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THE PROGRAM-SITE ALLIANCE: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND FIELD PLACEMENT SITES

by

Tamara Tribitt

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Counseling

Idaho State University

August 2017

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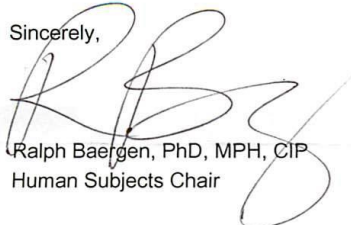
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Glossary

DOUBLE HERMENEUTIC: Participants meanings and interpretations of their experience is then interpreted by the researcher

HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE: Refers to the dynamic relationship between the whole and the parts of a process. In IPA, the hermeneutic circle describes the process of interpretation and the non-linear style of thinking.

HOMOGENEOUS SAMPLE: A sample of participants who are similar to one another, there is little variation between participants. In IPA, a homogeneous sample allows for the researcher to explore an experience of a particular group thoroughly and in-depth.

IDIOGRAPHY: Being concerned with the particular. There is a commitment to detail and thorough analysis in IPA. There is also a commitment to understanding how particular phenomena have been understood from the perspective of particular people, in a particular context in IPA.

ISOMORPHIC: The phenomenon whereby categories with different content, but similar form, can be mapped in such a way that there are corresponding parts and processes within each structure. For example, there is a parallel process that exists between the client-counselor relationship and the supervisee-supervisor relationship. These relationships are an isomorph of the other.

GATEKEEPING: The role of the clinical gatekeeper is twofold: to protect the integrity of the counseling profession and to prevent harm from being inflicted upon future clients receiving services from incompetent counselors.

PROGRAM-SITE ALLIANCE: The relationship between counselor education programs and field placement sites

SITE SUPERVISOR: Licensed clinicians who supervise counselors-in-training during their practicum or internship experience.

Abstract

Fieldwork is mandatory for students in counselor education programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counselor and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016). As such, creating and maintaining relationships with field placement sites is essential for counselor education programs to offer quality field placements for their counselors-in-training (CITs). This relationship is identified as the program-site alliance for the purposes of this study. Using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this inquiry explored the program-site alliance from the perspective of site supervisors. Findings suggested five themes capture the dynamics of the relationship: Site Supervisor Role, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Independent Mutualism, Regulated Support, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. Implications for current literature and counselor educators are discussed.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Counselor education curriculum typically includes field experiences in the form of practicum and internship. For many programs, providing an educational experience in the field is a requirement for accreditation. Field experiences have proven to be influential in the development of counselors-in-training (CIT; Bjornestad, Johnson, Hittner, & Paulson, 2014; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Lewis, Hatcher, & Pate, 2005; Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). Fieldwork offers CITs an opportunity to apply what they have learned from classroom experiences and it can expose them to the realities of providing mental health services to the public; fieldwork is educational and practical (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). For counselor education programs to provide these experiences, they need to develop relationships with agencies and schools in the community who are willing to supervise CITs.

The quality of the relationship between a counselor education program and the field placement site, referred to the program-site alliance for this study, can impact the availability of sites and CITs' experiences. Tenuous program-site alliances may yield a lack of desire on the part of sites to engage in supervision. The complete absence of a program-site alliance could hinder counselor education programs in meeting accreditation standards. Additionally, fragile program-site alliances could result in an unsupportive training environment that impedes CIT learning and growth (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Lewis et al., 2005). Concerns such as lack of communication or unclear expectations in the program-site alliance can result in frustration for the site, which can interfere with

CITs' learning (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Dodds, 1986). The program-site alliance is an instrumental component of counselor training programs.

Counselor education programs are responsible for developing relationships with field placement sites to provide a well-rounded education to CITs. However, many sites report this relationship is not prioritized among the tasks counselor education programs must complete (Carter & Duchac, 2013; Lewis et al., 2005; Liu, Sun, & Anderson, 2012). Failing to cultivate the program-site alliance is ultimately failing to cultivate rich learning environments that have a considerable impact on CIT development. The program-site alliance will be explored through the lens of site supervisors in an effort to understand what is occurring in this relationship. The meaning site supervisors make from this relationship can be beneficial to counselor education programs as they create and maintain program-site alliances.

Conceptual Framework

Field placements offer CITs an experience outside the classroom were substantial development as a practitioner can occur (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; CACREP, 2016; Dodds, 1986). A factor that enhances a CITs' field experience is the relational climate between their counselor education program and their field placement site (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986). The program-site alliance is an influential change agent in CIT outcomes. If a program-site alliance is characterized as stressful, this stress could impede CITs' learning opportunities. A strong program-site alliance could make for a rich learning environment for CITs. Due to the influential nature on CIT outcomes, the program-site alliance parallels the therapeutic and supervisory alliance developed by Bordin (1979, 1983).

A large body of evidence supports the therapeutic alliance as a significant agent of change in the counseling process (Bordin, 1979; Corey, 2013; Ladany, Walker, Pate-Carolan, & Evans, 2008; Safran & Muran, 2000). There is a positive correlation between a strong therapeutic alliance and successful treatment outcomes (Cloitre, Stovall-McClough, Miranda, & Chemtob, 2004; Ladany et al., 2008). Bordin (1979) has explained the relationship between counselor and client consists of three elements: a) a mutual agreement between counselor and client concerning the goals of counseling, b) a mutual agreement regarding the tasks each will take responsibility for during counseling, and c) an emotional bond developed through collaboration and having a shared experience. Developing these three components leads to a strong therapeutic alliance. Martin, Garske, and Davis (2000) empirically supported the therapeutic alliance's contribution to change in a counseling relationship. A strong therapeutic alliance is the foundation for effective counseling.

The elements of the therapeutic alliance were then recognized in the supervisory alliance. Bordin (1983) has explained how the elements of the therapeutic alliance can easily be translated to the supervisory alliance due to the isomorphic processes that occur. The same three elements found in the therapeutic alliance between the counselor and client can be identified in the supervisory alliance between the supervisor and CIT. There is a large body of research that indicates the supervisory alliance is as crucial to supervisee outcomes as the therapeutic alliance is to client outcomes (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983; Ladany et al., 2008). Ladany, Ellis, and Friedlander (1999) found the emotional bond component to be directly related to CITs view of the supervisory alliance. The stronger the alliance, the more satisfied the CIT was with their

performance and the supervisor (Ladany et al., 1999). The quality of the supervisory alliance is an essential component for the change process and the outcomes for the CIT (Bordin, 1983; Orlinsky, Grawe, & Parks, 1994; Watkins, 2013).

There has been a thorough examination of working relationships between individuals (i.e. the client and counselor or the supervisor and CIT). However, there is an absence in research exploring the working alliance from a systemic perspective. I propose extending Bordin's conceptualization of the therapeutic and supervisory alliance to the working relationship between counselor education programs and field placement sites. An exploration of the program-site alliance can provide insight into a relationship that significantly impacts CIT development and outcomes. Information gleaned from this exploration can also highlight strategies to manage ruptures in the program-site alliance. Thereby, maintaining connections with field sites and preventing violations to accreditation standards.

The Program-Site Alliance

Like Bordin's (1979, 1983) model, the program-site alliance consists of two out of three components that form the therapeutic and supervisory alliance. The program-site alliance is a) a mutual agreement between the counselor education program and the field placement site concerning goals of placement and b) a mutual agreement regarding the tasks for which each entity will take responsibility during placement. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) have described contracts or agreements of understanding between counselor education programs and field sites as documents that clarify the opportunities the site is expected to provide during the time of the supervisee's placement. These documents also explain the roles and responsibilities for the site supervisor, the

supervisee, and the program supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Not only is clearly defining duties during the initial stages of relationship development in alignment with Bordin's model of alliances, it also simplifies a convoluted relationship between two different entities.

The program-site alliance is complex in that it is two systems with differing goals uniting to train future counselors. The overarching goal for counselor education programs is to train and graduate effective professional counselors. The main goal for field placement sites is to provide quality counseling services to the population they serve. Additional responsibilities and tasks are added to the already present system goals when a program-site alliance is formed to accommodate a CIT. Figure 1 illustrates the program-site alliance formed when two systems merge as they commit to the mutual agreements associated with field placement. Within these systems, usually a field placement site coordinator from the counselor education program and a site supervisor from the field site are identified to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in a program-site alliance. Each individual plays distinct roles in this relationship.

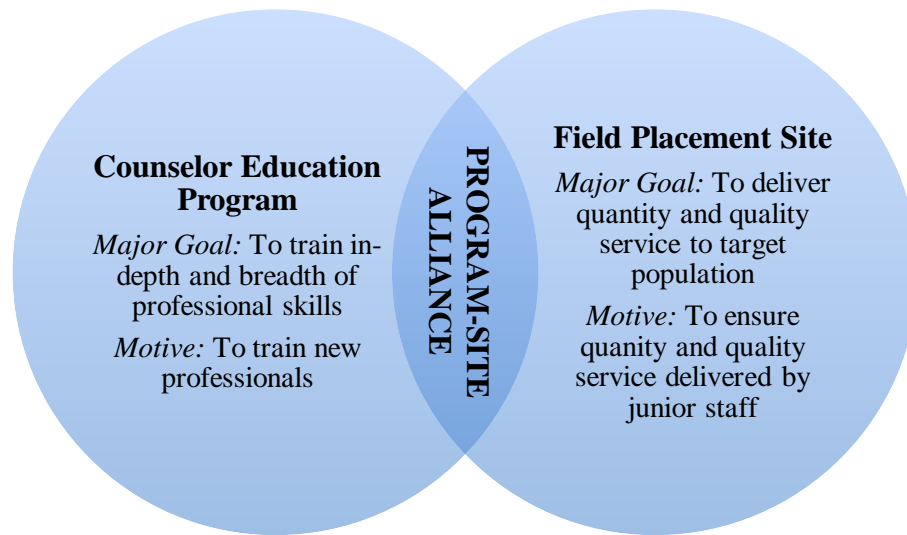


Figure 1.1 The program-site alliance illustrated as two systems merge. Adopted from “Supervision of Psychology Trainees in Field Placements,” by J. Dodds, 1986, *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 17(4), p. 298. Copyright 1986 by American Psychological Association.

Site Supervisor’s Role in the Program-Site Alliance

Site supervision plays a critical role in the development of CITs and in the program-site alliance. It is more than a senior member of the counseling profession providing guidance to a junior member of the same profession. Site supervisors are responsible for monitoring the quality of services provided to their clientele and enhancing the professional development of CITs, while acting as gatekeepers to the counseling profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Sopko (2012) found site supervisors believe their role includes encourager, consultant, model, observer, expert/advisor, collaborator, and fosterer of relationships amongst other staff members. Site supervisors

also saw themselves embracing the counselor or teacher role during their work with CITs (Sopko, 2012). The site supervisor role is multifaceted and fosters CIT development while protecting clients.

Site supervisors are asked to fulfill specific duties. Often, site supervisors facilitate a brief training when a CIT first arrives at an agency to ensure the CIT is familiarized with the policies and procedures of the organization. The Council for Accreditation of Counselor and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) requires CITs have an average of one hour of supervision per week (Standard 3.H, L). Typically, site supervisors are asked to provide an hour of supervision per week. Throughout the academic term, site supervisors are usually asked to complete assessments so a CIT's progress can be communicated to the affiliated university. Site supervisors have duties they must fulfill when engaged in the program-site alliance, as does the counselor education program.

Counselor Education Program's Role in the Program-Site Alliance

The responsibilities associated with the counselor education program's role in the program-site alliance may look different across universities. Sometimes that is one faculty member or the tasks are divided amongst faculty according to counseling specialty. Some universities use a liaison that acts as a field placement coordinator and bridges the gap between sites and institutions. There is flexibility in how counselor education programs manage their role in the program-site alliance. However, the duties of this role seem to permeate across programs. Sopko (2012) discussed the role of counselor education programs as one that monitors CIT development and supports the site supervisor. Faculty in the counselor education program typically know the CITs from a

broader perspective than perhaps a site supervisor may understand the CIT (Sopko, 2012). If faculty members have concerns about a CIT then a site supervisor expects the program to communicate those concerns (Sopko, 2012). Likewise, if a site supervisor has concerns about a CIT, there is an expectation that the program will support site supervisors as they attend to the concern (Sopko, 2012). This support is usually communicated in the contracts counselor education programs provide field sites when an alliance is initiated. Additionally, counselor education programs are responsible for ensuring field placements meet the required standards set by CACREP. Counselor education programs are expected to be aware of CITs' overall development. Because growth is occurring outside the classroom, the communication within the program-site alliance is necessary for programs to remain informed.

The Program-Site Alliance Currently

While the program-site alliance is needed for many CITs to complete their academic requirements, site supervisors and counselor educators report concerns and dissatisfaction with the relationship. According to Carter and Duchac (2013), counselor educators acknowledged the need for more effective communication with field placement sites. Site supervisors reportedly agree with counselor educators in regards to the need for communication. Site supervisors said they had very little contact with their affiliated counselor education program and few considered their relationship with the counselor education program a partnership (Carter & Duchac, 2013). Uellendahl and Tenenbaum's (2015) findings echoed those of Carter and Duchac (2013) in that site supervisors are eager for more connection with their affiliated university. Lewis et al. (2005) established enhanced communication is vital to the relationship between field sites and education

programs. Without this, field sites appear to have a low level of awareness in regards to the education program's requirements for CITs (Lewis et al., 2005). When a placement site is unfamiliar with a CIT's program requirements, it is possible the site will focus more of their resources on the agency's service agenda while overlooking the supervisee's training needs (Lewis et al., 2005). Also, Lewis et al. (2005) stated of the sites who were aware of the education program's requirements, many report the goals of the education program are only somewhat consistent with the goals of their agency. It is conceivable a site is not providing a field experience in alignment with the mutual agreement (Lewis et al., 2005). Consequently, a CIT may not be provided the necessary supervision, hours, or experience needed to fully develop their skills and abilities. The education program may be oblivious to these incidents. Moreover, an education program is responsible for providing current information regarding the realities of working as a professional (Lewis et al., 2005). As field placement sites are valuable resources in this regard, an institution could fail to discuss present-day professional issues with their students if they have a poor relationship with field placement sites. A fragile program-site alliance may yield an inadequate experience and unsatisfactory learning outcomes for CITs.

In some instances, a lack of communication in the program-site alliance can result in untrained site supervisors struggling with gatekeeping processes. School counseling site supervisors disclosed a need for support and training because, oftentimes, there is little to no structure or process when training site supervisors (Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). Many site supervisors are left to manage difficult and potentially disconcerting gatekeeping processes on their own. In discussions with social workers, Bogo, Regehr,

Power, and Regehr (2007) established field supervisors are conflicted in their roles as dedicated professionals and as gatekeepers for the profession. On one hand, supervisors value operating from a nonjudgmental, strengths-based perspective as well as personalizing approaches to specific individuals and environments (Bogo et al., 2007). While on the other, they are expected to judge a supervisee's performance and determine an individual's skill level (Bogo et al., 2007). This intrapersonal conflict along with the reported lack of support or training from the affiliated university results in loneliness and feeling overburdened by gatekeeping responsibilities (Bogo et al., 2007). In addition, there are social, psychological, and systemic pressures that prevent supervisors from reporting their supervisees true level of development (Dudek, Marks, & Regehr, 2005). To illustrate, if a supervisor perceives a lack of support from the affiliated university, they are more likely to give an underdeveloped supervisee a positive evaluation to avoid confrontation (Dudek, et al., 2005). The process of failing a supervisee is seen as difficult, stressful, and time consuming, especially if the evaluation is contested by the student (Dudek, et al., 2005). If an evaluation is challenged, the participants reported feeling like their credibility was being questioned, like others did not trust their judgment, and they feared legal action (Dudek, et al., 2005). Site supervisors are hungry for clarity regarding expectations for supervision and gatekeeping processes (Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). Without a proper support system or appropriate training, it is unreasonable to expect supervisors to engage in effective gatekeeping when they are feeling overwhelmed by the possible complications of the evaluation process.

Personal Experience

My personal interest in program-site alliance stems from two roles I fulfilled during my career. In my role as a school counselor, I had the opportunity to be a site supervisor for three CITs. I recall feeling conflicted about taking on a new practicum/internship student every time my affiliated university would inquire about my interest in supervising a CIT for the semester. On one hand, I was excited to have another individual in the building who could focus on school counseling and I always found it rewarding to be involved in a CIT's development. On the other, I was very concerned about the additional responsibility a CIT brought to my already full workload as well as my competency as a supervisor. In talking with my school counseling colleagues, I heard similar experiences. Sometimes the university system would become the focus of our discouragement in times of exhaustion. Statements such as the following were expressed: "They don't know what it is like in the trenches," or "I wonder if the university is seeing similar troublesome behaviors from this CIT," or "This is the last time I am taking on an intern." For me, the latter thought was then followed by feelings of immense guilt because I value giving back to my profession and being a site supervisor was a great way to do that. We would implement strategies like alternating years we housed CITs, only take one CIT per semester, or we would decline the opportunity to supervise. There were times, as a site supervisor, I felt overwhelmed by my duties, alone in my journey as a supervisor, and unsupported by the university.

Later in my career, I began working as an adjunct instructor in a school counselor education program. In that role, I was given the responsibility of placing school counseling students for internship. At this university, it was customary for the university

coordinator to initiate contact with the sites in the community to inquire if they would be interested in supervising a CIT. Many of the site supervisors I spoke to explained they had a CIT last semester and they were unable to house one this time but to contact them the following semester, or they already had a practicum student so they could not take an internship student, or they simply said no thank you. Suddenly, I found myself faced with the possibility of not finding field placement sites for several CITs. I realized I was no longer the person feeling shame because I could not supervise a CIT; I was now feeling shame because I was the person having to persuade an overworked clinician to take on the responsibility of a CIT.

Because of these experiences, I find myself wondering what could be done to help with this phenomenon. There are site supervisors who thoroughly enjoy that role but have reservations about supervising a CIT due to the added responsibility and time commitment; I was one of them. Conversely, education programs need field placement sites to fulfill requirements from CACREP and for their CITs' advancement. I am hopeful the information gained from this study can offer suggestions to counselor education programs when examining their own program-site alliances.

Rationale

As discussed, the program-site alliance has aspects in common with Bordin's models for the therapeutic and supervisory alliance. All three develop mutual agreements addressing the goals, responsibilities, and tasks expected for each party in the alliance. There is a third element to Bordin's models that remains unclear in regards to the program-site alliance. Bordin (1979, 1983) has postulated an emotional bond develops through collaboration and having a shared experience between the two parties involved in

the alliance. It is this emotional bond that influences the outcomes for clients or supervisees (Bordin, 1979, 1983; Cloitre, et al., 2004; Goldberg, Davis, and Hoyt, 2013; Orlinsky, et al., 1994; Watkins, 2013). However, the emotional bonds that may exist in a program-site alliance remain ambiguous. Research has indicated emotions are experienced in the program-site alliance (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986; Dudek, et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2007). For example, two organizations with different goals coming together in the program-site alliance can cause stress or frustration (Dodds, 1986). Site supervisors express feelings of hope for stronger relationships with educational programs (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013). However, there is a dearth in the literature in regards to what individuals experience in the relational bonds that form in the program-site alliance.

The lack of focus on the program-site alliance in research can negatively impact counselor education programs. The literature implies a strong program-site alliance can be an effective preventative factor in times of evaluation and gatekeeping (Dudek, et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2005). If a program-site alliance is fragile, it is possible an underdeveloped CIT will enter the counseling profession unprepared for ethical practice, which is a major concern for client welfare. Additionally, a site may decline an institution's request to supervise CITs if the relational bonds in the program-site alliance are problematic. These possibilities are concerning outcomes for counselor education programs as there are specific accreditation and ethical standards to which programs must adhere.

CACREP Standards (2016) require students to engage in professional practice, such as a practicum and an internship, during their CACREP-accredited program. CITs

are required to complete 100 supervised hours for practicum, with a minimum of 40 hours working directly with clients in a field site (CACREP, 2016, Standard 3.F, G). Additionally, CITs are required to complete a 600-hour supervised counseling internship; at least 240 hours must be direct contact with clients in a field placement site (CACREP, 2016, Standard 3.J, K). To provide this experience for CITs, counselor education programs must have a relationship with field placement sites. Without field placement sites, there is potential for counselor education programs to violate CACREP standards and compromise their accreditation. Along with practicum and internship requirements, CACREP (2016) requires counselor education programs to provide site supervisor training opportunities (Standard 3.Q). Also, education programs are ethically required by the American Counseling Association (ACA) to provide stated roles and responsibilities to field placement sites (ACA, 2014, Standard F.7.i). Ultimately, counseling education programs are mandated and ethically required to develop some level of a relationship with field placement sites.

Proposed Research

The purpose of this research was to explore the program-site alliance created when counselor education programs and field placement sites work together to train CITs. The goals of this research were to gain an understanding of site supervisor's experience in the program-site alliance and how they make sense of the alliance. To explore the program-site alliance, the research question was: What is the experience of site supervisors when they are in relationship with their affiliated counselor education program during CIT field experiences? Through Interpretive Phenomenology Analysis (IPA), I collaborated with participants to explore site supervisors' experience and the

meaning they make when engaged in the program-site alliance (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA methodology provided a platform for site supervisors to share their voice and expertise with the university.

Summary

By extending Bordin's (1979, 1983) conceptualization of the therapeutic and supervisory alliance, a framework exists to explore the program-site alliance and the relational bonds experienced by individuals in the alliance. There is a shortage in the literature concerning the site supervisors' experience and a greater understanding of the program-site alliance is a necessity for counselor education programs invested in meeting CACREP standards and producing ethical counselors. This inquiry was conducted utilizing the IPA methodology as outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

The literature about the program-site alliance is limited, but there is evidence a relationship is formed when counselor education programs collaborate with field placement sites to train CITs. Dynamics within the program-site alliance such as expectations for roles within the alliance, outcomes from the collaboration, or hopes for future program-site alliances have been highlighted in the literature as factors that could influence the relationship (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986; Lewis et al., 2005; Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). However, it was evident there are no studies exploring site supervisors' experiences when engaged in a program-site alliance and the meaning they make from this collaboration. Given the dearth of literature in this area, the need for strong alliances, and the factors identified in the current literature, an inquiry thoroughly investigating site supervisors' experience in the program-site alliance was warranted. The research question for this study was: What is the experience of site supervisors when they are in relationship with their affiliated counselor education program during CIT field experiences? This question was answered using interpretive phenomenology analysis (IPA), which allowed site supervisors to share their voice as they provide an in-depth account of their experience and meaning-making process regarding the program-site alliance. The way this in-depth account was captured is discussed in this chapter. There is also a discussion of IPA philosophy and methodology, the role of the researcher and participants, a description of the research procedures, and steps taken to address trustworthiness of the findings.

Qualitative Research

According to Creswell (2013), it is critical to make an informed decision when choosing the best methodology for one's research question. Qualitative inquiry is a unique, explorative approach to researching specific phenomena. It explores participants' narratives in an effort to understand their perspectives and how they construct meaning in their world (Patton, 2015). The acquisition of an inside understanding is a foundational idea in qualitative research (Schwandt, 2000). Qualitative researchers employ a defined qualitative approach to collect data, which is then analyzed to establish themes or patterns regarding the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Throughout the study, researchers remain sensitive to the participants and the setting under examination, maintain a high level of reflexivity, and provide a detailed account of patterns or themes that represent the participants' meaning-making process (Creswell, 2013). Understanding program-site alliances through the identification of themes and meaning-making processes provided insight to further the counseling profession's stance toward such alliances or highlighted a need for change.

Qualitative research can explore phenomena beyond that of the individual; it may include data at a systemic level. As the program-site alliance was conceptualized as two systems merging to train CITs (Dodds, 1986), using qualitative research to explore "why people do what they do within systems" and performing an "in-depth inquiry of system dynamics" was beneficial to understanding the program-site alliance (Patton, 2015, p 8). Through the use of open inquiry, I was interested in identifying intended and unintended happenings (Patton, 2015) from the site supervisor's perspective when two systems merge to form the program-site alliance. I hoped this inquiry would reveal advantages of

the program-site alliance as well as solutions to potential issues within the alliance.

Qualitative research encompasses a wide range of ontologies and epistemologies that are quite different from conventional approaches to research (Lincoln & Guba, 2005). The approach that best fit the research question, and my ontological and epistemological approach, was IPA.

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

IPA is a methodology well suited for exploring the program-site alliance as it is integrative in nature, focuses on the voices of the participants, and designed to investigate participants' meaning-making within a specific phenomenon (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). IPA provides a framework to engage in reflections that occur when participants contemplate a major event in their life (Smith et al., 2009). Smith et al. (2009) has stated, "when people are engaged with 'an experience' of something major in their lives, they begin to reflect on the significance of what is happening and IPA research aims to engage with these reflections" (p. 3). As indicated in the literature, the program-site alliance can be a source of substantial stress and heightened emotions (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986; Dudek, et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2007). The program-site alliance was a key relationship worthy of exploration. I, as an IPA researcher, conducted a detailed examination into the relationship between site supervisors and their affiliated university. This provided a clearer understanding of the program-site alliance from the perspective of the site supervisor.

IPA joins together aspects from several philosophical approaches to explore a phenomenon with depth and specificity. IPA draws from transcendental, existential phenomenology, and hermeneutical phenomenology to highlight participants' personal

meaning and processes in relation to an experience (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). The synthesis of ontological and epistemological concepts are meant to give voice to the participants' experience and meaning-making process (Barrington & Shakespeare-Finch, 2013).

IPA Ontology. If ontology examines the nature of reality, what is or what can be known (Creswell, 2013), then from an IPA perspective, reality is a relational existence. Informed by existential phenomenology, IPA aligns with Merleau-Ponty's belief that we are more than beings in a world that is *acting on* us. We are beings with our unique perspectives who act *on* the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Smith et al., 2009). Individuals' physical and cognitive body is constantly in relationship with the existing world they are "thrown into" (Heidegger, 1962/1927; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Smith et al., 2009). This body-in-the-world position, or embodied position, speaks to the relationship between the individual and all parts of the world; one's reality has an individual, social, and biological context (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Smith et al., 2009). As Heidegger (1962/1927) has postulated, there is an aspect of intersubjectivity to our existence. As we engage in the world, our lived experiences are shared with others, overlap with others, and are relational in nature (Heidegger, 1962/1927; Smith et al., 2009). In addition to our body-in-the-world existence, there is a being-in-the-world aspect that is multi-modal, which means our engagement with the physical world, our self-reflection, our emotions, and our interactions with others are integrated to create our lived experiences (Heidegger, 1962/1927). Because of this embodied perspective, one's experience cannot be fully understood (Smith et al., 2009). A person's experience of a phenomenon belongs to their personal position in the world (Smith et al., 2009). However, IPA researchers refuse to

ignore the unknown. Like Sartre believed as an existential phenomenologist, what is hidden is just as important as what is revealed (Sartre, 1956/1943; Smith et al., 2009).

The nothingness we experience as embodied beings is as vital to the description of an experience as the occurrences within our awareness (Sartre, 1956/1943; Smith et al., 2009). A phenomenon is explored from various angles in IPA to provide a holistic view of a specific experience.

IPA Epistemological. IPA's holistic orientation is integrated in its epistemological stance, too. Adopting concepts from hermeneutical phenomenology, knowledge is revealed via an interpretive process involving participants and researchers (Heidegger, 1962/1927; Smith et al., 2009). The hermeneutic interpretive process is described as participants sharing their interpretation of their meaning-making process and the researcher interpreting their interpretation. This two-stage process, or double hermeneutic process, attempts to create a full picture of what is occurring for participants and researchers alike during an inquiry (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The intersubjective meaning participants and researchers attach to the experience also inform the double hermeneutic process (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith & Osborn, 2008). While exploring the personal, social, and biological contexts of participants' experience, researchers are engaged in their own process influenced by their personal, social, and biological contexts. Because others engaged in their perception of the world shape our perception of the world, researchers and participants bring preconceived ideas to the study (Sartre, 1956/1943; Smith et al., 2009). As Heidegger (1962/1927) has proposed, when we explore knowledge, we bring our fore-conception or fore-structure which includes prior experiences, assumptions, and preconceptions. Our fore-structure is similar

to the embodied position described by Merleau-Ponty. We come to know knowledge, or create meaning of an experience, through the unique lens we possess that is impacted by our body-in-the-world position (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). A holistic view of knowledge is assumed in IPA methodology by integrating the double hermeneutic approach that accounts for the researcher's and the participant's meaning-making process. Both of which are based on their embodied positions and are considered valuable to understanding the meaning-making process of an experience.

As the researcher makes meaning of the participant's meaning-making process, it is possible to create meaning beyond that which is overtly discussed. Like Hiedegger (1962/1927) has stated, phenomena have visible meaning as well as hidden meanings. With the researcher deeply involved in the interpretation process, it is possible what is hidden can be revealed in an effort to create greater meaning and understanding (Hiedegger, 1962/1927; Schleiermacher, 1998; Sartre, 1956/1943). Using IPA can offer meaningful insights outside the explicit in an attempt to understand a person's relatedness to the world (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Schleiermacher, 1998). Because meaning making is such a relational process from an IPA perspective, the investigator's interpretation is not excluded from the research process.

Role of the Researcher

In IPA, the researcher is instrumental in the process. As the researcher in this inquiry, I took an active role in understanding participants' experiences and meaning-making processes (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). My role was influenced by my background, experience, interpersonal skills, cross-cultural competency, and empathy (Patton, 2015). Smith et al. (2009) noted these influences have

an impact on the interpretation process in IPA. To ensure the voice of the participants was prioritized, I engaged in reflective practices to increase awareness of my personal assumptions (Smith et al., 2009). The hermeneutic process is cyclical in nature and constantly occurring throughout the study as a strategy to manage personal assumptions. Gadamer (1990/1960) has stated a researcher may have some level of awareness regarding their assumptions prior to the initiation of the study but additional preconceptions will emerge throughout the study. Therefore, I was dedicated to regularly reflecting on and dialoguing about what I brought and what the data brought to the study (Gadamer, 1990/1960; Smith et al., 2009). It was vital my fore-structure did not overshadow participants' detailed, personal accounts of the phenomenon and their meaning-making process.

Role of the Participant

By participating in an IPA inquiry, participants agreed to engage in a relational, interpretive process. They were asked to share their experience of a phenomenon and their meaning-making process regarding said phenomenon. Participants engaged in a high level of reflexivity to provide a detailed account of their experience (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009). I invited participants to share their multi-modal perspective to provide insights into the program-site alliance (Heidegger, 1962/1927; Smith et al., 2009). An important goal for an IPA study is to share the voices of participants as they present their emic perspective.

Research Procedures

Participants' emic perspectives were explored in detail to uncover the inner workings of the program-site alliance. This detailed examination, known as idiography, is

a theoretical orientation that informs research procedures in IPA research. Idiography refers to “an in-depth analysis of single cases and examining individual perspectives of study participants, in their unique contexts (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012, p. 363).

Attention is given to the particular or specific rather than the general or universal (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, Harré, & Van Langenhove, 1995). IPA research designs involve small sample sizes and thorough, detailed analysis in order to explore individual perspectives of each participants’ narrative (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith et al., 2009; Smith, et al., 1995; Smith & Osborn, 2008). An IPA inquiry is idiographic in design to focus on the comprehensive, personal accounts of participants with the ultimate goal of understanding their experience and meaning making associated with a specific phenomenon.

Selection of Participants

To represent a perspective rather than a population, I applied purposeful sampling when selecting participants (Patton, 2015; Smith et al., 2009). Purposeful sampling allows for an in-depth study rich in information, a fundamental goal of IPA (Patton, 2015; Smith et al., 2009). The participants from this sample had a high level of homogeneity (Smith et al., 2009). A small homogeneous sample lends itself to the idiographic underpinnings of IPA where participants’ experiences can be studied thoroughly (Patton, 2015). This purposefully-sampled homogeneous group provided insight into their experience and meaning-making processes in the program-site alliance.

Five participants were recruited due to suggestions made by Pietkiewicz and Smith (2012) and Smith et al. (2009) who outlined three to six participants is appropriate for an IPA study so the researcher can attend to the idiographic nature of the

methodology. I posted a call for participants on listservs associated with the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Next, I contacted university coordinators across regions of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) directly and requested they email the call for participants to their affiliated site supervisors. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: a) serve as a site supervisor for couple and family, mental health, or school counseling students, b) serve as a site supervisor for three or more years, c) site supervisors' place of employment must be affiliated with a CACREP accredited university. Once participants communicated their interest in the study, they completed an initial screening questionnaire that examined participants' experience as a site supervisor and demographic information (See appendix A). I was interested in participants who met the criteria but also who practiced in different counseling settings and geographic locations.

Data Collection

Data collection methods in IPA are designed to invite participants to share “a rich, detailed, first-person account of their experiences” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 56). These methods are meant to elicit in-depth narratives, thoughts, and feelings about a particular phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). I conducted two rounds of unstructured, in-depth interviews to explore the research question. Unstructured interviews tend to be more defined by the participant without being led by the assumptions or biases of the researcher (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher can facilitate, not direct, a discussion to uncover unanticipated findings with the use of unstructured interviews (Smith et al., 2009). The interviews were conducted using video conferencing software, Skype.

Participants were thoroughly informed of the limitations of confidentiality related to video conferencing.

In the first round of interviews, participants answered questions such as a) Please discuss your experience with your affiliated university when you are supervising CITs, b) How would you describe the program-site alliance you are involved in, and c) What does the program-site alliance mean to you. I documented all interviews using video recordings and written notes. Once the first round of interviews were finished, each interview was transcribed to create a written script used for data analysis. After the transcripts were analyzed, second round interview questions were developed based upon the information gathered from round one interviews. My intention for second round interviews was to thicken areas in the data that lack richness and in-depth detail. The following questions are examples of what participants were asked in the second interview a) What occurs between you and your affiliated institution, b) What emotions are present in this relationship, and c) What would you change about this relationship? Transcription occurred once the second round of interviews was complete. All documentation was kept secure and confidential.

Using the IPA methodology provided an opportunity to use creative data collection methods. Data was collected using unstructured interviews as well as a computer-based version of sandtray. Traditional sandtray is a therapeutic modality that utilizes a 30 in. x 20 in. x 3 in. box which is painted blue on the inside to simulate water and sky (Homeyer & Sweeney, 2011). Fine sand is put in the box and clients construct a visual representation of the concern they are seeking services for by using figurines, or miniatures as they are known as in sandtray therapy, to represent the characters of their

story (Homeyer & Sweeney, 2011). Miniatures of various types are typically available such as people, animals, fences, and elements of nature. They can also include items that represent different emotions like aggression, happiness, or sadness to elicit a wide range of expression. As an example, after an introduction to sandtray therapy, a counselor may say to a client, “Make a scene in the sand that expresses how you feel when your family doesn’t listen to you.” The client chooses miniatures to create the scene, then the counselor and client process the meaning of what was created.

For the purposes of this study, I created a virtual sandtray based upon the concepts of traditional sandtray. The sandtray was created in the Microsoft Office PowerPoint program. This electronic version of sandtray allowed for interviews to be conducted via video conferencing as opposed to in-person, like traditional sandtray. The first slide of the virtual sandtray document was used as participants’ sandtray and the miniatures were found on subsequent slides. The miniatures in this study were assorted, royalty-free clipart images found in the PowerPoint program and on the Internet that could be manipulated in size and orientation. I invited participants to create a sandtray that represented their experience as they interact with their affiliated counselor education program regarding CIT placement. A sandtray was created during each interview and the finished sandtrays were saved. The virtual sandtray was useful when exploring the participants’ meaning making processes, which is in accordance with IPA.

Sandtray as a Data Collection Medium. Arts-based research practices are a relatively new concept in the field of research. Arts-based research practices are “methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines” which “adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address social research questions in holistic and engaging

ways” (Leavy, 2015, p. 4). These practices include, but are not limited to, short stories, poetry, music, and visual arts. By the 1990’s, arts-based research was established as a research genre due in part to the use of expressive arts therapies in clinical settings (Leavy, 2015; Sinner, A., Leggo, C., Irwin, R., Gouzouasis, P., & Grauer, K., 2006). Sandtray is an example of expressive art therapy used to access deep emotional states that usually remain hidden (Degges-White & Davis, 2011). The advantages of using traditional sandtray in the clinical setting offers similar advantages when it was modified to be an arts-based research tool for the purposes of this study.

Sandtray has been extensively documented as a beneficial clinical intervention (Carnes-Holt, Meany-Walen, & Felton, 2014; De Domenico, 1999; Homeyer & Sweeney, 2011; Lowenfeld, 1979; McCurdy & Owen, 2008). Sandtray can emphasize interpersonal interactions in a tangible, concrete manner (Stark & Frels, 2014). The visual representation produced in sandtray also facilitates deeper reflections and new solutions to concerning issues (Bainum, Schneider, & Stone, 2006; Stark & Frels, 2014). Other benefits to using sandtray include fostering a sense of empowerment and providing a balanced view of the experience (Mayes, Mayes, & Williams, 2007). Constructed sandtrays can represent both positive and challenging elements to one’s experience (Mayes et al., 2007). Using sandtray in counseling can be valuable where client outcomes are concerned.

A history of modifying expressive arts techniques for the purposes of conducting arts-based research and the documented benefits of traditional sandtray provide a context to customize sandtray therapy for its use in this qualitative study. The similarities between counseling and qualitative research promote the use of sandtray as a data

collection tool. The skills utilized in counseling parallel the skills utilized in qualitative research (Farber, 2006; Nelson, Onwuegbuzie, Wines, & Frels, 2013). Additionally, researchers have used sandtray to study adult female incest survivors, counselor identity, and children's school experiences (Berman, 1993; Gordon, 2015; Peterson, 2014).

Extending the use of sandtray as an art-based research tool is well suited for IPA.

Employing sandtray as a data collection method can provide the in-depth, detailed information sought when using IPA. Any data collection strategy that can access detailed, in-depth, personal discussion is likely to be effective in an IPA inquiry (Smith et al., 2009). Sandtray can also highlight the holistic perspective valued in IPA and arts-based research (Leavy, 2015; Smith et al., 2009). A rich account of participants' experiences and meaning-making process can be collected through the use of sandtray.

Analysis of Data

IPA's philosophical underpinnings orient the data analysis process. IPA draws upon hermeneutics during the analytic process in the form of the hermeneutic circle. The hermeneutic circle is an analytic process that emphasizes the relationship of parts to wholes and wholes to parts (Patton, 2015). During analysis, there is movement between the part and the whole in an attempt to accurately capture the participants experience and meaning-making process (Smith et al., 2009). In IPA, researchers examine in detail each participant's data set as if the participant was the only participant in the study. The interpretations based on sections of one participant's data are influenced by the whole data set for that participant. Likewise, the interpretations made from the entire data set for that participant are impacted by the detailed interpretations made from specific sections of the data set. As I analyzed the data for each participant, my interpretations made about

the cumulative data for all participants were informed by each participant's data set and vice versa. The whole influenced the parts and the parts influenced the whole. The following steps outlined by Smith et al. (2009) highlight the idiographic sensibility and hermeneutic circle important in IPA's approach to analysis.

1. Reading and Re-Reading. In this step, I entered the participant's world by actively engaging with the data. This was accomplished by focusing on one data set at a time, taking time to ingest and reflect on the provided information, and re-reading the data set. This allowed for the detailed examination of the particular required of idiography.
2. Initial Noting. This step, which could be combined with step one, produced detailed notes and comments about the data. I wrote exploratory comments that were open-ended in nature, which highlighted what matters to the participant and the meaning they have created about the specific phenomenon. The comments were descriptive, linguistic, or conceptual. Descriptive comments highlight content such as phrases, words, or descriptions that illustrate the participant's experience or meaning-making process. Linguistic comments focus on how content and meaning is represented by the language used. I emphasized speech patterns, word choice, or metaphors used by the participant. Conceptual comments are questions that arise for the researcher as the data is being examined. These comments may have required further interpretation on my part or further exploration for the participant.
3. Developing emergent themes. Once I reached this step, there was a movement away from the raw data to the notes generated from it. Here, emergent themes

were created based on the initial notes. The themes were interpretations that reflected participants' words and thoughts. This step embodied the hermeneutic circle since the parts and the whole influence interpretations.

4. Making connections across themes. In this step, I attempted to connect emergent themes to produce a structure that represented the relationships, or lack of, between themes (Smith et al, 2009). These relationships were represented in a visual manner that fit best for the inquiry (Smith et al., 2009). For the purposes of this research study, I created a virtual sandtray to represent the relationships between emergent themes. Smith et al. (2009) has highlighted seven ways to explore emergent themes: (a) abstraction is combining like themes together and forming a super-ordinate theme that captures the essence of the cluster; (b) subsumption is when an emergent theme is the super-ordinate theme and other emergent themes fit under the superordinate emergent theme; (c) polarization focuses themes that are different rather than alike; (d) contextualizing themes occurs when the researcher identifies any temporal, cultural, or narrative themes that may frame the participant's experience; (e) numeration speaks to the frequency themes appear indicating that importance to the participant; (f) identifying the function of emergent themes can help assess how a participant represent their experience. By implementing multiple strategies to explore emergent themes, there was significant engagement with data so the details of each experience were emphasized.
5. Moving to the next case. Smith et al. (2009) has proposed that steps 1-4 be complete for one participant before moving onto the next participant's data. This

speaks to IPA's commitment to idiography. Handling each participant's data like a case study allowed me to concentrate on the details of each participant's experience.

6. Searching for patterns across cases. The last step in the IPA analytic process is to focus on the whole to find patterns across experiences. I searched for similarities and differences in experiences, meaning-making processes, and relationships between themes. Lastly, a graphic representation of the connections for the group was generated. For the purposes of this inquiry, I created a virtual sandtray to represent the overarching themes that emerged from the data across all participants.

Abiding by this systematic data analysis structure allowed for movement between the whole and the parts. This process also allowed for the in-depth, single-case examination valued in IPA methodology. Rich data was collected and analyzed in this inquiry but additional steps were needed to uphold authentic findings.

Trustworthiness

Because IPA is founded on interpretation, this inquiry was vulnerable to threats to trustworthiness. As Smith et al. (2009) has acknowledged interactions with participants' raw data decrease as one moves through the analytic process. This could lead to interpretations reflecting my voice more than participants' voices. Researcher bias is defined as the values, beliefs, and perceptual lens the researcher brings to the inquiry (Maxwell, 2013). My fore-structure was acknowledged by IPA's philosophical underpinnings, but my subjectivity could have influenced the inquiry. This influence is defined as reactivity (Maxwell, 2013). While interpretations created in an IPA study

include the participant's and the researcher's influence (Heidegger, 1962/1927; Smith et al., 2009), the participant's voice is prioritized over the researcher's voice. Despite this priority, it is possible I influenced the research setting, the data analysis, the findings, or participants. Both researcher bias and reactivity are unavoidable in qualitative research but there are mechanisms that exist to minimize these threats to trustworthiness (Maxwell, 2013). It is vital to present credible findings and interpretations, thus, threats to trustworthiness must be managed.

One such measure I used was prolonged engagement. According to Lincoln and Guba (2005), prolonged engagement is spending adequate time with the study to learn the culture, check for misinformation, and build a trusting relationship with participants; all of which are conducive to exploring participants' experience and meaning-making process in the program-site alliance. I had multiple interactions with participants throughout the research process. I conversed regularly with them through email in addition to the two interviews and three member checks conducted throughout the study. These email conversations included updates on my timeline and answering any questions that arose between interviews. The systematic structure of the data analysis process allowed for prolonged engagement with the data collected from the interviews. As outlined by IPA, I spent multiple days analyzing each participant's transcript and creating themes that reflected their experience and meaning-making processes. Maxwell (2013) has advocated for multiple interviews and the "sustained presence of the researcher" in order to minimize "premature theories" and inaccurate data analysis (p. 126). Prolonged engagement, or time, with the study assisted in maintaining trustworthiness.

Another measure that was used to manage threats to trustworthiness was reflexivity. Researcher reflexivity is the “continuous process of self-reflection that researchers engage in to generate awareness about their actions, feelings and perceptions” (Anderson 2008; Darawsheh, 2014, p. 561). Throughout the entire study, I engaged in memoing to temper my bias as a researcher. Memoing increased my awareness and highlighted any unknown preconceptions throughout the inquiry because knowledge is created based exclusively from interpretation according to IPA. As I engaged in the double hermeneutic that occurs in an IPA study when making sense of participants stories, memoing encouraged reflexivity when I was viewing these stories through my personal lens, which promoted trustworthiness.

Triangulation was a strategy used to preserve trustworthiness, too. Triangulation is the use of multiple sources and methods of data collection to examine the credibility of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 2005; Maxwell, 2013). Multiple methods of collecting and verifying data can reveal different aspects of the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2015). I employed several examples of triangulation during this inquiry. Both interviews and virtual sandtray were used as data sources. I also triangulated the findings with the current literature. Another method of triangulation I utilized was consistently meeting with my advisor to check for bias. And lastly, I employed member checks throughout the research process as a form of triangulation. A member check is a strategy used to get feedback from participants regarding the findings and any misunderstandings or biases surfacing for the researcher (Maxwell, 2013). I conducted individual member checks after each round of interviews upon the completion of the data analysis. Member checks were used to ensure accuracy of the emergent themes. A final individual member check

was conducted when the entire analytic process was complete. According to Cho and Trent (2006) member checks can occur throughout the research process, not only at the end of the study. As such, each participant was encouraged to partake in a member check a minimum of three times throughout the research process. Implementing several methods of triangulation kept my interpretations grounded in the participants' experience and was helpful in uncovering participants' whole experience, an important aspect in IPA inquiries.

IPA's ultimate goals are giving voice to participants while understanding their experience and meaning-making processes. It was crucial threats to trustworthiness were regulated. This inquiry maintained rigor and trustworthiness through the use of prolonged engagement, reflexivity, and several forms of triangulation. Methods such as taking my time in each step of the research process, memoing, and member checks promoted credibility and consistency in the findings.

Summary

IPA is idiographic in nature, is informed by hermeneutics, and has existential phenomenological underpinnings. To thoroughly explore site supervisors' experiences, two rounds of interviews were conducted using virtual sandtray as a data collection tool. Each round was followed by data analysis. Member checks were conducted after each round of interviews and a final member check concluded the study to ensure trustworthiness. Through rigorous analysis this inquiry provided insights into site supervisors' experiences with universities as they engage in the program-site alliance when they supervise CITs. Threats to trustworthiness were managed such that participants' voices were clear and their entire experience was explored.

CHAPTER III: ROUND ONE RESULTS

The following chapter provides a detailed account of the emergent themes after one round of data collection. In IPA, results may be presented favoring the methodology's idiographic stance by discussing each participant's data, known as a theme within a case (Smith et al, 2009). Results can also be presented by supporting each theme with data from all the participants, known as case within a theme (Smith et al, 2009). This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section highlights IPA's theme within a case approach and separately discusses emergent themes for participants after the first interview. The second section contains the collective results for round one, as in IPA's case within a theme approach. Each emergent theme is discussed with supporting data from all participants. I chose to complete both presentation forms in order to attend to the idiographic nature and hermeneutic stance of IPA.

Themes Within Specific Cases

Using the IPA methodology allowed me to present the data for each participant separately. Emergent themes within each participant's data set, or case, are highlighted independently. This discussion attends to the commitment to detail and the particular required of IPA's idiographic nature. The results for Cari, Dallas, Justin, Karen, and Henry are reported, along with the virtual sandtrays they created in our first interview.

Cari

Cari identified as a 37-year-old white female. She had been a school counselor at a middle school for six years at the time of this study. She was a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the Rocky Mountain region of the Association of Counselor Educator

and Supervision (ACES). Cari also had a Pupil Personnel Services certificate and a School Administrator certificate. She had been a site supervisor for five CITs over the span of three years at the time of this inquiry. She was affiliated with multiple CACREP accredited counselor education programs. When asked to characterize the program-site alliances she had been involved in, she rated them a 5 on a Likert-scale (1 = Bad, 5 = Excellent).

After our first interview, the superordinate themes that emerged from Cari's data included Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility were emergent subthemes of Site Supervisor Role for Cari. The following is an explanation of each theme's essence according to Cari's experience.

Site Supervisor Role. The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, focused on the duties and tasks Cari perceived she needed to fulfill as a site supervisor. This theme also included the meaning Cari made of these responsibilities. Gatekeeper emerged as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role. For Cari, a Gatekeeper was responsible for preventing harm to clients and maintaining the integrity of the counseling profession and her site. She indicated gatekeeping began during the screening process to determine CIT placement. Cari typically interviewed CITs to determine if they would be a good fit for her organization. She discussed the time commitment the screening process brought, "I usually am met with like 15 or so people that are looking for a placement" (Cari, Rd 1). However, she took the time needed for a few reasons. One reason was due to her desire to have CITs who fit within the culture of her agency. She stated,

We have a large special ed population, so it's, it's a pretty busy place and can be, um, you know, can cause some emotions sometimes, just out of, you know, experiencing with the kids what they're going through. And so finding that right intern is important. (Cari, Rd 1)

Cari was also interested in preventing gatekeeping issues from developing once the CIT was placed in her organization. She explained,

The previous year, we had a, a, a gal that interviewed really well and I felt like was gonna fit well. And then, it just didn't. It wasn't... She did not like middle school. She didn't like... But she kind of took a clinical approach with kids and that doesn't always work in a school setting. (Cari, Rd 1)

As a result of this, Cari said she would taking greater precautions in the future. “So, it was just a little bit different last year for me. So, I think we're a little more diligent in our interviewing this year” (Cari, Rd 1). Cari saw her gatekeeping duties as a major component of the site supervisor role.

Cari also referred to the emotional toll she experienced when she was engaged in gatekeeping responsibilities as a site supervisor. She specifically spoke of how difficult it was to reject CITs if they were not going to be placed at her agency. “And just kind of that devastated blow that these people experienced. I mean, it was really hard for me to be the one to be like, ‘I'm really sorry, but we picked somebody else.’” (Cari, Rd 1). Cari had great empathy for the CITs she had contact with as a site supervisor.

Another subtheme that emerged within the site supervisor role from Cari's data was Facilitator of CIT Development. Cari believed that her major function as a site supervisor once a CIT was placed in her organization was to foster CIT growth.

I don't shy away from involving them in anything, um, tha-, that, whatever it might be. If it's a difficult parent or a 504, and IEP meeting, I always just say, "Is it okay if my intern's in here for learning purposes?" And we run with it, because I just... I think that gives them a leg up when they do interview and then when they're in the position, to know that, "Okay. I can get through this because I've had this experience and that's kinda how they did it. This worked; this didn't work." Um. I think it's all about exposure. (Cari, Rd 1)

She highlighted the importance of developing a supportive relationship with CITs because the issues they would be exposed to as they grew could be challenging. She said, I try to set up that relationship so that, at any point if they're feeling however they're feeling, that they can talk to me about it and...Um. So I do take that, uh, supervision, weekly supervision meeting very... I take it very seriously and just take what's working well, what's not working. Um. So I think I would find myself in between each and every one of these emotions...just trying to push and prod them along. (Cari, Rd 1)

The supportive relationship she attempted to cultivate with CITs included promoting autonomy. She explained,

I have them shadow me for a couple of weeks and then I just say, "Okay. Now I'm gonna watch you." And once I feel like, I feel like they've got the gist of where they should be or how they should approach things and...I just kinda let them go and say, "Whatever you want to do, I'm all for it." (Cari, Rd 1)

She continued saying,

So, um, I like the independence I think that creates for them. And then also, they can kind of tell me, "Well, I haven't seen this or experienced this." And in my school we can always come up with something... [laughs]...that fits the need of what they're looking for. (Cari, Rd 1)

Balancing support and autonomy for CITs was critical for Cari as a site supervisor. In order to determine what the balance was for individual CITs, Cari recognized the difference in development. For example,

I just feel like [affiliated university A] program for the school specifically is a little more... It better prepares them [CITs]. When they come in as an intern, they've already done a practicum out in the school setting. Whereas at [affiliated university B], their practicum is spent in... Um. At [affiliated university B], they do... They work with college students who are there as part of a psychology class requirement...In fact, they're like... That's such a controlled environment that it doesn't really expose the practicum students to what a school is really like...So I kind of feel like they come in with a disadvantage, because they haven't been in that school environment. (Cari, Rd 1)

Cari tailored her setting to meet the needs of each CIT in accordance to their developmental needs. She hoped to create a field placement that was worthwhile to all the CITs she supervised. "I just try to make sure they don't have that kind of experience, where they're like, 'Now why am I working all these hours and not getting paid? I don't...' [laughs]... 'I don't understand.'" (Cari, Rd 1). Her ultimate goal with CIT development was job placement. She discussed what she hoped a CIT could speak to

during a job interview, “So they have things to talk about in an interview. Like, ‘Have you been exposed to this?’ ‘Why, yes I have,’ you know” (Cari, Rd 1).

Cari took her role as site supervisor very seriously and felt much pride taking on the role. Sense of Pride emerged as a third subtheme for Cari under the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. To illustrate,

But I take on that, um, it's a choice to supervise, and so I need to be prepared for that responsibility and, um, be willing to sort of address concerns, and confront, and things like that. Um. Because it really... Uh. It's an option. I don't have to do this, so if I'm gonna choose to do something I should be fully invested in it. (Cari, Rd 1)

She felt much pride when making the choice to be a site supervisor. Sense of pride also emerged as she spoke of the lasting relationships that could develop with CITs.

I have developed an amazing friendship with an intern I had last year. She got hired on in the district this year. And so it's just making connections with people that are passionate about the same things you are. And you can make lifelong friends that way. (Cari, Rd 1)

As she puts forth much effort to develop a relationship with CITs, Cari felt pride when those relationships maintained over time and evolved into relationships with colleagues.

Along with feeling pride, Cari revealed feeling a sense of responsibility when in the role of site supervisor. As discussed, Cari made the conscious choice to be a site supervisor. Thus, Welcomed Responsibility transpired as a subtheme of Site Supervisor Role. The essence of Welcomed Responsibility for Cari was that she willingly takes on the responsibility of supervising a CIT. She recognized the magnitude and implications of

supervising a CIT when she stated, “They're [the affiliated university] giving me that, that big responsibility of making sure that I'm correcting also the things that maybe don't come out until they're in practice” (Cari, Rd 1). And she voluntarily took on this obligation because as she explained, “I still feel like it's the right thing to do [to be a site supervisor], um, just as part of my ed-, my giving back to an amazing profession” (Cari, Rd 1). Cari saw supervising CITs as a way to honor the counseling profession. She also welcomed the obligation to supervise CITs in an effort to maintain the integrity of the profession and to ensure effective school counselors were working with children. She said, “Because I want them [CITs] to go out in the world and be prepared for the craziness that is working in a school” (Cari, Rd 1). Cari welcomed the obligation of supervising CITs to honor her profession and protect its ethicality.

Site Supervisor Role developed as a superordinate theme for Cari with Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility as subthemes. Cari discussed the importance of this role and how dedicated she was to making her field placement site a successful experience for CITs. She also highlighted the maintenance of her profession's integrity was significant for her. As such, she welcomed the role of site supervisor and was dedicated to the success of her CITs.

Program-Site Alliance. A second superordinate theme that materialized after the first interview was Program-Site Alliance. Cari discussed her experience of the relationship between herself and the affiliated universities when she was supervising a CIT. For the most part, she spoke highly of her program-site alliances. Cari shared that

existing relationships with affiliated universities were a major variable that contributed to her favorable experience. She explained,

But I went through [affiliated university], so I know that program really well. And most of the professors are still fairly similar, so I feel like if I have a concern, I could definitely raise it and have it addressed. (Cari, Rd 1)

Cari's level of comfort increased when there was an existing relationship with her affiliated university. She said, "...it's really helpful when you have those connections...with people" (Cari, Rd 1).

She considered the university's role in the program-site alliance as having inconsequential impact when she was supervising a CIT but supportive nonetheless. She articulated,

I think they [affiliated university] do their work maybe before I even come into the picture...Like they've done the preparation, and the training, and, um, you know, helped people kind of prepare themselves for that...And so they had come even before me. (Cari, Rd 1)

She went on to say that she was content with universities' negligible involvement at her site. In fact, she appreciated the autonomy to manage her site in a manner suitable to the needs of her CITs and the structure of her site.

INTERVIEWER ...you value that sense of independence and freedom that the universities are giving you, when you do have students.

CARI Yes. (Cari, Rd 1)

While she admitted the majority of the university's role took place prior to and after a CIT was placed at her site, she recognized the supportive nature of their role—especially in cases of urgent situations.

I would think they'd [affiliated university] kind of be like the, maybe the, the rainbow above [referring to her virtual sandtray], like they're there to swoop in if there's an emergency or... Oops! Um. Or maybe they'd be balloons [referring to her virtual sandtray]. I don't really see them much, so maybe they're just at the end...When the prize, the coveted diploma comes out. (Cari, Rd 1)

For Cari, the university's role was minimal. She acknowledged the importance of the university in the preparation of students and their evaluative role. She also noticed the significance of their role during challenging times. But overall, Cari experienced universities as unobtrusive and innocuous, which was fitting for her when she was engaged in a program-site alliance.

Cari added she experienced the program-site alliance as a mutualistic. She saw benefits to all parties involved in the program-site alliance. She pointed out,

And they, they [affiliated university] provide a great service to me in that I'm able to get so much more done because I have the support of interns. I mean, they're running counseling groups like crazy...And you know, just having all these different options for students available because there are more bodies in our counseling office than we're, you know, given, um, funding to have. (Cari, Rd 1)

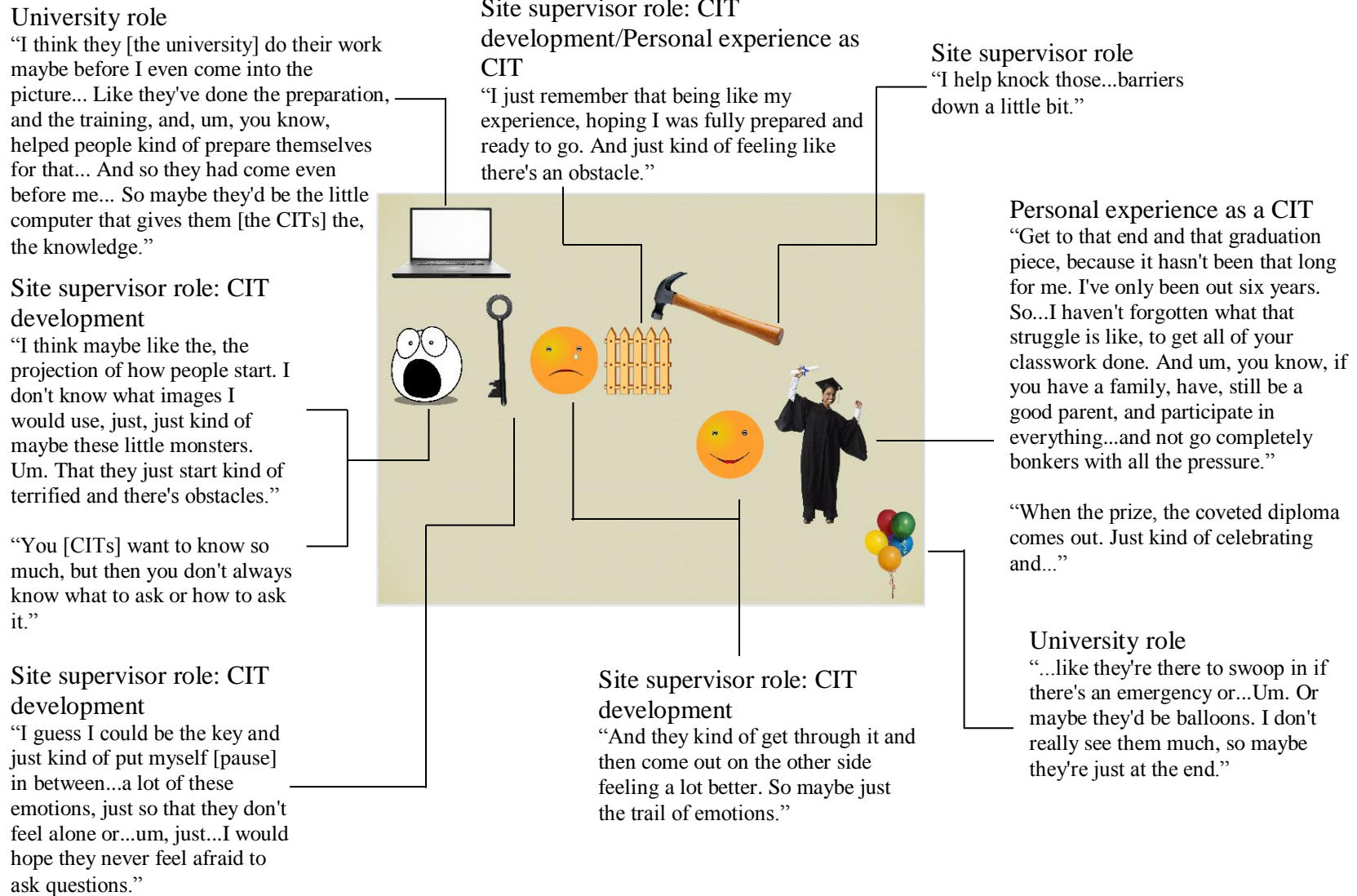
She benefited from having more people provide services to her clientele. Cari discussed how advantageous her work as a supervisor was to the university. She stated, "And I feel like they entrust me with helping that student develop" (Cari, Rd 1). She highlighted how

she helped the university when she said, “If there's a concern, they're counting on me to bring that to their attention. Because they only have seen these guys operate within a controlled environment as well” (Cari, Rd 1). By serving as a site supervisor, Cari helped CITs meet outcomes established by the university while she attended to more clients at her site because she had a CIT providing services.

I just think it's kind of a give-and-take. Like they [affiliated university] give me this great person that's gonna work with me and I'm gonna take that responsibility and, and do everything I can to make sure they're [CIT] ready to go out on their own when they're done. (Cari, Rd 1)

In the first round of interviews, Cari provided an elaborate description of her experience as a site supervisor. Site Supervisor Role emerged as a superordinate theme with subthemes of Gatekeeping, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. Program-Site Alliance transpired as a superordinate theme, too. See Figure 3.1 Start to Finish: A Long Process, But It's Worth It for Cari's virtual sandtray illustrating her experience and emergent themes. In it she highlighted the process a CIT goes through when they are engaged in fieldwork starting with the white face on the left and ending with graduation, represented by the balloons. She included representations of her role and the university's role in the CIT's process.

Figure 3.1. Start to Finish: A Long Process, But It's Worth It
(Cari, Rd 1)



Dallas

Dallas identified as a 38-year-old Caucasian male. He was a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LPCP) in the Rocky Mountain Region of ACES. Dallas had worked as a clinician for twelve years and was the clinical supervisor for at a juvenile corrections facility at the time of this study. He had been a site supervisor for five years and had supervised approximately fifteen CITs and LPCs. Dallas had served as site supervisor for multiple CACREP accredited counselor education programs. When asked to characterize the program-site alliances he had been involved in, he rated them a 4 on a Likert-scale (1 = Bad, 5 = Excellent).

After our first interview, the superordinate themes that emerged from Dallas' data included Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development emerged as subthemes of Site Supervisor Role for Dallas. Independent Mutualism and Regulated Support transpired as subthemes of Program-Site Alliance. The following is an explanation of each theme's essence according to Dallas' experience.

Site Supervisor Role. The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, focused on the duties and tasks DB perceived he needed to fulfill as a site supervisor. This theme also included the meaning Dallas made of these responsibilities. A major responsibility Dallas outlined within the Site Supervisor Role that emerged as a subtheme was Gatekeeper. For Dallas, a Gatekeeper was heavily focused on intervening during a concerning situation involving a CIT. Dallas described a situation where a CIT was adding to a challenging situation involving Dallas and an employee. He said,

...it was already a tense situation that was already very difficult to work with. Um, and just to pour gasoline on the fire didn't help...And that person [CIT] was really

putting an employee that I was having a lot of problems with against me...putting her, the employee, against me. (Dallas, Rd 1)

The situation required Dallas to intervene and ultimately remove the CIT from his facility.

And then, uh, I sat down with the intern and I said, "You know, I don't think this is working for either of us...And-and then I sat down with the student and I said, "You know, here's where we're at"...yeah, and then we had that exit, uh, conversation. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Removing the CIT from his field site highlighted the need to have an effective screening process for Dallas. He was also reminded of the importance of placing CITs with his agency that are a suitable fit for the agency's culture. He explained,

So, uh, just making sure that, you know, I'm comfortable with whoever's in the facility, that I know they're [the CIT] gonna be safe, they're gonna follow policy and procedure, and that they're gonna be able to work with our team, you know, and that this is gonna be a learning experience for them as well as beneficial for...for our facility...while they're with us. (Dallas, Rd 1)

In Dallas' experience, encountering gatekeeping issues were included in the role of site supervisor. He emphasized the importance of a screening process and taking action when the issue required intervention as a gatekeeper.

Another subtheme from Dallas' data was CIT development. Much like Cari, Dallas saw facilitating CIT development as a duty to be fulfilled by a site supervisor. He stated, "...on my end, I want to help that student [CIT] be able to take what they're learning in school and put that into practice in a supervised setting where they can learn

and not do damage” (Dallas, Rd 1). The practical application of what CITs learn in the classroom was the emphasis when Dallas was fostering growth in his supervisees. He explained that he hoped to “install, uh, confidence in what they're [CIT] learning, and then into their practice” (Dallas, Rd 1). Dallas continued on to say, “I think the graduation picture is a little bit...a little bit limiting there [referring to sandtray], but we want to get them to graduation. But, uh, the purpose, really, is to be that outstanding clinician” (Dallas, Rd 1).

Dallas shared that he believed exposure to the realities of the counseling profession and offering support helped CITs reach their fullest potential as clinicians.

...that's kind of the interesting thing is the interns, they get to see...you know, they don't just see this really beautiful, cheerful site all the time. They see when people are upset when they're having a rough day. Not just the juveniles, but staff...

(Dallas, Rd 1)

Dallas spoke of a situation where he was in a staff meeting and a stakeholder was on the phone. A difference of opinion arose between the stakeholder and himself. He discussed the importance for a CIT to witness the exchange.

And it's not just practicing on ethics with our clients, but also representing those, uh, what decisions were being made...Uh, and not necessarily being abrasive about it, but trying to be a partner and, uh, with this personal stakeholder, or this particular stakeholder, I had to be pretty strong with him. But, uh, but being able to see how...how difficult decisions get made when there's disagreement. (Dallas, Rd 1)

He was open to providing experiences where individuals could model professional conduct because CIT development included working with clients as well as managing interactions with colleagues. In the case with the stakeholder having a different opinion, Dallas personally modeled professional behavior and illustrated a realistic exchange for the CIT. He said, “And that's really trying to be professional and modeling that professionalism for the students that we're working with, so they understand what, uh, professional conduct looks like...” (Dallas, Rd 1). In addition, Dallas acknowledged that offering support to CITs also helped them become outstanding clinicians. He narrated a story about one of his site supervisors who offered encouragement while he was in his fieldwork as a CIT.

Um, and so I try to do the same thing for our interns in making sure that we give them those accolades, and that we're giving them that, you know, "Hey, you know, you handled this really, really well," or, uh, expressing appreciation for their hard work in whatever those things are... (Dallas, Rd 1)

He endeavored to support CITs throughout their fieldwork because he recognized how challenging fieldwork could be for them. He stated, “Uh, because, you know, when they come in, it's a steep learning curve, it really is” (Dallas, Rd 1). Dallas said he hoped through exposure and support CITs developed into confident clinicians who were “adaptable to-to an environment that is-is moving very quickly and every day is different than the one before it...” (Dallas, Rd 1).

Site Supervisor Role developed as a superordinate theme for Dallas with Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development as subthemes. Dallas discussed the importance of an effective screening process to prevent gatekeeping concerns. He also

emphasized the significance of exposing CITs to the realities of working in the counseling profession. Dallas reported his goal as a site supervisor was to produce self-assured practitioners who have accumulated a multitude of experiences. He said encouraging and supporting the CIT accomplished this goal.

Program-Site Alliance. A second superordinate theme that developed for Dallas was Program-Site Alliance. Dallas discussed his experience of the relationship between himself and the affiliated universities when he was supervising a CIT. He viewed the program-site alliance as a partnership between two entities that operated differently. He stated, “So, um, they're-they're-they're working well together, but they're different” (Dallas, Rd 1). He perceived the university’s role as “similar in some ways” to the agency’s, “but also different...Um, where the school is more instructional, and here [at the field site], we're more experiential” (Dallas, Rd 1). He believed both the university and the field site were important for CIT development, yet they facilitated learning differently.

While he recognized the difference between the two partners, he discussed the mutualism that he saw in the program-site alliance. As such, Independent Mutualism materialized from Dallas’ data as a subtheme for the superordinate theme, Program-Site Alliance. The essence of Independent Mutualism for Dallas was each party was independent from one another and advantages exist for both when they have a CIT in common. Dallas discussed how he saw the role for the university and the field site as different but he continued on to discuss the mutualistic nature of the program-site alliance. He explained,

Because, uh, the student wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the school...and we wouldn't benefit from them being here and being able to invest in their lives...in their career...And then, the student wouldn't be prepared to enter the field without a site to adequately prepare them as well. So yeah, I do see that as being partners and equal...equal folks on our end as well as the school. (Dallas, Rd1)

Dallas stated all players in the program-site alliance benefited from the relationship. Universities had field placement sites to help CITs grow into effective clinicians, CITs had the opportunity to engage in experiential learning, and the field site benefited from the CIT being at his site. He said,

I can take some of the burden off some of my clinicians' workload...by having that intern work with some of our juveniles that don't need quite a high level of intensity, but will allow that clinician to be able to focus on the more high-intensity juveniles. While the intern works on a little bit lighter need juveniles. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Housing a CIT was advantageous to both the university and the field site even though there were marked differences in their approach to fostering CIT learning. They were independent units with individual duties and responsibilities yet remaining connected in a mutually beneficial relationship, hence, Independent Mutualism as a subtheme.

Another subtheme that emerged from Dallas' data was Regulated Support. From Dallas' perspective, Regulated Support was comprised of two constructs: autonomy and support. This theme represents the autonomy Dallas experienced in the program-site alliance while acknowledging there may be times where support was needed from the

university. For example, he highlighted the divergence between the university and the field site then spoke of his experience of the separation.

So, um, academically, we-we really have no idea what's going on at the school...Um, and so...and then honestly, the school, I doubt knows...everything I do with that...sorry, not juvenile, with that student is learning, uh, learning and is experiencing completely on a day-to-day basis. There's gonna be some stuff that neither one of us fully know what's going on in the other. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Despite the unknowns he mentioned, Dallas discussed the importance he placed on having freedom to be a site supervisor without the interference of the university. He said,

But, you know, we don't need a ton of interaction, either. Um, I think being able to give the support when we need it and, uh, you know, knowing that the schools seeing the evaluations on the student, knowing where the student's at...the school being able to talk to me if there's any issues in that evaluation process. Making sure the students are getting what they're supposed to get from their site...um, that's fine. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Dallas did not require copious amounts of interaction with universities; he preferred it be more balanced. He explained, “The university, uh, the online school, uh, communicated really well with us, um, and we had conversations, I think, scheduled every quarter over the following day, and that instructor...me and the student and instruct...and the person from the school” (Dallas, Rd 1). He pointed out that he was also open to less formal modes of communication,

...both the university and the site have the ability to communicate to each other, uh, either through, you know, the evaluation process of the student, or just saying,

"Hey, just checking out. Just want to see if there's anything you need." I've had schools do that, uh, and just periodically hear from, say, "Hey, just want to check in. Is there anything you need from us? Is the student doing okay? Do you have any concerns? Are things going really well?" And, uh, just informally. And I found that to be helpful, too. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Dallas preferred a program-site alliance that offered him opportunities to be autonomous in the site supervisor role while it was evident the university was present and could be called upon when needed.

He stressed how valuable it was to have the university available, especially when gatekeeping issues arose. Dallas disclosed an experience he had with a university when he faced a gatekeeping issue with a CIT. A concerning CIT was placed at his site, he completed the quarterly evaluation but no action was taken so the concerns persisted. He explained his experience when he phoned the university.

Uh, I had already communicated with her school prior to that [the completed evaluation]...and, uh, made sure that they were aware of where we were at, and then we discovered that that supervisor hadn't seen the evaluation I completed on her. (Dallas, Rd 1)

He narrated further,

...but I think maybe the-the supervisor at the school said, "Well, you know, this is kind of the first time I'm hearing about this." And I said, "Well, I found the evaluation that I sent you two months ago or three months ago up on my computer, and it really displayed exactly what we're talking about today. And my point is that nothing has really changed." (Dallas, Rd 1)

As it turned out, there was a mishap with the first evaluation regarding the concerning CIT. Dallas stated,

I said, "You know, here's-here's the problem of where we're at. And I had...I had completed her, uh, semester, quarterly evaluation. And that reflected the same problems early on." And the information from the evaluation didn't get to that supervisor. It landed on the wrong desk at their school...So, uh, there was, uh, there was an obvious problem very quickly because what could have been remediated early on, it wasn't because of a lack of communication. (Dallas, Rd 1)

While explaining this situation, Dallas disclosed feeling frustrated that he had communicated with the university in the manner agreed upon in this particular program-site alliance, yet the situation remained unresolved for a time. For Dallas, the university did not offer support in his time of need. Once more communication about the situation had occurred, the source of the problem was revealed.

And, uh, she [university supervisor] looked up and she found the error on their side. Came back, owned it, and said, "You know...you know, it was our mistake. Somebody else had..." in the processing of their information, it got put in the wrong spot. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Upon this realization, Dallas appreciated how the situation was resolved. He said, "Working with the school was-was very beneficial, it was helpful. Um, I don't have any problems with the way the school handled it when they got to that point" (Dallas, Rd 1). The support was available to him once the problem was identified.

Dallas also spoke of a program-site alliance in which the paperwork for evaluating CITs was time consuming. He recounted,

But their, uh, their evaluations and the paperwork they-they required was pretty cumbersome...and, uh, in many ways, it was above...because I work with other-other schools, and I'm like, "This really is unnecessary. There's an easier way to do this." And it took up a lot of time...Uh, the student did great, the student was a great, great intern, and, uh, worked well with us, and-and-and was very complimentary, the relationship between us and that student. The school did all right. It was just very cumbersome on the paperwork end. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Too much involvement from the university compromised Dallas' experience of autonomy in the program-site alliance. Having respect for time was highlighted in Dallas' interview, "That-that we don't take up a lot of unnecessary time on stuff that-that we don't need to, that we use our time wisely. And respect that...I respect the school's time and the school respects mine" (Dallas, Rd 1). When a university disrespected his time as site supervisor, Dallas experienced an imbalance between autonomy and support that was encompassed in the subtheme, Regulated Support.

For Dallas, Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance emerged as superordinate themes. Figure 3.2 Cooperation and Partnership and Figure 3.3 Process of Supervision are Dallas' virtual sandtrays representing his experience and emergent themes. Within the Site Supervisor Role, Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development materialized as subthemes. Figure 3.2 highlights the various roles the site supervisor and the university took on in the program-site alliance in Dallas' perception. He viewed gatekeeper as vital to the role of site supervisor, especially when the culture of his agency was jeopardized. He believed he had a responsibility to the development of CITs as shown in Figure 3.3. Putting the knowledge CITs have accumulated while at the

university into practice at his field site was critical. Within the superordinate theme, Program-Site Alliance, there were two subthemes that emerged for Dallas. One was Independent Mutualism, which consisted of respecting the individuality of the university and the field site while recognizing the mutual benefits for each when they shared a CIT. The other subtheme was Regulated Support, which involved a balance between autonomy for Dallas as a site supervisor and timely support from the university. Independent Mutualism and Regulated Support are demonstrated in Figure 3.3 by the sheep and the horse working along side each other to get through a maze. They are different animals but support one another in the process of training CITs.

Figure 3.2. Cooperation and Partnership
(Dallas, Rd 1)

Site supervisor role

"And we kind of do a panel interview. We try to keep it informal. We don't have preselected questions. So we keep it very conversational. And, uh, so, that has helped improve the fence. And, uh, and I think we've had much better outcomes with, uh, since then, and we've avoided, uh, that negative, uh, you know, situation we had with that previous intern."

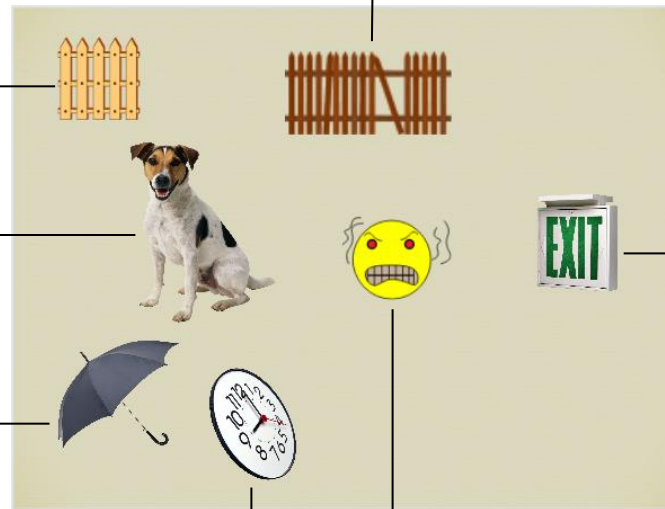
Practice image that did not get removed

University role

"I kind of like that one. Uh, I see the school as...I don't know if this is gonna work as a good analogy or not. Um, they're kind of a shield to us because there's already been some vetting of that student coming in."

Gatekeeping issue

"This is kind of what we had, uh, the broken down fence. And, uh, piece that in there. It was a fence and it was a screening process, but it wasn't very good."



Site supervisor role/University support/Gatekeeping issue

"And, uh, and so, you know, I worked with her supervisor from the school and we figured out the problem was. And then, uh, I sat down with the intern and I said, 'You know, I don't think this is working for either of us.' And it was a mutual decision at that point...for her to, to find a new site. And that's why I chose that exit sign."

Site supervisor role/Gatekeeping issue (supervisee impact on agency culture)

"She's very...not a good fit for our site, and, uh, ended up stirring up a lot of drama. And I think that pictures makes...it exemplifies how I feel when I'm dealing with a lot of drama."

Mutual respect

"But like I said, it's a very fast-paced moving environment...That-that we don't take up a lot of unnecessary time on stuff that-that we don't need to, that we use our time wisely. And respect that...I respect the school's time and the school respects mine."

Figure 3.3. Process of Supervision
(Dallas, Rd 1)

Autonomy

"...and then honestly, the school, I doubt knows...everything I do with that...sorry, not juvenile, with that student is learning, uh, learning and is experiencing completely on a day-to-day basis. There's gonna be some stuff that neither one of us fully know what's going on in the other. That we're gonna trust that, uh, the program is providing them with all those important important CACREP requirements, uh, and that they're...they're being prepared, you know, learning their diagnostics at the school, and then we help them in the practice."

"...academically, we-we really have no idea what's going on at the school."

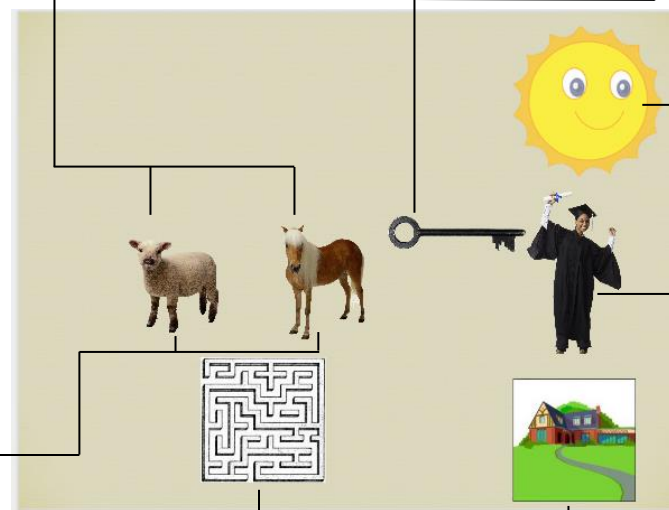
"But, uh, so we have some different worlds that we live in. So in that essence, we are separate."

Mutual respect

"Okay, so two different, distinct animals. Um, you know, but they're, uh, they're friendly to each other, and they-they're supportive of each other. And they-they can...they get along, they can have fun, and they achieve mutual...mutual goals together. They're on a farm..."

"Because, uh, the student wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the school...and we wouldn't benefit from them being here and being able to invest in their lives...in their career...And then, the student wouldn't be prepared to enter the field without a site to adequately prepare them as well. So yeah, I do see that as being partners and equal..."

"Um, but we have a common interest in that student."



CIT development/Site supervisor role

"And then, we really like to build up our interns, and I just put a key on there... It's kind of the...part of the key to success. Because we really want to install, uh, confidence in what they're learning, and then into their practice."

Mutual respect

"Um, I like the sun, so that's a copy. Put that up here. There we go, move these guys down around here. So, um, they're-they're-they're working well together, but they're different."

CIT development

"And I guess that's where this person can come in handy. Um, but not just a graduate, but a person who's gonna take everything they learned and just be an outstanding person."

"I think the graduation picture is a little bit...a little bit limiting there, but we want to get them to graduation. But, uh, the purpose, really, is to be that outstanding clinician."

Mutual respect

"So...but we [the field site and the university] have to go through this little maze together with the student..."

CIT development

"...we're-we're on this little journey together to this beautiful estate in the country is-is what we end up with the very competent counselor heading out into the community to be safe and ethical...and provide good results."

Justin

Justin identified as a 40-year-old German, Luxembourgian, Bohemian, and Belgian male and was currently a doctoral student in the North Atlantic Region of ACES. He had practiced as a clinician for twelve years and specialized in couple and family work, mental health, addictions, eating disorders, career counseling, and sports performance at the time of this study. Justin had his LPC license and was credentialed as a Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP), Certified Addictions Counselor-Level II (CAC II), and a National Certified Counselor (NCC). He had seven years of experience as a site supervisor and had supervised ten CITs at the time of this inquiry. Justin worked with multiple CACREP accredited counselor education programs. When asked to characterize the program-site alliances he had been involved in, he rated them a 5 on a Likert-scale (1 = Bad, 5 = Excellent).

Justin's interview consisted of his narrative about a gatekeeping situation involving himself, a colleague in his clinic, and a CIT. The superordinate theme that emerged was Site Supervisor Role with subthemes of Gatekeeper and Sense of Pride. These themes transpired within the context of the gatekeeping issue Justin shared.

For Justin, the Site Supervisor Role included attending to gatekeeping issues as they arose, hence, Gatekeeper as a subtheme. He highlighted the importance of intervening as a Gatekeeper when in the Site Supervisor Role. He explained his process when fulfilling the responsibilities of Gatekeeper,

And so I have been one to tell people that I'm calling all their clients, and that I'm gonna have conversations with their supervisors, um, because I'm concerned regarding, you know, their lack of development, if they hit a plateau, and if

they're struggling with, uh, removing...you know, whatever. They have some barrier that's impacting the way that's, uh, detriment to the organi-, isn't representing the organization for which I work. (Justin, Rd 1)

He highlighted being a Gatekeeper as a site supervisor served the CIT as well as protected his agency's reputation.

During our first interview, Justin discussed a situation where a CIT placed in his agency was actively using substances while seeing clients. He said,

...one intern in particular had an active substance use disorder during the time at my facility that my coworker and I who are very experienced clinicians just struggled to confront. And we believe she was using cocaine and other stimulants whilst she was seeing clients. (Justin, Rd 1)

He continued on to say that despite what he believed was an effective screening process, issues concerning the CIT's performance with clients developed. He stated while referring to his virtual sandtray,

We're up here in this far right corner and she's uh...this person [CIT] is way down here in the bottom left corner because despite the fact that we thought we made a really good hire we were really distant from each other. We didn't know really what was going on. (Justin, Rd 1)

For Justin, the site supervisor role consisted of taking action to mitigate safety concerns for his agency, his clients, and his CITs when gatekeeping issues arose. When it was revealed that his CIT was struggling with addiction, Justin immediately became aware of the risks associated with the situation.

Yeah, I feel like um one of the things that I was most concerned about was her A, but B, her clients. She was seeing clients in error, I believe, and so the reputation of our agency was at risk. (Justin, Rd 1)

As stated by other participants, Justin believed gatekeeping issues compromise the integrity of his agency as well as the safety of the clients his agency served.

Once he and his colleague discovered what was happening in their agency, they attempted to intervene in different ways. He shared while referring to his virtual sandtray,

Some days we would try different things. This is what the key represents. "Let's try this or let's confront this way. Let's ask about clinical notes and why they're late. Let's see what we can do to make things better for her, ask her about her stress in her life. Ask her about whatever we noticed." Because we're therapists and we're intuitive and we noticed something was off so we might make a comment but that didn't seem to work. So, then we found the hammer down here and we started hammering our heads, we started hammering like let's...we've got to figure out how to make this different and we can't do it. (Justin, Rd 1)

Along with their subtle attempts to solve the problem, Justin and his colleague reached out to others for consultation.

And I was asking mentors as well. Of course, I have a lot of mentors in my life and so I'm calling my mentor, [mentor name], and I'm like, "What do we do here?" And she's like, "Well you need to...you know what does the manual say? What are the rules around this?" (Justin, Rd 1)

Justin and his colleague also attempted a more direct approach with the CIT, but that did not seem to resolve the situation either.

When we confronted her [the CIT] she got angry and she blamed us and she told us and she yelled at [Justin's colleague] and she would yell and she would be defensive. So, she [the CIT] was like the monster [referring to his virtual sandtray]. (Justin, Rd 1)

Their attempts to resolve the gatekeeping issue were unsuccessful.

Because of this, Justin spoke of the emotional toll gatekeeper duties had on him when he was in the site supervisor role. He explained referring to his virtual sandtray,

Um then when things started going and the flames started to come up...and I'm going to say that the smoke is flames uh on the factory...and this time bomb started ticking we started getting frustrated, sad and scared and confused about what to do. (Justin, Rd 1)

Justin described a variety of emotions happening for him during this gatekeeping issue.

He went on to discuss his experience when the situation intensified. "She [the CIT] was like, just in her addiction, just, I mean, yelling at [Justin's colleague], made [Justin's colleague] cry a couple of times" (Justin, Rd 1). He expounded, "And when she [the CIT] became more of the monster and more of the monster as she was kind of steeped in denial um yeah so, we kinda became lost ourselves in like what to do" (Justin, Rd 1). He said, "Um and so then at that point we're like, 'Man what do we do? We're frustrated, we're angry and sad or scared.'" (Justin, Rd 1). Justin reiterated feeling lost, "And I felt lost, I felt like I had probably maybe could have done something different to prevent this but I didn't understand exactly what that was" (Rd 1). In addition, the length of time in which Justin had to manage the gatekeeping issue contributed to the emotional toll. Trying to confront the issue from a multitude of angles took time, which meant the CIT's

placement maintained. She continued seeing clients and representing Justin's agency. He recognized consulting with mentors may have contributed to the length of time the problem remained unresolved. He said, "...by reaching out to other networks and I don't think that necessarily made things go faster" (Justin, Rd 1). He referred to the time it took for the situation to be resolved as a slow-moving turtle in his virtual sandtray. As a result, "Some days we just wanted to exit and run. We didn't want to confront or try to talk about it. We just wanted to ignore the problem so we wanted to exit" (Justin, Rd 1). Justin became discouraged with the situation and could not find a solution.

Eventually, Justin reached out to the university the CIT was affiliated with. The superordinate theme, Program-Site Alliance, was highlighted in this section of Justin's narrative. Justin said, "...we pushed back on the university and they didn't want to do anything" (Justin, Rd 1). He continued on describing the situation as urgent but did not perceive the university as recognizing the urgency.

...we really needed an urgent intervention but our system was set out that it made it very challenging and that's, I think, why we wanted to lean on the supervisor from the university, the site super-, the uh, the person that comes and checks on their intern and even the program director. And that was the worst part is that one of my good colleagues who is now the director there I couldn't even get her to understand how urgent the situation was. (Justin, Rd 1)

Justin perceived the university not taking action to resolve the gatekeeping issue. He stated, again, he and his colleague "pushed on the university" and told the university,

"Hey we've got some concerns, some pretty severe concerns. Can you talk to her?" And they didn't want to take any action. They seemed to not be able to do

anything about that so...Then one day the intern was gone and she went to [city name] where she was put into inpatient and we never heard from her again.

(Justin, Rd 1)

Justin's narrative concluded with,

And so, she basically disappeared but again we didn't hear much from the university and uh we were all left kind of with our hands up in the air with her caseload, right, and her gone and not a lot of answers. (Justin, Rd 1)

Justin's experience in the program-site alliance during this gatekeeping issue lacked communication and support. He empathized with the university, "...but I feel like the university...again I love my former school but at the time they had just lost their chair and we were kind of in this place of not having a lot of support" (Justin, Rd 1). Justin recognized that the university may have been in a place of transition, however, he described feeling irritated with the lack of support, "And yeah, so I think in a lot of ways uh, I felt maybe even frustration with the [affiliated university]" (Justin, Rd 1). The university was absent in his time of need as a gatekeeper.

Serving as a site supervisor was not always a positive experience, yet, Justin reported still being interested in growing as a site supervisor. He identified challenges that came into his awareness that he hoped would prepare him for future challenging experiences. Justin disclosed he was not inherently comfortable with confrontation, but he realized the value of utilizing it when his gatekeeping issue materialized. He stated,

It [confrontation] would still be terrifying for me because I'm a non-confrontational person I know myself. But I know myself enough that you have to

do it or just...again for me it's the patient requiring safety that's most important, so. (Justin, Rd 1)

Since he remained interested in serving as a site supervisor after this gatekeeping experience, he explained that he would be more willing to be confrontational should the need arise for the safety of his clientele. In reference to his virtual sandtray he said,

So, I would probably become uh a fake lion for a day and be this...so I do come across sometimes intimidatingly if people don't know me well. So, I think I can pretend to be this person one day for, to face this bear here. (Justin, Rd 1)

He recognized that at the time of the gatekeeping issue he may not have been as prepared as needed, "I think I didn't necessarily have the tools, and neither did she [Justin's colleague], to really put the hammer down and we probably needed to" (Justin, Rd 1).

Justin went on to say "I am pretty straightforward with them about what I expect and why I need this" now when he has CITs placed in his organization (Rd 1). Justin also discussed changes his field placement program implemented as a result of the gatekeeping issue.

So, we were interviewing...you know I love interviewing like it's just something that I study and so I just delve into that more, studying, how do you tell cues, things like that. I think particularly with references, just hammering references, just try to get a better feel for who is coming in the door through my networks as well. So, that was probably one of the things we did. (Justin, Rd 1)

His agency decided to be more diligent about the screening process. Justin shared he would reach out to the university earlier. He said, "I would immediately call the site supervisor [at the university] and they [the CIT and the university supervisor] would be in

my office in the next two days and we would all be meeting together. We'd be getting everything on the table" (Justin, Rd 1). His interview highlighted the changes he would implement should he have a challenging CIT in the future.

Despite the demands of challenging gatekeeping issues, Justin explained that he still enjoyed serving as a site supervisor. Sense of Pride emerged as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role. He stated,

I mean I think one of the coolest things about my experience in that is that all the clinicians that I have supervised over the years at a site are still in contact with me and I get to hear about their amazing careers, their amazing private practices.

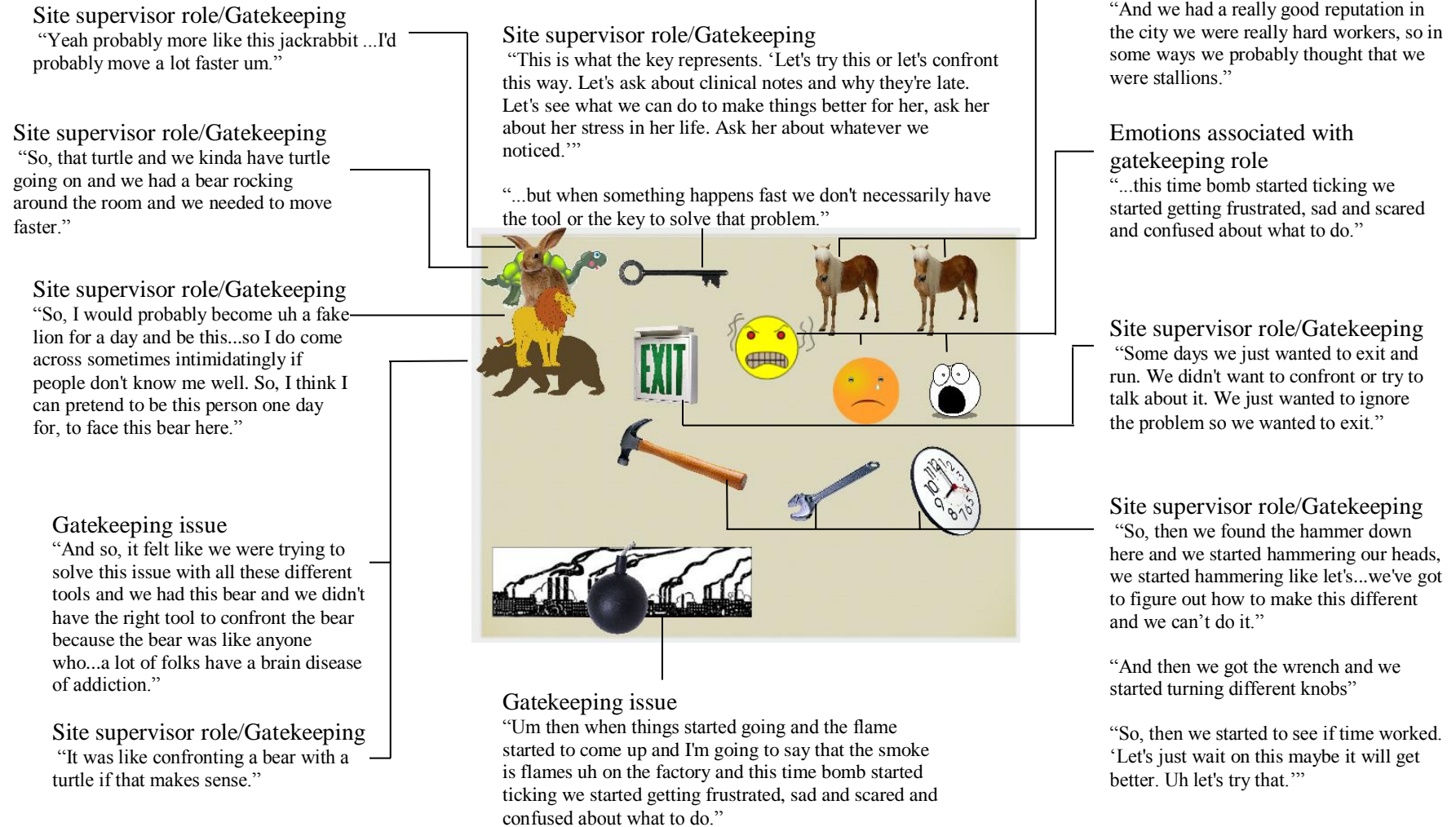
(Justin, Rd 1)

Justin felt proud knowing he was a part of CITs journey as they develop into amazing clinicians. Even if he had to intervene in challenging gatekeeping issues, the rewards he received when he encountered a successful CIT helped him stay engaged in the site supervisor role. He said, "And so, that [CIT success stories] just is a rewarding part of my career. So, I think despite having that one really challenging experience it's, uh overall, it's such a wonderful thing" (Justin, Rd 1). Justin asserted because he had worthwhile experiences with CITs, he did not allow challenges to prevent him taking on the role of site supervisor.

Justin's first interview focused on the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. He concentrated specifically on his duties as a Gatekeeper, which emerged as a subtheme. He also articulated the emotional toll challenging gatekeeping issues had on him. Justin spoke of his development as a site supervisor after a challenging gatekeeping concern. Finally, Sense of Pride emerged as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role as

Justin reported working with CITs was typically a rewarding experience for him. These emergent themes are highlighted in Justin's virtual sandtray, Figure 3.4 Overcoming a Hidden Hurdle in Supervision With Little Support and Lots of Pain: One Giant Lesson. In it he illustrated a gatekeeping issue where a CIT, represented by the smoking factory and bomb, was presenting a gatekeeping issue in which he and his colleague, depicted by the two horses, implemented several strategies to resolve the concern. The key, hammer, wrench, and clock represent strategies they attempted to use. He identified his emotional experience during this challenging time through the use of various faces.

Figure 3.4. Overcoming a Hidden Hurdle in Supervision
With Little Support and Lots of Pain: One Giant Lesson
(Justin, Rd 1)



Amy

Amy identified as a 55 year old white cisgender female. She had her doctorate, was a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and identified as a transgender specialist. She was the “executive director, the clinical director, the program director, and...daily operations manager, and each of their assistants” for a clinic that served the transgender population at the time of this study (Amy, Rd 2). Prior to this position, Amy was a clinician for ten years. She served as a site supervisor the last few years of her tenure as a practicing clinician and served as a site supervisor for the agency for which she was the director. She had been a site supervisor for the last seven years at the time of this inquiry. She reported working with approximately ninety supervisees from counseling, psychology, and social work programs. Amy had worked with CITs affiliated with multiple CACREP accredited programs. When asked to characterize the program-site alliances she had been involved in, she rated them a 4 on a Likert-scale (1 = Bad, 5 = Excellent).

Much like Justin, the results from Amy’s interview emerged from a specific experience she shared which involved her and a university she was affiliated with as a site supervisor. The superordinate themes that emerged were Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Sense of Pride developed as a subtheme for Site Supervisor Role. Amy’s experience of a particular program-site alliance was the context in which themes developed. She highlighted the relationship that existed between the site supervisor role and the program-site alliance.

The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, encompassed what Amy viewed as the duties and responsibilities of the position. Throughout her narrative, Amy spoke about her experience of what duties a site supervisor performed. She said,

But, you know, people get through the interview one way and then end up not being a good fit. This is a chaotic place...And it's not for everybody. And I tell people in the interview, "if...I'm not gonna meet you at the door with a list of things to do." (Amy, Rd 1)

She touched on the screening process site supervisors engaged in when choosing CITs for their site and her value of fostering autonomy with CITs. She also mentioned gatekeeping duties. She pointed out actions she took as a site supervisor if she had a gatekeeping concern.

But now I, you know, send an email, "I have these concerns. Can you send somebody out? We'll talk to the student."...It's a lot of time, a lot of discomfort, and I don't have time for it. My Midwest stuff doesn't like it. And, um, it's the right thing to do. It's just not my favorite. (Amy, Rd 1)

She explained removing CITs from her site when a gatekeeping issue developed was not a pleasant experience for her.

...and sometimes they [CIT] come in and talk with me and say what can I do differently. Um, it's better when they come in. Sometimes it's a hassle. It's like once I've made the decision, it's very hard for me, because I feel bad. I feel bad for the student, and it's embarrassing, and it's awkward. (Amy, Rd 1)

She recognized that being a gatekeeper was part of the site supervisor role, but it was not enjoyable for her.

However, Amy does find gratification in other aspects of the site supervisor role, as it was a source of pride for her. Sense of Pride emerged as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role. She discussed the joy she experienced as a site supervisor, the pride she felt about the field placement she had created, and she indicated feeling proud of her development as a site supervisor. Amy said, "I think I like it [being a site supervisor] more than seeing clients...You know, I was adequate as a therapist, but I wasn't brilliant. I just really wasn't. And I, I enjoyed it, but I love this" (Rd 1). She continued on saying,

And so I love the relationship. I love the enthusiasm. I think that I learn as much from the students as they learn from me. But I feel like I'm help-, I'm helping more people, because for every student I see, they go out and help 10 people...at a time. (Amy, Rd 1)

She emphasized the sense of pride she felt knowing that many people were being impacted by her role as site supervisor. Furthermore, Amy's sense of pride was demonstrated when she discussed her agency developing into a field placement site. She stated,

And so I started to ask for two interns. I got a first year and a second year. The second year I got, "Well, you know, I should expand my horizons." So I went to the, um, the public school, and they had an MSW program, and I got an intern from there. Since then, I've never had to solicit interns. They've all come to me. Somebody has come from...found our organization and said, "I wanna be an intern there." And I'd say, "Okay, go get the paperwork." And so, now, we've had interns from pretty much every program in the [city name] metro area. (Amy, Rd 1)

She exhibited pride when she spoke of not having to solicit interns anymore and that she supervised CITs from multiple programs. Pride was displayed when Amy stated, “But for the most part, I love what we [Amy’s agency] do. We serve a couple hundred people a week...And, um, I'm very pleased with the internship program that we have” (Rd 1). She also said, “I feel proud of...we have a placement that, um, is really competitive now” (Amy, Rd 1). Amy’s account of the pride she felt when in the site supervisor role also included the pride she experienced related to her development as a site supervisor. She reflected on her performance as a site supervisor,

Um, I still suffer from a little bit of the impostor syndrome. It's like "How in the world did I end up in this position? Don't they know that I'm dumb and I don't anything?"...So that is fading over the years, and I'm getting better. I used to be kind of reactive too. I was so nervous that I feel like students were afraid of me a little bit. And so I've really softened a lot. And [remembering] what was it like for me to be a student. And so, um, hopefully being more approachable. (Amy, Rd 1)

Amy admitted she had not fully moved through imposter syndrome, but she felt a sense of accomplishment that she had made improvements. When speaking of developing trusting relationships with CITs Amy stated, “And I felt like my own personal anxieties and concerns were an impediment to that [trust development]. So I think I've really accomplished that. I think I've noticed a difference in the last year, so...” (Rd 1). Having an understanding of her own process when in the site supervisor role helped Amy interact with CITs in a way she preferred and she discussed feeling proud of her growth as a site supervisor. As such, Sense of Pride developed as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role.

Another superordinate theme found in Amy's data was Program-Site Alliance. This theme was accentuated by a specific experience Amy illustrated in her virtual sandtray. She shared her experience of a conflict that had developed between an affiliated university and her when her agency's placement program was expanding. She started by saying, "We [her agency] had grown. We were, we were open noon to five, four days a week. So I was always here. And we expanded. And it just grew. It just exploded" (Amy, Rd 1). She went on to explain she went on vacation to visit her family. During that time the university had called the site asking to speak to her. In the following quote, when Amy said "student", she was referring to a CIT. She said, "And at one point, one day, they called the [Amy's agency's name] and said to the student, 'Um, let me speak to your supervisor.'" and the student responded with, "Oh, she's not here." (Amy, Rd 1). Amy believed the university knew her agency was open 84 hours a week with CITs on site without direct supervision. She stated, "Did they think I personally was on site 84 hours a week? It just was never discussed. For over a year, we had been at that level" (Amy, Rd 1). From Amy's perspective, it was not made clear that CITs could not be on site without a supervisor present. Due to the lack of supervision, the university started "pulling students unannounced [from the site] in the middle of the day while I was on vacation" (Amy, Rd 1). She explained, "...they sent all the students home and said they couldn't come back. I mean, one of them, somebody had driven an hour and a half for a session. They wouldn't let the student see the client" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy discussed a conversation she had with the field liaison associated with the affiliated university,

Well, there's a field liaison, and she, she was kind of the, the, the bad guy, the messenger between, you know, me and the school. And, um, she said, "Yeah, I

kind of..." And I said, "Pam, how did you not know that I, I was not here 84 hours a week? You knew we were open all those hours." "Yeah, I kind of had that noodling in my head. I just never thought to bring it up." (Amy, Rd 1)

In the end, Amy corrected the issue by scheduling supervisors for all the hours her agency had CITs on site, "And, um, so I created the supervisor onsite system. It, it was probably time for that to happen anyway" (Amy, Rd 1). She stated, "I put together this supervisor onsite system in a matter of about three days" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy felt a sense of urgency to resolve the issue because, ultimately, clients were not being served by her agency.

For Amy, the program-site alliance with her affiliated university was strained. Something was not working well in this alliance as evidenced by the lack of clarity regarding the university's expectations for field sites. Once the situation came to both parties' awareness and communication with the university commenced, Amy's view of this program-site alliance became more disconnected. She explained her experience after CITs were removed from her agency, "The way it happened was, was unkind to the students. It was cruel to our clients. And it was really unfair to me. They could've said, 'Hey, we heard that there's not a supervisor at all times.'" (Amy, Rd 1). She continued on,

...if they had come to me and said, "[Amy], we just found out, we did not realize, it didn't occur to us that, um, there's not as...that you're not onsite at all times, and we have concerns about that. We have rules about that," whatever. And I would say, "Oh gee, I didn't know that." (Amy, Rd 1)

Amy highlighted the way communication occurs within the program-site alliance was important.

AMY They could've said, "[Amy], we're concerned about this. Can we sit down and talk about this and come up with a plan?"

INTERVIEWER So the, sort of, the way they communicated...so th-there was communication, but it was the way that things were communicated was really not effective for you.

AMY It was...I, I think it was really unfair. (Amy, Rd 1)

She felt belittled in the conversations with the university, "...it was really punitive...And, um, degrading and condescending..." (Amy, Rd 1). These feelings were magnified when she had additional encounters with the university, "But then the remediation that summer afterwards, like, I had somehow...I was a horrible site and supervisor. And I just felt unsupported by them" (Amy, Rd 1). The manner in which interactions occurred for Amy in this particular program-site alliance left her feeling unsupported, patronized, and judged.

In the end, Amy's trust within this program-site alliance significantly decreased. Referring to the remediation that occurred over the summer, Amy said, "I'm like 'Now, I'm under review because I'm not good enough?' I mean, it just felt really...I don't know. It didn't feel good. And so I don't trust them" (Amy, Rd 1). She revealed she felt like she was always being watched or that at any moment she was going to get reprimanded. In reference to her sandtray she said, "And there's kind of a rat sitting among us at all times" (Amy, Rd 1). She reported she was constantly worried someone at her agency, be it staff member or CIT, was going to "rat" her out. Amy added she believed even the trust she

had developed with her CITs was violated. She explained the university did not communicate with CITs. She stated,

They [the university] wouldn't talk to the students about it. They just said, "You can go back now." So the students were left with this uneasy feeling that I had let them down. They didn't know when, you know, if they had a, a... They spent three or four days, you know, "Do I have an internship site anymore?" (Amy, Rd 1).

For Amy, trust with the university and her CITs was imperative to a working program-site alliance. The situation she spoke of violated her trust with the university and the trust CITs had in her as a site supervisor. She revealed it had been difficult to regain a trusting relationship within the program-site alliance. Amy said, "You know, I'm polite to them [the university], and I have a great relationship with the field liaison I've had over six years now. And...but I still feel like what's the next thing they're gonna judge me on?" (Rd 1). When she discussed her relationship with the CITs she shared, "Yeah, the students never recovered, and they never trusted me or the school. And the school told them that it was my fault. Th-th-the school really threw me under the bus" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy articulated this situation occurred a few years ago but she still felt traumatized about it. It had been a challenge for the program-site alliance to be repaired.

She also emphasized inconsistencies in program-site alliances, which added to her feeling criticized and lack of trust. She said, "What I know is there's a not a supervisor at all times at plenty of sites...I feel picked on and chosen" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy had an awareness that what she was reprimanded for happened at other field sites and, to her knowledge, they had not been penalized. Additionally, she spoke of inconsistencies across program-site alliances. She said, "Some universities offer more support than

others. Some schools are like I never hear from anyone. I get the student in. I get an email, 'Please do this.' and I never hear from them otherwise" (Amy, Rd 1). She continued on saying, "You know, I get an evaluation reminder a couple times a year. But, um, none of the other schools are more involved. So it, it depends on the school" (Amy, Rd 1). In Amy's experience, the communication that occurred in the program-site alliance was contingent on the university. She has also experienced differences in the amount of support offered by universities,

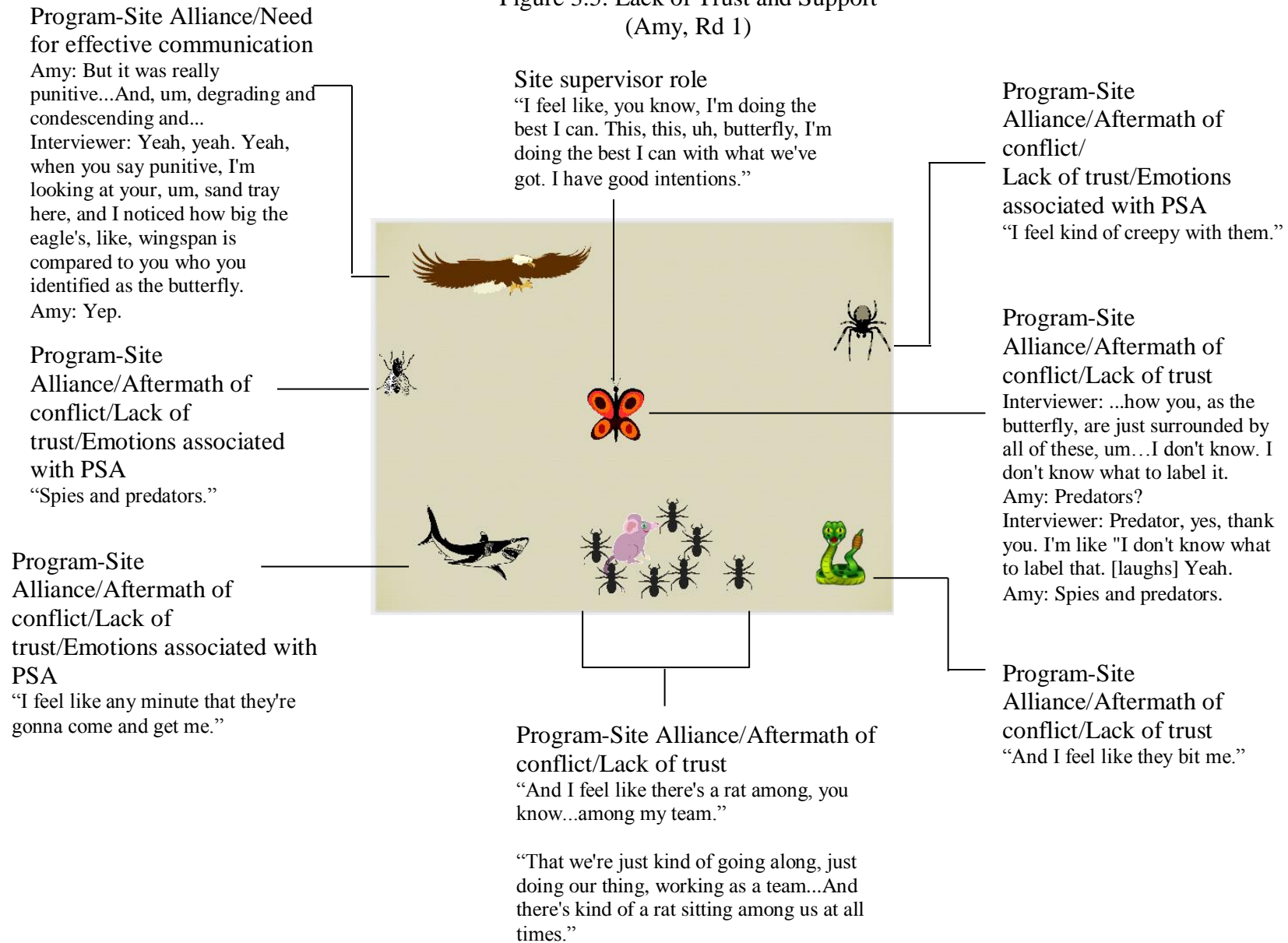
People go into helping professions with their own luggage, and sometimes they haven't unpacked it yet...So that's not a good fit for our place. Um, sometimes...and so when those things happen, some schools have been incredibly supportive... And, um, some really don't care... (Amy, Rd 1)

The schools she felt supported by were program-site alliances she valued and appreciated.

Amy's data revealed Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site alliance as superordinate themes. Amy's experience illustrated the impact ambiguous expectations, lack of communication, and lack of support can have on a site supervisor and the program-site alliance. Amy revealed that she battled imposter syndrome in regards to her performance as a site supervisor. This was magnified when she was in conflict with her affiliated university. She began doubting herself in the role of site supervisor when she experienced admonishment from the university. As a result, trust within the program-site alliance suffered and was not fully restored. Amy alluded to a relationship between site supervisor performance and strength of program-site alliance. Her experience and emergent themes are illustrated in her sandtray, Figure 3.5 Lack of Trust and Support. In

it she depicted herself as a butterfly surrounded by predators and images that represent lack of trust.

Figure 3.5. Lack of Trust and Support
(Amy, Rd 1)



Henry

Henry was a 39-year-old white male. He was a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and was the clinic director of an outpatient mental health facility. Henry was a clinician for fifteen years and served as a site supervisor for ten years. He had supervised 60-80 working professionals and CITs at the time of this study. Many of the CITs he supervised had been affiliate with CACREP accredited programs. When asked to characterize the program-site alliances he has been involved in, he rated one relationship as a 5 on a Likert-scale (1 = Bad, 5 = Excellent). He reported the relationships he had with other universities were “professional, but distant” (Henry, Initial Questionnaire).

The superordinate themes that emerged for Henry include Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Within Site Supervisor Role, subthemes including Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, and Sense of Pride developed. The following is an explanation of each theme’s essence according to Henry’s experience.

Site Supervisor Role. For Henry, the Site Supervisor Role encompassed gatekeeping duties and fostering CIT development. It became evident that Henry’s performance in the site supervisor role was a source of pride for him, too. In his experience, his approach to CIT training proved effective in producing quality clinicians. As a result, Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, and Sense of Pride emerged as subthemes for the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role.

Acting as a Gatekeeper was of utmost importance to Henry. He happily supervised CITs but his first priority was protecting the profession, his clients, and his agency. He said,

I don't need somebody who, who can't counsel, and doesn't know what to do with emotions. I think it's grossly unprofessional for a counselor to say, "Hey, let me reflect that emotion." And then when you get to that emotion, you're like, "What the hell do I do?" So, um, I'm huge with gatekeeping, too. So I do, I consider myself to be a little more aggressive or blunt. And some of that is because I need to keep out who is actually doing work and who is not. (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry's ultimate goal as a Gatekeeper was to guard clients and the profession from clinicians who could do harm in the future. He explained, "Uh, and, and, and some of that is selfish, because I am a clinical snob, and you're coming into my profession. I don't need somebody who, who can't counsel, and doesn't know what to do with emotions" (Henry, Rd 1). In order to guard against harmful CITs, Henry welcomed confrontation. He articulated, "I'm, um, I'm working towards protecting the clients and our reputation as an organization, and so whatever needs to happen" (Henry, Rd 1). The "whatever needs to happen" he spoke of included remediation and dismissal from his site. For example, he shared a situation where a CIT had a remediation plan then was inappropriate during a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) group they were facilitating on behalf of his agency. He recounted,

And I don't mean to be, sound, like, heartless when I say that. "But it's time for you to go. You get kicked out of a high school, and you're representing our organization, because you said something inappropriate during the GSA. It's time for you to go. And, and this is on top of you already on remediation. No, you need to go." (Henry, Rd 1)

If a CIT was not performing to Henry's standards of excellence, especially after they had opportunities to be successful, he did not hesitate to take action to protect the profession and clients.

A relationship existed between Henry's experience of the Gatekeeper Role and Facilitator of CIT Development, the second subtheme for Site Supervisor Role. He aimed to produce quality CITs as a way of protecting the profession from unethical clinicians. Henry's main focus when facilitating CIT Development was skill development. He said,

But my thing is, is that hours doesn't make someone good or bad. Can we focus on the skills? Can we focus on the testimonials that their clients are giving? Can we focus on how they're co-facilitating groups, and do they understand group dynamics? (Henry, Rd 1)

He recognized the importance of hours, but for him, skill development was the priority when supervising CITs. Part of skill development, from Henry's perspective, was the practical application of what the CIT was learning at the university. He stated, "Um, you know, we ask for open communication about what classes you're [the CIT] taking, and how we can implement some of that knowledge within the day" (Henry, Rd 1). He also shared,

So I'm constantly fighting the theoretical stuff that they're learning with, "Is that practical? What's your intention? And do you believe what you're hearing? What are you reading? How are you analyzing what you're reading?" (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry reported challenging CITs to engage in a higher level of thinking as they applied their new insights in the field. "And so when, when I have an intern, I'm trying to get the, the intern to realize how are they taking this conceptual, theoretical understanding of

what they've learned, and make it practical for the individuals who see them" (Henry, Rd 1). Henry perceived the practical application of CITs conceptual knowledge essential to fostering CIT development.

When facilitating CIT development, Henry emphasized the importance of attending to the CIT's individual needs. He said,

And so I'm starting basically from basic skills when that, the person comes. So we're putting you in more of a case management role, until we can develop the understanding of...foundations in psychotherapy. And then we're gonna get you your own client. Whereas somebody from, um, you know, like, somebody from [affiliated university] is totally different, too, because we're getting those students after they've already had a practicum. (Henry, Rd 1)

He recognized a CIT in practicum had different developmental needs than a CIT in their internship. Attending to CIT individual needs was so critical for Henry, he willingly recognized his limitations and took steps to foster his own development as a site supervisor. He explained as he referred to a face in his virtual sandtray that represented frustration,

But I do wanna make sure that that individual is getting their needs met. So when I that, like, if, if that face is to continue in this relationship, that's because the intern is saying, "Hey, I'm this orientation." And for me, I don't believe I have information, so I'm calling, like, [affiliated university], and being like, "Hey, this and this. Who is your DBT [Dialectical behavioral therapy] person? Let me talk to him." (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry reported he utilized his resources to grow as a site supervisor in order to meet CIT needs.

Moreover, Henry explained how facilitating CIT development included the role of gatekeeper, specifically when the CIT was struggling. He discussed his process when helping a CIT,

And so I have been one to tell people that I'm calling all their clients, and that I'm gonna have conversations with their supervisors, um, because I'm concerned regarding, you know, their lack of development, if they hit a plateau...They have some barrier that's impacting the way that's, uh, a detriment to the organi-, isn't representing the organization for which I work. (Henry, Rd 1)

Protecting the integrity of his organization became paramount when a CIT was not progressing, which was a duty of gatekeeper for Henry. "So even if they [a CIT] have the hours, I wouldn't pass them anyway. Whereas another individual may just get it, and understand how to do that, and work that magic inside the room" (Henry, Rd 1). Henry explained he would prevent a harmful CIT from entering the counseling profession if they were not growing. If CITs were not meeting expectations, Henry revealed his propensity for open dialog with the university regarding CIT development. In one situation, Henry narrated an interaction between an affiliated university and himself about a concerning CIT,

"Look, your boy [the CIT] just got, um..." I'd say it much more professionally, but this is how, I'm like, "Look, your student just got, uh, um, you know, es-, escorted out of a high school, because of an inappropriate statement they made while facilitating the group. You and I have already had conversations regarding

significant concerns regarding their clinical acumen, their ability to prepare for clients, and their presentation to clients...including falling asleep on two of your individuals and then, uh, and then in supervision on three occasions during group supervision.” (Henry, Rd 1)

He also stated,

And then have open communication where you’re [the CIT] not meeting the needs of my expectations. Or and subsequently with your school, I’m having a conversation with them [the university] about them [the CIT] not meeting expectations of our clinic’s clinical standard (Henry, Rd 1).

Henry acted quickly when there was a gatekeeping concern involving CIT development.

Throughout the first interview, Henry demonstrated a pride in his approach to the site supervisor role, hence, the subtheme Sense of Pride. For instance, Henry remained involved in many aspects of the counseling profession in addition to his role as site supervisor.

...they call me trenches, because I’m, I’ve been in the field for so long, and I’ve never gone too far away from a case load. I’m a Clinical Program Director. I’m in a doctoral program. I still keep a caseload of at least 20. (Henry, Rd 1)

He felt proud that he remained connected to the profession as a practicing clinician, program director, and pursuing his doctorate while serving as a site supervisor. Henry went on to illustrate his pride regarding the work his CITs engaged in,

I believe all of my interns are currently, um, have two proposals. And two [proposals] are for [national organization name] and [state organization name], um, [they] have also sent something into the [regional organization name], um, so

that they are kinda involved in the counseling education aspect of what it's like to have more aggressive counsel-, uh, supervision, which is my style. (Rd 1)

He was clearly proud of his supervisees' accomplishments and he exhibited pride when discussing his approach to supervision. It was clear Henry was passionate about his role as supervisor and the counseling profession. He stated, "I love it [supervision]. I love the student aspect of it" and in reference to his virtual sandtray he said, "These two things right here, the sun and the rainbow, are because I believe we're in the best profession ever, um, and love it" (Henry, Rd 1). Sense of Pride developed as a subtheme for Henry because he displayed pride when he spoke of his work with supervisees, CIT achievements, and his love for the counseling profession.

The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, emerged from Henry's data. This superordinate theme had subthemes of Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, and Sense of Pride. Henry viewed his site supervisor role including duties related to gatekeeping to protect the profession, his agency, and clientele. It was evident Henry valued fostering CIT development in order to produce effective clinicians. And Henry's approach to supervision and his gatekeeping duties was a source of pride for him.

Program-Site Alliance. Program-Site Alliance emerged as a second superordinate theme for Henry. His experience of the relationship between his site and affiliated universities varied. He said,

And it's, it really, the relationship between the school, um, and between, like, their representative from the academic institution and myself, varies significantly on the academic institution in the whole. And also seems to change between, like, license clinical social, uh, social work schools and internment programs, which is

interesting. Um, but, so I have gone anywhere from absolutely no communication, to pretty regular communication in the on-site visits, and working together and really collaborating, um, and really depending on, uh, having a wonderful collaboration and just development of, you know, the counselor in training.

(Henry, Rd 1)

Henry highlighted the inconsistency that existed across different program-site alliances as well as the collaborative nature he has experienced. In reference to his virtual sandtray he explained,

...it's more of a we are working together, right. So our clinic and academic education are similar, and there's no road to get there. It's basically just pop out, take the path over, and, you know, and it's a phone call... (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry emphasized communication was effortless when the university and field site were working together in a partnership. He discussed how helpful communication with universities was when attending to CIT developmental needs. When a CIT was placed at his site, Henry articulated what he said to the CIT,

"I know you have practicum, I will give you a client probably in your second week, compared to some...because I've already spoken with your site supervisor, I've already talked to your, uh, practicum instructor about what your strengths are, what your areas of concern are. You and I have already, already practiced how to give your statement of disclosure. And through our [the university and Henry] conversations, through the onboarding process, you know, the paperwork and all that, um, we figured out that we can trust you clinically in sessions." (Rd 1)

Because there was a history of communication with the university, Henry knew where to start with the CIT. Open communication also helped Henry share CIT achievements with the university. He explained,

[I'm] calling to let them [the university] know, "Hey, this intern is doing amazing. Um, we've gotten seven different testimonials from clients talking about how they're doing there. And I just wanted to let you know that she went above and beyond this time with her, uh, client who was recently sexually assaulted, who has recently has been continuously bullied. Had to be hospitalized, and she went to the hospital to check up on her on her way home. She did not have to do that. We did have a conversation about boundaries. I don't want you to be concerned about that. But she wanted to be there for the family, because of, uh, you know, they're, they're, um, uh, they are immigrants. And so, um, you know, to, to really be there, and support them in that time was extremely important. And, uh, the response that we got from that family is absolutely unbelievable. I need you to know that."

(Henry, Rd 1)

Henry stressed that when communication in the program-site alliance was unobstructed, he could attend to CIT needs and share their successes.

Accessibility due to communication was important to Henry, especially when gatekeeping issues arose. He shared,

Those [gatekeeping] conversations are so much easier, uh, when there's open lines of communication, compared to when it's kind of, you know, behind the scene, and not real-, really hands-on from, uh, the academic institution. I really struggle to have those conversations about when they're [CITs are] struggling.

Because it seems to come out of left field when I have documentation from supervision that says, “We've been working this, you know, for two months now and there's been no progress.” (Henry, Rd 1)

When gatekeeping issues were presented to Henry, he disclosed he felt supported in taking action due to open communication and effective program-site alliances.

Like, I don't have a problem with ruffling feathers, because we've had such good relationships in the most, with most schools, that our organization has a good repu-, reputation. So if, if it's, it's usually not a problem due to that longstanding relationship to say, “This student is not working. These are the reasons. This what we've done to re-, uh, to, as a remediation. And that, um, your student is still not, you know, coming up to it. (Henry, Rd 1)

When there was communication in the program-site alliance, Henry felt supported to implement a remediation plan for a struggling CIT.

If the program-site alliance lacked communication, Henry experiences concern. He shared,

But without communication, I'm always concerned that there's no questions. So I start to...my, my personal experience, uh, is to start to feel anxious about...or just concerned, not really anxious. But really concerned that, you know, making sure the client is getting their needs met, and, you know, and for them to understand. (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry became worried about the services his clients were receiving. He also indicated he felt isolated from the university when there was a lack of communication. “It's just really that, you know, they [affiliated university] feel a little, they feel totally detached” (Henry,

Rd 1). He said as he referred to his virtual sandtray, "...it feels like there's a huge disconnect. So that's why my clinic is way down here. They have barrier up there, because when I'm not getting any communication, it feels like I don't have a pass to get in" (Henry, Rd 1). If there was not open communication with him as a site supervisor or with a CIT, Henry said he felt fear. "And so, um, when, when it's, uh, a school that just kind of drops them, lets them be, and then leaves them to their own devices with limited involvement, this is how I feel [terrified]" (Henry, Rd 1). Henry reported the fear, anxiety, and concern occurred because his gatekeeping tendencies as a site supervisor were activated. He started worrying about the harm that might come to his clients, his agency, or the counseling profession.

Henry admitted communication with universities was challenging at times. For instance, he described a situation where a university contacted him because a CIT needed to practice family counseling. He reiterated,

And you know, and, and that's a conversation that I've had with [affiliated university] on several occasions. "Well, [Henry], they've [the CIT] been there for two months, they haven't seen any families." I'm like, "Your student can't even negotiate a 15 year old child. How am I gonna have them in, how am I gonna have them in with parents? You know, where they're, where they're negotiating basically three relationships. Mom and dad's relationship, counselor to dad relationship, and counselor to mom relationship. And so you have to understand that while you're academic focused, that just has...I could, could care less about the academic focus when you're talking about client's lives." (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry highlighted difficult communication when he spoke of the CIT who was removed from his site for being inappropriate during a GSA group. Henry recounted,

So, um, so then that conversation was difficult, because, uh, we put it out there, so I'm making this phone call saying that what he needs, you know, like, he's not welcome back, uh, until we have a conversation. And then, and then that's cool, and that internship's site coordinator never reached back out...to, to handle that situation. Like, we-, I have another one of her students, uh, but before I was willing to accept their students into our organization [again], I had, we, we had an agreement on, "This was unacceptable the way that you did not respond to, like, seven attempts to contact you regarding this student. And you didn't, and you never asked us to talk to another site, if that was the case. If he was being transferred, to provide information on how they were...what they needed to work on. And so we can't, we can't continue this relationship, because it's not a collaboration." (Rd 1)

Much like his approach to the site supervisor role, Henry did not hesitate to take action when communication was lacking or non-existent.

Henry mentioned various ways in which communication could take place. He discussed phone calls, emails, and CIT evaluations. He also acknowledged the usefulness of site visits conducted by the university. When a university took the time to visit his field placement site he said it illustrated interest in the site. He stated,

Whether it's the site visit before the interns get here, more than halfway through...just so they [know] what, uh, what the organization looks like, and they

have hands-on...it [a site visit] shows commitment to the organizations and what they're doing. (Henry, Rd 1)

He also pointed out that consistent communication was helpful in the program-site alliance. "And I would say that most schools, um, they are extremely receptive to our desire to have continuous communications throughout the academic year" (Henry, Rd 1). For Henry, effective communication in the program-site alliance was key to a successful relationship.

Two superordinate themes emerged in Henry's case, Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, and Sense of Pride emerged as subthemes within Site Supervisor Role. Henry focused on the importance of communication within the Program-Site Alliance. He viewed communication as the foundation of a collaborative partnership in the program-site alliance. He said,

...I think it's very interesting with collaboration, you know, they [universities] can call and have concerns, and [I can] talk to them about what the individuals are doing well, and what their continued areas of need are. Um, I think it, it is imperative to counselor development. (Henry, Rd 1)

His duties as a site supervisor regarding gatekeeping and CIT development were Henry's priority in the program-site alliance. Henry's experience and emergent themes are illustrated in his virtual sandtray, Figure 3.6 Transparent Collaboration. In it he depicted himself as a building in the lower left hand corner. He represented his experience of communicating with the university in the top center. He included his emotional experience as well.

Program-Site Alliance

"It's just really that, you know, they [the university] feel a little, they feel totally detached."

"...but I think that a lot of the time the academia world doesn't do a good job of, of teaching to the practical nature of our application...uh, our jobs, right. Because we, we, we...our job is to deal with the lives of other people. A lot of the stuff that's being taught inside of academia is theoretical and conceptual."

"They have barrier up there, because when I'm not getting any communication, it feels like I don't have a pass to get in."

Passion for profession

"...the sun and the rainbow, are because I believe we're in the best profession ever, um, and love it."

Site supervisor role

"Um, these gates, these gates right here. So this a maze in order to work with, figure out the key to working with, you know, your labyrinth right here, the key to working with each organization."

Site supervisor role

"...but I'm gonna put some people on there, because I am client focused. And I am student focused."

Program-Site Alliance

"It's just really that, you know, they [the university] feel a little, they feel totally detached."

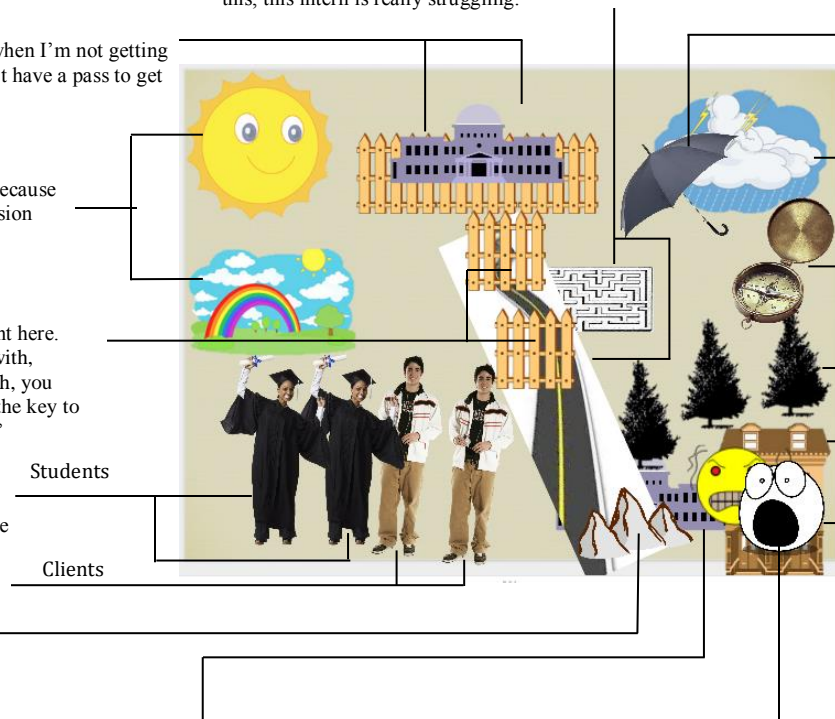
Program-Site Alliance

"You know, if they're, they're involved from the other side, I still probably have these faces and terrified, but that's just me because I'm client focused. But I would, I would argue that at that time, it's more of a we are working together, right. So our clinic and academic education are similar, and there's no road to get there. It's basically just pop out, take the path over, and, you know, and it's a phone call..."

Site supervisor role

"And so, and so it, it feels like this is the maze, because I wish you could go a different way than that. Because it feels like the road is maze, so that's why I was, those are connected. Um, and, and then, because it's hard at times to kinda negotiate, um, you know, like, you're focused on hours, but this, this intern is really struggling."

Figure 3.6. Transparent Collaboration
(Henry, Rd 1)



Gatekeeping

"...but really we're just trying to find the umbrella to make some of the storms okay."

Gatekeeping

"Um, and this represents the fact that people come to us all the time for, um, you know, some of the hardest things ever, uh, in their life, and they're trying to work through very distressing, oftentimes, traumatic, and other things like that. At least at my clinic we deal with a lot of trauma."

Site supervisor role

"...compass is because I believe that what we know, we're just kinda guiding and figuring out what the skill development is..."

"And then the trees are just because I like my stuff to be scenic."

Program-Site Alliance

"Like, we get so wrapped up in numbers [hours required for licensure], and this and that, and at times, um, it feels like there's a huge disconnect. So that's why my clinic is way down here."

Gatekeeping

"So when I get frustrated not only for what the student experience is and what we're teaching them, but my bigger fear is, what do we do with the lives that were actually interning? You know, these individuals [clients] are coming to my clinic because they're seeing us as professionals."

Program-Site Alliance

"...so, uh, it's frustrating, like, for me-, for me when I'm not having communication, maybe I'll try to articulate that. Um, and then, but really if you got underneath that, I'm just, like, uh, the white face with big mouth. I'm like, oh my god, no. And it's just terrifying."

Cases Within a Theme

This section demonstrates the case within a theme presentation form. The emergent themes after the first interview are discussed with data from all the participants included as support for the theme. This presentation form illustrates the hermeneutic circle of IPA in that parts of the data corpus are used to create the whole of the results. After round one analysis, several themes emerged that represented the experience of a site supervisor when they are in relationship with a counselor education program. All the themes were related to the roles and duties the site supervisor and the training program have within the program-site alliance. The emergent superordinate themes after one round of interviews were Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. See Table 3.1 for a list of all emergent themes from the first round of interviews. My virtual sandtray I created after round one interviews is included.

Table 3.1

Emergent Themes After Round One Data Analysis

Theme 1: Site Supervisor Role

- *Subthemes:* Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, Welcomed Responsibility

Theme 2: Program-Site Alliance

Site Supervisor Role

The first superordinate theme that emerged illustrated site supervisors' duties and responsibilities and labeled Site Supervisor Role. This theme included an explanation of what a site supervisor does and the meaning the participants made of this role. Within the superordinate theme of Site Supervisor Role, the sub-themes of gatekeeper, CIT development, sense of pride, and sense of responsibility emerged from the data.

Gatekeeper. A subtheme of Site Supervisor Role was Gatekeeper. Participants discussed attending to gatekeeping issues when in the role of site supervisor. The essence of gatekeeping for participants was centered on protecting the integrity of their agency, their clientele, and the counseling profession as a whole from CITs who could cause harm to future clients. All participants voiced the importance of fulfilling their role as a gatekeeper. Henry explained,

I don't need somebody who, who can't counsel, and doesn't know what to do with emotions. I think it's grossly unprofessional for a counselor to say, "Hey, let me reflect that emotion." And then when you get to that emotion, you're like, "What the hell do I do?" So, um, I'm huge with gatekeeping, too. So I do, I consider myself to be a little more aggressive or blunt. And some of that is because I need to keep out who is actually doing work and who is not. (Rd 1)

Participants reported their gatekeeping role began during the screening process when they were selecting CITs for field placement. Dallas discussed the weight of selecting CITs that were a good fit for the culture of his agency, which was echoed by other participants.

So, uh, just making sure that, you know, I'm comfortable with whoever's in the facility, that I know they're [CIT] gonna be safe, they're gonna follow policy and procedure, and that they're gonna be able to work with our team, you know, and that this is gonna be a learning experience for them as well as beneficial for...for our facility...while they're with us. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Several participants preferred to be involved in the screening process. Cari stated, “But I do the interviews, just because I, I want to make sure they're gonna fit” (Rd 1). Site supervisor involvement ensured their agency would be an appropriate placement for the CIT. Additionally, participants used their screening process as a preventative measure to mitigate future gatekeeping issues as suggested by Henry in his description of using “a two-prong interview” much like that used for “all of our, our, [the agency’s], uh, employees” when they interview for a paid position (Rd 1).

As part of the gatekeeper role, all participants provided examples of issues they had to face. Cari highlighted a situation in which a CIT may have been better suited for a different setting.

The previous year, we had a, a, a gal that interviewed really well and I felt like was gonna fit well. And then, it just didn't. It wasn't... She did not like middle school. She didn't like... But she kind of took a clinical approach with kids and that doesn't always work in a school setting. (Rd1)

Dallas spoke of an individual who seemed to compromise professionalism in his agency.

...it was already a tense situation that was already very difficult to work with. Um, and just to pour gasoline on the fire didn't help....And that person was really pitting an employee that was having a lot of problems with against me...pitting her, the employee, against me. (Rd 1)

Justin shared a situation where the health of a CIT and the services provided to clients were in jeopardy.

...one intern in particular had an active substance use disorder during the time at my facility that my coworker and I who are very experienced clinicians just struggled to confront. And we believe she was using cocaine and other stimulants whilst she was seeing clients. (Rd 1)

They also reported the actions they took to remedy the gatekeeping issue. Henry described his pragmatic approach to gatekeeping issues,

And I don't mean to be, sound, like, heartless when I say that. "But it's time for you to go. You get kicked out of a high school, and you're representing our organization because you said something inappropriate during the GSA [Gay-Straight Alliance group], it's time for you to go." (Rd 1)

Dallas explained what he said to the CIT who was negatively influencing the culture of his agency, "And then, uh, I sat down with the intern and I said, 'You know, I don't think this is working for either of us'" (Rd 1). All participants shared they had experience engaging in difficult conversations with CITs regarding remediation or termination of their position as a practicum or internship student at their agency. Challenging conversations were an element of the site supervisor role when confronted with gatekeeping issues.

Participants focused on their emotional experience as a result of facing gatekeeping issues. Cari acknowledged how emotionally taxing it was when turning CITs away during the screening process, "And just kind of that devastated blow that these people experienced. I mean, it was really hard for me to be the one to be like, 'I'm really sorry, but we picked somebody else'" (Cari, Rd 1). Justin disclosed his emotional

experience when coping with a CIT under the influence of an illegal substance while working with clients. He described feeling lost and wishing he could have done something to prevent the situation, “And I felt lost, I felt like I had probably maybe could have done something different to prevent this but I didn't understand exactly what that was” (Justin, Rd 1). He went on to say he “started getting frustrated, sad, and scared, and confused about what to do” when the issue remained unresolved (Justin, Rd 1). The participants noted the emotional challenges experienced when they were required to intervene during gatekeeping issues as part of the site supervisor role.

The subtheme of Gatekeeping, within the superordinate theme of Site Supervisor Role, was a duty inherent to the role of site supervisor. All participants shared experiences with gatekeeping issues. They indicated gatekeeping was critical for the protection of clients, their agencies, the counseling profession, and the CIT. While this was identified as a major duty for a site supervisor, gatekeeping situations were found to be emotionally draining and caused stress for the site supervisor. Managing gatekeeping issues was a central component of the site supervisor role according to participants.

Facilitator of CIT Development. After round one interviews, an additional subtheme of Site Supervisor Role was Facilitator of CIT Development. Another responsibility participants saw as vital to the site supervisor role was fostering CIT development. Participants viewed their agency as the setting where practical application of what CITs have been exposed to in their counselor education programs can take place. Dallas highlighted the integration of what the CIT learned in the classroom with their experience in the field setting. He said, “...on my end, I want to help that student be able

to take what they're learning in school and put that into practice in a supervised setting where they can learn and not do damage” (Dallas, Rd 1). Henry echoed Dallas’ goal of merging the theoretical knowledge from the classroom into the field setting. He explained,

A lot of the stuff that’s being taught inside of academia is theoretical and conceptual. And so when, when I have an intern, I’m trying to get the, the intern to realize how are they taking this conceptual, theoretical understanding of what they’ve learned, and make it practical for the individuals who see them. (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry approached this integration by asking challenging questions with the intention of fostering growth in his CITs. For example he stated, “So I’m constantly fighting the theoretical stuff that they’re learning with, ‘Is that practical? What’s your intention? And do you believe what you’re hearing? What are you reading? How are you analyzing what you’re reading?’” (Henry, Rd 1). When CITs move from the classroom to the field, “it’s a steep learning curve” (Dallas, Rd, 1) and providing a field setting where CITs could apply the knowledge they gained at the university was critical for participants.

Along with joining conceptual knowledge with practical application, participants emphasized the need for site supervisors to conceptualize individual CIT development. Identifying and understanding where a CIT was developmentally helped site supervisors meet specific CIT needs appropriately. Henry highlighted the difference in development between a CIT in their practicum and a CIT in their internship. He stated,

And so I'm starting basically from basic skills when that, the person [CIT in practicum] comes. So we're putting you in more of a case management role, until we can develop the understanding of...foundations in psychotherapy. And then we're gonna get you your own client. Whereas somebody from, um, you know, like, somebody from [affiliated university] is totally different, too, because we're getting those students after they've already had a practicum. (Henry, Rd 1)

Moreover, recognizing the difference in development was vital when a site supervisor was affiliated with multiple counselor education programs as Cari highlighted.

I just feel like [affiliated university A] program for the school specifically is a little more... It better prepares them [CITs]. When they come in as an intern, they've already done a practicum out in the school setting. Whereas at [affiliated university B], their practicum is spent in... Um. At [affiliated university B], they do... They work with college students who are there as part of a psychology class requirement...In fact, they're like... That's such a controlled environment that it doesn't really expose the practicum students to what a school is really like....So I kind of feel like they come in with a disadvantage, because they haven't been in that school environment. (Cari, Rd 1)

When site supervisors knew how each of their affiliated programs approach educating CITs, it helped them customize the field experience to the CITs needs.

Participants also discussed adapting the field setting for optimal CIT development in regards to the structure and purpose of supervision. Amy shared the story of how she founded her agency and initiated it as a field placement site for surrounding counselor

education programs. As her program grew, she recognized the need for additional onsite supervision. She reported, “And, um, so I created the supervisor onsite system. It, it was probably time for that to happen anyway” (Amy, Rd 1). To foster CIT development, Amy modified the structure of her field placement site such that CITs were receiving the required amount of supervision. Furthermore, Cari disclosed her intention with supervision and her approach to nurturing CIT development. She said,

I try to set up that relationship so that, at any point if they're feeling however they're feeling, that they can talk to me about it and...Um. So I do take that, uh, supervision, weekly supervision meeting very... I take it very seriously and just take what's working well, what's not working. Um. So I think I would find myself in between each and every one of these emotions [referring to the virtual sandtray]...just trying to push and prod them along. (Cari, Rd 1)

By making weekly supervision a priority in her field site, Cari fostered a relationship with CITs that attended to the cognitive and emotional development of CITs. The manner in which participants illustrated the structure of their field placement program exemplified their commitment to advancing CIT development.

Participants discussed the culmination of CIT development. For them, they aimed for CIT development to result in effective clinicians and successful job placement. Cari believed that involving CITs in a variety of experiences in her role as site supervisor helped them be noticed when seeking employment. She explained,

I don't shy away from involving them in anything, um, tha-, that, whatever it might be. If it's a difficult parent or a 504, and IEP meeting, I always just say, "Is

it okay if my intern's in here for learning purposes?" And we run with it, because I just... I think that gives them a leg up when they do interview and then when they're in the position, to know that, "Okay. I can get through this because I've had this experience and that's kinda how they did it. This worked; this didn't work." Um. I think it's all about exposure. (Cari, Rd 1)

She aspired to provide an experience where a CIT could enter a job interview and “have things to talk about in an interview. Like, ‘Have you been exposed to this?’ ‘Why, yes I have,’ you know” (Cari, Rd 1). Likewise, Dallas endeavored to cultivate effective clinicians and employable individuals by providing a well-rounded field placement setting for CITs. He stressed the importance of “modeling that professionalism for the students that we're working with, so they understand what, uh, professional conduct looks like” (Dallas, Rd 1). He went on to explain a situation where he was having a challenging conversation with a stakeholder of his agency and an intern was present. He said,

I had an intern who was sitting in on a meeting we had concerning when we were gonna place a particular juvenile that was recently committed to us. And, uh, while we were in a discussion on the phone, uh, one of the stakeholders on the phone, uh, was asking what I felt to be some inappropriate questions and assumed some things that really go against our ethics...Not just here in the department, but for professional ethics. And I had to confront that in the meeting. And the intern observed that, uh, and gets to see that, you know, we have to advocate strongly, sometimes, and draw a line for what's acceptable and what's not, you know? And it's not just practicing our ethics with our clients, but also representing those, uh,

what decisions were being made...Uh, and not necessarily being abrasive about it, but trying to be a partner and, uh, with this personal stakeholder, or this particular stakeholder, I had to be pretty strong with him. But, uh, but being able to see how...how difficult decisions get made when there's disagreement. (Dallas, Rd 1)

By providing experiences that represent a realistic view of what occurred in the counseling profession, participants hoped CITs achieved their greatest potential to become competitive individuals in the job market.

The subtheme Facilitator of CIT Development, within the superordinate theme of Site Supervisor Role, was comprised of multiple elements. Participants acknowledged the importance of integrating theoretical and practical learning and adjusting their field setting to meet CIT developmental needs. Participants also disclosed their ultimate goal of setting CITs up for success in regards to job placement. Providing a setting conducive to CIT development and offering experiences that would enhance a CIT's knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy when in the counselor role was paramount for participants.

Sense of Pride. Throughout the first round of interviews, I noticed participants spoke of their performance as clinicians and site supervisors with a sense of pride. Thus, Sense of Pride emerged as a subtheme within the superordinate theme of Site Supervisor Role. For example, during the construction of his virtual sandtray, Justin stated,

So, we [Justin and another colleague] were the two hired clinicians for the city and the county of [location]'s internal employee assistance program. And we had a really good reputation in the city. We were really hard workers, so in some ways we probably thought that we were stallions. (Rd 1)

The language he used and the image he chose to represent his experience of being a clinician illustrated the pride he feels about his work at his agency. He presented as proud of his accomplishments and the reputation his agency developed and maintained.

Participants' sense of pride was communicated when they discussed specific experiences when in the site supervisor role. Dallas' sense of pride was exemplified in his assertion that he has had "very, very few negative experiences" as a site supervisor (Rd 1). Amy demonstrated pride as she explained how her field placement program was established. She said,

What's happened is I, I went to the school that I got my PhD at, because I knew they had a master's program. So I kind of...that was homish...And so I started to ask for two interns. I got a first year and a second year. The second year I got, "Well, you know, I should expand my horizons." So I went to the, um, the public school, and they had an MSW program, and I got an intern from there. Since then, I've never had to solicit interns. They've all come to me. Somebody has come from...found our organization and said, "I wanna be an intern there." And I'd say, "Okay, go get the paperwork." And so, now, we've had interns from pretty much every program in the [city name] metro area. (Amy, Rd 1)

She went on to say "I feel proud of...we have a placement that, um, is really competitive now" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy also felt pride due to her development as a site supervisor when she said, "I want people to feel like they can trust me...And I felt like my own personal anxieties and concerns were an impediment to that. So I think I've really accomplished that. I think I've noticed a difference in the last year, so..." (Rd 1).

For other participants, a sense of pride materialized in their discussion of CITs. Henry was proud that CIT's he supervised were presenting at state-level and national conferences about his approach to supervision. He stated,

I believe all of my interns are currently, um, have two proposals. And two [proposals] are for [national organization name] and [state organization name], um, [they] have also sent something into the [regional organization name], um, so that they are kinda involved in the counseling education aspect of what it's like to have more aggressive counsel-, uh, supervision, which is my style. (Henry, Rd 1)

While Cari's sense of pride became apparent when she was talking about the lasting relationships she maintained after a CIT's field experience was complete. She said,

I have developed an amazing friendship with an intern I had last year. She got hired on in the district this year. And so it's just making connections with people that are passionate about the same things you are. And you can make lifelong friends that way. (Cari, Rd 1)

Sense of Pride developed as a subtheme of Site Supervisor Role. Participants demonstrated pride in their work as a clinician while others illustrated pride in their role as site supervisor when working with CITs or developing an effective field placement setting. For all participants, pride in their work as professionals was evident in the data.

Welcomed Responsibility. An additional subtheme that emerged within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, was Welcomed Responsibility. The essence of this theme was a willingness to supervise a CIT, perform their duties as site supervisor to the best of their abilities, and follow through with their commitments to CITs despite

their professional workload. For example, Cari explained her perspective regarding the welcomed obligation of supervising a CIT,

But I take on that, um, it's a choice to supervise, and so I need to be prepared for that responsibility and, um, be willing to sort of address concerns, and confront, and things like that. Um. Because it really... Uh. It's an option. I don't have to do this, so if I'm gonna choose to do something I should be fully invested in it. (Rd 1)

Others echoed Cari's perspective in that once a participant chose to be a site supervisor, one was obligated to give the commitment one's full attention.

The entity in which participants felt most responsible to differed across participants when discussing their performance as a site supervisor. Participants felt obligated to be effective site supervisors for the benefit of their agency, their clientele, the development of the CIT, or the profession as a whole. One participant even felt a sense of responsibility to himself to perform to their personal standards. For participants, Welcomed Responsibility was highlighted when discussing gatekeeping issues. For instance, Dallas discussed a situation where a CIT was negatively impacting the professional culture of his agency by causing a conflict between him and another clinician. As the director of his agency, he feared the ramifications of having strife within his organization. He explained,

But it really created...and it was more than just my relationship with that other clinician. It was with the team that works around the two of us, as well as everybody in this facility...And we're talking probably 100 employees being impacted in one way or another. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Dallas felt obligated to his agency and colleagues to remedy the situation with the CIT in an effort to maintain a professional culture. Justin spoke of similar responsibilities when he was supervising a CIT struggling with addiction. “She was seeing clients in error, I believe, and so the reputation of our agency was at risk” (Justin, Rd 1). Justin felt a sense of responsibility to maintain the reputation of his agency during a challenging gatekeeping situation. Henry reiterated this sense of obligation to his agency,

And so I have been one to tell people that I’m calling all their clients, and that I’m gonna have conversations with their supervisors, um, because I’m concerned regarding, you know, their lack of development, if they hit a plateau, and if they’re struggling with, uh, removing...you know, whatever. They have some barrier that’s impacting the way that’s, uh, detriment to the organi-, isn’t representing the organization for which I work. (Henry, Rd 1)

For participants, maintaining the integrity of their organization was critical. They saw it as an obligation to uphold the agency’s reputation and professional culture if CITs put them at risk.

Participants believed they were obligated to protect their clientele when a gatekeeping issue occurred. Amy discussed a situation where a CIT found a new field placement setting and did not communicate that to Amy. “She [the CIT] just up and left. I was like ‘What am I supposed to do with her clients?’” (Amy, Rd 1). Justin spoke of a similar concern when he realized his CIT was struggling with addiction. “Yeah, I feel like um one of the things that I was most concerned about was her [the CIT] A, but B, her

clients” (Justin, Rd 1). Both Amy and Justin reported their first priority during gatekeeping issues was an obligation to provide services to clients.

Participants acknowledged the sense of obligation they felt toward themselves to fulfill the role of site supervisor according to their standards. Henry emphasized his obligation to foster CIT development as well as meet his personal expectations as a site supervisor.

But I do wanna make sure that that individual is getting their needs met. So when I that, like, if, if that face is to continue in this relationship, that’s because the intern is saying, “Hey, I’m this orientation.” And for me, I don’t believe I have information, so I’m calling, like, [affiliated university], and being like, “Hey, this and this. Who is your DBT person? Let me talk to him.” Um, you know, or, “Let me make sure that I’m doing what I need to do in order to take care of them.”

(Henry, Rd 1)

During Justin’s gatekeeping situation where a CIT was struggling with addiction, he exemplified how he saw himself as responsible for problem solving difficult situations. “I felt like I had probably maybe could have done something different to prevent this [the gatekeeping issue] but I didn’t understand exactly what that was” (Justin, Rd 1).

Participants had an ideal standard for effective site supervision and they felt obligated to meet that standard for the betterment of the CIT.

Despite participants’ sense of obligation being highlighted in the context of troublesome gatekeeping issues, they stated they remained interested in taking on the responsibility of supervising CITs. Others agreed with Cari when she said, “I still feel

like it's the right thing to do, um, just as part of my ed-, my giving back to an amazing profession” (Rd 1). Being a site supervisor was a way to give back to the profession or people they encountered during their own field placement for participants. They also viewed supervision as a source of enjoyment, hence, the subtheme, Welcomed Responsibility. No matter the magnitude of their negative experiences, participants expressed continued motivation to supervise CITs. Justin expressed,

I mean I think one of the coolest things about my experience in that is that all the clinicians that I have supervised over the years at a site are still in contact with me and I get to hear about their amazing careers, their amazing private practices...And so, that just is a rewarding part of my career. So, I think despite having that one really challenging experience it's, uh overall, it's such a wonderful thing. (Rd 1)

Amy saw her role as site supervisor having a greater impact than her role as clinician. She welcomed the obligation of supervising CITs because she could help more people. She stated,

I think I like it more than seeing clients...You know, I was adequate as a therapist, but I wasn't brilliant. I just really wasn't. And I, I enjoyed it, but I love this...I think that I learn as much from the students as they learn from me. But I feel like I'm help-, uh, I'm helping more people, because for every student I see, they go out and help 10 people...at a time. (Rd 1)

Henry found his motivation to take on the obligation of supervising CITs because of his love for the counseling profession. “The sun and the rainbow [referring to his virtual

sandtray], are because I believe we're in the best profession ever, um, and love it" (Henry, Rd 1). The passion and gratification participants felt when in the role of site supervisor became evident during the data collection phase.

The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, transpired during the first round of interviews. Site Supervisor Role encompassed several subthemes including Gatekeeping, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. Participants also articulated what motivates them to continually take on this role in times of hardship. What participants saw as their duties and responsibilities when in the site supervisor role were identified.

Program-Site Alliance

The second superordinate theme to emerge from the data in round one interviews was Program-Site Alliance. It encompassed participants' experience of the university's role and the dynamics that occurred in the relationship created when the field site and university had a CIT in common. Participants confirmed the existence of a program-site alliance. Henry discussed his comfort with confrontation because of a relationship with his affiliated university. He said, "Like, I don't have a problem with ruffling feathers, because we've [Henry's agency] had such good relationships in the most, with most schools, that our organization has a good repu-, reputation" (Henry, Rd 1). Justin also alluded to being in relationship with affiliated universities. He stated,

I have most recently especially in the [affiliated university name] I did have very strong relationships with the [university] supervisors. And so, I was able to be, feel a little bit more comfortable if there was an issue coming up" (Justin, Rd 1).

When site supervisors were supervising a CIT, they formed an alliance to fulfill their duties to the CIT. This relationship was identified as the program-site alliance for the purposes of this study.

Like the theme Site Supervisor Role, participants outlined their perception of the duties their affiliated university were responsible for when engaged in the program-site alliance. Participants saw the university's role having the most influence before and after the CIT was placed at their site. Cari stated,

I don't really see them [affiliated university] much, so maybe they're just at the end...When the prize, the coveted diploma comes out...I think they do their work maybe before I even come into the picture...Like they've done the preparation, and the training, and, um, you know, helped people kind of prepare themselves for that. (Cari, Rd 1)

Participants also recognized the screening process used to prevent gatekeeping issues began prior to CITs being placed at the site. Dallas saw the university as "kind of a shield to us because there's already been some vetting of that student coming in" to his agency (Rd 1). Participants acknowledged the university's role in the gatekeeping process outside the fieldwork.

In the event gatekeeping concerns did arise once the CIT was placed at their site, participants appreciated the support universities provided throughout the process. Amy had a CIT who wanted to discuss their evaluation with her "and the school was very kind and supportive. Um, the student said they wanna come in and talk to me" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy conceded that her site was not a fitting placement for all CITs and she was grateful

some of her affiliated universities accepted that. She stated, “People go into helping professions with their own luggage, and sometimes they haven't unpacked it yet...So that's not a good fit for our place. Um, sometimes...and so when those things happen, some schools have been incredibly supportive” (Amy, Rd 1). Dallas also discussed a situation when a CIT was not a good fit for his agency. He said, “when I needed the help, the school was able to understand” (Dallas, Rd 1). Cari reiterated her view of the university role as one of support, “I would think they'd kind of be like the, maybe the, the rainbow above [referring to virtual sandtray], like they're there to swoop in if there's an emergency...” (Rd 1). Dallas’ perspective included attending to CIT needs in addition to supporting site supervisors within the university’s role.

I think being able to give the support when we need it and, uh, you know, knowing that the schools seeing the evaluations on the student, knowing where the student's at...the school being able to talk to me if there's any issues in that evaluation process. Making sure the students are getting what they're supposed to get from their site... (Dallas, Rd 1)

Participants saw the university role as one of support in times of need. Support included quality assurance that the field site met CIT needs.

Participants saw the university’s role as one of academically preparing CITs for fieldwork. Universities who provided assistance to the site supervisor during gatekeeping concerns and offered to help ensure CIT needs could be met by the site was valued by participants. Overall, participants saw the university as a supportive resource.

Participants’ experience of the university’s role in the program-site alliance highlighted

differences between the tasks for which site supervisors are responsible and the tasks universities are responsible.

While participants recognized site supervisors and universities have separate duties and responsibilities, they acknowledged the two parties have mutual goals when CITs were involved. Dallas explained,

So, um, academically, we-we really have no idea what's going on at the school...Um, and so...and then honestly, the school, I doubt knows...everything I do with that...sorry, not juvenile, with that student is learning, uh, learning and is experiencing completely on a day-to-day basis. There's gonna be some stuff that neither one of us fully know what's going on in the other...But, uh, so we have some different worlds that we live in. So in that essence, we are separate...Um, but we have a common interest in that student. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Cari recognized universities “only have seen these guys operate within a controlled environment as well...Either program [Cari was affiliated with two universities] it would be just kind of what the student chooses to share. They don't see the day-to-day like I would” and she feels like “they entrust me with helping that student develop”

(Cari, Rd 1). Participants viewed universities and sites as independent from one another yet discussed the shared goal of helping CITs develop into successful clinicians. Site supervisors reported managing several responsibilities in their role as site supervisor, as outlined above in the theme Site Supervisor Role, and the duty of CIT development was shared with universities in the program-site alliance.

Experiences of the program-site alliance and the meaning participants made of the relationship varied. Some reported positive experiences in the program-site alliance; others discussed program-site alliances with many opportunities for growth. For those that demonstrated a positive outlook on the program-site alliance, they mentioned the mutual benefits of supervising CITs. Cari explained how supervising a CIT helped her as a clinician, the university, and her agency. She said,

I just think it's kind of a give-and-take. Like they [affiliated university] give me this great person that's gonna work with me and I'm gonna take that responsibility and, and do everything I can to make sure they're [CIT] ready to go out on their own when they're done. (Cari, RD 1)

She continued on to state specific scenarios that demonstrated the benefit of supervising CITs,

And they, they [CIT] provide a great service to me in that I'm able to get so much more done because I have the support of interns. I mean, they're running counseling groups like crazy...And you know, just having all these different options for students [Cari's clientele] available because there are more bodies in our counseling office than we're, you know, given, um, funding to have. (Cari, Rd 1)

Dallas agreed with Cari's view of the program-site alliance offering mutual benefits to all parties. He explained,

...the student wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the school...and we wouldn't benefit from them being here and being able to invest in their lives...in their career...And

then, the student wouldn't be prepared to enter the field without a site to adequately prepare them as well. So yeah, I do see that as being partners and equal...equal folks on our end as well as the school. (Dallas, Rd 1)

He echoed Cari's ideas about how supervising CITs was beneficial to furthering his agency's goals and helping the clinicians of his organization. He articulated,

But on this end also, we want it to be mutually beneficial to our facility, that I can take some of the burden off some of my clinicians' workload...by having that intern work with some of our juveniles that don't need quite a high level of intensity, but will allow that clinician to be able to focus on the more high-intensity juveniles. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Cari and Dallas expressed the mutualism that occurred when they are engaged in the program-site alliance.

Participants voiced their experience of the program-site alliance varied across universities. Participants noticed inconsistencies in the program-site alliance and inconsistencies in communication. To illustrate, when Justin created a virtual sandtray representing a gatekeeping situation where a CIT was struggling with addiction, he did not mention the involvement of the university.

INTERVIEWER But the university is just missing from your picture uh that's just striking me right now.

JUSTIN Yeah and I think that gives you the difference of uh university representatives over the years and it just depended on personality whether they were really somebody that would take action or not. I mean some of them didn't

have a clue what's going on, others were really challenging to the supervisee. So, it really depended on the um, on the personality of the individual but I would also say that if there was a trend I would say that they were probably more passive than active. And that might be why there's not a representation of the university on here somewhere. (Justin, Rd 1)

He highlighted the strength of the program-site alliance varied across universities and it depended on the level of activity of the university's field site coordinator. Dallas emphasized similar experiences. He stated, "The relationship between the school, um, and between, like, their representative from the academic institution and myself, varies significantly on the academic institution in the whole" (Dallas, Rd 1). These statements corresponded to Amy's experience of the program-site alliance. She said,

It-it depends. Some schools are like I never hear from anyone. I get the student in. I get an email, "Please do this," and I never hear from them otherwise...You know, I get an evaluation reminder a couple times a year. But, um, none of the other schools are more involved. So it, it depends on the school. (Amy, Rd 1)

From participants' perspective, the way the program-site alliance was managed differed across universities. It even shifted over time as management of the program-site alliance by the university evolved depending on how the university field placement coordinator at the time engaged with the relationship.

Other participants shared experiences that evidence inconsistencies in communication within the program-site alliance. Henry spoke of his experience,

I have gone anywhere from absolutely no communication, to pretty regular communication in the in-site visits, and working together and really collaborating, um, and really depending on, uh, having a wonderful collaboration and just development of, you know, the counselor in training. (Henry, Rd 1)

The differences in communication impacted participants meaning-making of the program-site alliance. One participant experienced inconsistency in the communication of standards of practice for field placement sites. Amy spoke of a situation where her field placement program had grown such that she needed to increase the amount of hours her agency provided on-site supervision. It was not clear to her this was needed until the university realized there were times her agency did not have on-site supervision available. She reported knowing of a lack of site supervision at other field sites. She stated, “And then knowing that other sites don't have the same enforcement of that rule...That feels personal” (Amy, Rd 1). For Amy, the inconsistency in communication led to her feeling attacked and singled out. She said the interaction increased her self-doubt and had her thinking, ““Now, I'm under review because I'm not good enough?”” (Amy, Rd 1). She went on to say, “I mean, it just felt really...I don't know. It didn't feel good. And so I don't trust them [affiliated university]” (Amy, Rd 1). Amy's trust was compromised because of this miscommunication and it impacted her experience of the program-site alliance.

Another participant discussed the value of having consistent communication. Henry explains how open communication helped when he had to have conversations related to gatekeeping,

You know, do I, should I know of any concerns, should I need to give you [a CIT] feedback of what's going well, and, um, some areas that we will be working on. Those conversations are so much easier, uh, when there's open lines of communication, compared to when it's kind of, you know, behind the scene, and not real-, really hands-on from, uh, the academic institution, I really struggle to have those conversations about when they're [CIT] struggling. (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry continued to explain the value of communication within the program-site alliance in the context of collaboration,

You know, because, I think, I think it's very interesting with collaboration, you know, they can call and have concerns, and be able to talk to them about what the individuals are doing well, and what their continued areas of need are. Um, I think it, it is imperative to counselor development. (Henry, Rd 1)

Henry saw collaboration and communication with the university vital to CIT development and helpful when gatekeeping issues present themselves. Without communication, Henry expressed, "...when I'm not getting any communication, it feels like I don't have a pass to get" into the institution (Rd 1). He reported it seems like there were barriers present that he could not pass through. In his virtual sandtray, Henry represented his experience with the lack of communication with images that depicted feelings of frustration (a yellow face) and fear (a white face). He said when there was communication, "the yellow face definitely goes away during that time," meaning he experiences less frustration when there was communication in the program-site alliance (Rd 1).

Justin's experience of lack of communication resembled Henry's experience. The university did not have a presence in his virtual sandtray. In his experience, the trend had been "more passive than active" as far as the university's involvement in the program-site alliance (Justin, Rd 1). He acknowledged, "I think I felt a bit like on an island" when he was supervising a CIT struggling with addiction (Rd 1). During the gatekeeping concern, Justin reported minimal communication with the university even when the CIT was removed from his site. Justin admitted, "we didn't hear much from the university and uh we were all left kind of with our hands up in the air with her [the CIT's] caseload, right, and her gone and not a lot of answers" (Rd 1). He believed his agency was left with "a mess to clean up, right, because we then had her 20-client caseload that was now needing to be redistributed" (Justin, Rd 1). He said, "I felt maybe even frustration" with the university's lack of communication (Justin, Rd 1). Communication in the program-site alliance is vital, especially when gatekeeping issues arise.

The superordinate theme of Program-Site Alliance encompassed a multitude of characteristics and the relationships between these characteristics were dynamic. The university's role included academic preparation, gatekeeping, and a supportive resource for field site. Participants discussed the variability in the program-site alliance across universities. The effectiveness of the program-site alliance changed from school to school. Because of this, communication style and frequency was inconsistent and levels of support varied from school to school.

Summary

After the first round of interviews, two superordinate themes emerged. The first superordinate theme was Site Supervisor Role, which embodied participants' experiences of serving as a site supervisor. Site Supervisor Role highlighted participants' perceptions of their duties and the emotions they experienced as site supervisors. Subthemes for Site Supervisor Role were Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. The second superordinate theme was Program-Site Alliance. This theme focused on the relationship between field placement sites and universities. Participants' perceptions of what the university's role was in the program-site alliance were emphasized. The Program-Site Alliance superordinate theme also focused on the support and communication site supervisors preferred when gatekeeping issues arise. See Figure 3.7. Coming Together to Accomplish a Common Goal for a visual representation of the results after round one interviews. This visual representation is my virtual sandtray depicting my interpretation of the first round results. The lion represents the site supervisor proud of their accomplishments and the bear represents the university. The puppies surrounded by the gates depict the CIT's the lion and bear have to care for and sometimes a puppy turns out to be a monster that causes gatekeeping issues. The sky symbolizes the connection between the site and the university with different weather patterns to represent the various relationships that exist between sites and universities.

Figure 3.7. Coming Together to Accomplish a Common Goal
(Tamara, Rd 1)

Weather patterns

The different weather patterns represent the differences the participants experience when in relationship with universities. Some relationships are positive and Participants have had challenging experiences with universities.

Lion on the mountain

The lion on the mountain represents the site supervisor and their agency. The lion wearing a crown symbolizes the pride discussed by participants regarding their performance as a clinician and site supervisors. The mountain represents the agency they have worked hard to create.

Fence

The fence represents the protection and support given to CITs as they develop. It is not always a perfectly constructed fence (hence broken fence). CITs are introduced to the profession according to their developmental stage.

Sky

The sky connects the bear and the lion. There is a connection between the university and the field site when they share a CIT.

Bear in the forest

The bear represents the university. The bear enjoys the forest but the trees can hinder their view like the university. The university enjoys their environment as it suits its purpose but sometimes the university cannot see through the trees of the forest. It can be difficult to see the site supervisor's experience.

Broken fence

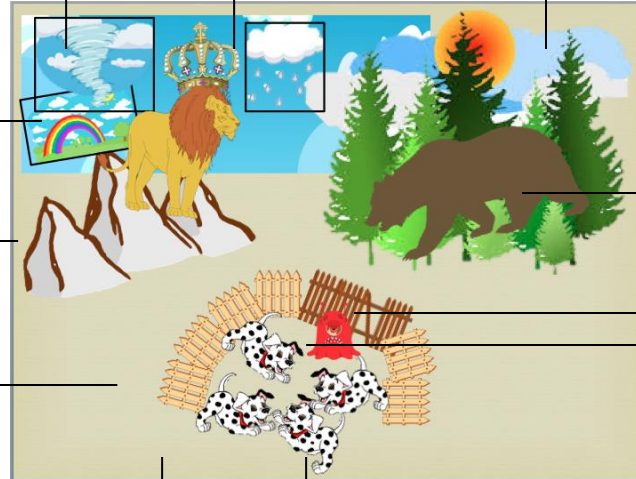
The broken fence represents gatekeeping issues. Despite efforts to prevent and avoid gatekeeping situations, they can still occur. Effort to protect CITs, clients, agencies, and the profession can be unsuccessful sometimes.

Little monster

The little monster represents concerning CITs. Despite intentional screening processes, it is possible for CITs who create gatekeeping concerns still enter the field site.

Puppies

The puppies represent CITs who come to the field sites as novices with much room for growth and development.



CHAPTER IV: FINAL RESULTS

As with Chapter Three, this chapter discusses the final results in two different manners. The first is the idiographic form, themes within a case, where themes for each participant are explained separately. The second reflects the hermeneutic circle and data is presented as cases within a theme, where specific themes are discussed with data from each participant to support it. Data from round one produced two superordinate themes, Site Supervisor Role and Program-Site Alliance. Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility emerged as subthemes within Site Supervisor Role. It was evident that Program-Site Alliance was emerging as a theme but further exploration was needed. For this reason, the program-site alliance was the focus of the second round of interviews. Second round interview questions included, a) What do you see as the role of the university when you have a CIT placed in your agency? and b) What happens between you (or your agency) and the university when you are supervising a CIT? My intention with these questions was to collect additional data on the university's role in the program-site alliance. I also hoped to gain more insight into the dynamics that occur between field placement sites and universities in the program-site alliance from the participants' perspective.

Themes Within Specific Cases

Following are the results for each participant after round two explaining the evolution of themes from round one to round two. Included are each participant's virtual sandtray created in the second interview as well as their virtual sandtray from round one as a reference. Lastly, only four of the five original participants completed the second

interview. After many attempts to contact Henry, I had to continue the process without him. He later contacted me explaining he had an unforeseen circumstance arise that prevented him from continuing his participating in the study.

Cari

In the first interview, Site Supervisor Role was an emergent superordinate theme for Cari with Gatekeeper, Facilitating CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility as subthemes. She also discussed her favorable experience of the program-site alliance. See Figure 3.1 for a reference of Cari's data from the first interview. The subthemes Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development were confirmed in the second interview. Furthermore, pairing the data from round one with the data from round two yielded Independent Mutualism as a theme. Her descriptions added to the data in such a way that Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Empathy for the University, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances emerged as themes that explained the program-site alliance.

Subthemes of Site Supervisor Role were verified in the second interview. Cari discussed her role as Gatekeeper. She stated, "Because it's my job, they're [CITs] acting on my license. So I want to make sure they're doing the right thing and acting ethically and appropriately, so those types of things I know I would report" (Cari, Rd 2). Cari's intention as a gatekeeper was to prevent harm to clients and maintain the integrity of the counseling profession and her site. Cari again highlighted the subtheme Facilitator of CIT Development. She said,

I would just like to know, like if these are things that they don't talk about then I know, "Oh, that's really an area I want to focus on because if they're not learning

about it in class, then maybe there's some things I can shed light on in, in practical experience, so... (Cari, Rd 2)

Providing a worthwhile practical experience that expanded the CIT's academic knowledge was a priority for Cari as a site supervisor. Welcomed Responsibility was corroborated, too. Cari shared, "And like, I just like feeling like I'm giving back but I feel like it's such a big part of our profession to do something, to pay it forward for first" (Rd 2). She felt responsible to give back to her profession in hopes that her CITs would do the same in the future. She willingly took on commitments that were inherent to supervising a CIT. Data collected in the second interview emphasized the superordinate theme Site Supervisor Role and the subthemes Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, and Welcomed Responsibility.

Her discussion included additional information about the Program-Site Alliance. Themes included Independent Mutualism, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, and Empathy for the University. The essence of Independent Mutualism for Cari encompassed the individuality she addressed in the first interview and the mutualistic nature of the Program-Site Alliance. She explained how she and the university are separate from one another, "Um, for now it kinda feels like we're on different...different places. Or we're at different places...I don't really hear a lot from, um, either school at this point other than just a few, like, um, their online evaluation tools" (Cari, Rd 2). Cari continued on to say, "So I really feel a little bit separated at this point...But I don't...I don't know that...know that in years past I felt any more connected I guess" (Cari, Rd 2). From our first conversation it became clear that this separation was not a concern for Cari, she said she preferred the freedom. While there was a sense of

independence in the program-site alliance, Cari discussed the many benefits to supervising a CIT. She said, “And it's also just hugely helpful to me to have someone else [the CIT] always there if I need to be in two places at once, it's really the only way I can do it” (Cari, Rd 2). She also stated,

And like then a lot of times I get...um, I get a lot of enjoyment out of it but also a lot of help, to be honest. We wouldn't offer the number of groups we offer without that [a CIT]...And just with not having three full-time counselors, it's nice. On the day that our sixth-grade counselor is gone we have an intern there so it's still like we're at full strength. (Cari, Rd 2)

She disclosed, “Um, not to be blunt but it's free labor. So it's really nice to have help” (Cari, Rd 2). Cari valued the program-site alliance because supervising a CIT allowed her to meet the needs of her agency to a greater extent. There was a reciprocal relationship between the university and her site. Integrating the mutualism she experienced in the program-site alliance with the independence she discussed captured the essence of Independent Mutualism for Cari.

Another theme that emerged in the second interview was Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. Cari shared experiences of engaging in various forms of communication such as over the phone, via emails, and through the use of student evaluations. She continued on to explain the various forms of communication helped her fulfill her duties as a site supervisor. For example, Cari discussed feeling supported by the university when there was communication.

Yes, I feel like the evaluations are very...those are very concrete things. Like, “Are they ethical? Are they responsible? Are they punctual?” I mean those are just

concrete, obvious kinds of things, but some of the questions like, um, for example, one of my interns I have right now is very chatty. She chats with the office staff a lot and I just chatted with her about that last week to say I need to get her feedback and then she was really just like not knowing what to do to fill her time. So it...a lot of time was in conversation. But I don't know, I guess I always want to make sure I'm not overstepping that role and I want to make sure I'm promoting what the university's really looking for. So then I have someone to kind of, I don't know, bounce those ideas and some of those questions off of. I think that kind of conversation would be more meaningful for me and also the interns. (Cari, Rd 2)

Communicating with the university was a strategy Cari utilized when she was seeking consultation as a Gatekeeper. She said,

Um, and maybe seek clear feedback and because they clearly have more knowledge than I do in supervising interns so to have them give me some feedback about, "Well, this is how I would try to work on it or how I would help the student if they were in my facility or my site." (Cari, Rd 2)

When Cari communicated with the university, she gained insight into how to manage gatekeeping issues. She reported feeling very comfortable reaching out to universities when there was an urgent or significant gatekeeping issue. "But it's more the...Like those small things. Like is this an issue that's come up before? Maybe to be able to have that communication with someone" would help her and the CIT overcome a gatekeeping concern (Cari, Rd 2). She went on to say communication within the program-site alliance was "really helpful so that if I had a concern I would know that I'm communicating it to

the right person” (Cari, Rd 2). Communication helped establish a relationship with the individual from the university Cari called upon for support as a gatekeeper.

Additionally, Cari disclosed communication within the program-site alliance bridged the gap between the university and the CIT’s field placement site. As a result of the separateness Cari acknowledged in the first interview, she reported not fully understanding what the CIT’s were experiencing in their academics.

Just things that for the intern's sake I feel like it would be better...When I'm helping them or giving input on assignments, I'm like, "Why the heck do you have to do that?" I mean, you know, so just my own inquiries about, you know, class assignments. Or "Why do you have to write a 10 page paper about this? I don't get it?" Design a lesson plan or a group plan or something instead but... (Cari, Rd 2)

Communication within the program-site alliance gave her a greater understanding of programmatic expectations. This was important to Cari because when she had this information, she could meet CITs’ developmental needs and better fulfill her duties as site supervisor.

Cari was realistic about communication. She stated in reference to her second sandtray,

But I definitely feel like that communication can be an obstacle. A little mountain in here, maybe. Their there. So it kinda feels like there's things getting in the way sometimes. And maybe the time is always the factor. And nobody has time. (Cari, Rd 2)

She admitted there could be complications with effective communication in the program-site alliance; for her, time was the major hindrance. However, she refused to let that impact her choice to take on the role of site supervisor.

Just remembering that they have their part, I'm doing my part so, um, those obstacles really shouldn't be insurmountable in any way...And I don't feel like they are, I just feel like sometimes....and it might depend on my mood for the day, who knows? But sometimes those obstacles annoy me more than others. So, but, they're not that bad. (Cari, Rd 2)

She acknowledged feeling annoyed if communication was obstructed but she reported a willingness to attend to the situation in an effort to improve communication. “And then on the flip side I don't know if it would be annoying to be communicated with too often. I'm not really sure” (Cari, Rd 2). Cari went on to say, “So my time as an intern, I don't think I would have wanted them communicating too much because then it becomes almost burdensome for the supervisors “ (Rd 2). Communication within the program-site alliance was a balance between too little and too much. For Cari, too little left her feeling annoyed and unsupported; too much left her feeling like the university was overly involved.

Cari voiced her preference concerning Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance but it was tempered with compassion for the university. As such, Empathy for the University became a theme in the second round of Cari's interviews. She admitted,

Um, I feel like it's kind of... It is a two-way street so I can call them if I have a concern but I guess I'm looking more for them to contact me than the other way around. I don't know...I think ideally I would hear from them, like either the site

supervisor from the university, either via phone or in person if they came out to my school to visit, at least once a semester. But I know they have a lot of interns that they are working with. (Cari, Rd 2).

She demonstrated empathy when discussing faculty turnover. Cari said,

I know there's been a lot of staff changes at both schools. I think that plays a part.

They've had a lot of professors change and so their routines are very different and they're probably trying to feel all that out still...Always rebuilding. (Rd 2)

Cari noticed potential difficulties that may impede the university initiating effective communication yet was empathetic about it.

Lastly, Cari highlighted the theme Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. Cari reported working with two different universities and viewed disparities between the two program-site alliances. She stated, "So....and again, working with two different universities sometimes it feels like, 'I wonder why this school doesn't do what this school does?' And they're asking different things or checking in at different times. So that's a little bit different" (Cari, Rd 2). She discussed she interviewed a CIT from a new counselor education program. She said she had the potential to form a new program-site alliance with the online university.

INTERVIEWER ...the relationships you have so far, they are established already somehow. Either, you know, like you were talking about the one you graduated from and I'm getting the sense that you have an established relationship the other program just because you're there and you've had several of their interns. So yeah, starting a new relationship with an online program and not knowing what that's like, I would imagine that would be kind of hard.

CARI Yeah, and again a third program is operated differently. And I'm sure online is quite different. So I don't know. It's interesting. (Cari, Rd 2)

She acknowledged that a third program-site alliance would require a third set of requirements and a third approach to the elements that made up the program-site alliance.

Cari's second interview illuminated data to support the themes from her first interview such as the subthemes Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. Additional themes were identified including Independent Mutualism, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Empathy for the University, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. See Figure 4.1 Awareness of Obstacles: Things That Can Get in the Way for Cari's second sandtray, which is a visual representation of her experience she discussed in the second interview. She highlighted obstacles she faced when communicating with universities as represented by the mountains and clock.

Figure 4.1. Awareness of Obstacles: Things That Can Get in the Way
(Cari, Rd 2)

University role (From Rd 1)

"I think they [the university] do their work maybe before I even come into the picture... Like they've done the preparation, and the training, and, um, you know, helped people kind of prepare themselves for that... And so they had come even before me... So maybe they'd be the little computer that gives them [the CITs] the, the knowledge."

University role (From Rd 1)

"...like they're there to swoop in if there's an emergency or...Um. Or maybe they'd be balloons. I don't really see them much, so maybe they're just at the end."

Program-site alliance/Communication

But I definitely feel like that communication can be an obstacle. A little mountain in here, maybe. They're there. So it kinda feels like there's things getting in the way sometimes.

Program-site alliance/Communication

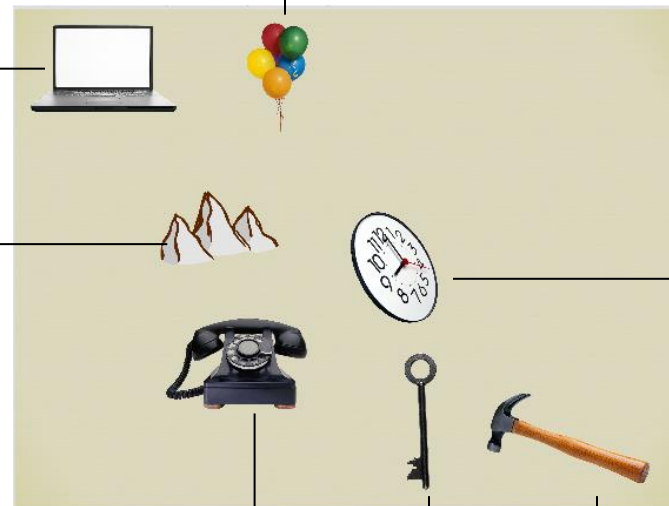
So it kinda feels like there's things getting in the way sometimes. And maybe the time is always the factor. And nobody has time. So that gets in the way too

Program-site alliance/Communication

Um, maybe just like a phone to show that there's communication. It's just not very frequent. Um, I feel like it's kind of... It is a two-way street so I can call them if I have a concern but I guess I'm looking more for them to contact me than the other way around.

Site supervisor role: CIT development (From Rd 1)

"I guess I could be the key and just kind of put myself [pause] in between...a lot of these emotions, just so that they don't feel alone or...um, just...I would hope they never feel afraid to ask questions."



Dallas

In the first interview, Site Supervisor Role was an emergent superordinate theme for Dallas with Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development as subthemes. He also discussed his experience of the program-site alliance in which Independent Mutualism and Regulated Support developed as themes. See Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 for a reference of Dallas' data from the first interview. In Dallas' second interview, the themes Facilitator of CIT Development, Independent Mutualism, and Regulated Support were confirmed. A new theme emerged from his data, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. Dallas' second interview provided greater insight into the program-site alliance and the dynamics that occurred in the relationship. Due to a miscommunication about the requirements for the second round interviews, Dallas did not create a second sandtray to represent his experience.

In Dallas' first interview, he explained his experience of the site supervisor role. Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development emerged as major duties in Dallas' view of being a site supervisor, thus they became subthemes for Site Supervisor Role. Gatekeeper was reiterated in his second interview. Dallas discussed how he saw the university's role in gatekeeping taking place prior to the CIT being placed in the field and his role was to determine if the CIT was a good fit for his setting. He said,

...we [the site] hope that [the vetting of CITs] takes place, you know, where they're [the university] weeding out, you know, poor candidates, so that would take place way early on...Because our part is, you know, we're getting to know if this person, you know, can they pass the background check, you know, is this person a fit within our team...And, yeah letting the school make sure they're doing

that. Not letting them, but that, because that's really what their function is in that beginning process. And then we just kind of determine you know, you know, they're good for the field but maybe not for this setting. (Dallas, Rd 2)

As a gatekeeper, Dallas hoped the university was removing unfit CITs prior to their placement at his site. He then continued the gatekeeping process to make sure the CIT was a good match for the profession and his site. Dallas took his duties as gatekeeper very seriously because if a gatekeeping issue arose, there could be dire financial consequences. He shared,

And so if I, you know, I had an intern do something that, you know, did something dangerous or got themselves hurt, or say, got somebody else hurt through, you know, just really poor actions or something, that's gonna reflect more...that's gonna reflect in a lot more areas than only on a student's grade report, the transcript. That could be media coverage and we've run into that...It was horrific, and so it was really bad media coverage for over, for years. And so I think, you know, that's why we pay really close attention, make sure that we're bringing people in that we-, we're comfortable with and we're okay with. Because or even working with schools that we're okay with because the consequences for that, you know, it could result in, you know, millions of dollars' worth of lawsuits on our state agency, working for a public agency, people are not afraid to sue you. (Dallas, Rd 2)

He continued on saying,

It's protecting the public interest because, you know, state agency we get sued and we lose a suit, I worry that if you don't lose and you win, you're still paying out

lots and lots money in legal fees and court battles, and we all pay taxes, so it's not all about the money, but you know, trying to be good steward of our public resources. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Dallas viewed a gatekeeper as an individual who protected clients and the profession. He included protecting public resources in his experience as a site supervisor.

Facilitator of CIT Development was verified in Dallas' second interview. He restated his values regarding the use of encouragement as a strategy to foster growth in CITs. Dallas stated,

I had a really bad supervisor when I was in internship that I had began working with after I graduated for a short period of time. And uh, but one valuable thing that, a good thing that he did for me was when I asked him for feedback he goes, he said, "You know, this is where you're at. Don't compare yourself to these other people over here. You know, they're in the field a couple years down the road ahead of you, you know, you're doing okay for where you're at. You know, keep striving. But you know, allow yourself sometime to learn." (Rd 2)

Dallas encouraged CITs to reflect on their growth even if they had not progressed to the CIT's desired goal. He believed positive encouragement to be a motivational tool, which assisted CITs' to continually be engaged in the field experience to further their development. Within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development were confirmed as subthemes.

Other themes verified by Dallas' second interview were focused specifically on the program-site alliance. Independent Mutualism was echoed in Dallas' data from round one in round two. The essence of Independent Mutualism for Dallas acknowledged a

distinction between the university and his site as well as the mutual benefits all parties received when CIT's were in their field setting. He said,

...there's a space in between because you've got to have some autonomy, you know, of the site and the purpose of the site supervisor, and then the purpose of the school. And each have very distinct purposes and so that kind of create boundaries uh, for each of us...understanding, you know, uh, we can't put too much on the site supervisor. We have to understand they have a job to do and a purpose to do, and I, you know, I in turn, you know, don't harass the school with stuff that, you know, really isn't huge. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Much like Cari, he acknowledged a separateness between the site and the university. He also reported the benefits everyone received from having a CIT in the field.

But things are just going okay, you know, the student is benefiting from, from their staff, and you know, they're learning and being challenged and the site supervisor, you know, has a student that they get to invest in and experience working with. And as well as experiencing, you know, getting to experience the benefits of having interns working with you, kind of free labor...type of thing. And, you know the school, you know, they get to have those students get that real-life world application. (Dallas, Rd 2)

While there was individualism between the site and the university in the program-site alliance, Dallas viewed the relationship as mutualistic in nature because advantages existed for all parties. Hence, the theme Independent Mutualism emerged from Dallas' data.

Another theme concerning the program-site alliance that was verified in the second interview was Regulated Support. Dallas shared receiving support from the university was a balance between too little and too much. Dallas said, “Oh, I like the autonomy” (Rd 2). He reported valuing the ability to call upon the university when needed and enjoying the autonomy he experienced as a site supervisor. He shared,

I've been able to have a contact person. At least you know, know who to call and who to reach out to. That's been pretty helpful in the past, because honestly you know, I don't-, I don't, I don't have a lot of contact with people from the school and that's okay. You know, uh, but knowing that I got a contact number I know who I can contact if I need to, um, if any of those concerns come up. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Dallas disclosed he did not worry if a program-site alliance seemed distant. He really only needed the university to respond when gatekeeping issues arose. He said, “But, you know we [Dallas and the university] stay connected and talk when there's any kind of issues or concerns that come up” (Dallas, Rd 2). This is why Regulated Support was a theme for Dallas. As long as there was balance in the amount of support given, Dallas experienced the program-site alliance favorably.

A new theme emerged from Dallas’ second interview. Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance developed from the information Dallas shared. He provided several examples of effective and ineffective communication he has experienced when in a relationship with a university because they share a CIT. Much of Dallas’ experience was similar to Cari in that communication with the university helped him fulfill his duties as a site supervisor. Dallas specifically cited instances where communication within the

program-site alliance supported his gatekeeping efforts and his attempts to facilitate CIT development. Dallas said,

I want that person of the school, that [university] contact person you know, to be a good support that if I have something going on and I either need that student removed from the program, you know, from here at our site...or you know, having the ability to go, you know, "Here's some concerns I'm seeing that we need to shore up that we've, here's what we've tried, XYZ." And maybe having that person to be flexible and, you know, that we're at least crea-, I guess what I'm trying to say is, creative of going, "Okay, how can we help the student be successful?" Because I would much rather a student be successful and overcome barriers, than, you know, to have to move to another site, or, you know, be removed from the program or something like that... (Rd 2)

Dallas viewed communication within the program-site alliance as a strategy to foster CIT growth or perform gatekeeping duties to protect his clients and his agency. He explained that communication provided him insight into what the program's expectations were for CITs. He stated,

I think clear expectations, what the school expects...But just knowing that you're going to have evaluations, they're going to come to you and those have to be done in a timely manner. And so I'm preparing going, "Okay, gotta make sure I got time for this and for that knowing, you know, how many interns can I really take on, make sure I can, you know have their needs met or I won't be able to do my work." And so, and then knowing what they need to be experiencing at our site, as well. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Communication within the program-site alliance aided Dallas in understanding what each university expected of him as a site supervisor. He reported that once this information was shared, he tailored his field site to meet the needs of CITs. The exchange of information that occurred in the program-site helped Dallas perform his responsibilities as a site supervisor.

Dallas acknowledged communication was not always beneficial to the program-site alliance. He discussed potential communication barriers,

Or, we [the site] don't even have contact people [at the university] or the contact person doesn't answer the phone, or they haven't communicated changes in contact people, to where maybe the school might...might have some unnecessary barriers that maybe they're even oblivious to...That make contact difficult.

(Dallas, Rd 2)

In his first interview, he discussed a situation where the university misplaced an evaluation for a CIT Dallas was concerned about. There was no communication with the university and as a result the concern evolved into a gatekeeping issue. The lack of communication negatively impacted the program-site alliance. However, in Dallas' second interview, he added that once communication had occurred the program-site alliance was mended. He shared,

And the school recognized, you know, they quickly owned that they had made mistakes. So, and then, we [the site] probably could have communicated more earlier on our end, too. So you know, there's a lot of stuff in there that everything didn't go all bad, and everything didn't go all perfect either. But I think when things, well, it's kind of a mix. This is going well, but this isn't, I'm going, "You

know, let's just do the best we can, and let's try and make things work from here.

Let's just own what we did wrong and let's learn from it, let's move forward."

(Dallas, Rd 2)

For Dallas, if there was a problem in the program-site alliance, communication about the situation was best. He believed if each party communicated accountability for their part in the situation, a contentious program-site alliance could be repaired. He went on to say,

...we [may] disagree and not see things the same, but we all have the same mission, we all have the same interest in making sure that we're serving our public the way that we're supposed to. And when we find that commonality, you know we do get things accomplished and get some things done. Even though we may not always like each other. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Communicating within the program-site alliance allowed each party to find their common goal and to strategize ways to accomplish that goal. He referred to this when discussing a school that engaged in too much communication,

And I've worked with online schools, with students before, too. And have pretty decent, I actually I've had probably more, I'll tell you I've had more contact with online school programs, than I do with classroom instruction programs. I think that might be the online schools saying, "Hey, we recognize that we don't have eyes on the student all, you know, several days a week so we're just going to go above and beyond that communication." And that's been okay. I've felt like sometimes the communication expectation is a little bit high, but you know, we all have the best interests in mind, of the students. (Dallas, Rd 2)

He recognized the intention behind the amount of communication from the online school was related to their desire for the best field experience for the CIT, which was Dallas' goal as well.

When speaking of the program-site alliance in general terms, Dallas said, Yeah, when it's going well, I would say it's-, it's pleasurable because, you know, we're all working well together with the student, and helping them be successful, and or respecting each other and we can communicate if things are going okay. So I'd say that it's a pleasure to work with them. And then, when it's not, it's contentious is what I would call that because on my end, it's not only as a clinical supervisor to that person but I'm an administrator for our facility and within our state agency. (Rd 2)

When the program-site alliance was working, Dallas had a favorable experience. If it was not working, he became concerned about gatekeeping issues and the potential consequences his agency would face. However, Dallas admitted the program-site alliance was "very seldom really black and white" (Dallas, Rd 2). It rarely was only good or only bad, and the program-site alliance contained elements to help move through the bad.

Dallas' second interview verified the subthemes, Gatekeeper and Facilitator of CIT Development, within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. He also confirmed the themes Independent Mutualism and Regulated Support. His second interview highlighted the theme Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. He viewed communication as a tool to fulfill his duties as site supervisor and as a tool to mitigate problems that arose in the program-site alliance. Due to miscommunication between Dallas and I, he did not create a second sandtray.

Justin

In his first interview, Site Supervisor Role was an emergent superordinate theme for Justin with Gatekeeper and Sense of Pride as subthemes. See Figure 3.4 for a reference of Justin's data from the first interview. In his second interview, the theme Sense of Pride was confirmed. A new theme developed from his data, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. Justin discussed his experience with various forms of communication with his affiliated universities. He highlighted elements of communication that improved the program-site alliance.

Justin verified Sense of Pride, a subtheme of Site Supervisor Role, which emerged in his first interview. He said,

I think that's the...that's the fun thing is that I have stayed in contact with almost all of my interns that I've had. I've had a number, probably about ten at this point. And so, I actually like, when I do my interviewing skills class, if I'm teaching it myself, I'll show them my former interns and what they're doing professionally. I'll be like, "Look at this...this is what's happened." (Justin, Rd 2)

He went on to express,

...they also still contact me, you know, if there's a specifically dicey issue and they need, uh, advice about something, they will reach out. Or they reach out for references all the time, so...that's a pretty regular thing. (Justin, Rd 2)

As he spoke about his lasting relationships and showing current CITs the accomplishment of his past CITs, he was demonstrating a sense of pride in his work as a site supervisor.

Justin confirmed the findings from his first interview.

The data from the second interview uncovered new themes. The new theme that developed for Justin was Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. From Justin's perspective, the essence of Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was focused on communicating to ensure student success. Justin verified that communication between him and universities was vital to successful student development. In reference to his second sandtray, Figure 3.9, Justin stated,

I feel like I feel connected to the university, uh, when, uh, people who are talented at what they do, which represents the horse, uh, are communicating over time with the institution and, uh, good communication, good growth, those sort of things seem to happen when there's open pathways. (Rd 2)

Unlike Cari and Dallas, who saw communication within the program-site alliance as a tool to fulfill their site supervisor duties, open communication for Justin was a demonstration of a university's level of investment in the success of their CITs.

Justin expressed his belief that a university "taking time to make sure that growth and learning has happened" for CITs was critical for a successful field placement (Rd, 2). From his perspective, this was accomplished by taking time to communicate with site supervisors. He stated, "I've really appreciated those who have taken extra time and, and have done a tour of wherever I'm at or something like that, and really been interested in what the student is doing and their growth" (Justin, Rd 2). He also shared,

I wonder about things like what constitutes a really good experience in a master's level practicum and program, right, um, and I think a lot of that has to do with those two dynamics that, that professors take the time, and the care to spend time

with the growth and development of folks, and, and the mentorship piece as well, um, so yeah, I think that's, that's a huge component. (Justin, Rd 2)

When a university invested time to correspond or connect with him as a site supervisor, it communicated to Justin that the university had a strong interest in the development of their CITs. He reiterated, “Yeah, I mean, I think it's taking the time to communicate” that illustrated a university’s care for CITs (Justin, Rd 2).

Justin mentioned professors investing in the “growth and development of folks” and he spoke of mentorship. Another way he believed universities can communicate their interest in the development of CITs is by demonstrating interest in the growth of their site supervisors. He said, “I think things that I've seen really positive is when the, um, [affiliated] university has done great trainings and, and things like that so it's a really reciprocal relationship” (Justin, Rd 1). Investing in the development of site supervisors directly impacted the development of CITs. So according to Justin, when a university provided trainings as a form of communication with site supervisors, they were exhibiting care for CITs.

An aspect of Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance that helped Justin fulfill his duties as a site supervisor was that of accountability. While Dallas discussed parties taking accountability for their role during times of conflict, Justin spoke of accountability in the context of each party fulfilling their duties to enhance CIT development. Justin said,

The accountability piece is on both sides, and that means that me as the supervisor at the site and, um, the university, who is providing the interns, are held accountable and that means that they're available to answer questions, um, they're

available to have tough conversations around remediation, uh, they're there to provide resources for the students, um, both ways...[internship] has to do with, you know, emotional growth and, um, training and, you know, looking at these different models of supervision, uh, you know, whether it's staffing cases or the student's development. There's all these different types of dynamics going on and I think both sides need to be, uh, accountable and available to the students to optimize growth for them. (Justin, Rd 2)

To Justin, taking accountability for one's role and fulfilling responsibilities communicated care for CITs.

Justin also acknowledged there were barriers to communication that could impact the program-site alliance. He shared,

So, I'd say poor communication, not returning phone calls, not returning phone calls in a timely manner, um, not being available with resources like forms, guidance around licensure, guidance around hours, CACREP standards, all those things...(Justin, Rd 2)

He continued on explaining other scenarios,

...[if] you can't find the site supervisor, you can't schedule a meeting, they don't show up when they schedule it, it's, um, or it's a rushed meeting... They come into your office and they're throwing their stuff down and they say, gimme...I mean, like, like I've had these meetings where we've had to... "All right Justin, what do you think? Are there any problems? No? Okay, I'm outta here." Like, that doesn't seem like a, a rich experience of learning and, and growth...(Justin, Rd 2)

Justin viewed a lack of availability on the part of the university as a lack of communication within the program-site alliance. A program-site alliance that has little to no communication was not beneficial for CIT development.

If we're having good communication, and accountability, and training, then I feel like it creates an environment where there's a lot of sunshine and growth. But if those things are not in place, then often times, you get into, uh, some of the really, uh, negative types of things that can happen in an experience, I think, for a student. (Justin, Rd 2)

Not only was a CIT impacted by a fragile program-site alliance, but gatekeeping concerns could develop that may impact Justin's agency. He stated, "I think when there's not good communication, there's not good accountability, uh, there isn't a good relationship with the university, then we kinda get into some of these areas where we can have, uh, issues" (Justin, Rd 2).

The essence of Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance for Justin captured what behaviors communicate in the program-site alliance. He believed if a university cared for their CITs, he would observe behaviors demonstrating this concern. Justin highlighted the ways communication occurred in the program-site alliance. He spoke of his experience when the university reached out to him individually, offered site supervisor training, or simply executed their duties as the university.

Justin's second interview verified the subtheme, Sense of Pride, within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. The new data collected highlighted the theme Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. From Justin's perspective, how much time a university dedicated to communicate with him as a site supervisor or the CIT was

an indication of how much the university was committed to CIT success. He noticed when communication was lacking or nonexistent was when gatekeeping concerns presented themselves. See Figure 4.2. Three Keys to Communication as a Supervisor, Justin's second virtual sandtray, for a visual representation of his experience. He illustrated the line of communication between him, depicted by the horse, and the institution, represented by the building. For him, if communication was effective there was much growth as demonstrated by the images on the right side of the sandtray. If it was problematic there were challenges represented by the images on the left side of the sandtray. Justin reported the three keys to a successful program-site alliance were communication, time, and care (Rd 2).

Figure 4.2. Three Keys to Communication as a Supervisor
(Justin, Rd 2)

Site supervisor role/CIT development

I'm talking particularly about the, the students, like I want them to be in the sun, uh, and be growing as a professional.

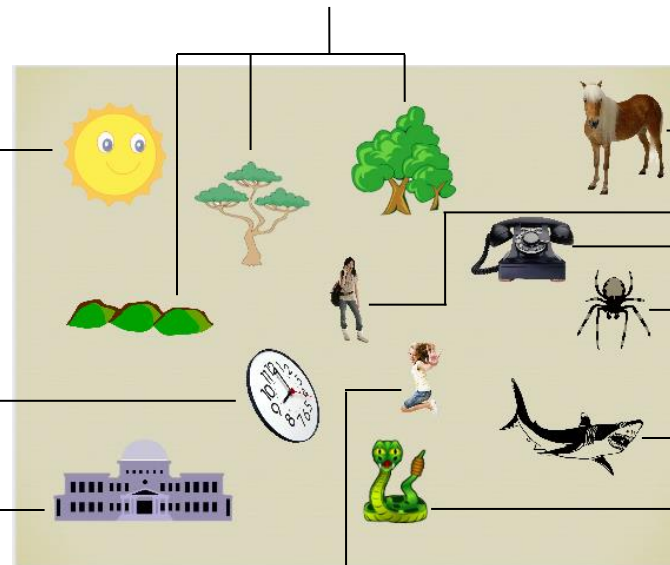
Program-site alliance/Invest time

And I feel like I feel connected to the university, uh, when, uh, people who are talented at what they do, which represents the horse, uh, are communicating over time with the institution and, uh, good communication, good growth, those sort of things seem to happen when there's open pathways.

So, uh, up in the right-hand corner is a horse, and, and down in the left-hand corner is the institution.

Program-site alliance/Fosters CIT development

And I'm thinking about the idea of being connected to the institution and, um, on the upper left hand side, we have growth represented by trees and green hills and sunshine...



Program-site alliance/Accountability

And there's also this other individual who has the stop sign up like this. What that represents is accountability, and I feel like it also needs to be that there's not only communication but accountability, and that's for me as the supervisor and also the institution as, uh, on their side of the table, uh, what I need from the university, what I need from the internship coordinator, what I need, uh, from their department. Also, I think things that I've seen really positive is when the, um, supervising university has done great trainings and, and things like that so it's a really reciprocal relationship.

JJ and colleague in the site supervisor role (From Rd 1)

"And we had a really good reputation in the city we were really hard workers, so in some ways we probably thought that we were stallions."

...people who are talented at what they do, which represents the horse...

Program-site alliance/Communication

...as you see, there's an individual on a phone, and there...that's about communication over time, right, and so there's a telephone, there's a person talking and over time.

Program-Site Alliance/Disconnected

And then at the bottom of the screen, we've got this spider shark, uh, rattlesnake, and I think when there's not good communication, there's not good accountability, uh, there isn't a good relationship with the university, then we kinda get into some of these areas where we can have, uh, issues.

Amy

In her first interview, Site Supervisor Role was an emergent superordinate theme for Amy with Sense of Pride as a subtheme. She included a description of her experience of the program-site alliance. See Figure 3.5 for a reference of Amy's data from the first interview. In her second interview, the theme Sense of Pride was confirmed. Pairing the data Amy shared in her first interview with the data collected in her second on, themes specific to the program-site alliance emerged including Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances, Independent Mutualism, and Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. Other participants had similar themes but Amy's experience highlighted different aspects.

Amy confirmed Sense of Pride, a subtheme of the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role. She stated, "I love it. This makes me happy. And I love students. I love interviewing them. I love choosing them and hiring them. I love training them. I love doing supervision with them" (Amy, Rd 2). Amy also demonstrated pride when she spoke of her role in creating her clinical program. "The agency is 40 years old, but the programming and the clinical stuff is only six and a half, seven years old...yeah, just barely six years old. And, um, I accidentally created it" (Rd 2). She also indicated she felt pride when she spoke of the experience CITs encounter at her site.

And I think that most of our, most students do have a good experience. I'm proud that we have a pretty good reputation and that, um, students go to their classes. You know, most students have a class, a field class, and they talk about what's happening in their internships. In the first year, they say, "Yeah, I got this client doing this and a client doing that." And the others are like "I'm still making

copies. And finally, I'm doing coffee and shadowing people." I'm like "No, I, I throw them in there, and I support them, but help them do things." (Amy, Rd 2)

It was evident that Amy felt proud of her accomplishments as a site supervisor and clinic director.

Amy's first and second interviews revealed irregularities when she was engaged in program-site alliances, thus Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances was an emergent theme. As illustrated in her second virtual sandtray (see Figure 3.10), Amy had multiple program-site alliances. She stated as she added different buildings to her sandtray, "Just to convey that there are several schools, because...there's different kinds of relationships with each of them" (Amy, Rd 2). Amy experienced differences in every program-site alliance. One difference she discussed was related to site visits.

So, um, the schools...I have one that I think I've never had a visitor, but somebody's coming this year. And I've had six students from that program. They've never come to see the site...And then I have other ones that, that come once a year. Some come twice a year. (Amy, Rd 2)

The number of site visits varied program to program. Even evaluation methods were different in the various program-site alliances. She continued on saying,

...the one [university] program, they sit down, they plan it [an evaluation meeting], and they see me with each student individually for an hour three times during the year...Some of these other schools, the person comes by and says, "How are my three students doing?" And it's just me and them. The students aren't there...And I don't know. And then there's some that, you know, I did one by phone recently...(Amy, Rd 2)

Because Amy worked with multiple universities as a site supervisor, the inconsistencies in the relationships became burdensome.

It's become unwieldy...And I'm trying to find ways to be more organized. Now that I have so many students from so many schools, I need to start creating spreadsheets to remind me...because they all have different kinds of evaluation requirements. They have different kind of field visit requirements. They all have... I just need to keep track of it. (Amy, Rd 2)

For Amy, the Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances was difficult to manage at times.

Another aspect of the program-site alliance that Amy discussed as challenging was related to the theme Regulated Support. The essence of this theme for participants encompassed the balance between autonomy as a site supervisor and support provided by the university. Amy shared her experience when the university did not honor her autonomy. Typically she did not “really get involved with the school until it's time for evaluation” (Amy, Rd 2). In some cases, Amy experienced universities not respecting her boundaries and they offered too much support. She reflected on the frequency of site visits. She stated,

...most of them have some kind of field visit...So, um, they come quarterly. The... You know, most schools are semesters. This one school, pr-, a program is on quarters. So they come three times... (Amy, Rd 2).

She added, “And the school that I have the most trouble with ironically, and thinking about it, is the one that comes most often...” (Amy, Rd 2). The “trouble” Amy referenced was related to the situation she discussed in her first interview. CITs were removed from

her site due to a lack of on-site supervision and remediation took place. The university who visited her site the most led the remediation. Amy reported feeling like her autonomy was compromised when the university was overly responsive. She expressed,

I have mixed feelings because I'd really like to see the schools be more involved in the field. And then I think, "Oh, dear Lord, I don't need them in my

business...and I don't have the time."...So there's, there's a grey area. (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy's experience illustrated the consequences of unregulated support from a university. As a result, she reported having a negative view of this program-site alliance.

Additionally, communication was a major topic in Amy's first interview. It was discussed in her second interview, too. Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was a theme for Amy. She highlighted the use of workshops as a form of communication. Amy shared, "...a lot of times, they have, um, opportunities to go to workshops. They all tend to offer different kinds of workshops. I've gone to some of them...It's a way to stay connected, provide additional training and whatnot" (Rd 2). She also cited site visits as opportunities for communication, "...most schools, I don't, I don't know, a lot of them...most of them have some kind of field visit" (Amy, Rd 2). Amy reported various forms of communication occurred in the program-site alliance.

For Amy, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance went beyond a description of the various forms of communication. This theme included a discussion of the way in which communication occurred between the site supervisor and the university. As indicated in her first interview, Amy's experience with communication created a strained program-site alliance. This was reiterated in her second interview. The way the university communicated with her impacted her view of the program-site alliance.

...the difference is when, when I feel supported by the [university] field director...and I've had those experiences. I've had this, this problem with a student. [The university field director said,] "I'm so sorry you're experiencing that. Can you please write that up in a report? And then, um, we'll talk to the student." And, um, I felt supported. And they said, "We're so sorry that happened. We hope that you'll continue to have our students...because we love having them come to your place." (Amy, Rd 2)

When communication was supportive, Amy felt connected to the university and had a positive view of the program-site alliance. However, if the communication was not supportive, she viewed the program-site alliance as strained.

The other place, the one where all those...had all the bugs crawling and stuff that [referencing Figure 3.5]...it's, it's kind of like "Well, what have you done now?" And I always feel, it feels very punitive, judgmental, and, like, somehow, I screwed up...And I'm not perfect, but I don't respond well to that kind of...It, it feels like an attack on me. (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy reported unsupportive communication in the program-site alliance impacted her on a personal level.

Yeah. It's, um, because I do blame myself. You know that it's pretty easy to throw gasoline on that fire. So, um, when I get that support, it's like "Oh, I'm okay. This is just something that happened." (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy disclosed her battle with imposter syndrome in her first interview. She acknowledged she felt more challenged to combat imposter syndrome when unsupportive communication occurred in the program-site alliance. Hearing supportive communication

helped her “think more clearly...and more level-headed” (Amy, Rd 2), especially when she had a challenging CIT at her site. Amy said,

I’ve had really, really good experiences with problem interns, you know, [universities have said,] "I'm so sorry that happened. And how can we support you in this process because it sounds like that was really difficult?" That's a different response than "What have you done now? And I think we need to pull our students." (Rd 2)

Supportive communication during difficult times helped Amy feel connected in a program-site alliance. Amy explained that supportive communication could be informal such as a phone call or email.

...one school that would, um, had one woman who would send me an email every month, and she would say, "You don't have to respond to this. But this is a reminder that if you want to respond to it, you can, and I’m here for you." So a lot of times, I didn't. But sometimes I am just like "Thank you for seeing me," you know? I, I just appreciated that. Like I said I didn’t really use it for anything, but it was kind of a reminder that they were out there. (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy disclosed when she felt supported by a university, which she determined by the way they communicated with her, she was more likely to accept CITs from that university. She shared, “the response from the school was so kind. And I'm like "Yep, I’ll take students from your program any day" (Amy, Rd 2).

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance captures the types of communication Amy experienced as well as the meaning she made from the interactions. If the communication was supportive from Amy’s perspective, she viewed the program-

site alliance as positive. When this occurred, she reported being more likely to take on the responsibility of supervising CITs who were students from supportive universities.

Amy also explained communication with universities increased her awareness of program expectations. She stated,

Yeah, I mean, I can be a better supervisor if I know what they're learning and, um, how to help them apply that. I can't...if I don't know...and the students don't know what I don't know. I can... All I can do is talk in general terms...“Here’s what I do or here’s what I would do or here’s what people do under these circumstances.” But if I knew their curriculum better, I could use their language...you know? I said, um, say, “Well, I see last week, you talked about such and such. How does that apply to this client?” And I could, I could just could be really more academic with the supervision. (Amy, Rd 2)

Like Cari and Dallas, Amy discussed Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance helped her feel more connected to universities, which helped her attend to CIT needs more effectively. Amy said,

...if I'm connected to the [university] person, um, I feel like I can, you know, toss around ideas for the student. I feel more connected to the student and the program. Otherwise, it's, I have students who have schools out there somewhere, and I don't really know what they're doing or what their programs are like...So I feel like I could do my job better if had a better connection. (Rd 2)

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance increased Amy’s feelings of connection to her affiliated universities. She reported knowing more about what she needed to do in order to foster growth in CITs.

Amy's second interview verified emergent themes such as Sense of Pride. It also provided a fuller description of her experience of the program-site alliance. Integrating both interviews yielded the following themes: Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances, Regulated Support, and Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance. Amy highlighted all her program-site alliances differed and sometimes it was difficult to manage. She expressed concern when her independence as a site supervisor was not respected. And she spoke about the manner in which communication occurred impacted the program-site alliance; especially in a challenging situation, the "school's response matters" (Amy, Rd 2). Her experience with the program-site alliance left her ambivalent. She expressed,

Um, like I said, I think I talk out both sides of my mouth. But I, in some ways, I would like more relationship with the schools...And then in some ways, I'm like "Oh, please don't bother me anymore. I don't have time for all this." And so I'm really torn. (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy's experience and themes were visually represented in her second sandtray, Figure 4.3 The Ying and Yang of School/Field Relationships. She represented herself with the butterfly and she highlighted the different relationships she had by using images of different schools on the left. She illustrated the different dynamics she has experienced in program-site alliances using the two suns. And she represented the inconsistent relationships with the tree between herself and the schools. She said a tree can provide shade but it can also be an obstacle. Much like her experience of the program-site alliance, it can be a source of support or challenge.

Figure 4.3. The Ying and Yang of School/Field Relationships
(Amy, Rd 2)

Program-site alliance/Inconsistency

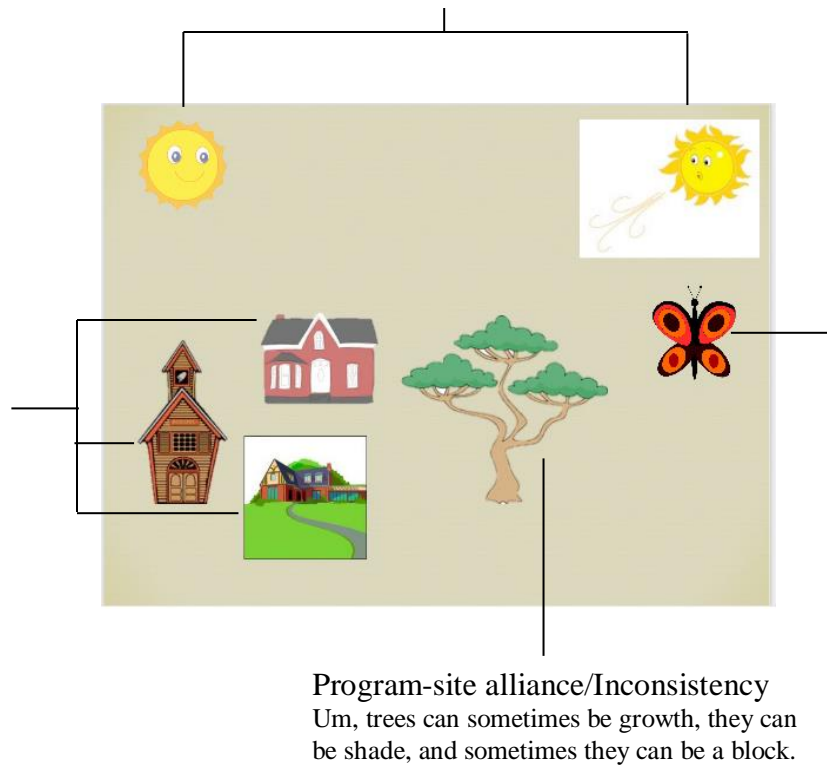
Interviewer: Um, I was wondering, can you tell me again what the two suns represent?

KS: Oh, well, that sometimes they're, you know, they're blowing at me and making things difficult. But sometimes, they're smiling at me and, um, supporting me...and being very pleasant.

Program-site

alliance/Inconsistency

Just to convey that there are several schools, because...there's different kinds of relationships with each of them.



Site supervisor role

"I feel like, you know, I'm doing the best I can. This, this, uh, butterfly, I'm doing the best I can with what we've got. I have good intentions."

Program-site alliance/Inconsistency

Um, trees can sometimes be growth, they can be shade, and sometimes they can be a block.

Final Results: Cases Within a Theme

This section discusses the final results for the entire study using IPA's cases within a theme presentation format. The themes for the study are discussed with data from each participant to support it as a reflection of the hermeneutic circle. After the second round of interviews, themes from the first round evolved due to the additional data. The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, and its subthemes were confirmed in the second interviews, therefore, remain unchanged. The new data greatly influenced the theme, Program-Site Alliance, so much so that it was no longer a superordinate theme. The new data indicated the elements that comprise the program-site alliance are the superordinate themes. Themes that evolved and expanded after the second interview include Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Independent Mutualism, Regulated Support, and Inconsistencies Between Program-Site Alliances. The themes highlighted in this chapter are central to site supervisors' experiences when they were engaged in a program-site alliance. The purpose for this qualitative study was to answer the research question: What is the experience of site supervisors when they are in relationship with their affiliated counselor education program during CIT field experiences? Refer to Table 4.1 for a list of final superordinate themes and their subthemes.

Table 4.1

Final Themes After Round Two Data Analysis

Theme 1: Site Supervisor Role

- *Subthemes:* Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, Welcomed Responsibility

Theme 2: Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance

- *Subthemes:* Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of the University's Dedication, Barriers to Effective Communication

Theme 3: Independent Mutualism

Theme 4: Regulated Support

Theme 5: Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances

Site Supervisor Role

The first superordinate theme that developed in this study illustrated site supervisors' duties and responsibilities. The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, included an explanation of what participants experienced as site supervisor responsibilities and the meaning they made of this role. Within Site Supervisor Role, the subthemes Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility emerged from the data. The essence of each subtheme is explained below.

Gatekeeper. All participants viewed attending to gatekeeping issues as a duty associated with the role of site supervisor. The essence of Gatekeeper for participants was centered on protecting the integrity of their agency, their clientele, and the counseling profession as a whole from CITs who have the potential of violating professional ethics. Participants discussed Gatekeeper being a protection for CITs, too. All participants voiced the importance of fulfilling their role as a gatekeeper. For example, Henry said, "Uh, and, and, and some of that is selfish, because I am a clinical snob, and you're coming into my profession. I don't need somebody who, who can't counsel..." (Rd 1). In addition to protecting clients, the agency, and the profession, the site supervisor had a personal interest in confronting gatekeeping concerns. Cari stated, "Because it's my job,

they're [CITs] acting on my license. So I want to make sure they're doing the right thing and acting ethically and appropriately..." (Rd 2). Ultimately, the site supervisor was held accountable if a gatekeeping issue resulted in an ethical violation. Being a gatekeeper at the site was a preventative measure intended to maintain integrity and safety.

Participants alluded to acting as Gatekeeper in order to determine a CIT's fitness for their agency. If a CIT is not a good fit for their agency, it resulted in gatekeeping issues. As gatekeepers, site supervisors took the population they served into account as they selected CITs.

We have a large special ed population, so it's, it's a pretty busy place and can be, um, you know, can cause some emotions sometimes, just out of, you know, experiencing with the kids what they're going through. And so finding that right intern is important. (Cari, Rd 1)

Amy added, "But, you know, people get through the interview one way and then end up not being a good fit. This is a chaotic place...And it's not for everybody" (Rd 1). Placing a CIT who could work with the agency's population was vital for Gatekeepers. Participants said it was important to determine if the placement would benefit both the CIT and their agency.

So, uh, just making sure that, you know, I'm comfortable with whoever's in the facility, that I know they're [the CIT] gonna be safe, they're gonna follow policy and procedure, and that they're gonna be able to work with our team, you know, and that this is gonna be a learning experience for them as well as beneficial for...for our facility...while they're with us. (Dallas, Rd 1)

As a Gatekeeper, site supervisors prevented future gatekeeping issues by selecting CITs who would be a good fit for their agency.

Participants discussed their experience of having to intervene as a Gatekeeper. For instance, Justin had a CIT who was struggling with an active substance addiction while working with clients at his agency. Dallas had a CIT who fostered a toxic working environment within among his employees. Henry reported his actions when a CIT said something inappropriate during a Gay-Straight Alliance group. Cari discussed a CIT who was not fulfilling the expectations Cari outlined at the start of the placement. And Amy highlighted a situation where a CIT was not an appropriate fit for the transgender clientele served by her agency. In these instances, participants reported confronting the situation. Henry articulated,

And I don't mean to be, sound, like, heartless when I say that. "But it's time for you to go. You get kicked out of a high school, and you're representing our organization, because you said something inappropriate during the GSA. It's time for you to go. And, and this is on top of you already on remediation. No, you need to go." (Rd 1)

Dallas echoed the discussion of termination,

And then, uh, I sat down with the intern and I said, "You know, I don't think this is working for either of us...And-and then I sat down with the student and I said, "You know, here's where we're at"...yeah, and then we had that exit, uh, conversation. (Rd 1)

All participants discussed their experience of enforcing and following through with gatekeeping responsibilities.

Participants recognized the need to confront gatekeeping issues as a site supervisor but it was not easy for everyone. Cari described her experience when she had to disclose a potential CIT was not placed at her site. “And just kind of that devastated blow that these people experienced. I mean, it was really hard for me to be the one to be like, ‘I’m really sorry, but we picked somebody else.’” (Cari, Rd 1). Amy shared her experience when she had to terminate a CIT’s placement. She said, “It’s like once I’ve made the decision, it’s very hard for me, because I feel bad. I feel bad for the student, and it’s embarrassing, and it’s awkward” (Amy, Rd 1). In Justin’s case, the gatekeeping issue he was faced with was not getting resolved and he was unsure of how to proceed. He shared while referencing his virtual sandtray, “And when she [the CIT] became more of the monster and more of the monster as she was kind of steeped in denial [of her addiction], um yeah so, we kinda became lost ourselves in like what to do” (Justin, Rd 1). Gatekeeper duties were emotionally taxing for the site supervisors.

Gatekeeper emerged as a subtheme within Site Supervisor Role. Participants willingly accepted this duty but all spoke of challenges they encountered throughout their time as site supervisor. Participants spoke of the emotional toll that occurred for them during challenging gatekeeping situations. Being proactive as a Gatekeeper and assessing for fitness prior to CITs placement was discussed as a strategy to prevent gatekeeping issues from surfacing.

Facilitator of CIT Development. Another subtheme of Site Supervisor role was Facilitator of CIT Development. Helping a CIT grow and develop into a practicing clinician was a central component of participants’ experience. Participants highlighted the importance of integrating what CITs learn in the academic setting with practical

experiences in the field placement setting. Dallas stated, "...on my end, I want to help that student [CIT] be able to take what they're learning in school and put that into practice in a supervised setting where they can learn and not do damage" (Rd 1). Cari reported wanting to supplement academic knowledge with practical insight, "...like if these are things that they don't talk about then I know, 'Oh, that's really an area I want to focus on because if they're not learning about it in class, then maybe there's some things I can shed light on in, in practical experience...' " (Rd 2). For Henry, practicality was the key to CIT development. He said, "So I'm constantly fighting the theoretical stuff that they're learning with, 'Is that practical? What's your intention? And do you believe what you're hearing? What are you reading? How are you analyzing what you're reading?'" (Henry, Rd 1). Offering the space for CITs to apply the conceptual knowledge they have acquired was critical for participants when they fulfilled their duties as Facilitators of CIT Development.

Participants discussed exposing CITs to all aspects of the profession as a strategy to foster CIT development. Cari shared,

I have them shadow me for a couple of weeks and then I just say, "Okay. Now I'm gonna watch you." And once I feel like, I feel like they've got the gist of where they should be or how they should approach things and...I just kinda let them go and say, "Whatever you want to do, I'm all for it." (Rd 1)

She explained that she offers CITs a large amount of support in their early days at her site then lessens the support so they can experience whatever they see as important. She also said she intentionally invites CITs to any meeting she is involved in,

I always just say, "Is it okay if my intern's in here for learning purposes?" And we run with it, because I just... I think that gives them a leg up when they do interview and then when they're in the position, to know that, "Okay. I can get through this because I've had this experience and that's kinda how they did it. This worked; this didn't work." Um. I think it's all about exposure. (Cari, Rd 1)

Dallas echoed Cari's description when he spoke of exposing CITs to situations involving staff as well as clients,

...that's kind of the interesting thing is the interns, they get to see...you know, they don't just see this really beautiful, cheerful site all the time. They see when people are upset when they're having a rough day. Not just the juveniles, but staff... (Rd 1)

Sharing all aspects of the position with CITs was necessary for them to have the opportunity to grow to their fullest potential.

As Henry pointed out, CIT development was closely related to a site supervisor's gatekeeping duties. He explained,

...I have been one to tell people that I'm calling all their clients, and that I'm gonna have conversations with their [university] supervisors, um, because I'm concerned regarding, you know, their lack of development, if they hit a plateau...(Henry, Rd 1)

Participants discussed taking action if they became concerned about a CIT's progression and development. If a CIT was not developing, gatekeeping issues were more likely. The ultimate goal for a site supervisor as a Facilitator of CIT Development was "...to get them

to graduation. But, uh, the purpose, really, is to be that outstanding clinician” (Dallas, Rd 1). As such, Facilitator of CIT Development was a subtheme of Site Supervisor Role.

Sense of Pride. Sense of Pride emerged as a subtheme for Site Supervisor Role. Throughout the first round of interviews, I noticed participants spoke of their accomplishments and their experience as a site supervisor with much dignity. All participants made statements that lead me to believe they feel proud of the work they do as clinicians or site supervisors. Participants explicitly said they were proud of their achievements. Amy expressed the pride she has regarding her field placement site. She said, “But for the most part, I love what we [Amy’s agency] do. We serve a couple hundred people a week...And, um, I’m very pleased with the internship program that we have” (Amy, Rd 1). She also expressed, “I feel proud of...we have a placement that, um, is really competitive now” (Amy, Rd 1). In accordance with IPA, I interpreted a sense of pride from the participants whose data was less definite. For instance, Henry spoke of the many roles he had in addition to site supervisor,

...they call me trenches, because I’m, I’ve been in the field for so long, and I’ve never gone too far away from a case load. I’m a Clinical Program Director. I’m in a doctoral program. I still keep a caseload of at least 20. (Rd 1)

Henry sharing his nickname and his other identities communicated to me that he felt proud of the work he was currently engaged in. Similarly, when Justin spoke of his agency and his work as a clinician he shared,

So, we [Justin and another colleague] were the two hired clinicians for the city and the county of [location]’s internal employee assistance program. And we had a really good reputation in the city. We were really hard

workers, so in some ways we probably thought that we were stallions. (Rd 1)

His use of metaphor regarding the “stallions” indicated to me that he saw himself and his colleague as gallant, strong, and honorable. The use of “stallions” communicated to me a Sense of Pride.

The subtheme Sense of Pride was verified in the second round of interviews when Justin shared,

...when I do my interviewing skills class, if I'm teaching it myself, I'll show them my former interns and what they're doing professionally. I'll be like, "Look at this...this is what's happened." And so...and they also still contact me, you know, if there's a specifically dicey issue and they need, uh, advice about something, they will reach out. (Rd 2)

Amy also confirmed Sense of Pride when she reiterated information about her agency, “The agency is 40 years old, but the programming and the clinical stuff is only six and a half, seven years old...yeah, just barely six years old. And, um, I accidentally created it” (Rd 2). In the data for all participants, I interpreted a Sense of Pride when they conversed about their work as clinicians and site supervisors.

Welcomed Responsibility. The last subtheme for Site Supervisor Role was Welcomed Responsibility. The essence of this subtheme encompassed site supervisors’ willingness to supervise CITs, despite the additional responsibilities the role brings. Welcomed Responsibility also highlighted the entities participants felt beholden to. All participants discussed various entities they believed they were obligated to as effective

site supervisors. However, participants shared they voluntarily consented to take on the responsibility of supervising CITs and fulfill their obligations to the various entities.

Participants articulated their willingness to supervise CITs. Cari viewed supervising CITs as a way to give back to her profession. She said, “I just like feeling like I'm giving back but I feel like it's such a big part of our profession to do something, to pay it forward.” (Rd 2). Henry added as he referred to his virtual sandtray, “These two things right here, the sun and the rainbow, are because I believe we're in the best profession ever, um, and love it” (Rd 1). And Amy expressed, “I love it [site supervision]. This makes me happy. And I love students. I love interviewing them. I love choosing them and hiring them. I love training them. I love doing supervision with them” (Rd 2). Participants voiced their decision to supervise CITs was due to their love for the profession and because they genuinely enjoyed being a supervisor.

While they expressed joy to be site supervisors, participants embraced the seriousness of the role. All participants recognized their responsibility as a site supervisor goes beyond their commitments to CITs. Participants acknowledged they were obligated to other entities to fulfill their duty as site supervisors. Dallas spoke of his obligation to protect the reputation of his agency. He said,

And so if I, you know, I had an intern do something that, you know, did something dangerous or got themselves hurt, or say, got somebody else hurt through, you know, just really poor actions or something, that's gonna reflect more...that's gonna reflect in a lot more areas than only on a student's grade report, the transcript. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Justin echoed Dallas' sense of responsibility to protect his organization. In reference to his gatekeeping situation where a CIT was struggling with an active addiction he stated,

Yeah, I feel like um one of the things that I was most concerned about was her A, but B, her clients. She was seeing clients in error, I believe, and so the reputation of our agency was at risk. (Justin, Rd 1)

Amy highlighted her responsibility to the clients her agency serves. She discussed a situation where a CIT left unexpectedly, "She [the CIT] just up and left. I was like 'What am I supposed to do with her clients?'" (Rd 1). Participants shared they felt a sense of responsibility to their agency, to their clients, and even to themselves to effectively fulfill their duties as site supervisors. This sense of responsibility was connected to their duty as a Gatekeeper. Participants had an obligation to protect these various entities from CITs who engaged in unethical behavior. Henry said, "I'm, um, I'm working towards protecting the clients and our reputation as an organization, and so whatever needs to happen" (Rd 1). When he said "whatever needs to happen", I interpreted that as his way of saying he was obligated to take appropriate action as a Gatekeeper to maintain the integrity of his agency and the safety of his clients. All participants acknowledged the immense responsibility that comes with supervising CITs.

The subtheme Welcomed Responsibility emerged from the data after both interviews. Participants recognized the additional responsibility supervising CITs brings as well as the increased level of diligence they were obligated to engage in as Gatekeepers, but all participants voiced their willingness to take on such responsibility. Even after having managing a challenging situation with a CIT, Justin explained,

I mean I think one of the coolest things about my experience in that is that all the clinicians that I have supervised over the years at a site are still in contact with me and I get to hear about their amazing careers, their amazing private practices. And so, that just is a rewarding part of my career. So, I think despite having that one really challenging experience it's, uh overall, it's such a wonderful thing. (Rd 1)

Cari also demonstrated Welcomed Responsibility when she shared,

...I take on that, um, it's a choice to supervise, and so I need to be prepared for that responsibility and, um, be willing to sort of address concerns, and confront, and things like that. Um. Because it really... Uh. It's an option. I don't have to do this, so if I'm gonna choose to do something I should be fully invested in it. (Rd 1)

All participants disclosed challenges to being a site supervisor but they continued to voluntarily consent to be in the Site Supervisor Role.

Within the superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, subthemes emerged which included Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. This superordinate theme encapsulated participants' experience of their duties as a site supervisor. It also provided insight into the meaning participants make of the role such as feelings of pride and their sense of responsibility. Ultimately, the Site Supervisor Role helped CITs develop and protected the profession from unethical situations.

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance emerged as a superordinate theme. All participants referenced communication in their interviews in some way.

Participants highlighted the different forms of communication they have experienced in

program-site alliances such as emails, phone calls, training workshops hosted by the university, CIT evaluations, and site visits. Participants viewed these forms of communication as strategies to connect with the university. Amy said, "...a lot of times, they have, um, opportunities to go to workshops. They all tend to offer different kinds of workshops. I've gone to some of them...It's a way to stay connected, provide additional training and whatnot" (Amy, Rd 2). Participants also shared their experiences with little or ineffective communication. Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance evolved into a superordinate theme with subthemes as the study progressed. The subthemes for Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance include Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of the University's Dedication, and Barriers to Effective Communication.

Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties. Participants explained that communication with the university helped them fulfill their duties as site supervisors. As established, Gatekeeper was seen as a responsibility for site supervisors. When participants were able to communicate within the program-site alliance they found gatekeeping issues were less difficult to resolve. Henry stated,

Those [gatekeeping] conversations are so much easier, uh, when there's open lines of communication, compared to when it's kind of, you know, behind the scene, and not really hands-on from, uh, the academic institution. I really struggle to have those conversations about when they're [CITs are] struggling. (Henry, Rd 1)

Justin provided an example of the difficulty he faced as a Gatekeeper when communication with the university was unproductive and missing. Referencing the CIT who struggled with addiction he shared,

...we really needed an urgent intervention but our system was set out that it made it very challenging and that's, I think, why we wanted to lean on the supervisor from the university...And that was the worst part is that one of my good colleagues who is now the director there I couldn't even get her to understand how urgent the situation was. (Justin, Rd 1)

From his perspective Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was ineffective. He reported that it seemed like

...they didn't want to take any action. They seemed to not be able to do anything about that so...Then one day the intern was gone and she went to [city name] where she was put into inpatient and we never heard from her again. (Justin, Rd 1)

The CIT was removed from his site without any communication about the situation. Suddenly Justin was faced with attending to the clients the CIT was serving. On one hand, the gatekeeping concern was resolved but now he was unexpectedly faced with managing his responsibilities as a clinician. The lack of Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance made it more challenging for him to fulfill his Gatekeeper role.

Participants also discussed how helpful communication was when they were attending to duties associated with Facilitator of CIT Development. Dallas articulated communication with the university helped him know “what the school expects” so he knew what CITs “need to be experiencing at our site” (Dallas, Rd 2). When there was

clear communication with the university, Dallas could attend to specific programmatic requirements for individual CITs. Amy echoed this idea,

...if I'm connected to the [university] person, um, I feel like I can, you know, toss around ideas for the student. I feel more connected to the student and the program. Otherwise, it's, I have students who have schools out there somewhere, and I don't really know what they're doing or what their programs are like...So I feel like I could do my job better if had a better connection. (Rd 2)

Having open communication with the university helped site supervisors fulfill their duties, especially with remediation if a CIT was having difficulty with their growth. Dallas illustrated a collaborative approach when helping impaired CITs was the use of communication,

...having that person to be flexible and...creative of going, "Okay, how can we help the student be successful?" Because I would much rather a student be successful and overcome barriers, than, you know, to have to move to another site, or, you know, be removed from the program or something like that...(Rd 2)

The subtheme Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties emerged because participants admitted that open communication with universities was a form of support when they performed their responsibilities as site supervisors.

Expression of the University's Dedication. Other participants viewed Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance demonstrated a university's commitment to CIT success, thus, Expression of the University's Dedication emerged as a subtheme. Justin highlighted, "I've really appreciated those who have taken extra time and, and have done a tour of wherever I'm at or something like that, and really been

interested in what the student is doing and their growth” (Rd 2). When universities took the time to communication with him through site visits, Justin perceived the university caring about the sort of experience the CIT has at his site. Henry supported Justin’s position,

Whether it’s the site visit before the interns get here, more than halfway through...just so they [know] what, uh, what the organization looks like, and they have hands-on...it [a site visit] shows commitment to the organizations and what they’re doing. (Rd 1)

Participants said communication illustrated the university’s level of investment in the success of their CITs. “Yeah, I mean, I think it's taking the time to communicate” that illustrates a university’s care for CITs (Justin, Rd 2)

Barriers to Effective Communication. Barriers to Effective Communication emerged as a subtheme for Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance.

Participants identified impediments that hindered contact with the university. Referencing her virtual sandtray, Cari said,

...I definitely feel like that communication can be an obstacle. A little mountain in here, maybe. They’re there. So it kinda feels like there's things getting in the way sometimes. And maybe the time is always the factor. And nobody has time. (Rd 2)

She viewed the resource of time as an obstruction to communication. She recognized that both her and the university potentially find it challenging to make time to connect with one another. Dallas hypothesized that “...the school might...might have some unnecessary

barriers that maybe they're even oblivious to...That make contact difficult. (Rd 2). Justin shared difficulties he perceived as barriers to communication,

...[if] you can't find the site supervisor, you can't schedule a meeting, they don't show up when they schedule it, it's, um, or it's a rushed meeting...They come into your office and they're throwing their stuff down and they say..."All right Justin, what do you think? Are there any problems? No? Okay, I'm outta here." Like, that doesn't seem like a, a rich experience of learning and, and growth...(Rd 2)

Participants voiced communication was instrumental in their success as site supervisors; barriers compromised their view of the program-site alliance as a whole.

Amy highlighted how one can feel supported or unsupported as a site supervisor depending on the manner in which communication occurs with universities. Amy shared a situation where the university discovered she did not have a supervisor on site when CITs were present. As a result, CITs were temporarily removed from the site immediately without notice, leaving Amy with many clients who could not be provided services. She reported not being aware of this requirement and was asked to engage in "remediation" (Amy, Rd 1). Amy stated, "The way it happened was, was unkind to the students. It was cruel to our clients. And it was really unfair to me. They could've said, 'Hey, we heard that there's not a supervisor at all times.'" (Amy, Rd 1). She expressed the way the university communicated "...was really punitive...And, um, degrading and condescending..." (Amy, Rd 1). She reported the way this situation was handled by the university violated her trust in the program-site alliance. She said she felt personally attacked, unsupported, and judged. She explained,

...the difference is when, when I feel supported by the [university] field director...and I've had those experiences. I've had this, this problem with a student. [The university field director said,] "I'm so sorry you're experiencing that. Can you please write that up in a report? And then, um, we'll talk to the student." And, um, I felt supported. And they said, "We're so sorry that happened. We hope that you'll continue to have our students...because we love having them come to your place." (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy's narrative illustrates the manner in which communication occurs in the program-site alliance can impact site supervisor's view of the relationship. For Amy, when the "...the response from the school was so kind...I'm like "Yep, I'll take students from your program any day" (Amy, Rd 2). She disclosed she was more likely to supervise CITs when communication occurred in a supportive manner. This is noteworthy, as counselor education programs need field sites for their CITs.

While participants acknowledged various barriers, some provided insight into moving beyond the obstacle. Cari stated,

Just remembering that they [the university] have their part, I'm doing my part so, um, those obstacles really shouldn't be insurmountable in any way...And I don't feel like they are, I just feel like sometimes...sometimes those obstacles annoy me more than others. So, but, they're not that bad. (Cari, Rd 2)

She admitted to feeling irritated by the barriers but she demonstrated a willingness to move past them. Other participants spoke of accountability as a way to overcome communication challenges. For Justin, accountability meant both the university and the site supervisor meet expectations in accordance with their role. He explained,

The accountability piece is on both sides, and that means that me as the supervisor at the site and, um, the university, who is providing the interns, are held accountable and that means that they're available to answer questions, um, they're available to have tough conversations around remediation, uh, they're there to provide resources for the students, um, both ways...[internship] has to do with, you know, emotional growth and, um, training and, you know, looking at these different models of supervision, uh, you know, whether it's staffing cases or the student's development. There's all these different types of dynamics going on and I think both sides need to be, uh, accountable and available to the students to optimize growth for them. (Justin, Rd 2)

For Dallas, accountability meant taking responsibility for missteps. When he was dealing with the university misplacing an evaluation about a CIT who was presenting with gatekeeping concerns, he reported it was helpful when the university took accountability for their mistake. He said,

And the school recognized, you know, they quickly owned that they had made mistakes. So, and then, we [the site] probably could have communicated more earlier on our end, too...I'm going, "You know, let's just do the best we can, and let's try and make things work from here. Let's just own what we did wrong and let's learn from it, let's move forward." (Dallas, Rd 2)

Participants touched on ways to move through barriers to communication within the program-site alliance.

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance emerged as a superordinate theme with Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of the University's

Dedication, and Barriers to Effective Communication developing as subthemes.

Communication was instrumental in the program-site alliance and was related to other emergent themes. Without communication, participants reported feeling uneasy and their other roles become activated such as Gatekeeper. For example, Justin stated,

I think when there's not good communication, there's not good accountability, uh, there isn't a good relationship with the university, then we kinda get into some of these areas where we can have, uh, issues” (Justin, Rd 2)

He became worried that the CIT may not be developing as they should or that his clientele were not being served in accordance with his agency’s reputation. Henry spoke of being unsettled about clients’ welfare when there is a lack of effective communication. He shared,

...without communication, I’m always concerned that there’s no questions. So I start to...my, my personal experience, uh, is to start to feel anxious about...or just concerned, not really anxious. But really concerned that, you know, making sure the client is getting their needs met...(Henry, Rd 1)

As participants have highlighted, the program-site alliance was viewed as favorable when communication was effective. When site supervisors had negative experiences with communication, their view of the program-site alliance was tainted. And participants shared that the negative view could be restored.

Independent Mutualism

Another superordinate theme that emerged was Independent Mutualism. This theme encompassed the separateness that exists between the field site and the university while acknowledging the mutual benefits each receives when they both serve CITs.

Participants recognized the field site and the university have different goals and approaches to CIT development.

So, um, academically, we-we really have no idea what's going on at the school...Um, and so...and then honestly, the school, I doubt knows...everything I do with that...with that student is learning, uh, learning and is experiencing completely on a day-to-day basis. There's gonna be some stuff that neither one of us fully know what's going on in the other...But, uh, so we have some different worlds that we live in. So in that essence, we are separate...Um, but we have a common interest in that student. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Henry highlighted the separateness between field sites and universities when he said, "...our job is to deal with the lives of other people. A lot of the stuff that's being taught inside of academia is theoretical and conceptual" (Henry, Rd 1). And Cari explained, "Um, for now it kinda feels like we're on different...different places. Or we're at different places..." (Cari, Rd 2). Participants acknowledged a separateness or independence from one another exists between the field site and the university.

This divergence was present, yet participants spoke of the field site being connected to the university. There was a mutualistic relationship between the site and the university when CITs were placed in the field.

I just think it's kind of a give-and-take. Like they [affiliated university] give me this great person that's gonna work with me and I'm gonna take that responsibility and, and do everything I can to make sure they're [CIT] ready to go out on their own when they're done. (Cari, Rd 1)

Dallas expounded on Cari's description of mutualism,

Because, uh, the student wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the school...and we wouldn't benefit from them being here...And then, the student wouldn't be prepared to enter the field without a site to adequately prepare them as well. So yeah, I do see that as being partners and equal...equal folks on our end as well as the school. (Dallas, Rd1)

Participants discussed how their site benefits from having CITs placed with them. Cari said,

And like then a lot of times I get...um, I get a lot of enjoyment out of it but also a lot of help, to be honest. We wouldn't offer the number of groups we offer without that [a CIT]...And just with not having three full-time counselors, it's nice. On the day that our sixth-grade counselor is gone we have an intern there so it's still like we're at full strength. (Rd 2)

Dallas shared Cari's experience,

But on this end also, we want it to be mutually beneficial to our facility, that I can take some of the burden off some of my clinicians' workload...by having that intern work with some of our juveniles that don't need quite a high level of intensity, but will allow that clinician to be able to focus on the more high-intensity juveniles. (Dallas, Rd 1)

Both indicated that when CITs were placed at their site, workload was dispersed so clinicians could attend to their duties more effectively. Justin brought up the mutualistic relationship in his discussion of workshops the university offers, "I think things that I've seen really positive is when the, um, [affiliated] university has done great trainings and, and things like that so it's a really reciprocal relationship" (Justin, Rd 1).

Independent Mutualism developed as a superordinate theme when the participants spoke of their experience with the program-site alliance. Participants noted the field site and the university are separate, individual entities that engage in a mutually beneficial relationship when they share a CIT. “The school is more instructional, and...we're more experiential” (Dallas, Rd 1); and “Um, not to be blunt but it's free labor. So it's really nice to have help” (Cari, Rd 2).

Regulated Support

Regulated Support emerged as a theme in the first round of interviews and was verified in the second round. Regulated Support described participants' experience of the balance between autonomy and support provided by universities. Participants reported appreciating the independence to manage their site and operate as a site supervisor in a manner befitting their environment. They reported they value the ability to call upon the university when needed. For instance,

INTERVIEWER ...you value that sense of independence and freedom that the universities are giving you, when you do have students.

CARI Yes. (Cari, Rd 1)

Cari highlighted autonomy while Dallas highlighted calling upon the university when he deemed it necessary,

But, you know, we don't need a ton of interaction, either. Um, I think being able to give the support when we need it and, uh, you know, knowing that the schools seeing the evaluations on the student, knowing where the student's at...the school being able to talk to me if there's any issues in that evaluation process. Making

sure the students are getting what they're supposed to get from their site...um,
that's fine. (Rd 1)

Participants went on to discuss occurrences when the relationship between autonomy and support is unbalanced. Justin explained his experience when the university wasn't present during a significant gatekeeping issue. He stated, "...but I feel like the university...again I love my former school but at the time they had just lost their chair and we were kind of in this place of not having a lot of support" (Justin, Rd 1). He continued, "...I think in a lot of ways uh, I felt maybe even frustration with the [affiliated university]" (Justin, Rd 1). When the program-site alliance lacked support from Justin's perspective, he felt frustrated. Additionally, Amy shared her experience of a university providing too much support. She said, "And the school that I have the most trouble with ironically, and thinking about it, is the one that comes most often [for site visits]..." (Amy, Rd 2). Amy went on saying,

I have mixed feelings because I'd really like to see the schools be more involved in the field. And then I think, "Oh, dear Lord, I don't need them in my

business...and I don't have the time."...So there's, there's a grey area. (Amy, Rd 2)

Amy is ambivalent about the university being overly involved in the program-site alliance. Participants valued a balance between autonomy as a site supervisor and the support provided by universities.

...there's a space in between because you've got to have some autonomy, you know, of the site and the purpose of the site supervisor, and then the purpose of the school. And each have very distinct purposes and so that kind of create boundaries uh, for each of us...understanding, you know, uh, we can't put too

much on the site supervisor. We have to understand they have a job to do and a purpose to do, and I, you know, I in turn, you know, don't harass the school with stuff that, you know, really isn't huge. (Dallas, Rd 2)

Participants preferred universities regulate the amount of support they provided to the field placement site, hence the theme Regulated Support.

Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances

The last superordinate theme for this study was Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. The essence of this theme focused on the differences site supervisors experience when they had multiple university affiliations or a university had a shift in faculty. Henry explained,

And it's, it really, the relationship between the school, um, and between, like, their representative from the academic institution and myself, varies significantly on the academic institution on the whole...Um, but, so I have gone anywhere from absolutely no communication, to pretty regular communication in the on-site visits, and working together and really collaborating, um, and really depending on, uh, having a wonderful collaboration and just development of, you know, the counselor-in-training. (Henry, Rd 1)

The nature of the program-site alliance can be different across universities. Amy noticed that the amount of support she receives shifts,

Some universities offer more support than others. Some schools are like I never hear from anyone. I get the student in. I get an email, 'Please do this.' and I never hear from them otherwise...So it, it depends on the school (Rd 1)

For Cari, the inconsistency she experienced left her questioning the program curriculum. She said, "...working with two different universities sometimes it feels like, 'I wonder why this school doesn't do what this school does?' And they're asking different things or checking in at different times. So that's a little bit different" (Cari, Rd 2). Amy discussed experiencing inconsistency in the administration of field site requirements. When referencing the situation where CITs were removed from her site due to a lack of supervision she shared, "And then knowing that other sites don't have the same enforcement of that rule...That feels personal" (Amy, Rd 1). She felt attacked because she knew other sites with similar supervision did not have their CITs removed.

Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances developed as a superordinate theme. Participant acknowledged differences in program-site alliances such as differences in the management of the program-site alliances, differences in curriculum, and differences in support. The meaning participants attached to the inconsistency seem to have a negative impact on their view of the program-site alliance.

Relationships Between Themes

In IPA methodology, the researcher highlights the relationships that exist between themes that have emerged from the data. For this study, the relationships between the themes impacted site supervisors' view of the program-site alliance. Refer to Figure 4.4 for a visual representation of this written account. The site supervisor took on several responsibilities, it was like they were an octopus and each tentacle managed a different responsibility. As the data showed, the dynamics within the program-site alliance assisted in the performance and completion of their responsibilities. It was the site supervisor's experience of the dynamics that impacted their view of the program-site alliance. When

looking at Figure 4.4, we see the superordinate themes that specifically concern the program site alliance placed between the site supervisor and the images that represent the relationship. As the site supervisor moved through the dynamics and accumulated experiences, the knowledge they gained from those experiences was like a pair of glasses that helped them see the program-site alliance. The dynamics in the relationship acted as filters the site supervisor used to form an opinion of it. For instance, if a site supervisor experienced a balance between autonomy and support (Regulated Support), they had a favorable view of the program-site alliance. If a site supervisor experienced too much support and a university was perceived as overinvolved, they viewed the program-site alliance in a negative light.

The different views of the relationship are represented by the various images of weather surrounding the pool. Similar to weather, the program-site alliance was not found to be static. Based upon the dynamics in the relationship, the program-site alliance shifted from being seen as helpful to being seen as a burden depending on the occurrences within the relationship. For example, Dallas discussed a situation where the university made a mistake with paperwork. He was not satisfied with the program-site alliance when this was happening. But as soon as he and the university communicated, the negative view of the program-site alliance shifted to more positive.

Overall, the most significant relationship between the themes was balance. As depicted by the scale and lines going to all the themes represented in Figure 4.4, balance of the dynamics in the program-site alliance was vital. If the dynamics become unbalanced, the site supervisor had a difficult time completing their duties and they began to perceive the relationship as challenging. For example, if Site Supervisor Role was on

one side of the scale and Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was on the other, the relationship between the two impacted the site supervisor's view of the program-site alliance. When the site supervisor was confronting an urgent gatekeeping issue and the university is not available for consultation, the site supervisor viewed the program-site alliance as lacking communication and support. Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance and Regulated Support were unbalanced, one side of the scale falls while the other rises. Without communication and support from the university, a site supervisor could not take the action necessary to mitigate the gatekeeping issue. This led to safety concerns for their clients or it jeopardized the reputation of their agency. When the scale was unbalanced, other dynamics identified by the themes became impacted. For instance, the program-site alliance was no longer mutually beneficial, there was too much independence in the relationship, no communication, and a lack of support. Site supervisors could not fulfill their duties when the relationship was unbalanced and this left the program-site alliance strained. Balance of the themes helped site supervisors perform their duties and maintains a strong, working program-site alliance.

Summary

Site supervisors' experience of the program-site alliance was explored in this study. In accordance with IPA, I identified themes and discussed the relationships between them. Emergent superordinate themes for this study were Site Supervisor Role, Regulated Support, Independent Mutualism, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. Subthemes for Site Supervisor Role were Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. Subthemes for Communication Within the Program-Site

Alliance were Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of the University's Dedication, and Barriers to Effective Communication. The findings in this study offer university field placement coordinators insight into factors that foster a working program-site alliance as well as factors that yield a strained relationship with site supervisors.

Refer to Figure 4.11 Filters for my virtual sandtray that represents the final themes. Site Supervisor Role is represented by the octopus holding various objects that illustrate the many responsibilities site supervisors fulfill. Independent Mutualism, Regulated Support, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances are represented to the right of the octopus. The large glasses illustrate the connection between the dynamics occurring in the program-site alliance and the site supervisors' view of the relationship. If there is balance in the themes, the site supervisor views the relationship favorably. However, if it is unbalanced, the relationship is strained. This is illustrated with the scales connected to all the themes and the different weather patterns surrounding the octopus, representing the site supervisor, and bear, representing the university, in the pool together.

Figure 4.4. Filters
(Tamara Final Results)

Site Supervisor Role

The octopus is the site supervisor who has many duties. The crown represents Sense of Pride. The fence is Gatekeeper. The flowers represent Facilitator of CIT Development. And the umbrella represents sites supervisors' sense of responsibility to shield the profession. The octopus is smiling to represent Welcomed Responsibility.

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance

The mouth represents communication. The mountains represent Barriers to Effective Communication, the heart and angry face represent feelings related to communication, the toolbox represents Ally to Fulfill Site Supervisor Duties, and the diploma is Expression of University's Dedication.

Balance Between All Themes

The scale represents the participants' hope for balance in the themes. If one gets out of balance their duties as site supervisor become unbalanced.

Regulated Support

The traffic light is controlling the ambulance. The ambulance, which represents the university, will respond only when the light is green. Site supervisors decide when the light turns green.

Individual Mutualism

In nature birds have a mutualistic relationship with zebras. They help each other, yet they can survive on their own. This is similar to the dynamics experienced by site supervisors. They prefer their autonomy but recognized mutual benefits when they supervised a CIT.

View of the Program-Site Alliance

The dynamics within Regulated Support, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances, and Individual Mutualism influence how site supervisors see the program-site alliance, hence the glasses. These themes are like filters that the site supervisor views the program-site alliance through.

Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances

The present represents the inconsistency site supervisors experienced. It is imagery for site supervisors not knowing what to expect in the program-site alliance.

The Program-Site Alliance

The pool with the octopus (site supervisor) and bear (university) in it represents the program-site alliance. The program-site alliance is contained, like a pool, to only when they have a CIT in common. Like a pool, the program-site alliance can be fun or dangerous and somewhere in between. The weather represents the different types of program-site alliances. They can be negative, positive, or varying degrees of both.



CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The findings showed that site supervisors' experience of the program-site alliance ranged from connected to detached, from strained to helpful. They shared aspects of their experience that spanned the continuum of an unreliable program-site alliance to a strong program-site alliance. In this final chapter, I review the results of this study and discuss implications for counselor educators who serve as field placement coordinators.

Additionally, I contextualize the findings using current literature. I end this chapter with an explanation of limitations and potential avenues for future research.

Summary of Findings

Research is limited about the experience of site supervisors when in the program-site alliance. Expectations about the responsibilities each take on in the program-site alliance have been examined, as have outcomes from the partnership (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986; Lewis et al., 2005; Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). Yet, there is no literature thoroughly exploring site supervisors' experience and meaning-making process regarding the program-site alliance. Using IPA, an in-depth investigation was conducted to gain insight into what occurs for site supervisors in the program-site alliance. For the purposes of this study, the program-site alliance was defined as the relationship between the university and the field placement site that exists when a CIT completes fieldwork required for their master's degree.

The program-site alliance is a relationship that is established due to a required arrangement between universities and field placement sites. Counselor education

programs' accrediting body, the Council for Accreditation of Counselor and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), require that CITs be engaged in fieldwork for a significant portion of their training (CACREP, 2016). CACREP has stipulated specific standards for the amount of hours CITs are expected to work in the field, as a result, counselor education programs need field placement sites (2016). Research suggests the interactions that occur between the university and the field site can impact CIT experiences (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Dodds, 1986; Lewis et al., 2005). As such, this exploration of site supervisors' experience of the program-site alliance provided insight into the relationship. The research question was: What is the experience of site supervisors when they are in relationship with their affiliated counselor education program during CIT field experiences? With the use of IPA, I was able to thoroughly explore site supervisors' experiences in an idiographic, comprehensive manner to focus on their personal accounts. The overarching goal was to understand their experience and meaning-making associated with the program-site alliance.

In my analysis, I identified five superordinate themes: Site Supervisor Role, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance, Independent Mutualism, Regulated Support, and Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role had four subthemes, which included Gatekeeper, Facilitator of CIT Development, Sense of Pride, and Welcomed Responsibility. The superordinate theme, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance had three subthemes, which included Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of University's Dedication, and Barriers to Effective Communication. These individual themes amalgamated to create the essence of participants' experience of the program-site alliance.

Theme 1: Site Supervisor Role

The superordinate theme, Site Supervisor Role, captured what participants experienced as site supervisor responsibilities and the meaning they made of this role. They viewed Gatekeeper as an essential duty for site supervisors. The subtheme, Gatekeeper described the site supervisor's role in protecting the integrity of their agency, their clientele, and the counseling profession as a whole from CITs who have the potential to violate professional ethics. For example, Henry said,

So, um, I'm huge with gatekeeping, too. So I do, I consider myself to be a little more aggressive or blunt. And some of that is because I need to keep out who is actually doing work and who is not. (Rd 1)

Many participants discussed the emotional toll of being a Gatekeeper. One participant reported feeling lost when gatekeeping concerns arose. Participants also shared they experienced a myriad of emotions as a Gatekeeper, particularly if the gatekeeping issue continued unresolved for an extended period of time. These included frustration, sadness, fear, confusion, and anger. One participant reported feeling guilt if they had to terminate a CIT's placement. Bogo, Regehr, Power, and Regehr (2007) supported this when they found site supervisors were conflicted about their roles as gatekeepers and clinicians. However, despite the intensity of the emotions inherent in the Gatekeeper role, participants' desire to maintain the integrity of their agency or profession and to protect clients took precedent, therefore, they followed through with their gatekeeping duties.

Another subtheme that emerged was Facilitator of CIT Development. This subtheme reflected site supervisors' duty to foster growth in the CITs they supervised. They believed fieldwork was a complimentary element to what the CIT was learning in

the classroom. They reported it vital CITs applied the conceptual material they have accumulated in a practical setting such as the field placement agency. Also, exposing CITs to the realities of the profession developed as a commonality between participants. If a CIT was not developing at a typical rate, in the subjective view of the site supervisor, the Gatekeeper role was activated and the site supervisor experienced the need to intervene. Participants saw Facilitator of CIT Development as a major duty associated with the Site Supervisor Role.

Within Site Supervisor Role, Sense of Pride developed as an additional subtheme. As I listened to participants discuss their role, it became apparent they felt proud of their accomplishments as clinicians and supervisors. Some explicitly discussed feeling proud of their agency's reputation that they worked diligently to construct. Others discussed feeling proud of their approach to supervision. For others, Sense of Pride was insinuated in their discussion and it was illustrated more by the way they spoke or the feeling I was picking up from them. For instance, Justin displayed pride when he spoke of his contact with past CITs,

I think that's the...that's the fun thing is that I have stayed in contact with almost all of my interns that I've had...when I do my interviewing skills class, if I'm teaching it myself, I'll show them my former interns and what they're doing professionally. I'll be like, "Look at this...this is what's happened." (Justin, Rd 2)

It was evident there was a Sense of Pride regarding the Site Supervisor Role.

The last subtheme within Site Supervisor Role was Welcomed Responsibility. This subtheme highlighted the additional responsibilities site supervisor take on when they supervise a CIT. It also captured participants' willingness to take on these

responsibilities. Welcomed Responsibility went beyond the additional duties associated with the role, it also captured participants' sense of responsibility. This was related to the subtheme, Gatekeeper. In the event a CIT presented with a gatekeeping concern, the site supervisors reported feeling responsible to maintain the integrity of their agency or the profession and upholding client safety. Participants explained no matter the level of pressure associated with supervising CITs, they continued to volunteer for the role. Thus, Welcomed Responsibility became a subtheme of Site Supervisor Role.

Theme 2: Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance

Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance emerged as a second superordinate theme with subthemes of Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties, Expression of the University's Dedication, and Barriers to Effective Communication. All participants discussed aspects of communication and its influence on their experience of the program-site alliance. They discussed various forms of communication as well as provided insight into their experience of effective, ineffective, and absence of communication. Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was a multifaceted superordinate theme.

The subtheme Ally in Fulfilling Site Supervisor Duties identified communication with universities as a method that helped site supervisors fulfill their responsibilities. Many participants spoke of how communication during gatekeeping issues eased the burden of managing the situation. Others reported experiencing additional stress in gatekeeping situations when there was a complete absence of communication. Some participants highlighted their role as site supervisor was less complicated when there was communication with the university. Amy stated,

...if I'm connected to the [university] person, um, I feel like I can, you know, toss around ideas for the student. I feel more connected to the student and the program. Otherwise, it's, I have students who have schools out there somewhere, and I don't really know what they're doing or what their programs are like...So I feel like I could do my job better if had a better connection. (Rd 2)

For one participant, communication increased his connection to universities in such a way that it highlighted partnership in the program-site alliance. Dallas shared if he was supervising a CIT who was struggling developmentally, he communicated with the university and collaborated to attend to the CIT's needs. He explained this could be a preventative measure with gatekeeping issues. Participants also recognized communication and partnership with the university helped them have a clearer understanding of programmatic expectations, which assisted site supervisors when tailoring their field experience to meet the needs of CITs. Participants acknowledged how helpful communication can be to performing their duties as site supervisors. Ally to Fulfill Site Supervisor Duties developed as a subtheme for Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance.

Another subtheme that emerged was Expression of the University's Dedication. This subtheme focused on participants' view that Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance demonstrated a university's commitment to CIT success and willingness to support the field site. Site visits were referenced as examples that proved a university's dedication. Participants shared site visits communicated to them that the university cared about the experience their site provided CITs. It showed the university's interest in CIT growth and development. "Yeah, I mean, I think it's taking the time to communicate" that

illustrates a university's care for CITs (Justin, Rd 2). Taking time to conduct site visits was an Expression of the University's Dedication.

The last subtheme in Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance was Barriers to Effective Communication. Many participants identified various obstacles to effective communication. One mentioned the availability of time. She said site supervisors and university coordinators found it difficult to find the time to communicate. Another participant highlighted lack of accessibility. He shared experiences of being unable to reach a university coordinator or a scheduled meeting was missed. He has found it difficult to access the university in times of need. Another participant expressed the way communication occurred within the program-site alliance was a barrier. She said she experienced some interactions with universities as punitive, degrading, condescending, and unfair. In these instances, she was activated by the manner in which the university spoke to her. She felt unsupported. She indicated that she would be less likely to supervise students from universities who she perceived as unsupportive.

Barriers to Effective Communication were present in the program-site alliance. However, some participants said these barriers could be circumvented. Accountability was brought up as a strategy to overcome barriers. Accountability was discussed in two contexts. The first was related to the university and the field site being held accountable for fulfilling their respective duties. The second was related to the university and the field site taking accountability for their actions in times of conflict. For instance,

And the school recognized, you know, they quickly owned that they had made mistakes. So, and then, we [the site] probably could have communicated more earlier on our end, too...I'm going, "You know, let's just do the best we can, and

let's try and make things work from here. Let's just own what we did wrong and let's learn from it, let's move forward." (Dallas, Rd 2)

Participants acknowledged Barriers To Effective Communication were present in the program-site alliance and they offered solutions to work through the barriers.

Communication Within the Program-Site was a significant theme that emerged from the data. Some participants shared a program-site alliance without helpful communication led to gatekeeping concerns. When gatekeeping concerns arose, participants reported an increase in worry for their agency and clientele as well as an increase in concern for CIT development. Ultimately, poor communication led to a site supervisor feeling unsupported within the program-site alliance, which directly impacted the site supervisor's desire to supervise CITs.

Theme 3: Independent Mutualism

Independent Mutualism captured the separateness described between the field site and the university while acknowledging the mutual benefits each received in the program-site alliance. Most participants discussed different duties the university and field site have and the divergent approaches to facilitating learning for CITs. Many saw the university as providing the conceptual knowledge CITs need in order to be successful in the field. Participants recognized the practical application inherent to fieldwork that cannot occur in the classroom. They acknowledged the university and the field site are independent entities, however, both benefited from CIT field placement. They saw the university benefited by having sites available for field placement where CITs can become effective clinicians. And participants discussed the benefit of having additional individuals to disburse their agency's workload according to the developmental

capabilities of the CIT. Participants highlighted the separateness that was present between their site and the university while accepting the mutual benefits they both experienced.

Independent Mutualism became a superordinate theme in this study.

Theme 4: Regulated Support

Regulated Support emerged as a superordinate theme that specifically referred to the program-site alliance. Regulated Support described participants' experience of the balance between autonomy and support provided by universities when in a relationship. Participants shared their preference to engage in the site supervisor role without interference from the university. They voiced their appreciation for the freedom to supervise CITs in a manner that fit their agency and CIT needs. They also disclosed their desire to manage their field site with little involvement from the university. As much as participants valued autonomy, they also acknowledged the need for university support. In challenging times, such as when gatekeeping issues were present, participants recognized university support was essential. It was important to participants to have the autonomy to embrace the site supervisor role as they saw fit but be able to call upon the university when there was a need. They said they preferred university support to be offered when requested, thus, Regulated Support was a theme.

Theme 5: Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances

The last superordinate theme for this study was Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. This theme discussed the differences site supervisors experience when they had multiple university affiliations or a university had a shift in faculty. Participants reported experiencing inconsistencies in the amount and styles of communication. They discussed their experience with inconsistencies in the enforcement of field site

expectations. Participants noticed differences in levels of support, too. Cari explained she questioned the program's curriculum when she experienced inconsistency in the program-site alliance. She said, "...working with two different universities sometimes it feels like, 'I wonder why this school doesn't do what this school does?' And they're asking different things or checking in at different times..." (Cari, Rd 2). Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances increases the challenges associated with the Site Supervisor Role.

Relationship Between Themes

The above themes expressed the dynamics site supervisors experienced in the program-site alliance. These themes were not independent from one another; they were all connected to participants' experience of the relationship. The interactions that occurred specific to the theme impacted site supervisors' view of the program-site alliance. For example, if communication was perceived as effective by the site supervisor, they had a favorable view of the program-site alliance. If the university was perceived as overinvolved, site supervisors saw the program-site in a negative light. Furthermore, the dynamics in the individual themes impeded a site supervisor's ability to perform their duties. During gatekeeping situations, an absence of support from the university prevented site supervisors from protecting their clients or agency from unethical occurrences, which was a highly valued responsibility for participants. When site supervisors could not perform their job, they had a negative experience of the relationship.

Overall, balance between all the themes proved to be the key to a working program-site alliance. If the dynamics identified by one theme did not meet the needs of

the site supervisor, the other themes were impacted. Amy's experience exemplified relationship between themes. For Amy, the way information was communicated to her when she was asked to provide on-site supervision whenever CITs were present was a Barrier to Effective Communication, so Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance (Theme 2) was unbalanced. This situation left Amy feeling unsupported and she continued to perceive the university as overinvolved in the management of her field setting, therefore, Regulated Support (Theme 4) and Independent Mutualism (Theme 3) were unbalanced. These imbalances were heightened for Amy because she was not experiencing the same dynamics in other program-site alliances, illustrating the significance of the theme Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances (Theme 5). In the end, Amy had a difficult time fulfilling the Site Supervisor Role (Theme 1). Amy reported Facilitating CIT Development became difficult for her because she experienced a decrease in trust with CITs and her confidence in her abilities as site supervisor declined. Findings in this study indicate balance between all themes is crucial in the program-site alliance and has significant implications for counselor education programs.

Implications

The results of this study offer practical implications for counselor education programs. The findings add to the current body of research in a number of ways. In this section, I will provide an overview of those implications and considerations for counselor educators. I include a discussion of how this study contributes to the literature in counselor education. The implications and contribution to literature provide insight for counselor education programs when attending to program-site alliances in which they are involved.

Working Alliances

The findings of this study expand on the conceptualization of the therapeutic and supervisory alliances (Bordin, 1979; 1983). The therapeutic and supervisory alliances are seen as collaborations for change, either in the client or the supervisee, and consist of three elements (Bordin, 1983). Bordin (1983) described the three elements as a) a mutual agreement between the partners concerning the goals of counseling or supervision, b) a mutual agreement regarding the tasks each will take responsibility for during counseling or supervision, and c) an emotional bond developed through collaboration and having a shared experience. The findings suggest this model can be applied to the program-site alliance with shifts in focus and language to accurately represent the dynamics of the relationship.

As referenced in Bordin's (1979, 1983) first element, the therapeutic and supervisory alliances' mutual goal is collaboration to foster change. The results indicate the mutual agreement in the program-site alliances is collaboration for change as well. The goal of collaboration in the program-site alliance is facilitating development, or change, in CITs. However, in therapeutic and supervisory alliances, one partner is seeking change while the other is offering change (Bordin, 1979). This dynamic is slightly different in the program-site alliance. The results of this study indicate neither the university nor the field site are seeking change, they are working together to foster change in a third party. Participants highlighted the relationship with affiliated universities lack hierarchy; they enter the relationship with equal amounts of power. Where as in Bordin's conceptualization of alliances, there is an assumed expertness in the relationship as one partner fosters or supports change. Within the program-site alliance,

both parties are experts of their respective crafts coming together to facilitate CIT development. This dynamic is highlighted in the theme Independent Mutualism in that participants acknowledged the separateness that exists between the university and the field site. The lack of hierarchy is also emphasized in the theme Regulated Support in that participants discussed the magnitude in which they valued autonomy as site supervisors. If they needed support from the university, participants reported calling upon the university as consultants not supervisors. Participants explained they do not require high levels of support and prefer to receive assistance only when they deemed it necessary. Like the alliances Bordin (1979, 1983) focused on, the collaboration that occurs in the program-site alliance intends to foster change. But unlike those alliances, the program-site alliance lacks hierarchy and differences in power.

Bordin conceptualized a second element in the therapeutic and supervisory alliances. He postulated that a mutual agreement regarding the tasks each will take responsibility for during counseling or supervision occurs between the partners in the alliance (1979, 1983). The findings of the current study suggest this transpires in the program-site alliance, too. Participants demonstrated a clear understanding of site supervisor expectations in the theme Site Supervisor Role. Participants reported they were informed of these expectations through their personal experiences as CITs and through trainings hosted by affiliated universities. The duties outlined by participants support those outlined by existing literature. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) explained site supervisors monitor the quality of services they provide while facilitating CIT development and acting as gatekeepers. Moreover, participants explained their expectations of universities, including offering support and communication. When one

partner did not follow through with their agreed upon responsibilities, conflict within the program-site alliance occurred. One participant spoke about misunderstanding a requirement of site supervisors. She understood the concern but was impacted by the interactions with the university that followed. This is captured by the subtheme Barriers to Effective Communication. The manner in which the communication happened in the program-site alliance left the participant feeling belittled, judged, and unsupported. Another participant shared a situation where there university failed to offer support during a significant gatekeeping issue. As indicated by current literature, the program-site alliance became a source of frustration and heightened emotions for these two participants (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Dodds, 1986; Dudek et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2007). Performing the agreed upon duties within the program-site alliance is vital to a successful relationship. Participants voiced communication is the key to facilitating fulfillment of university and field site responsibilities. As a result, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance emerged as the superordinate theme.

The last element conceptualized by Bordin emphasized the emotional bond that develops between partners in the therapeutic and supervisory alliance when they collaborate and have a shared experience (1979, 1983). He explained that stronger bonds exist in the alliances when there is liking, caring, and trust (Bordin, 1983). Stronger emotional bonds also develop based on the level of vulnerability each partner engages in, bringing more of their private self into the relationship (Bordin, 1983). Ladany et al. (1999) supported Bordin's work when they found the stronger the emotional bond in the alliance; the more satisfied parties were in the relationship. The findings of this inquiry suggest that Bordin's idea regarding the relationship being stronger when there is liking,

caring, and trust applies to the program-site alliance. Participants reported feeling more connected to universities in the program-site alliance when they were working with a program they had an extensive history with. For example, some participants served as site supervisors for the counselor education programs they graduated from. It was evident they had much respect for the program and demonstrated loyalty to the relationship. Other participants shared that the time universities invested in communicating with them illustrated their care for the shared CIT and them as site supervisors. Bordin's (1984) discussion of vulnerability strengthening alliances was found to be slightly different in the program-site alliance. Rather than sharing more of their private self as a display of vulnerability like in counseling or supervisory alliances, vulnerability in the program-site alliance was about each party taking accountability for mistakes. Recognizing when a misstep has occurred and communicating to resolve the issue was a form of vulnerability in the program-site alliance that strengthened the relationship. In addition, results indicate the program-site alliance was strengthened when both parties satisfied the agreed upon responsibilities. As outlined in the second element of Bordin's model, when universities and site supervisors performed the duties expected of them, the program-site alliance was viewed in a favorable light. This increased the trust Bordin outlined in his discussion of emotional bonds in alliances. The results of this study indicated the emotional bond in the program-site alliance is composed of liking, caring, and trust. These three characteristics were manifested in the program-site alliance through the use of vulnerability and accountability. The quality of the emotional bond impacts the level of connection a site supervisor experiences in the relationship similar to the therapeutic and supervisory

alliance (Bordin, 1979; 1983; Ladany et al. (1999), & Ladany et al., 2008). The actions of both parties can shift the feelings of connectedness.

The program-site alliance aligns with Bordin's conceptualization of therapeutic and supervisory alliances. The goals, responsibilities, and dynamics between the partners in the relationship may be different but overall the alliances are similar. Like therapeutic and supervisory alliances where the parties are more willing to engage in the relationship, the stronger the connection in the program-site alliance the more likely site supervisors will accept the responsibility of supervising CITs. For counselor education programs, this means they have familiarity with the program-site alliance. Even if university personnel have never conceptualized the program-site alliance, they already know what may be helpful in strengthening the relationship as they know what fosters connection in therapeutic or supervisory alliances. Balance between support and autonomy, effective communication, and working through misunderstandings in a caring manner facilitate working program-site alliances, much like therapeutic and supervisory alliances.

Implications Specific to Counselor Education Programs

The present study has additional implications for counselor education programs. The results illustrate the importance of taking time to foster the program-site alliance. When both parties in the relationship dedicate time to fulfill their duties or communicate with one another, the connection in the program-site alliance is stronger. Participants recognized time as a limited resource for both parties. I found that when participants experienced universities taking time to effectively fulfill their duties, site supervisors were better able to perform their responsibilities. As such, it may be helpful for the program-site alliance if universities designate personnel asked to only take on the role of

field placement coordinator or provide course waivers for faculty members asked to fill this position. This could ease university personnel workload and allow the individual to dedicate the time required to foster working program-site alliances.

In cases where counselor education programs lack the finances to have a specific person taking on the duties of field site coordinator only, there are less time consuming ways counselor education programs can attend to the program-site alliance. For instance, field placement coordinators can send a brief email to site supervisors as a reminder that the program coordinator was available if they needed anything, as suggested by Amy. Other ideas are scheduled site visits or training workshops hosted by the affiliated counselor education program. Participants voiced they felt supported when they received communication beyond that of the required placement paperwork.

A major finding that highlighted the value of dedicating time to the program-site alliance was that of following through with agreed upon duties. Site supervisors explained that when both parties upheld expectations of the relationship, they felt a stronger connection to the program-site alliance. This was especially revealed when the participants discussed their experiences with gatekeeping issues. Dudek et al. (2005) found that the role of gatekeeper is difficult, stressful, and time consuming. If a university failed to support site supervisors during gatekeeping concerns or were completely absent, the program-site alliance significantly suffered. It is vital that university field placement coordinator has the time to attend to gatekeeping issues and support the site supervisor in need to maintain the integrity of the program-site alliance.

Other implications are related to the theme Inconsistency Between Program-Site Alliances. Each participant shared they were involved in multiple program-site alliances.

They reported experiencing different dynamics in each program-site alliance. Participants reported differences in program expectations, support, and strength of the program-site alliances across universities. Some inconsistencies can be resolved at the university level. Participants discussed inconsistencies in expectations as a site supervisor such as CIT evaluation frequency or amount of paperwork. Inconsistencies could be due to different requirements between counselor education programs or the site supervisor might be housing students from various helping professions, such as a student from a counselor education program and a student from a social work training program. In the event a counselor education program is aware a field site is working with multiple universities, perhaps this is an opportunity for universities in close proximity to collaborate and develop expectations for program-site alliances as a way to foster consistent communication with field sites. For instance, all counselor education programs in one area could partner to develop consistent CIT evaluation instruments or use the same hour log format. Education programs from various helping professions could partner to host training workshops for site supervisors or develop a consistent mode of communication. Steps could be taken by education programs to minimize the inconsistency found in program-site alliances.

Further, participants experienced support as inconsistent. Some participants reported feeling supported by universities, while others reported experiencing a complete lack of support. However, they explained communication was a factor that alleviated the stress of managing the inconsistency between relationships. While Lewis et al. (2005) called for an increase in communication within the program-site alliance, I found participants desired a balance between a lack of communication and too much

communication. Balanced communication was directly related to participants feeling supported within the program-site alliance. Participants in this study had an individual view of what balanced communication and support was for them in the program-site alliance. As such, it seems important for field placement coordinators to broach this topic with site supervisors. When a coordinator can attend to support and communication within the program-site alliance in accordance with a site supervisor's preference, both parties will view the relationship as satisfactory. This can be discussed through a variety of ways and could include setting up a meeting between the site supervisor and the coordinator, communicating via email, or creating a brief questionnaire for site supervisors to complete. Consistency in communication was found to be valuable to participants. It is important university coordinators have an awareness of inconsistencies and take action to mitigate potential conflicts that could arise because of it.

While it is vital university coordinators take time to evaluate consistency across the program-site alliances in which they are involved in, perhaps consistency can be enhanced at a systemic level through standardization of field placement procedures. CACREP (2016) has set standards regarding fieldwork for counselor education programs, perhaps regulations regarding the program-site alliance would decrease the inconsistency participants discussed. For example, regulating how many CIT's site supervisor can supervise or guidelines stipulating how many program-site alliances a site can be a partner. It could also be helpful to have standards related to frequency of communication within the relationship. Literature suggests that a strained program-site alliance can intervene with CIT outcomes (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Dodds, 1986). CACREP's

involvement in the program-site alliance could enhance a field experience, thereby, helping CITs meet student outcome expectations.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate site supervisors desire stronger program-site alliances. This supports existing literature that suggests site supervisor's hope for more connection with their affiliated universities (Bogo et al., 2007; Carter & Duchac, 2013; Uellendahl & Tenenbaum, 2015). The manner in which university field placement coordinators work toward fostering stronger program-site alliances is dependent on what is accessible to them and their program. Suggestions have been made in this discussion of implications as ways universities could give attention to a much needed relationship. I found overlooking the program-site alliance could result in site supervisors' diminished interest in supervising CITs.

In addition to the implications regarding the program-site alliance, this study has implications for counselor education as to the manner in which qualitative research is conducted. From my perspective and as reported by the participants, utilizing virtual sandtray as an arts-based research practice assisted in gathering rich, detailed data. Much like traditional sandtray, the virtual sandtray provided participants the opportunity for deeper reflection and greater detail of their experience (Degges-White & Davis, 2011; Homeyer & Sweeney, 2011). All participants voiced their approval of the tool during the study. Cari was so fond of the virtual sandtray, she said she was interested in creating one for her middle school clients. Likewise, as a researcher, I found the virtual sandtray facilitated deeper levels of discussion and provided a holistic view of each participant's experience. Leavy (2015) has postulated an arts-based research tool, such as virtual sandtray, allows researchers to challenge assumptions about what constitutes research

and knowledge. Including data collection methods such as virtual sandtray is an opportunity for researchers to expand the definition of qualitative research in an effort to gather the most comprehensive data corpus possible of a particular phenomenon.

Limitations

There were some limitations associated with this study. One was regarding participants' involvement in the data collection phase of the inquiry. After several attempts to connect with Henry for a second interview, he was unable to complete the second interview due to personal reasons. Henry participated in the first round of interviews and member checks plus he was involved in the final member check. Additionally, Dallas' second interview did not contain a virtual sandtray. Due to his schedule and my lack of communication regarding the expectations for the second round of interviews, Dallas did not create a second virtual sandtray. The data includes his transcripts for the first and second interview, the virtual sandtrays he created in the first interview, and his three member checks. Both of these situations may have limited the depth of description regarding their experience as a site supervisor. Henry's and Dallas' work experience and tenure as site supervisors added a unique perspective to the data corpus. The limited exploration of their experience with the program-site alliance could have left important aspects concealed.

Another limitation in this inquiry may have been the virtual sandtray. While participants voiced their affinity for the virtual sandtray and rich data was collected, it is an emergent tool in conducting arts-based research (Leavy, 2015). It is possible the use of this technology was more of a distraction, rather than a facilitator of conversation. At the start of each interview, I took time to explain how to use the virtual sandtray. Some

participants admitted to not being comfortable with technology and I experienced some participants hesitant to engage with the computer-based tool. Using the virtual sandtray may have detracted from participants' full attention in the interview. Also, taking the time to familiarize participants with the technology may have used too much of their available time. They may have felt pressed for time, which could have led to a limited description of their experience with the program-site alliance. Adding the virtual sandtray to the study could have been an impediment for some participants.

The participant pool could have been a limitation, too. The individuals who volunteered to be participants may have had biases toward the program-site alliance that could have impacted the findings. For example, all participants in this study welcomed the responsibility of supervising CITs and were dedicated to being effective supervisors. Having participants who did not welcome the responsibility in the study could have provided a more complete understanding of the phenomenon. Also, the five participants identified as some form of European descent (i.e. White) and did not disclose identifying with marginalized populations. The experiences of individuals who identify as members of non-dominate groups are often ignored or unknown, particularly in research (Heppner, Wampold, & Kivlighan, 2008; Sue & Sue, 2016). Having a more diverse participant pool may have provided a fuller description of the spectrum of experiences. A lack of diversity in the participant pool could have implications for trustworthiness and relevance of findings. The homogeneity of perspectives and cultural backgrounds in the participant pool could have limited the depth of the findings.

While limitations emerged in this study, trustworthiness procedures were followed. Prolonged engagement, or time engaged with the study, was utilized through

multiple interactions with participants and extended time with the data. Reflexivity was also implemented through the use of personal memos. And lastly, multiple sources of triangulation were used as methods to maintain trustworthiness. I had interviews and virtual sandtrays to triangulate with existing literature, I met regularly with my faculty advisor, and I asked participants to complete three member checks throughout the study. Limitations did arise in this study that could prompt future research but trustworthiness measures were employed to protect the integrity of the results.

Future Research

There are several avenues of future research that can be initiated by this study. One potential study is to continue exploring the other players who are involved in the program-site alliance. For example, a phenomenological study can be conducted exploring the experiences of university field placement coordinators in counselor education when engaged in the program-site alliance. Another could be a phenomenological inquiry into CITs' experiences of the program-site alliance. The participants in this study provided a thorough description of their perception of university coordinators' and CITs' part in the program-site alliance, but getting the information directly from the individuals in those roles would give a fuller, more comprehensive account. Having a full picture of the program-site alliance from a phenomenological viewpoint could be influential in the creation and maintenance of the relationship.

Other studies inspired by this inquiry could be a deeper examination of specific emergent themes. For instance, Communication Within the Program-Site Alliance developed as a theme in this study. A grounded theory inquiry exploring the process of how communication develops bonds in the program-site alliance could be a future study.

This study could have helpful implications if a researcher was interested in exploring how communication influences the relationship. Further, a subtheme in the current study was Ally in Fulfilling Gatekeeper Duties. A future endeavor to investigate this could be a phenomenological study into participants' experience of communication supporting their work as a site supervisor. There are endless possibilities if a researcher is interested in more information about a specific theme from this study.

Another potential future research inquiry encompasses site supervisors' developmental process. A grounded theory investigation into the developmental process for site supervisors as they gain experience in their role. It could be interesting to explore influential factors that foster or hinder their development. To illustrate, in this study, Cari repeatedly referred to the influence her experience as a CIT had on her interactions with supervisees in her role as site supervisor. Others referenced interactions with specific site supervisors. While this was not pertinent to this study, it prompted my curiosity about what processes occur for site supervisors as they grow and gain experience.

From a quantitative perspective, researchers may be interested in developing an evaluative instrument that assesses site supervisors' perception of the program-site alliance. Researchers could develop an instrument for a larger, randomly-selected pool of participants based on the themes from this study. A factor analysis could be conducted to confirm themes. Reliability could be assessed through measuring internal consistency and face validity could be established by using a panel of experts to review the instrument. This instrument could provide counselor educators a tool to investigate techniques and/or interventions that are working well in their specific program-site alliances and what needs to be improved upon.

Lastly, inquiries into the use of virtual sandtray as an arts-based research tool could be conducted following this study. Qualitative explorations could be initiated in an effort to discover participants' experience of using the virtual sandtray as a data collection strategy. Other studies could include investigating the effectiveness of using virtual sandtray as a modality to reach participants with diverse backgrounds. Leavy (2011) has said using arts-based research helps connect diverse audiences to research. A possibility for future research could be to see if virtual sandtray is an effective tool to help diverse populations share their voice with academia, such as individuals with communication disorders or participants who have been repeatedly silenced by the dominant culture. Studies focusing on the efficacy of using sandtray in research could advance the current study.

Conclusion

For this study, I focused on exploring site supervisors experience when in the program-site alliance. Findings showed their experience varied depending on the university and the individuals involved in the relationship. Participants shared similar views on what their role as site supervisor was, specifically concerning gatekeeping and fostering growth in CITs. They also reported valuing their autonomy as a site supervisor but found it helpful if universities responded when it was needed. Participants recognized the university and the field site have separate goals but acknowledged that both benefit from CIT placement. Communication was a major element in the program-site alliance. Participants highlighted the impact of supportive and unsupportive communication. Lastly, participants discussed experiencing the program-site alliance as inconsistent

across universities. In some cases, the inconsistency was cumbersome. Overall, participants highlighted the importance of balance with all these elements.

There were some limitations noted for this study. These include consistency across participants' involvement in the study. One participant was unable to complete his second interview and another did not create a virtual sandtray in his second interview. Another limitation may have been the use of the virtual sandtray; it is possible the technology detracted from the data. There are also limitations related to the pool of participants.

There are several recommendations for future research. Studies exploring the experience of other parties, such as university field-placement coordinators or CITs, in the program-site alliance could provide a well-rounded description of the relationship. Studies could be conducted on specific themes that emerged in this study. Phenomenological studies exploring specific themes could produce more in-depth experience of each theme. Another inquiry could be a grounded theory exploration of the developmental processes for site supervisors and examine what factors influence their development. An instrument measuring the effectiveness of a program-site alliance could be developed. Finally, studies into the efficacy of using virtual sandtray as a data collection tool could be conducted. This study could initiate many future research endeavors.

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Appendix A

Participant Selection Screening Questionnaire

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Where do you live?
4. What is your specialty area (i.e. community mental health, couple and family, school, student affairs, etc.)?
5. What type of agency/organization do you work at (i.e. community agency, school, university)?
6. How long have you been a practicing clinician?
7. How long have you been a site supervisor?
8. If applicable, are you a registered supervisor?
N/A Yes No
9. How many supervisees have you worked with?
10. Is the university you are affiliated with CACREP accredited?
11. How would you characterize your relationship with your affiliated university?
Bad 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent