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HELPING STUDENTS NAVIGATE VALUE CONFLICTS

Helping Students Navigate Value Conflicts: A Grounded Theory Study of Counselor Educators' Processes

by
Heidi McKinley

A dissertation
Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Counseling
Idaho State University
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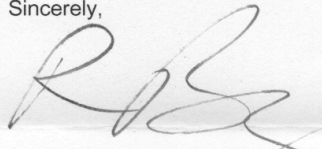
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ABSTRACT

Counselor educators must be prepared to help counselors-in-training with their development throughout a training program while simultaneously monitoring client welfare, as required by the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014). A student's development encompasses their cognitive development, emotional development, and increased self-awareness and awareness of others (Skovholt, Ronnestad, & Jennings, 1997). As awareness of others expands, so does the awareness of the array of possible client identities one will be faced with working with, to include work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) clients (Smith, Foley, & Chaney, 2008). For some counselors-in-training this may evoke value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients (Whitman & Bidell, 2014). This study explores the process of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory (2014) was used to explore participants' processes and categories, forming the Value Conflict Navigation Project Map, which visually displays the participants' process.

Chapter I

Introduction and Conceptual Framework

The interaction between personal and professional values in the counseling profession, and in counselor training, has been examined in counseling literature for many years (Bergin, 1980; Grimm, 1994; Peteet, 2014). There is wide consensus in the literature that value-free counseling is not possible (Bergin, 1980; Elliott, 2011; Kocet & Herlihy, 2014; Sperry, 2008). However, the debate about whether personal and professional values belong together in counseling, and how they may compliment one another, is ongoing (Brown, Carney, Parrish, & Klem, 2013; Peteet, 2014). The process of navigating this interaction can be challenging for counselors-in-training.

According to Wilkinson (2011), personal and professional growth in counselor-training programs requires students to be simultaneously self-aware while applying appropriate counseling interventions. Self-reflection, which includes a focus on one's emotions, thoughts, feelings, and actions, leads to self-awareness and is consistent with the values of the counseling profession (Pompeo & Levitt, 2014). According to Pompeo et al. (2014), through reflection the counselor-in-training will gain a clearer sense of their position on how to manage counseling interactions, including those laden with strongly held values. Published research dedicated to exploring the navigation of value-based conflicts in counselor education is limited (Barsky, 2008; Illes, Ellemers, & Harinck, 2014). Developmentally, the student may need guidance with this process. It is important because such value conflicts can lead to ethical and legal issues.

Helping students navigate ethical and legal issues, and different multicultural influences throughout counselor training, is an important task of counselor educators (Wilkinson, 2011). Several multicultural issues that arise in counselor education include classism, racism, and heterosexism, to name only a few (Smith et al., 2008). Some of these issues may spark value-based conflicts for counselors-in-training, which may advertently, or inadvertently, lead to partiality or intolerance toward certain clients. The American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014) states it is unethical for counselors to discriminate against people based upon age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis prescribed by the law. Discrimination is defined as treating a person less favorably because of an identified or perceived social identity (U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, 2013). Dissemination of such a code by a profession places the needs and interests of clients over the personal needs or values of any member of the profession (Francis & Dugger, 2014). Even experienced counselors face challenges when confronted with making value-laden ethical decisions, and this process is even more difficult for counselors-in-training (Ametrano, 2014). Becoming an ethical counselor has been described as a developmental process (Anderson & Handelsman, 2010; Handelsman & Gottlieb, 2005; Neukrug, Lovell, & Parker, 1996), so it makes sense that students would need the assistance of counselor educators to develop over time into ethical professional counselors. Counselor educators have scarcely researched the process of assisting students with navigating value-based conflicts in counselor training (Ametrano, 2014;

Paprocki, 2014), including those related to conservative religious beliefs and working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) clients.

There have been many instances in which personal and professional values have conflicted in the counseling profession, in relation to conservative religious beliefs and LGBTQI identities. Recent court cases, *Keeton v. Anderson-Wiley* (2010) and *Ward v. Wilbanks* (2010, 2012), have helped highlight the complexities and importance of this issue. In both cases the counselors-in-training were dismissed from their respective school counseling programs after declining to counsel LGBTQI clients because counseling these clients would conflict with their conservative religious values (Kocet et al., 2014). One of the main tasks of counselor educators is to assist counselors-in-training through the process of personal and professional growth (Myers, Mobley, & Booth, 2003; Wilkinson, 2011). When personal values are influencing decisions made by a counselor-in-training, this can be a challenging proposition, especially when the conflict results in the disruption of the student's training and services provided to clients, as in the above examples.

Throughout the document the term value conflict will be used to describe a value-based conflict, specifically for this study regarding conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. There will also be acronyms used throughout to describe the population being cited. For example, I will be generally referring to all gender identities and sexualities, so the acronym LGBTQI will be used, unless a specific citation uses another acronym to describe the population.

Values

Values reveal principles and beliefs about how one thinks the world should be (Illes, et al., 2014). Values represent who we are as people and highlight our uniqueness. Personal values play an important role in decision making as well as having influence on commitment toward development and training (McGuire, Garavan, O'Donnell, Saha, & Cseh, 2008). It is important for counselors to understand their own cultural identity, which includes their value system, to better serve clients who are different culturally (Lago, 2006). Understanding self requires awareness led by reflection. Many graduate counseling programs and counselor supervisors discuss the ideas of reflection and self-awareness with their students (Pompeo et al., 2014). Despite the concept of self-awareness in counselor education being widely mentioned and recognized, it is not often defined outright in literature (Williams, Hurley, O'Brien, & DeGregorio, 2003). Williams et al. (2003) defined self-awareness in parts, with the first being a global knowledge of one's perceptions and experiences and the second being more of a temporary condition of focusing on self. It seems the former is a clearer understanding of one's values and relationship processes and the second part involves more of an in the moment awareness of feelings and bodily reactions (Pieterse, Lee, Ritmeester, & Collins, 2013). Both are equally important and for the purposes of this study self-awareness related to gaining a clearer understanding of one's perceptions and experiences, including values and relationship processes, will be the focus. Without prior experience with such reflection, one of the roles of counselor educator is to guide counselors-in-training in this reflective process.

The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) highlights many personal characteristics that may be laden with personal values and those include age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, or immigration status. Additional characteristics are also possible, including lifestyle choices, political stances, and relational styles (Kocet et al., 2014). Each person holds values and beliefs that influence how they interact with others. Values may be directly or indirectly communicated by a counselor and, in a counseling relationship, this may occur through nonverbal responses to client disclosures, which client stories are focused on and avoided, how convincingly care and respect is communicated, which interventions are used in session, and by a counselor's willingness to continue working with a client (Francis et al., 2014). According to Francis et al. (2014), it is especially important to consider the counselor's communication of values in the counseling relationship because the inherent power differential in the relationship makes value imposition more likely.

One example of how the power differential in the counseling relationship may be highlighted is portrayed in published literature. Some literature suggests there is a tendency of highly religious people to perceive themselves as having stronger moral attributes than nonreligious people (Hunter, 2001). Sherkat (2007) suggested conservative religious students may experience difficulty when transitioning into college due to having little or no preparation for tolerating ideas that confront their beliefs. That is not to assume that simply because someone identifies as LGBTQI that they are not also religious, but studies find that LGB individuals are less likely

than heterosexual individuals to engage in institutionalized religion, are more likely to abandon the religious affiliation they grew up with and are overall less likely to attend religious services (Sherkat, 2002; Herek, Notron, Allen, & Sims, 2010). This is important to highlight, as the possibility for biases on the part of a conservative religious counselor could be higher toward an individual who does not share a conservative religious identity. Such possible biases by a conservative religious counselor could impact the counseling relationship in a negative way (Richards & Davison, 1992) in regards to working with LGBTQI clients. There is an inherent hierarchical and power difference in the counseling relationship, making this type of counselor bias even more important to consider.

Power and Hierarchy

The inherent hierarchical and power difference is present between both educator and student, in a classroom environment and in supervision, and counselor and client in a counseling relationship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Edwards & Chen, 1999). Some counseling literature, especially the publications highlighting feminist pedagogy, suggest benefits with minimizing or limiting hierarchy in supervisory relationships or mentor relationships (Degges-White, Colon, & Borzumato-Gainey, 2013; Prouty-Lyness & Helmeke, 2008). According to Degges-White et al. (2013) the benefits of addressing the uneven power differential in supervisory relationships include increased trust, shared power in relationship and eventual increased supervisee/counselor autonomy. One of the benefits of addressing hierarchy in a classroom setting is that students experience power and freedom and the ability to have individual voice and respect where there was once inequality, as addressing

hierarchy and power challenges traditional educational norms by “redefining the expert to be each member within the classroom” (LaMantia, Wagner, & Bohecker, 2015, p. 144). In a study by Hoover and Morrow (2016) it was found that what limits this open dialogue among students and educators is hierarchy. When students perceive the learning environment to be safe, supportive, and free from judgment, they are more likely to engage in difficult and personal conversations (Raghallaigh & Cunniffe, 2013), such as those pertaining to values conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

The very nature of one’s values is that they are personal and to the core of someone’s identity. That being said, in an educational setting, it is important for educators to tend to the hierarchical tenants of the relationship as a precursor to delving into a student’s deeply held personal values related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Without establishing trust and discussing the inherent hierarchy in the relationship, it is highly possible a student may feel defensive and uncomfortable being open and honest, for fear of being judged or reprimanded.

Some of this discomfort may be partially explained by the research that examines the phenomenon of students entering college and their religious faith becoming less outwardly prominent in their lives (Halman & Draulans, 2006; Schwadel, 2015). Regnerus and Uecker (2007) described the faith of some new college students as something that moves to the background of who they are and is not a regular topic of conversation with peers and professors. The risk in this being a possibility is that most Americans self-identify as spiritual or religious (Newport,

2011) and, perhaps, by counselors-in-training leaving this piece of themselves out of their counselor training experiences, they are not able to be fully congruent in their learning processes.

A lack of congruence in regards to one's own religious or spiritual beliefs in the learning process can have negative repercussions in counselor training, including discomfort in addressing these issues with clients when appropriate (Adams, 2012) and potential legal and ethical concerns (Gonsiorek, Richards, Pargament, & McGinn, 2009), such as the two court cases mentioned previously. Again, the mentoring relationship, or supervisory alliance, between student and educator is especially important for tending to such issues in counselor training.

Supervisory Alliance

The relationship in supervision between supervisee and supervisor is known as the supervisory relationship or the supervisory alliance (Bernard et al., 2004; Watkins, 2013). This relationship is significant to counselor development (Bernard et al., 2004; Edwards, 2013). With many supervision models in counseling literature (Bernard, 1979; Bernard et al., 2004; Holloway, 1995; Leach & Stoltenberg, 1997; Watkins, 1997), the integral variable of successful supervision is relationship or supervisory alliance (Watkins, 2013). In conjunction with successful supervisory outcomes, supervisory alliance has been in the counseling literature as a consistent predictor of counseling outcomes for decades (Bordin, 1979; Luborsky, Crits-Christoph, Alexander, Margolis, & Cohen, 1983; Lustig, Strauser, Rice, & Rucker, 2002; Owen, Reese, Quirk, & Rodolfa, 2013). It is essential to tend to the relationship in supervision, as it relates to helping students navigate values conflicts,

because without a trusting relationship, the student may not discuss vulnerable feelings and possibly risk causing unintentional harm to clients.

Value Conflicts

It is not uncommon for counselors-in-training to confront their own values in relation to the counseling profession's values and struggle to integrate the two (Whitman et al., 2014). The counseling profession's values are presented clearly in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014). While a number of sections of the code are relevant to the counselor's responsibility in resolving issues related to personal values, the following sections are especially applicable. Section A.1.a states, "The primary responsibility of counselors is to respect the dignity and promote welfare of clients" (p. 4). By definition, dignity is the implicit capacity for upholding one's principles (Killmister, 2010). Section A.4.b states, "Counselors are aware of- and avoid imposing- their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Counselors respect the diversity of clients, trainees, and research participants and seek training in areas in which they are at risk of imposing their values onto clients, especially when the counselor's values are inconsistent with the client's goals or are discriminatory in nature" (p. 5). And lastly, section C.5 includes guidelines for counselors about discrimination.

Counselors do not condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language

preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by the law. (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014, pp. 9)

Knowing there are a variety of situations and client identities that may evoke value conflicts for counselors-in-training, it is imperative to consider how to navigate this occurrence with minimal negative impact on both the client and counselor-in-training.

A counselor-in-training internally navigating value conflicts without support may lead to their self-efficacy being negatively impacted. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief to perform a certain task (Bandura, 1986). In multiple studies it has been shown that successful performance is directly tied to a person's beliefs about their ability to achieve (Kozina, Grabovari, Stefano, & Drapeau, 2010). Specifically, with counselor training, Lent, Hill, and Hoffman (2003), found that counselors-in-training who were more confident in their basic counseling skills and at handling challenging situations, were more likely to express confidence in managing the crucial aspects of counseling. Counseling professionals have long acknowledged that counselors and clients will inevitably bring their belief systems into the counseling relationship (Choudhuri & Krauss, 2014). According to Levitt and Jacques (2005), the prerequisites to becoming an effective counselor include being authentic, empathetic, analytical, and spontaneous. Although the tendencies may be there when a counselor-in-training begins their training, development takes time. Skovholt et al. (1997) highlight that counselor development goes far beyond just the cognitive dimension of learning and understanding. Counseling literature emphasizes the alliance between client and counselor as being the most influential piece of counseling work (Bordin, 1979; Emmerling & Whelton, 2009; Krupnick et al., 1996;

Norcross, 2001). Bordin (1994) went on to highlight the therapeutic bond between client and counselor occurs as a result of mutually agreed upon goals and directions in counseling. Knowing how to navigate this relationship takes time, knowledge, and counselor efficacy (Fuentes, Gelso, Owen, & Cheng, 2013), especially when there are value conflicts present in the therapeutic relationship.

Counseling literature dedicated to resolving value-based conflicts is limited (Illes, et al., 2014.) There are many publications discussing certain techniques or perspectives that may be helpful in exploring and moving toward resolving value conflicts, but models aimed at this task are more difficult to find (Kocet et al., 2014). For example, Barsky (2008) discussed the importance of utilizing basic conflict resolution methods to navigate ethical conflicts and states more research is needed to explore which techniques, or methods, work for different types of conflicts, such as value-based conflicts. Choudhuri et al. (2014) recommended approaching value conflicts using Buddhist principles. In some counseling literature the term ethical bracketing, stemming from a phenomenological approach, has been used to describe the strategy of a counselor intentionally separating personal values from one's counseling work with clients, especially when the client's worldviews, values, belief systems, and decisions differ from those of the counselor (Kocet et al., 2014, Levitt, Farry, & Mazzarella, 2015).

In an article by Kocet et al. (2014) a decision making model is presented that was designed to assist counselors in the process of self-examination when faced with a value-based conflict. This model is especially salient to this study because it was designed not only to assist counselors with clients, but could also be readily adapted

for use between supervisors and supervisees as well as between counselor educators and counseling students (Kocet et al., 2014). There are five steps in the described model that include: (1) determine whether the nature of the value conflict is personal or professional; (2) explore core issues and potential barriers to providing appropriate standard of care; (3) seek assistance or remediation for providing appropriate standard of care; (4) determine and evaluate possible courses of action; and (5) ensure the proposed actions promote client welfare (Kocet et al., 2014). Perhaps pieces of this model could be relevant to the process of educators helping students navigate value conflicts, especially when the two parties share differing values themselves. An important consideration is how student development may influence educators when working on value conflicts.

Student Development

The concept of development dates back to the 18th century and denotes a progressive change in human functioning (Ronnestad & Skovholt, 2003). According to Ronnestad et al. (2003) empirically based knowledge on counselor development in the profession is minimal, yet growing. Being analytical, authentic, spontaneous, and empathetic are all prerequisites of being an effective counselor (Levitt & Jacques, 2005). These characteristics are fostered throughout counselor training and counselors-in-training are required to integrate their knowledge in practice with clients (Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007), which happens with counselor development over time. This timeframe of development has been described through many developmental models and I will focus on two in particular, one that will discuss the emotional development of counselors-in-training and one that will

highlight the cognitive developmental process for counselors-in-training. Because counselor training is such a developmental process, the importance of considering student development while simultaneously helping students navigate value conflicts is imperative. These concepts could be relevant to educators helping students through value conflicts, through either providing additional insight or, perhaps more importantly, being applied directly while working with a student or supervisee.

Emotional development. Emotional development in counselors-in-training can also be referred to as self-awareness development. Self-awareness, in regards to counselor identity, is defined as counselors' knowledge and understanding of themselves in relation to values, beliefs, life experiences and worldview (McGoldrick, 1998). There is limited published literature on the process of self-awareness development among counselors-in-training (Pieterse, et al., 2013). According to Pieterse et al. (2013), the objective of self-awareness being integrated into counselor training is for the counselor to develop the ability to identify their personal reactions and to understand or manage and utilize these reactions therapeutically within the counseling relationship. This is a key aspect in the process of counseling, as without this awareness, essentially one person is left out of the dynamics occurring within the counseling relationship. This is also applicable to the educator/counselor-in-training relationship. The educator must also demonstrate self-awareness so that personal reactions are not impeding the supervision/educational process.

One way of building self-awareness as a counselor-in-training is through personal counseling (Von Haenisch, 2011). In a study by Rizq and Target (2008),

through participants engaging in personal counseling and counselor training simultaneously, it was reported that emotional learning took place and that personal counseling was a necessary part of counselor training. Specifically, personal counseling reportedly endowed participants with an “inner confidence, an emotional strength” which they relied upon to relate with clients in their role as counselor (Von Haenisch, 2011, pp. 38). This may also be relevant in the role of educator or supervisor. In another study by Murphy (2005), counselor-in-training participants reported personal counseling as being imperative for the development of a strong ability to empathize with clients. Under the accrediting body Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) the standards do not require counselors-in-training to engage in personal counseling (CACREP, 2016). However, based on the benefits highlighted in some counselor-training literature (Murphy, 2005; Von Haenisch, 2011), the inclusion of personal counseling may aid students, and educators, in the process of navigating through value conflicts in the counseling relationship by using empathy as a tool for navigation.

When value conflicts are present in a counseling relationship, it may be difficult for a counselor to focus on fostering the relationship, which may also be true in the supervisory relationship. Increased awareness, on the part of the counselor or supervisor, may aid in this navigation. The literature on counselor self-awareness suggests that increased awareness of personal unresolved conflicts, personal processes, family of origin dynamics, cultural bias and worldview are important components for effective counseling work (Pieterse et al., 2013). It has been said

numerous times in counseling literature that one of the most important pieces of the counseling process is the use of self (Baldwin, 2000; Fusco, 2012; McWilliams, 2004; Merriman, 2015). Without emotional development and self-awareness this integral part is missing. It is a faulty assumption to assume all educators have moved sufficiently through the process of their own emotional development and self-awareness exploration. Perhaps the concepts could be just as relevant to the educator through the navigation process of helping students work through value conflicts.

Cognitive development. Cognitive development among counseling students has been identified as an important component of counselor training (Choate & Granello, 2006). Successful cognitive development can have positive influences on a counseling student's ability to conceptualize client cases over time (Duys & Hedstrom, 2000), access higher levels of empathy for clients (Lovell, 1999) and increase awareness of one's worldview, to include a broader view of multiculturalism (Lyons & Hazler, 2002). One of the most influential theories related to cognitive development among college students was developed by Perry (1970), who took an epistemological approach to exploring cognition and organized his theory into four general categories: dualistic, multiplicitic, relativistic, and committed relativistic thinking, which are made up of nine development positions (Granello, 2002).

According to Granello (2002), the first category, dualistic thinking, is characterized by dichotomous thinking in which the world is observed in complete either-or terms. In the second category, multiplicitic thinking, dichotomous thinking is replaced with uncertainty and all information seems to be equally valid. In this stage there is much less reliance on authorities and a budding respect for one's own opinion (Mulqueen &

Elias, 2000). The third category is relativistic thinking and knowledge is contextual and decisions are made with what the learner perceives to be the best information available, which is done through tolerating diverse opinions and increase ability to assess and judge these opinions based on evidence, logic and comparison (Granello, 2002; Mulqueen et al., 2000). Perry (1981) found that very few people reached the fourth and final category, committed relativism, in which individuals take lifelong moral stances on the basis of their beliefs and remain open to learning and growing. Despite only few people reaching the final stage in this model, it is important for counselors-in-training to move beyond dichotomous thinking, to more complex ways of thinking and have more tolerance for ambiguity, as a way to connect more congruently with clients (Weiss Ogden & Sias, 2011).

As mentioned previously, perhaps these concepts are relevant to educators in this inquiry. Consider, for example, an educator helping a student navigate a value conflict related to conservative religious beliefs and working with an LGBTQI client. If the educator viewed the situation dichotomously, without holistically considering all points of view (in this case the view of the client, the view of the counselor-in-training and the personal view of the educator), there runs a risk of a presumptive decision being made and one based solely upon biases. It is imperative educators consider how well they know themselves, to include personally held values and beliefs, and how those influence their educator identity while working with counselors-in-training.

Educator Identity

As educators, developing one's own personal philosophy of teaching may be one of the most important aspects of professional identity development (Skelton, 2012), and is similar to the process of identity development for professional counselors. This process is heavily influenced by personal values and beliefs and, ethically, should also be influenced by the code of ethics tied to the profession. According to Skovholt and Ronnestad (1992), counselors rely on their professional identity as a frame of reference when making decisions in work with clients. This idea could easily be related to counselor educators' work with students, as personal values are also very influential in that setting. According to Bodman, Taylor and Norris (2012), when educators are not able to make decisions in the classroom that are in alignment with their pedagogical lens it can create unrest, tension, and burnout. Exploration into how educators navigate this potential situation could be helpful in better understanding the process of navigating value conflicts with counselors-in-training.

Another potential influential concept, in helping counselors-in-training with the navigation of value conflicts, may be that of the political environment in which the educator is employed. Workplace environment greatly impacts employee motivation, productivity and satisfaction and work environment can be defined as the physical environment as well as political environment. According to Sedivy-Benton, Stroschen, Cavazos, and Boden-McGill (2015), bullying in higher education is an increasingly common occurrence. This phenomenon can negatively impact the climate, productivity, educational experiences and ability for educators to be

congruent with their personal beliefs and values (Sedivy-Benton et al, 2015). It may be safe to assume some of the workplace bullying may be influenced by the clash of personal values between co-workers. Exploring educators' process of navigating their own value conflicts in the workplace may be crucial in understanding how educators help students navigate value conflicts, as personal work satisfaction influences many things.

Having tenure status is shown to have an influence on work satisfaction in counselor education overall (Hill, 2009). In the literature, pre-tenured faculty tend to have strict time constraints for many new demands, a lack of support, unrealistic expectations placed upon them, a lack of clear feedback or recognition, and difficulty maintaining work/life balance (Hill, 2009; Sorcinelli, 1994). This environment could impact the junior faculty's ability and willingness to address student values conflict congruently and effectively. The process of helping students explore value conflicts related to such deeply held beliefs requires energy, time, and confidence on the part of the educator. Value conflicts can be difficult to navigate, as they are embedded in personal beliefs.

Illes, et al. (2014) highlight one of the main reasons value conflicts are so difficult to manage, as value conflicts communicate our deeply held personal principles and beliefs about how we think the world should be. As an educator, one is not free from personal values that help shape the way the world is viewed, to include how one views students and their development throughout a counseling program. An educator's personal values have a strong influence on the process of navigating work with students who experience value conflicts. As with counselors-in-training, having

awareness of self can help with the process of navigating values in counselor training. Increased awareness can help limit intentional or unintentional discrimination, which is the most important piece of this study, specifically limiting intentional or unintentional discrimination against LGBTQI clients and conservative religious counselors-in-training.

Oppression and Discrimination of LGBTQI Community

There is significant research showing the prevalence of oppression and discrimination against people who identify as LGBTQI (Chance, 2013; Dragowski, McCabe, & Robinson, 2016; Duncan & Hatzenbuehler, 2014; Everly & Schwarz, 2015; Hatzenbuehler, 2011; Walker & Prince, 2010). Marginalized groups, including the LGBT population, experience discrimination and disparities in privileges such as health care and access to employment compared to non-minority groups (Chance, 2013). According to Chance (2013), the LGBT community has higher than average rates of uninsured individuals and barriers to quality health care that non-LGBT individuals do not, including denial based on identity and outright discrimination. Employment discrimination against LGBT individuals remains a persistent problem in the United States (Croteau, 1996; Everly et al., 2015; Ragins & Singh, 2007). Because of these disparities, it is imperative counselors and counselors-in-training create a safe space for refuge for clients suffering from such discrimination.

Even the mental health community has a history of pathologizing the LGBTQI population, as evidenced by diagnoses within the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 1952, 1968, 1980, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2013). Until 1973 homosexuality was defined as a

mental health disorder in the *DSM* (Whitman et al., 2014). The current *DSM-5* (2013) defines gender dysphoria as a condition for people whose gender identity does not align with the gender they were assigned at birth (Toscano & Maynard, 2014). Most recently, the governor of Tennessee signed legislation that allows counselors to refuse to work with clients based upon personally held religious beliefs (Wagner, 2016), which goes directly against the ACA Code of Ethics (2014). Evidence is emerging that shows relationships between the religious identity of counselors and their prejudice toward LGB people (Bidell, 2014). Furthermore, Balkin, Schlosser and Levitt (2009) found that counselors who were more rigid in their religious beliefs were more likely to exhibit homophobic attitudes.

With the LGBTQI population experiencing much higher rates of discrimination and oppression than heterosexual and cisgender people, it is imperative that counselors-in-training ready themselves to support the LGBTQI clients that walk through their doors for counseling services. That being said, the importance of counselor educators being confident in their abilities to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts in this area is crucial. Oppression and discrimination can go both ways. Exploring this conflict from different angles allows for a holistic view on the issues related to helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Oppression and Discrimination of Conservative Religious Community

Discrimination of individuals and groups who hold conservative religious beliefs in academia is fairly well documented (Affolter, 2013; Marsden, 2015). Some

believe that liberal beliefs have prevailed in academia for many years (Marsden, 2015; Surridge, 2016; Woessner & Kelly-Woessner, 2015). Marsden (2015) went so far as to say, “The liberal attitudes that have prevailed academia since the early 20th century have tended to discourage (though they have not entirely excluded) expressions of varieties of religious faith in relation to intellectual life” (p. 20). In recent years, changing laws and increased attention paid to LGBTQI rights have highlighted this disparity. Many of the clashes between academic institutions and some students involve religious student organizations that discriminate on the basis of religion and/or sexual orientation (Affolter, 2013).

Inclusiveness should recognize race, class, sexual orientation, and so on, but also religious differences so that people of a variety of faiths can contribute to academic life (Marsden, 2015). In counselor training it is important for counselor educators and counselors-in-training to recognize different religious values and beliefs while simultaneously upholding the importance of not discriminating against anyone based upon their own personally held beliefs. Historically it seems as though religion and professional counseling were not integrated (Henriksen Jr., Polonyi, Bornsheuer-Boswell, Greger, & Watts, 2015). In recent years there has been a higher importance placed upon incorporating spirituality and religion into counselor training (Adams, 2012; Lambie, Davis, & Miller, 2008; Young, 2007), as well as the development of competencies for doing so (ASERVIC, 2009). A way in which educators can address religious beliefs and the integration of being inclusive to all clients is by considering a counselor-in-training’s spiritual development.

Considering a Model of Spiritual Development

Incorporating spirituality into supervision is not an area that has received a great deal of attention in the counseling literature, despite its possible influence on the counseling relationship (Galo, 2014). Of the models of spiritual development in the literature, only some of them have been highlighted for use in counselor training and supervision (Fowler, 1981; Parker, 2009, 2011; Shuler, 2009; Stanard & Painter, 2004; Watts, 2001; Weiss Ogden et al., 2011). The spiritual developmental models that have been linked to counselor training tend to be heavily influenced by developmental theories (Shuler, 2009). Those that will be discussed here are Parks' theory of spiritual development (2000), Helminiak's model of spiritual development (1987, 2001), and Fowler's stages of faith (1981). The three spiritual developmental models mentioned here are certainly not the only models that could be used in conjunction with counselor training. However, they have been linked in counseling literature with the process of counselor training and navigating the inclusion of spirituality and religion into the counseling profession (Parker, 2009, 2011; Shuler, 2009; Stanard et al., 2004; Watts, 2001; Weiss Ogden et al., 2011).

Parks theory of spiritual development (Parks, 2000) and Helminiak's model of spiritual development (Helminiak, 1987) will only briefly be discussed here. Fowler's stages of faith will be discussed at greater length, for the elements of the model seem to coincide best with this inquiry and it is the model most often found in published counseling literature (Muselman & Wiggins, 2012; Weiss Ogden et al., 2011; Parker, 2006, 2009, 2001; Stanard et al., 2004). Parks theory of spiritual development encompasses three strands of development: (a) form of cognition; (b)

form of dependence; and (c) form of community (Shuler, 2009). According to Parks (2000), weaving together the three strands best describes the process of spiritual development. Helminiak's model of spiritual development cannot be considered separate from all other aspects of human development, as considering this path of spiritual development is to consider the entire process of human development (Shuler, 2009). According to Helminiak (1987), spiritual development is placed in the context of four distinctive characteristics: (a) a principle of authentic self-transcendence; (b) openness to this principle; (c) integrity and wholeness of the subject in question; and (d) the self-critical self-responsibility of being an adult. According to this particular model, without authentic self-transcendence, spiritual development is not possible (Shuler, 2009). Fowler's theory of faith development was constructed to follow the lifespan of an individual and is set in hierarchical progression through the stages of life and development (Shuler, 2009). According to Fowler's (1981) model, the seven stages acknowledge the cognitive, affective, and relational aspects of religious/spiritual faith. Perhaps that is one of the reasons behind this model being mentioned so often in counseling literature in relation to counselor training (Muselman et al., 2012; Weiss Ogden et al., 2011; Parker, 2006, 2009, 2001; Stanard et al., 2004).

Fowler's theory of faith development has had a significant influence in educational settings and is one of the most widely noted models of this type (Parker, 2006). As mentioned previously, Fowler's model will be discussed in more detail and the reasons are multifaceted. First, this model takes a growth-oriented approach to spirituality that reflects the typical development among counselors-in-training

(Parker, 2009). Also, according to Parker (2009), this developmental model fits well with developmental models of supervision, like the Integrated Developmental Model (Stoltenberg, 2005). As with any developmental model, educators need to be cognizant of fact that counselors-in-training will each have their own life experiences and worldviews. Considering a developmental model is simply a framework in which experiences and processes may coincide with and be used as discussion points in counselor training.

Fowler modeled his work after Piaget's cognitive development model (1970) and Kohlberg's moral development model (1976) and proposed seven stages of faith, describing a person's way of making sense and relating to one's "ultimate environment" (Parker, 2006; Stanard et al., 2004). A person's ultimate environment, according to Fowler, is the transcendent set of values and the reality in one's life (Parker, 2009). By relying on a faith development model, such as Fowler's, it may make navigation and discussion of value conflicts with counselors-in-training more manageable, as it may provide structure, talking points, and competencies.

An in-depth discussion of Fowler's model and its stages are not going to be presented here, however, a summary of the significant pieces of Fowler's (1981) model will be highlighted as they may relate to this research question. First, it may be helpful for educators to consider at what stage of spiritual development the student is in. Second, it may also be imperative for the educator to explore, through self-reflection, which stage of spiritual development they are in according to the model. Both may influence the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Several points within Fowler's model that may be especially relevant to this inquiry will be highlighted. The initial stages of the model are characterized by high levels of conformity to beliefs of the community (Stanard et al., 2004). According to Stanard et al. (2004), beliefs during these stages are often based on literal interpretations and authority is a powerful influence. This may be influential for a counselor-in-training who may be struggling with being presented with new ideas and beliefs upon the entrance into a graduate counselor-training program. Limited perspective-taking ability may be present during initial stages (Parker, 2011), which may influence how a counselor-in-training is able to consider a differing perspective, or worldview, of a particular client.

During the subsequent phases, according to Fowler (1981), individuals begin taking personal responsibility for their own beliefs and attitudes. It is during these later stages that one may experience unrest in realizing that their views may not coincide with the views of a larger group and that the dichotomous thinking from previous stages is not necessarily the only way of conceptualizing the world and faith (Stanard et al., 2004). This may be especially influential in how the navigation process of value conflicts unfolds with a counselor-in-training. By realizing personal values and beliefs may not coincide with others' values and beliefs and that there are other ways to conceptualize a client's world, it may aid in a smoother process of navigating a value conflict. And, perhaps, the value conflict would not be as impactful in the first place. Again, considering whether this applies to the educator is also important in considering what it may look like to assist a counselor-in-training in a situation where worldviews may differ greatly.

Utilizing a faith development model, such as Fowler's (1981), may give guidance and structure for having value conflict related conversations with counselors-in-training. As suggested by literature, such a model would provide a comprehensive and systematic method to address issues related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients (Whitman et al., 2014). When religious beliefs are held inflexibly, according to Balkin et al. (2009), counselors and counselors-in-training tend to demonstrate more biases against LGB people.

In order for counselor educators to help students manage value conflicts related to personally held religious views and working with LGB clients, it is imperative they embrace their roles of educator, mentor, leader, social advocate, and gatekeeper (Balkin et al., 2009). It is important for educators to play their part in upholding the profession's values, which includes promoting respect for human dignity, honoring diversity and promoting social justice, as well as ensuring competence and ethical practice (ACA Code of Ethics, 2014). These tasks can be accomplished through the successful process of helping students navigate their conservative religious values conflicting with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) when working with LGBTQI clients.

Methodology

Through qualitative inquiry I had the opportunity to explore the processes of a small group of participants. Using constructivist grounded theory the participants and I collaborated to create a theory that can shed light on the process of navigating value conflicts with counselors-in-training. Through exploring and building a clearer understanding of the participants' processes, my hope is that counselor educators

have more clarity on how to navigate this process and there is less risk of client harm, specifically LGBTQI client harm. A detailed description of the methodology will be provided in chapter two.

This study contributes to the current body of counseling literature by offering an increased understanding of the process of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate through value-based conflicts related to personally held conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. This in-depth inquiry reveals unconsidered strategies, as well as gaps in the literature. Additionally, this study provides support for counselor educators who are struggling with helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts based upon conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Chapter II

Methodology

Research is limited specifically in regards to values conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with clients who identify as LGBTQI, and seems to offer inconsistent information to educators about how to assist counselors-in-training with value conflicts in the counseling relationship (Henriksen, et al., 2015; Kocet et al., 2014). The purpose of this study is to contribute to the limited body of counseling research related to the process of counselor educators navigating value conflicts with counselors-in-training. Specifically, the research question is: What is the process of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts pertaining to their conservative religious values conflicting with the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014) when working with LGBTQI clients?

The reviewed literature provides inconsistent, and sometimes contradictory, guidance on how to navigate value-based conflicts in counseling relationships (Kocet et al., 2014). To address the current gaps in literature, this study used qualitative methodology to examine the process counselor educators engage in to help counselors-in-training navigate through value-based conflicts related to personally held conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Specifically, I used grounded theory as a method to explore this navigation process.

Learning requires openness and flexibility, which are key components of qualitative research (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). According to Corbin et al. (2015), qualitative research is a type of research in which the researcher collects and interprets data, making the researcher as much a part of the process as the participants

and data collected. Some of the strengths of qualitative research include an emphasis on a process orientation to the world and a focus on descriptions of people and specific situations (Maxwell, 2013). In this study, constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) was used to explore the process of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value-based conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. The conceptual framework informs the study and includes systems of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that help support and inform the research (Maxwell, 2013). This conceptual framework includes the purpose of this study, current research on the topic, and the researcher's philosophical stance on the research.

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative research is a type of research in which the researcher collects and interprets data, which makes the researcher as significant to the process as the participants and the data provided (Corbin et al., 2015). This open and flexible design lends itself to many different types of qualitative research, each with a unique structure and focus (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research allows the researcher and reader to explore the inner experiences of participants, how meanings are formed, and to take a holistic approach to the study of phenomena (Corbin et al., 2015). Often qualitative researchers are drawn to the evolving and fluid nature of this type of inquiry. Qualitative research also fits well within the counseling profession, as counseling is often focused on exploring clients' worldviews, to include personally held values.

As a researcher, I believe it is important to uphold participants' views, processes, and experiences the best I can, in other words, to gain a clearer understanding of participants' perspectives (Maxwell, 2013). What this means, ultimately, is that there is no one truth, but rather numerous truths. To frame my stance as the researcher, it is important to highlight my philosophical assumptions behind qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2013), it is imperative to be aware of the ideas and beliefs that inform our research, as they guide the action of the entire research process. These ideas and beliefs, often referred to as paradigms (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011), are beliefs about ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology (Creswell, 2011).

I view social reality as being co-constructed by people who interact and make meanings of their world through these social interactions. I do not believe social interactions exist independently of my perceptions. Therefore, I did not bracket myself out of the research process; instead I considered my perceptions and social interactions with each participant as being noteworthy. I believe knowledge is derived through social interactions and that there is great value in learning from each other. Without social interactions ideas remain isolated, stagnant and uninfluenced.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded theory inquiry consists of moving beyond descriptions of stories or experiences of participants to the construction of a theory for a process or action experienced by participants (Creswell, 2013). Grounded theory is a constructivist approach, which allows for exploration *with* participants (Myers, 1997). Knowledge is created through action, participants' ontology and through relationships with others

(Corbin et al., 2015). These relationships include connections between participants and researchers, as Charmaz (2014) highlights clearly, “Rather, we are part of the world we study, the data we collect, and the analyses we produce. We *construct* our grounded theories through our past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (p. 17).

Charmaz’s constructivist grounded theory was born out of dissatisfaction with her perception that social constructionist research often produced what is treated as “accurate renderings of these worlds (the worlds they studied) rather than as constructions of them” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 14). Constructivist grounded theory does not seek one truth, but rather multiple perspectives, lending to a richer understanding of participants’ worlds (Charmaz, 2014). Specifically with this study, participants were given the opportunity to share a multitude of perspectives by converging my, the researcher’s, view of the world and theirs through continued and reciprocal dialogue.

Situating the Researcher. It is important for me, the researcher, to be invested in the topic of inquiry, perhaps through personal or professional experience, as the likelihood of a successful research endeavor is greater with more personal investment (Corbin et al., 2015). My interest in this research topic is connected to my valuing equality and fairness in relationships and also the importance and timeliness of this topic to counselor education. Personal and professional experiences have led me to my research question and style of inquiry.

I grew up in a very socially and politically liberal community and never thought to question whether most people shared affirming attitudes and beliefs, especially among helping professionals. Upon beginning a doctoral program in a

more socially and spiritually conservative community, where conservative religion is prominent, I realized that some conservative beliefs greatly contrast with the affirming values I became accustomed to in my life, specifically in regards to LGBTQI identities and conservative religious beliefs. As a budding educator trying to learn how to best help students thrive while protecting the dignity and safety of clients, I have found myself wondering how to help students navigate value conflicts that are core to who they are as people yet are not affirming to the clients who are seeking service from them. I have observed students who feel frustrated, confused, angry, hurt and at an impasse when faced with a value conflict regarding their religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. What is worse is that I have observed students “go underground,” which is a term some counselors-in-training have used to describe the process of not discussing the conflict with counselor educators, but rather avoiding the issue altogether and planning to refer clients out upon graduation when values conflict. While the counselors-in-training in this situation are struggling, the clients whom they serve may not be receiving the highest quality care or may possibly be suffering from discrimination.

I am an ally for the LGBTQI population, I am an ally for counselors-in-training and I am an ally for the counseling profession. My belief is that people are free to hold personal values and beliefs and, at the same time, I do not believe those values and beliefs should allow for counselors to marginalize, discriminate, and/or oppress clients seeking services. Similarly, I do not believe counselors-in-training should be marginalized or discriminated against because of their personally held religious beliefs. It is our professional responsibility as counselors, and as counselor

educators, to accept all clients and students no matter their age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status or any other element of one's identity. In order to best serve marginalized clients and help counselors-in-training develop professionally, counselor educators would benefit from being more competent in the area of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

The reason I chose a constructivist methodology to approach this inquiry also comes from personal beliefs and interests. I believe that knowledge is built through social interactions and through sharing. Social constructivism highlights the social context of meaning making, as it is saturated in culture, history, language and interaction (McAuliffe & Eriksen, 2011). Some conceptualizations of research neglect the importance of relationship between research participants and researcher (Kim, 2014). My belief is that the relationship is the most important piece of the research process and without tending to the relationship with participants socially constructed meanings are potentially lost.

Role of Researcher. In qualitative research, the researcher is considered an instrument for gathering, analyzing and interpreting data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). From a constructivist stance, it was not possible to bracket myself out of the research process. At the same time, it was imperative to tend to strategies that ensured trustworthiness, which is discussed at length in a later section. Constructivist grounded theory, specifically, allows for a

multitude of interpretations (Ponterotto, 2005). In other words, there are many truths or realities to be sought through research. By using interviews, interpreting dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007), and final member checks as data collection methods, I stayed true to the discovery oriented constructivist paradigm and sought the many truths of the participants' processes (Charmaz, 2014). At the same time, I was not a neutral observer in the research process, as what I brought to the study had influence.

Charmaz (2014) highlights this point well when she states,

We are not scientific observers who can dismiss scrutiny of our values by claiming scientific neutrality and authority. Neither observer nor observed come to a scene untouched by the world...Nevertheless, researchers...are obligated to be reflexive about what we bring to the scene, what we see, and how we see it. (pg. 27)

I was actively reflexive through the research process and solicited feedback from my research advisor throughout the process.

Qualitative research emphasizes the importance of the relationship between participant and researcher (Maxwell, 2013). This type of method involves entering the participants' world, which requires a certain level of trust and rapport to be built and maintained (Charmaz, 2014). I consider the relationships through the research process as being the most important consideration, as a strong collaboration with participants can help lead to the establishment of credibility and trustworthiness of the study, as well as confidence that the participants' voices will be heard in the way they intend. I feel incredibly honored to have been in relationship with participants and to have had the opportunity to learn and share with them through the research process.

Prolonged engagement with participants allowed for trust to be built as well as vulnerable sharing between the participants and myself. Through this process of sharing, I was aware of the inherent hierarchy in the researcher/participant relationship and I minimized that dynamic as much as possible. Reflexivity, which involves thoughtful, self-awareness of my own experience as researcher (Raheim, Magnussen, Sekse, Lunde, Jacobsen, & Blystad, 2016), was important to be able to minimize the hierarchy between participants and myself.

I was prepared for the research process to be vulnerable, not only for the participants, but also for myself. According to Hewitt (2007), vulnerability can come from in-depth interviews and unintended closeness, and opportunities for increased trust may arise through this potentially vulnerable process. I anticipated this to be the case as I intended, again, not to bracket myself out of the research process. I learned so much from the participants' processes. I demonstrated vulnerability by continuously asking for feedback from my research advisor on my process and my potential biases throughout this research process.

Procedures

Participant Selection. Using purposeful selection I sought to recruit four to six participants for this research study. Purposeful selection is the process in which participants are chosen deliberately, as they are thought to be able to provide information that is relevant to the research question and, in grounded theory, participants who can contribute to the development of the theory (Creswell, 2013; Maxwell, 2013). In this case I was deliberate in choosing participants who had an interest and experience in helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts

related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. I was also deliberate about choosing participants who worked within a CACREP accredited program. As incentive, and to show my appreciation, I offered a \$25 Amazon gift card to each participant chosen for the study. Ultimately there were four participants chosen.

Along with purposeful selection, I used maximum variation sampling to provide richness to the study. Maximum variation sampling is a way to increase the likelihood of diversity among a pool of participants by choosing participants based upon a variety of criteria (Lincoln et al., 1985). According to Maxwell (2013), this is best done by defining relevant dimensions of the study and choosing participants who represent a broad range of these dimensions. In order to have maximum variation of counselor educators who have input about the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts, participants for this study were sought from a variety of identifiers. The specific identifiers include: length of employment in counselor education, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and home region. These characteristics seem to be most tied to the literature in what may influence the process of educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. I sought these participants through the counseling listserv CESNET-L and from university contact lists. I began with the CESNET-L listserv and when I did not receive enough interest that way, I emailed program directors through university contact lists.

Data Collection. Prior to collecting data, each participant was required to sign an informed consent (Appendix A), which covered the details of the study, potential

risks, rights of participants, and confidentiality. Also, at that time, participants were asked to choose a pseudonym to further protect their confidentiality. I went on to utilize several procedures for collecting data: (a) individual participant interviews, (b) interpreting dialogues, (c) memo-writing of my observations and conceptualizations, and (d) a final member check.

Each individual participant engaged in two intensive interviews. According to Charmaz (2014), an intensive interview is “a gently-guided, one-sided conversation that explores research participants’ perspectives on their personal experience with the research topic” (p. 56). The purpose of intensive interviews was to gain a clearer understanding of participants’ perspectives, meanings, and experiences (Charmaz, 2014). During each interview a semi-structured format was used. Semi-structured interviews maintain some consistency over the concepts covered, while still allowing for the participants to add to the discussion (Corbin et al., 2015). The initial interview was guided by three broad research questions, which were derived after reviewing the published research and conceptual articles on this topic and related topics. The broad questions allowed for flexibility during the interview process, as well as for each participant’s unique process to be heard. Before and during each interview I tended to the relationship with each participant and was aware and open about the inherent unequal power dynamic between the participant and myself, the interviewer. Recent discussions in counseling literature have highlighted the importance of reflecting on the interviewer and the interviewee relationship (Anyan, 2013; Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2009). By monitoring each relationship I sought to minimize the felt relationship hierarchy and increase the likelihood each participant felt comfortable to

be authentic and congruent in their responses. During the first interview I asked each participant the following broad questions: (1) What has been your process in helping students navigate value conflicts related to their own conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients?; (2) What influences how you navigate this process with counselors-in-training?; and (3) What, if anything, provides you support through this process? The second interview was conducted after the first interpreting dialogue, explained below, and was guided by the data that emerged from the initial interview and the initial interpreting dialogue discussion. I conducted the interviews using online video conferencing, specifically VSee or Skype, in a private and quiet location. VSee is a secure conferencing platform and will be given first as an option to participants. Some participants chose not to download VSee and stated they would rather use Skype. Because Skype is less secure, I included that choice in the informed consent.

The second data collecting procedure used was interpreting dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007). According to Coe Smith (2007) interpreting dialogues serve primarily as “a collaborative interpreting session to mutually critique the ongoing data analysis and interpretation” (p. 49). However, despite this method being used for data analysis and interpretation, some new data may emerge during these interpreting dialogue sessions (Coe Smith, 2007). Each participant engaged in two interpreting dialogue sessions, each taking place after the first and second intensive interviews were conducted, professionally transcribed, coded and analyzed. After the previous round of data from each interview was professionally transcribed, coded and analyzed, it was then shared with each participant to give them the opportunity to respond to each

through the interpreting dialogue session. Interpreting dialogues gave participants the opportunity to co-construct meaning through clarifying, verifying, adding to or changing data from the previous interview (Coe-Smith, 2007). Each interpreting dialogue discussion took place via VSee or Skype, dependent upon each participant's preference, and was professionally transcribed, coded and analyzed, adding to the data analysis of the entire process. This data collecting procedure further strengthened my research style of co-constructing meaning *with* participants.

The third data collecting procedure was memo-writing, which is a pivotal step in grounded theory inquiry (Charmaz, 2014). According to Charmaz (2014), memo-writing prompts the researcher to pause and analyze ideas about the emerging data early on and throughout the data collection process. This procedure allowed for me to reflect on the meanings I was making from the data, to include any biases that were coming up. It also allowed for the opportunity to decide upon follow-up questions and identified thin areas in the data.

The fourth and final data collection procedure was a final member check. A member check is a trustworthiness strategy (Creswell, 2013; Lincoln et al., 1985), which allows the researcher to take ideas back to participants for their confirmation (Charmaz, 2014). This final data collection phase was one last opportunity for participants to confirm the emergent data and theory.

Data Analysis. As briefly described above, data analysis began early on in the research process. As I interacted with participants and the emerging data, I was exploring the meanings with participants through the interpreting dialogues and keeping track of my thoughts and feelings throughout the process with the use of

memo-writing or memoing. This exploration into greater understanding continued into the coding of data.

Coding. I used Charmaz's (2014) data coding methods for this research inquiry. Coding is the pivotal link between data collection and the development of an emergent theory in grounded theory research (Charmaz, 2014). It is through coding that I helped to define what was happening within the data and begin to form a meaning attached to it. I coded the two intensive interviews, the two interpreting dialogue sessions and the final member check for each participant. Grounded theory coding involves two distinct phases, according to Charmaz (2014), (a) initial coding, which is naming each word, line, or segment of data; and (b) focused coding, which is identifying the most frequent or significant codes to integrate and organize the large amounts of data.

I began the initial coding process with the first transcribed intensive interview for each participant. I explored the data line by line by placing a name next to each and, according to Charmaz (2014), the process meets the goal of remaining open to "all possible theoretical directions indicated by... the data" (p. 114). This initial step of coding influenced later decisions about defining categories (Charmaz, 2014), which was why it was imperative during this phase to stick close to the data, rather than attempting to fit data into preconceived categories. It was also helpful to look for actions in each segment, as the intent of grounded theory is to generate a theory for a process or action (Creswell, 2013). This stage of the coding process prompted me to recognize thin areas in the data, which influenced possible prompts and follow-up questions in the subsequent round of data collection (Charmaz, 2014). The initial

codes were simple and precise and, according to Charmaz (2014), the process of beginning to compare codes began during this initial stage. Once the first interviews were coded and I completed the first round of interpreting dialogues, I moved onto coding those next.

I utilized elements from Charmaz's (2014) described initial coding process when coding the first round of interpreting dialogues, such as going through the data line by line, remaining open to the data, constructing short and concise codes and beginning to compare codes. I also began transitioning to the second phase of coding, focused coding (Charmaz, 2014), during this phase. I looked for codes that appeared regularly among the initial codes. In focused coding codes were used to sift, sort, synthesize, and analyze larger amounts of data (Charmaz, 2014). According to Charmaz (2014), a goal during this phase is to determine the adequacy and conceptual strength of the initial codes. I was aware, through this process, that my interpretation of what the codes mean was unique to my point of view. As mentioned previously, I do not believe I can bracket myself, the researcher, out of the research process. I relied on memoing to process through potential biases, thoughts and feelings that came up for me.

As I moved on to begin the coding process for the second round of interviews and the second interpreting dialogues, I had some momentum with the process of coding, meaning the process moved quicker and felt much more natural (Charmaz, 2014). I went through each document, the second interview and second interpreting dialogue for each participant, and focused on line-by-line coding and then transitioned to focused coding. According to Charmaz (2014), moving to focused

coding is not entirely a linear process. It may seem as though the coding process was simply passively reading the data and coding, but actually the coding process allowed me to interact and act upon the data (Charmaz, 2014). I engaged with thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about the topic that I had not had previously. Ideas emerged as incidents and descriptions built upon one another and as I interacted with participants. The grounded theory emerged little by little.

The final piece of coding was applied to the final member check. The final member checks were much shorter than the intensive interviews and the interpreting dialogue sessions. However, each member check was transcribed. Some of the participants' final member checks were coded and others were not because of their length and the lack of data that was present. The coding process during this final phase was focused coding. This step increased my confidence in the emerging analysis of a theory. The codes from the final member checks did not reveal any obvious gaps in the data. However, as the data gathering portion of the project came to a close, I wondered about implications and areas of further research.

Establishing Trustworthiness

When embarking on this research study the most important consideration for me was ensuring credibility and trustworthiness, especially in terms of ensuring the participants' voices were heard in the way they intended for them to be. Throughout the inquiry process there were many things I did to ensure this happened to the best of my ability. Constructivist researchers construct *with* the participants their stories, while also tending to the interviewer-participant relationship (Charmaz, 2014). I did this through prolonged engagement. Prolonged engagement refers to the importance

of adequate quality time spent on the inquiry and all its pieces (Lincoln et al., 1985). This included tending to thin areas of data as well as intentionally listening to the quieter voices in the study. I recognized that for prolonged engagement to be as effective as it is intended to be, that I needed to establish trust with the participants. I achieved this through continued transparency, respect, communication and active listening. In addition, I allowed each participant to share their story and paid close attention to cultural differences. I approached the project with curiosity, openness and gratitude with the expectation that I was going to learn a great deal and build effective relationships with the participants.

This approach was woven into another tool that helped establish trustworthiness, which was memoing. I engaged in memo-writing throughout the research process and included thoughts and feelings of curiosity, gratitude, and potential biases that came up for me. It helped my views and assumptions become visible (Charmaz, 2014). Memoing helped me challenge my assumptions and reactions as well. I use my memos in two ways. First, I compared them with the emergent data from participants. If the thoughts, ideas and areas of exploration were similar, I proceeded with confidence that the participants and I are communicating well and that we understood each other. Second, I shared the thoughts captured in my memos with my research advisor, Dr. David Kleist, weekly. This gave my advisor insight into my process so that he was able to provide feedback.

In addition to memoing, I ensured credibility and trustworthiness with the help of Dr. Kleist. I engaged in weekly meetings with him to discuss the progress of this research project, as well as my personal experiences related to the process. He

continually gave feedback on the research and considered the participants in each step. Also, I consulted regularly with some of my committee members on my research process.

As mentioned previously, I engaged in two interpreting dialogue (Coe-Smith, 2007) sessions with each participant, one following each interview. These dialogues allowed the participants to share thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and opinions on the emerging analysis of data gathered from interviews (Coe Smith, 2007). I chose this method as a way to maintain integrity for co-constructed meanings on this research question. It was incredibly important to me that participants were able to provide input on my interpretations of the emerging data, that way I could honor multiple viewpoints rather than one truth.

In addition, I ended the data gathering process with final member checks, as stated earlier. This allowed for participants to respond to the emergent theory, as well as add any concluding thoughts. According to Lincoln et al. (1985), member checks are a crucial technique for establishing trustworthiness.

According to Charmaz (2014), there are other considerations when evaluating trustworthiness for grounded theory studies and these include credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness. I tended to each of these throughout the study. To ensure credibility, my hope and goal was that this research would broaden familiarity with the process of helping counselors-in-training to navigate value conflicts. In creating a theory with participants, I ensured the claims were sufficiently backed by data and that sufficient saturation was reached. Saturation of data is reached with there is nothing new left to contribute (Charmaz, 2014; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

This was accomplished through the two participant interviews, two interpreting dialogue sessions and the final member check. I knew saturation had occurred once no new information was emerging from participants. With this data gathering, it was important to make “strong logical links between the gathered data and...analysis” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 337) to help ensure credibility. Lastly, my goal for ensuring credibility was for readers to form an independent assessment of the research results based upon the ample amount of evidence provided, while also agreeing with my claims (Charmaz, 2014). This informed me that my biases and worldview did not overpower the information gathered and that participants’ voices were heard and understood.

I embarked on this research project because I noticed a gap in counseling literature in the area of the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts, especially related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. According to Charmaz (2014), it is important to consider both the levels of originality and usefulness in grounded theory studies. I believe this topic is original and useful because, if I am experiencing and seeing counselors-in-training and counselor educators struggling with this process, I think it is safe to assume that others may be experiencing and seeing as well, and perhaps having difficulties navigating this issue without much published information on the topic as guidance. The topic is especially timely with the fairly recent 2015 Supreme Court ruling that declared same-sex marriage legal in all 50 states (Chappell, 2015). As well as with the recent Tennessee signed legislation that allows counselors to refuse to work with clients based upon personally held religious beliefs (Wagner, 2016). My hope and

goal is that the grounded theory from this research inquiry will help the counseling profession in giving some guidance into the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts.

Lastly, resonance is another way to establish trustworthiness, according to Charmaz (2014). Resonance is the concern that the findings depict the voices of participants (Priya, 2013). My previously described practices, such as the use of interpreting dialogues, prolonged engagement, and a final member check helped ensure resonance. In addition, my hope was that through prompting participants and readers to consider their own values and personal biases that perhaps it would offer them deeper insights into their lives and worlds (Charmaz, 2014).

The process of how counselor educators help counselors-in-training navigate their conservative religious values when faced with working with LGBTQI clients was studied utilizing constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). I chose qualitative inquiry to explore this process and to construct meaning *with* participants. The study adds to the limited published literature in counselor education informing counselor educators how to navigate this, at times, potentially difficult process.

Chapter III

Round One Interview and Interpreting Dialogue Interpretations

This research was an exploration of the processes of faculty who self-identified as having helped counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQI) clients. Maximum variation sampling was used as a way to increase the likelihood of diversity among the pool of potential participants. Maximum variation was sought, and mostly met, in terms of length of employment in counselor education, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and home region. It was my intent to have all Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) regions represented, but based upon participant interest, participant availability and fit, it ended up that four participants were chosen for the study. Three ACES regions were represented, all but Rocky Mountain ACES (RMACES) region and North Central ACES (NCACES) region. There was one potential participant interested in participating, who lived in the NCACES region, but her availability did not fit with the timeline of the study due to involvement in a study abroad opportunity. Of the four participants, two participants asked the researcher to choose pseudonyms for them, one participant chose a pseudonym, and one participant chose to use their real name. The pseudonyms the researcher chose for two of the participants were generated by a random pseudonym generator. The participant introductions, below, were reviewed and approved by participants.

Participants

Alexandra. Alexandra identifies as a heterosexual female LGBTQI ally and as spiritual, with no religious affiliation. She teaches in a hybrid format, with both online and in-person interactions, in a CACREP accredited counseling program in the Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES) region. She has been a counselor educator for eight years. The first two years of her career were part time adjunct teaching. Prior to becoming a counselor educator she was a full-time counselor. Alexandra has had experience in helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, especially in the region in which she is currently employed, as she reported Southern Baptist religious is prominent there.

Louise. Louise identifies as a straight female ally and as an Episcopal Christian. She teaches in an online format in a CACREP accredited counseling program and lives in the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (NARACES) region. She has been a counselor educator for five years. Prior to becoming a counselor educator she was a full-time private practice counselor and business consultant, and currently she sees clients very part time in addition to her role as educator. Louise has presented several times on the topic of values conflicts in counselor training and initiates conversations about value conflicts with counselors-in-training in practicum and internship and in supervision with post-master's students and pre-licensed counselors often.

Mae. Mae identifies as a queer, cisgender female with no religious affiliation. She teaches in a hybrid format, with both online and in-person interactions, in a

CACREP accredited university in the Western Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (WACES) region. She has been a counselor educator for a year and a half. Prior to becoming a counselor educator she worked as a professional counselor and advocate in a variety of community settings, focusing primarily on sexuality health and wellness and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQQIA) children, adolescents, adults, and their families. Mae has had experience in initiating conversations about value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, especially in teaching classes on sexuality.

Stuart. Stuart identifies as a gay male and as Earth-Centered. He teaches in a brick and mortar format, in a CACREP accredited university in the NARACES region. He has been a counselor educator for 24 years. Prior to becoming a counselor educator he was a counselor supervisor. Stuart has extensive experience studying and presenting on sexuality counseling and advocacy and has helped students navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQ clients for many years. He has been influenced by the work of Caitlin Ryan, director of the *Family Acceptance Project*, and Aspen Baker, author of *Pro-Voice: How to Keep Listening When the World Wants a Fight*.

Procedures

Each participant was asked to read and sign the informed consent in order to participate in the research (Appendix A). Once that was complete for each participant, round one data collection began. The first round of analysis included an intensive interview, an interpreting dialogue, and memo-writing. As stated

previously, each interview and interpreting dialogue session was professionally transcribed and coded upon completion. Each interview lasted a minimum of one hour and each interpreting dialogue session lasted between 10-45 minutes. All participant interactions took place in a secure and private office in the counseling department at Idaho State University, with the exception of one interview in which the participant gave permission for the researcher to conduct the interview in a home office after not being able to enter the counseling department. There were white noise machines on to dampen the sound and to protect confidentiality. Each interview and interpreting dialogue session was conducted via VSee, a secure conferencing platform, or Skype, depending on the particular participant's preference. Each participant's platform of choice was added to the informed consent they signed.

The first interview was where the most data were gathered in round one for each participant, and was each guided by the following questions: (1) What has been your process in helping students navigate value conflicts related to their own conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients?; (2) What influences how you navigate this process with counselors-in-training?; and (3) What, if anything, provides you support through this process? Follow-up questions were asked when clarification or further depth was needed. Memo-writing was done throughout the first round and the researcher's thoughts, feelings, and potential biases were discussed regularly with the faculty advisor. Finally, interpreting dialogues were used to gather information on each participant's thoughts, feelings, and interpretations of fit of my emerging analysis of round one interview data. All of the participants confirmed the information shared from round one interview or elaborated

further on the information gathered during the first interview, giving voice to the process. None of the participants disagreed with the emerging data analysis from our first interview.

Before each interpreting dialogue session occurred, I analyzed data from each participant's round one interview. In this process I highlighted and documented consistent codes and provided excerpts to support them. Each participant received this document before meeting with me for their interpreting dialogue session and were asked to review the document before our meeting. I communicated to each participant the intent for the interpreting dialogue session, and stated to them that I would be curious to hear their "thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and opinions on the precision of fit and representation of the emerging analyses and interpretations" (Coe Smith, 2007, p. 51). The interpreting dialogue sessions were meant to review the analysis of the interviews, as well as to give participants the opportunity to have more of a direct influence on the data analysis and interpretation (Coe Smith, 2007).

Again, some participants took this opportunity to elaborate further and others simply stated the emerging analysis, highlighted on the document I shared with them, fit with what they were trying to communicate in their interview. That being said, the round one results in this chapter are based upon combined data from each participant's round one interview and round one interpreting dialogue. The information is laid out to share, first, the emergent categories from the first interview and then to describe, in more detail, the process of how participants reported they navigate such value conflicts with counselors-in-training, which emerged in both the interview and the interpreting dialogue.

Each interview and interpreting dialogue was audio recorded via iPhone app, Recorder, and through VSee as a back up. One of the audio recordings was then transferred to a password-protected laptop, owned by the researcher, and then to an encrypted external hard drive. The other back-up recording was deleted. The external hard drive was used to transport each interview to the professional transcriptionist for transcription and then kept in a locked drawer in the researcher's office. Once the documents were professionally transcribed, the first round of data was analyzed first with initial coding. Initial coding, specifically word-by-word and then line-by-line coding, allowed me to remain close to the data and to focus on action in each segment of the data (Charmaz, 2014). Next, I utilized Charmaz's (2014) second phase of coding, focused coding. Focused coding is used to sift, sort, and analyze large amounts of data (Charmaz, 2014). Lastly, as a way to conceptualize how the emergent codes are related and to begin moving the story in a theoretical direction, I used theoretical coding. Theoretical codes conceptualize how the substantive codes may relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into the theory (Charmaz, 2014). After the coding was complete the first interview for each participant, I created a situational map as a way to organize what was emerging from the data and to share with participants before each interpreting dialogue session, along with a document listing categories and excerpts to support those, also from the first interview (see Figure 3.1).

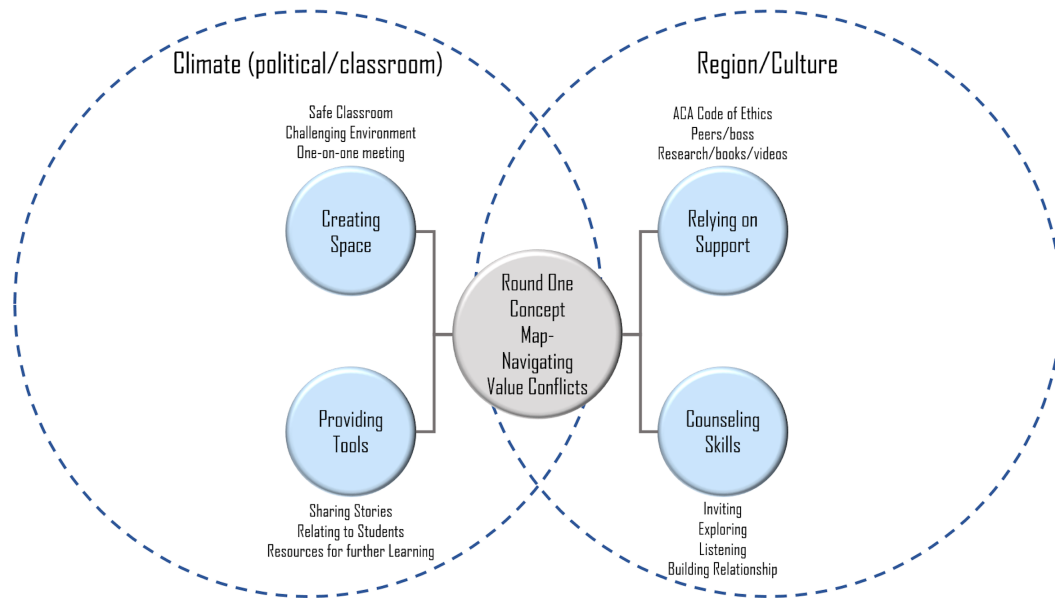


Figure 3.1. Round One Concept Map.

After the coding was complete for each interpreting dialogue session in round one, I created a situational map as a way to organize the emergent process of how participants described helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients (see Figure 3.2). Information included on *Figure 3.2* was derived from interview one and interpreting dialogue one. Situational maps are supplemental approaches to grounded theory analyses that are focused on framing action as social processes (Clarke, 2003).

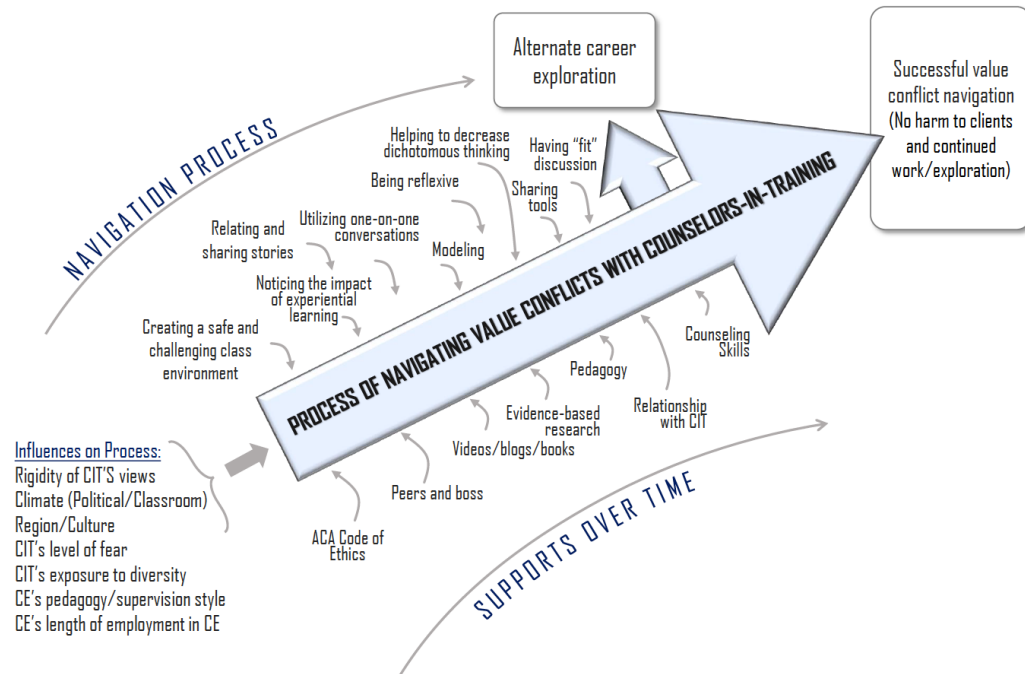


Figure 3.2. Round One Situational Map of the *Emerging Process*.

Emerging Categories

Throughout the document the terms category, subcategory, and property will be used to describe the categorization and organization of codes derived from the data, from broad to more specific. In one instance the term dimensions will be used. For the purposes of these subsequent chapters, the word category is used to describe the division of codes based upon overall shared characteristics or activities directed toward a similar process, subcategory is used to describe the division of a category, also based upon shared characteristics distinct from others, property is used to describe an essential or distinctive attribute of the category or subcategory, and dimension is used to describe the further distinguishing of a property (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In the process of analyzing and organizing data, it did not end up that all four levels of categorization were always present. Something that may have begun as property of something may have merged into being a subcategory, based upon the

level or organization needed and the amount of data present to support the description as data analysis progressed. For example, *Rigidity of CIT's Views* emerged as a property of a category in round one data analysis and was then merged into its own subcategory in round two, which will be described in more detail in the next chapter. In addition, the names used to describe categories, subcategories, properties, and dimensions may be slightly altered to better capture the items. When that occurs the reasoning will be given, which will be supported by emergent data provided by participants. The data analyses of round one revealed a number of emerging theoretical categories in participants' processes, to include specific properties for each.

The emerging categories came from the codes derived from round one interviews and were supported in round one interpreting dialogues. Each of the emerging categories consisted of numerous properties that varied for some participants. The categories included: (1) *Creating Space*; (2) *Relying on Support*; (3) *Utilizing Counseling Skills*; and (4) *Providing Tools*. There were also properties of each category that emerged from the interviews. The properties for *Creating Space* included: (1) *Safe Classroom*; (2) *Challenging Environment*; and (3) *One-on-one meeting*. The properties for *Relying on Support* included: (1) *ACA Code of Ethics*; (2) *Peers/boss*; and (3) *Research/books/videos*. The properties for *Utilizing Counseling Skills* included: (1) *Inviting*; (2) *Exploring*; (3) *Listening*; and (4) *Building Relationship*. Lastly, the properties for *Providing Tools* included: (1) *Sharing Stories*; (2) *Relating to Students*; and (3) *Resources for Further Learning*. In addition to the categories and properties, there is a layer of underlying influences, or

properties, that colored the navigation process overall. Those underlying properties included: (1) *Climate (political/classroom)*; and (2) *Region/Culture*. Figure 3.1 is a visual representation of the categories and properties as they relate to the process, derived from round one interview data and supported by interpreting dialogues. The underlying properties will be discussed next, with supporting participant excerpts. Participants' actual processes, highlighted through theoretical codes, will be discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

Climate (Political/Classroom)

Climate (Political/Classroom) emerged as an underlying property that seemed to have an influence on the overall navigation process for educators. Round one interviews and round one interpreting dialogue discussions occurred right before, during and directly after the general presidential election for the United States. Because of the timing, political climate seemed to be central in discussions with participants as it relates to having an influence on how participants help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Stuart discussed how the level of fear in having discussions about differing views and identities can be influenced by the political environment. He explained:

I remember one of the first ACA conferences I went to, uh, a famous congressperson who's now retired, who was out as gay, uh, Massachusetts congressperson was sneaking in the door. He wasn't sure it was safe to even talk to, at the time, what became LGBTQ, the group, you know, was-was in a little, tiny room in a conference, it was like, is it okay to be, to-to even talk to

you all? I mean, the level of fear. And I think a lot of folks have forgotten that or aren't aware of just how scary that it was. So, and we may be in for some scary times coming up (with the election), too, but we had so many people who fought so hard in so many states - and still do - around the issues, that that fight hasn't gone away. I mean, folks are-are ready to defend rights and identities. And-and I think we have many, many more allies at this point now than we did even ten years ago. (I1, pg. 23)

He later continued:

So that I-I, my research, uh, says quite clearly that the U.S. is a very sex-negative

culture... We sell things with sex, we advertise sex, we have sex all over the place, but we still don't teach it to all children and youth. Since everyone has phones now, folks are learning about sex through their phones. It's the same thing (political issue). (I1, pg. 4)

Mae discussed some ways in which the political climate of the country has influenced how students who identify as religious navigate value conflicts related to working with LGBTQI clients, particularly in regards to how open counselors-in-training are being in the process in classroom settings. She explained:

And I've had, even-even students that have, um, either neutral or affirming beliefs on-on sexual minorities, uh, tend to downplay their religiosity in class as well. And-and so I think that, um, the political climate particular to the Bay Area has made it so much more challenging for students to openly do that process work in class...(I1, pg. 15-16)

She later continued:

Um, and, you know, certainly over the past, like, let's say three or four or five years, but just when marriage equality has started to come to a head on the national level, um, California has always been, um - not always - but has tended to move before the country as a whole on these things. But just the national climate, I think, too serves to really polarize, um, the class, uh, polarize students. If-if that's, you know, almost like your stance on marriage equality makes-makes, um, almost an impenetrable, or uncrossable lacuna. You know, it's like students can no longer connect with one another once they realize that their person that they've been sitting next to all year was a Trump supporter... And-and so, yeah, I don't know. (I1, pg. 17)

Similarly, Alexandra discussed the prevalence of value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients where she lives due to the political leanings of the area. She explained:

Um, and so this topic comes up frequently, um, because it is a very red state, um, and although I wouldn't say I'm necessarily at either end of the spectrum as far as, uh, political views, um, this is a very red state. Uh, and, uh, very religious, uh, directed, uh, it is part, considered part of the Bible Belt. (I1, pg. 1)

Region/Culture

Region/Culture emerged as an underlying property that seemed to influence the overall navigation process for educators. In most instances participants described the region of the country, to include sections of the United States, or specific cities.

Participants spoke about culture in terms of race, religion, and a particular region's culture. For example, Alexandra spoke about the majority race in the classroom as being influential in how she navigates value conflicts with counselors-in-training in general and highlights this as a way to encourage empathy for people who identify differently. She explained:

I was trying to educate them because they were all Caucasian. Uh, so I started a practicum in the first class saying, I have this exercise I want you to do, and since we're all white here... And they were all like - And I was like, what, we're all white? I'm gonna call it like it is. I'm not gonna, is somebody else not white? Am I missing something? Um, and (we're) going to identify that you have white privilege. (I1, pg. 17-18)

In some instances participants spoke about the culture in terms of religious culture, specifically, and how that influences the navigation process. Participants highlighted this influence in terms of how many people identified religious and also the how influential religion is on a group. Louise explained:

I think, um, with this particular issue, um, it's always been a challenge for me as a counselor educator because my first counselor education job was in a conservative, religious institution... Um, and I'm not a conservative Christian. I'm a, I'm a Christian. Um, but, you know, so my students were these, you know, very sheltered sorts of kids that grew up with a whole bunch of money - I shouldn't call them kids, they were young adults - um, that grew up with a lot of money and with a lot of protection around them. (I1, pg. 5)

Mae similarly discussed the influence of region, and described how she has made assumptions about the classroom environment that were not correct and that influenced her navigation process with counselors-in-training. She explained:

Um, I was working with a, well, a woman in my class who is in the Bay Area, and I think that I had an assumption coming from Texas that all of my students were going to be super liberal and progressive and, um, just very queer friendly. And that, uh, so that was my bias coming into the classroom...And I, um, had a woman submit a reflection paper to me, and in the reflection paper she was very explicit about her own values around, um, sexuality... So, um, upon reading this I'm like, okay. So, of course I'm having reactions reading some of this, like, more heated language that she's using. And I'm like, okay, like, how, um, you know, how is this, first of all, how is this reading, like, impacting me? (I1, pg. 5-6)

Most participants acknowledged the impact of region within the country as being noteworthy on their navigation process. Some participants had experience working as an educator in different regions of the country and others have made assumptions based upon having traveled and experienced different cultures. Stuart discussed:

But it could be geographic, and it could be - even in the Bronx, we for years had these huge rallies that were anti-marriage. So people think, oh, New York City is truly the progressive. Well, pockets of New York City are progressive and pockets are conservative. (ID1, pg. 11)

Creating Space

Creating Space emerged as a category throughout round one analysis. One item participants discussed in creating space was that of a safe environment. Louise discussed the influence of safety in a classroom environment on discussions related to value conflicts of this type. She explained:

And when I started to be able to do that as an instructor, as a teacher, as an educator, um, I got a lot further with my students because then they were willing to engage in a process where they felt safe to be vulnerable, they felt safe to say out loud that they really, you know, that they really felt called, they felt spiritually, religiously called to become a counselor, but they couldn't support LGBT clients because that was against the Bible and that was against God. And they were so distraught about, how can God call me to this but then put these people in front of me. (I1, pg. 11)

Other participants spoke of a lack of safety as being a hindrance to conversations related to value conflicts. Mae explained, "...I, um, you know, pushed the student and kind of challenged them in a way that was not, um, in a, you know, not perhaps the most empowering way" (I1, pg. 12).

Stuart discussed how safety in the conversations about navigating value conflicts can limit damage being done. He explained:

I want you to be able to affirm completely the folks that can't stand it and are freaking out. And that's the toughest thing to do, but if you are able to do it then I know you are going to be safe, you're not going to do damage to anyone and you're still going to keep yourself whole. (ID1, pg. 5)

Another piece of *Creating Space* that emerged was creating an environment for counselors-in-training to feel challenged. Most of the participants discussed the importance of people being pushed and challenged as a way to consider other points of view. Mae described this and stated:

Say, hey, this is, this is what was going on in my class. Um, just make sure that you are, um, facilitating conversations that continue to kind of challenge the students' ways of thinking, that-that continue to, um, you know, all, you know, all sort of different points of view. (I1, pg. 19)

Stuart spoke about wanting counselors-in-training to feel challenged to the point of being able to work with populations who challenge their views the most. He explained:

My goal is for folks to be able to work a hundred and eighty degrees opposite of their value orientation. So if you are uncomfortable with abortion, I want you to be able to work with folks who are completely comfortable with it. And if you're comfortable, I want you to be able to affirm completely the folks who can't stand it and are freaking out. So the issue is not ever that I impose my value system on other, the issue is that I am so clear and present about my own values that I work to ensure that I am always working with where the client values are at, unless it compromises the code of ethics then obviously we, uh, we have to intervene, we have to shift. (I1, pg. 2-3)

The last unique piece that emerged for the category of *Creating Space* was the importance of a one-on-meeting with a counselor-in-training. This strategy seemed especially important for counselors-in-training who continued to struggle past class

discussions or if the participant noticed a counselor-in-training not engaging in the class discussions. Mae discussed this situation and emphasized her reasoning for planning a one-on-one meeting with a counselor-in-training:

Um, like, and so in some instances it would not be appropriate, um, I don't think for, um, you know, me to call on a, you know, call on a student in class and, like, have what would be more perhaps better suited in a one-on-one setting, because most of my clients, or most of my students are very, very progressive. (I1, pg. 10)

Alexandra stated she decides to meet one-on-one with a counselor-in-training if class discussions do not seem to result in perceived growth on the part of the counselor-in-training and their described struggle with a value conflict. She stated, “Um, and so we have a direct meeting with the student” (I1, pg. 14).

Relying on Support

Relying on Support emerged as a category from round one. Participants discussed the importance of relying on support when helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts pertaining to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. The support systems discussed were different for a variety of the participants. The way in which participants reported relying on support has changed over time for them, which will be discussed later in this chapter when the process is discussed in more detail.

Alexandra reported feeling very connected to the ACA Code of Ethics throughout her career as a counselor educator. She described relying on the code for support in

classroom settings when asking the counselors-in-training to engage in in-class assignments. Alexandra explained:

...I want you (counselor-in-training) to use the ethics code and I want you to look at where the student was ethically obligated, where they, uh, succeeded and where they possibly failed. Where the professors were ethically obligated, where they, again, succeeded or potentially failed. Where site supervisors were ethically obligated, and so on. (I1, pg. 4-5)

Mae also discussed finding support in the reliance on the ACA Code of Ethics. She explained relying on the code during one-on-one meetings with counselors-in-training and shared a recent example. She stated, “And, um, so it was easy for me with her to kind of say, okay, um, like, let's take a look at the ACA ethical codes” (I1, pg. 8).

Other areas of support that participants discussed included relying on the support of peers and bosses and relying on the support of research, books, and videos. Louise discussed finding support in peers who she trusts and who have had similar experiences. She stated, “Um, I get my support from other people who I know and trust who are also having trouble helping their students do it [navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQ clients]” (I1, pg. 27).

Alexandra described her reliance on her boss for support, despite this person living in another town. She stated, “I also, um, have my-my direct boss, she oversees those five campuses I was talking about. She's my first line of support” (I1, pg. 14).

All of the participants discussed relying on some form of research, books, or videos as aids for helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to

their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Some reported utilizing those supports in class with counselors-in-training and others in one-on-one meetings with counselors-in-training. Stuart shared he relies heavily on the research done by other professionals whom he especially admires. He described:

I can't say enough about what Caitlin Ryan has done to completely shift. So every presentation I do in my classes, I'm constantly echoing and channeling, um, her work. This is stuff that we have done together, and it's just, because it's in video form, it's in three different languages, it's just so well done. And it's what folks need. When folks see that family rejection often is out of love, it's out of the belief is - I can't have this and I can't have that. It's very either-or thinking. And so her research is all about both end. It's about helping families to not get rid of their religion at all. (I1, pg. 7)

He later continued:

So I'm on twitter now with the author of this, uh, Aspen Baker... Pro-Voice: How to Keep, um, Listening When the World Wants a Fight. And what they have done is they have created a model that brings together pro-choice and pro-life voices and says, you know what, no more arguing. (I1, pg. 15)

Stuart went on to discuss the value in utilizing books and videos to highlight stories within the LGBTQ population as a way to help counselors-in-training connect and build empathy for such clients. He highlighted the importance of utilizing resources that touch people on an emotional level. He explained:

So I feel like there are a lot of places to draw from, but I think the most important is when I share a personal story or I share a story from a client or

student that has given me permission to do that like the one that I started with. That really moves people. It's similar to... I always go back to Caitlin Ryan and her work with the Family Acceptance Project. When we see the stories of families and we watch a twenty, twenty-five minute clip of conservative families moving from hatred and fear and homophobia to incredible love and affirmation of their gay kids, it doesn't get any better than that. And so I think it's finding the resources, finding the books, finding the videos, finding the stories that will really move people. (I1, pg. 22)

Mae also described using various mediums to help normalize the LGBTQI population to counselors-in-training. She discussed her intention of sharing resources that the counselors-in-training can review during class and during their own time, as a way to expand their current knowledge. She explained:

And, um, for working with those students, oftentimes if you assign videos and, like, point them to blogs and point them to, you know, just, like, YouTube channels. And, like, let students kind of see this process in a way that is just different in the way the church, um, presents, um, the process. (I1, pg. 22)

Counseling Skills

Counseling Skills emerged as a category from round one analysis.

Participants discussed utilizing learned counseling skills during the navigation process with counselors-in-training who were working through value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Some of the basic counseling skills that were discussed include active listening/exploring, inviting

the other person to engage in the discussion, and building relationship. Stuart discussed what he described as one of the core conditions of empathy, the importance of listening. He explained:

So it's that, it's that, you know, we, our core conditions of empathy are about listening. And so, you know, here I am telling a doctoral-level supervisor. I listen, I really listen. And there's clearly a level of trust that folks are able to share that. (I1, pg. 18-19)

Most participants highlighted the importance of exploration, rather than telling the counselors-in-training what to think or what direction to go, as being effective and rewarding. Louise discussed how she uses exploration as a way to begin the navigation process with students. She explained:

So maybe I might say, oh, you don't feel competent to work with an LGBTQ client, let's talk about that. What competencies do you think you need to, like, let's pull out the competencies for LGBTQ. And let's, uh, let's pull out the competencies from LGBTQ and see what they are and where you feel comfortable and where you don't and let's work on those. (I1, pg. 26)

Louise also discussed the importance of inviting counselors-in-training into the conversation about navigating value conflicts. She spoke about utilizing the counseling skill of inviting in a variety different roles, to include her role as educator. She explained:

Now I really try to make space to invite the tension and not skip over it and really work through it and really process it out. And that's just congruent with my counseling style, my supervision style. And when I started to be able to do

that as an instructor, as a teacher, as an educator, um, I got a lot further with my students because then they were willing to engage in a process where they felt safe to be vulnerable, they felt safe to say out loud that they really, you know, that they really felt called, they felt spiritually, religiously called to become a counselor, but they couldn't support LGBT clients because that was against the Bible and that was against God. (I1, pg. 11)

All participants emphasized the importance of relationship with the counselor-in-training throughout the process of working through value conflicts of this type. Stuart shared an example of working with a past student, as a way to highlight the power of focusing on relationship has on the navigation process with counselors-in-training. He explained:

So when I started off my career, I was working in-as a counselor educator- in a conservative suburb of Chicago. And I once had a student - and I have permission from the student to share the story- who said that she was afraid of even being in the room with me because she heard that I was gay. And she couldn't reconcile that with her belief system. And so I eventually had her. She took my family course, she took my sexuality counseling course. And, uh, over time, uh, she, uh, completely shifted from being incredibly homophobic to being incredibly gay affirming. (I1, pg. 1)

Similarly, Mae discussed her focus on caring about the student and focusing on the relationship, which she stated she values so much. She reported, “And, um, all the while being very intentional, um, about, uh, not condemning her for her value system” (I1, pg. 8).

Providing Tools

Providing Tools emerged as a category from round one analysis. Participants each discussed ways in which they provide counselors-in-training tools to help them navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQ clients. Some of the tools provided are intended for use in the moment and others, according to participants, seem to be intended for use far beyond the classroom. These were provided by participants through sharing stories, relating to students, and providing tangible resources for further learning beyond the classroom. Louise discussed the power of sharing personal stories as a way to relate to counselors-in-training. She reported sharing the idea of bracketing as a way to navigate her own value conflicts in her work with clients. She described:

So the challenge is, how do I help students learn how to do it? But it's not easy for me to sit with a client who's a fundamentalist Christian telling me the reason why they're so oppressed is because of what they believe about what God said to them in the Bible, which I think is ridiculous because I don't take a literal interpretation of the Bible. So that's my personal opinion, right. So then I have to go through the-the process of bracketing my own thing, to figure out a way to get with the client and be able to be helpful to them an authentic, professional, ethical way. (I1, pg. 7)

Alexandra discussed the idea of bracketing, or setting values aside, as a concept she shares as a way to help counselors-in-training understand one possible way of working through value conflicts when working with LGBTQ clients. She explained:

Um, you know, that I become aware that some people are struggling with the, uh, the thought process or potentiality of providing therapy to someone of a different sexual, uh, or gender identity. Um, and let's talk about, uh, feelings that come up. And, uh, your own personal values. And, um, how, uh, how we can set that aside? (I1, pg. 3)

Mae also discussed the idea of bracketing, as an ethical way to work through value conflicts when working with LGBTQ clients. She provided an example of her work with one counselor-in-training in particular. She explained:

Let's take a look at some of, um, you know, the articles earlier on in the quarter where we looked at values conflicts and, um, really kind of re-presenting her with some of what the field suggests. And then asking her how she feels about some of the-the tools or the tips or the tricks that-that the, um, the literature suggests, particularly around bracketing. And, um, you know, asking her if that feels like something that she can execute in an ethical way, in a way that is affirming with clients. And, um, through, I think through that consultation with her, um, we started to get to this place where, um, I think she was starting to grow awareness that maybe she couldn't as seamlessly bracket with a client as-as she thought she could. (I1, pg. 7-8)

Stuart highlighted the power of sharing stories with counselors-in-training, as a way to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts. He emphasized the importance of sharing stories that impact people on an emotional level. He described:

So when I share things like that and I show the videos and I talk about the research, it really moves people. And it moves people not just because of the

research, but when you see people's life stories, when you see, uh, the one story that I love is the-the Mexican-American dad who almost saw, his son almost died from alcohol poisoning. That's when they-they woke up and they're like, our belief system is important, but we need our son. (I1, pg. 8)

He later explained:

So I feel like there are a lot of places to draw from, but I think the most important is when I share a personal story or I share a story from a client or student that has given me permission to do that like the one that I started with. That really moves people. It's similar to... I always go back to Caitlin Ryan and her work with the Family Acceptance Project. When we see the stories of families and we watch a twenty, twenty-five minute clip of conservative families moving from hatred and fear and homophobia to incredible love and affirmation of their gay kids, it doesn't get any better than that. And so I think it's finding the resources, finding the books, finding the videos, finding the stories that will really move people. (I1, pg. 22)

Mae also highlighted the influence of sharing stories through readings, videos, websites, and blogs as a way to help counselors-in-training become exposed to different identities and points of view. She highlighted the benefit of challenging binary viewpoints often emphasized in society. She shared:

And the purpose of this is really to, um, just spark a conversation, right. So I-I, um, I kind of offer different types of readings, different types of videos, websites, blogs that, um, just present an alternate point of view to, like, a binary-driven focus. (I1, pg 1)

The categories that emerged from round one helped to set the stage for the participants' process to be explored in further depth. The emergent process of how participants help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients will be highlighted below. Some of the previously mentioned categories and properties will be mentioned and briefly described again when necessary. The emerging process was derived from round one theoretical coding and emphasized in round one interpreting dialogue. Theoretical coding, according to Charmaz (2014), lends form to the focused codes originated from the data. This step helps to begin to tell the story, to begin forming a theory and to provide movement to the participants' stories. *Figure 3.2* is a visual representation of the theoretical categories and the emerging process of how counselor educators help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, supported by both interview one and interpreting dialogue one. Each category and property will be discussed next, with supporting participant excerpts.

Emerging Process

Throughout the coding process, through initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding, the process of how counselor educators help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, according to participants, emerged. This process was highlighted in round one interviews and was then confirmed and elaborated on in interpreting dialogue sessions. There were several categories that surfaced that were particularly related to the participants' processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value

conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. The categories included: (1) *The Navigation Process*; (2) *Supports Over Time*; and, (3) *Influences on Process*. Each category included various properties, which will be discussed below. Figure 3.2 is a visual representation of the Round One Situational Map of the *Emerging Process*, which was supported by both round one interview data and interpreting dialogue data. A draft of this diagram was shared with participants before and during interpreting dialogue discussions, and from those, minor edits were made to create the final version.

As data gathering and analysis progressed through round one interpreting dialogue, some of the previously identified categories and properties were altered slightly or merged with other items for greater clarity. For example, with the emergence of the three new categories, properties were organized in a way that helped describe the movement of the navigation process, rather than just components of the process. Specifically, the category *Creating Space* and its properties were merged into the new category *The Navigation Process*, as participants further described those properties as being distinct to the navigation process. The category *Relying on Support* was merged into the emergent and renamed category *Supports Over Time*, as participants began to elaborate on how their processes had changed over time for them. The category *Utilizing Counseling Skills* and its properties were also merged and collapsed into the new category *Supports Over Time*, as participants described relying on their basic counseling skills as supports in their processes. The previous category *Providing Tools* and its properties were collapsed and merged into the new category, *The Navigation Process*, as participants discussed providing such

tools as part of their overall navigation process. The previously identified underlying properties, *Climate (political/classroom)* and *Region/Culture*, were merged into a new category *Influences on the Process*, as more data emerged to warrant a new category describing this piece. The data lends support to the described developments and will be described below.

The Navigation Process

Within *The Navigation Process* there were nine properties that emerged as being part of the navigation process for participants, and for the most part they seemed to occur for participants in the general order presented here. They included: (1) *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment*; (2) *Noticing the Impact of Experiential Learning*; (3) *Relating and Sharing Stories*; (4) *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*; (5) *Modeling*; (6) *Being Reflexive*; (7) *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*; (8) *Sharing Tools*; and (9) *Having “Fit” Discussion*. Some of the properties, *Creating Safe and Challenging Class Environment*, *Relating and Sharing Stories* and *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*, were discussed in the previous section and will be discussed in less depth here. Figure 3.2 is a situational map of the emerging process.

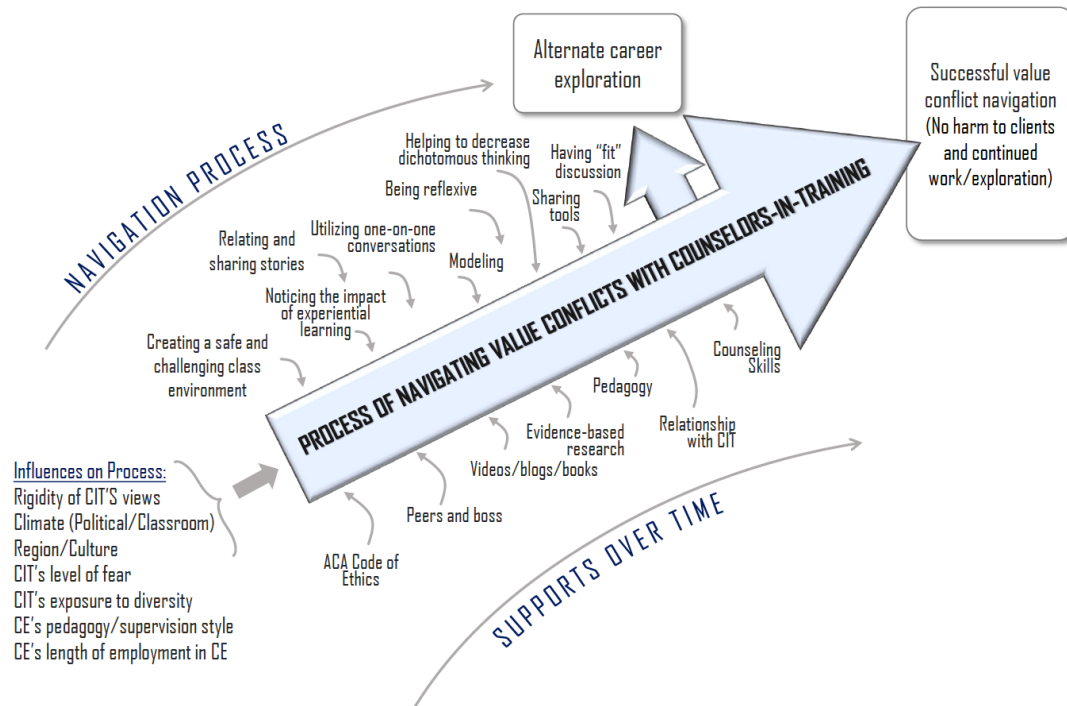


Figure 3.2. Round One Situational Map of the *Emerging Process*.

Creating a safe and challenging class environment. Participants discussed the importance of *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment* as part of the beginning of the navigation process with counselors-in-training. All participants acknowledged that helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients most often begins in the classroom. With that said, most participants highlighted the need to contribute to the level of safety and challenge in the classroom. Stuart discussed that part of his navigation process, beginning in the classroom, is to assess for safety and overall wellbeing. He shared a story about a counselor-in-training who was struggling with the idea and thought of developing into an affirming counselor. He stated, “Something occurred in a class and I could tell that she was not well, and I referred for counseling” (I1, pg. 1).

He went on to discuss an example of the challenging environment he provides in class. “It's hard. But that's-that's... And I talked about that before... I want my students to be as effective in working with abortion (for example), uh, the opposite view that they have as opposed to otherwise” (ID1, pg. 1).

Similarly, Louise discussed the importance of creating a challenging environment for counselors-in-training to grow and to develop. She highlighted the unique interaction between a safe, yet challenging, environment most participants spoke to. She described:

I really believe this- I think the best thing a clinical supervisor can do for a supervisee is find where they can put the supervisee into that sort of process of having to struggle...Not for the purpose of making them uncomfortable. Not for the purpose of being mean-spirited, but for the purpose of providing a place, a safe, mentoring, supportive place where a supervisee can sort of go there - quote, unquote- and figure it out. (ID1, pg. 14)

Noticing the impact of experiential learning. All of the participants mentioned *Noticing the Impact of Experiential Learning* as a way to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts. It seemed each participant highly valued the opportunity for counselors-in-training to learn by doing and to learn from each other. Alexandra described a form of experiential learning in one of her classrooms, around the topic of religion and LGBTQI identities. She shared, “So I would split the group into two. And I would give them both the same cases. And I would say, go research about what's happened in both of these cases...” (I1, pg. 4).

Stuart discussed an experiential activity he often uses in class, especially when value conflicts arise. He described:

I think I'm up to thirty-five or forty- different examples of human sexual behavior. And they range the gamut from things that most folks would be comfortable with to things that no one is comfortable with. And it's a forced choice exercise. And I give it to folks overnight and I say, you've got to rank order this. You've got to come up with what are you most comfortable with, what you're least comfortable with, and then you've got to tell me why. How did you come to the rankings of this? (I1, pg. 3)

Similarly, Louise described the use of experiential learning as being a strong part of her process. She emphasized the use of experiential learning as a way to help highlight the process for counselors-in-training, which she described as something she highly values. She stated, "I'm more committed to making it a process. Rather than being more committed to the outcome of making my students do the right thing" (I1, pg. 16).

Relating and sharing stories. Most participants reported *Relating and Sharing Stories* as part of the navigation process with counselors-in-training. The participants reported this technique, or practice, helps to increase students' ability to empathize with a population they are struggling with the idea of working with. In a way, according to participants, relating and sharing stories, seemed to humanize the issue. Stuart reported feeling comfortable and drawn to share his personal story of living as a gay man, as well as his advocacy work on this topic. He discussed, "And so because I have had these unique experiences because of who I am, that-that makes

that type of teaching and supervision really powerful” (ID1, pg. 15-16). He went on to say, “Uh, and so I just stay who I am. And I say what I do. And I, uh, I share a lot of my writings with my students as well in class” (ID1, pg. 18).

Louise shared that she relies on relating with counselors-in-training as a way to help them navigate value conflicts. She reported that doing so helps normalize the counselors-in-training struggles with having a value conflict in the first place. She explained sharing similar processes with her supervisees. She stated:

It might not be the popular ones, but everybody's got some sort of values conflict. And you don't know what it's like for a supervisee until you face your own, until I face my own values conflict. And, um, in, it is in the working through of that that I learn more about myself as a person and as a clinician. And so I know that it is in the working through that that makes my supervisees grow as people and professionals. (ID1, pg. 6-7)

Utilizing one-on-one conversations. All participants reported *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations* with counselors-in-training who were struggling with the idea of working with LGBTQI clients was imperative to the navigation process. Mae discussed her reason for initiating one-on-one meetings with counselors-in-training. She described:

And I think that the conservative students are already feeling that they have, um, that they have to keep their values close to the chest. And so sometimes having that being a very open process in the middle of class, uh, can feel very shaming. (I1, pg. 10)

Louise described the power of utilizing one-on-one conversations over attempting to reach a student in class, in front of their peers. She explained, “I mean, so we could have those rich conversations, but previously my actions prevented those conversations. And so now I really try to do what I can to invite them” (I1, pg. 11).

Modeling. Most participants described the importance of *Modeling*, as a way to help students navigate such value conflicts. Stuart described using modeling for others as a teaching tool with counselors-in-training. He stated:

I'm not ever mean to the person. I may, I may challenge a concept or something, but I don't ever... I model for the president elect how not to humiliate people, how not to, how to value the person even if I completely disagree...(ID1, pg. 5)

He later discussed, “...you know these are my professional values or beliefs and I certainly have my own as well. My job is to work with your, the client's value system” (ID1, pg. 10).

Louise discussed giving examples of her work with clients as a way to model for counselors-in-training. She explained, “They-you can't, like, tell them, telling them the right answer doesn't help them feel that way. It's like working with a client and doing some cognitive restructuring technique before you've done any reflection of feelings. It won't work” (I1, pg. 17).

Being Reflexive. Most participants discussed *Being Reflexive* as being a part of their process as they help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with clients who identify as LGBTQI. They spoke about the part of their process as being something that happens internally.

Stuart explained weighing his time with what works with counselors-in-training with what is not effective. He discussed, “Because trying to get people to do anything else does not work. And it's not worth our time” (ID1, pg. 2). He went on to reflect on his own process of learning as he is helping counselors-in-training. He stated, “And I feel the students always are teaching me just as much as I teach them” (ID1, pg. 20).

Louise reflected on her own development as it related to the process her students are going through. She explained feeling connected to them because she could relate. She discussed:

It-it's in our own personal development and how we work through all of this that informs, on the flipside of it, like, okay, I understand because I went through this. I know how I feel about it. I know what I think about it because I've read. (ID1, pg. 8)

She went to reflect on her process of learning to help counselors-in-training navigate struggles related to value conflicts. She went on to say:

So this skill of being able to facilitate a student's or a supervisee's journey and-and support the process is something you learn how to do when you learn more about being a supervisor and how it's different than being a counselor. (ID1, pg. 10)

Helping to decrease dichotomous thinking. Some participants discussed the importance of helping counselors-in-training expand their ways of thinking, and *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*, as a way to successfully navigate value conflicts. Mae reported seeing value in helping to expand counselors-in-trainings' knowledge and understanding. She explained:

So, um, I think foremost I-I see my role as an educator, um, as-as facilitating, you know, opportunities in the classroom that, um, in-in a way, like, serve as stimuli to-to all students, right. That, um, that-that facilitates some deeper thought around issues that they maybe perhaps hadn't thought about or that they hadn't, you know, come into contact with. (I1, pg. 1)

Similarly, Stuart emphasized his value of asking counselors-in-training to add to their knowledge base, rather than to take away their personally held values or ways of thinking. He discussed:

And it's helping folks to see that, you know, faith traditions, even if there's a little interpretation, that interpretation came from so many different people and so many different places. And so it's-it's helping folks to add something to the either/or... that's to limit the dichotomous thinking. (ID1, pg. 2)

Sharing tools. Participants discussed *Sharing Tools* as being something they regularly do while helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts. Some of the tools discussed are pieces of knowledge, while others are tangible items that the student can utilize in the future. Stuart shared a tip while intending to make a lasting impact on counselors-in-training by providing something simple and easy to remember. He stated, “..the priority is the client's value system always” (ID1, pg. 2). He later discussed sharing tangible items with counselors-in-training. He stated, “I-I'm going for the ten dollar evidence-based... I don't do self help, but I do the, if there's great research and it's something readable and it's ten bucks, yeah, let's go for it, so...” (ID1, pg. 14)

Mae spoke about providing a variety of tools while simultaneously providing a disclaimer explaining she is not simply providing these things because she subscribes to the messages they provide, but rather to offer a broader lens. She stated:

You know, just-just different types of perspectives. And present all of those with the disclaimer that hey, just because I'm inundating you with all of this, you know, uh, really kind of diverse, these diverse topics and these diverse ideas doesn't mean that I believe them myself, or doesn't mean that this is an extension of-of what I believe is right or true or, you know, whatever. (I1, pg. 2)

Having “fit” discussion. All participants mentioned the possibility of having a discussion about “fit” for the profession, or *Having “Fit” Discussion*, with counselors-in-training at the point in which value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients seemed to be inflexible. Most participants stated this conversation is something that typically occurs toward the middle or end of their navigation process with a counselor-in-training, as seen on Figure 3.2. Stuart described the point in which he may have a discussion about whether the particular counselor-in-training believes the counseling profession is a good fit for them. He explained, “And if folks stay so rigid and are unable to do any of this, you might talk about is this really the right profession for you” (I1, pg. 18)?

Alexandra discussed what she tends to do when she notices she is at a point with a counselor-in-training that she needs to explore whether the profession is a good fit for this particular student. She explained:

...I have an opportunity to, um, begin establishing the foundation, um, as a professional counselor and counselor educator, uh, to the students of what do you do when you have a values conflict between yourself and somebody you're potentially going to serve? Whether it be their point of perspective, their religious or lack thereof orientation, sexual identity, I mean, I just went through the list. (I1, pg. 4)

She went on to say, “And it is, uh, it's conditional acceptance (probation period) and it gives them an opportunity to leave the program if they feel it's not a good fit” (I1, pg. 13).

Supports Over Time

Within *Supports Over Time* there were seven properties that emerged as being part of the navigation process for participants over time. They included: (1) *ACA Code of Ethics*; (2) *Peers and Boss*; (3) *Videos/Blogs/Books*; (4) *Evidence-based Research*; (5) *Pedagogy*; (6) *Relationship with Counselor-in-Training (CIT)*; and (7) *Counseling Skills*. These properties have been discussed previously and will be discussed in less depth here, and only in relation to how they have changed over time for participants.

ACA code of ethics. All of the participants mentioned the *ACA Code of Ethics* as being supportive to their processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts. Some more than others reported they relied on the code consistently at the beginning of their career and less often as they gained more experience in the profession. Stuart stated, “We do have a professional code, so if

there's danger to self or others, those are things we obviously have to, there's no, that's just, that's what makes the profession” (ID1, pg. 10).

Louise discussed how the support she sought from of the ACA Code of Ethics has changed over time for her. She shared how her relationship with the code has changed and mentioned it being a “security blanket” for her when she first began her career. She stated:

Because I really was at that time, um, the code of ethics served as my, uh, security blanket or trump card... Because it was, because I-I so supported the code of ethics, the code of ethics was easily in line with my own value system, that, um, and I was a new supervisor, too. I wasn't practiced at, I was a strong clinician, but a new supervisor, and those are two different skills. And so, um, yeah. I totally used it as a security blanket. You know, sort of a, uh, see, I'm right about this because the ACA has it, uh, on the code of ethics, so therefore you should listen to me. Kind of message that I probably sent my people and that's just a terrible way to supervise. But that's probably what I did in the beginning. (ID1, pg. 5)

Peers and boss. Some participants discussed the positive impact of finding support through *Peers and Boss*. It seemed, for some, that the reliance on this type of support has changed over time, as they have gained more experience as a counselor educator. Stuart discussed:

So those two women of African descent, who have been targets of incredible racism and classism both [this university] and before, um, were such

extraordinary allies to me, um, as a bi and eventually gay man. And that really did it. Fantastic supervision. (I1, pg. 28)

He went on to share about a supportive peer who helped him find confidence in this type of advocacy work. He reported:

I had a couple of really wonderful, uh, close colleagues and friends, uh, one (in particular)... He and I worked together for years. And he was, like, this really healthy out gay role model and-and was just wonderful in terms of just being supportive. (I1, pg. 29)

Louise reported finding support in those she works closely with. She stated, “Um, the-I get my support from my peers” (I1, pg. 27). She also acknowledged the support of self-reflection along with consultation from peers. She stated:

And then calling one of my, um, one of my colleagues and doing some consultation over the phone, like, hey, you know, what are your thoughts on-on-on this situation? And I think ultimately, um, you know, my self reflection and my consultation is, um, is my tool for really getting a, like a, maybe a sturdier foundation before moving forward... (I1, pg. 6)

Alexandria reported finding support in her boss, despite the two of them living in different cities. She explained, “If I have a concern with a student, um, I'll send her an e-mail or ask for a phone call. She's my first line of support” (I1, pg. 14).

Videos/blogs/books. As stated previously, all participants reported relying on outside sources such as *Videos/Blogs/Books* to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI

clients. Mae described the impact she has noticed in class after sharing videos depicting LGBTQI families and their stories. She stated,

You can, you can almost start to see their wheels turning and they're like, okay. Like, gays and lesbians aren't monsters or they're not predators. Like, they're literally people that are in this class or my instructor or, um, they're my clients. They are my clients. Um, and for in particular, the, um, my Chinese students, and many of them never, it never even dawned on them that they would have an LGBT client, um, because it is so underground. (I1, pg. 22)

Alexandra discussed the prevalence of additional information and argued, with technology there is accessibility for counselors-in-training like never before. She shared:

So there's no need to refer if we have the literature, we have professional conferences. We-we now have the blessing of, you can do on-demand training. Whether you go buy it, or they have webinars, or, you know, they have things on file with ACA that you can go through that have been, even free trainings. (I1, pg. 36-37)

Evidence-based research. All participants reported finding support in *Evidence-based Research* and sharing that with counselors-in-training. Stuart discussed a particular area of evidence-based research in which he relies on to help students navigate value conflicts related to their religious views. He stated, “And this-this is Caitlin Ryan's research base. This is why the Family Acceptance Project and her work is so important, because it's, you allow folks to keep the religiosity. You allow folks to keep that traditional, uh, world view” (ID1, pg. 2). He went on to say,

“...she (Caitlin Ryan) is the evidence-based researcher in the world in-in terms of this. And so I really want to highlight her work in that, I think that's critical” (ID1, pg. 5).

Louise stated one thing that helps her through this navigation process with counselors-in-training is to stay connected with the current literature on the topic, for herself. She discussed, “...what influences the way I navigate this, I really do try to stay current with the literature” (ID1, pg. 1).

Relationship with counselor-in-training. Participants discussed the power of relying on the *Relationship with the Counselor-in-Training* as a way to successfully help them navigate value conflicts. Stuart shared his take on approaching the situation with kindness and by putting the relationship first. He stated, “Because if we can be honoring and supportive... You get a lot more with sweetness than you do with vinegar” (ID1, pg. 1). He went on to say, “And this power of connecting rather than arguing points is right back to that, uh, the-the peacemaking model...” (ID1, pg. 2).

Louise discussed the power of relationship on a counselor-in-training's journey toward becoming an effective counselor. She highlighted the parallel process between the counseling relationship and the supervision relationship. She stated:

There's, just like there's no greater gift you can give a client than your real, true presence, being really present with them, I don't think there's a greater gift a supervisor can give a supervisee than that. Because that is what makes them great clinicians. (ID1, pg. 14-15)

Counseling skills. Most participants discussed relying on their learned *Counseling Skills* as support to help counselors-in-training navigate this type of value conflicts. Most of these participants reported feeling pleasantly surprised when they realized they were using the skills they are asking their students to use. Stuart explained the parallel process between what he strives to do, with counselors-in-training experiencing value conflicts, and what he is asking them to do when working with LGBTQI clients. He stated, “It's finding value in everybody wherever they're at and honoring the process of wherever they're at as opposed to, I'm right, you're wrong” (ID1, pg. 2). He went on to say, “And that we have done our work as counselors if we're able to be at that level of empathy” (ID2, pg. 2). He later discussed skills he tries to teach the counselors-in-training that he believes will help them navigate such value conflicts. He reported, “And so, uh, the-the art of self-reflection is one of the most important pieces that we can help people develop” (ID2, pg. 4). He went on to say, “And it's that whole idea of empathy that-that really deep empathy” (ID1, pg. 15).

Louise described how basic counseling skills, or the spirit of the counseling profession, is part of the navigation process for her and partly what provides her support through the process. She described:

I mean, we want, what we really want are counselors who respect the dignity of every human being no matter who they are. And who readily accept and find strength in every human being no matter who they are. I mean that's-that's really the spirit of our profession. So like, um, so... In support of that, I think

everybody has their own, their own personal, private tension to work through.

(ID1, pg. 6)

Influences on the Process

Within *Influences on the Process* there were seven properties that emerged as being influential on the navigation process for participants. They included: (1) *Rigidity of CIT's Views*; (2) *Climate (Political/Classroom)*; (3) *Region/Culture*; (4) *CIT's Level of Fear*; (5) *CIT's Exposure to Diversity*; (6) *Counselor Educators' (CE's) Pedagogy/Supervision Style*; and (7) *CE's Length of Employment in Counselor Education (CE)*. Most of the properties were discussed in previous sections and will be discussed in less depth here.

Rigidity of counselor-in-training's views. Most of the participants reported the *Rigidity of Counselor-in-Training's Views* has an impact on how they navigate the value conflict with the particular counselor-in-training. Participants referred to rigidity as being rigid, inflexible or stuck. Stuart related rigid views with fear and mentioned his initial approach with a counselor-in-training exhibiting that behavior as being cautious. He discussed:

Most of the folks who are dealing with the fear here are in very rigid world views. It's very all or nothing. It's my faith tradition tells me this, therefore I don't have to do anything else... And-and so I'm pretty wary with that. (ID1, pg. 1)

He went on to say:

And I think as professional counselors - well, I know that's what we do ethically as well- we are there to support multiple value systems. The danger

when people go to just one, is that can really reinforce that-that-that rigidity, that-that either/or. (ID1, pg. 22)

Mae discussed an instance in which she was working with a counselor-in-training who was demonstrating some rigid behaviors when speaking about her views and beliefs. Mae shared what occurred when she tended to this observation with the student. She stated:

And, um, through, I think through that consultation with her, um, we started to get to this place where, um, I think she was starting to grow awareness that maybe she couldn't as seamlessly bracket with a client as-as she thought she could. (I1, pg. 8)

Climate (political/classroom). Most participants reported the *Climate (Political/Classroom)* had an influence on how they navigated value conflicts with students. Participants acknowledged the political climate most often, as the general presidential election had just occurred and seemed to have an impact on participant's relationship with teaching and advocacy. Mae discussed the current political climate of the country and how it is influencing her navigation process with students. She indicated she will need to consider what adjustments to make in coming months, depending on what occurs after the election. She explained:

And so now that the election has-has happened, I-I don't know really what to expect, if-if I'm being honest. I-I think that we're already starting to see, um, people feel more emboldened in-in their, you know, anti - insert here - beliefs. And, um, and that's, you know, that's kind of scary. And I think that that, of course the classroom isn't immune to that. Because the classroom is the little

microcosm of the rest of society. And, um, you know, I'm just, who knows how I'll see that next year or next quarter when I'm teaching sexuality. (I1, pg. 17)

She went on to discuss the possibility of cohort dynamics changing and the level of open sharing being impacted by the election results. She stated, "To keep those beliefs underground because there's, um, a very real threat of alienation now" (I1, pg. 16).

Stuart discussed the climate of the classroom as it relates to the general political leanings of the students there. He acknowledged his approach in the classroom is dependent upon the climate (political/classroom). He stated, "But my students in the Chicago suburb tended to be much more conservative. My students in the Bronx tend to be much more progressive" (ID1, pg. 13).

Region/culture. All participants acknowledged *Region/Culture* as being influential to their navigation process with counselors-in-training. Mae described how region and culture can influence how she navigates discussions about value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQ clients. She described:

And so I think that... I teach students that live in China. Our program has, um, has several cohorts that-that are Chinese students. And so you come in and you can tell very clearly that they've never really talked about LGBTQ people before. And, um, many of them are coming from a Christian faith. And-and so they kind of just let the language fly. And they're just like, homosexuality is

wrong. And they're just typing all about it. And I'm like, oh, okay, so this is where we're at right now. (I1, pg. 21-22)

Stuart mentioned region of the country as being impactful to his navigation process. He explained, “And so, um, uh, different when I was teaching in conservative suburb Chicago to now teaching in the Bronx. Um, but the Bronx has its conservative elements” (I1, pg. 5-6). He went on to describe:

...the process is different depending on where counselor in training is from in terms of region. And, you know, it-it could be region, it could be culture, it could be family, it could be religion. I mean, there's so many different, when we say where they're coming from, I would argue it's not only geographic. (ID1, pg. 9-10)

Counselor-in-training's level of fear. Most participants acknowledged the *Counselor-in-Training's Level of Fear* they notice in counselors-in-training who are struggling to navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients influence how they help the student through the navigation process. Stuart noticed he approaches the situation with caution when he recognizes a certain level of fear. He discussed:

It's-it's fear-driven. It's out of this fear of oh, these secular folks can't honor my values... So I get very wary of-of that particular way of working because for many of the folks who are in that, they're really pushing a particular value system. (ID1, pg. 21)

He went on to explain the level of fear may signify an increased need for supervision or personal work. He included himself, as an educator, in that possible scenario as he described it. He reported:

If our stuff is still getting in the way, that means that either we need more supervision or more something, uh, it-it's a challenge. I mean, we have to really work at it for most of us. But, uh, that-that's the real, that's the real gold mine if we're able to get to it. (ID2, pg. 3)

Stuart later described how this described level of fear can be overcome without harming the client, or in his case the supervisee. He discussed:

...we have to honor the experience and the voice of whatever has occurred. And we can't be putting, uh, a judgment on, that that's the problem, that's what's really harmed what's going on, that whatever that person's experience, it is valid and needs to be supported and affirmed. And so it's such a beautiful and powerful model for our work across the sexuality spectrum and exactly for LGBT, um, IQ issues when we're dealing with folks who are fearful and are out of conservative religious or-or cultural backgrounds. (ID1, pg. 9)

Louise spoke about navigating the conversation with a counselor-in-training when she is noticing fear in their presentation. She emphasized the importance of validating the difficulty in discussing the struggle. She stated, "Then I have to go, let's talk about that. Um, you know, it's a really hard issue. And I make it okay. It's a really hard issue because it speaks to who you are as a person" (I1, pg. 24).

Counselor-in-training's exposure to diversity. Most participants discussed *Counselor-in-Trainings' Exposure to Diversity* was noteworthy in the navigation of

value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. It seemed the most prominent take-away was that participants noticed there was a connection between a lack of exposure to diversity and an increased likelihood of experiencing such value conflicts. Some participants used this knowledge as a teaching tool and exposed students to diversity, as a way to increase their ability to empathize with people who identify differently. Louise spoke about feeling challenged when counselors-in-training were not exposed to diversity. She stated, “And they had no idea what the real world is like. Um, and so it was a challenge for me to help them” (I1, pg. 5).

Stuart spoke about the fear that seems to be associated with a lack of experience or exposure. He stated, “Uh, and we have to look at people in the wonderful diversity and variety that is, that is being human. But we often get stuck and we get scared” (I1, pg. 21). He went on to discuss how his own exposure to diversity has influenced his ability to be so open and accepting of difference. He stated:

And I talk, and I talk about growing up in a family that had an incredibly diverse belief system. Uh, in my family we have atheists, agnostics, Hindus, Christians, uh, Greek Orthodox, Buddhists, post-Buddhists, pre-Buddhists, um, we have an extraordinary diversity. Uh, we have folks with degrees in divinity, uh, who are agnostic. Uh, I have a degree in-in religious studies and I'm earth-centered. Uh, we have pagans, we have wiccans, and we have this just phenomenal diversity of beliefs. And so I say that, you know, obviously that's really affected who I am. (I1, pg. 21)

Counselor educator's pedagogy/supervision style. Most participants discussed being influenced by their pedagogy, or their personal supervision style and reported it having an impact on how they help students navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQ clients. *Counselor Educator's Pedagogy/Supervision Style* emerged as a property in round one. Louise stated, "Now I really try to make space to invite the tension and not skip over it and really work through it and really process it out. And that's just congruent with my counseling style, my supervision style" (I1, pg. 11).

Mae described being influenced and supported by her pedagogy. She shared, "But I am, from day one, presenting, um, an explicitly, um, or an expressly, like, queer, um, like, challenge to the, to the heteronormative dialogue that I think that we receive than in mainstream society" (I1, pg. 1). She went on to say:

Um, so, so I would say what most navigates this process for me is, um, is just my-my understanding and my training of feminist pedagogy...Of, um, of very, of a pedagogy that, um, embraces values conflicts, that embraces, um, you know, kind of just the-the nuance and the ideological nuance in a group of people, um, and particularly one that-that-that, you know, is focused on empowering students to raise their voice where-whenever they may be. (I1, pg. 11-12)

Counselor educator's length of employment in counselor education. Most participants acknowledged their process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts has changed over time, depending *Counselor Educator's Length of Employment in Counselor Education*. Louise discussed how her process of

navigating value conflicts with counselors-in-training has changed over time and has been influenced by how long she has been a counselor educator. She shared how her approach has changed. She explained:

Um, my process has grown over time, has changed over time... Um, my process in the early years of being a counselor educator was to sort of stand up for the code of ethics... And just sort of my stance was, I see that you feel that way, but you actually have to do this if you want to be a professional counselor and you're not allowed to, um, you know, you're not allowed to... Even-even the 2005 code did not want us to refer people out... So my stance was, you just can't do that. You're just not allowed to do that. And, um, so that was it in the beginning. And that obviously wasn't very helpful because that trained my students and supervisees to lie to me and tell me the answer that they knew that I wanted to hear... And so I've moved from that stance, um, and more fully embraced the way I usually go about supervision, which is to just get more into my relationship with the person who I'm working with. (I1, pg. 9-10)

She went on to say, “And I think that, um, there's-there's more. I think it [helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts] requires, um, maturity as a supervisor” (ID1, pg. 9). Later she mentioned, “And so, um, I think because of the complexity of that process, more mature supervisors are better at it naturally. Um, maturity being a function of the length of time they've spent providing supervision, receiving supervision consultation, etcetera” (ID1, pg. 10).

Mae spoke about an observation about her own process and actions, specifically noticing her process was to ignore the noticing of the value conflict, rather than addressing it in the moment. She stated:

And, you know, I think that the first couple of times that this came up, I did not have the tools to handle it in a way that was, you know, mut-, you know, affirming to that student and to other members of the class that was safe...

Um, I think that it was just either I kind of glossed over it or... (I1, pg. 12)

Conclusion

The first round of interviews and interpreting dialogue sessions led to rich descriptions of educators' emerging processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Round one analysis initially led to the following categories: (1) *Creating Space*; (2) *Relying on Support*; (3) *Utilizing Counseling Skills*; and (4) *Providing Tools*, which emerged mainly from round one interviews and included distinct and unique properties. For the category *Creating Space* the properties included: (1) *Safe Classroom*; (2) *Challenging Environment*; and (3) *One-on-one meeting*. For the category *Relying on Support* the properties included: (1) *ACA Code of Ethics*; (2) *Peers/boss*; and (3) *Research/books/videos*. For the category *Utilizing Counseling Skills* the properties included: (1) *Inviting*; (2) *Exploring*; (3) *Listening*; and (4) *Building Relationship*. Lastly, for the category *Providing Tools* the properties included: (1) *Sharing Stories*; (2) *Relating to Students*; and (3) *Resources for Further Learning*. In addition to distinct properties, there was a layer of underlying properties

that colored the navigation process overall. Those underlying properties included: (1) *Climate (political/classroom)*; and (2) *Region/Culture*.

As data collection progressed, and interpreting dialogues were complete, the process for participants began to emerge more clearly as participants confirmed or elaborated on data gleaned from interview one. There were several categories that surfaced that were particularly related to the participants' processes. The categories included: (1) *The Navigation Process*; (2) *Supports Over Time*; and, (3) *Influences on Process*. Each category included distinct properties. The properties of *The Navigation Process* included: (1) *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment*; (2) *Noticing the Impact of Experiential Learning*; (3) *Relating and Sharing Stories*; (4) *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*; (5) *Modeling*; (6) *Being Reflexive*; (7) *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*; (8) *Sharing Tools*; and (9) *Having "Fit" Discussion*. The properties of *Supports Over Time* included: (1) *ACA Code of Ethics*; (2) *Peers and Boss*; (3) *Videos/Blogs/Books*; (4) *Evidence-based Research*; (5) *Pedagogy*; (6) *Relationship with Counselor-in-Training (CIT)*; and (7) *Counseling Skills*. And finally, the properties of *Influences on the Process* included: (1) *Rigidity of CIT's Views*; (2) *Climate (Political/Classroom)*; (3) *Region/Culture*; (4) *CIT's Level of Fear*; (5) *CIT's Exposure to Diversity*; (6) *Counselor Educators' (CE's) Pedagogy/Supervision Style*; and (7) *CE's Length of Employment in Counselor Education (CE)*.

Round one included an interview, memo-writing, and an interpreting dialogue session for each participant. Although rich data emerged from round one, more depth and detail was needed to help explain the process counselor educators go through to

help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. To help gain more clarity on the participants' processes, the following questions were developed for round two interviews: (1) In what ways do the influences on your process guide you?, (2) It seems, through the navigation process, you are assessing for change/growth/movement. What does that assessment process look like for you?, and (3) If your process has changed over time, how would you explain how this navigation process has changed since you have been a counselor educator? The next chapter presents the data from round two analysis, which includes a second and final interview, memo-writing, the final interpreting dialogue session, and the final member check for each participant.

Chapter IV

Round Two Interview and Interpreting Dialogue Interpretations

This chapter presents the analysis of round two interview and interpreting dialogue data. The second round of analysis included an intensive interview, an interpreting dialogue, memo-writing throughout, and a final member check. The analysis refines, confirms and adds to the data gathered from round one.

Similarly to in round one, after the interview and I shared with each participant the analyzed data I derived from their round two interview. At this point, before the interpreting dialogue session, each participant was reminded of the intent for the interpreting dialogue discussion. I approached each participant and stated that I would be curious to hear their “thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and opinions on the precision of fit and representation of the emerging analyses and interpretations” (Coe Smith, 2007, pp. 51). This was provided to each participant individually and included consistent codes and excerpts to support each category. As with round one interpreting dialogues, some participants took the opportunity to elaborate further and others simply stated the emerging analysis, highlighted on the document I shared with them, fit with what they were trying to communicate in their interview. With that said, the round two results in this chapter are based upon combined data from each participant’s round two interview and round two interpreting dialogue, which is layered upon what was gathered during round one.

Again, each interview and interpreting dialogue was audio recorded via iPhone app, Recorder, and through VSee as a back up. Each iPhone audio recording was then transferred to a password-protected laptop, owned by the researcher, and

then to an encrypted external hard drive. The other back-up recording was immediately deleted. The external hard drive was used to transport each interview to the professional transcriptionist for transcription and then kept in a locked drawer in the researcher's office. Once the documents were professionally transcribed, the data was coded, again, using initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding (Charmaz, 2014).

In an effort to elaborate, deepen and clarify understanding of the process of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, the following questions were formulated and presented to each participant during the round two interview. The questions included: (1) In what ways do the influences on your process guide you?, (2) It seems, through the navigation process, you are assessing for change/growth/movement. What does that assessment process look like for you?, and (3) If your process has changed over time, how would you explain how this navigation process has changed since you have been a counselor educator?

Round two data collection emerged with three main categories: (1) *Navigation Process*; (2) *Supports Over Time*; and (3) *Influences on Process*. The main three categories stayed consistent from the end of round one and throughout round two data analysis. Again, each main category consisted of subcategories and properties. Most of the subcategories and properties were emphasized in round two and some were elaborated upon, deepened and clarified for further understanding. Some properties were reorganized to create their own subcategories, when the data warranted such reorganization for further clarity and description. In addition, the overall

reorganization of categories, subcategories, and properties was done in an effort to better communicate the emerging process participants described. This, at times, included the renaming of certain items to better communicate participants' voices. Those developments will be described in this chapter.

Figure 3.3 is a visual representation of the *Value Conflict Navigation Project Map*, which is supported by both round two interview data and interpreting dialogue data, and is layered upon data analysis from round one. Each category, subcategory, and property will be discussed next, with supporting participant excerpts.

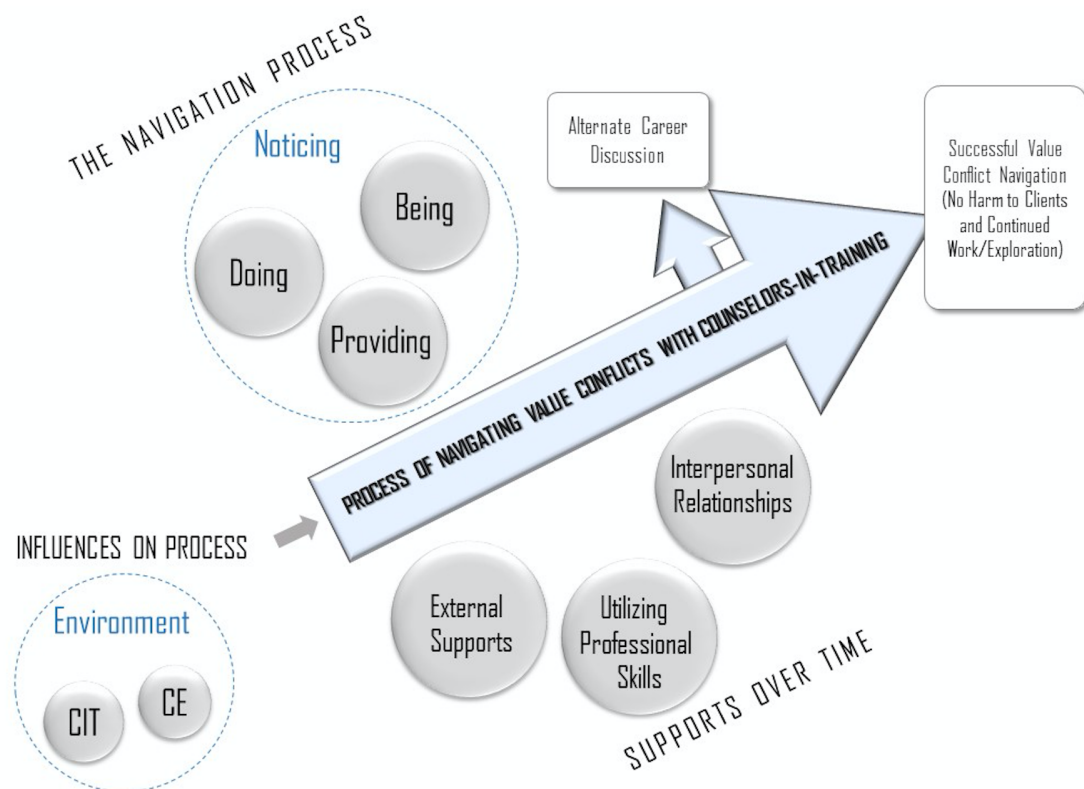


Figure 3.3. Value Conflict Navigation Project Map

The Navigation Process

Within *The Navigation Process* category there were four subcategories that emerged for participants in round two. The subcategories included: (1) *Doing*; (2)

Providing; (3) *Being*; and (4) *Noticing*. Each included distinct properties and they are in order of how participants described working through the navigation process with students. The first three subcategories listed generally occur in the order in which they are listed throughout the navigation process with students, as participants described. The fourth, *Noticing*, emerged as an underlying subcategory that permeated each of the other three subcategories here. They will be discussed in more detail below. Figure 3.4 is a visual representation of the situational map of the *The Navigation Process Map*.

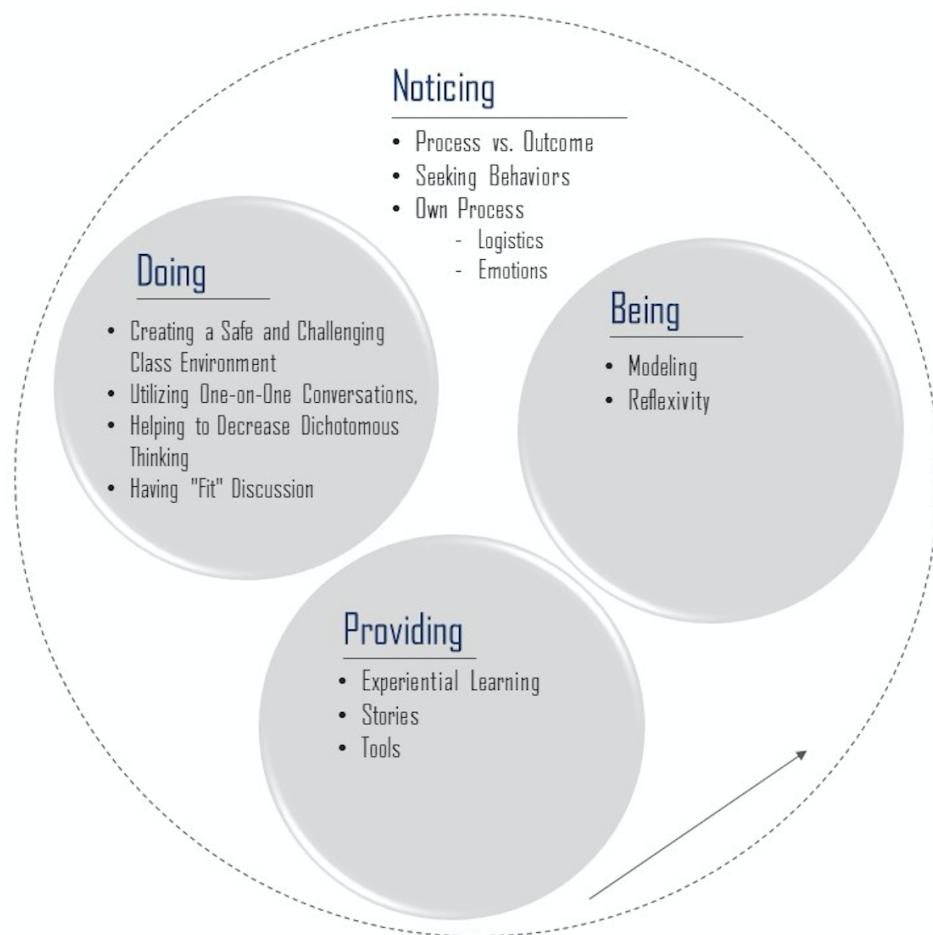


Figure 3.4. The Navigation Process Map

Doing. Similar to round one, participants shared actions that they tend to take during the navigation process with counselors-in-training struggling with value conflicts. Because of the action-oriented stance, on the part of the counselor educator, this subcategory was named *Doing* to help capture the action participants described in round two. Based on the participants' statements, most properties outlined in this subcategory typically occur before the next subcategory, *Providing*. The properties of the subcategory *Doing* included: (1) *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment*; (2) *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*; (3) *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*; and (4) *Having "Fit" Discussion*. The properties are listed in the order in which most participants described when they spoke about the actions taken during the navigation process with counselors-in-training.

Creating a safe and challenging class environment. The property of *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment* was strengthened in round two. Participants discussed the importance of paying attention to and tending to the overall classroom environment as a way to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts, especially in the beginning of the process. Mae discussed one of her goals, in class and through the navigation process, is to set up an environment in which learning to navigate through value conflicts of this type can be worked through before they become a troubling issue for the counselor-in-training. She emphasized the importance of challenge and comfort to explore. She stated,

I just hope by the end of my classes that there's just a little more room for nuance, right. There's, like, a little more grey, a little, you know, less

dichotomy. You know, a little, a little less wrong or right. And just a little more ambiguity and, like, yeah. Maybe even, like, this, like, more comfort and ambiguity, right. (I2, pg. 30)

Alexandra discussed her actions within a classroom environment, as they relate to her role of teacher. She stated, “Um, but, so if I can help them explore that [where the value conflict is coming from], which I guess is also a supervisory or advisory role, as well as a professor role” (I2, pg. 1).

Utilizing one-on-one conversations. Participants emphasized the importance of *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations* with counselors-in-training who are struggling with value conflicts again in round two. Most discussed these types of meetings as being imperative, in conjunction with in-class discussions, and as a supplemental way to reach students if class discussions are not appearing to be as successful as possible. Participants placed this action, for the most part, after *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment* in the navigation process. Mae discussed the importance of regular meetings when helping students navigate value conflicts. She shared a specific example in which she described the regularity of the meetings to be important. She stated, “But we start this conversation and I outline this remediation plan and she and are meeting every week to check up on it and everything” (I2, pg. 19). She went on to further emphasize the importance of meeting regularly. She stated:

Um, but also I think it's just checking in, right. So if at the start of the quarter or the semester, um, I recognize, is this going to be an issue? We have our initial point of contact or whether it's a remediation plan, or it's just a

conversation about what concerns are coming up and, like, what the expectations are as we're moving through the class. (I2, pg. 23).

Alexandra discussed incorporating one-on-one meetings with counselors-in-training, as well as relying on other resources. She described the importance of having regular and ongoing interactions one-on-one. She reported, “Um, I may refer the student, I may have a personal conversation with them and I may refer them to outside resources to expand the review, um, and then I follow up” (I2, pg. 32).

Helping to decrease dichotomous thinking. In round two participants strengthened the property of *Helping to Decreasing Dichotomous Thinking*. Most discussed the impact of counselors-in-training approaching things with a dichotomous lens, or engaging in either/or thinking, and emphasized its link to increased value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Most participants spoke to this occurring during or after *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*. Stuart emphasized his goal of helping counselors-in-training recognize that growth does not mean getting rid of personally held beliefs, but rather adding to them. He shared, “And it's helping folks to look at ways that other folks have been able to negotiate, uh, and rather than either/or, uh, trying to help people to add to their belief systems” (I2, pg. 4). He went on to describe something he emphasizes in one-on-one meetings with students and stated, “And so you have to find a way that you can keep your belief system and add to it” (I2, pg. 8). In his interpreting dialogue discussion he elaborated further and stated, “...it's giving client, students um, a new expanded narrative” (ID2, pg. 19).

Similarly, Alexandra discussed her approach of not asking students to change, but rather to add to their awareness and understanding as a way to decrease the impact of value conflicts. She shared, “And then we stress that with students, um, even with clients as well that, or people in my life, period, um, that I'm not asking you to shift who you are or completely change who you are” (I2, pg. 4). Most participants reiterated they are attempting to help counselors-in-training understand that opening up their worldviews does not mean they have to give up something, an important piece of their identity, but rather to expand their awareness and compassion for others’ differences.

Having “fit” discussion. The property *Having Fit Discussion* remained consistent in round two. Participants discussed having such conversations with counselors-in-training if they were not observing movement or growth, on the part of the student, in the area of being able to navigate their religious beliefs and being able to be affirming while working with LGBTQI clients. Participants described this action as being something that typically occurs later on in the navigation process, after *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment, Utilizing One-on-One Conversations, and Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*. Stuart discussed the importance of counselors-in-training doing their own personal work as a way to work through this dilemma and emphasized the process. He stated:

And if folks are able to move and grow, then this is the right professional fit. If they're not, you know, we need electricians, we need bricklayers, we need plumbers, but please don't, uh, plumb people's depths when you haven't plumbed your own first. (I2, pg. 12)

He went on to say, “It's a developmental piece. And if folks are able to move and grow, then this is the right professional fit” (I2, pg. 12).

Alexandra also discussed the importance of self-exploration and increased self-awareness on the part of the counselor in training. Like other participants, she sees this as being imperative to whether or not the student is a good fit for the counseling profession. She stated:

Um, so I will go with the, uh, student back to exploration in order for them to gain insight. Because what research demonstrates is without personal insight, a person cannot make change, which is, um, uh, um, can be sustained. (I2, pg. 2)

Providing. The subcategory *Providing* helped to describe what participants shared about what they, as educators, tend to provide to counselors-in-training when value conflicts are present. This subcategory included four distinct properties, yet the data were thin for each. However, they were distinct properties in round one as well and were significant enough throughout data collection that it was appropriate to include them. Rather than section them out here, the properties will be described and supported together. The properties included: (1) *Experiential Learning*; (2) *Relating*; (3) *Sharing Stories*; and (4) *Sharing Tools*. Consistent with the description of the participants' processes, this subcategory tended to occur before the next, *Being*, as described by participants.

Louise highlighted the influence of *Experiential Learning* on the process of navigating such value conflicts with counselors-in-training. She stated, “...there are certain things that you, um, that students resonate with when they really see it in

action versus then when we as educators just try to tell them about it... You know, when they really experience something, so. (I2, pg. 6). Stuart also highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for experiential learning to counselors-in-training who are particularly struggling with such value conflicts. He stated:

...If you're in this stuck place, in terms of cognitive identify, and then experiences occur that alter that, it's those experiences that move people to those higher order levels. And that's what we want to provide as supervisors, as counselor educators, for counselors-in-training who are stuck is to give those experiences. And, for the most part, you know, it works. (ID2, pg. 11)

Similarly, participants described the impact of being able to hear tangible, real life examples. Mae underlined the influence of sharing or providing *Stories* with one another, as a way to relate and gain more insight. She shared:

Um, when you hear someone kind of police themselves when they, you know, call a transwoman he and then they stop and they're like, oh, I'm so sorry. That was, I didn't intend, you know, I didn't, I didn't mean to do that. I didn't mean to be offensive. And so it's like this way that you start seeing a student begin to be mindful of-of their just day-to-day values and positions, things that we do all the time, I-I do all the time. (I2, pg. 24)

Lastly, participants continued to strengthen the emphasis on the importance of providing counselors-in-training with *Tools*. Stuart discussed his experience in training students on the topic of sexuality, and how that has provided valuable tools for counselors-in-training. He stated:

I think that has really, um, I think I got a lot of great tools, uh, in training in sexuality in those five graduate courses that I had in my, uh, master's, doctorate, and otherwise. So few people in counselor ed have any training in sexuality. (I2, pg. 1)

Being. Most participants spoke to the importance of tending to their own behavior during the navigation process with students. The two properties that were most distinct were *Modeling* and *Reflexivity*. These sentiments built the subcategory *Being*.

As with other subcategories here, *Being* tended to be a focus for participants after the subcategory of *Providing*.

Modeling. Participants spoke about modeling, either modeling behavior on their own as a teaching tool, or asking counselors-in-training to model behaviors for clients and others. *Modeling* emerged as a strong property in round two. Stuart shared his take on being comfortable and open about one's own cultural identity, while noticing that others' may be different. He stated, "Religion culture, um, certainly my own local cultural identities, my own spiritual belief system are huge and I'm very open with students about that. Um, I certainly don't impose it, but I talk about it" (I2, pg. 5). Similarly, Alexandra discussed the idea of modeling as a teaching tool. She spoke about the idea that, as counselors, it is important to remember the importance of modeling for clients and reported emphasizing that as a teaching tool. She stated, "So in some ways it seems like you're asking them to model, you know, use modeling and, yeah. Like, you can't ask your client to do something you're not willing to do" (I2, pg. 4).

Reflexivity. Most participants also spoke about their need to demonstrate *Reflexivity* during the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts, making *Reflexivity* a strong emergent property in round two. When participants described reflexivity in this context, they referred to personal values having an influence on their outlook and recognizing the personal uniqueness in that view. It also seemed participants were metaphorically placing themselves in the described experiences students may be struggling with. For example, Louise reflected on her own work with clients as a way to access empathy and gain a clearer understanding for student's experiences. She reported, "I think that when I recognize when other, when other people, or even when I - we talked about this in our first meeting - when I have my own responses to a client, when I'm reminded of how much it is to struggle with it" (I2, pg. 10). She went on to elaborate, "So I have to really watch myself, um, to make sure I'm honoring their belief system as we do our work on... And so, and when those situations happen, I'm reminded of how it is for my students" (I2, pg. 11).

Mae described being reflexive in several instances when working with counselors-in-training navigating value conflicts. First, she discussed a way in which she helps her students normalize feelings of discomfort as they explore topics that are new to them or uncomfortable for them to talk about, related to sexuality specifically. She stated:

I-I-I came to use a bit of humor, uh, with my students. And particularly around issues that can feel kind of uncomfortable. And, you know, say with,

you know, lightheartedness, like, yeah, this can feel super uncomfortable.

And, like, sometimes saying these words...(I2, pg. 9)

She went on to discuss an instance in which she shared with a counselor-in-training who was struggling with the thought of connecting with someone who identified as LGBTQI that she herself identified as queer. She reported it seemed appropriate to disclose to her because she felt as though she and the student had developed a strong working relationship and wanted to provide a corrective emotional experience for her. She stated:

And I was like, I kind of came, and I came out to her. And I was just like, what has it been like getting to know me? Like, what did it, you know, what is it like now knowing this about me? And how does it change the way you feel about me? (I2, pg. 19)

She later discussed using reflexivity in her role of educator, as a way to tend to the innate hierarchy in the relationship. She described:

And, um, so yeah. I think that because of the innate power differential between, you know, me being, you know, the evaluator, the instructor, and her being the student, and particularly in this case, like, us being in an active remediation plan, it was something that I put a lot of thought into. (I2, pg. 36)

Noticing. Based on the data analysis of round two, a brand new subcategory emerged. This subcategory *Noticing* helped to describe participants' observations, over the entire navigation process. Unlike the three subcategories discussed previously, this subcategory is not in a particular order compared to the other categories. In other words, it is not a step in participants' processes, but rather a

subcategory that overlays the rest. All of the participants described themselves actively *Noticing* throughout the process of navigating value conflicts with counselors-in-training. The three properties under *Noticing* included: (1) *Process vs. Outcome*; (2) *Seeking Behaviors*; (3) *Own Process*, with dimensions of *Logistics* and *Emotions*.

Process vs. outcome. Most participants spoke about focusing on the *Process* vs. *Outcome*, as a way to help counselors-in-training successfully navigate value conflicts of this type. It seemed, based on what participants shared, that they believed by focusing on the process that students would gain an understanding of how to navigate such struggles in the future without as much challenge. Mae discussed the difference in focusing on the process over the outcome and reiterated that the end goal is not to change someone's belief system. She stated:

So I think that assessing for change in, not necessarily change in a student's belief system, but assessing for change in students' ability to, like, mitigate, um, the negative impact of their belief system. Or to, um, mitigate, uh, their valued presence, uh, with a client. I, um, I guess I-I can really only tap into that by paying attention to their language and process. (I2, pg. 22)

She went on to further describe one of the reasons in which focusing on the outcome is not the most productive thing to do, as it does not guarantee sustained learning on the part of the student. She shared:

And that a lot of times we can't actually assess the change that our clients or our students are going through. And so I think for me, um, yeah. I think it's just a-a process of checking in and also understanding that sometimes I'll

never know. Like, sometimes a student, um, behaviorally can show, like, leaps and gains throughout the quarter and they're still, you know, you know, they still could have very problematic behaviors with clients. That's-that's also possible. And I'll never know. (I2, pg. 23-24)

Louise described the navigation process as being difficult to explain. She stated, "It's [the assessment process] very unscientific" (I2, pg. 7). She went on to describe how she believes the student's internal process, to include their thoughts and feelings, is a valuable part of the learning process. She shared:

And so it's very, it's a very personal process. So it's, to me, it's more about what's going on inside and how a person is both thinking and feeling how a counselor, how-how a trainee is thinking and feeling about their work in the context within they're doing it. It's more about how that thinking and feeling is going than it is necessarily about them being so rigid in their response to me. (I2, pg. 5)

Seeking behaviors. *Seeking Behaviors* emerged as a significant property in round two. Under the subcategory *Noticing*, participants described noticing certain seeking behaviors in counselors-in-training as a sign of growth, or successful value conflict navigation. On the other hand, participants spoke about the opposite as well, if they noticed counselors-in-training demonstrating rigidity in their views, that rigidity influenced the overall navigation process. That will be discussed in greater depth later in this chapter, when the category *Influences on the Process* is discussed. Based on what participants shared, seeking behaviors include continuing education or supervision specific to the LGBTQI population and their needs, being open about the

need for continued self-growth, reflexivity and continued engagement despite feeling challenged.

Alexandra spoke about noticing seeking behaviors related to the counselor-in-training pursuing continuing education and additional supervision directly related to working with the LGBTQI population, as a sign of growth. She stated, “Um, they [counselors-in-training] may be reporting that they have attended, um, a continuing education training regarding, um, working with the LGBT population...If they're at their clinical site, um, and they're speaking to their, they report speaking to their supervisor about working with [LGBTQI clients] (I2, pg. 17-18). She went on to say, “Um, so they're doing, they're initiating, or they're recognizing, um, their own resistance, and so they're-they're initiating, whether it be continuing education or whatever” (I2, pg. 18). Louise shared similar sentiments and stated:

I think that's [counselors-in-training reaching out], um, I think that's also a way to barometer that I know that they are, um, far enough along in their own development to know that they do need help and to reach out (I2, pg. 9).

Participants acknowledged when CIT's demonstrate openness about continued self growth, reflexivity and continued engagement, despite feeling challenged through the value conflict they are experiencing, they are exhibiting signs of growth.

Alexandra described this when she spoke about students having corrective emotional experiences. She stated:

If they're taking on clients and then reporting their experience of how it is so different than what they had envisioned, um, then I know. You know, so it's a lot of, like, uh, willingness, self initiation, self exploration, uh, but I-I watched

one student go from a person who was for certainly, we're not going to work with anybody who's LGBT, to becoming an advocate in the community for LGBT people. (I2, pg. 18-19)

Similarly, Louise reported noticing students demonstrating openness as a sign of movement. She stated, "Unless they also said, I noticed this about myself and I really want to work on this... So I would recognize that kind of thinking as something different and outside of their norm (I2, pg. 4). She went on to give two examples of students demonstrating reflexivity and engagement. She shared:

...here I [counselor-in-training] go again. I-I, you know, we need to come back to this. I know, I know because I had that sort of response in myself that I really need to talk about this again. It helped last time, you know. (I2, pg. 8)

She went on to say:

So they wouldn't come in saying, I'm not working with this client. They would come in honoring that they're still trying to be congruent, but they still can't get to the place where they can feel congruent about their faith and yet support this person who seems to be engaging in something that's against their faith, um, and they would be more able to just talk about that struggle. (I2, pg. 8)

Own process. During round two participants spoke about noticing their *Own Process* through the navigation of such value conflicts with counselors-in-training. *Own Process* emerged as a strong property for round two. There were two dimensions to this property, as participants distinguished between *Logistics* and *Emotions* as they shared.

Participants discussed noticing the *Logistics* of their own process, or the implementation of actions, as they helped counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Louise spoke to this clearly. She stated, “I-I usually will just sort of name what I'm seeing” (I2, pg. 3). She went on to say,

And I would probably address it and say, hey... I usually find you (CIT) to be, um, pretty open and to invite maybe some dissonance in your work, but this really feels, uh, feels like you had, like, and oomph, sort of physical almost response. And tell me what's happening. (I2, pg. 4)

Later Louise described noticing her own process changing, logistically, over time. She shared:

Um, I-I think it's changed partly because of my own development as a person, as a woman, as a counselor, as a supervisor, as a counselor educator, as a person who teaches in front of people, as a person who teaches online, as a person who was a follower, as a person who now has to be a leader. I mean, it's just my own development really. (I2, pg. 9-10)

Mae shared her noticing of how her process, logistically, has changed over time, specifically in relation to how she relies on the ACA Code of Ethics when helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. She stated:

I-I think I did, and sometimes still do defer to the code of ethics where I'm just like, this is the way it is. This is, like, you know, if you're practicing in a way that's not in accordance with this, like, you might have problems in your, you

know, and I hate to, like, use, like, the big book as, like, the, you know, the law of the land... Um, which feels very much, um, yeah, that feels like a very superficial intervention. (I2, pg. 33-34)

Some participants discussed noticing the *Emotions* related to their own process, or the implementation of actions, as they helped counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Some participants discussed how their emotional experiences have changed over time. Stuart spoke to this clearly. He stated, “Uh, I think that I have become more comfortable with it (the process)” (I2, pg. 12). He went on to further elaborate. He shared:

So, uh, the moments that-that I think have become easier are, I think I'm a lot more gentle with people as the years have gone by. They may not see it that way, but I feel I have been, that I see it very much more developmentally, that I don't see it as a personal thing. And I could easily have personalized, and-and, uh, had chosen not to. (I2, pg. 12)

Mae shared similar sentiments about her emotional process becoming easier with time. She stated:

...one thing that I've noticed in the short time that I've been an educator is that I, myself, have been able to, like, manage my emotional reactions to it. And it feels less personal. And it feels like less of an attack. (I2, pg. 32)

She went on to describe her process and alluded to the process being ongoing for her, and with time she finds more comfort and confidence. She reported:

Yeah, I think... I also just, I also feel considerably more comfortable talking about uncomfortable things. And, I mean, it's uncomfortable to, it's uncomfortable that it can, it still is uncomfortable at times for me to, um, you know, initiate a one-on-one. Or to even, like, try and have a, maybe a corrective - I'm not sure if that's the right word - but a corrective experience within the classroom when something is said that, um, you know, was discriminatory or just potentially harmful for other members of the class... Um, so yeah. I think maybe I'm just getting a little better at that. But still-still working on it, for sure. (I2, pg. 34-35).

Similarly, Louise discussed how her process has changed over time and with that, how her emotional experience, when helping students through such value conflicts has shifted. She alluded to relying on self-talk as she navigates this process. She shared:

I guess it's more about my own self talk, like um, when I hear something from someone that strikes me as being a very rigid kind of belief I, um, in my earlier years would have instantly wanted to have a power struggle about it and now I just kind of say to myself, okay...this is just reminder about how different your beliefs are from this person. And just because you think they're wrong doesn't mean they are and, you know, slow down, be patient and do your job. (ID2, pg. 18)

Supports Over Time

Three subcategories emerged under the category *Supports Over Time* with the properties from round one and new data in round two to support this expansion.

Those subcategories included: (1) *External Supports*; (2) *Utilizing Professional Skills*; and (3) *Interpersonal Relationships*. The subcategories are in order of how participants described relying on supports over time, since being in the role of counselor educator. All of the subcategories included distinct properties, some stronger than others. The subcategory *External Supports*, for example, included properties that were supported thinly by the data in round two. The properties included: (1) *Codes of Ethics* and; (2) *Evidence-based Research (EBR)*. Previously the property referring to codes of ethics was specific to the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), but round two data analysis revealed the inclusion of other professional codes, hence the name change to *Codes of Ethics* as a way to be encompassing. The subcategory *Utilizing Professional Skills* included two properties: (1) *Pedagogy*; and (2) *Counseling Skills*. The subcategory *Interpersonal Relationships* also included two properties: (1) *Peers*; and (2) *Relationship with CIT*. Figure 3.5 is a visual representation of the situational map *Supports Over Time Map*.

External supports. The subcategory *External Supports* helped to describe what participants shared about the external supports they tend to rely on when assisting counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts of this type. This subcategory included two distinct properties. The data to support these two properties in round two was thin, however, they were also distinct properties in round one and were significant enough throughout data collection that it was appropriate to include them. Consistent with the description of the participants' processes, this subcategory tended to occur before the next two, *Utilizing Professional Skills* and *Interpersonal Relationships*, as described by participants. The properties included:

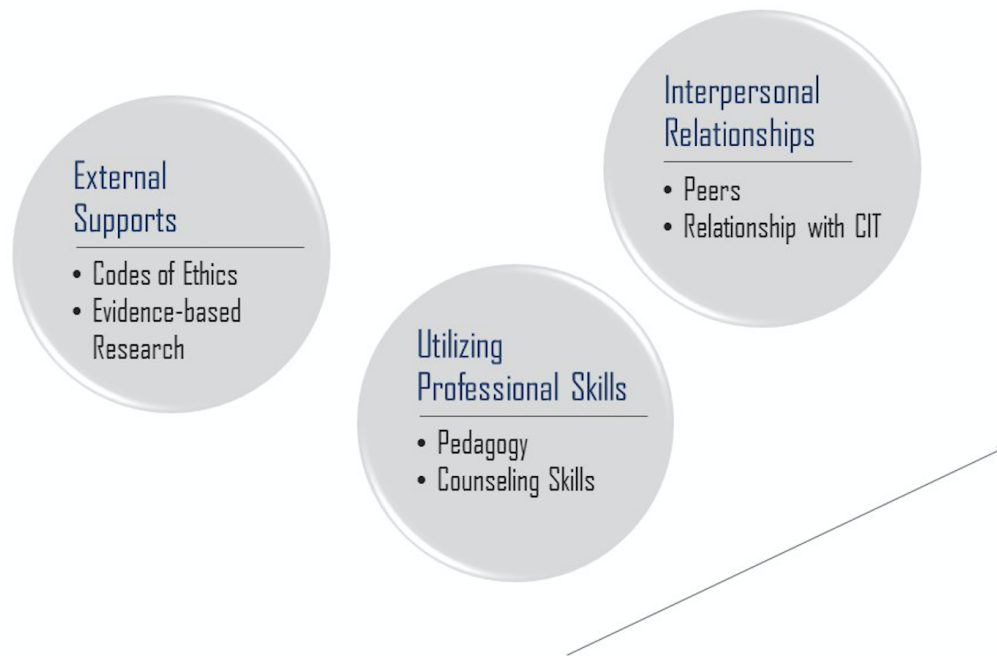


Figure 3.5. Supports Over Time Map

(1) *Codes of Ethics*; and (2) *Evidence-based Research*. They will be described together, as there seemed to be overlap for participants and, again, not enough data to support separating them.

Most participants discussed relying on some ethical guidelines as part of their process in helping students navigate value conflicts. Most participants mentioned the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), while one participant mentioned relying specifically on the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Ethical Standards for School Counselors (2016). For example, Stuart shared:

I, uh, I look at multiple issues of oppression, uh, I look at, uh, intersectionality, I look at how the school counselors close achievement opportunity attainment gaps. And I do that in part by looking at the multiple identities. And so, in so doing, uh, when value conflicts arise, uh, that's the

place that I go back to. Our codes of ethics, uh, ASCA code of ethics...(I2, pg. 3)

Alexandra stated, “Um, and probably equally is, uh, important, I would use the ACA ethics code equally” (I2, pg. 29). She went on to say, “Um, and that one (ACA Code of Ethics) remains the first thing I always look at. Um, because if I have to document, I want to document something that's in print, um, that supports me (I2, pg. 29).

Some participants spoke to their reliance on *Codes of Ethics* changing over time. Louise spoke to this being the case for her and shared some about her development as a counselor educator. She stated:

So I think sort of going back to the development, my development as a supervisor and an educator, I think originally when I met, when I was met with that kind of rigidity that might be my rigid response of... (relying on) the Code of Ethics. (I2, pg. 2-3)

Most participants also discussed relying on some sort of *Evidence-based Research (EBR)* as a supportive factor in helping counselors-in-training work through value conflicts. Alexandra mentioned utilizing a tiered model to help students. She shared:

So, um, so I would move into that, um, I suppose, I use the three models here for, uh, teaching about counseling, uh, how to be, how to be a counselor, uh, with clients. And I use a three-tier model that's not mine, it's, uh, actually belongs to Clara Hill. (I2, pg. 2)

Similarly, Stuart reported relying on both an evidence-based counseling theory and EBR specifically. He stated, "...the key core conditions that, um, Rogers built, uh, uh, his model, uh, person-centered counseling on (I2, pg. 16). He went on to say, "...uh, and this is the model of the family acceptance project, this is Caitlin Ryan's wonderful research (I2, pg. 4).

Utilizing professional skills. The subcategory *Utilizing Professional Skills* was solidified in round two. This subcategory helped describe what participants shared about the professional skills they tend to call upon to help support the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts. This subcategory included two properties: (1) *Pedagogy*; and (2) *Counseling Skills*. Consistent with the description of the participants' processes, this subcategory tended to occur before the next, *Interpersonal Relationships*, as described by participants.

Pedagogy. As in round one, most participants discussed relying on their personal supervision style, or their pedagogy, as support during the navigation process with students. Some participants did not use the word pedagogy, but sometimes rather described it as their personal style, behaviors in line with their personality or being influenced by their chosen counseling theory. Louise discussed her preference for approaching counselors-in-training with curiosity. She shared:

So as I, as I kind of compare, like how you describe what you used to do compared to what you do now, it seems like more of, like, um, that's occurring right now. So addressing the feelings that are happening with the student, um, rather than relying on, you know, something else for support and saying, like, you have to because here's this. (I2, pg. 4)

Louise discussed her personal style, or pedagogy, and highlighted an approach that she takes that tends to the counselors-in-training's feelings. She explained the moment in which she alters her approach based upon her perception of the student's experience in the moment. She stated:

Where now I recognize a rigid view, um, in different context. I don't instantly recognize it as somebody's digging their heels in. I-I more instantly recognize it as, somebody doesn't really know what to do and they feel somehow threatened. They feel somehow unsafe. And so I respond to it differently. (I2, pg. 3)

Mae similarly described her soft approach with students. She explained encouraging counselors-in-training to approach value-laden topics, those specifically related to conflicts between conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, with tentativeness and openness. She stated:

And then I may explicitly kind of remind the class that, um, that, like, discomfort is vulnerable and discomfort among your peers and in front of an educator or someone who holds an evaluative role over you, can be, can feel very, can feel very vulnerable and uncomfortable. And, um, and-and may, I may, like, encourage folks to take it one step at a time. (I2, pg. 10-11)

Stuart described being greatly influenced by his pedagogy and by the counseling theory he most aligns with. He shared:

Rooted in a feminist, anti-oppression approach...So, if we use narrative when working with our trainees using it in a supervisory sense as well, its how can we restoring your experience as professional counselor working with folks

who have a this very different belief system from you. Just as we ask our clients to engage in restoring processes of their own. (ID2, pg. 7)

Counseling skills. Similar to round one data analysis, *Counseling Skills* remained an important property. Participants described relying on their own learned counseling skills as they helped counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Alexandra discussed shifting her role when working with a student who is struggling with this type of value conflict, as a way to further explore the person's experience. She stated:

Well, it would probably put me more into, um, a counselor role. And it's not that I would become their counselor... Um, but I would go back to using, um, micro-counseling skills to help them investigate where this is coming from. (I2, pg. 1)

She went on to elaborate on the specific counseling skills she tends to rely on in such situations, and reiterated her goal of exploring further. She shared:

Okay, so as far as rigidity, um, that would come with a lot of challenging discrepancies, uh, again, which is a counseling skill, um, you know, and although I try to divorce my personal hat from, um, being a counselor, it's difficult to divorce my counselor hat from the rest of my life... challenging discrepancies and asking for consistency and, uh, using open questions and paraphrasing and reflecting feelings. (I2, pg. 3)

Mae similarly shared her reliance on counseling skills as a way to help create a safe environment in which counselors-in-training can share their experiences related to such value conflicts. She stated:

I may rely on another type of micro-skill, whether it's, um, you know, um, like a-a softness or a kindness in my voice, or, um, you know, uh, just eye contact and openness and really trying to use those types of skills that facilitate a safer feel to the room, a safer environment. (I2, pg. 10).

Interpersonal relationships. Consistent with round one data analysis, *Interpersonal Relationships* emerged clearly as something participants described relying on for support throughout this process of helping students navigate such value conflicts. *Interpersonal Relationships* became a subcategory in round two. Participants described relying on both *Peers* and *Relationship with CIT* as supportive properties. Again, the property *Peers* previously was paired with boss support and round two data analysis did not support the inclusion of this piece as a distinct property.

Peers. Some participants highlighted their reliance on the support of their *Peers* or colleagues as they work with students who struggle with such value conflicts. Stuart described sharing information about situations related to working with counselors-in-training with his colleagues as a way to work through it, while also gaining more perspective. He stated:

Do I want to team it with my counselor ed full-time faculty colleagues and meeting when we review our candidates and say, look, this came up, we've got major drama, here's my plan, this is what I'm doing, what do you think?

And everyone say, yep, go for it, that's fine, or what do you think about this?

So it's certainly, uh, a consultation of colleagues. (I2, pg. 9-10)

He went on to say, "Um, yeah. I think that that's-that's probably where I assess, the ways that I assess that" (I2, pg. 24).

Alexandra similarly described relying on her peers for support. Specifically, she was discussing her process in working through helping a student navigate a value conflict related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients and talking about what she does, considering there are many ways to approach the situation. She shared, "Um, I may talk to one of my peers who lives here" (I2, pg. 31). In the same conversation she also highlighted the change over time in her reliance on support when she stated, "And I would say the first two years I was here, I relied heavily on the supervision of my boss. So, um, but I don't go to her frequently now, my boss" (I2, pg. 30-31), which further highlights her increased reliance on her peers for support.

Relationship with CIT. All of the participants spoke to the *Relationship with CIT* as being imperative for support through the successful navigation of such value conflicts. It seemed, as described by participants, that focusing on the relationship was key to maintaining connection, while experiencing growth and furthered understanding. Stuart described an instance in which he was working with a counselor-in-training who was having a difficult time being in his class because he identified as gay. He shared how his focus on building relationship with her made a monumental difference in her successful navigation through the value conflict she was experiencing. He stated:

Uh, she was in multiple classes with me, including eventually sexuality, and was able to, I was able to work with her in terms of supporting her belief system, giving her permission to challenge the things that weren't working, and then over the years just watched her own, uh, growth and-and belief system. She became incredibly trusting of me, um, and saw the damage of her belief system. (I2, pg. 10-11)

Similarly, Louise spoke to the time investment of building relationships with students, and alluded to the reward of taking the time to do so. She shared:

And so I usually don't see that in a sinc-, in a real sincere way, in-in a, uh, um, in any kind of a deep way. Until they've been working with me for a while. Because we've got to go through the whole performance anxiety thing in the beginning, so... (I2, pg. 9)

Mae and Alexandra both spoke to the power of building relationships with counselors-in-training and the impact it can have on helping them through value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Mae stated, "And I-I don't know. It was just, to-to me, it like, it signified, or it-it, our relationship kind of opened up what it can look like when you build strong relationships with students" (I2, pg. 20). Comparably Alexandra shared, "Um, but I, at the end of two years, even those that have been most resistant are hugging me and thanking me" (I2, pg. 5).

Influences on Process

Influences on the Process strengthened as a central category in round two data collection and analysis. In this category there were three subcategories. They

included: (1) *Counselor-in-Training (CIT)*; (2) *Counselor Educator (CE)*; and (3) *Environment*. Each subcategory included distinct properties, based on round two data analysis. The subcategory *CIT* included four properties: (1) *CIT's Level of Flexibility*; (2) *Rigidity of CIT's views*; (3) *CIT's Level of Fear*; and (4) *CIT's Exposure to Diversity*. The property *CIT's Level of Flexibility* was added as a new property after data analysis of round two as a way to further enhance and deepen the understanding of the category *Influences on Process*. The subcategory *CE* included two properties: (1) *Pedagogy*; and (2) *Length of Employment as a CE*. The subcategory *Environment* included two properties: (1) *Climate*; and (2) *Region*. This subcategory also emerged as an underlying subcategory that permeated each of the other two subcategories here. Unlike other subcategories in other categories, the subcategories here are not in a particular order, per participants' reports. Figure 3.6 is a visual representation of the situational map of the *Influences on the Process Map*.

Environment. Consistent with round one data collection and analysis, *Environment* remained a significant subcategory in round two. This subcategory helped describe what participants shared about how environmental factors, specifically the properties *Climate* and *Region*, tended to influence the navigation process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts. The data to support these two properties in round two was thin, however, they were also distinct properties in round one and were significant enough throughout data collection that it was appropriate to include them.

The property *Climate* was highlighted by some participants as being related to the religious climate or the overall climate in the classroom, which included dominant

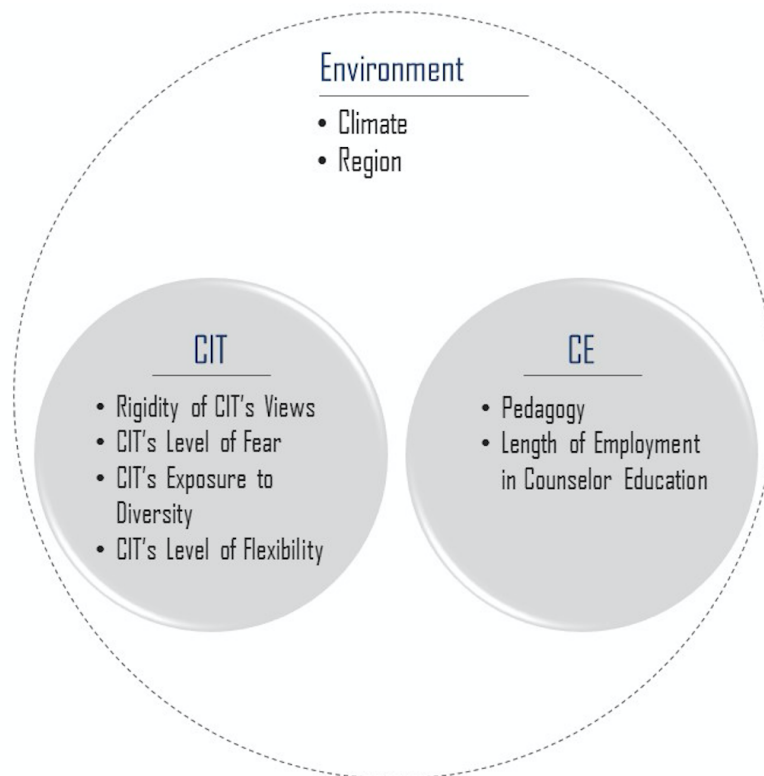


Figure 3.6. Influences on the Process Map

religious beliefs. Stuart mentioned noticing more such value conflicts in a particularly religious climate. He stated, “So, uh, we-we, uh, are able to work with multiple identities and when value conflicts come up, they're usually out of a conservative religious tradition” (I2, pg. 3). In his interpreting dialogue session he elaborated when he shared about the goal of asking counselors-in-training who are struggling with such value conflicts to add to their worldview, rather than considering taking away their beliefs. He reported being influenced by his goal also for the politicians who are currently being highlighted in the media. He shared:

...By helping families, and um educators as well and potential counselors, look at not taking away their value system, but adding to it. Um by, showing

here is what family members do out of love to push away LGBT folks, here's what you do to hold on. So, instead of rejecting, affirming. So, if we apply that then to everything else that's going on right now in the country, everything else that we want for our candidates to be moving out of that either/or place...(ID2, pg. 18)

Louise and Mae separately discussed the classroom climate as being influential to the navigation process. Louise shared:

And the way that I had to approach this in the classroom, I felt so much more guarded about how to approach this in the classroom than I do now. And not because I'm working now for an online institution, but because I am now working for a non faith-based institution. (I2, pg. 2)

In her interpreting dialogue session she elaborated more and described the difference she noticed in working with a faith-based institution and a secular institution. She shared:

The identity of the institution as faith based also influenced this...in order to be a, um, an appropriate representation of the program of the institution with my students, um, and to also be congruent with my own self, I had to be much more careful about the way I worded certain things. Um, and I don't have to be that careful where I am now. (ID2, pg. 20)

Mae shared how her process of helping students navigate such value conflicts is influenced by the climate of the classroom. She stated, "Um, so when I find myself in the classroom that-that doesn't feel particularly welcoming to the conversation that

I'm about, that I'm about to, you know, hopefully facilitate, I-I may not use humor” (I2, pg. 10).

The property *Region* did not appear to be as significant in round two, however, due to its prominence in round one and it showing up again in round two, it seemed important to include. Stuart spoke to *Region* when he described *CIT's Exposure to Diversity* and how that can be influenced by region of the country. He stated, “I think exposure to diversity for our, uh, school counselor candidates is critical” (I2, pg. 3).

CIT. The subcategory *CIT* helped to describe the influences on the process related specifically to the counselor-in-training. Participants described three of the properties, *Rigidity of CIT's Views*, *CIT's Level of Fear*, and *CIT's Exposure to Diversity* clearly in round one. These properties remained consistent in round two. A fourth property, *CIT's Level of Flexibility*, emerged strongly in round two. Participants described all four properties as being influential on educators' process of navigating such value conflicts with counselors-in-training.

Rigidity of CIT's views. As in round one, *Rigidity of CIT's Views* remained consistent throughout round two data collection and analysis and emerged as a strong property. Stuart discussed how he used rigidity as an assessment tool when gauging potential for client harm. He stated, “Well, I think, uh, it starts with a baseline of either I or a colleague, or some-something has happened that there is this level of rigidity that is potentially going to harm, potentially current or future clients” (I2, pg. 9). He went on to explain the level of rigidity demonstrated by a student will influence whether or not he will consult with others. He stated, “If-if I feel that's

necessary. Sometimes I will, sometimes I won't (consult). It depends on the level of rigidity" (I2, pg. 10).

Louise discussed her overall impression and interaction style with a counselor-in-training who is exhibiting rigidity in their views. She reported this definitely influences the process of navigating value conflicts of this type with counselors-in-training. She described, "So, I think that, you know, the-there's a human response to talking to someone who has very rigid views. A response to anybody who's instantly rigid about anything" (I2, pg. 2).

CIT's level of fear. Similar to round one, *CIT's Level of Fear* remained consistent throughout round two data collection and analysis, and as described by most participants as being influential to the navigation process. *CIT's Level of Fear* emerged as a strong property. Stuart acknowledged fear as being influential to the process and described an approach he takes that does not focus on the fear itself, but rather models the opposite. He stated:

I'm not a big fear person. Uh, I'm much more into the opposite, which is love... And I try to model love, uh, in an appropriate ethical way. And I, uh, try to work more from a base of, uh, of love than a base of fear. So I think that's useful. (I2, pg. 4-5)

He went on to discuss the influence of fear in counselor-in-trainings' processes and their development through being able to successfully navigate such value conflicts.

He stated,

...often out of fear, often people adopt a lower cognitive level of development even though they have the potential for much higher, out of fear or out of, you

know, this is what I've been taught. I've been socialize to believe authority, I've been taught to believe...(ID2, pg. 9)

Alexandra also acknowledged fear as being influential and spoke about where she believes fear comes from. She also discussed a solution for decreasing the level of fear among counselors-in-training. She shared, "And so, uh, it's the lack of understanding or knowledge, um, which you know, there's enough research out there to support that the lack of knowledge is where fear comes from (I2, pg. 1).

CIT's exposure to diversity. *CIT's Exposure to Diversity* remained significant to the overall process through round two and emerged as a solid property. Based on what participants shared, it seems a student's exposure to diversity, either past or present, has an impact on their navigation process through value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. There seemed to be a relationship between a lack of exposure to diversity and increased likelihood or increased struggle with such value conflicts. Stuart discussed having worked in multiple locations, and in regards to being surrounded by diversity, mentioned having fewer opportunities to navigate such value conflicts with students. He stated, "Uh, one of the nice things about working in the Bronx is that we have extraordinary exposure to diversity" (I2, pg. 3). In his interpreting dialogue discussion he went on to emphasize the impact of increased exposure to diversity. He stated:

When I teach multicultural, its one of the assignments...cultural immersion experience, put yourself in the middle of a group where you are the only one and interact, talk, um explore. And so we know, almost all research indicates

that fear of Muslims, fear of gay people, fear of the other is less dramatic when you have personal, direct experience. (ID2, pg. 12)

Louise similarly reported her observation about how exposure to diversity influences counselors-in-training, as it relates to experiencing such value conflicts. Specifically she shared her beliefs on how increased exposure may help counselors-in-training empathize with others who identify differently than they do. Comparably to Stuart, she has had experience working with students who have had more opportunities to interact with diverse populations and those who have had fewer opportunities to do so. She acknowledged the difference between the two experiences and stated:

Um, and so they just really needed to be exposed to some things, you know. So psycho-ed and some movies and some books and some stories and people from the community that I could find to come in... But the people that I worked with online and the people that I work with online now, and my doc students, they had had lots of exposure to diversity. So, um, just-just different (I2, pg. 5).

CIT's level of flexibility. As stated earlier, the property *CIT's Level of Flexibility* emerged as a property in round two. Components of this property were seen somewhat in round one, but emerged strongly in round two. All of the participants described *CIT's Level of Flexibility* as being influential in the process of navigating such value conflicts, as well as with the outcome of the navigation process. Participants described this idea of flexibility also by discussing a tolerance

for ambiguity, reflexivity and openness on the part of the counselor-in-training's ways of thinking.

Louise discussed her perception of the importance in the counselor-in-training being able to tolerate ambiguity in the process of navigating value conflicts. She stated, "So, it-it's a, again, it's just my observation of their willingness to tolerate the ambiguity and be in a process without knowing the answer all of the time" (I2, pg. 8). Similarly, Alexandra spoke about the steps she takes when working with a student who is demonstrating a lack of flexibility or openness in their thoughts. She described asking the student to empathize. She shared,

So, um, so with rigidity, um, you know, it'd go back to challenging, uh, the discrepancy of being rigid and even note that, um, you know, how can you ask a client to become flexible and consider other points of perspective when you yourself are not...(I2, pg. 3)

She went on to discuss her perception of the importance of noticing a counselor-in-training demonstrate reflexivity by altering or lending more openness to their previous ways of thinking. She stated, "Um, okay, so I will hear more, uh, variance in their thinking and, um, communication. So, being as that they're not as rigid, they have attained some level of flexibility" (I2, pg. 17)...

Stuart described his perception of how flexibility in thought can influence one's behavior, which influences the navigation of such value conflicts overall. In this he alluded to the state of being flexible is something that can be attained with work, and with support. He shared, "And when you have that flexibility, you have a much greater ability to be warm and empathic and nonjudgmental and accepting..."

And so really the antithesis of that is someone who's rigid and someone who is stuck” (I2, pg. 16)

CE. The subcategory *CE* helped describe the influences on the process related specifically to the counselor educator, in this case the participants of the study. Participants described two properties, *Pedagogy* and *Length of Employment in CE* clearly in round one. These properties remained consistent in round two. Participants described both properties as being influential on educators’ process of navigating such value conflicts with counselors-in-training.

Pedagogy. Some participants spoke about their pedagogy, or their personal style of teaching and supervising, as being influential to the process of navigating such value conflicts with counselors-in-training. Mae shared her tendency to want to connect with students and to inquire about their internal processes, while remaining in the role of supervisor. She shared, “You know, how are you, how are you feeling? You know, what's coming up for you? Um, you know, what are some areas that you hope to grow over the-the next few weeks (I2, pg. 23)? Similarly, Alexandra spoke to her role and how her personal style, or pedagogy, comes into play in the process of navigation. She stated, “...not because I’m the catalyst- but, um, because I continued to encourage them to and challenge them to change, right, as their advisor (I2, pg. 5).

Length of employment in CE. Most participants spoke about the length of time they have been employed as counselor educators as being influential to the navigation process with counselors-in-training working through value conflicts of this type. Stuart spoke at length about this and shared some about his own experiences and how they have been influential on his process. He stated:

But, um, I think having had all of those experiences and then having had the doctoral internship, uh, working with a, uh, in a psychiatric sex therapy practice, being supervised by a psychiatrist who was a sex therapist really, you know, helped because that, all of those skills then really positioned me in terms of teaching sexuality and supervising around sexuality, and certainly sexual orientation and gender identity were-were integral aspects of that. (I2, pg. 1-2)

He went on to reiterate how influential length of employment has been on his process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts. He shared:

And so I think that length of employment is really critical because I've had the chance to work with and influence so many students, so many supervisees, um, in terms of reformative sexuality, in terms of looking at value conflicts, in terms of being able to lead folks from wherever they're at, uh, into all right, now you want to be able to, not only will-what you feel comfortable, but just because you get a client doesn't mean they're going to believe exactly what you do. And in many cases you'll get folks who don't. So how do you take that bridge? And so I think length of employment is critical with that. (I2, pg. 2)

Mae discussed how, over time, she has a better sense of what is occurring in interactions with students when they are struggling with navigating such value conflicts. She discussed:

Um, my, you know, paying attention to, like, us versus them language, or paying attention to pathologizing language, or, like, non person-first language. Um, and I think that it's, I mean, it's a sense, it's a feeling that you can get

from being around a student as you see them begin to open to up, or begin to maybe, uh, squirm less when a topic comes up. Um, is that the word? Yeah. Just kind of like, feel, you know, feel nonverbal discomfort. It's become easier (over time). (I2, pg. 22)

Conclusion

Round two data collection included interviews, interpreting dialogues, and continuous memo-writing. These processes were conducted in the same manner as round one. As data analysis progressed, so did my relationships with participants. I continually consulted with my advisor and remained engaged with memo-writing as a way to remain open to each experience and process described by participants.

Round two analysis led to the following categories: (1) *Navigation Process*; (2) *Supports Over Time*; and (3) *Influences on Process*. The main three categories stayed consistent from the end of round one and throughout round two data analysis. Again, each main category consisted of subcategories and properties. *Figure 3.3* is a visual representation of the situational map of the *Value Conflict Navigation Project Map*.

In the final member check, the participants determined the *Value Conflict Navigation Project Map* aligned with their described processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. In the next and final chapter, I will describe the emergent theory through telling participants' stories of this process.

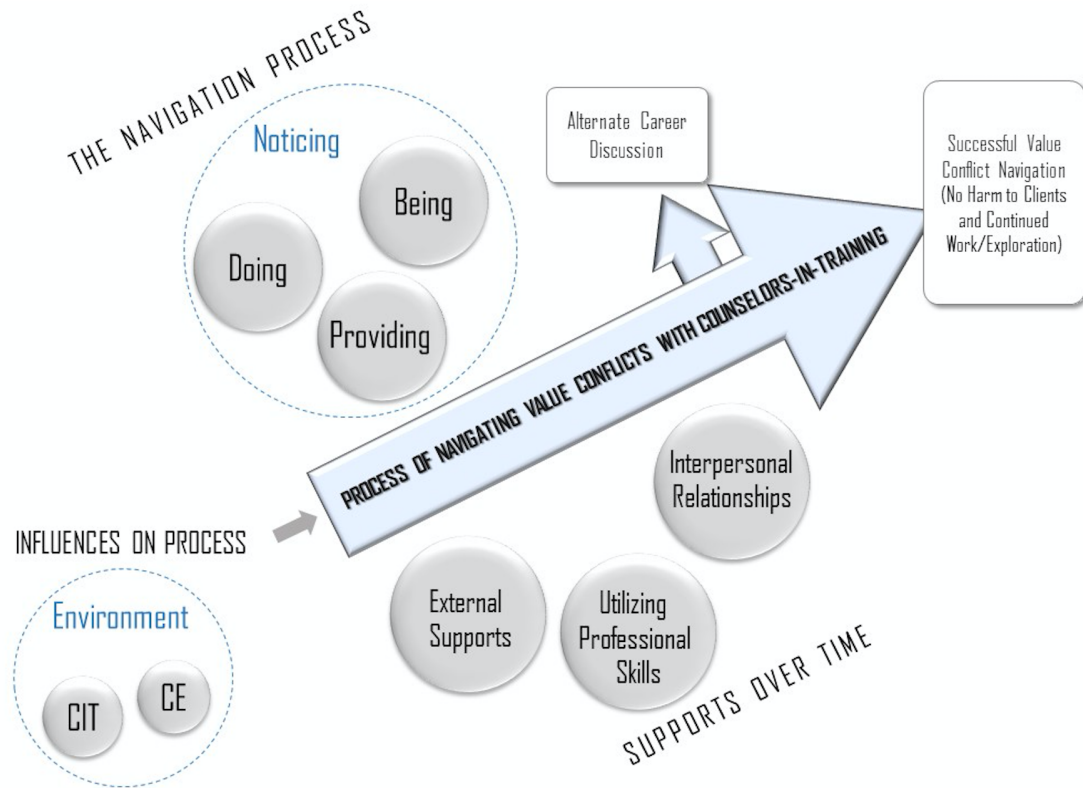


Figure 3.3. Value Conflict Navigation Project Map

Chapter V

Grounded Theory of the Process of Educators Helping Counselors-in-Training

Navigate Value Conflicts

Introduction

This study provides insight into four counselor educators' processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) clients. The philosophical and methodological foundation for the research comes from social constructionism and Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory (2014). This influenced my decision to rely on collaborative data gathering methods, such as intensive interviews, interpreting dialogues, continuous memo-writing and a final member check, as well as my ongoing conversations with my advisor as a means to assess the impact of my biases.

Four counselor educators engaged in this study, who self-identified as having a strong interest or experience in helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Purposeful selection was used to ensure participants would be able to provide information that was relevant to the research question (Creswell, 2013). Maximum variation sampling was used to as a way to increase the likelihood of diversity among a pool of participants (Lincoln et al., 1985). This variation was achieved in terms of length of employment in counselor education, sexual orientation, and religious affiliation. The participants' length of employment in counselor education ranged from 18 months to over 24 years. Sexual orientation included one identified queer

woman, one identified straight woman, one identified heterosexual woman, and one identified gay man. Spiritual and religious affiliation included no religious or spiritual affiliation, Episcopal Christian, and Earth Centered. The only variation that was originally sought that was not achieved was home region. Of the four participants two were from the North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (NARACES), one was from the Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES) region, and one was from the Western Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (WACES) region. Representation from the North Central Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (NCACES) and the Rocky Mountain Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (RMACES) regions were missing from the participant pool. As stated earlier, there were originally five participants, with the fifth representing the NCACES region, but due to study abroad plans this person was not able to participate in the study.

Grounded theory guided the data gathering and analysis, which again included two rounds of interviews, two interpreting dialogues, continuous memo-writing and a final member check. This methodology is an emergent type of inquiry, meaning the product of inquiry is not the sole focus, but rather the data that emerges through the entire process (Charmaz, 2011). Each interview lasted a minimum of one hour, each interpreting dialogue session lasted between 10-45 minutes and each final member check between 5-40 minutes. In total I spent a minimum of three hours with each participant, seeking to fully embrace Lincoln and Guba's (1985) foundational criteria of trustworthiness called prolonged engagement. Each meeting was audio recorded

and then professionally transcribed with the exception of two of the final member checks, as data did not warrant transcription. Memo-writing was continuous through the entire process. My memo-writing process included both handwriting journal style entries and typed entries, dependent simply on convenience. With both methods I ensured no identifying information was included, to protect participant confidentiality. I engaged in memo-writing throughout the entire data collection and analysis process, as a way to view my assumptions and biases more clearly, while simultaneously challenging my own beliefs and values that may be influencing interactions with participants (Charmaz, 2014).

During data analysis initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding were used to explore the data. Initial coding, according to Charmaz (2014), is the first step in coding and is a technique that produces short, simple, action focused codes that remain close to the data. Focused coding, the second phase of coding according to Charmaz (2014), condenses and sharpens the previous coding work by sorting and synthesizing chunks of data. And theoretical coding conceptualizes how the essential codes may relate to each other as hypotheses to be integrated into the theory (Charmaz, 2014). From this coding process, concept maps and situational maps were created to help highlight the emergent process described by participants.

Data analysis revealed three primary categories describing the process counselor educators described about helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. The three categories included: (1) *The Navigation Process*; (2) *Supports Over Time*; and (3) *Influences on the Process*. *The Navigation Process* included four

subcategories: (1) *Doing*; (2) *Providing*; (3) *Being*; and (4) *Noticing*, which all speak to the participants' described process over time. *Supports Over Time* included three subcategories: (1) *External Supports*; (2) *Utilizing Professional Skills*; and (3) *Interpersonal Relationships*, which spoke to participants' described supportive factors throughout their navigation process with counselors-in-training. And finally, the category *Influences on Process* included three subcategories: (1) *Counselor-in-Training (CIT)*; (2) *Counselor Educator (CE)*; and (3) *Environment*, which described the factors that influence the overall navigation process. *Figure 3.3* is a visual representation of the process captured during this study.

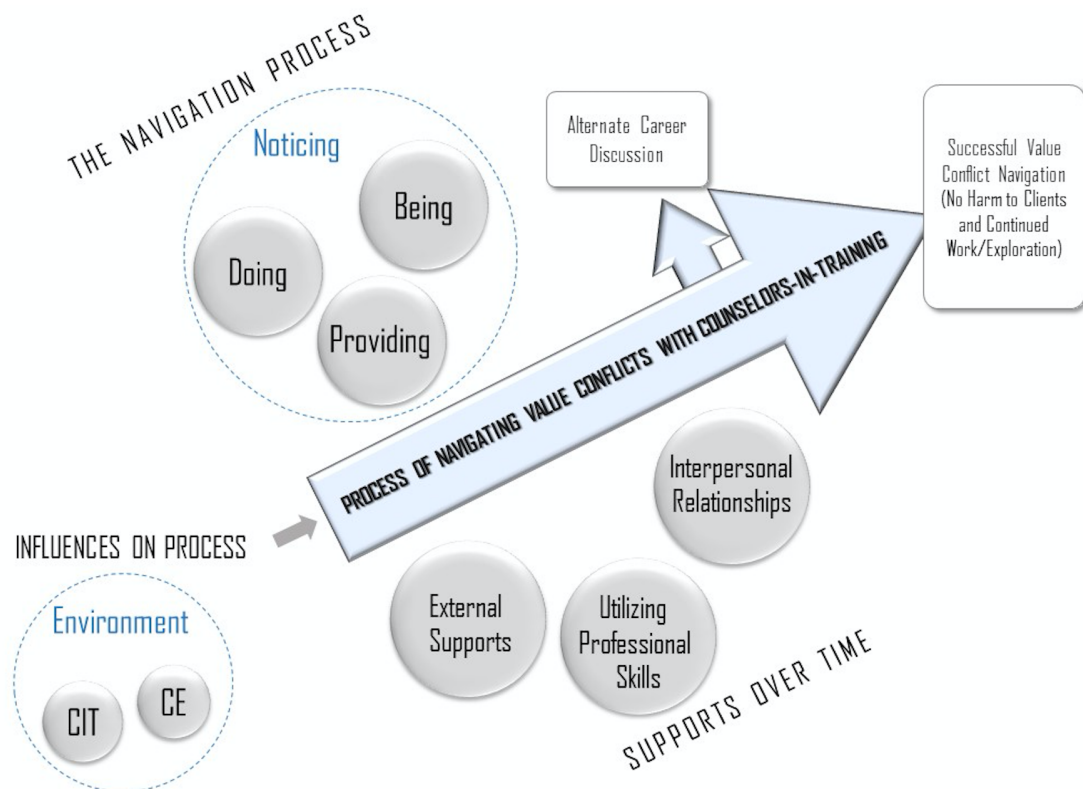


Figure 3.3. Value Conflict Navigation Project Map

Trustworthiness

A variety of criteria have been suggested to provide trustworthiness to qualitative, specifically constructivist, research (Morrow, 2005). In this study I made a concerted effort to ensure trustworthiness was enhanced. As mentioned in chapter two, there were a number of criteria I tended to throughout the research process. Those included prolonged engagement, regular meetings with my research advisor, Dr. David Kleist, memo-writing, interpreting dialogues, and final member checks.

Prolonged engagement refers to the adequate investment of time to achieve the study (Lincoln et al., 1985). Data collection took place over a four-month period and resulted in over 14 hours of audio-recorded dialogue total, or over three hours spent with each participant. I immensely enjoyed being immersed in the data and was thorough in this engagement. I did this by building and maintaining my relationship with participants by actively listening, exploring, and following up with each of them, as necessary. I was intentional about clearing my schedule, to place this process at the very top of my list of priorities for this timeframe.

As with prolonged engagement with participants, throughout the process I also engaged in at least weekly meetings with my research advisor, Dr. David Kleist. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss my thoughts, feelings, and ideas related to the research process. To ensure researcher reflexivity, I openly discussed my biases and reactions that arose throughout the process. I shared with Dr. Kleist my progress, to include the creating of categories, subcategories, properties, and visuals to help tell participants' emergent stories.

Simultaneously I engaged in continuous memo-writing to capture and process through my own thoughts, feelings, and biases that I noticed throughout the project. This activity, again either journaling or typing thoughts, feelings, reactions, and wonderings, reminded me to consider how my own beliefs may be influencing interactions with participants and how I viewed and analyzed the data. As stated previously, I embarked on this research journey to satisfy a deep curiosity. I did not know how to help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. While memoing I often processed through wondering how this selfish curiosity was influencing how I interacted with the data. I also felt deeply connected to each participant as they shared so openly and honestly. At times it was difficult to remain in the role of researcher, as I wanted to develop a friendship with each of them. Eventually I was able to do both successfully. By memo-writing, I was able to remain reflexive.

While interacting directly with participants there were several strategies I used to ensure trustworthiness. Interpreting dialogues was one of them and these discussions gave participants the opportunity to co-construct meaning through clarifying, verifying, adding to or changing data from the previous interview (Coe Smith, 2007). Again, it was my overall goal to create meaning *with* participants and by using interpreting dialogues I was able to do that. Participants were involved in the data analysis, to include making changes to the visual diagrams I shared with them along the way.

At the end of the data gathering and analysis process I met with each participant for a final member check. It was during this meeting that we discussed the

grounded theory, to include the visuals that helped to depict their processes. My goal was to ensure, again, that each participant felt as though their experiences were represented well in the grounded theory, or the story of the process of how they help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. It was also a time to wrap up our interactions as participant and researcher. At this time I was able to share just how much I appreciated each of their involvement, their time and their overall commitment to this research process. The following narrative describes the process, shared by participants, of how counselor educators help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Grounded Theory of Educators Helping Students Navigate Value Conflicts

Based upon the fact that the literature is thin in the area of how educators help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, this study may be used as a framework to help counselor educators with this process. The interpretations of the data were co-constructed with participants to ensure my understandings were fitting to what participants were voicing. *Figure 3.3*, two pages previous, provides a visual representation of the process captured in this study of counselor educators helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Navigation Process

Participants described the *Navigation Process* as being what actually occurs, or happens, during the navigation process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. This category is made up of four subcategories. The subcategories include *Doing*, *Providing*, *Being*, and *Noticing* and for the most part were described in general sequence as participants described them as occurring.

Doing. Participants described that early on in process of helping students navigate such value conflicts they focus mainly on the *Doing* part of the navigation process. Participants spoke to action oriented tasks that helped them navigate such value conflicts with counselors-in-training. These described tasks, or properties, included *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment*, *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations*, *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking*, and *Having “Fit” Discussion*.

Participants identified *Creating a Safe and Challenging Class Environment* as something they do early on in the navigation process with students. They acknowledged the safety of the classroom as being imperative for students to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings related to the conflict between their conservative religious values and the possibility of working with LGBTQI clients. Louise shared, “...they were willing to engage in a process where they felt safe to be vulnerable...” (I1, pg. 11). Participants openly recognized the value in offering challenge in the classroom, as they see the positive impact on counselor development of doing so. The piece of counselor development most often mentioned by

participants at this stage was increased ability to empathize with people who identify differently than they do. Stuart stated, "...once they're presented with these exercises and all of these different readings, there's some sort of awakening, there's some sort of, uh, their heart melts a bit" (I1, pg. 18).

Participants relied next on *Utilizing One-on-One Conversations* with counselors-in-training if they felt as though the in class discussions were not reaching them, or if they noticed particular counselors-in-training reacting strongly to what occurred in class. As shared by Mae, "And the first, you know, I guess the first step in moving forward is contacting the student and requesting a one-on-one" (I1, pg. 7). These instances were particularly related to value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Participants noticed students get stuck thinking because of their personal beliefs that there is not way to move forward, not a way to be in alignment with the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014). It was with the one-on-one conversations with counselors-in-training that this could be explored further.

During those one-on-one conversations with counselors-in-training participants spoke to one of their goals as being *Helping to Decrease Dichotomous Thinking* on the part of the student. Participants mentioned during this early stage of a counselor-in-training's development that it is common for students to be thinking in terms of either/or, rather than opening to both/and ways of thinking. This thinking can exacerbate value conflicts of this type, as from this lens it seems there is no option but to give up personally held beliefs, which of course people do not want to do. Stuart highlighted, "It's very either-or thinking" (I1, pg. 7). Participants

emphasized the importance of helping counselors-in-training increase their awareness to other identities, other ways of thinking and other ways of living as a way to increase the ability to empathize with others and to increase their own awareness.

Participants spoke openly about the possibility of counselors-in-training not experiencing enlightenment in the area of decreasing dichotomous thinking and considering being open to accepting others' differences in their budding role of counselor. Participants shared that when they do not notice growth, openness, and a willingness to explore other ways of thinking on the part of the student, they will then initiate a different conversation. *Having "Fit" Discussion* comes toward the end of the action oriented *Doing* items participants discussed. Participants shared that it is common to initiate a discussion exploring whether the counselor-in-training believes the counseling profession is a good professional fit for them, based upon their immobility and lack of flexibility toward becoming more in alignment with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014). The purpose of this discussion is to allow counselors-in-training who are struggling with value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients an opportunity to consider another more fitting professional path, as shared by Alexandra, "...it gives them an opportunity to leave the program if they feel it's not a good fit" (I1, pg. 13).

Providing. Also fairly early on in the navigation process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Participants described *Providing* a variety of things to students as a way to help the navigation process. The elements provided by participants included *Experiential Learning*, *Stories*, and *Tools*.

Participants explained providing *Experiential Learning* to counselors-in-training is a way to help them actively explore topics related to this type of value conflict. They described this part of the process as being impactful for students and reiterated that sometimes learning occurs more effectively with the use of experiential activities. As Alexandra shared, "...I would split the group into two. And I would give them both the same cases. And I would say, go research about what's happened in both of these cases..." (I1, pg. 4). Like Alexandra, the other participants highlighted the benefits of counselors-in-training learning from their peers and from doing, rather than from simply listening to a lecture, or discussion, from the educator.

Providing and sharing *Stories* was something that participants discussed as being impactful to counselor-in-training navigation through value conflicts of this type, especially in the earlier stages of the process. It seemed, through hearing touching stories, that students increased their ability to open their awareness to different identities and their ability to empathize with others. As Stuart shared, "...it moves people not just because of the research, but when you see people's life stories" (I1, pg. 8). Participants reported sharing *Stories* that directly related to this type of value conflict- either people struggling to accept another person's identity or people struggling to reconcile their conservative religious beliefs when wanting to accept someone who identifies as LGBTQI.

Lastly, participants reported providing *Tools* to counselors-in-training to continue exploring and navigating such value conflicts. According to participants, providing *Tools* is something that typically happens after they provide *Experiential Learning* and *Stories*, as *Tools* are items that students can rely on as they continue

through their navigation process, far beyond their initial interaction with the participants. Some of the tools mentioned include videos, books, blogs, webinars, and additional trainings, as Alexandra mentioned, "...they have webinars, or, you know, they have things on file with ACA that you can go through...even free trainings" (I1, pg. 36-37).

Being. Participants identified the importance of tending to their own way of being as part of the navigation process. This typically came to awareness for participants after the *Doing* and *Providing* steps in the navigation process. More often than not participants felt as though they did not have much control in the outcome of the navigation process counselors-in-training went through. For example, participants spoke to being able to *Do* and *Provide*, but the what a student did with those experiences and that information is ultimately up to them. With that realization, participants described the importance of tending to their own *Modeling* and *Reflexivity* behaviors.

Participants, like Alexandra for example, highlighted the importance of *Modeling* for counselors-in-training when she suggested, "...use modeling..." (I2, pg. 4). According to participants it is important that educators model the behaviors they believe to be important in the role of counselor. The specific behaviors participants suggested modeling during such value conflict navigation processes included openness, acceptance of difference, flexibility, humbleness, and courage.

Similarly, participants highlighted the importance of being *Reflexive* throughout the navigation process with students. It is important for them to stay in touch with a thoughtful self-awareness. As Louise described, "So I have to really

watch myself... I'm reminded of how it is for my students" (I2, pg. 11). It is through *Reflexivity* that participants are able to remain humble, stay in touch with the experiences of students, and to empathize with them in their navigation process.

Noticing. Unlike *Doing*, *Providing*, and *Being*, which occurred in sequential order in the category *Navigation Process*, *Noticing* occurred for participants throughout the entire process. *Noticing* is made up of properties participants reported being aware of and included *Process vs. Outcome*, *Seeking Behaviors*, and *Own Process* with the dimensions *Logistics* and *Emotions*.

Participants recognized their tendency to focus on *Process vs. Outcome* in the navigation process. Their perspective, again, was that the outcome of the navigation process is beyond their control and, in addition, the value and the growth come with the navigation process itself. It is within the process that participants are able to observe the counselors-in-training movement and growth as they navigate such value conflicts. As Mae shared, "I can really only tap into that by paying attention to their language and process" (I2, pg. 22).

Similarly, participants discussed *Noticing* counselors-in-training *Seeking Behaviors* as signs of change, growth and movement within the navigation process of such value conflicts. These behaviors would signify successful value conflict navigation, according to participants. Such *Seeking Behaviors* include continuing education or supervision specific to the LGBTQI population and their needs, being open about the need for continued self-growth, reflexivity and continued engagement despite feeling challenged. As described by Louise, "...they would be more able to just talk about that struggle (I2, pg. 8). Contradictory to that would be participants

not *Noticing* such *Seeking Behaviors*, which may signify an unsuccessful value conflict navigation, resulting in an alternate career consideration discussion between the counselor-in-training and educator.

Supports Over Time

Participants described *Supports Over Time* as being what supports them during the navigation process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. This category is made up of three subcategories. The subcategories include *External Supports*, *Utilizing Professional Skills*, and *Interpersonal Relationships* and, for the most part, were described in a general sequence by participants, based upon how long they have been employed as counselor educators.

External supports. Participants rely on external supports to help them navigate value conflicts of this type with counselors-in-training and this was especially true in the beginning of their careers. *Codes of Ethics* and *Evidence-based Research (EBR)* were two properties in which participants reported relying. The reliance on *Codes of Ethics* remains present for participants, but the weight of the reliance has changed over time for them, as described by Louise, “Um, my process in the early years of being a counselor educator was to sort of stand up for the code of ethics” (I1, pg. 9). She and other participants spoke to the *Codes of Ethics* as being concrete, easy to reference, and a comforting guide overall, as the documents gave clear answers and direction about how to navigate such value conflicts. As their careers in counselor education progressed, participants reported relying on other areas of support more heavily, as they noticed referencing the *Codes of Ethics* alone was

not enough to help counselors-in-training increase their own awareness, deepen their understanding of their budding role of counselor, and to make lasting changes in regards to navigating value conflicts. The additional external supports will be described in the following sections.

Evidence-based Research (EBR) is another area of support described by participants, especially early on in their careers. As with *Codes of Ethics*, *EBR* remains an area of support even for those participants who have been counselor educators for some time, but the reliance on such support has changed over time. The types of *EBR* varied, as described by Mae, "...offer different types of readings, different types of videos, websites, blogs that, um, just present an alternate point of view" (I1, pg. 1). Participants shared specific resources they offer, as well as general ideas of what they may suggest to students who are struggling with navigating value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Utilizing professional skills. As participants' time in counselor education increased so did their reliance on *Utilizing Professional Skills* as an area of support when helping students navigate such value conflicts. Examples of this included *Pedagogy* and *Counseling Skills*. Participants reported relying on their personal style of supervision, or their pedagogy, as a supportive factor, as Louise explained, "...that's just congruent with my counseling style, my supervision style" (I1, pg. 11). As educators, personal style or pedagogy develops over time. For this reason, this supportive factor was not as noticeable for participants early on in their careers while their pedagogy was still developing.

Counseling Skills emerged as a supportive factor and was a pleasant surprise for some participants to recognize. With all the years of training and practice, participants were pleased to recognize *Counseling Skills* as being supportive in their navigation processes with students. As Stuart stated, "...to be warm and empathic and nonjudgmental and accepting..." (I2, pg. 16). Participants spoke to the importance of approaching the counselor-in-training with curiosity, openness and without judgment while navigating this process with them, just like they described being appropriate with their work with clients.

Interpersonal relationships. Participants' reliance on *Interpersonal Relationships* as an area of support grew as their time in the profession did. They described this as being their reliance on their relationships with both *Peers* and their *Relationship with Counselor-in-Training (CIT)* while helping students navigate such value conflicts. Participants described the purposes of these reliances as being different. Their reliance on *Peers* was out of a need for personal and professional support, as stated by Mae, "...self reflection and my consultation is, um, is my tool for really getting a...sturdier foundation before moving forward" (I1, pg. 6).

Participants' reliance on *Relationship with CIT* was more out of a desire to maintain connection, while simultaneously helping the counselor-in-training work toward growth and increased awareness and acceptance of others, including LGBTQI clients. They discussed relying on *Relationship with CIT* as coinciding with increased time as a counselor educator. In other words, participants noticed their increased reliance on *Relationship with CIT* over time. Louise spoke to that development and stated, "And so I've moved from that stance, um, and more fully

embraced the way I usually go about supervision, which is to just get more into my relationship with the person who I'm working with" (I1, pg. 10).

Influences on Process

There were influences on participants' navigation process with counselors-in-training. Participants described these influences as having an effect on the entire navigation process. This category is made up of three subcategories. The subcategories include *CIT*, *CE*, and *Environment* and unlike in the other two categories, were not described in any sequential format by participants.

CIT. Participants indicated there were four properties related to *CIT* that influenced their navigation process with counselors-in-training. Those included *Rigidity of CIT's Views*, *CIT's Level of Fear*, *CIT's Exposure to Diversity*, and *CIT's Level of Flexibility*. Participants recognized *Rigidity of CIT's Views* as being influential to the process, as the more rigid the student's views, the more difficult it may be for the educator to convince them that flexibility and increased openness does not require one to rid themselves of their currently held beliefs. For example, Stuart shared, "...rather than either/or, uh, trying to help people to add to their belief systems" (I2, pg. 3).

Participants identified *CIT's Level of Fear* as being instrumental to how the processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts of this type unfold. They describe the *CIT's Level of Fear* as being influential to how they approach the student and also what they decide to share with the student. Stuart highlighted his approach shifting based upon the level of fear he notices. He stated, "...when we're dealing with folks who are fearful" (ID1, pg. 9). Participants

acknowledged being more careful in their wording and their pace of navigation with a student who is especially fearful.

In addition, participants recognized *CIT's Exposure to Diversity* as being influential on the navigation process and how they approach students who are struggling with such value conflicts. It was apparent to participants that with increased exposure to diversity, the prevalence of such value conflicts was lessened. Also, the severity or length of time it took to navigate such struggles decreased as exposure to diversity increased. Participants spoke to the influence of counselors-in-training being exposed to diversity before entering the counseling program, or outside of the program, as well as within the program. Louise shared her role as counselor educator, "...it is my responsibility to show different points of views and to-to make sure that there are numerous opportunities for our students to develop empathy..." (I1, pg. 11).

Lastly, participants identified *CIT's Level of Flexibility* as being impactful on the navigation process. By flexibility, participants meant a tolerance for ambiguity, reflexivity and openness on the part of the counselor-in-training's ways of thinking. They recognized the more flexible a counselor-in-training was in their ways of thinking, the easier the navigation process was for them. Increased levels of flexibility also signified growth, change or movement, as described by participants. Alexandra shared about this and stated, "I will hear more, uh, variance in their thinking and, um, communication. So, being as that they're not as rigid, they have attained some level of flexibility" (I2, pg. 17).

CE. Participants indicated there were two properties related to *CE* that influenced the navigation process with counselors-in-training. Those included *Pedagogy* and *Length of Employment* in counselor education. It was clear that personal style, or pedagogy, influenced how participants viewed such value conflicts, as well as influenced how they may help counselors-in-training navigate them. *Pedagogy* also emerged as a supportive factor, as described in a previous section. Participants discussed being influenced by their *Pedagogy*, or by certain pedagogical leanings, as Mae did when she stated, “my understanding and my training of feminist pedagogy...a pedagogy that, um, embraces values conflicts...” (I1, pg. 10-11).

Similarly, participants reported being influenced by their *Length of Employment* in counselor education. As stated previously, participants acknowledged how their processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients has changed over time. Participants described how the order in which they did things, the supports they relied on and their emphases have changed over time. For example, participants described their experiences to be much more focused on the process rather than outcome now that they have more experience in the role of educator. Or, toward the beginning of their careers, they were less focused on their relationships with students. In addition, participants spoke to increased experience influencing their proficiency in this process, as Stuart shared, “I think that length of employment is really critical because I've had the chance to work with and influence so many students...in terms of looking at value conflicts” (I2, pg. 2).

Environment. The subcategory *Environment* helps to describe what participants shared about how environmental factors, specifically the properties *Climate* and *Region*, tend to influence the navigation process of helping counselors-in-training navigate such value conflicts. Environment colored both the influences *CIT* and *CE*, meaning *Environment* had an influence on both. Participants spoke to *Climate* as being influential in their processes and what they meant by *Climate* is the political climate and religious climate. Participants engaged in this research study right before, during and after the general Presidential election in the United States, in November 2016. Because of the timing, political *Climate* seemed to be at the forefront of participant's thoughts. For example, Mae described the environment in her classroom shifting during the election. She stated, "...students can no longer connect with one another once they realize that their person that they've been sitting next to all year was a Trump supporter" (I1, pg. 17). Participants reported having to adjust their approaches with this being the case.

Similarly, participants spoke about the religious climate impacting the *Environment* and, in turn, influencing their navigation process with students struggling with such value conflicts. Depending upon the dominant religion in the classroom, or in the surrounding area, participants reported having to adjust their approaches, as Alexandra stated, "...it is a very red state...very religious...considered part of the Bible Belt" (I1, pg. 1).

Participants identified *Region* as being influential to their processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. They described *Region* as being not only

different cultures based upon regional location, but also factored in the dominate race and religion of certain areas in the country as being influential. Participants also spoke to assumptions made about *Region*, to include assumptions they have made, which have influenced their navigation process with students. Stuart spoke to this when he stated, “So people think, oh, New York City is truly the progressive. Well, pockets of New York City are progressive and pockets are conservative” (ID1, pg. 11). Participants shared it is important for them to consider the overall *Environment*, to include *Climate* and *Region*, before deciding on an approach to help counselors-in-training navigate through value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients.

Limitations

The purpose of this study was to explore and learn about counselor educators’ processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. Efforts to ensure trustworthiness were utilized throughout the entire research process. Again, those efforts included prolonged engagement, weekly advisory meetings, continuous memo-writing, interpreting dialogues, and a final member check for each participant.

My goal was to achieve maximum variation among participants. This goal was only partially met, with not being able to achieve participant representation from all of the ACES Regions. Three ACES regions were represented, all but NCACES and RMACES regions. As stated in a previous chapter, there was one potential participant interested in participating, who lived in the NCACES region, but her availability did not fit with the timeline of the study due to involvement in a study

abroad opportunity and she ultimately decided not to participate. Efforts were made to attain representation from the missing regions by sending direct emails to department chairs in those regions. The efforts were not met with additional participants. Not having complete representation of all ACES regions is a limitation, as voices from those regions are not represented in this study, which may have added richer descriptions of the impact of region. In addition, although it was not a specific goal based upon what the literature says about navigating value conflicts, for the study to attain racial/ethnic diversity among participants it would have increased the heterogeneity of the group. As it was, all participants were white.

As data emerged in round two it became clear that some areas of data were thinner than others, and as described earlier, were described on a dimensional level. For example, in the primary category *The Navigation Process*, within the subcategory *Noticing*, one of the properties was *Own Process* with dimensions of *Logistics* and *Emotions*. The data making up the dimensions of participants' *Own Process* was not thick enough to substantiate separate or distinct properties. This may be viewed as a limitation, as more information was needed to more clearly understand these nuances. In the interest of time, more information was not sought in an additional round of data collection.

Similarly, the data that emerged from some of the interpreting dialogue discussions and final member checks seemed thin, as the length of the conversations were rather short. In some instances, with both interpreting dialogues and final member checks, it seemed as though saturation had been reached and that the participants and I had previously been communicating clearly enough not to warrant

clarification or further elaboration. A possible limitation may have been the way some of the interpreting dialogue discussions ended. It seemed as though the intent of the interpreting dialogues was not fully understood by some participants. This seemed to be the case as some participants seemed to treat the interpreting dialogues as they did the final member check by confirming or denying data analysis and giving short and closed ended answers, rather than including their thoughts, feelings, as well as interpretation of fit of the data (Coe Smith, 2007). Others seemed to more fully embrace the intent of interpreting dialogues by sharing thoughts, feelings, and interpretation of fit of the emergent data (Coe Smith, 2007), which resulted in lengthy and rich discussions. As I reflect on the process I wonder how I, as researcher, could have presented the interpreting dialogues in a different way and if that would have influenced the length of some of the interpreting dialogues and in the outcome overall.

The other two limitations in this study represent my personal biases and life experiences. I was not raised with a religious background and do not identify as religious. Because of this view I have a bias toward the rigidity of certain religious values when the beliefs harm others. In addition, I identify as an ally for the LGBTQI community. Therefore, I have a bias toward behaviors that discriminate and reject identities within this population. There were times in which I struggled to manage this bias. For example, in a handwritten memo I wrote, “I don’t understand how I will feel confident that a student with such rigid views will go on to become an affirming counselor to all clients” (memo, December 3, 2016). This point was considered after speaking with a participant in round one and hearing her mention the

need to focus more on the navigation process, rather than on the outcome of the navigation process. To help challenge this bias I read articles about conservative religious beliefs, consulted with others who identify as having conservative religious beliefs, discussed this concern with my advisor at least weekly, actively listened to participants' stories related to this and memoed about my perceptions.

Implications and Further Research

There is minimal published literature highlighting the process of educators assisting counselors-in-training with navigating value-based conflicts (Ametrano, 2014; Paprocki, 2014). I am not aware of research about the process of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs conflicting with ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and working with LGBTQI clients. The ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and CACREP 2016 Standards (2015) highlight the importance of honoring diversity and human dignity. This study offers insight into the process of how educators help counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients, while simultaneously helping to decrease the possibility of client harm. Counselor educators may benefit from hearing from this group of participants about their processes.

In addition to their being limited research on the process of educators assisting counselors-in-training through value conflicts, I am not aware of any research highlighting the influence of climate, such as political climate, on the process counselors-in-training navigating value conflicts. Through this research it became evident that political climate did matter and greatly influenced the process of

counselor educators helping students navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. It also seemed evident that there was a relationship between political climate and religious climate of the classroom, based upon noticeable changes in the classroom environment during and directly after the general presidential election for the United States. In the interest of time, and to stay true to the original research question, this was not explored further. It would be interesting to conduct more research in this area to examine how the political climate of the country, and of the world, influences the climate of classrooms and how this navigation process unfolds for counselors-in-training.

Each category highlighted in this study has implications for future research related to the exploration of value conflicts within the counseling profession. Again, the categories of this research include *The Navigation Process*, *Supports Over Time*, and *Influences on the Process*. The ideas for future research in this area are vast and I will only discuss several ideas here.

Within *The Navigation Process*, future research could expand upon how educators came to engage in the process as they described. For example, to further explore how educators make decisions about the navigation process may help increase awareness about whether the process they use is as effective as it could be. In light of fairly recent court cases in which counselors-in-training struggled with such value conflicts and were ultimately dismissed from the programs they were attending, it may behoove the profession to examine this situation closer. Perhaps, in those cases, educators could have helped the counselors-in-training address these

issues before having to engage in court proceedings. As mentioned by participants in this study, perhaps a discussion about “fit” within the profession earlier on in the process could have helped.

Supports Over Time emerged as a category in this study. It may be helpful to further understand just how supportive these factors are for educators navigating this process. As shared by participants in this study, reliance on the *Codes of Ethics* was helpful early on in their careers especially. As time went on, they described relying on other supports that seem to be more impactful. Again, with the recent court cases in the media, it would be interesting to consider whether relying on different supports throughout the process, such as *Counseling Skills* and *Relationship with Counselor-in-Training (CIT)*, rather than solely on the *Codes of Ethics*, if that would have made a difference in the overall processes for those involved. I do not have evidence suggesting what types of supports were relied upon in those situations.

The third category, *Influences on the Process*, has many areas of further research. One in particular could be to explore students’ experiences as the *Influences on Process* changed over time. For example, in this study, participants spoke to intentionally increasing *CIT’s Exposure to Diversity* through experiential activities, guest speakers, and case studies. It would be insightful to learn about how those particular influences changed the CIT’s relationship with such value conflicts. As participants shared, increased exposure seemed to decrease the severity of value conflicts. It may be beneficial to further understand such influences, as perhaps they could be incorporated before a counselor-in-training becomes immobilized by a value conflict of this type.

Both qualitative and quantitative research could be used to explore further the dilemma of counselors-in-training struggling with value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. For example, a phenomenological study could seek to further understand educators' experiences related to helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. And a quantitative study could seek information about how successful educators perceive the elements of such navigation processes have been effective for them over time. Further exploration may help to minimize the harm and discrimination caused to LGBTQI clients, as well as to decrease the possible struggle counselors-in-training and educators face with this type of potentially difficult navigation process. In addition, more research in this area would benefit the profession as a whole, as it would help bridge the gaps between these described differences.

Interpreting dialogues (Coe Smith, 2007) to date have limited usage in qualitative research, so it may be impactful to more deeply understand their influence on this type of qualitative research. Because of the collaborative intent behind this data gathering method, it seems to support constructivist grounded theory very well. One way to explore this would be to collaborate with the creator of interpreting dialogues, Dr. Jane Coe Smith, on an article highlighting the use of interpreting dialogues in qualitative research with using my experiences within this inquiry as supportive data. The intent of interpreting dialogues fits nicely with constructivist approach that was utilized for this study (Charmaz, 2014) and it would be helpful to have more information supporting its supplementary nature.

Another area of further research comes from the most surprising realization, on the part of the researcher, through this inquiry process. This realization was the power of a rich relationship with research, and the participants, and how these relationships influence the process greatly. Based upon this realization, it may be helpful to share this experience by embarking on an autoethnography highlighting the possible unique, and possibly very powerful, relationship with research and the participants involved. As a new researcher, and someone who was still learning about research as I complete this study, it would have been helpful to have a glimpse into someone else's experience on this topic. I engaged in such detailed and continuous memo writing throughout the process that I have the data at my fingertips already.

Two other pieces of information emerged from the data that may lend themselves to beneficial areas of future research. First, exploring the differences between educators navigating such value conflicts with counselors-in-training if the educators are employed at a brick and mortar university compared to an online setting. This detail seemed to be noteworthy to participants in the way in which they engaged with students, what they noticed in students' responses, and how the navigation process was directed. Again, in the interest of time and in remaining true to the research question, this was not investigated further during this study. Second, the idea of educators having noticed seeking behaviors in counselors-in-training as signs of change, growth, or movement as students navigated through such value conflicts seemed significant. Seeking behaviors, defined by participants, included continuing education or supervision specific to the LGBTQI population and their

needs, being open about the need for continued self-growth, reflexivity and continued engagement despite feeling challenged. It would be interesting to conduct research with counselors-in-training to explore their experiences and processes with this described seeking behavior. For example, to consider reasons in which students choose to seek versus not seek and how those decisions influenced their process of navigating such value conflicts.

Reflections of the Researcher

Within qualitative inquiry, the researcher is as significant to the process as the participants and the data provided (Corbin et al., 2015). I recognized this going into this research process, and I do not believe I fully understood the extent to which that is true. My intention all along was to consider my interactions with each participant as being noteworthy, and influential to the research outcome. As I reflect back on this, I realize that each interaction *was* noteworthy, meaningful, and influential. There were times, as much as I tried to stay on track with the research questions, that participants and I would find a commonality and share our experiences related to our shared perspectives. Each time this brought me closer with each participant and it increased my understanding of what they were communicating. Without this context, I believe the richness of the data would be lacking. I believe knowledge is derived through social interactions and that there is great value in learning from each other. In addition, I am proud of the experience and believe I stayed true to the grounded theory approach. With the methodology being a constructivist approach, which allows for exploration *with* participants (Myers, 1997), I did just that.

As anticipated, I came to further understand my personal biases related to conservative religion. Previously I had made an assumption that counselors-in-training who identify with a conservative religious background are going to have a difficult time working, in an affirming way, with the LGBTQI population. Honestly, this was a worry of mine whether or not affirming counseling would be possible in this scenario. Through participants' stories and further reflection, my assumption was proven wrong. I heard story after story about students successfully navigating this process to become incredibly affirming counselors to the LGBTQI community.

An additional reflection of my research process is that I came to enjoy research immensely, which I did not expect. I felt so honored to be in the presence of these participants, who shared so deeply and honestly with me about their processes of helping students navigate such value conflicts. Between this research experience and others I have had recently, I now view research as an incredible experience in which so much heartfelt learning can take place. It has fueled my passion for the profession of counselor education and I anticipate exploring in this way for years to come.

Conclusion

Four counselor educators shared their experiences and their processes of helping counselors-in-training navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with LGBTQI clients. This research was completed by utilizing intensive interviews, interpreting dialogues and a final member check with each participant. Constructivist grounded theory methodology and co-construction were used to produce the results shared here.

The LGBTQI community continues to experience discrimination and oppression outside of the counseling profession and within. Counselor educators have the opportunity to help counselors-in-training recognize that holding conservative religious beliefs is not discouraged, but rather imposing those views upon clients and being influenced by them in the counseling relationship to the point of being discriminatory is what causes client harm. As counselors, and counselors-in-training, our primary mission is to uphold respect for human dignity and diversity. Counselor educators can use the information gathered in this study to further explore their own navigation process with counselors-in-training, as well as to guide them to grow in this area.

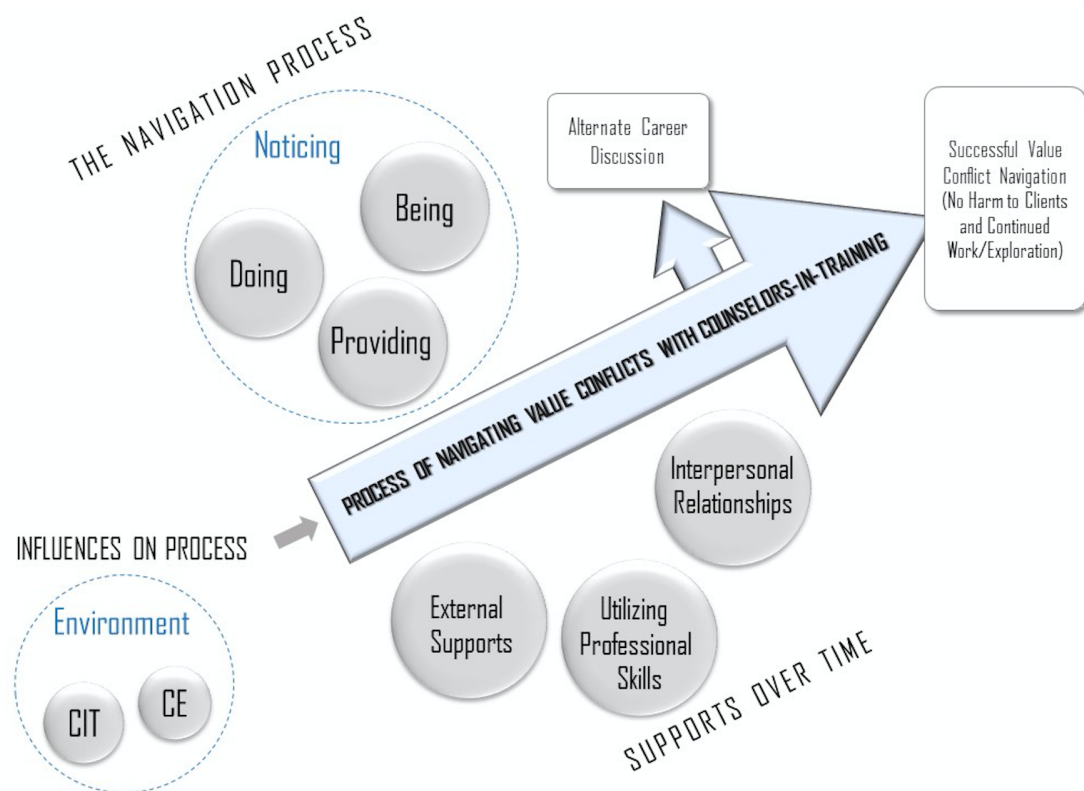


Figure 3.3. Value Conflict Navigation Project Map

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APPENDIX A

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Counselor Educators' Process of Assisting Students Navigate Value Conflicts Related to their Conservative Religious Beliefs and Working with LGBTQI Clients

Researcher: Heidi McKinley

Faculty Advisor: Dr. David Kleist

Introduction

You are being asked to participate in a qualitative study exploring educators' process of assisting students navigate value conflicts related to their conservative religious beliefs and working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning and intersex (LGBTQI) clients. You were selected as a participant because you identify as an educator in a CACREP accredited master's counseling program, or a program that is in the process of seeking CACREP accreditation, in the United States. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions that may arise before agreeing to participate in the study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the limited body of research about counselor educators' process of assisting students navigate value conflicts between their conservative religious values and the ACA Code of Ethics, specifically when working with LGBTQI clients. Ultimately this research may be published in a peer reviewed counseling journal and presented at national, regional and state conferences.

Description of the Study Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to engage in two intensive interviews, two interpreting dialogue sessions, and one final member check. The total time commitment for each participant will be about 2-4 hours. The timeframe for completing the research will be about three-four months, beginning in the fall of 2016.

Risks/Discomforts of Being in this Study

The risks participants will be exposed to will be minimal to none. There is the possibility of distress occurring as participants share experiences related to the process of assisting students navigate value conflicts. If support is needed, beyond interactions between researcher and participant, the researcher commits to assist in seeking additional support for the participant.

Benefits of Being in the Study

There are not significant benefits from being directly involved in this study. There is the possibility for participants to self-reflect on their own stances and views related to value conflicts within the counseling profession. Also, assuming a particular participant is struggling with the process of navigating value conflicts with counseling students, perhaps the involvement in the study will provide more insight through discussion.

Confidentiality

Each interview, interpreting dialogue session and final member check will be done over VSee, or Skype if preferred by the participant, and will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. Each interaction will take place in a quiet and private location in the Department of Counseling at ISU, with white noise machines on to help dampen the sound of the interactions. The audio recordings will be transferred to a password protected laptop, owned by the researcher, and then to an encrypted external hard drive. The external hard drive will be kept in a locked drawer in the researcher's office on the campus of Idaho State University. Access to the audio recordings will only be given to the researcher, the faculty advisor and the professional transcriptionist. Upon beginning the research process, participants will be asked to create a pseudonym to further protect their confidentiality.

Payments

As incentive, the researcher will offer a \$25 Amazon gift card to each participant chosen for the study. The gift cards will be mailed upon the completion of the final member check.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

The decision to participate in this study is entirely voluntary. You may decline to take part in the study at any time without affecting your relationship with the researcher, the faculty advisor or Idaho State University. You have the right not to answer any question or prompt, as well as to withdraw completely from the interview at any point during the process. Additionally, you have the right to request that the researcher not use any of your interview material.

Right to Ask Questions and Report Concerns

You have the right to ask questions about this research study before, during or after the study. If you have further questions about the study, at any time feel free to contact me, Heidi McKinley at mckiheid@isu.edu or by telephone at (406) 570-5294. If you have other concerns about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered sufficiently by the researcher, you may contact Dr. David Kleist at kleidavi@isu.edu. Alternatively, concerns can be reported by completing an Adverse Event Form, which can be found at the IRB website at <http://isuresearch.org/protocol-forms/>.

Consent

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study and that you have read and understood the information provided. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form.

Participant's Name (print): _____

Participant's Signature and Date: _____

Researcher's Signature and Date: _____