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A Situational Analysis of Counselor Educators Incorporating

Spiritual and Religious Issues into Teaching

by

Jade L. H. Letourneau

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Counseling

Idaho State University

Spring 2016

To the Graduate Faculty:


      The members of the committee appointed to examine the dissertation of JADE L. H. LETOURNEAU find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.


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November 24, 2015

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RE: regarding study number IRB-FY2016-147: A Situational Analysis of Counselor Educators Incorporating Spiritual and Religious Issues into Teaching

Dear Ms. Letourneau:

I agree that this study qualifies as exempt from review under the following guideline: Category 1: Normal educational practices & settings. This letter is your approval, please, keep this document in a safe place.

Notify the HSC of any adverse events. Serious, unexpected adverse events must be reported in writing within 10 business days.

You are granted permission to conduct your study effective immediately. The study is not subject to renewal.

Please note that any changes to the study as approved must be promptly reported and approved. Some changes may be approved by expedited review; others require full board review. Contact Tom Bailey (208-282-2179; fax 208-282-4723; email: humsubj@isu.edu) if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Rálph Baergén, PhD, MPH, CIP
Human Subjects Chair

DEDICATION

For my grandparents, Dorothy and Leo, who are so much a part of everything I do.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My odyssey changed course a little over three years ago when I decided to travel to Idaho to complete a doctoral program. You are about to read the project that commemorates the end of that journey, and the beginning of a new one. I did not make it here alone. Along the way, there were many who steered me away from the lure of the sirens, held me up when I was drowning, and showed me how to make it to the next island. I wish to recognize some of those people here.

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Abstract

It is explicit professional counselors are expected to be competent in working with clients' spiritual and religious issues (e.g., American Counseling Association, 2014; Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling, 2009; Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 2015). These requirements imply counselor educators are expected to train counseling students to be competent in addressing spiritual and religious issues with clients. To date, however, little research has been published that examines how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching.

This study employed the qualitative research methods of situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) and grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) to explore the processes, social actions, experiences, and contextual influences of four counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching. Four sensitizing concepts emerged from the data: personal odyssey, serving the client, trusting, and planting seeds for future growth. These sensitizing concepts have multi-directional processual relationships. Each participant's personal odyssey contributed to the belief that spiritual and religious competency in counseling was critical to serving the client ethically, holistically, and empathically. Personal odyssey also influences the ways in which participants bring self into their teaching, which is represented by planting seeds for future growth. Planting seeds for future growth is a metaphor for the action and process of offering students new awareness, knowledge, and skills to allow for development of spiritual and religious competency over time. Trusting is fundamental to the situation, is developed through one's personal odyssey, and has considerable salience to serving the client and planting

seeds for future growth. Trusting has many forms and moves in many directions with

self, students, and clients. Implications and directions for future research are discussed.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Conceptual Framework

The idea and practice of incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counseling work has taken root in the counseling profession (Corey, 2011). The salience of spiritual and religious issues in counseling is evidenced in two of the profession's guiding documents: the *American Counseling Association* (ACA) *Code of Ethics* (2014) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) *2016 Standards* (2015). This increasing attention to spiritual and religious issues in counseling brings to light the responsibility of counselor educators to ensure counseling students are receiving adequate education and practice in this area. Researchers have found many students and counselors perceived their training in spiritual and religious issues in counseling to be inadequate or non-existent (Adams, 2012; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Henriksen et al., 2015). Many authors have recommended investigating how counselor educators are incorporating spiritual and religious issues into the curriculum, as well as research on how to improve teaching in this area (e.g., Briggs & Dixon Rayle, 2005; Burke, et al., 1999; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Kelly, 1994; Souza, 2002; Young, Cashwell, Wiggins-Frame, & Belaire, 2002; Young, Wiggins-Frame, & Cashwell, 2007). Yet, to date, there is scarce published research to answer those recommendations. This proposed inquiry will examine how and in what contexts counselor educators incorporate spiritual and religious issues into their teaching.

It is well established students, professional counselors, and counselor educators, as well as professional counseling organizations, place importance on incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counselor training (Adams, 2012; Cashwell & Young,

2004; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Souza, 2002; Young et al., 2002; Young et al., 2007). CACREP's *2016 Standards* (2015) require accredited counseling programs, in order to meet expectations in the Social and Cultural Diversity core area, demonstrate students receive training regarding "the impact of spiritual beliefs on client and counselors' worldviews" (Section II.2.g, p. 9). The previous CACREP 2009 *Standards,* had specifically mentioned competency in spirituality for only the Student Affairs and College Counseling and Addiction Counseling tracks. The *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) attends to spiritual and religious issues in counseling by stating counselors involve religious/spiritual/community leaders as client supports, when appropriate (Section A.1.d, p. 4); counselors do not discriminate against clients based on religion or spirituality (Section C.5, p. 9); counselors consider multicultural appropriateness, including spirituality and religion, when using assessments with clients (Section E.8, p. 12); and, counselors are responsible for maintaining and promoting their own spiritual well-being (Section C, Introduction, p.8).

In addition to the CACREP *2016 Standards* and *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014), the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) is an ACA division "devoted to professionals who believe that spiritual, ethical, religious, and other human values are essential to the full development of the person and to the discipline of counseling" (ACA, n.d.). In 2009, ASERVIC developed a revised "Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling" (hereafter called "ASERVIC Competencies") that were endorsed by ACA that same year (Robertson & Young, 2011). The ASERVIC Competencies comprise 14 items divided into six categories: culture and worldview; counselor self-awareness; human and spiritual

development; communication; assessment; and diagnosis and treatment. The ASERVIC

Competencies are intended as a complement to the *ACA Code of Ethics* and are meant to

be used in conjunction with evidence-based approaches and other best practices in

counseling (ASERVIC, 2009). ASERVIC publishes a biannual peer-reviewed journal,

*Counseling and Values*, that focuses on spiritual, ethical, religious, and value domains of

counseling (ASERVIC, n.d.). *Counseling and Values* contains myriad articles on

evidence-based approaches and techniques related to incorporating spirituality and

religion into one's counseling practice. Other ACA-published peer-reviewed journals

include theory, research, and conceptual articles on spirituality and religious issues in

counseling, but not as a primary focus. The publication patterns in the counseling

literature since 1970, however, show a substantial and continual increase in articles,

chapters, and books addressing counseling and spirituality, and suggest the topic can

more readily be found in non-spirituality-specific publications (Powers, 2005).

Within the counseling literature, there is research addressing students' (Adams,

2012; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Henriksen et al., 2015), professional counselors'

(Young et al., 2007), and counselor educators' (Young et al., 2002) perceptions of such

training, and general support for the inclusion of the ASERVIC Competencies in the

counselor education curriculum (Cashwell & Young, 2004). Counselor educators can find

suggestions for incorporating the ASERVIC Competencies across the curriculum, or as

specific, targeted activities. What is yet to be explored are the processes, social actions,

experiences, and contextual influences of counselor educators incorporating spirituality

and religion into their teaching. This deficiency led to the research problem addressed in

this study: What is the situation of counselor educators incorporating spiritual and religious issues into their teaching?

## Conceptual Framework

What follows is an explanation of the literature and knowledge that constructs the conceptual framework for my proposed inquiry of how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching. This conceptual framework is not intended to be an exhaustive review of the literature, but rather a representation of the knowledge I have used to develop a structure for this study (Maxwell, 2013). The knowledge and literature referenced is intended to address the potential contributions of my proposed study, as well as ground it in relevant theory (Maxwell, 2013). Toward this end, I will attend to my experiential knowledge and selected literature on spiritual and religious issues in counselor education, as well as in psychology training and social work education.

Within my study, I adopted the definitions of spirituality and religion put forth by Young and Cashwell (2011): "Spirituality is the universal human capacity to experience self-transcendence and awareness of sacred immanence, with resulting increases in greater self-other compassion and love" (p. 7). Religion is defined socially, and "provides a structure for human spirituality, including narratives, symbols, beliefs, and practices, which are embedded in ancestral traditions, cultural traditions, or both" (Cashwell & Young, 2011, p. 9). Spirituality and religion are intertwined, and may have significant influence on each other, but the terms are not interchangeable. A counselor's ability to compare and differentiate spirituality and religion is considered important enough to be the first of the ASERVIC Competencies (ASERVIC, 2009). Despite the importance of

this differentiation, most research and theory in counseling and other mental health fields does not examine the concepts separately (Hage et al., 2006).

**Experiential Knowledge**

I have long been curious and inquisitive about spirituality and religion. It likely stems from my upbringing. My parents exposed my siblings and me to different religions and encouraged us to embrace our spiritual and religious curiosity. All religions were to be respected, and nothing was off limits. I recall attending many different houses of worship and being excited whenever I stayed a Saturday night with a friend who went to a church I had not yet visited. While I have a deep sense of spirituality, at this time, I do not consider myself as belonging to any religion nor do I have any regular spiritual practices.

My curiosity lingered into adulthood and became more of a scholarly interest when I entered my master's program in clinical mental health counseling. For my first major assignment in my first class (a summer course on research methods and techniques), I conducted a literature review on the effects of spirituality and religiousness on addiction recovery. In my theories course, I created mind maps for each theory, and always included a node for the ways a theory incorporated spirituality or religion. Although I often considered issues of spirituality and religion as I went through my courses, I do not remember many discussions in the classroom. In fact, the only course in which I remember spirituality and religion being explicitly discussed was diagnosis and treatment planning. It was not until I started my internship, however, that I became aware these discussions were not happening. As I was sitting across from a client who told me she could not participate in a certain intervention I attempted because she was a

Christian, I was struck by the realization that, although I had certainly read a lot about spirituality and client wellness, I did not quite know how to incorporate it into the work I was doing. Still, I thought, we must cover this content at some point in the program.

It was not until an instructor scoffed at a proposal I had to build upon my previous work reviewing the literature on spirituality and addiction recovery that I began to perceive not only an indifference to, but also possible hostility toward religion and spirituality. I began to wonder how anyone in a profession that counts *unconditional positive regard* among its core conditions could, at best, ignore what some clients consider a critical factor in their worldview and wellbeing. My desire to learn more about incorporating spirituality and religion was not satiated by my master's education, but rather by my motivation to find mentors and seek information via workshops, conferences, and reading.

When I began my doctoral studies, I knew I wanted to be intentional in including religious and spiritual issues into my teaching and supervising experiences. For my teaching practicum, I developed and implemented a spirituality and religion in counseling course using the ASERVIC Competencies as a framework. I am sure I learned as much, if not more, from the students as they learned from the course. By allowing students a space to share their knowledge, experiences, fears, and curiosities of spirituality and religion, I saw how they were able to gain confidence in their abilities to address these issues with clients. I was able to confront my own insecurities about introducing the topic to students. The course was offered as an elective, but I believe all students (and by extension their clients) could benefit from increased incorporation of the ASERVIC Competencies into the curriculum.

**Incorporating Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counselor Education**

The growing body of literature on incorporating spiritual and religious issues in counselor education can be categorized into two general areas: counselor education faculty perceptions and techniques/strategies for incorporating spiritual and religious issues. Whereas the publications regarding faculty perceptions are primarily rooted in research, a number of the published techniques and strategies for incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counselor education are conceptual in nature. The lack of empirical research regarding counselor educators' incorporation of spiritual and religious issues into counselor training has led to many calls for inquiry into what is being taught and how, as well as investigations of what is effective (Adams, 2012; Adams, Puig, Baggs, & Pence Wolf, 2015; Briggs & Dixon Rayle, 2005; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Henriksen, et al., 2015; Kelly, 1994; Powers, 2005; Reiner & Dobmeier, 2014; Souza, 2002; Young, et al., 2002; Young, et al., 2007).

**Faculty Perceptions of Incorporation of Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counselor Education.** When considering how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching, it may be worth examining attitudes and perceptions toward doing so. Kelly (1994) conducted what may be the first survey of counselor education programs' perceptions of the role of spirituality and religion in their curricula. After analyzing the survey data from 343 respondents (mostly program administrators), Kelly (1994) found fewer than 25 percent of programs offered training in spiritual and religious issues, whether as a course component or a stand-alone course. Religious-affiliated institutions were significantly more likely than state institutions to include spiritual and religious topics in their curricula. Although the majority of

responding program administrators reported they did not address spirituality and religion in their coursework, most indicated they believed it was important to train students to deal with these issues. When reviewing this study, it is important to remember the data were collected in 1991, before the creation of the ASERVIC Competencies, or the inclusion of addressing spiritual/religious awareness in the CACREP (2015) *2016 Standards* and *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014).

Young, et al. (2002), followed up on Kelly's (1994) findings with a survey of CACREP liaisons at 94 counselor education programs. The majority of liaisons reported spirituality and religion were addressed somewhere in the curriculum, a marked increase from Kelly's (1994) results. The researchers examined the perceived importance the liaisons placed on incorporating specific spiritual and religious competencies into coursework, as well as the liaisons' perceived ability (for themselves and their colleagues) to incorporate such topics. The spiritual and religious competencies used in this survey were an earlier iteration of what would become the ASERVIC Competencies. Of the respondents who felt unprepared to incorporate spiritual and religious issues into their coursework, nearly 80 percent indicated a need for curriculum guidelines. Many counselor educators are amenable to the idea of incorporating spirituality and religion into their curricula; however, guidance on how to do this may be necessary for those who do not already incorporate the concepts.

Responding to the recommendations to examine what spiritual and religious content is being included in counselor education curriculum (Kelly, 1994; Young, et al., 2002), Cashwell and Young (2004) performed a content analysis of 14 syllabi from introductory spirituality courses. Again, an earlier iteration of the ASERVIC

Competencies was used. Cashwell and Young found little consistency among the syllabi. There was considerable variance in how the ASERVIC Competencies were applied to the curricula, with some instructors using them as a guide, and others not addressing them at all. The lack of convergence in the syllabi prompted the authors to recommend further guidance to counselor educators in how to incorporate spiritual and religious issues in counselor training.

While counselor educators may be amenable to incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching, they may experience barriers that prevent them from doing so. Adams, et al. (2015) used Delphi methodology to determine what experts in spirituality and religion in counseling identify as the most common barriers to counselor educators' incorporation of spiritual and religious issues in their teaching and strategies to overcome these barriers. Experts were invited to participate based on criteria that included publication of at least two journal articles or book chapters, or one book, in the past five years and full-time faculty status with at least five years of teaching experience. Ten experts were recruited for the study and identified the following five barriers: (1) lack of faculty knowledge, preparation, and competence to address spiritual and religious issues, (2) lack of understanding of spirituality and religion and its importance to clients, (3) faculty disinterest, (4) seeing spiritual and religious issues as simply another "cultural issue," and (5) poor understanding of spirituality and religion and the differences between them. The experts identified 12 strategies that fell into three general categories: (1) continuing education, (2) heightened awareness of self and others, and (3) curriculum-specific recommendations. Although these results may be helpful in developing strategies to help counselor educators incorporate spiritual and religious issues into their teaching, it

should be taken into consideration the intent of the Delphi method is to synthesize experts' opinions. This study did not take into consideration, novice counselor educators who may experience the barriers to integrating religious and spiritual issues into their teaching and who may have valuable insight to add.

**Techniques and Strategies for Incorporating Spiritual and Religious Issues into Counselor Education.** Several articles have been published to aid counselor educators' incorporation of spiritual and religious issues into teaching. The majority are conceptual in nature, with anecdotal rather than empirical support. Although the conceptual nature of these articles does not necessarily diminish their usefulness, empirical research is still needed regarding how counselor educators incorporate spiritual and religious issues. Some authors offer specific interventions or class curricula, while others offer broad ideas for incorporating the ASERVIC Competencies across the curriculum.

For addressing spiritual and religious issues across the curriculum, Shaw, Bayne, and Lorelle (2012) have offered a constructivist approach that rejects universal truths while embracing discussion and "taking nothing for granted" (p. 272). In this approach, the instructor is not seen as an expert, but as a co-constructor of knowledge. Shaw et al. (2012), have encouraged counselor educators to engage their students in open discussion, as the benefits may be two-fold. Not only does discussion offer the opportunity for co-construction of knowledge, but also it models the appropriateness of discussing spiritual and religious issues openly with clients. Shaw et al. (2012), have provided suggestions for experiential activities, process questions, and reflective journaling for each of the six categories of the ASERVIC Competencies. Hagedorn and Gutierrez (2009) have also

used the ASERVIC Competencies as a framework for integrating spiritual and religious issues across the curriculum in counselor education programs. The authors have provided a specific activity, developed by "expert counselor educators," to address each competency (p. 32). For example, they have recommended a small group or journal exercise to attend to differences and similarities in spirituality and religion. The authors have written specific questions and prompts to present to students, as well as recommendations for processing, group size, and time limits. In contrast to using the ASERVIC Competencies as a framework, Briggs and Dixon Rayle (2005) have used the CACREP core counseling areas to structure the integration of spiritual and religious issues across the curriculum. For each of the eight core areas they recommend activities such as role plays, discussions, case studies, and journaling.

In addition to suggestions for how to incorporate spiritual and religious issues across the counselor education curriculum, there are also suggestions for structuring a stand-alone course on spiritual and religious issues in counseling. Ingersoll (1997) and Fukuyama and Sevig (1997) have developed curricula for such a course. Ingersoll's (1997) curriculum has set out to meet the goals of "explor[ing] spirituality as an organismic element possible for all people that can be a focus when working with clients;" describing and differentiating spirituality and religion; presenting client role plays involving spiritual issues; discussing assessment instruments relative client spirituality; and discussing models of spiritual development (p. 226) and outlined a five-part course to address each of these goals. There are suggested activities (i.e., yoga, small group exercises) and discussion questions provided for each part of the course. Fukuyama and Sevig (1997) similarly have set forth course objectives of understanding spiritual

issues that occur in counseling; learning to assess clients spiritual and religious histories, and how that history may affect development; supporting students' personal exploration; discussing ethical considerations; and experiencing religious diversity in order to expand tolerance. The authors have suggested meeting these goals via class activities such as didactic lecture, guest speakers, assigned reading, case studies, and journaling. The course goals in both of these examples, while not inconsistent with the ASERVIC Competencies, were likely developed before the first competencies were made public in 1996 (Robertson & Young, 2011).

Several authors have written about specific activities that can be used to incorporate spiritual and religious issues into counselor education. Willow, Tobin, and Toner (2010) have detailed a spiritual genogram activity to use with counseling students. In the activity, the instructor had students draw a genogram of their families' spiritual and religious histories that go back at least three generations and present them to the class. The authors asked students to attend to religious affiliations and spiritual beliefs, meaning and importance of religion and spirituality, generational differences, strengths and conflicts, and sense of spirituality and spiritual practice. Willow et al. (2010) have posited the safety created by both the instructor and students within the classroom contributed to the students' willingness to share and be open. Souza (2002) also has promoted the importance of counselor educators' creating a safe, non-judgmental environment to explore spiritual and religious issues. In a similar vein to genograms, Bohecker (2015) has adapted a client activity developed by Curry (2009) for use with students. She has described how she engages students in spiritual and religious exploration by having them draw a timeline of their spiritual development and create an accompanying narrative.

Meyer (2012) has created an experiential in-class exercise that utilizes drama therapy to explore students' perceptions and awareness of world religions. In this exercise, which Meyer has implemented into an internship course, students first discuss and define spirituality and religion. Following this discussion, the instructor then projects a religious painting onto a large screen; religions represented include Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism. Students then reenact and role-play the painting that is being projected. The class then processes why they chose the roles they did, how the role-play affected them, what awareness was enhanced, and what challenges they encountered. After in-class processing, discussion continues via process questions posted in an online discussion board. Meyer (2012) has reported positive feedback from many of the students who have participated in this activity. Buser and Buser (2014) incorporated spirituality and religion into their teaching by asking students to participate in a spiritual or religious activity of their choosing for five weeks and keep a reflection journal of the experience. They found overall positive growth experiences expressed in students' journals and have recommended including this assignment at the beginning of a counseling program.

**Incorporating Spirituality and Religion into Training in Other Mental Health Fields**

Although this study will focus on how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching, it is worthwhile to consider how related disciplines may approach the task. Hage, Hopson, Siegel, Payton, & DeFanti (2006) conducted an interdisciplinary literature review of training in spirituality across the fields of counselor education, clinical psychology, counseling psychology, marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation psychology, and psychiatry. The authors found faculty support for inclusion

of training in spiritual and religious issues was consistent across the disciplines, but was consistently minimally implemented. Similarly, faculty in all disciplines were amenable to classroom discussion of spirituality and religion, yet often reported a lack of competence to do so. At the time of the review, accrediting bodies were just beginning to require training in spiritual and religious issues. For the most part, the research and literature in psychology and social work education does not vary widely from findings in counselor education. There are several articles from these disciplines, however, that add dimension to this conceptual framework.

**Psychology Training.** With regard to techniques for incorporating spirituality and religion into psychology training, Crook-Lyon et al. (2012) have suggested reading materials, case studies, and guest lectures. Whereas similar suggestions appear in the counselor education literature (e.g., Fukuyama & Sevig, 1997), there is often more focus on experiential and process-oriented activities. This finding suggests psychology may take a more didactic approach to incorporation than counselor education.

McMinn, et al. (2014) have presented their Graduate Department of Clinical Psychology at George Fox University as a case study of curricular integration of spiritual and religious training at the doctoral level. Citing limited evidence of effective training models, they have provided the ways in which their religiously affiliated university program incorporates this training, accompanied with narratives of students' experiences. Students learn about spiritual and religious issues via coursework, clinical training, research, and ethics training. For example, one course uses co-teachers who specialize in world religions and there are clinical rounds specifically dedicated to spiritual and religious issues. The descriptions of each of these areas are brief and broad, with more

focus being given to the student narratives. These narratives offer insight into contextual influences and allow this article to stand out as unique in the literature. One student reflected on how these experiences are helping to form his identity; another shared how these experiences have improved her clinical work with religious clients. However, it should be noted the six students participating in the study were identified and received authorship credit for their descriptions.

**Social Work Education.** Wuest's (2009) unpublished dissertation *Factors Associated with Inclusion of Spirituality in Secular Social Work Education,* yields some particularly salient information for this conceptual framework. Wuest surveyed 222 social work education faculty and found two-thirds reported including the topic of spirituality in the courses they teach and that faculty's perception of student inclusion of spiritual issues was a strong predictor of faculty inclusion. In other words, if students brought up the subject, faculty were more likely to include it in teaching. Other predictors for faculty inclusion of spiritual issues were constructive discussions and perceived student interest. Wuest also found programs that offer a separate course in spirituality were a negative predictor for faculty inclusion of spiritual issues, meaning faculty were less likely to address the issues when a stand-alone course was offered. These findings suggest social work educators may wait for students to broach the subject of spirituality and religion before they incorporate it into their teaching. Furthermore, they may be less likely to incorporate spirituality and religion when a stand-alone course exists because they assume the material is being covered elsewhere in the curriculum. These theories are considerably relevant to how educators may incorporate spirituality into their teaching.

**Summary**

Through this examination of my experiential knowledge and research and literature in counseling and related professions, a conceptual framework of how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion is loosely constructed. The conceptual framework is one of counselor educators using a variety of experiential (e.g., psychodrama, genograms, lifelines, role play), constructivist (e.g., group discussions, reflexivity), feminist (e.g., modeling, creating safety), and didactic (e.g., lecture, guest speakers) approaches to introduce and incorporate spiritual and religious issues in the classroom. Although counselor educators may be open to the idea of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, they may experience barriers to implementation. Contextual factors, such as student reactions or programmatic structure, may influence how a counselor educator incorporates spiritual and religious issues into teaching. Most of the literature that supports this framework is conceptual or anecdotal. The majority of the publications focusing on how to incorporate spirituality and religion offer specific interventions or activities, not necessarily guidance or insight into the process. Despite repeated recommendations, there has been little empirical inquiry into how counselor educators incorporate spiritual and religious issues in their teaching.

This study may contribute to the current body of literature by offering an increased understanding of how counselor educators are addressing spirituality and religion in their classrooms. An in-depth inquiry of counselor educators' process of incorporating these issues may reveal previously unconsidered contextual influences, barriers, and/or strategies, as well as offer empirical support for some of the conceptual

literature. Furthermore, this inquiry may be of use to counselor educators who are seeking to develop their competency in addressing spiritual and religious issues.

## Methodology

I will use the qualitative methodologies of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) and situational analysis (Clarke, 2005, 2015) in this study of counselor educators' process of incorporating spirituality into teaching. Qualitative inquiry allows for a deep and rich exploration of counselor educators' experiences and processes. This approach is appropriate because so little is known about how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching and because it takes contextual factors into consideration. Using open-ended dialogue with counselor educators, I will be able to allow them to share their processes and co-construct a theory grounded in their experiences.

Grounded theory is a methodology that offers flexibility and focus (Charmaz, 2014). Situational analysis is a complementary method that expands upon and "pushes" grounded theory around the post-modern turn (Clarke, 2005). These methodologies work together to provide an approach that constructs theorizing grounded in the rich data of participants (Charmaz, 2014), and seeks to "hear silences" and illuminate differences (Clarke, 2005, p. 127).

Chapter 2

Methodology

Counselors are expected to have competence incorporating clients' spirituality and/or religions, as appropriate, into the counseling process (ACA, 2014; ASERVIC, 2009). Counselor educators have a responsibility to prepare counselors-in-training to do so (CACREP, 2015). There is little research, however, addressing how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into counselor training. This deficiency led to the research question that guided this proposed study: What is the situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching? To best examine the processes, experiences, and contextual influences of this situation, I used situational analysis (Clarke, 2005), a postmodern, qualitative research method that expands upon and modifies traditional grounded theory.

**Qualitative Inquiry**

It is important, when using qualitative inquiry, to address the paradigm that will anchor the research (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Questions of ontology (the nature of reality) and epistemology (the nature of knowledge) must be examined prior to answering the methodological question of "how does one go about acquiring this knowledge?" (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). This researcher embraced constructivist and postmodern ontologies and epistemologies. It is assumed there are multiple truths and realities have "status insofar as some group of persons…grants them that status" (Lincoln & Guba, 2013, p. 39). Knowledge, in turn, is not discovered, but constructed or created by the researcher and participants (Clarke, 2005; Clarke et al.,

2015; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). When conceptualized this way, knowledge cannot be deemed objective (Clarke, 2005).

Qualitative inquiry assumes research is value-bound (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As the primary research instrument, the researcher cannot be separated from the research. It was therefore important for me (the researcher) to embrace and examine my values as they related to this inquiry. Throughout the inquiry process, I continually reflected upon my experiential knowledge of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, as well as my reactions to the data. These reflections were incorporated into the memoing process described later in this chapter. My situatedness was considered equally as critical to the analysis as the participants' situatedness (Clarke, 2005). As Clarke (2005) has recommended, these values and experiences were incorporated into the situational analysis. The participants and I together created new "knowledges" of the situation of incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education.

**Situational Analysis**

I used Clarke's (2005) situational analysis (hereafter, "SA") for this proposed study. Clarke developed SA as a means of expanding grounded theory to be more postmodern. Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed grounded theory as a research method for generating theory from qualitative data, hence the theory is "grounded" in the data. Traditional grounded theory focuses on "basic social process" (Clarke, 2005). Researchers analyze data using coding techniques to develop categories, properties, and a theory of process (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Clarke has acknowledged grounded theory was "always already" postmodern in many ways, such as its perspectival approach, social constructionism bent, and deconstructive analysis. Clarke has argued,

however, traditional grounded theory (e.g., Glaser, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) oversimplifies instead of attending to differences, neglects analysis of power, and retains some positivist tendencies. Through the creation of analytic maps, SA specifically attends to differences and complexities and "opposes the quest for disembodied and unanchored generalizations" (Charmaz, 2015, p. 8).

Although SA is built upon grounded theory, there are several salient differences that require attention. In SA, *the situation of inquiry itself broadly conceived is the key unit of analysis"* (Clarke, 2005, p. xxxv, emphasis in original). This approach is notably different from grounded theory, in which social processes are the units of inquiry (Charmaz, 2015). The situation of analysis for this study was counselor educators incorporating of spirituality and religion into their teaching. Where grounded theory methods often emphasize attending only to what emerges from the data, SA encourages the researcher to find "sites of silence" that are not represented in the data (Clarke, 2005, p. 85). While it is important to stay true to the data, it is also important to acknowledge researchers have a responsibility to address their inherent power. SA does not focus on the dominant discourse, but rather the "attempts to upset and displace tacit hierarchies" (Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015, p. 21). In further attending to power analysis, SA considers non-human actants, as well as implicated actors. Non-human actants, as the name implies, are non-human elements that influence the situation. These elements can include available resources, technologies, space, and so forth. Implicated actors fall into two categories: those who are physically present in the situation, but are silenced or ignored, and those who are not present, but are implicated by the work of others (Clarke, 2005). Finally, the goal of SA is not to create a theory, but to *theorize*. Instead of

constructing a grand theory of process, the researcher is constructing provocative, yet

provisional, grounded theorizing. Grounded theorizing is ongoing and includes the

creation of thick analyses and sensitizing concepts and their processual relationships.

Sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1969) differ from defining concepts in that they offer a

direction to look versus specificity and commonalities. Clarke (2005) compares thick

analyses to Geertz's (1973) thick descriptions.

SA uses map creation as its primary analytic tool. Clarke (2005) was intentional

in her selection of maps for analytic purposes, as maps are often considered shifting,

political objects. There are three analytic maps that are foundational to SA—situational

maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps. These maps are constructed using

coded, or partially coded, data, and each serves a unique purpose. Situational maps are

meant to include all the important human and non-human elements and are dynamic and

fluid. Situational maps are started early in the data analysis process and are not usually

presented in a final research write-up (Clarke, 2005). Situational maps primarily allow

the researcher to move around in the data. Social worlds/arenas maps are firmly rooted in

symbolic interactionism and are a meso-level analytic framework of the social worlds

that are key to the situation of inquiry. Positional maps plot the positions represented in

the data to enable to researcher to see which positions are not taken. Positional maps

eschew negative cases, outliers, or "normal" positions.

**Procedures**

Procedures for this study began with the conceptual framework presented in

Chapter I. This conceptual framework informed the development of the methodological

procedures I used to conduct a SA of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and

religion into their teaching. Below, I outline how I selected participants, collected data, analyzed data, and ensured accountability and trustworthiness.

**Participant Selection**

Using purposeful sampling, I recruited four counselor educators as participants for this study. Purposeful sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) allowed me to select participants who could inform the research of the situation of counselor educators' incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching. Participants were required to be full-time faculty members in a counselor education department. I sought maximum variation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) within this purposeful sample. The aim of maximum variation is not generalizability or population representation, but a broad, heterogeneous grouping of participants. This method of participant selection was a logical fit with SA, as it gave me the latitude to chose participants based on their potentially silenced voices or positions of power. To achieve maximum variation, while being sensitive to the intent of SA, I sought one counselor educator from each ACES region. This allowed for a diversity of regions. I also considered religious affiliation of the counselor educator's employing university and sought to have a heterogeneous group of religiously affiliated and secular universities. I used CESNET-L, an electronic mailing list for counselor educators and supervisors and the ASERVIC electronic mailing list.

**Data Collection**

Each participant took part in two rounds of intensive interviews, two interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2006), and a focus group. Intensive interviews (Charmaz, 2014) are one-sided conversations that are researcher-guided, but mostly unstructured, to explore a participant's experience with the situation. The intensive interviews took 45 to

60 minutes. First round in-depth interviews were largely unstructured, centering around three broad questions: (1) How did you come to incorporate spirituality and religion into your teaching? (2) What influences how you incorporate spirituality and religion into your teaching? (3) What has been your experience when trying to incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching? Although the interviews were largely unstructured, I was careful to attend to influences that are relevant to SA. Specifically, I inquired about the influences of the micro-, meso-, and macro-level environment and non-human actants on incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching counseling students. Interviews and interpretive dialogues were conducted via Skype, then securely recorded and transcribed.

After transcription of each round of interviews, I coded the data, created a situational map for each participant's interview, and conducted an interpretive dialogue with the participant. Interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2006) are a form of member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) that allows for the participant to co-construct the interpretations of the data with the researcher. During these interpretive dialogues, which lasted between 20 and 60 minutes, I shared the situational map created from the interview data with the participant and elicited reactions, interpretations, feedback, and further input.

All participants were invited to participate in a final focus group. Participants were provided with the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps and brief descriptions of each. Participants were then asked to contribute to the construction of these maps by answering questions and offering commentary via Google Docs. I created a Google Doc

that allowed participants to contribute their interpretations and comments as well as interact with each other.

SA encourages multisite data collection (Clarke, 2005). Multisite data, according to Clarke, refers to collecting multiple types of data. Clarke (2005) has stated that "discourses are relentlessly social phenomena" (p. 147). As such, they can add valuable data. Discourse analysis examines the use of language and communication (Clarke, 2005). While the primary data collection method was interviews with the participants, discourse analysis also was incorporated. I conducted a brief discourse analysis of participants' counseling department's websites.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis began concurrent with data collection. In SA, map-making is the primary "analytic exercise" (Clarke, 2005, p. 83). These maps were not intended to be the final products of analysis, but rather were means of interacting with the data, avoiding "analytic paralysis," and illuminating invisible positions or silenced voices (Clarke, 2005, p. 84). The three types of maps created as part of data analysis were situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, and positional maps. It is important to note data analysis was not a linear process. Each of the following analytic processes were used at various times and in various sequences throughout the study.

**Coding.** Creating the maps required at least partially coded data. SA does not address methods for coding data, but instead allows the researcher to choose a coding strategy. For this study, I used Charmaz's (2014) data coding methods. Clarke (2005) identifies Charmaz's (2014) approach to grounded theory as congruent with her own goals for SA. Both methods emphasize "interpretive, constructivist, and …

relativist/perspectival understanding" (p. xxiii). Following Charmaz's method, I fragmented the data, gleaned meaning, and applied labels to the fragmented data in order to construct an analytic frame. I began with initial coding (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin & Strauss, 2014), which involved looking at the data word-by-word, line-by-line, segment-by-segment. These codes reflected action and meaning found in the data. Following this initial coding, I conducted focused coding (Charmaz, 2014). Focused coding involved retrieving and defining the most salient and useful codes from the initial coding and represents larger batches of data. From these initial and focused codes, I constructed situational, arenas, social worlds, and positional maps.

**Situational Maps.** Situational maps are a tool for "articulating the elements of a situation and examining relations among them" (Clarke, 2005, p. 86). They are meant to err on inclusivity, at first, and present all analytically relevant elements—human, non-human, symbolic, and so forth. In this phase of mapping, I laid out the major elements and codes in a working version that was intentionally "messy" and abstract. Critical and unique to SA, I used my own research experiences as data in these maps (Clarke, 2005). I next categorized the map elements to create an ordered situational map. Finally, as the situational map is solidified, I conducted relational analysis with the map. Relational analysis involved identifying major components of the map and drawing connections to the other elements of the map. In specifying each line of connection, relationships between elements become clearer. I created multiple copies of the situational map and drawing on each one. The situational map was complete when all layouts and arrangements have been exhausted (Clarke, 2005).

**Social worlds/arenas maps.** Social worlds/arenas maps are heavily influenced by symbolic interactionism (Clarke, 2005) and pay particular attention to meso-level influences. Strauss (1978) defined social worlds as "universes of discourse." The focus of these maps is on the meaning-making social group that influences the situation—in other words, it maps collective social action. "The task here is to upset the binary between modernist conceptions of knowing subjects and objects as having 'essences,' and the extreme end of postmodernist conceptualization that argues that all is fragmented, unrelated, and falls into nothingness" (Clarke, 2005, pp. 109-110). In creating this map, I identified the key social worlds that exist for counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching, as well as the arena(s) in which these social worlds exist. I then analyzed these social worlds to determine how their boundaries are established and maintained. I kept descriptions of these maps in my memos (described further below). The social worlds/arenas maps were complete when no new major social worlds could be gleaned from the data (Clarke, 2005).

**Positional Maps.** Positional maps are a means of charting the positions taken in the data (Clarke, 2005). These positions are not intended to represent individual, group, or institutional positions, but rather discourses present in the data. I created these maps by charting the positions on X- and Y-axes, as this allowed me to more clearly see what positions were *not* represented in the data. The emphasis was on the map as a whole, not the individual positions. In locating the missing positions, I was able to see where there are possible silenced voices. These missing positions were a further point of analysis, and suggest future lines of inquiry. As important as the positions, is the space between the positions. Clarke (2005) describes this space as "a postmodern space … highly reflexive

and analytic" (p. 127). The positional map was complete when saturation is achieved, meaning no new positions emerged from the data (Clarke, 2005).

**Memoing**

Memoing is a critical component of SA and began simultaneously with data collection. Memoing served multiple purposes for this project. Memos acted as audit trails, analytic placeholders, detailed explanations of map components, memory devices, and feeder documents. During data collection, I wrote memos during and following each interview. I recorded my data analysis process in written form. This documentation included information such as definitions of codes and descriptions of maps. These memos also included my reflections as a researcher, some of which were included in the situational maps. As relationships emerged, I created feeder memos that I returned to as analysis continued (Clarke, 2005). These memos contained questions that emerged from data analysis. I kept different versions of maps as they were constructed and evolved. I did this through both digital and paper means. The memos provided both a record of analysis and a tool for further analysis. As mentioned earlier, the ultimate outcome was grounded theorizing—detailed descriptions of sensitizing concepts and thick analyses.

## Accountability and Trustworthiness

In SA, researcher accountability plays a critical role in how the research is designed and analysis is conducted. Because of its postmodern bent, SA rejects some notions of traditional trustworthiness measures in qualitative research, such as negative cases. Researcher accountability is purposefully inherent in some of the procedures outlined above. Positional maps, for instance, ensure that as a researcher, I did not ignore positions that were (or were not) present in the data. Mapping the positions forced me to

see what I may have been blind to acknowledging. Memoing provided an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) that detailed the data analysis process. Memoing also engaged me in reflexive journaling to further illuminate blindspots and make biases overt. Clarke (2005) has asserted by not simplifying data into a narrow theory, SA is inclusive of differences and potentially marginalized positions and voices. Collecting multisite data (interviews, documents, websites) contributed to this goal of inclusivity, thereby strengthening accountability.

To further establish trustworthiness, there were additional procedures that are congruent with SA. By conducting four interviews and having regular email contact over a period of about four months, I was participating in prolonged engagement with the participants. Prolonged engagement allowed for sufficient time to elicit information from, co-construct meaning with, and build trust with the participants in this study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trust building may be particularly important with participants who have felt marginalized or silenced within the situation of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching.

In addition to trust building, by implementing interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2006), I made a space where participants were invited to be co-creators of the interpretations and meanings constructed from the data they provide. These dialogues may be considered a constructivist interpretation of member checks that go beyond post-analysis confirmation by participants. Lincoln and Guba have identified member checks as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 315). Gergen and Gergen (2003) and Denzin (2001) have encouraged dialogic relationships with participants as a means including multiple voices (i.e., beyond the singular voice of the researcher). Coe

Smith's (2006) interpretive dialogues achieve the goals of both member checks and dialogic relationships. Similarly, the final focus group gave participants one last opportunity offer their voices to the study. Although these procedures allow for more participant involvement, Clarke (2005) has clearly asserted that as the researcher, I ultimately have the power over what is presented, and I was continually challenged to recognize that power.

As a final means of accountability and trustworthiness, David Kleist, my major advisor, acted as an inquiry auditor for this project. An inquiry auditor (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is a person who examines the *process* and the *product* of the inquiry. As inquiry auditor, Dr. Kleist was closely involved in all elements of this inquiry.

**Summary**

Given the limited available knowledge of the situation of counselor educators incorporating spiritual and religious issues in counseling into their teaching, a qualitative inquiry was appropriate. SA is uniquely positioned to examine contextual elements, power dynamics, and social structures that influence this situation. I used the participant selection, data collection, and data analysis procedures outlined above to develop sensitizing concepts and grounded theorizing of counselor educators incorporating spiritual issues into their teaching. Accountability and trustworthiness was ensured through analytic mapping, memoing, prolonged engagement, interpretive dialogues, and an inquiry auditor.

Chapter III

Round One Data Analysis

Upon receiving approval from the Human Subjects Committee, I sent out requests for participants to the CESNET-L and ASERVIC electronic mailing lists. After screening volunteers to ensure they were full-time counselor educators who could be reflexive about their process of incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching, I chose four participants. There was one participant each from the following ACES regions: Western (WACES), North Central (NCACES), Southern (SACES), and North Atlantic (NARACES). Multiple attempts were made to recruit a participant from the Rocky Mountain ACES region, however, a suitable participant did not come forth. The four participants selected were Richard, Jeremy, Catherine, and Susan. Richard and Susan asked to use their real names, Jeremy chose a pseudonym, and Catherine expressed ambivalence about what names was used. I chose to assign Catherine a pseudonym.

**Participants**

**Richard** is a male, full professor in a CACREP-accredited counselor education program in the SACES region. He is currently at a public, secular university, where he works with both masters and doctoral students. He was previously a counseling faculty member at a faith-based university, also in the SACES region. Before becoming a counselor and counselor educator, he was a Baptist minister. As a young man it was "always understood that [he] would be a minister," but he did not embrace his religion fully until a near-fatal accident in college. He has shifted away from fundamentalism, although he still considers himself a conservative. He describes himself as a "Baptiscapalian." Richard's masters degree is from a Southern Baptist seminary, while

his doctoral degree is from a secular university. Richard has been in counselor education for more than 20 years and identifies as a "counselor who is Christian." He has been influenced by the works of C. S. Lewis, Soren Kierkegaard, and many others.

**Jeremy** is a male, assistant professor at a private, secular university in the WACES region. He is in his second year as a counselor educator in a holistic counseling psychology program that is not accredited by CACREP. Students graduating from his program are license-eligible as counselors in his state. Jeremy identifies as gay and Jewish and wears a kippah as a symbol of his faith. He grew up in a "religious [Jewish] community," but did not have a particularly religious upbringing. He has a dedicated mindfulness practice that drew him to work on the West Coast. Jeremy's masters degree is from a secular institution; his doctoral degree is from a Catholic university.

**Catherine** is a female, tenured associate professor at a public, secular university in the NCACES region. Her university was originally founded as a seminary and was later purchased by the state. She is in her sixth year as a faculty member in a CACREP-accredited clinical mental health and school program. She was raised a Southern Baptist, but found that it was not a fit for her. She thinks "the scripture of God is love," and uses that as her guiding principle. She calls herself a "secular humanist" whose spiritual practice is "connection through kindness." She received her masters and doctoral degrees from secular universities.

**Susan** is a female, assistant professor at a Catholic university in the NARACES region. She is in her second year as a faculty member in a CACREP-accredited mental health counseling program. She identifies as gay and was reared in an evangelical Christian home. For many of her adult years, she was a member of an evangelical

Christian church. She has since left the church, but very much continues on her spiritual journey. She credits Parker Palmer as having a significant influence on her teaching style, as well as the way she incorporates spirituality and religion into her teaching. Her masters degree is from a Catholic university; she earned her doctorate at a secular institution.

## Review of Procedures

After submitting signed informed consent forms, participants engaged in individual in-depth interviews regarding how they incorporate religion and spirituality into their teaching. The general questions that guided the interview were: (1) How did you come to incorporate spirituality and religion into your teaching? (2) What influences how you incorporate spirituality and religion into your teaching? (3) What has been your experience when trying to incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching? The interviews lasted 40 to 60 minutes, were audio recorded via Skype, transcribed, and checked for accuracy.

After ensuring the accuracy of the transcriptions, I used initial coding, then focused coding to analyze each individual interview, as well as conduct an overall analysis of all interviews. In general, coding is a process by which sections of data are labeled with words or brief phrases to begin to make sense of the data (Charmaz, 2014). Initial coding (Charmaz, 2014) involved analyzing the transcribed interviews word-by-word, line-by-line, and segment-by-segment in order to break open the data. Focused coding (Charmaz, 2014) is the process of finding the most salient or recurring initial codes to begin to build a picture of the process at work in the data. In constructing codes, I gave attention to capturing process, influence, and movement.

Subsequent to coding, I used the focused codes to first create messy situational maps. From these messy situational maps, I created situational maps for each interview. Situational maps served as an additional analytic process that allowed me to "move around" within the data (Clarke, 2005, p. 84). To connect points on the maps, I used axial coding. Axial coding (Charmaz, 2014) is a data analysis process by that seeks to identify the processual relationships between and among codes. I analyzed the data to find how codes, and the resulting sensitizing concepts, interacted with each other.

Once the maps were saturated, I created clearer, more organized situational maps for each participant (see Figures 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4) and used these in interpretive dialogues. During the interpretive dialogues with each participant, I reviewed the map and made notes in black ink directly on the map as participants added, changed, or disagreed with my analysis. The interpretive dialogues were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to support and enhance the sensitizing concepts that emerged from the first round of in-depth interviews.

### Emergent Sensitizing Concepts

The sensitizing concepts and contextual influences that emerged from the data analysis of Round One interviews were **personal spiritual/religious journey**, **developing professional identity**, **serving the client**, and **opening doors**. Sensitizing concepts are ideas found in the data that suggest where to look. Each sensitizing concept occurs within the process and contexts, both shared and unique, experienced by the participants. The influences are often bidirectional or directionality cannot be inferred, rather than unidirectional. For each of these concepts and influences, thick analyses developed.
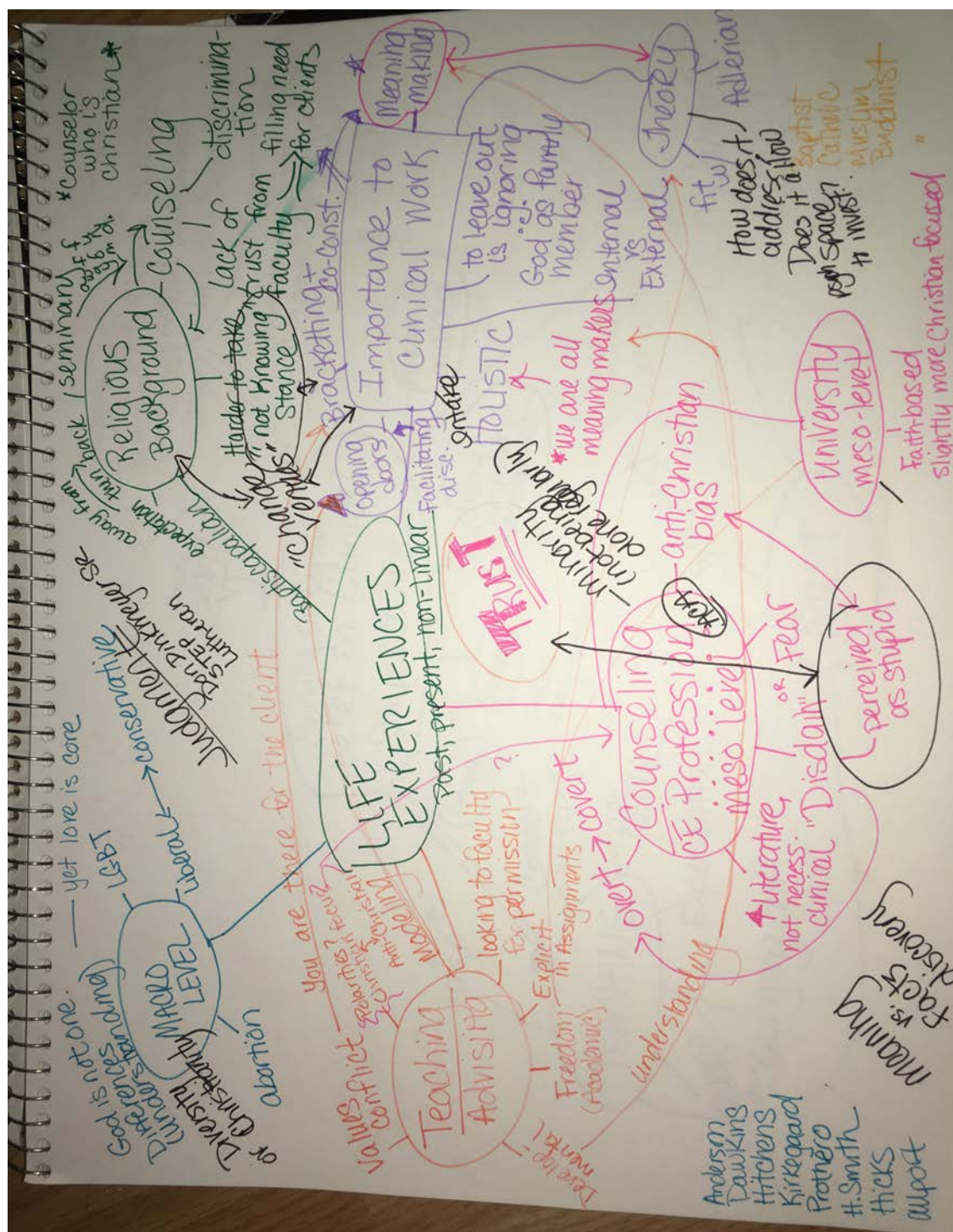
*Figure 3.1.* Richard's first round situational map. Black ink indicates Richard's interpretive dialogue notations.
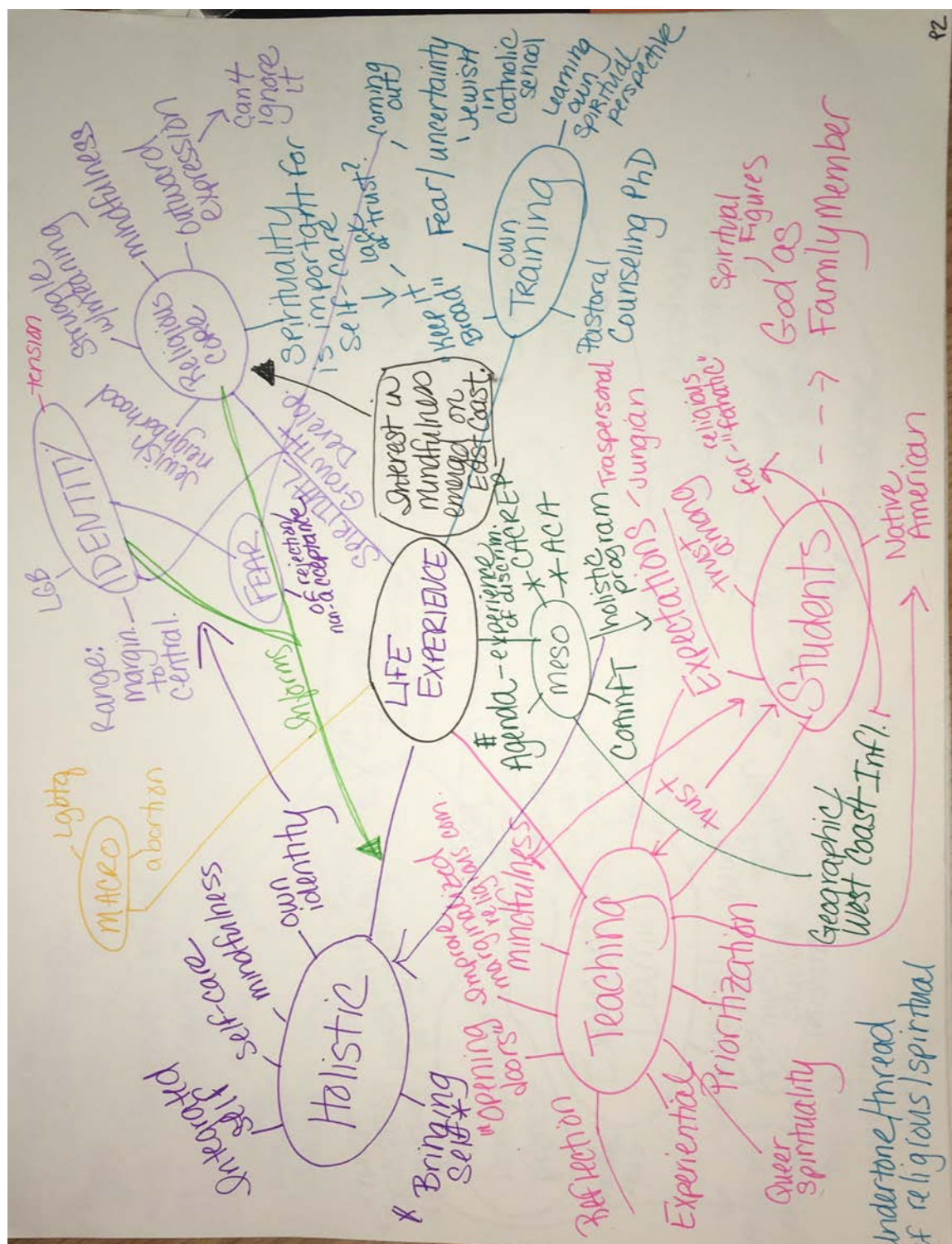
*Figure 3.2.* Jeremy's first round situational map. Black ink indicates Jeremy's interpretive dialogue notations.

*Figure 3.3.* Catherine's first round situational map. Black ink indicates Catherine's interpretive dialogue notations.
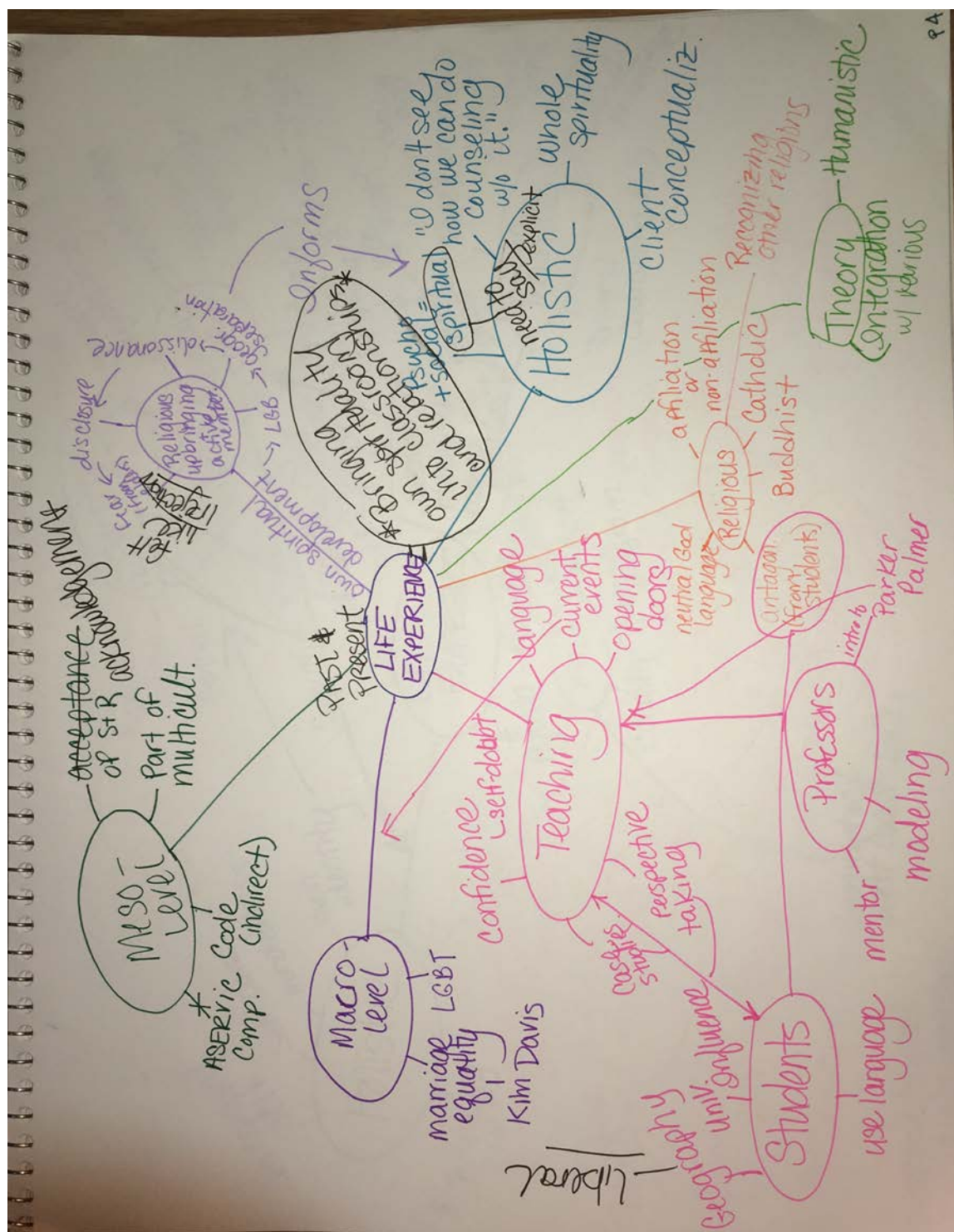
*Figure 3.4.* Susan's first round situational map. Black ink indicates Susan's interpretive dialogue notations.

**Personal Spiritual/Religious Journey**

The sensitizing concept of **personal spiritual/religious journey** can be described as the counselor educator's own experiences and process with religion and spirituality, as well as their faith development course. Richard, Jeremy, and Susan attributed their own spiritual and religious development as having a crucial role in how and why they view incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education as important. For them, the importance of training counselors to be competent in incorporating spiritual and religious issues into their work stems from their own development as spiritual and/or religious beings. Although each participant's journey is unique, the influence of their spiritual journeys was prevalent throughout the data. Within these journeys lie varied processes of moving toward and/or away from a specific religion, embracing an identity that may conflict with their faith, fear, and rejection.

Susan discussed how her spiritual path has influenced, and continues to influence, her approach to counselor education. She explained:

My background, most of my adult life, I was a very active church member in an evangelical church. Most of my life from childhood, I was born into it. And I've moved away from religion, but, um, so that's how I came into it. I was still a church member and a very active Christian when I went to do my masters program in counseling. So from the beginning, I was very interested in that connection and how the secular profession and, um, the… the religious perspective on people of reality and how those two can mesh.

She later continued:

> So influences in teaching spirituality and content… So much of it comes from my concern to get it there because it's part of my life. Part of my experience as a client in counseling, as well as a counselor.

A critical piece of her spiritual journey came when she decided to leave her church:

> It was part of my spiritual experience. It was the same, you know, the church uses the term the Holy Spirit, God's spirit guiding and interacting with our own spirit so that our wisdom comes from God. Well, there's still that same experience from listening to myself from which I was growing in these other directions like, um, uh, like recognizing my gay identity. You know, just, these were part of my spiritual growth. And they related to, they had to have this response from my religious setting. So that, that experience contributes an awful lot to the way I understand and handle spirituality and religion now.

Connected to her process of leaving was the experience of rejection from her church elders:

> As I came back [from my doctoral program] I thought, you know, I should tell my church elders at least that this is who I am, um, so they have the opportunity, I was still officially a member and still, you know, would be in communication with people, and uh, there was definitely the pronouncement that I was wrong (J: mmm) and on, and, uh, some of the words were, you know, "You're in a very dangerous place" so I know they feared for my salvation.

Richard described his transition from minister to counselor as "changing venues." He explained how his spiritual and religious background led to him becoming a counselor:

Near the end of my seminary degree, um, I started moving away from fundamentalism. I was a fundamentalist. I started moving away from fundamentalists. I was reading C. S. Lewis and Soren Kierkegaard, and they helped me understand, um, a more narrative understanding of truth, rather than a propositional understanding of truth. Um, and so, um, I knew I wanted to work on a doctorate. I started having people come to me when I was a minister, uh, I was associate, I wasn't the pastor, I was associate pastor, um, people started coming to me with problems I had no clue what to do with them. So I started studying counseling out of self defense … I started reading books initially and discovered I had a gift, a gifting for it.

He details further about his shift from fundamentalism:

I'm really not a Baptist anymore. I'm a Baptiscapalion. [laughs] I integrate ideas from all different perspectives within the Christ—larger Christian tradition, and things from Buddhism as well, that resonate…

When speaking of his journey, he acknowledged that it has been a very non-linear process, quipping that, "I only get information from God on a need to know basis."

Jeremy said his interest and practice of incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education "definitely came from my own life experience." He elaborated:

I was raised in a kind of like, not a religious home, but in a religious community, so I got a lot of religious, Jewish religious growing up. Um, so I kind of have that

at my core, even though I wasn't like practicing or aware of that. Um, and so then, when I kind of like got to my, like kind of Junior, Senior year of college. I was a little depressed, I was like floating, you know, struggling with meaning, and it just seemed like I kind of like re-stumbled upon spiritual practice from like an Eastern perspective and meditation and Yoga and, um, just got like a lot of support from spiritual life and my own religious tradition and so when I was kind of looking for, ah, you know, when I did my masters, you know, I wanted to really focus in on spirituality.

He spoke of his fear in expressing his gay identity as a religious person:

I identify as gay. So, like, uh, you know that identity with the religious identity played a very big role. I was very afraid, I was just coming out when I was doing my masters program, so I was just, I was very afraid, especially as a religious person to say that I was gay. And, um, I feel like that would have been a really accepting place to be gay, like when I was doing my masters program, but I already had the religious identity so I couldn't do both. I was like afraid to have both. And then, when I'm doing my doctoral program, I was already out and I was religious and gay and like I didn't like broadcast it, because I was like afraid, but I like was like testing the waters of like letting people know.

In addition to his fear of being openly gay in a religious education program, he expressed uncertainty of being able to attend a Catholic doctoral program because he was Jewish. He credited this with further influencing his approach to incorporating spirituality and religion into his teaching.

So I found out about [this Catholic university] that had the pastoral counseling

program. And, you know, I applied there… I checked make sure it's ok being

Jewish if I could go to a pastoral counseling program. And they reassured me that

it was fine, and so, I mean, it [the importance of spirituality in counseling] really

grew out of my own life experience. And I guess what had helped me.

The **personal spiritual/religious journey** stood out as a key sensitizing concept,

as well as one that is highly contextual. It influences and is influenced by the participant's

**developing professional identity**; occasionally, the two are so intertwined it can be

difficult to distinguish one from the other.

**Developing Professional Identity**

The sensitizing concept of **developing professional identity** is defined as the

counselor educator's own course of development as counselor and counselor educator.

This developmental process includes masters-level counselor training, work as a

counselor, doctoral-level training, research endeavors, and ongoing growth and

development as a faculty member. During their training (masters and doctoral),

participants' processes related to how they were permitted to work with spiritual and

religious issues were dimensionalized from prohibition to dissuasion to ambivalence.

Implied within these contexts is the power faculty have in allowing space for students to

discuss spiritual and religious issues with clients and in class.

For Catherine, her research agenda informed her decision to incorporate

spirituality and religion into her teaching. Her research and personal interest regarding

empathy led her to find spirituality and mindfulness were important factors related to

fostering empathy in counseling students:

I really care about empathy. I really am fascinated with empathy. Um, how to

develop it, how to grow it in our students, and what I'm finding in my research

is—I mean, as we know from the empathy literature that there's this big

disconnect often between cognitive empathy and affective empathy and I'm

curious what leads, what my research lab is calling "head, heart, hands, and feet."

How you move something from your head to your heart and from your heart to

action, the hands and the feet. I notice a very similar construct with spirituality

and mindfulness.

For her, spirituality was often integrated into her masters training, but rarely in her

doctoral training. She attributed this to, perhaps, the theoretical orientation of faculty. She

described:

I hesitate to use absolutes, but I feel like I saw neither [spirituality nor religion] in

my doc program. Um, I don't remember spirituality being part of the conversation

hardly at all. My masters program? Quite a lot. And then as I'm thinking about

that I'm giggling because I'm thinking well my masters program was, the

majority of the faculty were humanists. They were existential humanists. And, my

doctoral faculty, not so much. Maybe one, but the rest were kind of REBT, CBT,

um, there was an Adler dude, but I think it was more from family of origin

dynamics than it was holism or holistic sense of self. So it was more just

psychodynamic stuff. But I don't remember spirituality being integrated much in

or at all. And I hesitate to say that 'cause there may have been isolated incidents,

but it certainly wasn't a theme.

She later related how her own counseling theoretical orientation fits with the incorporation of spiritual and religious issues:

> I'm a humanist, trained by humanists in my masters program. My doc program was a lot more CBT, REBT, kind of change theory, and so we didn't get as much spirituality in that, but I also think it's not as much part of those theories in general, than you might see with the humanistic paradigm. Um, yeah, that really asks people to kind of question existence and consider what that might mean for them, without necessarily seeking to change it.

Susan described how instructors in her masters and doctoral programs served as models for how she incorporates spirituality and religion into both her clinical work and her teaching. She recalled spirituality and religion were infrequently brought into her masters training, and even less so into her doctoral training, despite having earned her masters at a faith-based institution. She elaborated on how one instructor's approach during her masters program gave her license to bring spirituality and religion into her clinical work:

> She used the name "God" without any qualifiers. And, um, and spoke to the spiritual essence of people, but really not, um, not in a restrictive or restricted way, very fluidly and not, you know, most of what she said, all of what she said was non-religious. And, uh, but, but she did fluidly move into spiritual considerations…. [I]t certainly helped me to incorporate it more naturally. Or to, it helped, for me as a student then, I was looking to professors—and she was not part of the core faculty, I think she was an adjunct while I was taking these things. But I was looking from somebody to help me bridge that. And she, in just the way

she carried out her instruction gave me permission, sort of, to blend the spiritual

with the secular.

She further detailed how in her doctoral program, although there was little focus on

religion or spirituality, there was an instance in which one professor's approach stood out

to her:

In my doctoral program, there was no mention of religion except in the—actually

two contexts. One was the multicultural counseling class where there was one

session, one little bit addressing religion and spirituality. And that professor had a

good sense of, you know, he was very incredible, he modeled respect for religious

differences for me in a way I'd never seen before. And then also faith

development was mentioned as part of considerations for adult development and

learning. So for teaching, um, those kinds of things. So it was there, but really

even less than in my masters program. Very, very much the doctoral program was

not religious.

Susan's counselor development process, through her clinical work, also contributed to

her approach to integrating spirituality and religion. She acknowledged the importance of

her (then) religion to counseling, while making an important distinction that the purpose

of her counseling work was not religious:

I did work, uh, in a church. And then, not enough clients, so I had to move on. But

a church, and then when I set up, set myself up for private practice, I was, um,

sharing space, an office in a church building. And also made a lot of my contacts

and sought clients through my religious contacts. Through churches. I identified

myself as a Christian who was a counselor, or a counselor who was a Christian. I

didn't try to be a Christian counselor. Because that word implies some other

things.

Richard made a very similar comment about his counselor identity. He remarked, "I'm

not a Christian counselor; I don't even like the term. Because it has a lot of political

baggage to it. I'm a counselor who is a Christian." The distinction offers a glimpse into

the differences between a counselor who incorporates spirituality and religion as a piece

of the counseling work they do (i.e., counselor who is Christian) versus a counselor

whose focus is on counseling clients about their Christianity (i.e., Christian Counselor).

Jeremy explained how dissuasion from focusing on spiritual issues in his masters

program contributed to his decision to pursue a doctorate in pastoral counseling from a

faith-based university:

I was kind of looking for, ah, you know, when I did my masters, you know, I

wanted to really focus in on spirituality and, um, it's not like they didn't let me,

but they said that I should really stay broad at first. And I shouldn't just like zone

in too quickly. So then when I was [going to do] my PhD, I was like I really want

to integrate with spirituality and religion with psychology. That's what I was

really interested in.

He discussed how, although faculty were encouraging him to "stay broad," his small

group supervisor was instrumental in validating his desire to incorporate spirituality into

his work. She helped him to present his interest in a way that was more amenable to the

culture of the program.

My supervisor, was just very, like affirming of like my own individuality. And,

um, I did an independent study on the spirituality of the therapist and I thought

that was just really important for me, like in terms of self care. So I think that's

how it was easily integrated, like "oh yeah!" spirituality's really important for self

care, um, so it was really accepted that I was looking into it like that, like as long

as you don't put that on other people, you know, so it's very much like a keep it to

yourself kind of thing,

He elaborated on how his doctoral training in pastoral counseling contributed to his

continued development and incorporation of his spiritual/religious identity with his

counselor identity:

I did a PhD in pastoral counseling, so there was like spiritual integration, general

integration, you know assessing for spiritual life and needs and how that helps

people, how that hurts people. So that really became, you know, a central issue

that was talked about. And I did a clinical pastoral education, which is like

Catholic training, and um, I think that really helped me to integrate a lot of, like,

what does it mean to bring my spiritual perspective as a helper.

While Jeremy sought out combined religious and counselor training, Richard

came to the counseling profession with religious training he hoped to merge with

counseling. He took leveling courses to allow him to enter a doctoral program with his

masters from a different field. He described his process of counselor and counselor

educator training as one laden with bias and assumptions, but there was a shift when his

specific knowledge was needed for a client:

And so I went back and did, um, some masters leveling work that you consider

for the doctoral program and then got into the doctoral program at the University...

However, I was told specifically and directly from professors um both at my

>masters, in my masters leveling courses, that I was absolutely not to bring up religion or spirituality to clients. That's because I had, you know, Baptist background, they thought I was going to start thumping them over the head with a Bible. Um, which I never would have done. Well in the, when I was… the first semester, we had two semesters of doctoral practicum, my first semester, a couple came in, it was a African American couple, and they specifically-they were getting married-and they specifically wanted a Christian, uh, to work with them in pre-marital counseling. Well, um, my professor said I want you to work with them because he knew my background and I said "well, Dr. M told me I can't talk about that" He said, "well, they asked for it." And so then he said, so, "you, um, can't preach to them. You can't put your values on them, but you can go where they want to go." Well they were very conservative, so. They were more conservative than I was. It was pretty easy to work with them. Well then I started to give any person who came in, who had religious or spiritual values, I got assigned that client because… so it went from "don't talk about it at all" to "you're our go-to guy"

This shift highlights the power his faculty held over his practice with clients, and how **serving the client** helped shift the perspective of faculty. He further detailed how he had already been writing and publishing on the topic, but had not been allowed to be more open about it until client needs emerged:

>I'd already written about it, but professors didn't, uh, I could write about it, I just couldn't talk about it with clients. So I had published papers on the integration of faith and religious or spiritual ideas, uh, as a doc student, and I started being

> allowed to do it with people that asked for specifically for people that had that
>
> background.

Richard encountered discrimination during a job interview for a faculty position. He

recalled the incident with passion, and called out the perceived hypocrisy:

> I was a Baptist minister for twelve years. And as soon as you use the word
>
> Baptist… I got attacked by Lesbian faculty when I interviewed at [one university].
>
> Because I, on my vita it showed that I'd been a Baptist minister. They knew
>
> nothing about me, but immediately assumed Fallwell-ian implications. So, uh, I
>
> was nothing like that. I could have sued them if I would have chose to because
>
> they attacked me based off of, uh, the particular class. They discriminated against
>
> me. They became the very thing they hated in the first place.

Richard also perceives this discrimination at the macro-level, where he sees "a strong

bias against specifically Christians in the ACA." Throughout his professional

development process, he has worked to show how a person of deep religious faith can be

effective and ethical when **serving clients** of all faiths. He explained the process like this:

> So in answer to your question how I got here, it was a natural synthesis, um, the
>
> training I had before I started studying counseling and my counselor education.
>
> And then, of course, working with clients as a minister, and then also getting
>
> referred clients from people that were ministers in the community that knew I had
>
> been trained as a counselor and knew that I would respect the client. I get, I have
>
> Jewish people refereed to me, I have Islamic people, not because of my Christian
>
> faith but because I had gone and talked to the, their spiritual leaders. They trusted

me and they knew that … I was sympathetic to people of faith and also that I

would not try to push my faith on to them.

Having taught at both faith-based and secular institutions, Richard sees little difference in

how he approaches incorporating spirituality and religion into the classroom. His

professional focus has been to include all types of religion and spirituality. For him:

I could be a little more specific … a little more, uh, directly focused on Christian

stuff at [Christian university]. Although, uh, I wasn't really that different. I told

the students, 'I understand you came [here], you may have come [here] because of

the Christian background. You gotta work with all types of people. All types of

spirituality.' And so, um, let's say here, um, … I may talk about Christian stuff 25

percent of the time. At [Christian university] I may have talked about it 35 percent

of the time. Not that much different.

While he acknowledged the institutional and student orientation was specifically

Christian, his approach has been consistent regardless of religious affiliation of the

program. In fact, he emphasized how his religious background and education may make

it more difficult for him to take a "not knowing" stance when incorporating spirituality or

religion into his counseling. He said:

Now, it is, I agree, it's easier for me because I have that training. But in some

ways it's harder for me, because I was trained specifically in, uh, Christian

theology. So I've had to study other perspectives. Rather than taking a not

knowing position like Harlene Anderson suggests, and just facilitating a

discussion. I have to set aside all that training many times in order to take a not

knowing position.

For Richard, part of his professional development has been learning how to bracket, or keep separate, his deep religious faith and prior education from his counseling work.

Participants' **personal spiritual/religious journey** and **developing professional identity** have been instrumental in how they conceptualize the place of spiritual and religious issues in counseling, and in turn their decision to incorporate these issues into counselor training. As they have navigated their counselor and counselor educator professional development, each has had to decide how best to justify and execute incorporating these issues into their work. Data analysis revealed the influence **personal spiritual/religious journey** and **developing professional identity** have on the **serving the client**.

**Serving the Client**

**Serving the client** is a cornerstone of why the participants in this study incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching. Within this sensitizing concept is an implicated actor—the client. Ultimately, the training students receive impacts the work they do with clients, yet the clients are actors who are not physically present in the classroom. For the participants in this study, the belief in the importance of spiritual and religious competence to **serving the client** stems from the sensitizing concepts of **personal spiritual/religious journey** and **developing professional identity**. **Serving the client** includes the context of holistic assessment, conceptualization, and treatment for clients, as well as the need for students to examine and take perspective of their own values.

When speaking to **serving the client**, the notion of spirituality as an integral piece of a person's being was often repeated. To treat clients holistically, spiritual and religious

issues cannot be dismissed or ignored. As Susan posited, "people's spirituality and even and their, their religion is such an essential part of their lives, that I don't see how we can do counseling without it." Richard takes it a step further, opining how it is unethical to not address spirituality with clients:

> I understand spirituality is the meaning making process of humans and then when you ignore that which gives fundamental meaning to a person's existence, you basically ignore the person. And we're doing that in counseling. If we're not investigating "where's your core meaning coming from?" be it religion or, or uh, some other thing—even atheists have a core meaning—it may be um, you know, contributing to humanity is their spirituality if you will, but everybody has one and to ignore it, um, I think, um, is as oppressive as a conservative religious person juxtaposing their values onto a, uh, person that's not interested.

Later he used the analogy of a mobile to describe the importance of spirituality and religion to balance. He said if counselors are leaving out spirituality, then:

> Part of the whole is being left out. And if you take one part out of the whole, it's kinda light clipping one little piece of a hanging mobile, it causes the mobile to get out of, uh, out of balance. And I think that when we don't address spirituality with clients, then we're out of balance as, uh, therapists and counselors.

Jeremy is a faculty member in a holistic counseling program, where spirituality is expected to be part of the training. He explained:

> The program isn't like a spiritual program, it's not like a spiritual counseling program. It's just that we recognize that the transpersonal is a very important part

of a person. So, you know, we, students bring it up, they talk about it, we look at

clinical work through a spiritual lens.

Susan described how she considers spirituality to be interwoven into client

conceptualization this way:

I consider it a part of the psycho and social. To me those are simply, you know,

the religious and spiritual pieces are part of that, but I can see how that is not true

for most people. And you would NEED that spiritual term added on.

Spirituality, to include religion, is considered to be inseparable from the client as a whole.

In this context, its importance to clinical work is self-evident.

The idea of holistic conceptualization does not apply only to individual counselor

work. It also extends to work with families and couples. Richard explained:

With people that their religion or spirituality is very important to them, it's the

lens by which they view the world. And, um, when you leave that out with a lot of

them, especially in couple and family therapy, you're leaving out a member of the

family: God. That's the third member of the family.

Jeremy recounted a classroom experience in which a student increased his awareness to

the role of spiritual figures as family members, particularly non-Judeo-Christian families.

In his words,

I did a genogram, uh, a family sculpting exercise where some of the students

sculpt their family. And [the student] included, like, two, they included like three

or four spiritual figures in their family sculpt. And then I later learned that the

person is from a Native tradition and I was like, you know like, 'you dummy" like

YEAH! Like that was so good for me to see and I think now when I teach that, I'll,

I'll bring that in, you know like that people might consider in their genograms, like spiritual, religious figures or in their family sculpting or just as they think about their influence.

Spirituality and religion is as important in considering a complete family or couple picture as it is in considering an individual client's whole being.

Beyond the conceptualization of the client, in the following excerpt, Catherine detailed how she sees spiritual development as core to a counselor's ability to be able to work with clients:

I do not think we can help our clients connect to that deeper sense of value-congruent living. Like I don't think we can help clients connect to that deeper sense of being if we've not figured out how to do that ourselves. And I find it to be an ethical responsibility within counselor training for that to happen. For those conversations to begin there. And then there to actually be experiential practices in counselor training that facilitate that more deeply.

Through her research on empathy, which is considered a core condition of counseling, she has come to believe that spirituality facilitates the shift from cognitive to affective empathy. She explained it in this passage:

There's this shift to kind of activating their awareness, like having an understanding of something and then that movement more to their heart space where they kind of spiritually connect with it in a more meaningful way. That's like empathy and gratitude and forgiveness and, that that spiritual and emotional component becomes part of their, their own journey. And then through that, it can lead to hands and feet. Behavioral action that lead to value-congruent living.

Thus, there is a parallel process between spiritual development in counseling students and their ability to work with clients' spiritual and religious issues.

Also central to **serving the client** is the avoidance of values imposition (ACA, 2014). This means that counselors, in order to be ethical clinicians do not impose their values or beliefs (whether religious, spiritual, political, or otherwise) on clients (ACA, 2014). Richard described his approach to helping students address values conflicts in clinical work this way:

> It's like when I tell, work with religious clients. I mean, with religious students who struggle working with gay or lesbian clients. I'll say "who are you there for? You're not there for yourself and your values. You're there for that client and his or her values." And they never thought about it that way. And so, um, it's, it all, you know, we all have biases and things, but we're not there for ourselves. And we're not going to be good counselors if we are there for ourselves and not focus solely from the client.

Other participants described having to ensure that students could work effectively with conservative religious clients. Susan described an incident in a recent class:

> There was criticism of religion more than there was, um, support of religion. And so in those conversations, what I hoped they experienced, was a, uh, was being required to shift their judgment a little bit, just suspend their judgment. Um, I did things like ask them to take the perspective of the person who was the "offensive" religious person. Uh, working against gay marriage, I think one of the conversations was about the Kim Davis story. And, and, just asking them, I

consistently ask them to take the perspective of—or to try to work with the client who is a person they disapprove.

Preparing students to work in a clinical setting with clients on either end of the spiritual/religious spectrum emerges from the data as an important component **serving the client**.

Finally, within the context of **serving the client** is the notion of ethical and competent practice. In the interviews, the ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014), ASERVIC *Competencies* (2009), and American School Counselor Association (2010) *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* are referred to only in passing and professional standards (e.g., CACREP, ASERVIC Competencies) are rarely referred to as a direct influence. Instead, the participants emphasized **serving the client** as being of primary importance to the incorporation of spirituality or religion. Jeremy works in a program that is not accredited by CACREP, which is not uncommon for the WACES region or the state where he teaches. Regarding his department, he quips, "I don't know if they do any ACA." He further explains, "we could do this whole interview about being an LPC in [my state]. But, like, I try to slip in language about ACA and LPC and our local [licensure]." For Susan,

> Um, the *Code of Ethics*…I haven't thought of as directly related. I've only thought of me bringing in the spiritual perspective on the *Code of Ethics* rather than the other way around.

Catherine explained how her department's fitness-to-practice expectation is related to CACREP standards:

So we have a fitness to practice policy that our students are introduced to in their

ethics class, which is the very first semester of their graduate training program.

And they sign a contract stating that they have read that and that they've actually

done a student learning outcome. We're a CACREP program, so the student

learning outcome tied to that so that they're understanding there is a fitness not

just tied to skills but to dispositions, to ways of being including openness and

awareness of how self is influencing other people and things like that. So, yes

they're taught it directly and then they actually sign a document, um, kind of an

[agreement] to say that we have covered this…. The ASCA Code of Ethics is

another [document we use]. Because we have a CACREP accredited school

counseling emphasis area within our program. So we use that one too. And in fact

we just recently had the school counseling state conference. A number of our

students attended that and one of the largest and hot topics thing we discussed was

creating advocacy and support for LGBTQ students which again being in the

bible belt, that creates a lot of discourse tied to marriage and equality and the

rights to that. So that's something that we, we look at the code of ethics for

American school counselors and we bring into our training as well.

None of the participants, when specifically asked, said they currently use the ASERVIC

Competencies (2009) as a guide. All participants were aware of the ASERVIC

Competencies (2009), but only Susan talked about ever using them:

It's interesting that you mention that because I used the ASERVIC Competencies

more, uh, directly when I started teaching. And you mention them, and I thought

"gee, I hope I assigned them to be read last semester" because I haven't brought

them back in because I have used them multiple times. They feel like "yep, this is

really just the same as the other competency lists" and I'm incorporating the

things that I know that I care about and I'm hoping my students include. Just like

the multicultural competencies, I wish these weren't separate from basic

counseling competencies. I wish these elements weren't separate.

S**erving the client** is guided more by the participants' own processes than formal

documentation or directives.

**Serving the client** is a sensitizing concept that points to *why* the participants

choose to incorporate spirituality and religion into counselor training. **Serving the client**

involves an implicated actor—the client. Clients are those to whom counselors and

counselor educators are most beholden. This leads to the final sensitizing concept,

**opening doors**, which addresses *how* the participants encourage **serving the client** by

addressing incorporating spiritual and religious issues in their teaching.

**Opening Doors**

**Opening doors** is defined as creating or allowing for experiences that encourage

students to openly discuss and examine religious and spiritual issues in the classroom and

represents the beginning of the process of becoming competent in these issues. The term

"**opening doors**" stems from an in vivo code gleaned from Jeremy's in-depth interview,

and encompasses the teaching approaches that emerged from the data. In **opening doors**,

participants use self and experiential activities to introduce and make space for learning

about **serving the client** via spiritual and religious issues in counseling.

Inviting the discussion of spirituality and religion into the classroom is one way of **opening doors.** Jeremy discussed how he invites spirituality and religion into the classroom when he is teaching; he used this example from teaching an addictions course:

> I always put on the board like "what are your ideas about addiction. What's the story that we tell about the physical impact? And the emotional impact? And the intellectual or mental impact? And the spiritual impact?" And I put four quadrants, and you know, when you bring the spiritual, you know, then people start bringing a different language. Um, and they bring more about their own experiences, and their own internal worlds. And, and there's a softness that comes into the room. Like a connection that comes into the room. And, um, so yeah, I think it's just important to know like, it's there. Just like culture's in the room, you can talk about it. Sexuality's in the room. Trauma's in the room. Like, just another door. It's like really important to open.

Susan invites the discussion by asking each student to share and giving them a framework within which to do that. She explained it like this:

> I do make a point, especially in the multicultural class, of asking them, you know, going around the room asking them to share something about their religious perspective or spiritual experience. And you know, drawing out of them, helping them to use that language and practice using that language, but it does often require that I give them an assignment of what to say.

Catherine is, from the first day of a class, explicit in her expectations that students act in accordance with professionalism, which includes sitting with and taking the perspective of people with whom they disagree. She described her approach in this excerpt:

The professionalism piece is broken into four components, one of which is empathy and one of which is differentiation. And, then the others, there are two others. But those two, I speak explicitly at the beginning of the semester that like I teach my classes a lot like an apprenticeship. That from the minute you walk in the door, we're counselor trainee professionals, and you know, we're sitting there across from our future colleagues. And so, I'm not looking at a tally mark of how many times you're here, but I'm looking for, in your presence in your classroom, are you empathically caring to understand other perspectives. And are you growing in that differentiation so that you can hold opposing views respectfully. Can you do that? Can you co-exist with people you disagree with in my classroom? And, so I think maybe since the very first day of class I present it that way, students know there's going to be disagreements in this course. I'm still asking you to sit along beside that.

She reported she rarely encounters resistance from students and attributes that to clear expectations that sensitive topics will be discussed in the classroom. Richard makes spirituality and religion an explicit piece of his assignments. For example, in his doctoral level counseling theories class, he detailed his approach as follows:

[I]n my assignments, I have students, especially in doc class, in the syllabus, things that they have to cover in their presentations. And I talk about, um, one of the things they have to address is the amenability of the theory for addressing religious and spiritual issues with clients. So it's, it's a part of assignments for each theory that they look in to. And they have to go look for that because most of the textbooks don't talk about it.

His approach tells the students spirituality and religion are expected to be considerations in assignments, and therefore implies the discussion is welcome in the classroom. He also knows the students will have to do their own research to find sufficient answers, requiring them to engage with spiritual and religious content.

In addition to the explicit requirement of spiritual and religious considerations, participants use self to imply the conversation is welcome. Susan discussed how she uses language to facilitate or invite discussion:

I feel like I have, I may use language that reflects spirituality that's not specifically spiritual. But I think the way I understand people that may also be part of the way I talk with students, um, I'm thinking of teaching theories and maybe even particularly teaching existentialist therapy. Um it's, that's such a spiritual perspective on life anyway that I feel like I naturally talk that way, so it may be reflected in, in especially in existentialism, but it may be reflected in the way I teach other theories as well.

She also spoke to bringing self into the classroom and fostering relationships with students. In her words:

I see my teaching, I see my relationships with students and with the subject matter as really essential to my teaching. Um, and I think that maybe reflects my spiritual leanings. The, I, I think that when I say my relationship with students is important, it's a, it's a connection. It's a wanting to speak with the core person and those are psychological concepts but for me they are part of spirituality. And I, that to me is essential to the teaching, whether or not I'm teaching, you know, explicitly

teaching skills and interpers—you know I may not be teaching the interpersonal

relationship aspect of things.

Jeremy spoke about bringing his full self into the classroom as an important piece of

modeling for students. He talked about how his kippah is an outward indicator to students

that he is a person of faith, which gives way to an up-front discussion about his identity.

He said:

> Well, you know, again, I walk in as a religious person, so, um, you know, I'm
>
> really open with students about like. You know like in the beginning in my little
>
> introduction spiel, you know like, I share about, you know like my religious
>
> practice a little bit and my spiritual life and around like mindfulness, 'cause a lot
>
> for me of spirituality and religion um could couch in the framework of
>
> mindfulness, um so, I just talk about myself, um, and often use as an example of
>
> like, you know, possible countertransference that hap—that could happen. Um,
>
> and, you know I say just like culturally just like stories that I might bring up in
>
> class. You know, I just give examples from Jewish culture and Jewish faith.

Invitations to bring a discussion of spiritual or religious issues in counseling to the

classroom may be explicit, implicit, or both.

Beyond these means of welcoming the discussion to the classroom, the

participants engage in **opening doors** through experiential assignments. Catherine sees

this as the most critical piece to how she teaches about spirituality and religion. She also

believes it is best done by moving outside the classroom and changing the physical space

of the student. She elaborated:

For me, as a counselor educator, the most important way to teach spirituality is to take it beyond the classroom. Like that is THE most important way I know to do that and so, um, like I took sixteen graduate students to Ireland, must have been like four years ago now. And that entire tour was called an existential tour of Ireland and basically it was exploring the dialecticism within ourselves. The competing parts of ourselves, but using Ireland as a metaphor because there's obviously North Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and it's been largely conflicted because of religion. Um, I myself went on a faculty fellowship I got a fellowship through our university to go to Spain and Morocco to learn about how competing cultures can co-exist within Christian Spanish influence and Muslim Moroccan influence. And so like that kind of stuff happens, and then in my diversity class I take my students to a local Mosque and we go, we just go to a variety of places where I think it in many ways asks them to physically, not just like in their metaphoric thinking, but physically relocate them somewhere else to learn about what it is to be in a different group. And that's, that's core to how I teach, I guess spirituality and religion directly.

Jeremy described his program's approach to teaching as "experiential," he incorporates spirituality and religion via post-experience reflections. Susan includes spiritual or religious components for the case studies she drafts for her students to use as a means of getting students to consider the client holistically and engage them in discussion. She described the process like this:

I will sometimes, uh, you know give a case that's a religious client. Um, I will mention religion as part of the way we assess a client and their resources and their

emotional, uh, life. Things like that. I will talk about religion and spirituality just

as a matter of course as a part of clients' lives and part of clients' treatment as

possibly while we're brainstorming ideas for treatment. "well what about drawing

on their religious community?" or "what about, um, is maybe their religion part of

meaning making in their lives?"

Engaging in consideration of the client's whole picture is important to her approach,

tying it back to the holistic view of the client.

Richard and Jeremy both discussed how **opening doors** relates to work with

clients. Each discussed how inviting spiritual and religious issues into counseling begins

with the intake. This is incorporated into their teaching as well. For Richard,

In fact, I teach my class to have on the intake form, "is your religion or spirituality

important to you? Yes or no. If so would you like it to be included in the

counseling process?" And then they know from the get go that it's welcome.

Jeremy talked about how he invites spirituality into his own client work:

And I definitely have, my client work, a question, like an open-ended question

about spirituality, religion and sometimes the client just writes down "none" and

you know, I'll probe a little bit. And it's like "ok." And sometimes, you know,

people always have something to say.

**Opening doors** for students parallels how religious and spiritual issues are invited into

counseling work. **Opening doors** may better be conceptualized as a way of being rather

than a way of doing. Participants' use of self and language are examples of **opening

doors** and are woven into the fabric of their teaching.

**Grounded Theorizing**

The sensitizing concepts of **personal spiritual/religious journey, developing professional identity, serving the client,** and **opening doors** are connected and influence each other in ways that are still being uncovered. Grounded theorizing allows for a presentation of how these sensitizing concepts engage with each other in the data. Participants' **personal spiritual/religious journeys** and **developing professional identities** have brought them to believe that **serving the client** includes incorporating spiritual and religious issues. They incorporate these issues by **opening doors** and inviting students to walk through.

<div align="center">

**Interpretive Dialogues**

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After the first round of in-depth interviews with Richard, Jeremy, Catherine, and Susan, verbatim transcripts were analyzed via coding and mapping. A map was created for each participant and used to guide the dialogue. Annotations were made on the maps as participants changed or elaborated on my analysis. Participants were in agreement with the interpretations and analysis of their interviews, adding clarification and elaboration as they deemed necessary. Interpretive dialogues occurred via Skype and lasted 10 to 60 minutes; they were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

For participants, clarifying pieces of their **personal spiritual/religious journey** and **developing professional identity** was important. Susan discussed the ongoing nature of her journey and development:

> When I talked about my experience [in our first interview], it was in the past tense about things that happened with religion. And something that is true for me is that I bring my own spirituality into the classroom and into student relationships. And

it's a present, living part of my experience and part of me still. It's very different

and it doesn't have a lot of words on it, attached to it. But it's a reality that the

further I get from being in—within the religious confines, the more evident it

becomes for me.

Jeremy clarified that his geographic relocation was influenced by his spirituality, and not

vice versa:

The only thing is that, um, yeah, my interest in mindfulness and stuff like that

sparked, you know, still when I was living on the East Coast and I emerged as I

was coming out and coming into myself. So, and then you know I was drawn to

this area because it's so alive here that, yeah, it wasn't the other way around. It's

not like I came to California and was like "oh, what's mindfulness?" I already had

a strong practice and identity and that, um yeah, and so I was transpersonal when

I came.

Richard elaborated his transition from minister to counselor, describing it as a vocational

change with the same core meaning:

I left being a vocational—working for a church as a vocational minister. I did not

leave the ministry, because I see in many ways helping—as a counselor helping

people, I see that as a ministry. But also helping students, that they're struggling

with interfacing faith and counseling, especially counseling theory, and also

helping students who are—who would like to pursue research on the interface of

faith and counseling. I see that as a part of ministry too.

Elaborating and clarifying details of **personal spiritual/religious journey** and

**developing professional identity** stood out as salient to the participants during the

interpretive dialogues. This focus on elaboration further supports the influence these sensitizing concepts have on the participants' processes of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching.

Regarding **serving the client**, participants verified the analysis that was shared. Richard reiterated the importance of having students evaluate counseling theories for fit with spiritual and religious issues:

> And if it doesn't address it, then what are you going to do? If your theory doesn't—because most of them don't. And so you have to give some thought to does your theory allow you psychological space—both you and the client psychological space to be curious and investigate those things? Yeah, humans are fact-finders and meaning-makers. We're not—a lot of people say, 'Well no, we're meaning-discoverers.' No. We discover facts, but facts in and of themselves have no meaning. We give meaning to those facts.

Susan further discussed the holistic nature of spirituality and religion in counseling, describing the relationship with God similarly to how Richard and Jeremy described it in their initial interviews:

> And when you're working with any of the religions in which people have a personal relationship with God or people are making decisions based on something they know about God, that's—there's another person in the room.

Susan also discussed the evolution of the definition of spirituality for her:

> And I have been thinking about whether spiritual feeling falls in the category of emotion. It's certainly there's emotion involved, but I'm leaning toward thinking of it as a sensibility. And that word is vague too.

The sensitizing concept of **serving the client** was upheld and expanded upon by the interpretive dialogues.

Finally, **opening doors** was confirmed and detailed further by the participants. As Catherine succinctly added, incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling "can't be taught just from a textbook," reinforcing the importance of experiential learning. Richard spoke to how his identity as Christian opens the door for clients:

> I've actually had people come to me because they've—my faith perspective— who were not Christian. They were Jewish and Islamic, but they knew that I was a professional counselor who would address faith issues, and they couldn't find a Jewish or an Islamic counselor so they came to see me because they-- 'Well this person understands faith.' And one of the concerns they had was, 'Can you work with a person who's Islam?' And I said, 'Can you work with a person who's a Christian?' And they laughed, because they got it.

He went on to emphasize, again, the importance of having it on a client intake form.

The sensitizing concepts of **personal spiritual/religious journey**, **developing professional identity**, **serving the client**, and **opening doors** were supported by the interpretive dialogues with the participants. There were no objections to the initial analysis, with participant contributions focusing mainly on reiterating, expanding upon, or clarifying details of the initial interviews.

### Situatedness of the Researcher

Throughout this first round of interviews, I had been constantly reminded of how new this process is for me. I worried that I was not doing it "right." This fear was intensified by the participation of Participant One. He was to be my first interview. He is

a big name in spiritual and religious issues in counseling, as well as in counseling in general. I vacillated between excitement that such an "important" counselor educator would participate in my study to terror that I would be interviewing and analyzing one of the people who wrote some of the literature upon which my conceptual framework was built. I immediately panicked that I did not know enough to interview this man. His crisp emails belied the kind nature that came through in his Skype interview.

Our conversation assuaged my anxiety and provided me more confidence for subsequent interviews. I noted an adversarial tone to his interview that surprised me at first. Upon reflection, however, it made sense as I thought about his length of time in the profession. He has seen the shift from "you cannot talk about it, period" to the development of the ASERVIC Competencies (2009) and integration into the ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014). He has been on the forefront of advocating for the incorporation of spirituality and religion in counseling. I was not surprised, however, when the other participants said their experiences have been less explicit. These experiences were similar to my own. I was not told directly not to do it, or it was not important. Rather, the lack of discussion at all suggested I *should not* incorporate spirituality into counseling or it *was not* important.

What perhaps intrigued me the most was the seemingly absent influence that professional standards have on the participants. While participants acknowledged the importance of the ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014), CACREP Standards (2016), and ASERVIC Competencies (2009), their take on them can, perhaps, best be summed up in Susan's words: "I've only thought of me bringing in the spiritual perspective on the *Code of Ethics* rather than the other way around." For these participants, it is clear that

spirituality is critical to counseling, regardless of professional mandates. As I thought about this, I wondered how effective these directives, or any others, truly are.

I was sometimes frustrated with myself for talking too much or straying off topic during interviews. This often stems from shared experiences and processes. There were a few incidents, in particular, where I very much connected to my participants' experiences. For example, Susan talked about how she did not always feel at liberty to bring spirituality and religion into her doctoral co-teaching experiences. She shared how "I was co-teaching rather than teaching [by] myself. So I wasn't generating the course material, or I wasn't doing it with the f—I didn't feel like I had the freedom to do my own thing with it." I, too, had felt I did not have the freedom to incorporate spirituality, or other issues not introduced by the instructor of record. I noticed how she caught herself saying she did not have the freedom and corrected herself to say that she did not "feel" she had the freedom. I would characterize my own experience that way, as well. There was no indication from most of the instructors with whom I worked to suggest the discussion would not be welcome, but I always felt as if it could be overstepping to introduce spirituality (or other topics not on the agenda). Also like her, I have had mentors and instructors who have modeled for me how it can be done.

At times my talking too much seemed to be because I felt a need to justify or explain why I may be asking a question. I became aware that I perceived a power dynamic as a student interviewing professors, even though there was nothing to indicate that is how the participants conceptualized the situation. I wondered if with Catherine it may have prevented me from inquiring about her own personal spirituality or religion, although it did not occur to me until I was analyzing that data that she had not mentioned

it. I thought, too, of how Clarke discusses our power as researchers and how my own insecurity had led me to dismiss or reject that power. And yet I know that rejecting power does not mean I hold none. In the end, I am the decision maker as to what makes it on the paper, and I must honor that power and use it wisely.

A final struggle for me, related to using that power, was deciding what morsels make it to the "final cut." I examined and re-examined, analyzed and re-analyzed, and there are still quips and barbs that have been thrown out by participants that I would love to address, but cannot within the scope of this project. I have tried to remind myself of my research question and ultimate goals, and I memo those barbs for a later study.

With all of these personalizations and connections, I examined my analyzed data to see if I had been projecting my own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs into the analysis. I searched for places where I may have inserted my own reactions in place of the participants' intentions. While SA allows for my experiences to influence data analysis, as I am the analytic instrument, I do want to be careful that it did not lead to misinterpretation. Through interpretive dialogues, reflective memos, and discussions with my major advisor, I have mitigated the temptation to conflate my own process with theirs.

## Implications for Round Two

The sensitizing concepts of **personal spiritual/religious journey, developing professional identity**, **serving the client,** and **opening doors,** as well as their connections and influence, are well supported in the data. It is likely that these sensitizing concepts will be further supported and thicker analyses Round Two interviews. They are not so fixed, yet, as to be immune to further analysis or questioning as new data collection occurs.

What stood out as needing further investigation in Round Two were concepts, ideas, and influences that were merely suggested or inferred during Round One. Among these concepts were *trust, geographic influence,* and *Judeo-Christian assumptions/normativity.* For instance, in each interview LGBTQ rights, a macro-level issue, were brought in to the discussion without prompting. There was an inference that may be made that religious issues are often seen in opposition to LGBTQ rights. Abortion was mentioned in passing in the interviews with Richard and Jeremy. The language and tone of the interviews sounded rooted in Judeo-Christian language and/or assumptions.

Within a lot of the interviews, there was an undercurrent of trust as an influence that could not be fleshed out with the data as it stood. At one point Richard mentioned, "[my professors] thought I was going to start thumping [client] over the head with a Bible. Um, which I never would have done." Jeremy's discussion of his fear of coming out during his masters program belies a lack of trust in the reactions of his peers and faculty. Susan spoke of how students "do not feel permitted" to discuss certain topics related to spirituality and religion without an explicit invitation. Catherine alluded to the trust she places in students when she says that "from the minute [students] walk in the door, [they are] counselor trainee professionals. And, you know, we're sitting there across from our future colleagues."

Similarly, participants referenced geographic norms, such as one who talks about living in the "buckle of the Bible Belt," yet there was not enough data available for thick analyses. The participants from NARACES and WACES, for example, discussed having students who are concerned about how they may work with conservative, religious clients.

Jeremy mentioned students were concerned about "'what if the Christian fanatic comes into my office? And saying like I can't accept my daughter because of that.'" Whereas, for the SACES and NCACES participants, there has been the experience of students who "struggle working with gay or lesbian clients" (Richard).

After discussing Round One analysis with David Kleist, the following questions were developed for Round Two:

1. What role does trust play in how you incorporate spirituality and religion into the classroom?

2. How do you perceive geography as influencing how you bring it in?

3. When you think of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, how is that influenced by Judeo-Christian normativity?

4. How does the current political climate influence how you approach spirituality and religion in teaching?

5. What role does gender play?

6. What do you see as the most critical aspect of HOW you incorporate spirituality and religion into the classroom?

After Round One, there was not sufficient data to construct social arenas and worlds. Round Two data collection offered a deeper picture of the boundaries of the arenas and worlds present in this study. Further data collection also served to support a positional map to identify positions not represented in the data.

Chapter IV

Round Two Data Analysis

**Review of Procedures**

As a means of further constructing and developing the sensitizing concepts of **personal spiritual/religious journey**, **own developing professional identity**, **serving the client**, and **opening doors**, I used a semi-structured interview approach to Round Two. Round one in-depth interviews and interpretive dialogues informed the questions that were used in this round of in-depth interviews. The questions were as follows:

1. What role does trust play in how you incorporate spirituality and religion into the classroom?

2. How do you perceive geography as influencing how you bring it in?

3. When you think of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, how is that influenced by Judeo-Christian normativity?

4. How does the current political climate influence how you approach spirituality and religion in teaching?

5. What role does gender play?

6. What do you see as the most critical aspect of HOW you incorporate spirituality and religion into the classroom?

Each participant engaged in an in-depth interview lasting 40 to 60 minutes and interpretive dialogue lasting 10 to 45 minutes. In-depth interviews occurred via Skype and were transcribed verbatim. I was able to conduct two interpretive dialogues in person; I employed Skype for the remaining two interpretive dialogues.

As in first round data analysis, I used open, focused, and axial coding to create situational maps of each participant's interview (see Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5). With this data, I supported and adjusted existing codes, created new codes, and mapped the codes/data to analyze connections and relationship. I then shared these maps with participants during interpretive dialogues to allow for further co-construction of sensitizing concepts and grounded theorizing. Notes made on the maps during the interpretive dialogues were taken in black ink. After using the interpretive dialogues to amend the situational maps, I analyzed discourse data gathered from the participants' department websites in an effort to further support or reshape the sensitizing concepts and grounded theorizing.
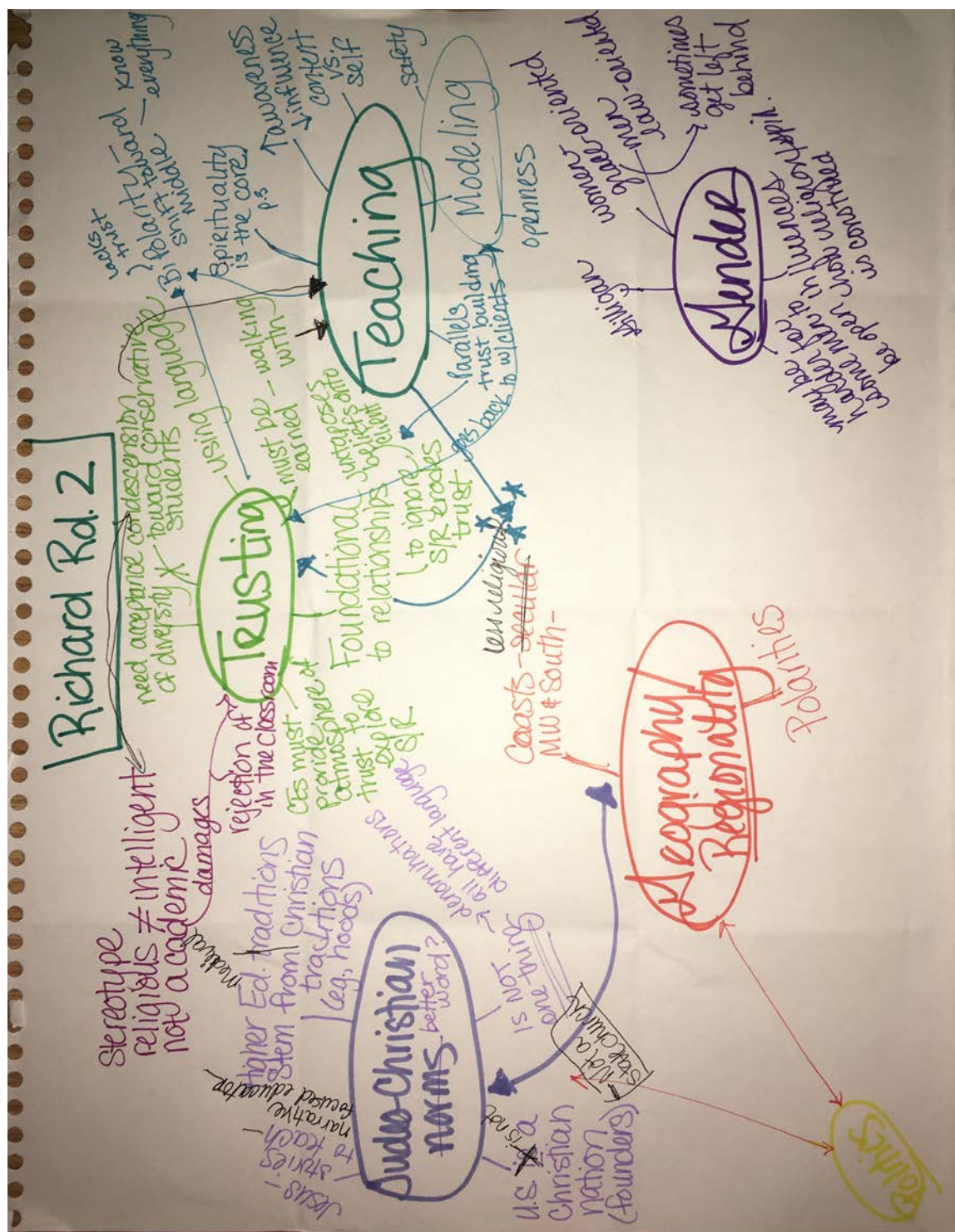
*Figure 4.1.* Richard's second round situational map. Black ink indicates Richard's interpretive dialogue notations.
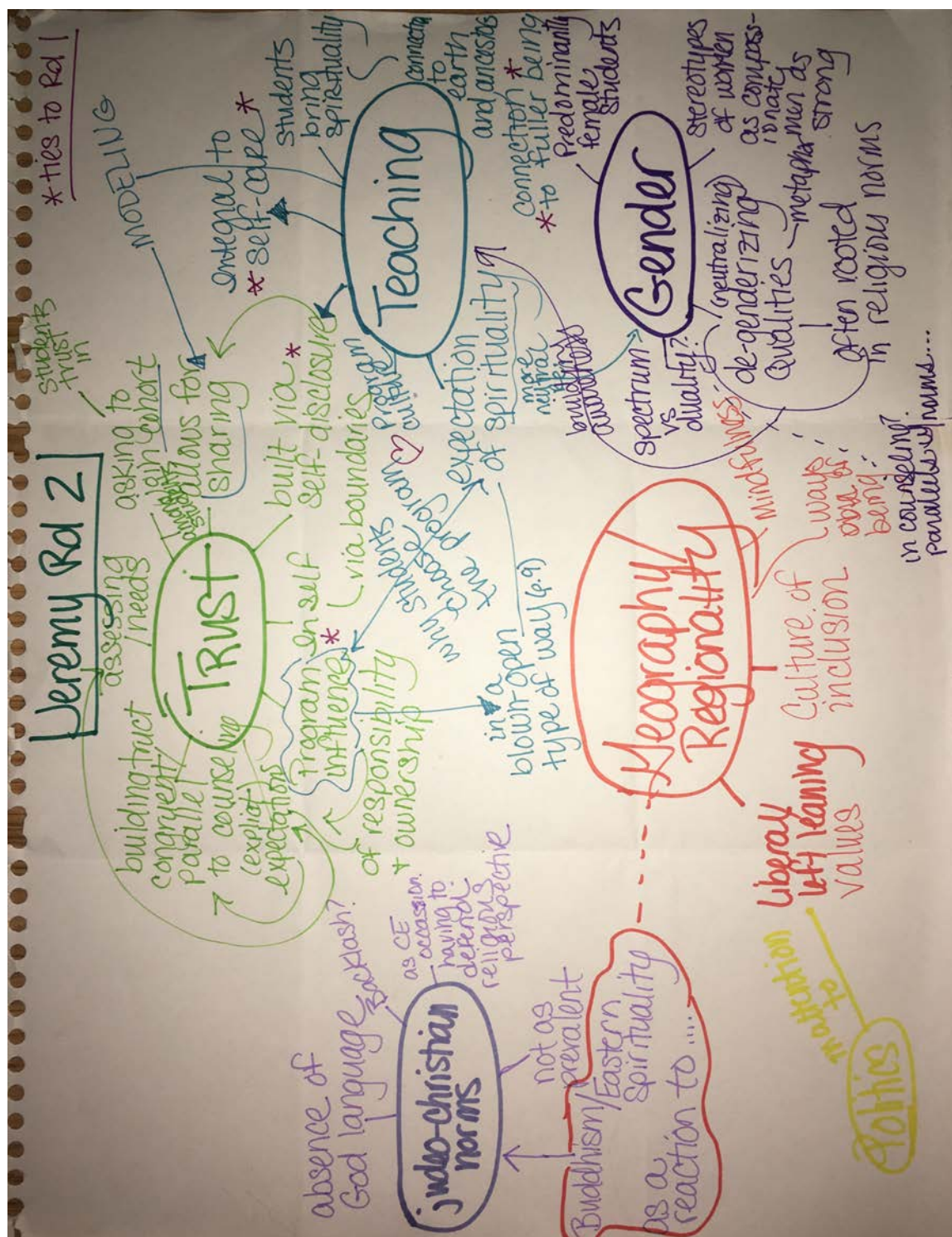
*Figure 4.2.* Jeremy's second round situational map. Black ink indicates Jeremy's interpretive dialogue notations.

*Figure 4.3.* Catherine's second round situational map. Black ink indicates Catherine's interpretive dialogue notations.

*Figure 4.4.* Susan's second round situational map. Black ink indicates Susan's interpretive dialogue notations.

**Second Round In-Depth Interview Analysis**

The grounded theorizing from first round analysis was reconstructed into four

sensitizing concepts; three concepts were adjusted, one remained the same. **Personal**

**spiritual/religious journey** and **own developing professional identity** were

consolidated into one sensitizing concept, **personal odyssey**, as they are inevitably

intertwined for the participants. The data contributed to a thicker description of **serving**

**the client**. **Trusting** emerged as a sensitizing concept demanding its own recognition,

with *opening doors* (a sensitizing concept from round one) being folded into this concept.

**Planting seeds for future growth** developed as a sensitizing concept related to the

process, techniques, and interventions counselor educators use to incorporate spiritual

and religious issues into teaching. As a result, the sensitizing concepts were reconstructed

as **personal odyssey, serving the client, trusting,** and **planting seeds for future growth.**

**Personal Odyssey**

**Personal odyssey** can be defined as an ongoing and meandering life journey

marked by spiritual, intellectual, professional, and personal experiences that contribute to

current and future directions. This **personal odyssey** encompasses both personal and

professional development, replacing the sensitizing concepts of **personal**

**spiritual/religious journey** and **own developing professional identity** from the first

round of analysis. While **personal odyssey** was not as much of a focus of the second

round interviews, it became clear it is one holistic journey, not separate paths. For the

participants, distinguishing the personal from the professional is often difficult, as they

are both woven into the fabric of the person's identity. Indeed, being able to bring

spirituality and religion into teaching requires *brining self* into the classroom. Susan described it this way:

> I think I have to say that the most crucial aspect [of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching] is keeping—is my own growth and staying honest and in touch with my own spirituality and my growth in my relationship to religion and spirituality. And staying connected to that and being willing to bring that into the classroom. I think that's the most crucial element. It keeps me—it's part of a bigger element that I think is crucial by bringing myself into the classroom and into the instruction, all aspects of it. Part of—I think I mentioned reading Parker Palmer, but it's part of that, the relational aspect of teaching that I—I guess it's not—I don't think it has to be for every educator, but I think it is a different kind of teaching and it's the kind that I want to do. So that really being not necessarily conceptually on top of my own stuff, but being genuine and open to my own growth and experiences and being willing to bring them in. And it's interesting because I felt this last week, when I taught on spirituality and religion, it was—it was the most—I didn't share as much about myself, but I felt more open and genuine and available to students than I ever have been before. It's been a progression. And but for me to do that, I think that's the most crucial aspect of teaching spirituality and religion, is connecting. And maybe that's because it's such an important part of my life and my personal story.

For Susan, her **personal odyssey** is not distinct from her professional identity development. It informs, influences, and allows ways of *bringing self* into the classroom. She also notes, "And I develop my articulation of my spirituality and of spirituality in

general—it's developing and I don't think it will ever stop developing." Richard often

tells stories that draw from his **personal odyssey** as minister, counselor, and educator.

This is evident in his retelling of a Christian parable:

> And what flashed to my mind as you said that were two things: one, there were—
> the story or parable that Jesus told about the sinner and the Pharisee. And the
> Pharisee, 'God, thank you for not making me like all these other sorry people.'
> You know, his cup was full. And so Jesus didn't honor him. And the other guy
> just said, 'Lord, forgive me. I'm a sinner. You know, my cup is empty.' And
> Jesus said, 'Which one went away righteous?' Well the guy with the empty cup.
> And then also when they got on Jesus for hanging out with sinners and he said,
> 'Well you know, I didn't come to—I didn't come to help the self-righteous. I
> came to help those who needed help.' Again, the ones who thought their cup was
> full. Now they're not—they don't have ears to hear. The ones that need help have
> the empty cup, so it's—I think it's a really good parallel.

Here, Richard used his religious training and background to be an educator and to relate

Christian teachings to working with both students and clients. His **personal odyssey** led

to an integrated identity that comes through in his narratives. Jeremy explained how

although his **personal odyssey** is holistic, he still maintains professional boundaries,

which can result in different personas. He addressed this division and how he sees it

shifting:

> I have very strong boundaries professionally. I really have a very clear—I just
> have a clear distinction. Like I feel like I have a different persona when I'm with
> my students than when I'm with my friends…. There already is part of me that's

kept sacred in a way, you know, like that's not for the students…. But you know,

I push that boundary and now that I'm starting to be with students for like a few

classes and they get ready to graduate, you know, I might loosen up a little bit.

Catherine spoke to how her spiritual development influenced her counselor educator

development, particularly when navigating Judeo-Christian cultural norms:

I'm agnostic. If anything, if I had to put a label to my experience with my

spirituality, it would be secular humanism. And so for me, Judeo-Christian

doesn't hang me up any more than any other faith base, because I don't even

ascribe to that. So even though that's the prominent culture, I would say within

America but certainly within where I live, it's not as much of a reconciliation for

me because that's not my faith system. I feel like I worked through that a long

time ago. Whereas if I did have a strong faith system, I might have a little bit

more rub with some of these topics, but I don't. I don't have that system guiding

my thought or my practice.

This passage also describes how her spiritual journey allows for **trusting** in the

classroom.

**Trusting**

     **Trusting** is a sensitizing concept that moves in many directions and occurs on

many levels—*trusting self, trusting students, students trusting each other, students*

*trusting teacher, building trust with clients.* Like **personal odyssey**, it permeates and

influences the entirety of the situation. Susan spoke to how she must trust herself and

trust students when bringing spirituality and religion into the classroom:

The first place my mind goes is the trust that I need to have in my students when I

open up that topic. And part of it is because it's personal to me. And so that's the

first place my mind goes, is I need to trust them with myself. I need to trust

myself to keep myself safe, and I need to trust them and their responses. And

that's interesting because I've never thought of it before, but it is a step that I take

when I'm planning to or if it comes up in conversation, there's pause. You need to

trust the situation and also to trust myself to be able to articulate something that is

sometimes—it's not necessarily concrete.

Catherine noted the importance of students **trusting** her as an educator:

[F]or me, trust and vulnerability go hand in hand and I don't know if students are

able to speak to their spiritual experience vulnerably if they don't have that trust

with me as their educator. So I think it's incredibly important.

She believes mutual trust among students and herself is critical to meaningful experiences

of learning to incorporate spirituality and religion into counseling, and explained how

apprehension about what some students might bring to the classroom can affect **trusting**

and her way of being as an educator:

When I trust my students I trust whatever happens organically to be valuable. But

when I can think of those couple tricky students that might really try to derail the

lesson because of their resistance, I find myself becoming more structured or at

least planful on the front end to kind of try to premeditate or try to prevent

those—I won't—well, prevent is not the right word, because I wouldn't

necessarily stop that resistance, but I'd try to think through what that might look

like in the classroom and have a plan for it before it happens so I'm not having to

think on my feet as much…. But in that, it kind of takes me out of my natural way

of being as an educator, so it—trust is huge, because when I trust my students I

trust what will happen organically to be valuable. And when I don't always have

that trust with my students, I become a different type of educator.

Jeremy spoke to the salience of **trusting** in general to bringing spirituality and religion

into the classroom:

Well um I think spirituality and religion are one of those topics that are

surprisingly sensitive and tender. And so I think trust is needed for people to

really disclose their true beliefs sometimes and even talk about their faith, because

it is so—it's such a sensitive topic.

He talked about "starting at the beginning [with] *trust building*," by using discussions of

expectations to initiate *trusting relationships* with students:

As I'm starting the class, I have like a discussion around what's our community

expectations for each other to make a safe learning community. And that usually

sets the tone for people to know that that's important. And it's not happening in a

vacuum either. I think like the program sets that as an expectation, you know,

when the students get together for their first orientation there's kind of like a—not

a—but like an informed consent basically and of like, you know, what's the

expectations of confidentiality in the program and boundaries and containment.

And so—so it's—you know, so there's a larger framework for trust. And then in

my class I just reinforce that by talking about, 'We're a community of learners.

What do we all need?' So I give people the chance—you know, I kind of go

through the main things using I-statements and owning your experience, owning

what you're talking about, and allowing people to have their beliefs and checking

in with yourself when you're feeling triggered. If you happen to stay in the room,

what do you need to do to stay in the room? And then I offer, 'Okay, what else—

you know, what do you notice that you need?' So people kind of share for them

what's important.

He uses *self-disclosure* as a way of building the students' trust in him and prioritizes

*joining* into the **trusting** that is already occurring among the students when he first has

contact with them:

By [my first class with them], they've already had two quarters together where

they do group dynamics for two quarters, so they're already pretty bonded. They

already know their basic story. So I think for me it's, you know, joining the

system. Like I need to make sure that I'm kind of like coming with my he—you

know, humbly in a way, like, 'I want to join your team.' And so I need to do some

self-disclosure and I usually share about, you know, my sexual orientation and I

wear, you know, a faith symbol. So you know, like I make some reference to it at

some point. I tell a story about my mother, like you know, I bring some—pieces

of myself to the students so they know like, 'Okay, he's willing to be open. We

can be open with him.'

Richard cultivates **trusting** with students by recognizing the power differential that

occurs in the classroom:

I think [building trust is] a little different [with students compared to clients] in

the sense that, yeah, there's a power differential between counselor and client, but

it's different in the classroom. And it's incumbent upon the professor to provide

an atmosphere in the classroom where students can feel permission to explore.

But a lot of professors, they don't give a rat's ass about spirituality. In fact, many

are opposed to it. And so the students don't feel permission. And I know for a fact

that some students feel when they want to bring up their spirituality—especially if

it's a more conservative type of religious spirituality, they feel condescended to

by professors. And to me, that's just wrong. We're there to educate, not

indoctrinate, and it goes both ways. I'm not—you know, as a fairly conservative

religious person, it's wrong for me to—if we talk about—when we talk about

spirituality in the classroom, it's wrong for me to—it would be wrong for me to

frame it only from one lens, mine. It's equally wrong to say that if I have a very

broad view of spirituality or no spirituality, and that that lens is the only one that's

welcome. It's got to—you can't really explore—you can't teach students to be

able to look at clients—that there are multiple ways things can be understood with

clients, if you only allow one lens in the camera. There's got to be opportunity for

multiple lenses, both from the person who—the professor who is spiritual or

religious or both, or people that—or professors that don't care about it.

Richard further described **trusting** as key to his process of incorporating spirituality and

religion into teaching and **planting seeds for future growth** of awareness and skills:

That I at the same time model openness to the students, that I model that I am

open to engaging clients where they are, but also concomitant to that, it's also

welcome. So I'm modeling an openness and so the head of the coin is I'm

modeling it. The tail of the coin is students feel welcome to dialogue about it.

Because to me the dynamic is remarkably similar to what's going on in a

counseling session. Clients are only going to be willing to go as far as they feel welcome to go. It's like I tell my students, 'You can only take a client as far as you're willing to go yourself.' And if I'm not working on my awareness of how my values and such could get in the way of a client, then it's going to get in the way of my students too. It's going to get in the way of me modeling that openness. They're also not going to feel—going back full circle: trust. You know, you started off the first question with trust. Trust is the key, is the crucial issue. Do they see me as someone who is trustworthy, worthy of trust?

By modeling openness, he is hoping students are learning how to be aware of their willingness to engage in conversations about spirituality, as well as seeing how to apply openness as a skill. Here, he also is *modeling* **trusting** in a way that highlights **serving the client** and **planting seeds for future growth.** The student must trust the professor, just as the client must trust the counselor.

**Serving the Client**

**Serving the client** remained intact as a sensitizing concept from the first round. Data from second round in-depth interviews continued to illuminate the influence serving **the client** has on the decision to incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching. Catherine spoke about assumptions students make about her faith system, when, in fact, **serving the client** is the motivation for bringing spiritual and religious issues into the classroom. She described how students are sometimes surprised at the reason for her motivation:

And so especially if [students have] had me in theory, they'll hear me speaking through these humanistic principles and valuing the work of all people. And so I

think what's funny is the students often wonder how I care so much about spirituality, or they wonder why I bring that into class, given that I don't have that faith system. So they make assumptions—whether their assumptions are correct—they make assumptions that I'm not Christian because I teach humanism. But then they question so why do I care about spirituality? And I'm like, 'Oh gosh, because I think it's core to a lot of our identity.' I mean even when I think of wellness and wellbeing, which is what I study, I understand that in the revision to Jane Myer's model, spirituality came out of the core—it was no longer the core of wellness. Though when I talk with people about purpose and meaning, it always comes back to that. And so for me it's such an important part of understanding who we are as people and understanding who our clients are as people. I can't imagine that not being in the classroom, but I think it baffles some of my students sometimes.

Richard's focus was often on the client, and he reflected how **serving the client** is so strongly connected to **trusting**:

I think [trust is] foundational. Just as we talk—teach students about the importance of the counselor/client relationship and building trust, if you ignore client's spirituality—and this will be something that harkens back to something I've already said to you—if you ignore a client's spiritual values and they're real important them, and consequently you're basically saying, 'Well that part of your life or that person in your life is not welcome here,' they're going to be hesitant to trust you as a counselor. I also think… not to work from the client's spiritual frame of reference and either covertly or overtly juxtaposing your preferred

spiritual perspective onto the client also can circumvent trust with your clients.

You know, so not only should you welcome spirituality in the counseling sessions,

but you also have to—in order to build trust— But I also believe that you have to

work from the client's view of spirituality to engender that trust as well. Because I

believe, you know, you have to earn—you have to earn that client—the right to

walk along the client in the pilgrimage that's counseling. You don't just hop—oh,

you don't get on the road, 'Hey, I see you're walking along. Well, I'm going to

join you.' And you know, they're going, 'Well who the hell are you? You know,

maybe I don't want you to join me.' You have to earn that right.

He elaborated on how **serving the client** influences bringing spirituality and religion into

teaching. Richard sees, for some clients, spirituality encompassing their total being versus

being one component of their holistic self:

Using the language of the client. You know, it's like we do with all clients and

based off their values. The bottom line is being willing to go with the client where

the client wants and needs to go, including in the realm of spirituality. And for a

lot of people, they see spirituality as one component of a holistic being. But for a

lot of clients, all the parts are under the umbrella of the spirituality. And so

that's—you have to understand that too, is if spirituality is really important to that

client, then it's not like, okay, spirituality is this part and you've got your job over

here and your family. But no, you've got all this stuff and within a spiritual womb,

if you will. And that's—they really—counselors really have to understand the

importance of spirituality for people—or for people that spirituality is really,

really important, it's not just one category. It is—it is the um—the central theme.

Susan discussed how assumptions and beliefs that some students may hold about different religions need to be challenged, again with the aim of **serving the client**:

One of the elements that I talked about in class last week was the definition of religion as a set of chosen beliefs. We tend to think your religion is something that people can choose. And we tend to think of it as, 'Well, what do you believe?' You know, that's the dominant perspective. And religion is simply not a choice and not a set of beliefs. It's a way of being, it's a whole social structure, it's a— it's an identity into which we are born in so much of the world—the rest of the world…. The idea of proselytizing or evangelizing is also—feeds that belief of religion is something you can choose. Even if I think—even if I have haven't actually chosen my religion, if my spirituality is not self-authored, I still think that other people could change their religion by converting to mine, by choosing my beliefs.

The idea of choosing a set of beliefs may be dismissive to clients in many religious communities. For many religious clients, their religion is a way of being, not a set of guidelines and beliefs. She believes it is important for students to have this understanding. Furthermore, Susan addressed the growth of anti-Muslim sentiment in her teaching. In an effort toward **serving the client,** she had a Muslim speaker address her class as a means of *broaching* and **planting seeds for future growth**:

I purposefully choose—the last two or three semesters I've chosen to have a Muslim come and speak because of the—what's the word? I don't know. But we—we have maligned Muslims in this country and the need for exposure to

the—the real people of Muslims. And so that's a choice that I make especially

because of the political and social situation here.

She is hoping to prepare students to be able to serve Muslim clients. Richard noted the

continued importance of *bracketing beliefs* when **serving the client.** He specified how he

distinguishes incorporating spirituality and religion in counseling from religious or

spiritual guidance:

It doesn't mean you have to change religious values, but you do have—you have

to bracket them to allow the—because you're there for the client, you're not—

you're not there for yourself and it's not—it's not a discipleship session, it's not

an evangelistic session. It's a counseling session. And so there's a time and place

for stuff, but when a person comes to see you for counseling, that's not the time or

place.

In **serving the client**, it is sometimes necessary to defend religious perspectives.

For instance, the discussion of values conflicts often tells a story a conservative, usually

Christian, counselor struggling to work with an LGBT client. This is prevalent in current

legislation, ACA's newest *Code of Ethics* (2014), and various counseling-related

discussion boards (e.g., CESENT-L). Jeremy and Susan, who are on the West Coast and

East Coasts, respectively, have both encountered this phenomenon. Jeremy explained:

That's kind of an assumption that we have on the West coast, that most likely—or

I shouldn't say on the West coast, but … where I'm teaching, where the students

are coming from, like most of the students are going to be liberal and they're

going to have liberal values and they're going to think that being gay is a-okay.

And so—and that's just like the—that's like the typical example. I remember

from the East coast, there was always the thing—like when I was a student, like oh, like when would my religious values be in conflict with having a gay client? So here it's like, 'Oh I have no problem having a gay client, but what do I do if a really religious parent comes into the room?'… Or the clients have very like gender-specific roles based on their faith. So I think there's more of like an edge in that way for my students… Yeah, there's diversity. People—and I think also like what's—you know, like here, I think for people to be spiritual but not religious is very common. And so there's an expectation of speaking about spirituality. You know, and all forms of spirituality and spirituality that comes from all different traditions. And again it's that re—it's like that inclusion of religion that sometimes gets tricky.

**Serving the client** requires serving clients who fall at all different points along the religious spectrum. In an effort to help students develop competence with spiritual and religious issues, the participants are **planting seeds** of knowledge and awareness that they hope will take root and grow to inform clinical skills.

**Planting Seeds for Future Growth**

**Planting seeds for future growth** is a sensitizing concept that describes the process the participants intend when incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching. They are not attempting to change students' values or expecting scripted answers. Instead, through *modeling, broaching,* and *opening doors* they hope they are instilling ideas and *awareness* that will stay with the students and later grow and blossom in ways that improve spiritual and religious *skills* and *knowledge* in clinical work. *Opening doors*, introduced in the first round of analysis, fits within this sensitizing

concept. The term **planting seeds for future growth** was derived from Catherine's interview. She disclosed her desired outcome with students, while describing the role her **personal odyssey**, **trusting** and *modeling* play in her process:

> I always think of the scripture of God is love. And that, as I've grown into understanding how I fit with spirituality, that is still my guiding principle. That for me, God is love, meaning all faith is about love. And I try very hard when I'm teaching spirituality and related constructs, to let that be my guiding force. Because I know for—I don't know even if it's in the geography as much as just what I believe about relationship and counselor education. I do not think my students will be open to learning and even testing the water on these conversations if they do not have faith with me. And so my faith, my belief in kindness being the guide, that is for me the most important critical spot. That even if I have those resistant students or those tricky students, not to shy away from the topic but also not to go toe-to-toe with them, not to meet them with the same lack of appreciation for discourse that they might be meeting me with. Being able to model the principles of what I view to be spiritual, which is connection through kindness, and to do that in my teaching. That is super, super important. It would be so—like for me, the most rewarding thing a student could possibly say would be, 'I did not agree with [Catherine], but I appreciate how she taught the topic.' Or, 'I never could reconcile this, but she taught it with a lot of empathy and compassion for her students and our struggle.' That would be the most important thing for me, that my students could see that I modeled it. So that maybe at some

point that's just planted a seed, but maybe at some point that becomes more of

their process.

In having compassion and empathy for students whose values are challenged by the

ethics and expectations of the counseling profession, she is **planting seeds for future**

**growth** of competence by **trusting** and *modeling*. Richard described *opening doors* to

encourage a process of learning about oneself—a technique he experienced as a student

and that he uses when he is **planting seeds for future growth**. The focus of this

technique is not content, but growth and learning that continue beyond the time and space

of the classroom:

> I had a professor in seminary who basically started the class off by saying, 'I
>
> know what you need to know. Don't ask questions and just write what I tell you
>
> to write.' And he was brilliant and it was fun hearing him talk. I didn't learn
>
> anything about myself in that class. And I had other professors who engaged us in
>
> dialogues, and maybe I didn't learn as—I didn't learn as much of the content from
>
> that professor, but I learned a good bit about myself. And I think that—
>
> consequently, I learned more from the second professor than the first. … [The
>
> importance of personal growth is] particularly true in dealing with spirituality,
>
> because it takes a lot of growth and maturity on a person's part to say, 'I may not
>
> agree with what your values are, but in humility I am willing to hear.' A lot of
>
> people, they say that they're open but they really don't have ears to hear. They're
>
> really—they act like they're listening, but what they're hearing is Charlie
>
> Brown's teacher, 'Wah wah wah wah.'

He is not expecting this growth to happen over the course of one semester or even within the span of the student's graduate program, but that the growth begins in the classroom with a new *awareness* of self instilled during open discussions.

*Broaching*, or initiating contact with cultural topics students may find sensitive (Day-Vines et al., 2007), is another technique that participants use when **planting seeds for future growth.** As Susan described in an earlier quotation, she brings in guest speakers to expose students to people from different religions. Catherine described her approach to *broaching* as one involving taking students beyond the classroom:

> I don't just think of didactic instruction or classroom instruction, but think of—
> like I mentioned in that first interview, taking my students abroad. Like I leave for
> [a study abroad trip] in three days and I'm taking nine of my graduate students
> down there. And spirituality will be part of that, discussing the role of faith in
> relationships will be part of that. And so I think of all of the different ways that
> counselor ed looks—how it looks, you know, and that being beyond the
> classroom, so through supervision and through different experiences like that.

Jeremy also talked about **planting seeds for future growth** of *awareness* by *modeling* and *opening doors* for de-genderized language and qualities as related to spirituality and religion:

> Well you know, in like the spiritual lingo, you know, there's a lot of talk about
> like the masculine versus the feminine and how the masculine is direct and, you
> know, goal-oriented and linear. And the feminine is receptive and compassionate
> and caring. And I—when that comes up in class, I really offer a different way—a
> different languaging around that. And I ask my students not to genderize those

qualities, because you know—you know, I think that's part of a—it's a metaphor to understand those differences, but it's really just qualities. And so, you know, I—you know, I haven't found like the perfect language, but I usually say like, 'Let's just talk about the qualities in themselves without them having to be genderized.' But I know that there is a kind of—I feel like there's a need for women, you know, because their uniqueness and power is something like they need to really grasp to like create and really emphasize like there' s a female something out there. And then men are now like reacting to that and like, 'Wait, wait, wait. There's also a masculine something.' You know? So I understand there's like a need to sometimes like claim those, so I don't want to like shut down students if that's what their need is. But just—you know, like in my own thinking, in my own life, in my own gender-thinking, I'm just like, 'Let's not make compassion and caring female.' Like… let's not make strength masculine. Like let's not do that, you know?

Jeremy is *opening doors* by introducing new ways of using language and considering gender characteristics, which he identified as often being rooted in religious gender traditions. Here, he is **planting seeds** for students to not only use gender-neutral language, but also to challenge how character traits may have been genderized by Judeo-Christian norms. **Planting seeds for future growth** connects to the other sensitizing concepts in that it requires **trusting** of and from students, and is motivated by **personal odyssey** and **serving the client.**

**Interpretive Dialogues**

After coding and mapping the second round interviews, I met with each participant for an interpretive dialogue. Again, the purpose of these dialogues was to serve as an interactive form of member check that allowed the participants to co-construct the interpretations of their interviews (Coe Smith, 2006). Participants were presented with their situational maps from their interviews. I explained the maps and facilitated discussion to clarify, confirm, or refute the analysis. The participants all confirmed the interpretations and maps, solidifying the sensitizing concepts of **personal odyssey**, **trusting, serving the client,** and **planting seeds for future growth** in their interpretive dialogues.

Richard chose to again reiterate **trusting** as critical to both teaching spirituality and religion and **serving the client** by detailing what could happen if **trusting** is absent:

> And then with students—and also with clients. If it's important—if it's important to a client, their spirituality—client spirituality is very important to a client, it's largely the lens by which they frame their world. And a client comes in and you basically either covertly or overtly communicate, 'Your spiritual values are not welcome here,' then it's going to destroy trust and it's going to clearly inhibit your ability to be useful to teaching.

He wanted to be clear that the absence of **trusting** is <u>not</u> **serving the client** and can be harmful to counseling and teaching. Although it was present in other participants' interviews, Susan wanted to add students **trusting** each other was important, as she had not mentioned it in her interview. She told how, in her teaching, students from outside the

counseling cohort occasionally participate in courses and can affect **trusting** among students.

Susan contributed one more piece of her **personal odyssey**, showing how it influences some of the decisions she made in *broaching* Islam when she is **planting seeds for future growth.**

> I discovered that I was gravitating toward using Islam as an example and um and that I discovered that I was focusing on Islam in two or three different ways throughout the semester, as opposed to other religions. And part of that comes out of my own experience. My parents were Christian missionaries to the Arab world….And um—and so I have some knowledge of Islam, not just as a religion that needs changing (laughs), as was the perspective. But I did learn a lot about Islam and come to have a lot of respect for Islam. So it's something I'm familiar with , so I gravitate toward teaching/using that. But I also decided, once I noticed that, um to keep that focus as uh—as a response to the social climate.

In this narrative, Susan described how her **personal odyssey** is continuing and how she continually reflects upon how that journey is influencing her teaching.

## Website Discourse Analysis

I accessed departmental websites for each of the participants and analyzed the content to identify any new or unmentioned contextual influences that may be occurring at the meso level. My analysis of these sites of discourse was unremarkable. The content yielded no analysis relevant to further grounded theorizing and development of sensitizing concepts. Perhaps what may be most notable is that, aside from Jeremy's department, which is explicitly a holistic, transpersonal program, there was no

terminology or use of language that pointed to the importance of spiritual or religious issues in counseling.

## Grounded Theorizing

The sensitizing concepts of **personal odyssey**, **trusting, serving the client,** and **planting seeds for future growth** are connected in a continual process. **The personal odyssey** of participants is an ongoing life journey that influences and is influenced by **trusting**, **serving the client**, and **planting seeds for future growth.** In many ways **personal odyssey** is the catalyst for **serving client**. Because of the importance religion and/or spirituality has played in the participants' **personal odyssey**, they have developed a belief in salience of spiritual issues when **serving clients**. **Trusting** is a fundamental component of the process of incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education, as well as **serving the client. Trusting** is multi-directional, including trusting self, teacher trusting students, students trusting teacher, students trusting each other, and clients trusting counselor. **Serving the client** in regards to spiritual and religious issues often involved *bracketing beliefs* and *remaining open* to the client's worldview. To encourage this client service, participants are **planting seeds for future growth** of competence via *broaching, modeling,* and *opening doors*. **Planting seeds** reflects the acknowledgement that growth is a process that can begin in the classroom, but continues beyond graduate training.

## Situatedness of the Researcher

Because I had less contact with masters students in my final semester than any previous semester, I sometimes felt removed from the situation. I was co-teaching research and statistics, and for the most part, there is no natural way to work in

spirituality and religion. Where I primarily saw the intersection of religion and counseling is in the news, specifically regarding legislation aimed at allowing discriminatory referrals based on religious beliefs. I wondered, if all counselor educators were as open as the participants to discussions about religion and spirituality in the classroom, would we be where we are now? Although the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) is explicit about prohibiting discriminatory referrals, I did not believe it is simply enough to tell students "you can't do it." There is a conversation that must occur to help students reconcile their values with those of the counseling profession. These conversations are the act of **planting seeds**.

The professional discussion around religious beliefs and values in counseling took center stage as I finished round two analysis. This was a related, yet separate, issue to teaching counseling students how to work with spiritual and religious issues. It exposed, however, several positions regarding religion in counseling. On CESNET-L, I read posts from conservative Christians who feel discriminated against by the ACA, and those whose words suggested they do not believe conservative Christians can be non-discriminatory. In a tangential exchange during Richard's interview, he discussed his fear of people at either extreme of the liberal-conservative spectrum:

> I'm conservative on a lot of stuff, but I don't have trouble working with a lot of the clients that conservatives struggle with. I may be more inclined to struggle with a person who—because people at extremes are both know-it-all's. People on the far right, they know it all. People on the far left, they know it all. Those are the people I struggle the most with, because they—if somebody tells me that they're pretty sure they have it all figured out, they scare me.

I made notes of these topics for future studies. There was a strong temptation to go down this path, and although there was most certainly an influence occurring here, it was beyond the scope of this study.

I was more comfortable in interviews, although I still may have talked too much. I attempted to be as intentional as possible when I spoke in an interview, and continually reflected on my reasons for speaking. For the most part, I was seeking to validate and clarify for the participants. Building relationships with the participants allowed for the semi-structured interview to feel less formal. I recognized in Susan a growth in confidence from the first round of interviews to the second. I do not have specific words (data) from her interviews to evidence this, however, it was obvious in speaking with her that as she is becoming more comfortable in her own skin. I continued to challenge myself to be aware of my place in the study. I shared some of my own experiences and process with participants during interviews, and I was aware that I was doing this as encouragement and validation. I used my process and experience, along with the data and conceptual framework, to inform the interviews.

In bringing myself into interviews, I was connecting to my participants. I particularly connected to Catherine's story about assumptions people make about her spirituality based on her passion for incorporating the topic into her teaching. I have encountered the same assumptions—that I must be of a particular faith or deeply religious because of what I have chosen to research. It is a curious, but not offensive, assumption to me. I have reflected on the many things it could mean, and I wondered if ultimately what people are saying to me is they think I have an agenda. I do have an

agenda—to understand ways counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching.

## Implications for Round Three Analysis

Grounded theorizing had taken shape around the sensitizing concepts of **personal odyssey**, **trusting, serving the client,** and **planting seeds**. Throughout the data analysis process, I noted and memoed positions taken in the data, as well as data that informs the social worlds and arenas germane to the situation of incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education. These maps will serve to locate the site of the situation and highlight potentially silenced voices. I will use the collected interview data and theoretically sampled discourse data to construct positional maps and social worlds/arenas maps. I will share these maps with the participants and invite them to engage in an online focus group. The goal of the focus group is to serve as a final member check of the positions, social worlds, and arenas, as well as to give participants an opportunity to engage with each other.

Chapter V

Round Three Data Analysis:

Positional Maps, Social Worlds/Arenas Maps, and Focus Group

**Review of Procedures**

Data analysis for round three consisted of constructing positional, arenas, and social worlds maps of the interview data from rounds one and two, as well as information from the conceptual framework. I included textual discourse found on the CESNET-L electronic mailing list to contribute to the positional maps. Clarke (2005) recommends employing this type of theoretical sampling at any stage of research, whenever possible, "if you lack the data you think need for theoretical reasons" (p. 177). Although the interview data supported the positional maps, the data I encountered on CESNET-L, a counselor education-specific electronic mailing list, provided additional theoretical support. This data became particularly salient to the positional map representing religious expression and hostility in counselor education. In constructing the social worlds and arenas maps, I collected and analyzed data from professional counseling organizations, some of which had already been used to inform the conceptual framework. Clarke (2005) stated this further data gathering is often necessary in the creation of the social worlds/arenas maps (p. 112), as interview data alone may not be sufficient.  After the positional, social worlds, and arenas maps were created, I shared the maps and descriptions with participants in a final focus group. I used the focus group data to confirm, revise, and strengthen the positional, social worlds, and arenas maps.

**Positional Maps**

Positional maps are analytic tools in which the researcher maps positions taken in the data with an aim toward identifying positions *not* taken (Clarke, 2005). These missing positions are used to illuminate potentially silenced voices, thereby enhancing trustworthiness, providing guidance and rationale for theoretical sampling, and offering directions for future studies. Positional maps employ an X- and Y-axes design. Although axes are used to represent movement along a continuum, it should be emphasized positional maps are *not* intended to represent quantitative data. Rather, they offer a matrix that allows for multiple positions to be visually arranged in order to determine which positions are taken and missing in the data. This design rejects the notion of binaries, as well as "negative cases," as differences are what generate the multiple positions (Clarke, 2005). It is important to note the positions do not represent individuals or collective groups, but "the full range of discursive positions on particular issues—fully allowing multiple positions and even contradictions within both individuals and collectives to be articulated" (Clarke, 2005, p. xxxvi). Because the positions do not represent individuals, it is possible (and probable) individuals may connect to multiple positions on the map. As with situational, arenas, and social worlds maps, movement is to be expected. Data analysis led to three positional maps: **teaching experience** and **structure and planning**; **religious/spiritual expression** and **experienced hostility**; and **tenure** and **autonomy.**

**Social Worlds and Arenas maps**

I constructed the arenas and social words map using the conceptual framework and interview data. As an actor in this situation, I also contributed my own knowledge to the construction of these maps. The primary analytic task for this cartography is the

construction of the social worlds (Clarke, 2005). Social worlds/arenas maps represent meso-level social action, as opposed to discourses (Clarke, 2005). Although discourses are present in the social worlds/arenas, they are not the focus of analysis. Arenas are the sites of social action, while "social worlds are actor-defined, permitting identification and analysis of collectivities construed as meaningful by the actors themselves" (Clarke, 2005, p. 110).

Boundaries of the social worlds and arenas maps are dotted to illustrate their porous nature (Clarke, 2005). Actors are never bound to only one arena or social world. There is a natural freedom of movement among arenas and worlds. Social world size is relative (but not exact) to the influence that world effects on the situation. The arenas map shows the three arenas that intersect at the site of the situation: **counselor education**, **spiritual**, and **religious.** The social worlds map lays out five major social worlds that occur at the intersection of these three arenas: **client**, **counselor**, **student**, **counselor educator**, and **faculty/department.**

**Focus Group**

I organized a focus group as a final means of allowing participants to co-construct the interpretations and maps resulting from data analysis. I sent all participants the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps. Each map was accompanied by a brief explanation. Participants were asked to contribute reactions and comments via the Google Docs web platform and encouraged to respond to each other's comments. Susan and Jeremy participated in the focus group. Although Richard and Catherine were unable to participate, this did not impact the overall findings.

**Positional Maps**

Using the data from both rounds of data collection, I created three positional maps to represent major positions taken in the data. I then used theoretical sampling to seek positions that were not represented, or were merely hinted at, in the data. CESNET-L, an electronic mailing list for counselor educators, was the source of this data. The positional maps represent the discursive issues of **teaching experience** and **structure and planning**; **religious/spiritual expression** and **experienced hostility**; and **tenure** and **autonomy**.

**Map One: Teaching Experience and Structure**

Positional Map One (see Figure 5.1) represents the relationship between teaching experience and the level of structure or planning used in incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education. Teaching experience related to spiritual and religious issues is represented on the X-axis. The level of structure and planning used is represented on the Y-axis. Positions taken in the data are plotted according to amount of teaching experience compared to the structure used to approach integrating spirituality in the classroom. Four positions, labeled A through D, emerged from the data, with two major positions missing from the data.
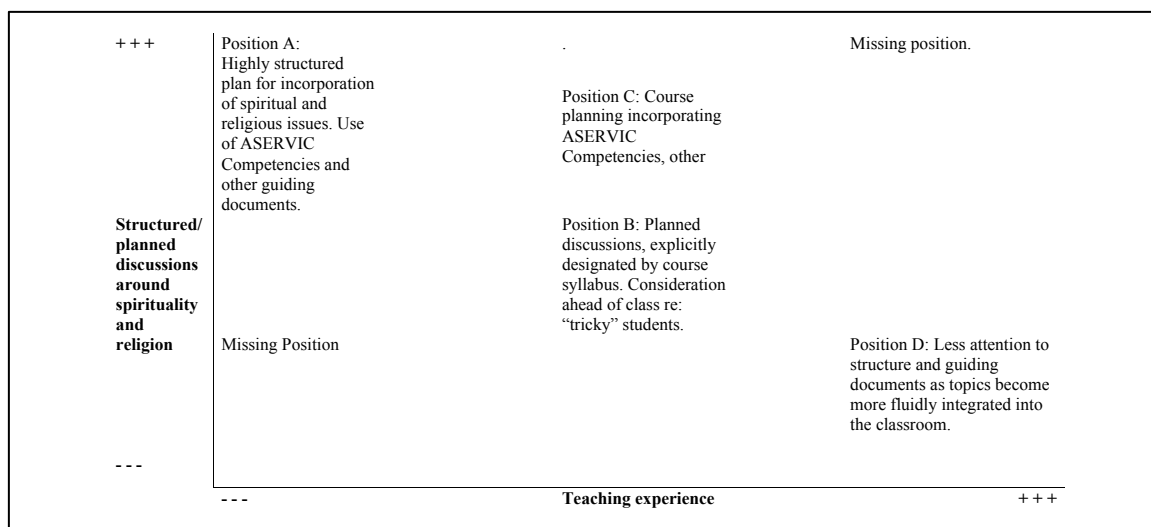
*Figure 5.1*. Positional Map One: Teaching experience and structure.

**Position A.** Position A shows counselors educators with low levels of teaching experience using highly structured approaches to incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching. This position first appeared in the conceptual framework. Young et al. (2002) in a survey of counselor educators found

> Respondents who considered themselves unprepared to address [spiritual and religious] competencies indicated a clear need for both additional training and curricular guidelines to provide direction for the infusion of this material (p. 28).

When asked about using the ASERVIC Competencies (2009) in teaching, Susan remarked, "It's interesting that you mention that because I used the ASERVIC Competencies more, uh, directly when I started teaching." Jeremy discussed the position similarly:

> I'm wondering if it's, you know, if it's a better tool for someone who is not comfortable or not, um, not sure where to start…. If there's that fear, you know, structure can help with the anxiety of how do I even talk about this. Well, here, now I have a document.

Cashwell and Young's (2011) textbook, *Integrating Spirituality and Religion into Counseling: A Guide to Competent Practice*, is an introductory text that follows the structure of the ASERVIC Competencies (2009). I used this textbook in teaching a course, my very first, on spirituality and religion in counseling because of the structure it offered.

 **Position B.** Position B reflects significant experience incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching and some use of planning, but not necessarily structure, in approaching the topic. Catherine, who has been incorporating spirituality and religion into her teaching for several years, spoke to being "planful" and what necessitates it:

> I'm reflecting on that, I don't necessarily think [a resistant student] would prevent me from having those activities or conversations, but I know it would make me far more cautious, planful. It would make me more—I guess prepared, because when I trust my students I trust whatever happens organically to be valuable. But when I can think of those couple tricky students that might really try to derail the lesson because of their resistance, I find myself becoming more structured or at least planful on the front end to kind of try to premeditate or try to prevent those—I won't—well, prevent is not the right word, because I wouldn't necessarily stop that resistance, but I'd try to think through what that might look like in the classroom and have a plan for it before it happens so I'm not having to think on my feet as much.

Position B shows how experience with incorporating spirituality and religion may allow for comfort with less structure. Similarly, Susan discussed how she plans for guest speakers and what will follow:

> I invited a guest speaker, and Egyptian-American Muslim woman who's very
>
> active in some of the local um—local and regional associations for Muslims and
>
> interfaith associations. And she spoke for an hour on Islam. But then after that,
>
> the second half of the class, I—you know, I always revamp my little lecture every
>
> semester, so I revamped it a little bit.

Susan's approach included planning, but not necessarily a rigid structure of topics or competencies to be discussed.

**Position C.** Structure does occur where there is significant experience incorporating spiritual and religious issues, as shown by Position C. Catherine spoke of a colleague in her department who uses ASERVIC Competencies (2009):

> and we just had a seminar that was taught a couple of weeks ago by one of my
>
> colleagues … whose area of research is spirituality in counselor training. That is
>
> what he studies. And he taught a spirituality seminar, and he taught ASERVIC
>
> values, code of ethics, that kind of stuff in that class.

It stands to reason counselor educators teaching courses specific to spirituality and religion in counseling would have a more structured approach for the overall course. Cashwell and Young (2004) conducted an analysis of course syllabi gathered from counselor educators known to teach courses in spirituality and religion. They found there was not consistency in application of the ASERVIC Competencies (2001), suggesting that although structure does exist, it does not follow specific competencies or guidelines.

**Position D.** Position D reflects an extensive level of teaching experience and a fluid, non-structured approach to integrating spirituality and religion. This position is seemingly a natural one for anyone who has incorporated specific issues into teaching

over a long period of time. Richard is an example of this position. Having taught for 21

years, when asked how he approaches incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching,

he responded:

> That I at the same time model openness to the students, that I model that I am
>
> open to engaging clients where they are, but also concomitant to that, it's also
>
> welcome. So I'm modeling an openness and so the head of the coin is I'm
>
> modeling it. The tail of the coin is students feel welcome to dialogue about it.

In this modeling approach, there is very little structure; it is marked by a fluid nature and

openness to whatever topics may be introduced. The concept of more professional

experience leading to a less rigid or structured approach to counseling can be seen in

theories such as Stoltenberg, McNeill, and Delworth's (1998) Integrated Developmental

Model, as well as Ronnestad and Skovholt's research on counselor development.

**Missing positions.** The two positions missing from the data are little teaching

experience with low levels of structure or planning and extensive teaching experience

with high levels of structure. These may seem like obvious missing positions, as

developmental theories (e.g., Stoltenberg et al., 1998) suggest the positions on the map to

be "normal." However, it may be worth pursuing these positions via theoretical sampling.

Doing so could offer insight as to what allows for less experienced counselor educators to

use a less structured approach to incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching.

**Map Two: Religious Expression and Experienced Hostility**

Positional Map Two (see Figure 5.2) represents the relationship between religious

or spiritual expression and experienced hostility in counselor education. Religious or

spiritual expression is represented on the X-axis and is defined as outwardly recognizable

expressions of religious or spiritual practice. For example, Jeremy wears a yarmulke (also known as a kippah); this is a highly recognizable outward expression of Judaism. Catherine, in contrast, has a spiritual practice of "connection through kindness," which may be less outwardly recognizable as an expression of religion or spirituality. The Y-axis represents a continuum of experienced hostility from others in counselor education, particularly those in power positions (e.g., professors, supervisors, profession as a whole). Five positions emerged from the data, with three positions missing.



Positional Map 3: Religious expression and discrimination

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| +++ | Missing position. | | Position D: Overt discrimination based on assumptions of religious affiliation. |
| | | Position C: Anti-Christian bias in American Counseling Association. | |
| | Position B: Covert/hidden messages to not introduce religion or spirituality. | | Missing position. |
| **Experienced hostility in CE** | Position A: No remarkable experience of hostility. | Missing position. | |
| --- | | | Position E: Welcomed inclusion of spiritual self into teaching/curriculum. |
| | --- | **Outward religious expression** | +++ |

*Figure 5.2*. Positional Map Two. Religious expression and experienced hostility.

**Position A.** In Position A, there is a low expression of spirituality or religiosity and no remarkable experience of hostility. Catherine, who described herself as "agnostic" and a "secular humanist," with a spiritual practice of "connection through kindness," recalled no hostility toward incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling or teaching. She explained how professionally she has not experienced hostility, although personally she experiences resistance in conversations:

I don't think I've heard ['don't speak about spirituality or religion'] directly. I

hear it more in the language of, um, in the defensiveness presenting with

something like, um… 'I know what I believe, and I know I can counsel people

who don't agree with what I believe, but I refuse to believe what they believe.'

Like in their faith. It's kind of like, again, it's more that cognitive thing. Like I

know that I can sit across from somebody I disagree with, but I don't really want

to look at why I believe what I believe and question it. And then, so then I'm kind

of sitting with this question. Why haven't I heard that more, since that is, um, not

professionally, but personally what I see in this area.

With low to no expression of spiritualty or religion it is possible hostility may not be

encountered because the topic is not being introduced or it is not perceived as a personal

agenda.

**Position B.** Position B is located where little spiritual or religious expression is

present and covert messages imply that topics related to spirituality are not valued. Susan,

who practiced an evangelical Christian religion during her masters program, but was not

necessarily "identifiable" as an evangelical Christian, described an example of such an

implicit message:

It was never discussed or addressed as spiritual or religious, but there certainly is

at least one faculty member who, um, who might roll his eyes at, at that kind of

content. Um, mostly, the two of them have very different teaching styles. And his

is much more academic, and so I think the differences are much more in the

teaching styles than in the spiritual content. There is some skepticism about the

non-um, about things that are not objectively measured….When I am talking

about these differences, these are things that I sensed and was part of during my

masters program. My—it would be easy for me to blend the two since I'm there

again now. But really those kinds of things I was aware of at that point. In fact,

the skeptical professor, had, uh, was teaching research, and he had us read and

critique, uh, some research articles. And one of them, which was poorly done, and

we were to find that it was not valid, was about the validity of prayer in healing

Often, these messages may be so covert or implicit they are hard to describe beyond "a

sense" of the topic not being welcome.

**Position C.** Position C lands where religious expression is moderate to high and

hostility is relatively high and is marked by the experience of an anti-Christian bias. At

the beginning of the first round interview with Richard, he asserted, "It's unfortunate,

given the number of people that are religious, uh… there's a strong bias against

specifically Christians in ACA." This position is further evidenced by recent discourses

on the CESNET-L electronic mailing list. As one member wrote:

I wonder if that was a direct response to ACA's perceived attack against

Christians with A.11.b. I know that group perceived that because of the Michigan

case in particular, which was sent back to the lower court, and the perception that

testimony in that case by ACA led to the perception that [professional] counseling

as represented by ACA is anti-Christian. (R. Henriksen Jr., personal

communication, April 14, 2016)

This position takes more space on the map, as it accounts for both moderate and high

levels of religious expression, particularly because a "Christian" may outwardly express

varying degrees of recognizable religious identity.

**Position D.** Position D occurs at the intersection of moderately high religious expression and high hostility, which often takes the form of discrimination. Discrimination, as related to religious expression, is a contested and often polarizing topic in the counselor education arena. This site of conflict is highlighted by the *Ward vs. Wilbanks* (2009) and *Keeton vs. Anderson-Wiley* (2010) cases. In each of these cases, students appealed their dismissals from counselor education programs. Each of the plaintiffs had refused to counsel gay clients, citing conflict with religious beliefs. Ultimately, the students were dismissed for violating the ACA's *Code of Ethics* (2009). Although the departments' right to dismiss the students for professional ethics violations was upheld by the courts, there is remaining debate in the counseling profession about whether or not this is discrimination based on religious values or beliefs. These students were expressing high levels of religiosity and, from their (and others') perspective, experienced discrimination as a result.

Richard discussed how he experienced discrimination from search committee members during two separate faculty interviews. He recounted his experience at one school:

> Because I, on my vita it showed that I'd been a Baptist minister. They knew nothing about me, but immediately assumed Falwellian implications. So, uh, I was nothing like that. I could have sued them if I would have chose to because they attacked me based off of, uh, the particular class. They discriminated against me.

The assumptions made regarding his conservative Christian education and work history were used to disqualify him from employment. A similar story was shared by a poster on CESNET-L:

> This type of discrimination also occurs on the hiring side. The past year I have been searching for a CES teaching position. During the interview process, I was notified by 2 universities who regularly post on CES-NET that the reason I was not moved forward in the hiring process was my Master's Degree from a conservative Christian seminary. While this may not meet the counseling professions definition of discrimination, it is discriminatory and disgraceful. (C. Limoges, personal communication, April 15, 2016).

It should be noted the data that substantiates this position is specifically related to expression of the Christian religion. Within this position, there is a missing sub-position of high expression of religions other than Christianity. The implication could be that non-Christian religions, which are also non-dominant religions, may be silenced in the discourse.

**Position E.** In Position E, religious expression is high and experienced hostility is very low. Richard, who frequently expresses his religious identity, talked about how spiritual and religious conversations have been welcomed by the department and students at two institutions where he has worked—one religiously affiliated, the other not.

> [At the religious university], I could be a little more specific … a little more, uh, directly focused on Christian stuff…. Although, uh, I wasn't really that different. I told the students, 'I understand you came to [to this university], you may have come [here], because of the Christian background. You gotta work with all types

of people. All types of spirituality.' And so, um, let's say here, um, … I may talk

about Christian stuff 25 percent of the time; at [that school] I may have talked

about it 35 percent of the time. Not that much different….[Here], they don't have

a problem, at least in the College of Ed, they don't have a problem with including

spirituality in the process as long, uh, as it's like, it's like any topic. As long as

it's not your ax that you're grinding.

Jeremy, whose yarmulke is an immediately recognizable faith symbol, spoke to a similar

acceptance from the students:

I mean the students are bringing it themselves, so I don't want to say like I'm

bringing it. So that the students are bringing it in a way that's showing their

connection with like their fuller being, like as they're stepping into like a

counselor identity.

A high expression of spirituality or religion is met with openness in this position.

**Missing positions.** The missing positions in the data occur where low expression

of spirituality and religion intersects with high hostility and moderate expression

intersects with moderate to low hostility. The first position is not necessarily

unanticipated, without expression there may not be a catalyst for the hostility. However,

it is possible that fear of hostility may impede expression, making it an important position

to seek in future study. The missing position of moderate religious expression and low

hostility may also be useful to seek via theoretical sampling. Moderate religious

expression with minimal experienced hostility may be missing from the data because it is

possibly considered a "nothing to report" position. This position is important to examine

in future research because it may offer useful approaches for both those who express religiosity and those who engage in hostility toward religious expression.

**Positional Map Three: Tenure and Autonomy**

Positional Map Three (see Figure 5.3) represents the relationship between tenure and the experienced (or perceived) level of autonomy in incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling or counselor education. The X-axis represents the continuum from student to pre-tenure or non-tenured faculty to tenured faculty. The data supports inclusion of the student position because counselor educators typically start teaching in their doctoral programs. The student positions also include work with clients, as this is often when messages from supervisors regarding spiritualty and religion begin to influence autonomy. The Y-axis represents the level of autonomy or freedom experienced in incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling or counselor education. The data supported five positions, while there are four positions lacking substantiation.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| +++ | Missing position. | Position D: Students' expectations of spiritual/religious discussion make space for freedom to explore in classroom. | Position E: Tenure allows for less fear of student grievances and more openness to spiritual/religious issues in the classroom. |
| **Experienced level of autonomy/ freedom to address spiritual and religious issues** | Position B: Implicit message that spiritual/religious issues not prioritized, but not prohibited. Only explicit initiation from client acceptable. | Position C: Spiritual/religious issues may be addressed. There is a heightened awareness of potential student grievance. | Missing position. |
| | Position A: Explicit directions not to discuss spiritual/religious issues with clients/students | Missing position. | Missing position. |
| --- | --- student | pre-tenure/non TT | tenure +++ |

*Figure 5.3*. Positional Map Three. Tenure and autonomy.

**Position A.** Position A is situated when counselor educators were students and experienced a low degree of autonomy to address spiritual or religious issues with clients or when teaching classes. This low level of autonomy is a result of being directly told by supervisors or faculty not to discuss spirituality and religion. Richard had been specifically told he could not discuss spirituality and religion as a student:

> And so I went back and did, um, some masters leveling work that you consider for the doctoral program and then got into the doctoral program. … However, I was told specifically and directly from professors um both at my masters, in my masters leveling courses, that I was absolutely not to bring up religion or spirituality to clients.

**Position B.** Position B occurs at the intersection of student and a moderate degree of autonomy. This position manifests as implicit messages that issues related to spirituality and religion are not prioritized and are only appropriate to discuss if the client or students introduce them. Jeremy talked about his desire to include spirituality in his work and the implicit message he received:

> When I did my masters, you know, I wanted to really focus in on spirituality and, um, it's not like they didn't let me, but they said that I should really stay broad at first. And I shouldn't just like zone in too quickly. So then when I was doing my PhD I was like I really want to integrate with spirituality and religion with psychology. That's what I was really interested in, so I found out [a university] that had a pastoral counseling program. And, you know, I applied there, I just like, I feel like, I felt like, I checked make sure it's ok being Jewish if I could go to a pastoral counseling program.

His experience of not feeling as though he had the freedom to explore spirituality influenced his decision to find a doctoral program where he would have latitude to do so. Ultimately, he sought a faculty position that did the same. Richard explained how, as a student, his faculty only allowed him to discuss spiritual and religious issues when clients asked for it:

> The first semester, we had two semesters of doctoral practicum, my first semester, a couple came in, it was a African American couple, and they specifically—they were getting married—and they specifically wanted a Christian, uh, to work with them in pre-marital counseling. Well, um, my professor said I want you to work with them because he knew my background and I said "well, Dr. M told me I can't talk about that" He said, "well, they asked for it." And so then he said, so, "you, um, can't preach to them. You can't put your values on them, but you can go where they want to go."

In Position B, bringing in spirituality or religion is "allowed" only when it is initiated by the other party.

**Position C.** Position C is located where tenure has either not yet been achieved or is not offered and there is a moderate level of experienced autonomy. At Position C, counselor educators may not have the academic freedom that often accompanies tenured positions. Catherine, although now tenured, discussed what it was like before having tenure:

> I am aware that there will in every classroom be at least one student that cannot resonate with the topic and to potentially be offended to the point of raising a student concern or complaint. And so that certainly—I won't say that it's on my

radar as much now as it was when I first started in teaching, but it's still on the

radar. … Now that I'm tenured, in my mind I think this is what education is about

and this is certainly what counseling is about: the ability to wrestle with these

tricky subjects. And so I don't find myself having as much pause…

There was pause and consideration of student complaints weighed into her decisions of

how to approach spirituality and religion in the classroom.

**Position D.** Position D is also situated in the pre-tenure/non-tenure section of the

X-axis, but it is higher on the experienced level of autonomy scale. In this position, the

counselor educator does not have the protections of tenure and feels freedom to explore

spiritual and religious topics. This freedom comes from student expectations of exploring

the topic. Jeremy is at a non-tenure-granting university where students come to the

counseling program specifically for the spirituality that is incorporated:

I mean the students are bringing it [spirituality] themselves, so I don't want to say

like I'm bringing it. So that the students are bringing it in a way that's showing

their connection with like their fuller being, like as they're stepping into like a

counselor identity.

With the expectation that spirituality or religion will be a topic of discussion comes a

certain freedom in the exploration.

**Position E.** Position E holds with tenure there is an accompanying freedom to

incorporate spirituality and religion into the classroom. Although Richard does not

explicitly express this position, I observed it in his overall attitude toward the subject. He

presented himself as not only passionate about the importance of bringing spirituality and

religion into counselor education, but also unafraid and unapologetic of doing so. This

does not necessarily seem out of character for a tenured, full professor. Catherine, who

recently achieved tenure, was succinct in her description of how it influences her

approach, "I don't think I'm going to lose my job by bringing up these topics."

**Missing positions.** The missing positions in this map are particularly salient for

identifying potentially silenced voices. Of note is that there are not positions taken for

pre-tenure/non-tenured, or tenured faculty and little autonomy to address spirituality and

religion in the classroom. As the experience of diminished autonomy may be an

indication of marginalization, it would be valuable to understand how and why these

positions may occur. In this way, these missing positions informed future research

recommendations discussed in the following chapter. It is possible that counselor

educators who can speak to these positions are fearful of doing so, which makes an even

more meaningful reason to find and hear from these voices. Finally, students and a high

degree of autonomy is a position not taken in the data. This may seem a predictable

missing position, as, by nature, students are under supervision from faculty and advisors.

That does not mean, however, that the position cannot be found. Detailing this position

could be useful to helping student counselor educators feel empowered to discuss

spirituality and religion in the classroom.

## Social Worlds and Arenas Maps

Using the conceptual framework, professional organization (e.g., ACA, ACES)

documents, data from rounds one and two, and my own professional knowledge related

to counseling, I constructed social worlds and arenas. There are three key arenas that

intersect for this study: the counselor education arena, the religious arena, and the

spiritual arena. The situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and

religion into teaching occurs within this intersection. The social worlds constructed from the data exist where all three of these arenas overlap.

The social worlds constructed from the data are the client world, the student world, the counselor world, the counselor educator world, and the faculty/department world. All social worlds occur on both sides of the arenas boundary for the counselor education, spiritual, and religious arenas, meaning that they are influenced by and occur within some, but not always all, of the arenas, as well as in other arenas not identified by the data or germane to the situation. There are uncountable numbers of arenas and social worlds; what is identified here are the worlds that have "stories to tell" for this study (Clarke, 2005, p. 111).

**Arenas Map**

The arenas map (see Figure 5.4) is deceptively simplistic in its design. It shows the three major arenas in which the situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching takes place—the counselor education, religious, and spiritual arenas. What is not shown on this map, as it is not the "big story" (Clarke, 2005, p. 111) of this study, are the countless and varied social worlds that exist within, between, and among the different configurations of intersections of the arenas. Rather, the social worlds for this study occur where the three arenas intersect.
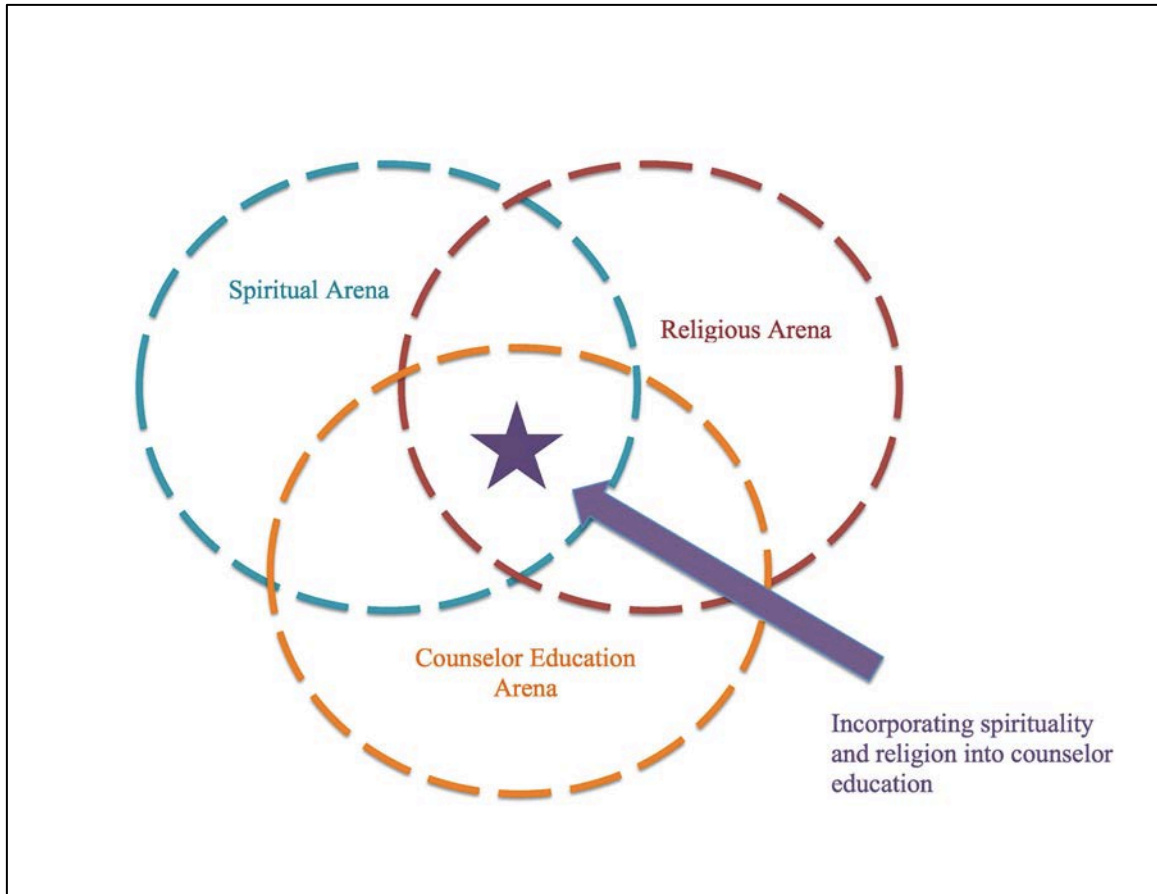
*Figure 5.4*. Arenas Map.

**Counselor education arena.** The counselor education arena represents the sites

of action where counselors receive training and education to contribute to their

developing professional counselor identity. This could include universities, counseling

departments, internship sites, and myriad other places that counselor development occurs.

This arena is evidenced by professional organizations whose purpose is to promote

counselor education and development, such as Association for Counselor Education and

Supervision (ACES), CACREP, National Board of Counselor Certification, as well as the

hundreds of masters- and doctoral-level counselor education programs located in

universities.

**Religious arena.** The religious arena encompasses the countless and varied religions that exist in the world. This arena comprises thousands (or more) social worlds beyond the scope of this study. Each major religion could be a sub-arena made up of social worlds of specific denominations. Religion, by its nature, is socially defined, "provides a structure for human spirituality, including narratives, symbols, beliefs, and practices, which are embedded in ancestral traditions, cultural traditions, or both" (Cashwell & Young, p. 9).

**Spiritual Arena.** The spiritual arena may be hardest to define, just as spirituality has a nebulous and subjective definition. Susan talked about the challenge in defining spirituality, noting its dynamic nature:

> it's not necessarily concrete. And I develop my articulation of my spirituality and of spirituality in general—it's developing and I don't think it will ever stop developing."

It is a concept that holds personal meaning to the individual. Yet, at the same time, as Richard explained:

> It's not like, okay, spirituality is this part and you've got your job over here and your family. But no, you've got all this stuff and [it fits] within a spiritual womb, if you will.

There is a "spiritual womb" that encompasses a collectivity of social worlds. Some may argue that all humans fall within this spiritual arena. Richard, who broadly defined spirituality as meaning-making, argued

> even atheists have a core meaning, it may be, you know, contributing to humanity is their spirituality if you will, but everybody has one.

**Social Worlds**

The social worlds of client, counselor educator, student, counselor, and faculty/department are situated within, and extend beyond, the porous boundaries of the intersection of the counselor educator, religious, and spiritual arena. To reiterate, these are the social worlds that have the biggest "stories to tell" in the collected data, not an exhaustive depiction of all social worlds that exist within the situation. The size and location of the social world on the map (see Figure 5.5) is relative to the influence and centrality of that world to the situation. In the interview data, social worlds are often implicit in subtleties of language such as "we," "us," and "them." In professional texts and websites, the social worlds are defined in ways that tend not to capture the fluidity of movement between or overlapping of multiple worlds.
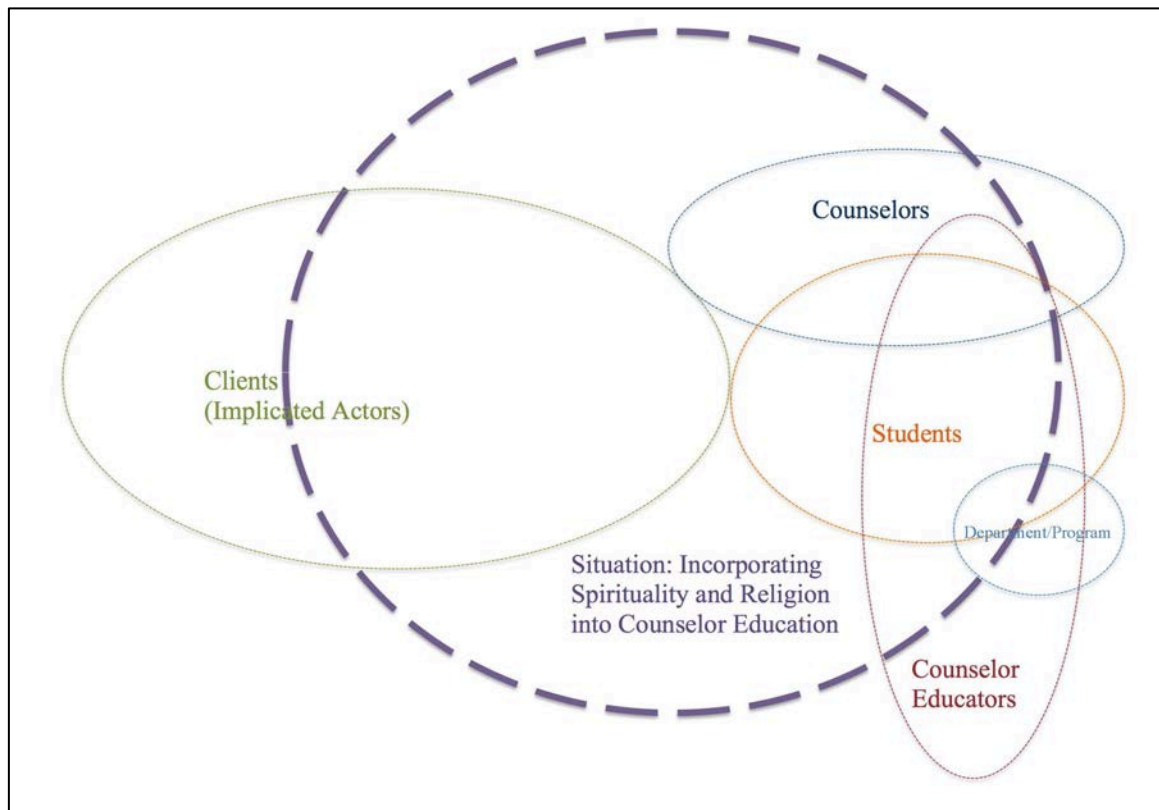


*Figure 5.5.* Social Worlds Map.

**Client world.** The client world is the largest social world because clients are ultimately the most important actors in the situation. At the same time, they are implicated actors, meaning that they are not physically present in the situation. Clarke (2005) has suggested implicated actors are marginalized or silenced voices, however, that is not necessarily true in this situation. The client is not physically present in the classroom, yet in training counselors, counselor educators are preparing them to ethically serve clients. As was seen in the sensitizing concept of *serving the client*, the client's wellbeing is a motivating factor for the incorporation of spirituality and religion into counseling. Indeed, according to the ACA (2014) *Code of Ethics* section A.1.a., "the primary responsibility of counselors is to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients" (p. 4).

Clients are people who seek the services of a counselor, and can be individuals, families, couples, or groups. They are a social world because there is a collective action of engaging in counseling, although they do not present themselves as a formal collective. For example, there is not a "clients of counseling" association. The boundaries for the client may be more diffuse than the other social worlds as they are not bound by professional standards, codes of ethics, or laws relative to being a client.

Although any individuals from the other social worlds present in the map may sometimes be clients, there would not be an overlap of the worlds, but rather a movement from the other social world into the client world. One may not act as a counselor and client in the same moment. A counselor and/or counselor educator's time spent in the client world may influence their actions in the counselor/counselor educator world. This can be illustrated by a comment Susan made. When asked what contributed to her feeling

a need to incorporate spirituality and religion into her teaching, Susan remarked, "because it's part of my life [and] part of my experience as a client in counseling."

**Counselor educator world.** The counselor educator world is the collective of professional counselors who engage in the training, development, and supervision of counselors (ACA, 2014, p. 20). All of the participants identified as counselor educators through their work, as well as through their earned doctorates of counselor education. Counselor educators engage in the social actions of teaching, researching, supervising, and advising. By definition (ACA, 2014), counselor educators are also counselors, so there is considerable overlap of the counselor educator world with the counselor world. Counselor educators do not exist solely within the social world of counselors, however, because social worlds are created by action, not identity. In other words, counselor educators are not always engaging in the actions of the counselor world.

Overlap of the counselor educator and counselor world may occur in several ways. Jeremy and Catherine both maintain private counseling practices in addition to their jobs as full-time counselor educators. In this way, they move their actions and their physical selves from educating to counseling. Counselor educator and counselor worlds overlap more subtly when counselor educators engage in counseling action with students. Although counselor educators are not students' counselors, as this would be an ethical boundary violation (ACA, 2014), it is common and acceptable during the relationship with students for counselor educators to slip into a counselor role (Bernard & Goodyear, 2013). Richard highlighted this overlap when he asserted that "if you have good training as a counselor, [as a counselor educator] you understand that…we're all in the process of meaning-making." He is speaking to counselor actions informing the actions of teaching.

There is also significant overlap between the counselor educator and the student worlds, as they are frequently engaging in reciprocal actions together, both in and beyond the classroom. Catherine described one example of this:

> For me, as a counselor educator, the most important way to teach spirituality is to take it beyond the classroom. Like that is the most important way I know to do that and so, um, like I took 16 graduate students to Ireland…and basically it was exploring the dialecticism within ourselves.

Here she is in the counselor educator world and student world at the same time. She is engaged in the actions of counselor educator and student. Her use of "ourselves" reflects this overlap.

The counselor educator world boundary does not touch the client world boundary, as there is not direct contact between counselor educator and client. Instead, the influence is indirect. The counselor educator world influences the client through its interactions with the counselor and student worlds. Conversely, counselor educators learn of the client world through their interactions with the counselor and student worlds.

**Student World.** The student world represents individuals engaging in the actions of learning counseling and developing a counselor identity via enrollment in an educational program. Jeremy explained how individuals enter the student world in his program, as well as the role that spirituality plays in that entry:

> Students come to the program because we're open about spirituality and religion, but I think mostly like spirituality in like a blown-open type of way. … And yeah, like I think um probably like people feel like a lot of the students feel like a spiritual connection with the institution. Like a lot of students say in their

interview, 'I'm just meant to be—I feel like I'm meant to be here.' It's like a very

common thing I hear. And that I think people becoming therapists for them is like

part of a calling that they have.

This reflects both a conscious and spiritually driven choice to enter the social world of

student. Jeremy also spoke to asking to join the student world, thus engaging in social

worlds overlap, as a means of gaining trust with the students.

Students overlap with the counselor world when they engage in the actions of

counseling. This occurs most typically in internship and practicum, when the students

begin to see clients and make contact with the client world. In those moments, they are

performing the actions of counselors in working with clients, as well as learning about

and developing their professional counselor identity.

**Counselor World.** The counselor world's boundaries are more rigid than the

other worlds' boundaries because of professional regulations and state laws. The ACA

(2014) *Code of Ethics*, as well as other professional documents and licensure rules, which

vary state to state, draw the boundaries of the counselor world. The collective social

action of counselors can be derived from the consensus definition of *counseling*:

Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals,

families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career

goals (Kaplan, Tarvydas, & Gladding, 2014, p. 366).

In the counselor world, individuals are developing and maintaining relationships with

clients in an effort to achieve mental health and other goals for the client. Other actions

that occur in the counselor world are seeking and maintaining licensure, advocating for

the counseling profession and for clients, and abiding by the rules of professional

organizations and states licensing boards. Again, these social actions are evidenced in the ACA (2014) *Code of Ethics*, but that does not mean there is not contestation and discourse about the preferred way of performing these actions. Electronic mailing lists and message boards for the counseling profession (e.g., CESNET-L, ACA Connect) are replete with discourses related to how counselors should perform the actions of this social world. Jeremy spoke to how his program is less involved in actions directed by professional counseling organizations like ACA and CACREP: "if I bring up CACREP, I get an eye roll."

**Faculty/department world.** The faculty/department social world is the smallest on the map, as the data showed it had the least amount of influence on the other worlds. The social world of the faculty/department is still relevant to the situation, however. The faculty/department world includes actions involving administration of counselor education, such as rulemaking, gatekeeping, creating norms, and curriculum development. Catherine described a recent collective action of gatekeeping with her faculty/department:

> There was a student in the class who pretty vocally said, you know, 'I understand that the American School Counseling Association says that we serve all students, but I have a bias and I will always have that bias.' And that statement…caused the faculty to draw a fitness to practice on her.

In this incident, the faculty acted together to enforce rules that they had created for their program. In involving the student as a participant in the action, there is overlap of the two social worlds. In these instances, the student or faculty may then need to make a decision that affects the student's continued membership in that social world. Rulemaking is a common task of the faculty/department world. Each participant's department, including

my own, has a faculty-authored handbook, as well as other supporting documents, to guide students and faculty actions when they are operating within the student, faculty/department, and counselor educator social worlds. Similarly, enforcement of those rules is a social action of the faculty/department.

**Summary of Social Worlds and Arenas**

Three arenas, counselor education, religious, and spiritual, intersect to form the site of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling. At this site, there is an interaction of the social worlds of client, counselor, counselor educator, student, and faculty/department. The social world of the client comes in contact with, but does not overlap, the social worlds of counselor and student. The social worlds of student, counselor, counselor educator, and faculty/department have significant overlap and movement among worlds. The client world is the largest representing its relative importance, while the counselor, counselor educator, and student worlds are relatively the same in size. The faculty/department world is the smallest, as the data supports that it has less influence than the other worlds.

## Focus Group

The participants were provided with the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps accompanied by brief descriptions. They were then invited to give feedback on positions taken, missing positions, arenas, and social worlds. In addition to being provided space for final comments, participants were invited to answer the following questions:

1.  What social worlds are most influential to incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education? How so?

2. What social worlds may be missing from this map?

3. How would you define membership/boundaries of any of the social worlds?

4. Which missing positions, if any, may be represented by your experiences? Please elaborate.

5. How might you amend any of the positions?

I provided an open link to a Google Doc that allowed participants to make their comments anonymous to other participants, if they preferred, and asked them to respond within one week. I encouraged participants to respond to the questions they deemed most salient and to feel free to interact with one another's comments. Only Jeremy and Susan were able to participate in the focus group. Richard and Catherine replied that other obligations prevented them from participating.

Susan and Jeremy confirmed the positions taken on all three positional maps, although Susan added the following regarding **teaching experience and structure:**

The only missing position I might have some experience with is low structure and low level of teaching experience in Map 1. Although not in the very first courses I taught, I remember informally and spontaneously some conversation about spirituality and religion quite early in my teaching experience. I think that might have been helped by being in a religiously affiliated (Catholic) institution.

This addition is useful, and it speaks to the need for future theoretical sampling to explore what allows for new counselor educators to be more comfortable with incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching. For that reason, it remains as a missing position on the map.

Susan also offered an implication of a missing position in the positional map for

**tenure and autonomy**:

> In Map 2, the missing high level of freedom for students speaks to me of the need
>
> for counselor educators to explicitly offer that freedom because of both the
>
> dominant culture (assumptions are made about what teachers expect) and the
>
> power structure of the student-teacher relationship (students might not claim
>
> freedom to break cultural rules without teacher invitation).

Indeed, the potential assumption of student subordination in a student-teacher

relationship may inhibit the student's perceived autonomy to introduce spirituality and

religion without invitation.

For the arenas and social worlds maps, there was debate surrounding an additional

social sphere. Jeremy commented

> right now there is also the influence of the larger social sphere we live in that is
>
> pumping the crucialness of diversity in every service-oriented arena.

To which Susan responded

> I also agree with [Jeremy] that the larger social sphere also feels quite present,
>
> bringing both public controversies over religion and a growing interest in
>
> spirituality, at least in some circles.

These controversies may certainly be present, however, they are not supported by the

data for inclusion in these particular maps. They are perhaps represented best by

discourses within the social worlds. As stated earlier, the social worlds and arenas maps

are not exhaustive, they are an analysis tool to help identify where the sites of action and

"big stories" lie.

Finally, Jeremy contributed what he envisions to be an additional social world:

What might be missing from the map is the potential clients imagined by the

students … We are educating towards a more enlightened world where there is

more freedom of R/S expression, openness, and acceptance of difference. So I

think both CEs, students, and the larger cultural context has a perceived client in

mind that is coming for therapy.

This introduced a possible concept of a social world of non-human actants—imagined

clients. I went back to the data to see if this was supported. Susan, Jeremy, and Richard

had all discussed using case studies and asking students to imagine how they may work

with a hypothetical client. In this imagining, there is an interaction or social encounter

with the hypothetical client. However, in revisiting what social worlds are intended to

represent, which is collective social action and commitment, I determined there is an

action happening within overlapping social worlds. It seems rather than being a social

world of its own, imagining a client is a collective social action of the social worlds of

student, counselor, and counselor educator.

I gave careful consideration to the focus group input, particularly regarding the

suggestion of adding a "social sphere" and a social world of an imagined client. In the

end, the data and methodology did not support amending the maps. These comments

from Jeremy and Susan did enhance the construction of the social worlds and offered

different perspectives of how social worlds may be conceptualized.

**Situatedness of the Researcher**

As I completed this final round of analysis, I began to sense weariness in the participants, as well as myself. The weariness of the participants was evidenced by the lack of participation in the focus group. I was mindful Jeremy, Susan, Richard, and Catherine have been generous with their time and have many other things going on in their lives. With the end of the semester approaching, I was fearful that no one would participate. In future studies, I will search for ways to gain depth of data from participants with less time commitment. I believe the relationships I have forged with the participants contributed to their generosity of time. This has been a win-win situation. I have created new connections and the result is a better study.

Regarding my own weariness, I was able to re-energize myself in several ways. I was motivated to finish, and I was careful to reflect on when that motivation may be causing me to rush through analysis or writing. When I began to feel that happening, I took a break. When I came back to the data and writing, I did so with fresh eyes and brain. When I was in doubt, I always went back to the data, particularly the interview transcripts. I sometimes felt as though I could recite these transcripts verbatim.

Finally, in the focus group, I felt pressured to be loyal to the comments made by Susan and Jeremy related to the additions they would make to the social worlds and arenas maps. My initial reaction was "the participants said they would add it, so I *must* add it." I also thought the idea of an imagined client social world was very cool and post-modern. But then I found myself trying to shoehorn in these concepts. I decided the best approach was to return to the data first and let it tell me what to do. I then reviewed Clarke's (2005) descriptions of and instructions for social worlds and arenas. When

applying these criteria, I could not rationalize or justify adding these two elements to the

maps. To do so would have been a result of feeling like I "must" to please my

participants, not because it was supported by the data or methodology. In the end, I

decided to let data and methodology guide the decision.

Chapter VI

Situational Analysis of Counselor Educators Incorporating

Spiritual and Religious Issues into Teaching

**Review of Procedures**

This study began with the question, "What is the situation of counselor educators

incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching?" Although the ACA (2014)

*Code of Ethics*, CACREP *2016 Standards,* and the ACA-endorsed *ASERVIC*

*Competencies* (2009) articulate that counselors are expected to be competent in

addressing clients' spiritual and religious issues, there has been scant investigation into

how counselor educators teach counselors-in-training to do so. In building a conceptual

framework for the study, I reviewed literature from counseling and other mental health

fields addressing how to teach students to incorporate spirituality and religion into client

work. Several authors (Briggs & Dixon Rayle, 2005; Burke, et al., 1999; Dobmeier &

Reiner, 2012; Kelly, 1994; Souza, 2002; Young et al., 2002; Young et al., 2007) have

called for more research on how spirituality and religion are included in the counseling

curriculum, as well as how to better teach these topics. Although there are numerous

publications offering specific interventions for addressing spiritual and religious issues in

the classroom (e.g., Curry, 2009; Meyer, 2012; Willow et al., 2010), there were no

studies found that address how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion

across the curriculum. Researchers have found many students and counselors perceived

their training in spiritual and religious issues in counseling to be inadequate or non-

existent (Adams, 2012; Dobmeier & Reiner, 2012; Henriksen et al., 2015).

To investigate the situation of counselor educators incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching, I used a qualitative research design blending situational analysis (Clarke, 2005) and grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). I recruited and selected four full-time counselor educators who incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching: Richard, Jeremy, Catherine, and Susan. The participants were selected to meet maximum variation of geographic region (based on ACES regions) and secular/religious affiliation of the university. ACES is divided into five geographic regions: North Atlantic (NARACES), Southern (SACES), North Central (NCACES), Rocky Mountain (RMACES), and Western (WACES). I was able to recruit a participant from every region, with the exception of RMACES. Before final participant selection, I had a brief phone conversation with each person to informally assess if they were able to engage in reflexive dialogue.

Data collection consisted of two rounds of in-depth interviews, two rounds of interpretive dialogues, a focus group, and a selection of discourse materials. Interviews and interpretive dialogues primarily happened via Skype, a web-based video conferencing program. Data analysis consisted of open coding, focused coding, axial coding, and mapping. Data analysis happened concurrent to data collection, which is a trademark of SA and grounded theory methodologies. Data collection began with the first round of in-depth interviews, which were transcribed verbatim to allow for coding and further analysis. Data analysis informally began during the first interview, when I memoed thoughts and potential codes that came to mind. More formal data analysis started with the transcribed interviews.

The first step in data analysis was initial coding, which involved looking at the data word-by-word, line-by-line, and incident-by-incident to label actions, themes, and topics (Charmaz, 2014). Using the initial codes, I then employed focused coding to identify the most frequent and salient codes, often consolidating related codes into one. Through focused coding, I developed sensitizing concepts and then used axial coding and situational mapping to find the ways in which the sensitizing concepts related to each other. I created a situational map for each participant's interview.

Using the situational maps, I conducted interpretive dialogues with each participant. I shared and described the map and its elements to each participant. As we discussed the map, I noted the participant's changes directly on the map using a different color ink to identify participant contributions. After completing all four interpretive dialogues, the sensitizing concepts that emerged were **personal spiritual/religious journey**, **own developing professional identity**, **serving the client**, and **opening doors**. I used grounded theorizing to describe the social actions and process that occurs between and among the sensitizing concepts. I then developed interview questions based on the gaps and curiosities left after first round analysis.

Second round data collection and analysis mirrored the procedures from the first round. After second round analysis, the sensitizing concepts were re-constructed into **personal odyssey, serving the client, trusting,** and **planting seeds for future growth.** I then collected and analyzed textual data from participants' department websites. This data yielded no significant contribution to the previous analysis. I again used grounded theorizing to describe the processual relationships among the sensitizing concepts.

Using all of the interview data, interpretive dialogue data, and textual data gathered from discussion threads on CESNET-L, a counselor educator electronic mailing list, as well as information and data that contributed to conceptual framework for this study, I created positional, arenas, and social worlds maps. These maps and brief descriptions were shared with participants via email, with participants being invited to partake in a focus group via Google Documents. Susan and Jeremy participated in the focus group, offering support for the maps and additional considerations. After analyzing the focus group responses, I found no changes were necessary for the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps. These maps detailed where the situation is located, what social worlds are involved, and what voices may be silenced. Together, all of the above described processes and procedures informed the situational analysis of counselor educators incorporating spiritual and religious issues into their teaching.

## Situational Analysis of Counselor Educators Incorporating Spiritual and Religious Issues into Teaching

The situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching is located at the intersection of the counselor education, religious, and spiritual arenas (see Figure 5.1). Here the social worlds of client, counselor educator, student, counselor, and faculty/department engage in collective actions related to incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counselor education (see Figure 5.2). The sensitizing concepts of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching—**personal odyssey, serving the client, trusting,** and **planting seeds for future growth**—offer directions to look for understanding the situation, not definitive

explanations. Grounded theorizing describes the processual relationships between and among these sensitizing concepts.

**Arenas and Social Worlds**

The situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion is located at the confluence of the counselor education, religious, and spiritual arenas. This is the "where" of the situation. The *counselor education arena* represents the sites of action where counselors receive training and education to contribute to their developing professional counselor identity, such as universities and counseling departments. The *religious arena* is large and diverse, encompassing all religions, and likely divided into many sub-arenas and countless social worlds. Religions are socially defined and offer structure to the practices of spirituality, including symbols, traditions, practices, and narratives (Cashwell & Young, 2011). The *spiritual arena* is similarly large and diverse, yet somewhat difficult to define. Spirituality is a deeply personal concept with meaning unique to each individual. It may be most broadly defined by Richard's definition of spirituality as meaning-making. Participants described spirituality in myriad ways, including "meaning making" (Richard), "connection" (Catherine and Jeremy), and "universality of breath" (Jeremy). Richard described all people as existing within a "spiritual womb" that encompasses all life.

Situated within the convergence of the counselor education, religious, and spiritual arenas are the social worlds of client, counselor educator, student, counselor, and faculty/department. Each social world represents the "who" in the situation, with "who" being defined by the collective actions of the world. The boundaries of the social worlds are porous, as individuals and groups move between social worlds. In many instances,

several social worlds overlap. The *client world* comprises those individuals, families, couples, and groups who seek and engage the services of counselors. Ultimately, they are receiving the outcomes of teaching spiritual and religious issues. The *counselor educator world* is bounded by the social action of training, teaching, supervising, and contributing to the development of counselors. The *student world* is composed of individuals engaging in the actions of learning counseling and developing a counselor identity via enrollment in an educational program. The *counselor world* has the most rigid boundaries because its actions are often regulated by professional organizations and state regulations. In the counselor world, individuals are developing and maintaining relationships with clients in an effort to achieve mental health and other goals for the client. The *faculty/department world* is marked by the administration of counselor education, through actions such as rulemaking, gatekeeping, and curriculum development. It is the smallest and least influential world in the situation.

**Grounded Theorizing**

Whereas the arenas suggest where to look for the situation, and the social worlds tell who is involved in the situation, the sensitizing concepts reveal which directions to look in the situation. Via thick analyses, sensitizing concepts describe versus prescribe (Blumer, 1969), offering suggestions rather than definitively specifying what is happening. The sensitizing concepts that emerged from the situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into their teaching are **personal odyssey, serving the client, trusting,** and **planting seeds for future growth**.

Grounded theorizing connects these sensitizing concepts via processual relationships. These relationships are illustrated in the final project map (see Figure 6.1).
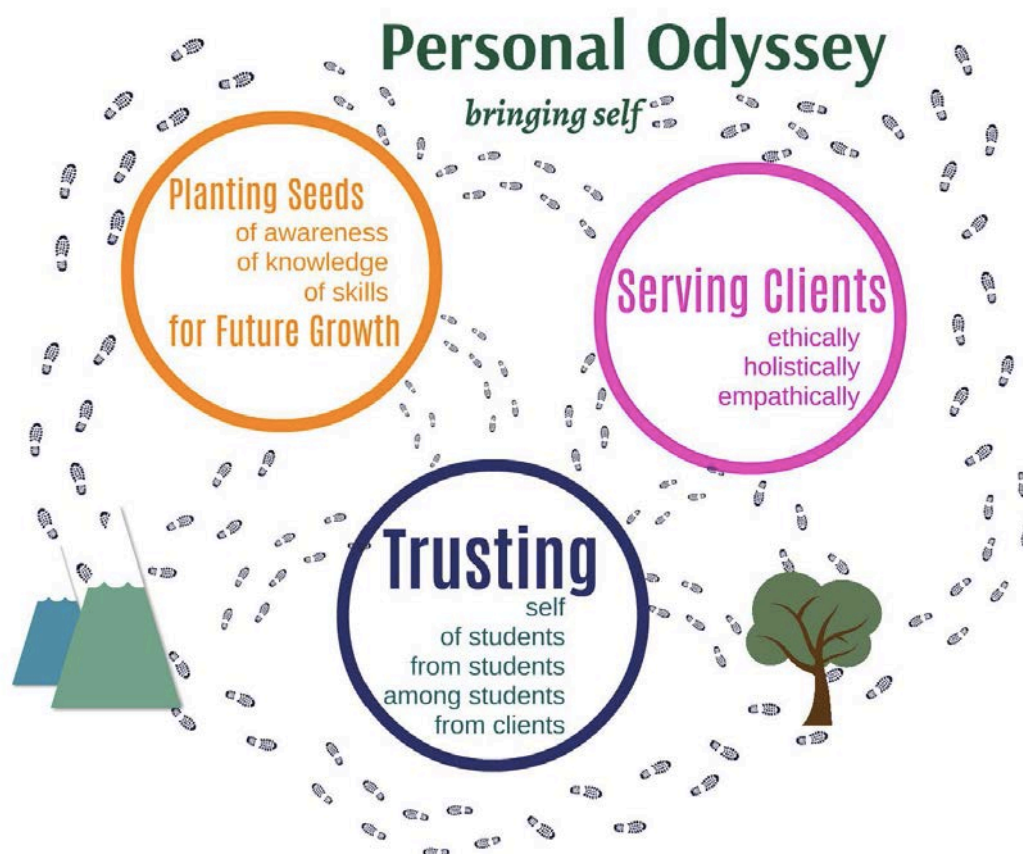
*Figure 6.1.* Final Project Map.

This map shows how **personal odyssey**, depicted with a footprint metaphor,

encompasses and connects the sensitizing concepts. The footprints are representative of

the non-linear path and permeating nature of **personal odyssey**, as well as the action of

*bringing self* to the other sensitizing concepts. Each participant's **personal odyssey**

contributed to the belief that spiritual and religious competency in counseling was critical

to **serving the client** *ethically*, *holistically,* and *empathically*. **Personal odyssey** also

influences the ways in which participants *bring self* into their teaching, which is

represented by **planting seeds for future growth. Planting seeds for future growth** is a

metaphor for the action and process of offering students new *awareness*, *knowledge*, and

*skills* to allow for development of spiritual and religious competency over time. **Trusting**

is developed through one's **personal odyssey** and has considerable salience to **serving the client** and **planting seeds for future growth. Trusting** is fundamental to incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education. **Trusting** has many forms and moves in many directions with *self, students,* and *clients*. The sensitizing concepts of **personal odyssey**, **serving the client**, **trusting**, and **planting seeds** and their processual relationships are described in greater detail below.

    **Personal odyssey.** Personal odyssey is the personal and professional developmental journey of the counselor educator. It is ongoing, having no identifiable start and continuing past the time constraints of this study. **Personal odyssey** pays homage to the integrated nature of identity development; the personal and professional cannot be easily separated as they both have considerable influence on each other. When participants were asked why they incorporate spirituality and religion into counselor education, each answered with a story of the **personal odyssey** that brought them to the belief that spiritual and religious competence was necessary to **serving clients**. For Catherine, the belief was rooted in her research, which can be perceived as both professional and personal:

      My professional research interests, um, are really grounded in understanding how
      when a person can really tap into their own sense of well-being, how that leads to
      improvements with themselves and with their relationships with other people.

      And for me, spirituality is a huge piece of that….I really care about empathy.

Susan talked about her own process of moving away from religion and the influence of that personal experience on her professional development:

My background, most of my adult life, I was a very active church member in an evangelical church. Most of my life from childhood, I was born into it. And I've moved away from religion, but, um, so that's how I came into it. I was still a church member and a very active Christian when I went to do my masters program in counseling. So from the beginning, I was very interested in that connection and how the secular profession and, um, the… the religious perspective on people of reality and how those two can mesh.

As Jeremy succinctly stated, his motivation for incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching "comes very much out of my life experience." The life experiences and developmental processes contained within the **personal odyssey** of the participants are laced throughout the situation.

*Bringing self* into the classroom represents this weaving together of personal and professional development. Susan highlighted these concepts when she described how her **personal odyssey** plays a pivotal role in *bringing self* into the classroom when she teaches about spiritual and religious issues:

I think I have to say that the most crucial aspect [of teaching spiritual and religious issues] is keeping—is my own growth and staying honest and in touch with my own spirituality and my growth in my relationship to religion and spirituality. And staying connected to that and being willing to bring that into the classroom…. So that really being not necessarily conceptually on top of my own stuff, but being genuine and open to my own growth and experiences and being willing to bring them in.

This also illustrates how p**ersonal odyssey** encircles and meanders among **trusting**, **planting seeds for future growth**, and **serving the client**.

**Serving the client.** The desired consequence of incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counselor education is **serving the client** *ethically, holistically,* and *empathically.* In teaching students ways to work with spiritual and religious issues, the participants are **planting seeds for future growth** in competence that will ultimately benefit the client. To *ethically* work with clients, students must be competent in spiritual and religious issues. Richard explained it this way:

> You're not there for yourself and your values. You're there for that client and his or her values." … We all have biases and things, but we're not there for ourselves. And we're not going to be good counselors if we are there for ourselves and not focus solely from the client.

Similarly, spirituality and religion contribute to the holistic being of the client. In expecting that students are **serving the client** holistically, spiritual and religious competence becomes important. Susan put it this way:

> People's spirituality and even and their, their religion is such an essential part of their lives, that I don't see how we can do counseling without it.

Finally, the connection of spirituality and empathy makes spiritual and religious competence necessary for *empathically* **serving the client.** Empathy is critical to building therapeutic relationships with clients. Catherine discussed how she has found spirituality to be the conduit for moving from cognitive empathy to affective empathy:

> We know from the empathy literature that there's this big disconnect often between cognitive empathy and affective empathy and I'm curious what leads [to

that]… How you move something from your head to your heart and from your

heart to action, the hands and the feet. I notice a very similar construct with

spirituality and mindfulness…There's this shift to kind of activating [students']

awareness, like having an understanding of something and then that movement

more to their heart space where they kind of spiritually connect with it in a more

meaningful way. That's like empathy and gratitude and forgiveness and, that

spiritual and emotional component becomes part of their, their own journey.

Being open to spiritual connection can allow for more *empathically* **serving the client**.

**Serving the client** *ethically, holistically,* and *empathically* also has a reciprocal

relationship with **trusting**, as Richard asserted:

Not to work from the client's spiritual frame of reference and either covertly or

overtly juxtaposing your preferred spiritual perspective onto the client also can

circumvent trust with your clients…. I also believe that you have to work from the

client's view of spirituality to engender that trust as well.

**Trusting** is a required action of **serving the client**.

**Trusting. Trusting** is a fundamental component of the process of incorporating

spirituality and religion into counselor education. **Trusting** moves in many directions and

occurs on many levels—*trusting self, trusting students, students trusting each other,*

*students trusting teacher, building trust with clients.* In this way, it engages in a

processual relationship with **serving the client, planting seeds for future growth**, and

**personal odyssey**. **Trusting** creates an environment that allows for *brining self* into the

classroom, on the part of both counselor educator and student. **Trusting** is necessary in

the classroom because, as Jeremy emphasized, "spirituality and religion are one of those topics that are surprisingly sensitive and tender."

Susan spoke to the need of **trusting** *in self* and *in students* when she is *bringing self* and spirituality and religion into the classroom: "I need to trust [students] with myself. I need to trust myself to keep myself safe, and I need to trust them and their responses." Catherine highlighted the importance of *students trusting educator*:

> trust and vulnerability go hand in hand and I don't know if students are able to speak to their spiritual experience vulnerably if they don't have that trust with me as their educator.

Jeremy spoke to a "larger framework of trust" that exists *among students* and he works to join in that **trusting**:

> They're already pretty bonded. They already know their basic story. So I think for me it's, you know, joining the system. Like I need to make sure that I'm kind of like coming with my he—you know, humbly in a way, like, 'I want to join your team.'

These actions of **trusting** are foundational to building spiritual and religious competence in counseling. Richard emphasized that **trusting** therefore must be facilitated by the counselor educator in the classroom: "it's incumbent upon the professor to provide an atmosphere in the classroom where students can feel permission to explore."

**Planting seeds for future growth.** In addition to **trusting**, and with an eye toward **serving the client**, the participants are **planting seeds for future growth.** These are seeds of *awareness*, *knowledge,* and *skills* that they hope will contribute to the development of competency in spiritual and religious issues. The participants understand

this development as part of the students' **personal odyssey**, and recognize it carries into the future. Catherine used the **planting seeds** metaphor when she discussed why she uses *modeling* empathy with students:

> Being able to model the principles of what I view to be spiritual, which is connection through kindness, and to do that in my teaching…. So that maybe at some point that's just planted a seed, but maybe at some point that becomes more of their process.

In *modeling* empathy and understanding, she is **planting seeds for future growth** *of skills* in her students. All of the participants *model* openness of spiritual and religious discussion as **planting seeds for future growth** *of awareness* and *skills.* By being open to the dialogue, they are subtly showing students how to engage in conversations with clients regarding spirituality and religion. This is a seed they hope will take root when students are **serving clients**. Susan is **planting seeds** *of knowledge* with her students by including content and bringing in guest speakers from minority and/or marginalized religions.

**Processual relationships.** The sensitizing concepts of **personal odyssey**, **serving clients**, **trusting**, and **planting seeds for future growth** connect and interact in many ways. As the final project map shows, there is no linear progression or singular directionality. The relational connections are numerous and move in many directions. Informed and motivated by **personal odyssey**, participants are *bringing self* and *modeling* with an aim of **planting seeds for future growth** of *awareness, knowledge,* and *skills,* that will lead to competence in **serving clients** spiritual and religious needs. **Trusting** is a foundational action of these processual relationships, as it creates the conditions

necessary for building competence in **serving clients**, **planting seeds for future growth**, and sharing **personal odyssey** by *bringing self*.

## Accountability and Trustworthiness

I engaged in several procedures to ensure accountability and trustworthiness in this study—prolonged engagement, interpretive dialogues, memoing, collecting multisite data, and map making. I was regularly in contact with the participants from the period of early December 2015 to mid-April 2016. Over this four-month stretch, I spoke with each participant at least six times, including screening and interviews. Further communications happened via email, and I was even able to meet Richard and Jeremy in person at a national conference we all attended. This prolonged engagement allowed for a deeper and more trusting relationship between each participant and me. Through this trust, participants were able to be authentic and reflexive in their interviews and interpretive dialogues. In addition, with every contact, I was able to know each participant a little better and have a deeper understanding of who they were. This understanding led to increased trustworthiness in data analysis of the interviews.

I used interpretive dialogues and a final focus group to allow the participants to contribute their voices to the data analysis process. Interpretive dialogues (Coe Smith, 2006) blend the concept of a member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) with dialogic relationships (Denzin, 2001; Gergen & Gergen, 2003). The interpretive dialogues occurred after each interview was analyzed. Together, participants and I reviewed the situational maps I created when initially analyzing their interviews. During these conversations, participants were invited to delete, amend, confirm, or elaborate any element of their situational maps. This process allowed for the correction of

misinterpretations and the co-construction of sensitizing concepts. The focus group gave participants an opportunity to review and revise the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps, as well as offer any final commentary on the project overall.

Accountability is built into SA through the mapping process, particularly in the positional maps. In creating positional maps, I was able to see (and confirm with participants) which positions were not taken in the data. This challenged me to seek positions that I may not have identified otherwise. In addition to forcing me to consider positions along continuums, these maps illuminate new paths of inquiry for future studies. In general, creating the maps gave me a different way to interact with the data and often generated new ideas and perspectives.

Through memoing and reflexive journaling, I was able to keep a record of my thoughts, feelings, and intentions as I was conducting interviews and analyzing data. I did my best to keep an organized journal of these reflections. At times, this memoing was very informal, consisting of notes jotted down on scraps of paper. The usefulness of these notes, formal or informal, was invaluable to the process of analyzing data and writing results. These memos helped to remind me of fleeting ideas, manage personalizations, and sketch different mapping possibilities. In addition to using my own journaling, I had regular meetings with David Kleist, my major advisor, who reviewed my work and challenged me to defend and/or reconsider my analysis.

## Limitations

Despite best efforts at ensuring accountability and trustworthiness, there are several limitations that demand attention. The intent of this study was to investigate counselor educators who incorporate spirituality and religion into teaching; therefore, it

may not resonate with a reader who does not find salience in incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling. As the participants described, it was their own personal journey that brought them to this belief. The meaning derived from this study will likely be different for each reader.

I was unable to recruit a participant from the Rocky Mountain ACES region. Although rich data and thick analyses were achieved with the four participants, there remains a small gap in the maximum variation. It was not the goal to have participants speak as a representatives for their regions, however, having a Rocky Mountain ACES participant would have increased the heterogeneity of the group. Further heterogeneity may have also been achieved by having more ethnic and religious diversity. All participants were white and came from a Judeo-Christian background. As such, minority ethnicities and religions did not have a voice in this study.

Richard and Catherine did not participate in the focus group, and therefore did not offer their perspectives on the positional, arenas, and social worlds maps. This left only Susan and Jeremy to contribute feedback and interpretations. While their comments on the maps were useful in confirming the construction of the maps, input from the other participants would have made for richer discussion.

 Finally, the positional maps highlighted several missing positions, and possible limitations, in the data. The most salient limitation that stands out from the positional maps is that of pre-tenure, non-tenured, and tenured counselor educators experiencing low levels of autonomy in incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching. These are likely silenced voices in the situation. The additional missing position of low religious expression and high experienced hostility is also a likely silenced voice. Despite some

early experiences of hostility or diminished autonomy in incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, all the participants expressed feeling as though they had the freedom to address these topics now. In not hearing from counselor educators who do not experience this level of freedom, marginalization may be going unnoticed.

## Implications

The ACA (2014) *Code of Ethics,* CACREP (2015) *2016 Standards*, and ACA-endorsed ASERVIC Competencies (2009) all highlight the importance of attending to spiritual and religious issues in counseling. Researchers have suggested many counselor educators are not incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching, despite the growing amount of literature supporting its inclusion in counseling work (Young et al., 2002; Young et al., 2007). However, there was no research examining how counselor educators incorporate spirituality and religion into their teaching. This study offers insight into the process and contextual influences of this incorporation. Counselor educators may benefit through understanding the situation of this group of participants incorporating spiritual and religious issues into teaching.

### Implications for Counselor Educators

Each participant identified the important role their own **personal odyssey** plays in how and why they incorporate spiritual and religious issues into their teaching and **serving clients**. This process of personal (to include spiritual/religious) and professional identity development was more influential to the participants than directives from ACA or CACREP to include spirituality and religion in client considerations. This suggests a counselor educator's relationship with spirituality and/or religion is an important avenue of exploration. This finding is supported by and supports ASERVIC Competencies

(2009) three, four, and five, which fall under the heading of "Counselor Self Awareness." These competencies highlight the importance of continually exploring, evaluating, and recognizing the influences of a counselor's own attitudes toward spirituality and religion. ASERVIC Competencies (2009) one and two, which identify the salience of spirituality and religion to culture and worldview also fit here.

Exploring and reflecting on one's own **personal odyssey** may allow for a new awareness of the meaning and influence spirituality and religion have had on personal and professional development. In examining this meaning and influence, counselor educators may find ways in which they have or have not been attending to spirituality and religion in the classroom and/or **serving clients**. Counselor educators may find they have been unintentionally imposing their religious or spiritual values, or even their ambivalence toward such values, on students and/or clients. Furthermore, engaging in this reflection may uncover blindspots caused by previous negative or toxic experiences with spirituality or religion. By increasing awareness of the attitudes toward spirituality and religion in teaching and **serving the client**, counselor educators may become more open to discussing these issues in class. Hagedorn and Moorhead (2011) have offered a four-step process of global self-awareness, focused self-awareness, developing resources, and continued assessment to help broaden counselors' awareness of their attitudes, beliefs, and values. Counselor educators may enhance their awareness through this detailed process, which offers prompts for reflection and self-assessment via journaling and tape review. Counselor educators may also wish to engage in this self-exploration is by using the spiritual genogram activity suggested by Willow et al. (2010).

**Trusting** emerged as a necessary condition for incorporating spirituality in the classroom, as well as counseling. Spirituality and religion are sensitive topics that often evoke emotional reactions. All of the participants emphasized the importance of **trusting** when they approach spiritual and religious issues. Beginning to build that trust is often the responsibility of the teacher. While trust and safety are rarely the responsibility of only one person, the power differential of the teacher-student relationship places additional responsibility on the teacher. Counselor educators may wish to examine how they create an atmosphere of **trusting** that allows for the discussion of spirituality and religion. This may be done in many different ways, including self-reflection, asking students for feedback, recording and watching video of one's teaching, or asking a colleague to observe and give feedback.

In addition to assessing trust, approaches to trust-building may be useful to counselor educators. **Trusting** may be encouraged via modeling openness to conversations about spirituality and religion. Counselor educators will need to be aware of and manage their own reactions and judgments to these conversations. If students do not trust the counselor educator to separate their personal values from their feelings toward students, it is unlikely they will share opposing perspectives. Being open to multiple perspectives may help build trust and encourage students to discuss spiritual and religious issues more freely. Furthermore, counselor educators may have to invite conversations around spirituality and religion, as students may not otherwise assume it is welcome. Because trust among students is also important to incorporating spirituality and religion into the classroom, counselor educators may want to engage students in group discussions regarding expectations, needs, and boundaries. This implication also supports

the ASERVIC Competencies (2009), specifically competency number seven, which states that counselors should respond to discussions of spiritual and religious topics with acceptance and sensitivity.

Participants discussed how, when they approach spirituality and religion in the classroom, they are not attempting to change students' values or provide scripted answers. Instead, they hope to begin a process by **planting seeds for future growth**. This process infers a certain amount of patience and managing expectations. Counselor educators who are hoping for immediate changes may experience disappointment. **Planting seeds for future growth** of competence in spiritual and religious issues in counseling may include using experiential activities, practicing new language, and broaching. Experiential activities can happen inside or beyond the classroom and may offer students ways to broaden their awareness and knowledge. An example of an in-class activity could be the drama therapy approach developed by Meyer (2012). Meyer (2012) projects famous works of art depicting religious scenes, has her students re-enact the scenes, and then has them reflect on the experience. This begins to heighten their awareness of reactions to various religions. An experiential activity beyond the classroom could include visiting a house of faith or worship that is new to the student (e.g., mosque, temple, synagogue). Again, this begins engagement in a process of learning about self and others. It also may allow students to begin using a new language. Giving students the opportunity to speak the language of spirituality and religion could improve their skills when working with future clients. Gaining comfort with spiritual and religious terminology in the classroom among peers has the potential transfer to comfort when **serving clients.**

Broaching is another potential approaching to **planting seeds for future growth**.

Broaching involves initiating conversations related to diversity and cultural influence

(Day-Vines et al., 2007). There is an element of contact involved in broaching that may

be addressed using guest speakers from underrepresented spiritual/religious groups. What

constitutes an underrepresented religious group will vary program to program. This

approach may be beneficial in helping the counselor educator introduce students to new

knowledge, possibly allowing for a better understanding and/or appreciation of diverse

religions and spiritual practices. This may further inform and improve a student's ability

to serve a client from that group, should he/she encounter such a client in the future.

These implications have focused on counselor educators teaching counselors-in-

training. It is important to mention counselor educators working with doctoral students in

counselor education. Each participant discussed mentors and instructors in their masters

and/or doctoral education who influenced their approach to incorporating spirituality and

religion into teaching. Modeling applies not only to working with counselors-in-training,

but also to counselor-educators-in-training. Doctoral students receive implicit messages

when they experience (or do not experience) spirituality and religion incorporated in

either classes they take or classes they co-teach with faculty. It may be prudent for

counselor educators working with doctoral students to consider ways in which they are

modeling openness to spiritual and religious issues in teaching.

While researchers have found counselor educators who do not include spirituality

and religion in their teaching desire guidelines for doing so (Young et al., 2002; Young et

al., 2007), the participants in this study expressed minimal influence of such documents.

Instead, the results of this situational analysis suggest a personal and professional

connection to the topic of spirituality and religion are more influential in the decision to incorporate the issues into teaching. Furthermore, a trusting classroom environment is necessary for this incorporation. Although the ASERVIC Competencies (2009) may offer content-related structure to incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, the counselor educator also needs to be reflexive, open, and patient with regards to the topic. Overall, these findings have offered support (and are supported by) the ASERVIC Competencies (2009). Like the personal odyssey, however, these competencies are not often implemented or experienced as a linear process.

This study focused on counselor educators teaching counselors-in-training, however, these implications may be more broadly applied to university campuses. Educators in other disciplines may find use in examining how they approach discussions regarding spirituality and religion in the classroom. Similarly, administrators may benefit from learning to better facilitate spiritual and religious dialogue on campus. Counselor educators may be able to help in this exploration of personal odyssey and trust building with faculty and administration outside their departments.

**Future Research**

This study reveals many paths for future research. Clarke (2005) refers to this sprouting of new paths for exploration as a rhizome, rather than a tree, as the roots grow horizontally with new growth and roots constantly emerging. The shoots along this rhizome of research are plentiful. As I think about the many shoots sticking out of the data in this study, I am overwhelmed by the possibilities.

Future research could begin with seeking the potential silenced voices identified by the missing positions. Of particular note are two missing positions: (1) pre-tenure,

non-tenured, and tenured counselor educators experiencing low levels of autonomy in incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, and (2) low religious expression and high experienced hostility. These missing positions can inform theoretical sampling for future situational analysis. Although anecdotal evidence (e.g., CESNET-L, personal communications) suggests there are counselor educators who feel oppressed in their efforts to include religion and spirituality, there is no research examining this position, nor was it supported by the data in this study. This oppression could occur at several levels, including university level and department level. It may be valuable to look at ways relationships with department faculty, as well as university administrators, influence this autonomy.

The missing sub-position of moderate to high religious expression and moderate to high experienced hostility for religions other than Christianity substantiates the use of theoretical sampling to select outwardly spiritual or religious, non-Christian counselor educators to examine their experiences of incorporating spirituality and religion into the classroom. It is unknown if this sub-position is missing because it does not exist or because these are also silenced voices. Additionally, all participants in this study were either currently or previously of a Judeo-Christian faith. Future study could help inform the ways non-Judeo-Christian religious affiliation influences teaching spirituality and religion.

Further research could also serve to support or refute Richard's, and others', assertion that the ACA is specifically biased against Christians. As with the positions in the data, a cursory glance at the discourse on electronic mailing lists such as CESNET-L and ACA Connect suggests Christians are a potentially silenced or marginalized majority.

There is not enough data in this study to support this claim, which certainly seems worthy of further exploration.

Although gender did not emerge as a contextual influence of incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor education in this study, it may be worthy of further inquiry. Each participant spoke to gender roles/stereotypes and how they perceived these to be rooted in religion. While they spoke to seeing these roles/stereotypes in the classroom, participants said they did not believe it influenced how they taught. The idea of gender stereotypes being rooted in religious gender roles, accompanied by the fact that females account for 82.3 percent of students in all CACREP-accredited programs, make this a relevant avenue of exploration. It is likely that the influence of gender dynamics is subtle and requires more focused attention.

This study was focused specifically on teaching, but as the social world of the counselor educator highlighted, there are other collective actions involved. Supervision is an integral component of counselor development. I debated whether to include supervision in this study and ultimately decided to keep it focused on teaching. On several occasions, participants mentioned the need for further inquiry into incorporating spirituality and religion into supervision. Such a study could take several directions—supervision of students by counselor educators, supervision of students by site supervisors, or supervision of professional counselors, to name a few.

Beyond researching the influences of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching, it would be prudent to examine students' processes and experiences in this realm. By understanding the process students engage when learning how to incorporate these issues, counselor educators may gain insight into better

ways of incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching. This research could focus on students in the classroom and/or students in supervision.

## Conclusion

I used situational analysis and grounded theory to conduct a study of counselor educators incorporating spiritual and religious issues into counseling. I collected data from four participants through a process of prolonged engagement. This data comprised two in-depth interviews, two interpretive dialogues, and a focus group. I analyzed this participant data, along with discourse data from websites, electronic mailing lists, and professional counseling documents, to create positional, arenas, and social worlds maps and construct four sensitizing concepts. The arenas maps revealed the situation of counselor educators incorporating spirituality and religion into teaching occurs at the intersection of the counselor education, religious, and spiritual arenas. In this location, the social worlds of client, counselor educator, student, counselor, and faculty/department are engaged in committed social actions.

The sensitizing concepts that emerged from the data were **personal odyssey**, **serving the client**, **trusting**, and **planting seeds for future growth**. I used grounded theorizing to create a final project map and explore the processual relationships of these sensitizing concepts. Each participant's **personal odyssey** contributed to the belief that spiritual and religious competency in counseling was critical to **serving the client** *ethically*, *holistically*, and *empathically*. **Personal odyssey** also influences the ways in which participants *bring self* into their teaching, which is represented by **planting seeds for future growth. Planting seeds for future growth** is a metaphor for the action and process of offering students new *awareness*, *knowledge*, and *skills* to allow for

development of spiritual and religious competency over time. **Trusting** is developed

through one's **personal odyssey** and has considerable salience to **serving the client** and

**planting seeds for future growth. Trusting** is fundamental to incorporating spirituality

and religion into counselor education. **Trusting** has many forms and moves in many

directions with *self, students,* and *clients*.

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