nonviolent Social Transformation Through Human and Ecological Dignity, came out of her work using TMRHS (Perry, 2015). This attests to the method's capacity for developing theory. TP is being applied in health science research, including a mixed-method study. TMRHS is a suitable standalone research method as well as a method appropriate for inclusion within the array of methods and theoretical propositions in CGT research and mixed-method studies (Perry, 2006; Perry, 2015; Kane & Perry, 2016).

Zajonc (2010) proposes that when the reliability and quality of the data are ensured, the study of our humanity through qualitative research and the softer sciences can have the same standing as the harder sciences. Theory has informed my analysis. Zajonc (2010) highlights the need for an expanded view of research that includes multiple modes of inquiry. This requires rigorous, reliable, and replicable studies, which will open our view of ways of knowing and help navigate such difficult areas as the "relationship between science and spirituality in the academy" (Zajonc, 2010, p. 73). I hope theoretically informed practices can help navigate challenging areas. Mindfulness and related lived experience research can attain higher standards by increasing the quality and replicability of qualitative studies. "When observations are variable and uncertain, then knowledge is likewise insecure. The challenge to the soft sciences, which depend on qualitative assessment, is to ensure that their observations are accurate and reproducible" (Zajonc, 2010, p. 71).

It is my hope that this study will contribute to raising awareness and taking action in the following areas:

- take measures to minimize and limit the potential for (re)traumatization and cumulative aggressions in mindfulness training settings;
- expand spaces for both intellectual and spiritual hospitality;
- widen the understanding of the contemporary and historical contexts of mindfulness training; and

- Actively initiate and partner in research to ensure best practices and ethicality in mindfulness training, taking special consideration emergent adult populations' unique mental health and well-being needs, current trends and economic pressures in higher education, and the popularization and commodification of mindfulness in the larger society.

### **6.3 Personal Reflection**

My growth as a researcher occurred throughout designing and carrying out his study. This included interacting with the literature and colleagues, attending academic conferences, participating in contemplative practices and retreats, and the invaluable input from my supervisors and contemplative practitioners and scholars. I have expressed this growth process below in Figure 14: Researcher Growth Cycle. My interviewing, observation, listening, and reflective skills sharpened with each interview conducted and over the course of the data collection. This created a sort of double loop of developing reflective practice and question-asking. Internal deliberations, interactions with the literature, and the accumulating number of interviews all expanded my growth. I felt an increased sense of purpose nested within my deepening sense of integration of self and work as a researcher. Within this experience of study and research, I also bumped up against several personal challenges, each of which tested my resolve to finish. Like the study participants, I was challenged by the internal and external validations that completing my doctoral degree might bring me against the effort and energy it has taken to come to this point of submitting my thesis. Going through this process and interacting with all the different kinds of literature and Archer's morphogenetic approach has instilled in me something unexpected, better-informed compassion for others who, just like me, are finding their way in the world.

I wonder if any study will ever feel fully complete. At some point, I had to consolidate my learning and submit the results. Critical realists share the notion that all findings are provisional until we know more. This is certainly true in this case. There is much more to learn.

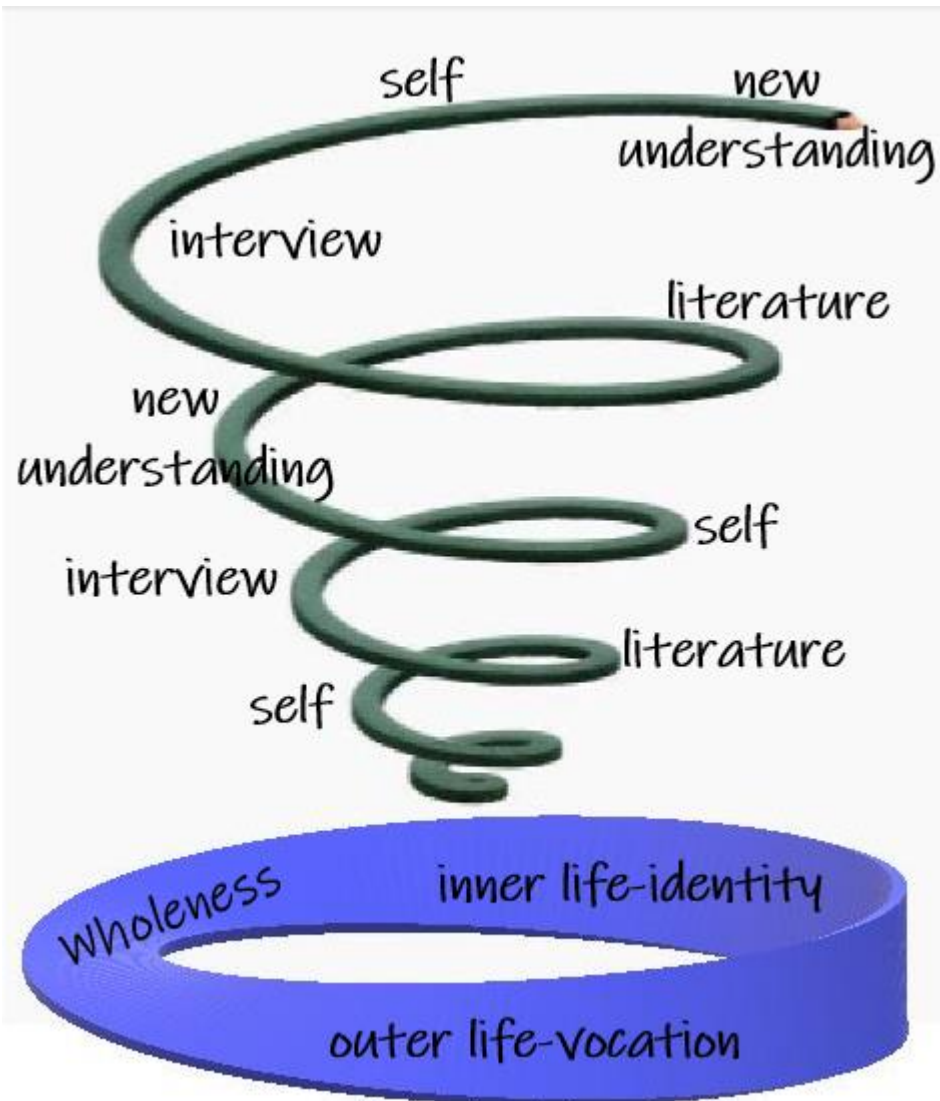


Figure 14: Researcher Growth Cycle

#### 6.4 From Quiet Revolution to Educational Reconstruction

In Chapter 2, I described the historical development of contemporary contemplative education. Mindfulness, including Koru Mindfulness, is part of the growth of contemplative practices and pedagogies employed as wellness interventions, MBIs, and pedagogical tools. In just over a quarter of a century, we have moved from Zajonc's (2013) description of contemplative pedagogy in higher education as a quiet revolution to Ergas's (2017) overt proposition of creating a curriculum centered on the nature of the mind and the embodied experience of learners. The nature and purpose of higher education continue to be questioned, challenged, and negotiated with the increase in accessibility of HE in its many forms (Gibbs &

Barnett, 2014; Barnett, 1997, 2004, 2014, 2017). Teachers remain on the frontline of educating students, yet commodification of education can result in the marginalization of faculty in order to maximize profits. Research into the lived experience of teachers can help inform, challenge, and encourage teaching practices and administrative choices. At the core of this study is a recognition of the sincerity by which study participants undertook Koru Mindfulness teaching in pursuit of concerns that reflect care for students, themselves, and the academy. Although we did not speak of *love* or one's *soul* in this thesis, Palmer (1993) encapsulates much of the goal for education as presented by study participants. He writes:

The goal of a knowledge arising from love is the reunification and reconstruction of broken selves and worlds. A knowledge born of compassion aims not at exploiting and manipulating creation but at reconciling the world to itself. The mind motivated by compassion reaches out to know as the heart reaches out to love. Here, the act of knowing *is* an act of love, the act of entering and embracing the reality of the other, of allowing the other to enter and embrace our own. In such knowing we know and are known as members of one community, and our knowing becomes a way of reweaving that community's bonds. (Palmer, 1993, p. 8)

It is a reweaving of our higher education community's bonds that can help enable the type of reconstruction needed for renewal in higher education and affirm a sense of purpose for higher education professionals, including those committed to contemplative practices and pedagogy.



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*Appendix A Interview Guide***Interview Guide****Primary research question**

How do Koru Mindfulness trainers in higher education experience the training of emergent adult populations and can shared experiences be interpreted through the inquiry?

*Opening conversation to acclimate interview partners and deal with any questions or technical issues.*

**Context 1 (C1)    The Immediate Context and the Cognitive Operations:** experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding

Experiencing

C1a.    Can you tell me how you first came to be aware of your interest in being a mindfulness trainer?

Understanding

C1b.    When you first had an interest or desire in teaching mindfulness, what kinds of questions did you have and how did you go about answering them?

Judgments of facts

C1c.    How did you validate or verify that this is a valid and appropriate educational tool?

Deciding (judgment of value)

C1d.    How did you go about deciding that this is the right method for you?

C1e.    How did you decide specifically to use the Koru curriculum?

**Context 2 (C2)    The Person as a Developing Human Being**

C2a.    Were there any past experiences or decisions that influenced you in choosing this method/pedagogy, that is in choosing to train people in mindfulness?

C2b.    Are there important values in your life that helped you make this decision?

C2c.    How do you think using mindfulness training has influenced you as a higher education professional?

***Next set of questions will typically be placed toward the end of the interview***

C2d.    How do you think using mindfulness training has influenced you as a person?

C2d.    How has mindfulness training been meaningful in your life?

C2e.    Has using mindfulness training had any influence on your spirituality or spiritual development?

**Context 3 (C3)    Context of Situation/ The Socio-Cultural Context**

C3a.    In general, how would you describe the socio-cultural context that your HEI is located in?

C3b.    How would you describe your organizational culture? That is - What is the culture like in your HEI?

C3c.    What kind of reception has your mindfulness training got at your HEI?

**Context 4 (C4)    Context of the Researcher and the Researcher's theoretical framework**

What type, if any, influence do you feel your work and mindfulness training has on:

C4a.    Students

C4b    HEIs (where the practitioner is currently conducting KM training)

C4c    the academy as a whole

C4d    locally

C4e    globally

C4F    Do you feel there are any types of risks in teaching mindfulness to emergent adults in higher education?

*Appendix B: Collected First-person Narratives from Published Works***Mary Rose O'Reilley****English and Environmental Studies, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul Minnesota, USA**

Silence creates one kind of contemplative space. The practice of hospitality, in the Benedictine sense, defines another: "All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ," says the Rule of St. Benedictine (Chittister 1990, 121). Hospitality defines a space for the visitor—the student—to be herself, because she is received graciously. Indeed, if real inner searching is going on, real multivocalism practiced, the transcendent disciplines of courtesy become essential to civil exchange. I mention this hospitality space, too, in the syllabus. I tell the students that I expect them to attend class regularly, and that I will try to receive them with unconditional presence. In making this small promise, I articulate a discipline for myself. I do not succeed at it very often, but I've found it, as all disciplines should be, a useful anchor in the midst of our turbulent days. Some of my colleagues are conscientious about getting to class early so that they are able to welcome their students; the more disorganized among us can specialize in graceful leave-taking.

...

Hospitality calls me to consider the singularity of each person, the diversity of needs. The discipline of presence requires me to *be there*, with my senses focused on the group at hand, listening rather than thinking about what I'm going to say—observing the students, the texts and the sensory world of the classroom. This is harder than sitting zazen. In zazen, nobody talks back to you. Hospitality, by contrast, implies reception of the challenging and unfamiliar: that student with spiked hair who has written on her card, "I'm the one with tattoos all over my body." I've spoken of presence as an aspect of hospitality; now I'd like to focus on it more specifically as a central premise of classroom 'management.' Presence, mindfulness, or—as I sometimes introduce it to the students—being awake is an important Zen discipline, a dimension of contemplation, carried into the world...Such mindfulness may lead us) after an excruciating passage of time) to some degree of tranquility and clarity. It's a useful discipline to practice during two recurring and predictable crises of professional life: terror and boredom. As a first-year teacher, clinging to lectern with white-knuckled hands, I wish I had known about mindfulness. What mostly preoccupied my attention in those days was an out-of-control mental voice-over: "What's going to happen next? What do they think of me? How should I respond?" By contrast, the experienced teacher has to deal with something much more like—doing the dishes. ...The practice of mindfulness allows us a chance, at least, of seeing the pure data. It releases us from inner babble, shortcuts projection, and shuts down the mental movies that take up most of our day with fretting about what *I said* and *he said* and *he means* and *they might* and *I should*: all very tempting and amusing, but none of it, for the contemplative, *true*. (O'Reilley, 1998, pp. 8-10)

*[from her course syllabus]*

This course moves rather slowly and covers material in depth rather than breadth. Try to be patient with going back over material in silence and slow time. I don't like to talk all the time, or to hear other people talk all the time. I often have to sit quietly in order to come up with an answer or analysis: sometimes I have to write a little, and perhaps I will stop class to do that: or perhaps that is not stopping class, but continuing class in a different way. I think that if we proceed in this rather contemplative manner we can get to deeper understandings. This is not McSchool; there are no golden arches out front. (O'Reilley, 1998, p. 8)

**Ellen J. Langer**

**Psychology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA**

A lack of novelty and a constant feeling of being evaluated are very stressful. Adults, however, have opportunities to change the context of their work, to look at it differently. By mindfully attending to different aspects of any situation, we can experience it differently. For example, in my work at Harvard, I could see every semester as stressful since there are many aspects of the beginning of the school year that are challenging, not the least of which is a whole class of people I don't know. Alternatively, I could attend to the parts of the situation that I have handled before—for example, they are all still twentysomething. In doing so, I feel in control. Then again, I could notice so many familiar parts of the situation that I've been in for so many years that I could find it boring. It's all up to me (Langer, 1997, 2016, Kindle Locations 271-278).

At the end of last semester, before the last class, I told students in my decision course that they couldn't come to class the following week unless they were wearing two different shoes. This was very hard for some of them, even though I assured them that no one who cares about them would care less if they were wearing different shoes and those who don't care would care even less. The next week, one of the students came and reported an incident in the elevator on the way to class. A young man looked at her shoes, looked at her face, looked at her shoes, looked at her face. After looking at her shoes one last time, he pointed to her shoes and said, "Was that intentional?" In response, she looked at his shoes, then his face, and then pointed to his shoes and said, "Was that?" The experience led students to be less concerned about mindless evaluations and freer to make decisions that are meaningful to them rather than unthinkingly accept the conventional expectations that may have been mindlessly created. (Langer, 1997, 2016, Kindle Locations 291-298).

**Beth Berila****Ethnic, Gender, & Women's Studies, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota, USA**

I delved into yoga and meditation deeply after I earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor. I had spent more than ten years teaching Women's Studies courses at various higher education institutions, working with hundreds of students, and tackling one social issue of oppression after another, both on campus and off. I was burned out, empty, and deeply in need of new sets of tools. I was disillusioned at how many of my students had still so deeply internalized oppressive ideologies into their sense of self even while being overpowered by Women's Studies and other social justice curriculum. I wondered if those were simply lesson students had to "learn the hard way" or if there were tools missing that we needed to offer them. I had a nagging hunch that the answer was both.

After tenure, I enrolled in a 200-hour Yoga Teacher Training Program and began teaching yoga sporadically. That experience deepened my practice immensely and allowed me to begin bringing the gifts of yoga to my community. Over the next several years, the two realms of my work- yoga and Women's Studies - continued to gravitate toward one another like two parts of a magnet. However, because I was still on the academic "treadmill" of always producing and doing more, the synergy was never quite firing.

Then I found the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE), which felt like coming home. Instead of always having to justify my interest in yoga as something so much deeper than merely "exercise" (which I so often had to do with many of my academic colleagues and administrators), I settled amongst a group of supportive people who understood what contemplative pedagogy offered collegiate learning. I participated in conferences that started with a grounding and integrated reflection. The two parts of my world started coming together even more closely.

But the social justice dimension of my work still seemed out of place in many contemplative environments. Though many of my yoga communities consist of deeply caring and even leftist people, the hard work of interrupting oppression was often not a central part of their project. I have often felt my feminist critique unwelcome in those spaces, despite the clear economic exclusion of many of the classes, trainings, and retreats. Fortunately, searching has revealed a great many people combining social justice work with yoga and meditation, including the Yoga and Body Image Coalition, of which I am a founding member, and Off the Mat, Into the World. A similar pattern emerged in other contemplative spaces. Despite the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic homogeneity of many contemplative spaces, discussions about social justice often remained on the margins, something that I am delighted to say is changing as I write this. Leaders in the field, including those at ACHME, are centering discussions of social justice as they move forward with contemplative pedagogy. I have great hope for the future of these conversations, which build on many historical efforts of social change that are deeply situated within contemplative communities. (Berila, 2016, pp. ix,x)

**Fran Grace****Religious Studies, University of the Redlands, California, USA**

This [is] a first-person account of my inner-outer evolution as a professor. The purpose is not to be exemplary but to animate the reader's own self-clarification and joy of teaching. Rather than encourage readers to adopt contemplative pedagogy, this chapter gives an account of why this professor decided to do so. The account is of interest ... because I began my career as the proverbial "last person you would ever expect" to teach meditation, and now I teach all of my classes in our university's Meditation Room, which is one of the first "contemplative classroom" spaces in the country. What happened? (Grace, 2011, p. 47).

When I first started the professor's life I thought I knew a lot. Seven years of graduate training, three master's degrees, and a doctorate "with honors" gave me the impression that I knew more than I actually did. I assumed that my principle task in teaching was to impart the scholarly knowledge that I had been privileged to acquire. In other words, education was about *content*.... My first teaching job was at a church-related liberal arts university, well known for its conservative views. For my entire adult life, I had been a faithful member of this Protestant denomination. I served as a church missionary for two years after college, and, at the time of my hire as a faculty member, was married to a minister in the church. My first steps on the path of the professor were that of the confident Christian believer, loyal to her church and its traditions, including the prohibition of women's leadership in worship: "Women, be silent in the church" (I Corinthians 14:34). When the university's student newspaper interviewed me as a new hire, they queried, "What is it like to be the first and only full-time female religion professor here? Are you a feminist?" "Of course not!" was my impatient response. But the question had a lingering effect on me. In the classroom, I felt an extra determination to prove that I was just as authoritative in my content expertise as my male colleagues. I made sure my classes were "rigorous". (I relished student complaints about how "hard" my classes were), and I would not tolerate any of "that warm, fuzzy, navel-gazing fluff" (Grace, 2011, p. 50).

Asserting my authority in the classroom however was not the only reason I disparaged interior learning. There were also unconscious fears about stillness. "Meditation is a doorway for the devil" was the warning from our preacher when I was in high school, and it still lurked in my unconscious two decades later.... The initial inward movement on the labyrinth is one of purgation, or unlearning. The Walker sheds ignorance and limiting self-views. One of the first beliefs about teaching that I shed was "You have to teach the way that others teach." As long as I clung to that belief, I would never discover a pedagogy that fulfilled my potential as a professor. In my third year of teaching, I realized that I was not an effective teacher following the style of my colleagues; though successful for them, it was not natural for me. Exertions to "prove oneself", I discovered, are not nearly as worthwhile as healing the insecurities that underlie such compensatory strains (Grace, 2011, pp. 50,51).

**Fran Grace****Religious Studies, University of the Redlands, California, USA**

This [is] a first-person account of my inner-outer evolution as a professor. The purpose is not to be exemplary but to animate the reader's own self-clarification and joy of teaching. Rather than encourage readers to adopt contemplative pedagogy, this chapter gives an account of why this professor decided to do so. The account is of interest ... because I began my career as the proverbial "last person you would ever expect" to teach meditation, and now I teach all of my

**Fran Grace** (*continued*)

**Religious Studies, University of the Redlands, California, USA**

In addition to pedagogical changes, I began to explore the inner vista beyond the sectarian wall I had lived behind for most of my life. Especially desirous of cultivating a calmer presence for the benefit of my students, I entered a three-year certificate program in spiritual direction and contemplative practice, taught by religious sisters in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. I faced my lifelong fear of silence and stillness as “the devil’s gateway” and touched the peace of what Catholics call contemplated prayer. ... The medieval contemplative manual *The Cloud of Unknowing* recommended letting go of all concepts and dogma about God—even the holiest ones ... By the fourth year of teaching, it felt riskier to stay where I was than to leave. The resignation was painful because I was leaving the only spiritual community and academic world I had known. Also, I feared failing the many women, young and old, who had placed their hopes on me to be an agent of change toward greater gender inclusivity with the institution. I hoped, however, that honoring my own joy would be the better gift than staying out of loyalty. Gratefully, a new educational community welcomed me and my work. It was a private, nonreligious university whose pedagogical hallmark was engaged, experiential, community-based, and interactive learning. ... (Grace, 2011, p. 52).

In the years previous, I had grown exhausted from a way of teaching and “doingness” that aimed at changing external behaviors and institutional structures of justice. I saw in myself, students, and colleagues that behaviors could *appear* more just while inner prejudice remained... I learned that meditation had the capacity to reduce suffering -- without drugs, without cost, and in a way that activated a person's own ethical agency and re find the mind itself. Meditative practice seemed to offer a means to fulfill the purpose of what I understood liberal education to be... (Grace, 2011, pp. 56,57).

Although ethically challenging, first-person contemplative methods bring a sense of completion to my pedagogy. They empower students to anchor themselves within their own body-mind-heart wholeness. It is so easy for students to default to the authority of another, especially that of the professor. Third-person critical thinking takes students a long way toward being independent thinkers, but in my experience, it is the first-person contemplative investigations into the nature of the mind that liberate the students from their intellectual and emotional dependencies on others, including the professor. ... Within a few weeks of meditation, they are usually able to experience the capacity *to observe* their mental phenomena. With that observer capacity activated, they are no longer the victims of their mind’s knee-jerk reactions to the ideas of others or their own life conditions. ... Contemplative teaching requires a razor-edge dedication students’ highest good, not only in verbal or written communication but also at the energetic level. ... I have learned that each seed sprouts in its own time far beyond what I can know of its circumstances, so there is a letting go of being attached to the outcomes. Peace prevails when I love the work for its own sake, with no thought given to the results or to receiving thanks (Grace, 2011, p. 59).



**Jon Kabat-Zinn****Center for Mindfulness, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, USA**

In my own teaching and practice, I try to bring a highly refined ear to the possible uses of language so that the languaging in itself recognizes and points to and embodies the non-dual. Without opening to this dimension of experience, there is no reason for teaching mindfulness, nor of practicing it. Thus the valuable gift of present participles in the English language, with the Buddhist scholar John Dunne termed, in observing how much care is given to it in MBSR, “the secret heart of the English gerund.” Its virtue is that it transcends duality. That is not the case in all languages, but in English, we are blessed with this part of speech, and it can be very effective in teaching of mindfulness and dharma. For one thing, it can help us to avoid unwittingly falling into the imperative verb form in guiding meditations, as in “breathe in” or “breathe out”, which posits an authority (me), telling someone namely *you*, who I expect to obey this command, what to do. But by saying “breathing in,” you the teacher are no longer giving an order, privileging your position over the student’s. We are in this together, and the breathing takes care of itself. The only question is, can we be here for it? Is there any awareness of it? For it is never the objects of attention that are the key to mindfulness practice. It is the *attending* itself. In the attending, there need not be any subject reified who is “doing the attending,” or “doing the meditating,” for that matter. ... One valuable use of the present participle in the English language is that it can leave subject and object indeterminant, unvoiced. This is a new (and very old) kind of experiencing, underneath thought itself, in the domain of being, in the domain of the timeless, of knowing without a knower, of pure awareness. This understanding lies at the heart of the pedagogy presented here (Kabat-Zinn, 2010, pp. xvi,xvii).

**John Eric Baugher****Sociology, University of Southern Maine**

My teaching is guided by a view of students, not as disembodied minds, but as full human being struggling to do their best and make sense of their lives and their place in the world. One consequence of my approach to teaching becoming more explicitly contemplative over the last several years is that an increasing number of students now come to me outside the classroom to explain how a course or a particular assignment has helped them to live with greater joy, sanity, and compassion. Even a course on research methods presents occasions for linking methods of knowing to the deepest yearnings of students for meaning and wholeness. And just as students benefit from assignments that engage every dimension of there being, so too do teachers need practices that sustain us and deepen our capacity to skillfully hold the uncomfortable emotions that come with teaching and living as mortal and moral being. (Baugher, 2014, p. 248)

**Christopher M. Bache****Religious Studies, Youngstown University, Youngstown, Ohio, USA**

I have been a professor of religious studies at a public university in northeastern Ohio for over thirty years. While I have incorporated meditation into a few of my courses, I have done so only in a limited fashion. In this respect, I probably represent a transitional pedagogy, something between the conventions of the past and the more robust contemplative pedagogies represented by others in this volume. In the conservative setting in which I have taught, I felt it was important for me to maintain a clear distinction between my private life and my professional work on campus. In my private life, I cultivated an active spiritual practice, drawing primarily from Buddhist and shamanic traditions. In my professional life, I worked as a more or less traditional academic, teaching courses in world religions, Eastern religions, psychology of religion, Buddhism, and transpersonal studies. As a matter of professional ethics, I kept these two domains separate from each other. I did not discuss my personal practice with my students and few knew about this side of my life. And yet what I discovered was that nature did not honor the boundary I had so carefully drawn.

As my spiritual practice deepened over the years, a variety of “paranormal” phenomena began to surface in my classroom, if one wishes to use that term. My mind and my students’ minds began to become more porous to each other in striking ways. Spiritual breakthroughs at home sometimes triggered shockwaves among my students on campus. Over the years, as I entered progressively deeper states of consciousness, the number of students being affected increased and the impact intensified. Eventually these energetic and cognitive resonances became such a prominent part of my teaching that I had no choice but to explore what was driving them in greater detail. I carefully observed what was taking place in my classes, read the consciousness literature extensively, and experimented with how to work with the powerful forces involved. Over time, this inquiry profoundly changed how I teach and eventually resulted in the publication of *The Living Classroom: Teaching and Collective Consciousness*.

If a professor’s “private” spiritual practice can trigger effects like those I am going to describe here [in this chapter] among students who were neither aware of their professor’s practice nor (in most cases) doing practice themselves, it seems reasonable to suggest that these effects could be even more pronounced where professors and students are doing contemplative practice together on a regular basis. In my experience, these practices not only illumine the great *depth* of consciousness, they also *activate* the great *breadth* of consciousness. Therefore, if we are going to initiate our students into these practices, we should be prepared to manage this activation when it occurs and to help our students understand it. These dynamics challenge the conventional psychological and pedagogical paradigm and invite us to take our teaching to a more conscious, more intentional level. (Bache, 2011, pp. 65,66)

**Rhonda V. Magee**

**Law, University of San Francisco School of Law, San Francisco, California, USA**

For several years, I have enjoyed the spirited challenge of chairing a faculty task force at my law school, aimed at facilitating conversations about the nature of legal education, about how and why we teach, and about how we might better respond to calls for change. Over the same period, I have worked with lawyers, law professors, and judges to examine the connections among spirituality, social justice, contemplative practice, and law through personal practice, pedagogical experimentation, and research...Deep involvement in these major projects inevitably led me to think about the ways that the movement for mindfulness in legal education responds directly to important aspects of the call for legal education reform across a broad range of front (Magee, 2013, p. 31)

At USF, where I have taught in the areas of torts, insurance, immigration, and race law and policy for more than thirteen years, professors Tim Iglesias and Judi Cohen and I decided a few years ago to work together to bring curricular and cocurricular offerings on contemplative practice into the law school environment...Starting in the fall of 2008, we met regularly... to brainstorm about ways of bringing mindfulness and other contemplative approaches to legal education to our law school. Though we shared a commitment to introducing students to contemplative practices, encouraging them to commit to a practice themselves and examining how such practices might assist one in becoming a better lawyer, my two coteachers and I each approached our work from different perspectives. For one of us, the primary ground of experience and commitment was Buddhism. For another, it was Catholicism. For me, it was a Buddhist-Hindu-Taoist flavored, Martin Luther King-turned-southern-Christian application of the directive to “love thy neighbor as thyself” that I call, when I call it something, “spiritual existential humanism.” Working with others throughout the original course development process, and my continuing to work with the students, helps me to clarify my own views while demonstrating to our students a wide range of approaches to contemplative law and openness to working and holding the space for diversity and oneness (Magee, 2013, pp. 33,34).

I have taught versions of the original course solo since that first offering, which as allowed me to explore the advantages of a single-instructor model for enhancing trust and relationships over the short semester...Although it is fair to guess that many law schools have not yet been introduced to this emerging field, anecdotal evidence indicates that the culture of many of our law schools remains challenging at best, hostile at worst, to the inclusion of mindfulness or other contemplative practices in anything more than ancillary doses. I have heard from law faculty, with both tenure and many years of meditation experience, who feel constrained against sharing these practices with their colleagues, for fear of being ostracized. I have heard from pretenure law faculty who fear introducing such practices will have a negative impact on their student evaluations and may otherwise negatively affect their chances for tenure. I have heard from pretenure law faculty members who have been discouraged from writing about these matters, as they do not represent the kind of topics that bolster a tenure application. And although my own dean and associate dean have been extremely supportive, and faculty have generally been so as well, I have personally been told by one faculty member that “students may clamor to sign up for your class, but they know that law practice isn't like that in the real world.” I have personally met with derision from another faculty member for suggesting the importance of providing opportunities for “self reflection” within the law school curriculum...Nevertheless, with each successful introduction of contemplative law and strong positive student responses thereto, the strength of those old institutional norms is lessened, contributing to the reconstruction of legal

**John Makransky**

**Buddhism and Comparative Theology, Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts, USA**

Compassion Beyond Fatigue is the name of a contemplative training workshop that I developed for people in the helping professions, including teachers and professors. In the workshop, guided meditations ease participants into a state of simple presence and compassionate connection with others. I have adapted these meditations from the “natural ease” tradition of Tibet (*dzogchen*) so as to make them accessible to people of all backgrounds and faiths. The purpose is to provide participants with contemplative techniques that can help them to alleviate burnout and compassion fatigue, to replenish energy and motivation, and to become more fully present to others...I began offering the Compassion Beyond Fatigue workshop in 2007 in the continuing education program at Boston College’s Graduate School of Social Work... The process that led to this workshop started seven years earlier when I began exploring new ways to adapt to Tibetan Buddhist meditations of compassion, reverence, and wisdom so as to make them more fully accessible to Western participants in meditation retreats sponsored by Buddhist centers... Several [participants] asked me to make the meditations available to a wider public of helping professionals in the secular world. As a result, I began to offer workshops in diverse professional settings in June 2007. In September 2008 together with [two others] I cofounded a new organization, the Foundation for Active Compassion, which provides contemplative training for people in all types of social services and social justice professions (Makransky, 2011, pp. 85,86).

Certainly there are people whose beliefs would not permit them to explore in this way. However, in the past nine years of contemplative retreats and workshops, I have taught these meditations to thousands of Christians and Jews...and to many others of no formal religion, who have had no difficulty finding a place in their worldviews to explore these meditations in a serious way... Self-selection seems already to be answering the question. Indeed, what I most often hear from religious Christians and Jews is deep appreciation for the light these meditations have shed upon their own traditions and spirituality (Makransky, 2011, p. 93).

**Linda A. Sanders**


**Arts and Humanities, University of Denver-Colorado Women's College, Denver, Colorado, USA**


As a lifelong theater artist and educator, as well as practitioner of a variety of meditative techniques, I have been keenly interested in the potential impact of sitting meditation and other contemplative practices on acting, vocal, and movement training in college and university performing arts departments. For years, I wondered if contemplative education could benefit the personal and professional development of artists-in-training. ...the literature revealed scant research in answer to my question (Sanders, 2011, pp. 53,54).

In my [doctoral] dissertation study, *presence-in-performance* was defined as a moment-to-moment authenticity and vibrancy created by a performing artist onstage, or in the studio, and palpably perceived by other performers and audience remembers. Students were asked how contemplative education influenced the development of four attributes of presence-in performance: openness, courage, confidence, and commitment (Sanders, 2011, p. 59)

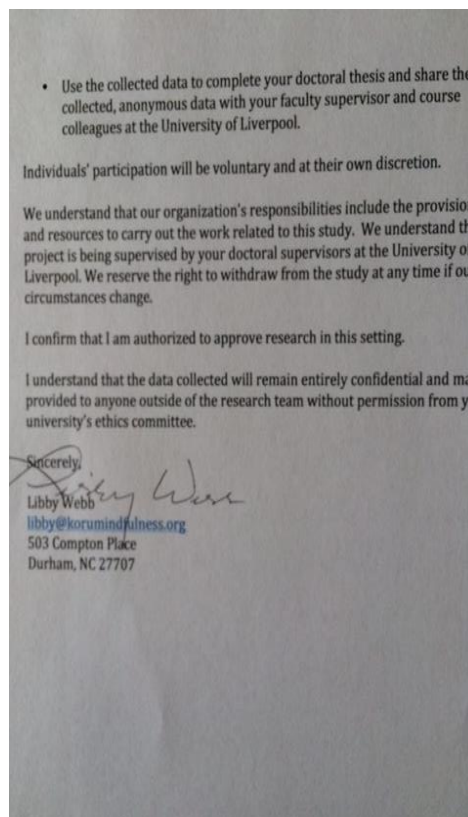
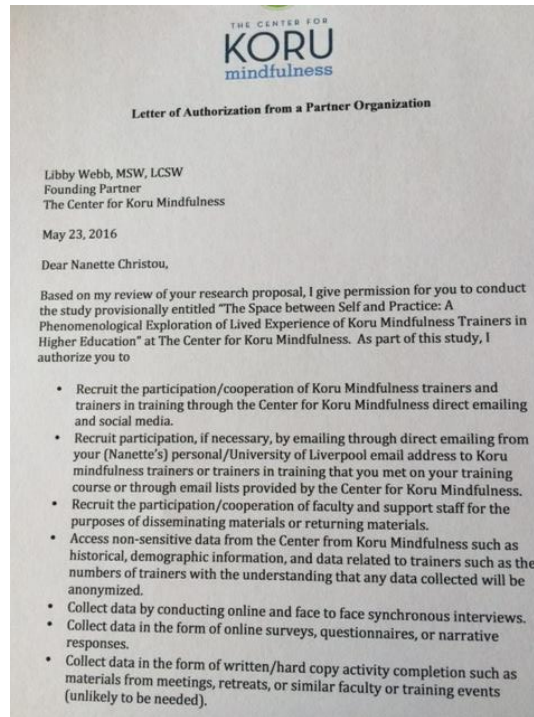
With the understanding that the findings of the dissertation study would be specific to the culture of Naropa's program, MFA in Theater: Contemporary Performance, the intention was that they could be of utility to performing arts professors and other postsecondary educators interested in the integration of contemplative view and practice with in their programs of study (Sanders, 2011, p. 62).

*Appendix C: University of Liverpool International Online Research Ethics Committee, Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)*

 UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL		ONLINE PROGRAMMES
Dear <a href="#">Nanette Christou</a>		
I am pleased to inform you that the EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) has approved your application for ethical approval for your study. Details and conditions of the approval can be found below.		
Sub-Committee:	EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)	
Review type:	Expedited	
PI:		
School:	Lifelong Learning	
Title:	The Space between Self and Practice: A Phenomenological Exploration of Koru Mindfulness Trainers in Higher Education	
First Reviewer:	Dr. Marco Ferreira	
Second Reviewer:	Dr. Martin Gough	
Other members of the Committee	Dr. Lucilla Crosta (co-chair), Dr. Kathleen Kelly, Dr. Kalman Winston, Dr. Christos Patschakis, Dr. Julia Reagan.	
Date of Approval:	13 <sup>th</sup> June 2016	
The application was APPROVED subject to the following conditions:		
Conditions		
1	Mandatory	M: All serious adverse events must be reported to the VPREC within 24 hours of their occurrence, via the EdD Thesis Primary Supervisor.

 UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL		ONLINE PROGRAMMES
This approval applies for the duration of the research. If it is proposed to extend the duration of the study as specified in the application form, the Sub-Committee should be notified. If it is proposed to make an amendment to the research, you should notify the Sub-Committee by following the Notice of Amendment procedure outlined at <a href="http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc">http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc</a> . Where your research includes elements that are not conducted in the UK, approval to proceed is further conditional upon a thorough risk assessment of the site and local permission to carry out the research, including, where such a body exists, local research ethics committee approval. No documentation of local permission is required (a) if the researcher will simply be asking organizations to distribute research invitations on the researcher's behalf, or (b) if the researcher is using only public means to identify/contact participants. When medical, educational, or business records are analysed or used to identify potential research participants, the site needs to explicitly approve access to data for research purposes (even if the researcher normally has access to that data to perform his or her job).		
Please note that the approval to proceed depends also on research proposal approval.		
Kind regards, Marco Ferreira Co-Chair, EdD. VPREC		

*Appendix D: Letter of Authorization from a Partner Organization from The Koru Center for Mindfulness*





## Participant Information Sheet

### **Research Project Title: The Space between Self and Practice: A Phenomenological Exploration of Lived Experience of Koru Mindfulness Trainers in Higher Education**

#### **Invitation**

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. While your participation is deeply appreciated, I would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to investigate the lived experience of Koru Mindfulness trainers and how being a trainer relates to personal-professional development. The research project is designed to lead participants through a reflective investigation of their own experience as a Koru Mindfulness trainer.

#### **Rationale for Your Participation**

You have been chosen to take part in some aspect of the study because of your position as a Koru Mindfulness trainer or trainer in training and are conducting the training in a higher educational setting. Koru trainers not conducting training in higher educational settings will not participate in this study nor will Koru faculty members of The Center for Koru Mindfulness. This is a small inquiry and the total number of participants is expected to be between 6 and 12.

#### **Do I have to take part?**

NO. Your participation is totally voluntary and even if you begin participation, you are free to withdraw anytime without explanation or penalty. If you choose not to participate, no data related to you or your participation will be used or reported in the research study.

#### **What will happen if I take part?**

If you take part, I will interview you through Skype or a similar internet technology. This interview is likely to take about an hour. You will also be able to contribute something like a poem, photo, or anything else that you think might help represent your experience. This is called an artefact. But you do not have to contribute anything more than the interview.

I will check-in with you later to confirm that I have understood you correctly during the first interview. The check-ins will most likely be through email or another Skype conversation that is likely to take less than 15 minutes.

If you choose to take part, some of the data you generate through participation may be used to compile an anonymous report/analysis and shared with faculty and students at the University of Liverpool and may be used for publication in academic articles or other publications related to the study. Specifically, the data being collected for this analysis may include:

- Synchronous (in real time) interviews through Skype or similar online platforms or face-to-face
- Online surveys, questionnaires, or narrative responses.
- Quotes and notes/observations of any dialogues that may take place during the study period.

All data will be gathered prior to December 31, 2016, after which time participation in the study will end and no further data will be gathered.



**Risks and Expenses**

It is not anticipated that you will experience any risks, harm or expenses from participation in this study. However, some research participants (including myself) have experienced degrees of distress from reflecting on their own practice. It is not anticipated that this small initial study will provoke significant emotional response. However, should you experience any discomfort as a result of your participation, please inform me, Nanette, the primary researcher immediately (contact information below).

**Benefits**

The anticipated primary benefits of participation in this study will be a deeper understanding of the impact being a Koru Mindfulness trainer has on individual trainers and Koru Mindfulness trainers as a group. This information could help inform other aspects of adult development, professional development, and the impact of mindfulness training in higher education more generally.

You will not receive any money or thank you gifts for participating in this study.

**Potential for conflict of interest by the researcher**

This study is not funded or organized in any way by The Center for Koru Mindfulness. The researcher, Nanette, is a Koru Mindfulness trainer in training but has no significant relationships or financial interest in The Center for Koru Mindfulness and has undertaken the Koru Mindfulness training as part of her exploration into mindfulness training in higher education. This study is separate from any professional role Nanette holds as a mindfulness trainer.

**What if I have a problem/complaint?**

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let me know by contacting me, Nanette Christou at (+357 99 581592) or [nanette.christou@online.liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:nanette.christou@online.liverpool.ac.uk) and I will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to me with then you should contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee via 001-612-312-1210 or [liverpooethics@ohecampus.com](mailto:liverpooethics@ohecampus.com). When contacting the chair, please provide details of the name or description of the study so that it can be identified, the researcher involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

**Will my participation be kept confidential?**

I, the researcher, will not disclose to any third party, including the Center for Koru Mindfulness, that you participated in this study. You are welcome to inform the Center for Koru [Mindfulness](#) but I will not inform them who chose to participate. Any data you generate will be kept anonymous. Anonymous data generated from participants in this study will be stored for five years in the researcher's secured personal storage device or destroyed prior to that once the project is finished and my doctoral thesis has passed and the data is no longer needed.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

Anonymous results will be compiled and reported within the University of Liverpool to fulfil the requirements for my doctoral thesis. Results will also be shared with the Center for Koru Mindfulness but identifiable individual data and personal responses will not be shared. Participant data will be made unidentifiable, which means that not only are names will be removed, but potentially identifying characteristics and demographic information will also be stripped from any shared data.

**What if I stop taking part?**

You may withdraw anytime without explanation. Results up to the period of withdrawal may be used, if you are happy for this to be done. Otherwise you may request that any data you have supplied be destroyed and no further use be made of them.

**Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

- **My contact details are:**

Nanette Christou, Principal Investigator |nanette.christou@online.liverpool.ac.uk| +357 99 581592

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- **The contact details of the Research Participant Advocate at the University of Liverpool are:**

001-612-312-1210 (USA number)

Email address [liverpooethics@ohecampus.com](mailto:liverpooethics@ohecampus.com)

Please keep/print a copy of the Participant Information Sheet for your reference. Please contact me and/or the Research Participant Advocate at the University of Liverpool with any question or concerns you may have.

Nanette M. W. Christou


13 May 2016

Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix F: Participant Consent Form (PCF)



**UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL**

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

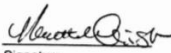
**Title of Research Project: Cultivating Faculty Reflection**

**Researcher: Nanette Christou**

**Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the Participant Information Sheet dated October 28, 2014 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my rights being affected.
3. I understand that, under the Data Protection Act, I can at any time ask for access to the information I provide and I can also request the destruction of that information if I wish.

3. I understand that, under the Data Protection Act, I can at any time ask for access to the information I provide and I can also request the destruction of that information if I wish.
4. I agree to take part in the above study.

Participant Name	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent	Date	Signature
Nanette Christou	10/23/2014	
Researcher	Date	Signature

**The contact details of lead Researcher (Principal Investigator) are:**  
 [Nanette Christou, +357 99 581592, nanette.christou@online.liverpool.ac.uk or nanetemchristou@gmail.com 1 Danti, Nisou, Nicosia CYPRUS 2571]

[Version Number] 1 for subject; 1 for researcher 1

[Date]

[Principal Investigator Initials]

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